



If IMF takes 50 years to come, we'll not wait for them - Amos

LUNGU OFF TO CHINA FOR HELP

By Joseph Mwenda
Special Assistant to the President for Press and Public Relations Amos Chanda says if the International Monetary Fund (IMF) takes 50 years to come through with a balance of payment support programme for Zambia, Finance Minister Margaret Mwanakatwe will not wait but look elsewhere for help, including China. *To page 5*

CiSCA backs church bid to lead dialogue

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

The Civil Society Constitutional Agenda (CiSCA) says the church is better suited to lead the dialogue process because it demands respect from both local and International players.

And CiSCA says President Edgar Lungu's continued comments on his 2021 eligibility when the matter is still before the Constitution court makes one wonder whether the outcomes of the case have already been pre-determined. *To page 6*

CK sues Tayali for defamation

By Zondiwe Mbewe

NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili and Mwamona Engineering have sued Chilufya Tayali in the Lusaka High Court, claiming damages for defamation of character. *To page 6*

Social Cash Transfer only reaching 27%, says ZIPAR

By Stuart Lisulo

The Social Cash Transfer programme has only received less than 30 per cent funding by the end of the first half of 2018 due to government's huge debt interest payments, says ZIPAR. And ZIPAR says government added K1.3 billion to the total debt stock in just between January and June this year. *To page 5*



2021 presidential aspirant Harry Kalaba fetes Lusaka street vendors at Cosmopolitan Mall

DEC nabs Lusaka banker for theft of over K450,000

By Zondiwe Mbewe

The Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) in Lusaka has arrested a 30-year-old banker and charged him with money laundering, forgery, and theft of over K450,000. And the Commission, through its Anti-Money Laundering

Investigations Unit, Programmer and a Senior Systems Analyst of Kasama District for forgery. *To page 2*

Magistrates' acquits 7 'rioting' NRDC students

Story page 7

1000 Applicants will be accepted

September Intake opening
10 September

Call/WhatsApp: +260 969 248 900
Former Tina Trust, Avoondale - Lusaka

95% Scholarship / Bursary

Enrollment in progress for sept 2018 intake | 2017 School to attach clearance forms

DEC nabs Lusaka banker for theft of over K450,000

By Mirriam Chabala

The Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) in Lusaka has arrested a 30-year-old banker and charged him with money laundering, forgery, and theft of over K450,000.

And the Commission, through its Anti-Money Laundering Investigations Unit, in Northern Province has also arrested an Information Technology Programmer and a Senior Systems Analyst of Kasama District for forgery.

DEC Public Relations Officer Theresa Katongo disclosed in a statement that the Lusaka banker had been fraudulently drawing money on several accounts of unsuspecting customers using ATM cards issued to himself while generating withdrawal slips fraudulently.

“Daniel Joseph Banda, 30, a banker of house number C6, Hands-worth Court has been charged with theft by servant, money laundering and forgery, contrary to the laws of Zambia. Particulars are that the suspect, jointly and whilst acting together with other persons unknown but between 1st January, 2016 and 31st December, 2017 did steal K 452, 794.72 by fraudulently drawing money on several accounts of unsuspecting customers using ATM cards issued to himself while fraudulently generating withdrawal slips. The suspect further forged bank documents purporting to have transferred money from a customer account into the bank’s investment account when in fact not, an act which resulted into money laundering. The suspect has since been released on police bond and is expected to appear in court soon,” stated Katongo.

“Meanwhile, the Anti-

Money Laundering Investigations Unit in Northern Province has arrested Bizeck Mbewe, 31, an Information Technology Programmer of Mulenga Hills in Kasama District and Boyd Banda, 52, a Senior Systems Analyst also of Kasama District for forgery, contrary to the laws of Zambia. The duo jointly and whilst acting together with other persons unknown on dates unknown but between 1st July, 2017 and 31st January, 2018, did forge various receipts which were later issued to customers of Kasama Municipal Council amounting to a total of K 19, 298.30. The suspects are expected to appear in court soon.”



Ministry of Health Permanent Secretary Kennedy Malama (c) poses for a picture with Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of India officials after discussing the 650 health posts project financed by that bank at a cost of US\$50 Million on Wednesday

NDC asks govt to explain Katumbi’s Zambian passport

By Mirriam Chabala

National Democratic Congress (NDC) Secretary General Mwenya Musenge has challenged government to explain how Congolese politician Moise Katumbi was issued with a Zambian diplomatic passport.

But Special Assistant to the President for Press and Public Relations Amos Chanda says government will not make any comment on the matter as it will not be right to engage the DRC government via social media.

In a statement yesterday, Musenge charged that the rumours surrounding the alleged issuance of a diplomatic passport to Katumbi must be clarified immediately and demanded that Home Affairs Minister Steven

Kampanyongo be fired if he has a hand in the issuance of the same passport.

“We want government to urgently clarify the alleged issuance of a diplomatic passport to Congolese politician Mr. Moise Katumbi because it has the potential to compromise national peace and security. If indeed, it is true that Mr. Katumbi is the holder of passport number... we want to know how he got the said documentation. As a party, we shall not gloss over this matter until those who issued the said passport are brought to book. As a party, we have nothing personal against Moise Katumbi as an individual but we have just commented on this matter because it raises a lot of questions that require urgent answers. Zambia should not and shall never be used as a safe haven for foreigners,” Musenge stated.

“If Mr. Katumbi indeed holds a Zambian passport, we wonder how many other foreigners such as Chinese have Zambian passports. If Mr. Katumbi has a Zambian passport, we demand for a clean up at the passport office. We further demand that all officers who are behind Mr. Katumbi’s passport be

arrested and prosecuted. If Home Affairs Minister Steven Kampanyongo has a hand in the issuance of this passport, we demand that he be fired by the appointing authority. The NDC demands that the authenticity of this matter be clarified by the Ministry of Home Affairs immediately. We further demand for a clarification from the Ministry of Home Affairs on how Mr. Katumbi was issued a Green National Registration Card (NRC).” And Musenge appealed to the Congolese government to clarify on the issue of dual citizenship in the DRC.

“The NDC is also appealing to the Congolese Government to clarify on the issue of dual citizenship in the DRC. We further want our Congolese counterparts to assist us with information if they are aware that Mr. Katumbi actually holds Zambian citizenship. Mr. Katumbi rose to prominence in the 1990s under the Fredrick Chiluba regime under the name Moses Katumbi. Moses Katumbi also claimed to be Dr. Chiluba’s relation. He went further and claimed he was a relation to one of the Royal Highnesses in Luapula Province. After Dr. Fredrick

Chiluba was arrested for corruption, Moses Katumbi unceremoniously left Zambia. He later appeared in the Congo as Moise Katumbi and became Governor for Katanga province. As a country, we may differ politically, but, we should not allow foreigners to hijack and take over our country. We have only one Zambia and we as citizens should safeguard this country from any foreign emissaries and aggressors,” stated Musenge.

But when asked to comment on the matter at a media briefing at State House yesterday, Chanda declined to give any comment but acknowledged that Katumbi had lived in Zambia for about 20 years. “I got a question as I was coming, from one International media organization about an online picture of Mr Katumbi’s passport purported to be Zambian. I have said that it would be out of character for the Zambian government to engage a foreign government through social media, so on that point we have no comment. Suffice to say that we know officially that the Congolese government issued an arrest warrant against

His Excellency Mr Moise Katumbi, former governor of Katanga Province, and that warrant clearly states that it must be executed anywhere in the world, clearly against a Congolese national. That is what we can say there, is an official document saying that he is a Congolese national, we also saw another document from the government spokesperson (of Congo) saying that Mr Katumbi is an Italian, that was last month,” said Chanda.

“I can only state here that Mr Katumbi lived here for close to 20 years, and that he is a Congolese national officially. We have dealt with him and we have seen a lot of documents signed by him as governor of Katanga Province. So we are not making any comment on that, it is against diplomatic relations with a friendly neighbor like Congo for us to engage in a social media exchange so to speak. There are elections in Congo like there were elections in Zimbabwe. We saw texts and texts of newspaper cuttings that President Mnangagwa was Zambian, so the electoral season does bring about so many things. So officially, we have no comment on that matter.”

Court Notice

TAKE NOTE that ONIAS PHIRI will apply for money lenders certificate under the style and name of REON ENTERPRISES under Money Lenders Act Cap 398 and will have his application heard by the Honourable Magistrate M.N. SINVULA in Chambers on the 4th September, 2018 at 10:00 hours or soon thereafter as he can be heard

Bata

Back to SCHOOL

Toughees®
Good Things
are Made to Last

Get a **Free** Drinking Bottle for every pair of Bata School Toughees!

All Sizes are Available



Price **K269.90**
Size **6-9**



Price **K229.90**
Size **2-5**



Price **K199.90**
Size **9-1**



Price **119.90**
Size **7-8**



K119.90
each



Price **K229.90**
Size **2-6**



Price **K189.90**
Size **9-1**



Price **K189.90**
Size **9-1**



K189.90
each



Price **K229.90**
Size **2-7**



Price **K189.90**
Size **9-1**



Price **K229.90**
Size **2-6**



Price **K189.90**
Size **9-1**



K189.90
each



K89.90



K99.90

K24.90
each



K16.90



K10.90



K15.90



K169.90
each



K19.90



K19.90



Available in all Bata stores

SHOP ONLINE AT www.bata.co.zm.



ZRA embarks on program to ensure brewers are tax compliant

By Mirriam Chabala

The Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) has observed that Ethanol smuggling is on the rise in the country leading to the manufacturing of illicit alcohol popularly known as Tujili-jili or Junta. ZRA Corporate Communications Manager Topsy Sikalinda stated in a press release, Thursday, that the Commission would therefore start conducting random and extensive inspections

on all individuals and businesses suspected to be involved in tax evasion through the manufacturing of illicit alcohol. Sikalinda further disclosed that ZRA was in talks with the Opaque Beer Association of Zambia (OBAZ) and other stakeholders, working to reorganise and reduce revenue leakages for government in the brewing industry. "The Authority wants to ensure that there is sanity

and tax compliance in the brewing industry whether opaque or clear beer. For this reason, the Authority will work closely with the Opaque Beer Association of Zambia (OBAZ) and other stakeholders to reorganise and reduce revenue leakages for government in the brewing industry. The Commissioner General

of the Zambia Revenue Authority Mr. Kingsley Chanda met with the OBAZ this week and resolved among other things, to improve tax compliance in the beer industry, level the playing field and carry out joint assessment to determine installed capacity of all players in the industry," stated Sikalinda.

"This will ensure that all players pay their fair share of taxes, including penalties and interest to the national treasury. This will also result into review of the importation of ethanol which is used to manufacture illicit beer that has serious health implications on the youths in Zambia. The review of

importation procedures for ethanol which is used to manufacture illicit alcohol will protect the vulnerable youths who are more prone to the abuse of illicit drugs and alcohol. The Commissioner General has warned all tax evaders to prepare for grave consequences as provided under the law."

By Mirriam Chabala

The Zambia Chamber of Mines (ZCM) has observed that the mining sector has stagnated because too much pressure has been mounted on it to service other sectors of the economy. ZCM President Nathan Chishimba observed that the mines did not seem to be contributing much to the country because Zambia's needs had grown faster than the mines were able to cope with. "The historical understanding of the value of the mining sector to the country has been as a source of revenue and this understanding has led to a situation where the industry has somewhat stagnated, it hasn't grown as much it should. Therefore, as the rest of the country's needs expand with time, it's appearing not to contribute as much as it should, when in fact what it should do is actually to be a key driver of growth in the economy. That's the role which it should be taking up presently but it's not in the growth mode presently, the growth is slower than it should be. We seem to have lost track of how mining should really be looked at. Mining is a long term business, typically it will take 10 to 20 years to prospect and develop a mining operation and we haven't had many examples of that Zambia at the moment because the industry is now mainly perceived as a source of revenue, which is contrary to the actual natural pattern of looking at a mining company," Chishimba explained. "Typically for instance you will take 10 to 20 years to prospect, you take probably another five years to develop and build a mine...this process involves several billion Dollars to try and get to an operation and then obviously the pay back can't come in two to three years, it will take typically about 20 or so years before you recover the investment that you put in a mining

Mining sector has stagnated – ZCM

operation. Now, in our country right now we have allowed a narrative where we look at mines mainly as a source of revenue and that has significantly impacted on the mining sector because there is a lot of pressure to get as much revenue as we can from these operations in a very short period of time. We haven't invested much but we hope to reap more, if you look at the President's speech when he opened the Chambishi South Hall project, he was talking about in the order of K13 billion that has gone into the mining operations in the last 10 to 15 years. Now that's a staggering amount

of money that requires extended periods to get pay back from. So because of the way we look at mining in Zambia, we tend influence our policy makers who then try to put policies that are designed to maximise revenue rather than to foster the long term growth of the sector, which is unfortunate." Chishimba said it was important to realize that mining needed an intensive, detailed investment plan. "We can remedy this situation by taking a longer view. I think it's important to view mining in its correct context. The way a mine starts is not through privatisation, it starts from

a very detailed and intensive level of investment which then results in the mining operations. And we have seen a situation where those countries that have encouraged this time of long term view are getting the biggest benefits from mining. I would also like to say that mining is our comparative advantage as a country. So we need to look at a very strategic way of encouraging mining to assist our efforts to diversify into the other sectors," he said. Meanwhile, Chanda admired the growth of the mining sector in the neighbouring DRC and hoped for the same in Zambia.

"Congo is a very interesting case, when you at the common headlines, Congo represents confusion and so on but they have done well in one respect, which is to manage their mining sector very strategically. The DRC actually created an environment where exploration investment was very high to the extent that they were among the top 10 destinations globally for exploration investments in the world. And then after that, they did put in place a very proactive mining fiscal regime which remained in place for over 10 years. Essentially they set in place all the ingredients that are

essential for good mining investments to the extent that the top four mining companies in the world are actually in Congo running operations there and that's what we rate trying to advocate in Zambia that we need a very strategic approach and all these ingredients to come into place," said Chishimba. "Exploration investment must flow into Zambia, right now are hovering at very low levels, I think below \$10 million annually as exploration investment. I know exploration investment globally has dropped but we need to be running with the big dogs by being able to attract all those big players in the world to come to Zambia. And there is no reason why they cannot come to Zambia. So I think we need to be predictable, we need to be able to have a very consistent approach to mining taxation, mining policies and all other ingredients that represent a favourable environment for the sector to grow."

Chinese nationals bought, smelted ZNBC cables stolen by employees – Katanga

By Daniel Chansa in Kitwe

Copperbelt Police Commissioner Charity Katanga has revealed that the ZNBC cables which were stolen by two employees with the help of outsiders were sold to Chinese nationals at K11,000. Katanga told News Diggers! in an interview that by the time the suspects led police to the buyer, a Chinese national, the cables weighing about 400kgs had been smelted. On Tuesday, Riverside police arrested two ZNBC employees, a cameraman and a driver, for allegedly stealing digital migration cables. But Katanga refused to give any further details until yesterday when she revealed that even a police officer who was stationed at ZNBC was involved. "Riverside police, Kitwe, received

a report of getting into a building and committing a felony therein which occurred between 26th August 2018 at 18:00 hours and 27th August 2018 at 08:30 at ZNBC studios in Kitwe. A report was received from Philip Ngoma, 38, an IT technician who reported on behalf of ZNBC that unknown criminals broke into the back studio and stole from therein about 20 meters of armoured power cable whose value was not ascertained. So after that, police visited the scene and instituted investigations. After thorough investigations, it led to the apprehension of two employees, who also led to the buyer of the same cables that were stolen," Katanga narrated. "The two employees are Mathews Moono, 28, a cameraman from ZNBC Kitwe also of House No.

1390 Kwacha township, Kitwe and Lukama Madson, 27, a driver of Kitwe also of House number 2224, Chimwemwe township, Kitwe who were picked up by police for interviews. It was later disclosed that 20 armoured power cables from ZNBC premises were stolen also with the help of outsiders. This later led to the apprehension of Rabson Chiluba Jnr of House No. 2827 Kwacha East who also led the police to a buyer, a Chinese National and owner of a company called Luena situated along Government Road in Chimwemwe Township by the names of Suya Yang, 50, of house no. 5876 of Buyatanshi township, Kitwe. It was later established that 400 Kg of the armoured cables were sold to the Chinese at K11,000, according to the information." She said when police visited

the buyer's house, they only found the insulator as the rest of the cable had been smelted. "When police visited the scene, they only recovered an outside insulator for the cable from the Chinese. The other one is believed to have been disposed off. Also involved in the case, was a police officer who was implicated, also of ZNBC identified as Constable Kapela of Kitwe who was also picked and later apprehended and charged for the subject offense. The four are detained at Riverside Police and Investigations are still underway. So when they got to the Chinese, they found that the 400 Kg of cable were smelted and that K11,000, they shared and part of the money, it seems it was given to some other officer who is also implicated," said Katanga.

By Stuart Lisulo

The Social Cash Transfer programme has only received less than 30 per cent funding by the end of the first half of 2018 due to government's huge debt interest payments, says ZIPAR.

And ZIPAR research fellow Shebo Nalishebo says government added K1.3 billion to the total debt stock in just a six-month period between January and June this year.

Meanwhile, Ministry of Finance assistant director at the Investments and Debt Management Department Mwila Kasase-Zulu has appealed to all stakeholders to help government bring the country's debt back to sustainable levels.

In an analysis of government spending released in Lusaka yesterday, the Zambia Institute for Policy Analysis and Research (ZIPAR) shows that while government spending on debt interest payments for the first half of 2018 was much more than planned, spending on key social sectors are not receiving promised funding in line with the 2018 budget.

ZIPAR disclosed that government spent K9.1 billion on debt interest payments for the first half of 2018, which was far higher than planned, compared to the K6.2 billion budgeted for.

According to ZIPAR's data, only 27 per cent of the budget for Social Cash Transfers has been dispersed, amounting to K197 million, against the intended K411 million that should have been disbursed by the mid-year point.

Support for the 574,000 poor households who in 2018 are

Social Cash Transfer funding reaches only 27% of the poor - ZIPAR

intended to receive Social Cash Transfers has been dealt a huge blow due to debt interest repayments.

Speaking during a presentation of the analysis of the mid-year budget performance, Nalishebo revealed that government's debt interest payments have squeezed spending on social services, and are even higher than education sector spending.

"Previously, interest payments used to be way down our ladder in terms of government spending. But now, interest payments are even higher than our spending on the education sector," Nalishebo told stakeholders at Taj Pamodzi Hotel.

He explained that government's capital expenditure continued to rise at a worryingly high pace during the half-year period under review.

"If you look in more detail at capital expenditure; we spent K12.4 billion in the first half against a projection of K7.5 billion so we went K4.9

billion overboard. So, by June (2018), 85 per cent of what we planned to spend on capital expenditure was already spent! And this is the largest source of budget overruns," Nalishebo added.

"I can't emphasize this hard enough: with the high capital expenditure from borrowed money, and increasing debt servicing costs, we don't have enough funds available for other critical spending such as social services, operations and maintenance."

He reminded all stakeholders that government's huge public debt affects everyone.

"If you are going to have cuts in recurrent departmental charges, this is the reason we have the shortage of drugs in health facilities...and even when it comes to education; lack of funds for school supplies are affected. So, most of you who think that debt is just this big figure up there, which does not affect you? You are wrong! It really goes down to the individual, and these are the effects of what debt can

do," he said.

"And because a lot of these are not being paid up, it has led to the accumulation of arrears."

And Nalishebo revealed that government added K1.3 billion to the total debt stock in just a six-month period between January and June this year.

"Looking at the financing figure, Zambia has effectively added about K1.3 billion to the stock of government debt in the first half of the year because of this borrowing. Usually, this figure of around K1.3-K1.5 billion is usually what we borrow for the entire year. But this is just half-year; we have already hit K1.3 billion! Hopefully, those austerity measures will really kick-in so that this figure really slows down and we continue being in the figures that we have seen previously," he said.

"If this was a movie, it will be called 'K1.3 billion coming soon to a debt stock near you' because our deficit was K7.3 billion, and that's what we

were supposed to borrow, but we ended up borrowing K13 billion instead."

He further stressed the importance of government seizing that all-important International Monetary Fund (IMF)-backed bailout package.

"Foreign grants continue to be erratic. At mid-year, we have only collected nine per cent of the planned grants for the year. We need to be realistic in terms of even how we do the projections for grants because, really, without the IMF programme, a lot of the commitments on foreign grants won't be met," Nalishebo observed.

He also advised that government should re-visit reversing the 80 per cent completion threshold for construction projects to revive economic growth.

"In the austerity measures, government mentioned that, 'anything that is below 80 per cent in terms of completion of projects, we need to cut off [funding]. What we are saying

is, we need to revisit that threshold because what if some of those of projects, which is at 50 per cent completion rate, is actually more economically or socially viable than something that is at 80 per cent. Why not prioritise a project like that, that is going to bring you the growth that you need rather than just a blanket statement of 80 per cent?" asked Nalishebo. Meanwhile, Zulu, who was the keynote speaker on behalf of the Ministry of Finance, appealed to all stakeholders to help government tackle the looming debt crisis.

"I wish to urge all stakeholders and citizens of Zambia to rally behind government as it implements the debt reform measures that will ensure that Zambia's debt is brought back to sustainable levels," said Zulu.

The ZIPAR analysis of the mid-year 2018 budget performance was held under the theme: "What does the mid-year budget performance mean for Zambia's Public Debt and Service Delivery?"

Mwanakatwe will not wait for IMF if China offers favourable conditions – State House

By Joseph Mwenda

Special Assistant to the President for Press and Public Relations Amos Chanda says if the International Monetary Fund (IMF) takes 50 years to come through with a balance of payment support programme for Zambia, Finance Minister Margaret Mwanakatwe will not wait, but look elsewhere for help, including China.

And Chanda says President Edgar Lungu, who left for China yesterday with a huge government and private sector delegation, will remain in that country until September 7th to enhance economic ties as well as renegotiate Chinese debt, among other activities.

Speaking when he addressed journalists at State House, Chanda said all options to improve Zambia's debt sustainability were being pursued.

"All options to improve Zambia's debt sustainability are available. But the trip that the President is undertaking to China today is to increase economic cooperation. If on the mutually-agreed platform, the owners of Chinese debt agree to renegotiate it, that will be done. That is what the Finance Minister is doing – to improve the terms of these loans, probably to improve

the tenor or probably increase the repayment period; to probably look at interest as well. But the broader term she is using is debt restructuring. So, what she will be doing is to renegotiate Chinese loan terms, if not on existing debt, then any debt that may come from there," Chanda responded when asked if Zambia was looking for balance of payment support from China.

"So, she (Finance Minister Margaret Mwanakatwe) has not made a specific request for balance of payment support, but if she finds the financing arrangements in China favourable, she may get because she is looking for any affordable financing from any direction."

Asked if a balance of payment support deal with China would not jeopardise the on-going negotiations with the IMF, Chanda said Zambia was not going to wait for the IMF to run its economy.

"The Minister of Finance runs the economy on a daily basis, so if the IMF is coming in 50 years, she will not wait, she will go to the market and seek favourable terms to negotiate. The desire to run the economy properly or the austerity measures are not dictated from above, the need to control spending

is not a condition from IMF, if it's a condition it's coincidental. It is a conscience of the Cabinet to control spending and reduce borrowing and make sure that there is no wastage in spending...if that is done without the IMF programme, so much the better; if the IMF programme works that's good also," Chanda responded.

"The IMF representative [who has been withdrawn from Zambia] a diplomat, so whatever has happened is being communicated within the diplomatic channels. What has been stated officially by the Ministry of Finance is that the IMF rep has been withdrawn for redeployment and a new representative will be sent, and the process for the programme is on-going. That is the position of the Minister. In this case, the IMF has withdrawn Dr Baldini and the reasons for the withdrawal would be undiplomatic to communicate in the media. But according to Honourable Mwanakatwe, the IMF are coming for Article 4 consultation any time soon, that tells you that the process is still on." Chanda then went ahead to outline President Lungu's agenda in China. "The President will this (Thursday) evening travel to China to attend to two major events. There is a bilateral

summit between the President of China Mr Xi Jinping and President Lungu on the 1st of September. The two leaders will discuss a broad range of cooperation agreements mainly in the economic sector; but they will also be discussing the long-standing cooperation in the political sphere," he explained.

"Then on the 2nd of September, President Lungu will address the China-Zambia Investment and Business Forum, to be hosted by CNMC, the biggest Chinese investor in Zambia who owns Chambishi Metals and other facilities such as the Airport Multi-Facility Economic Zone. The President will deliver a keynote address to those Chinese companies. He will also tour some selected companies."

He said President Lungu was travelling with an unprecedented private sector delegation.

"On the 3rd and 4th of September, the President will then join 45 other Heads of State from Africa who will be attending the Forum for China and Africa Cooperation, otherwise known as FOCAC. Then on the 5th and 6th, President Lungu will then move to Jiangsu Province to tour some facilities, including some copper processing plants and also to witness the signing of an

agreement between the Province of Jiangsu and Muchinga Province of Zambia. They will enter into a specific economic cooperation agreement where there will be technology transfer from China to Muchinga and vice-versa," narrated Chanda.

"I can add that a sizeable number of private sector people will be travelling alongside the President. I do not know the actual size of the private sector delegation, but what I can confirm is that government is facilitating to ensure that the difficulties that a private sector person may have when going are taken care of, otherwise they are financing themselves. It's a huge delegation in all fields, mining, fish-farming, manufacturing, tourism, road construction, technology and all other areas where the Chinese private sector is interested in. For diplomatic constraints, I cannot tell you details. I can only confirm that this is a very remarkable tour, probably the biggest tour you have ever seen of any Zambian President when going to China, given the size of the delegation, the number of agreements to be signed and the value of those signatures. I can confirm that it's not a trip like any other because of its significance."

ZNFU urges govt to pay farmers, supply inputs on time

By Mirriam Chabala

Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU) president Jervis Zimba has asked the Ministry of Finance to release funds to pay farmers for crop marketing and input supply. In a statement issued Thursday, Zimba stated that it was regrettable that late paying of farmers had become a norm. "The Zambia National Farmers' Union would like to urge Government through the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Agriculture to put priority on release of funds to pay farmers for crop marketing and input supply. We are in the middle of crop marketing and farmers are not being paid instantly by the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) for the maize supplied and some input suppliers have not been paid for inputs supplied under FISP. It is regrettable that not paying farmers on time has become the new normal way of doing business when dealing with the FRA as opposed to being an exception, why? Most farmers depend on rain-fed farming thus get one income stream in a year," Zimba stated.

Zimba observed that continued delay in paying farmers might lead to poor implementation of the FISP e-voucher. "Therefore, delaying paying them results in a chain reaction because depositing of funds will not take place on time for the FISP E-voucher and all the good plans thrown

in disarray. The Union is concerned because it is such delays that will lead to poor implementation of the FISP E-voucher again yet this is a very good programme which could emancipate the farmers and contribute towards diversification," Zimba observed.

He advised the treasury to speed up its decisions relating to farmers' concerns saying rains did not wait for anyone. "Notwithstanding all the competing demands on Government, it is time to walk the talk and avoid repeating the same mistakes every year because the cycle of crop production is known by all. Our reminder to the Treasury is that rains do not wait for anyone

hence decisions concerning farming cannot be delayed. It is now the end of August and input acquisition is high on the farmers' checklist hence there is need to re-engineer the sequencing of release of budgetary resources to give priority to ventures that are cardinal for propelling agriculture production. We have been compelled to highlight the current worrying situation because of the outcry from our members," Zimba stated. "It is also important to

highlight that Government has still not fully paid Agribusiness Suppliers for the last season FISP-E voucher programme, yet the companies must gear up and position inputs for this season. This is of grave concern as delayed payments to Agribusiness propel additional costs which affect future pricing of inputs making farming costly. As a Union we recognise that Government plans and intentions are good, BUT it is eminent that implementation

is faltering thus our call for immediate remedial action."

He further advised government to postpone funding for projects that can wait and instead meet the pressing needs in the agriculture sector.

"We therefore make an earnest appeal to the Honourable Minister of Finance to come to the aid of the agriculture sector and release funds so that the engines on farms begin to move again. Posterity will judge us harshly for

wasting opportunities as production slides downwards unchecked. The Union has always advocated for a special vault to be created for agriculture production related payments so that diversions to pay for other expenditures are eliminated. Thus, Government should consider postponing funding for projects that can wait to meet the pressing and time bound payments that must be made to keep alive Zambia's agriculture dream at all cost," stated Zimba.

CiSCA backs Church's bid to lead dialogue

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

The Civil Society Constitutional Agenda (CiSCA) says the church is better suited to lead the dialogue process because it demands respect from both local and International players.

And CiSCA says President Edgar Lungu's continued comments on his 2021 eligibility when the matter is still before the Constitution court makes one wonder whether the outcomes of the case have already been pre-determined.

Meanwhile, CiSCA has also condemned President Lungu and his Religious

Affairs Minister Godfridah Sumaili for remaining mute on the crude insults traded between Amos Chanda and Chishimba Kambwili.

Speaking at a press briefing in Lusaka, Thursday, CiSCA Treasurer Judy Mulenga condemned institutions which had been bashing the church over its stance on national dialogue.

"CiSCA has noted the controversy around and the fight for the leadership of the proposed national dialogue and reconciliation. The fight as to who should lead the dialogue between the Zambia Centre for Interparty Dialogue (ZCID) and the

church is unprogressive and must be resolved immediately. Under normal circumstances, Zambians should have allowed the church to handle the process because it commands national and international respect from both local and international political players. It would be sad and hypocritical, in a Christian nation to demonise the church and describe it as lacking moral standing to mediate in the political crisis that is damaging the country," Mulenga said.

"Therefore, CiSCA supports the role of the church in spearheading national

dialogue. Those who are against the church taking lead must realise the importance of the church's role in such matters for the history of our country. We urge all Zambians to rally behind the church-led national dialogue. CiSCA will not be part of the group of citizens to frustrate the efforts of the church based on political formation but will continue to support church efforts in given that the pioneer of the said dialogue at a time when it was very unfashionable to talk about the national dialogue and when ruling elites and their sympathizers denied the existence of political tension and crisis in this country."

And Mulenga said President Lungu's continued comments on his 2021 eligibility when the matter is still before the Constitution court makes

one wonder whether the outcomes of the case have already been pre-determined. "President Lungu has continued to make running comments on his 2021 eligibility bid as a presidential candidate for the 2021 general election when his eligibility case is currently before the Constitutional Court and has not been decided. This begs the question as to whether the outcome is already pre-determined? This regardless, amounts to abuse of his authority given to him under the Constitution. His actions and utterances are therefore inimical to his oath he swore of protecting and upholding the constitution," Mulenga said.

Meanwhile, Mulenga said it was shocking to hear unprintable insults between State House Press Aide and the Roan PF member of parliament in a country calling itself a Christian nation.

"The Civil Society Constitutional Agenda (CiSCA) has noted with concern, the continued assault to Article 8 of the Republican Constitution

that prescribes national values and principles that the Head of State has sworn to promote and uphold. CiSCA is dismayed and appalled by the silence of President Edgar Chagwa Lungu and the Minister of National Guidance and Religious Affairs who must have the primary custodians of these values. The crude insults and other unprintables traded between President Edgar Lungu's Press Aide Amos Chanda and National Democratic Congress (NDC) consultant, and Roan PF member of parliament Chishimba Kambwili were shocking in a country calling itself a Christian nation whose national values and principles of morality are enshrined in a constitution," she said.

Mulenga said President Lungu should have reprimanded his Press Aide for his utterances against the people living with HIV/AIDS.

"Further, the mocking, indirect stigmatization and discrimination of persons living with HIV and AIDS and those affected by Amos Chanda was very unfortunate and concerning. Mr Chanda's utterances should have attracted serious reprimand from the appointing authority, but lack of it, is a clear demonstration of government's lack of commitment and sensitivity to matters that concern ordinary citizens and has the potential to reverse the gains made so far in reducing stigma and discrimination based on one's HIV status. Perhaps this is no wonder the country had experienced a loss of HIV testing kits from the Ministry of Health under the watch of the authorities with lukewarm response against the culprits. Therefore, we condemn the trading of insults by senior leaders and their lack of respect for the people living with HIV," said Mulenga.

Kambwili, Mwamona Ltd sue Tayali for defamation

By Zondiwe Mbewe

NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili and Mwamona Engineering and Technical Services Limited have sued Economic and Equity Party leader Chilufya Tayali in the Lusaka High Court, claiming damages for defamation of character and mental anguish.

The plaintiffs, Kambwili and Mwamona, have stated that Tayali uttered defamatory words against them at a press conference last year on October 27, when he accused the directors of Mwamona, as well as Kambwili, of fraud.

Tayali had said at the press conference, among other accusations, that when Kambwili came back to Zambia from UK after PF had started gaining mileage, he had no money and was just renting a house, but today he was worth more than K50 million.

He had charged that Kambwili had fraudulently acquired Mwamona and registered it in his son and wife's names to hide his corruption.

"Which business can you do within seven years to have 50 million? I know how tough business is. But I will tell you how Kambwili has managed to get that 50 million... Fraudulently, Kambwili registered a company called

Mwamona...The 50 million worth of properties that I'm talking about, most of it you won't find it in CKs name, you won't. And this is why he boasts to say 'I'm as clean as KK's handkerchief', it's because the properties that he has fraudulently or corruptly acquired are not in his name..." Tayali had charged.

But in a statement of claim filed in the Lusaka High Court, Thursday, the plaintiffs stated that the said words were false, malicious and defamatory. They disclosed that they had been severely injured and their reputation had been brought into scandal, odium and contempt in the eyes of the society as the result.

The plaintiffs denied the said words saying that they were not guilty of any of the things they had been accused of by Tayali.

They added that they were and had always been well-respected and law abiding citizens.

They observed that Tayali allowed the recording of the said conference knowing fully well that the same would be heard by people within and outside Zambia, to the total destruction of the plaintiffs.

"The defendant allowed the recording

of the said conference knowing fully well that the same would be heard by people within and outside Zambia, to the total destruction of the plaintiff. The said publication has since been widely circulated and has been heard by the Zambian and international community who include the plaintiffs' colleagues, subordinates, business partners, family and friends," read the statement of claim.

The plaintiffs stated that unless Tayali was restrained, he would continue uttering defamatory statements against them.

"Unless the defendant is restrained from uttering further false, malicious and defamatory statements against the plaintiff, he will continue to utter the same or similar statements to the total destruction of the plaintiffs political, business and private life as well-respected, law abiding and honest citizens," read the statement of claim.

They now claim for exemplary or punitive damages for defamation of character, compensatory damages, damages for mental anguish and strain, a public retraction and apology in respect of all the defamatory utterances, interest, costs and any other reliefs the court may deem fit.

Policy inconsistencies have made illicit financial flows thrive - CSPR

By Thomas Mulenga

The Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) says illicit financial flows are rampant in Zambia due to lack of consistency in government policies aimed at combating the scourge.

Speaking when he featured on an OSISA funded 'PA Bwingu Project on ending illicit financial flows' UNZA Radio program, Wednesday, CSPR executive director Patrick Nshindano said there was need for efficient political will locally and internationally in order to curb illicit financial flows.

"What the problem has been in terms of curbing illicit financial flows is partly because of inconsistency on the part of us as a country and specifically government. I think when you realize that there is a problem like we did with the mining sector where we are saying ok this is how we are going to tackle this issue of illicit financial

flows then because of the backlash, we backtrack then a few months later again you bring in another tax and so on, so that level of policy inconsistency on the part of government does affect issues to do with tackling issues to do with illicit financial flows," Nshindano said.

"But it is also a very complex issue that needs a lot of political will beyond borders of a country like Zambia. You need to have a lot of corporative corporations of tax authorities out there because money is taken out of the country so you need systems that are able to first and foremost crawl back moneys that seem to be either of illicit flows but also in certain instances illicit flows can actually be proceeds of criminal activities and this is also a dangerous part which could also be a threat to national security."

Nshindano said lack of strong investigative wings to track the

illicit flow of finances had also contributed their persistence.

"We are a fully liberalized country both economically and financially so what that means is that people are free to move money in and out but also our systems have not grown, they are not strong enough to be able to detect some of these issues with regards to financial flows and that's why if you are going to tackle issues to do with illicit financial flows there has to be very strong government to government corporation because it is not an issue that can tackled within the jurisdiction of Zambia alone because it is a very complex issue and a lot of money does get out of this country, and the onus is on us to be able to ensure through the revenue authority and different wings of government such as DEC, ACC work hard to end the scourge," Nshindano said.

He noted that money that was acquired through illicit means

was mostly externalized and kept in official accounts, thereby denying local people an opportunity to borrow money from local banks at cheaper rates as there was no excess money in local banks.

"If somebody regardless of the transaction that they do, decides instead of keeping money with ZANACO, they move money dubiously out of the country and go and put it in Bahamas or the Virgin islands, known to be a tax haven, what that does is that it's robbing the country of the much needed capital which if it sits in a bank like ZANACO you have liquidity. But what you have is that there is no liquidity, money is being taken out of the country which pushes up interest because there is no money that even the banks don't have excess to be able to bother about the small business people but worry about the bigger ones because they know first and foremost that there is security

and they will be able to get a higher return. But also for a country like Zambia where you have a high presence of government participation in the financial market through issuance of bonds and securities, the banks prefer to deal with government because it's a guarantee the risk there is very minimal and so the local economy tends to die out," Nshindano explained.

He added that illicit financial flows had led to loss of revenue by government through tax avoidance by multi-national corporations.

"The bottom line is that illicit financial flows leads to a loss of resources on the part of the government, and the resources are actually lost into foreign hands, through taxation. If you look at the records of the mining companies, I stand to be corrected now, but based on the past records none of the mining companies in Zambia have actually paid corporate income tax. Most of them end up just paying mineral royalty which is basically a rent and they all indicate that no either loss making positions and all these things and the question has always been if you have been loss making for the past ten years why are you still here and those are the questions that are there and to be able to tackle that, one of the things government tried to do was come up with a single tear tax system where they say it doesn't matter what you do, your profit base or whatever challenges or how you can do your calculations, what we want is basically a rent on the mining and what we are going to do is make it fixed and charge it on that but there was a lot of backlash to that effect because the fixed mineral

royalty did not take into consideration the cost burden and operational cost of a mining company," Nshindano said.

"So based on existing tax system you find that one may decide to manipulate their account and just declare the one that is giving them the lowest kind of tax burden so instead of operating at the 35 corporate income tax despite their earnings coming from that kind of amount they decide oh ok am going to pick the lower one which is an incentivized one, mainly because just a quarter of the activities is coming from that, take an example of agriculture because agriculture now is taxed at 10% so you find an entity that has a component of agriculture instead of paying the full corporate of 35, they decide to say our activities are under agriculture meanwhile that is not the case so you find that the country tends to lose a lot of resources."

Nshindano said illicit financial flows had contributed to none delivery of social services and improvement of peoples' living standards.

"Our call as civil society has always been can we ensure that we tackle the issue of illicit financial flows because even the debt burden that we are now suffering from is just as a result of that because as a country we are growing, the needs are growing every single day and government needs to ensure that it provides these services and can only do that through taxation but you only have a very few pool of people that are contributing to the coffers of the country most of the burden is placed on the agriculture sector," said Nshindano.

NDC warns PF to leave police out of political battles

By Mirriam Chabala

The National Democratic Congress (NDC) has asked the PF to stop using police in its political battles, saying opposition parties have the right to hold public meetings because Zambia is a democratic country.

In a statement, Thursday, NDC secretary general Mwenya Musenge noted that the Patriotic Front government, under President Edgar Lungu, was abusing governance institutions to disadvantage the opposition by denying them permits and other privileges.

Musenge complained that the Zambia Police Service was seemingly receiving instructions from the governing PF to cripple all political activities of the opposition parties in the country.

"The National Democratic Congress NDC is not happy that the police service has continuously been denying opposition political groupings permits to hold campaign meetings. As a party, we are not happy that police have blocked our tour of the North Western province. Our attempts as a party to tour the North Western region on three different occasions this year alone have been denied. The reason being cited by the police command in that region are seemingly vague and political.

The police service is ostensibly receiving instructions from the governing PF to cripple our political activities. NDC consultant and 2021 Presidential candidate Chishimba Kambwili was scheduled to visit that part of the country next week. The police has denied the NDC permits to hold meetings despite fulfilling all conditions under the Public Order Act to enable the party hold political activities," Musenge stated.

"The blocking of the NDC to hold public gatherings is not synonymous with the North Western province alone. All our countrywide tours are on hold because the police in those regions are skeptical to sanction our undertakings. This behavior by the police to stop us from holding countrywide tours is at variance with the Republican constitution. As a political front, we have all the rights to hold gatherings, i.e, assemble and address meetings. It is clear that the PF is abusing governance institutions to disadvantage the opposition. The PF should not use the police service to fight proxy political battles, this we shall not accept as a party. Zambia is a democratic country and the opposition should have the right to hold public meetings." Musenge further condemned the culture of the ruling PF conducting public gatherings

anyhow and without permission from the police.

"We have further noticed that while the opposition is being denied permits, the PF is busy campaigning without permits from police. We do not need such double standards in a multi party state. As a party, we are urging President Edgar Lungu to stop this well orchestrated agenda to amputate the opposition. The people of Zambia have every

right to listen to opposition figures. After all, the NDC is a registered movement. This regime should seriously reflect and start respecting divergent views, Zambia is our heritage and we are all equally stakeholders. This country belongs to all of us and not the PF alone. If the police service continues denying us permits, we shall have no option but resort to pursue legal options," stated Musenge.

Court acquits 7 NRDC students of malicious damage to property

By Zondiwe Mbewe

The Lusaka Magistrates' Court has acquitted seven Natural Resources Development College (NRDC) students who were arrested for malicious damage to property during a riot.

The seven, Peter Tembo, 21, Peter Mwenya, 22, Benjamin Musonda, 23, Jacob Mpepo, 22, Given Nyimbili, 24, Sokoni Mahone, 20, and James Fusankolo, 21, were acquitted after the complainant, NRDC registrar Manda Sinkala decided to withdraw the case in court saying they wanted to handle the matter administratively.

It was alleged that on August 20, 2018, in Lusaka, the seven students jointly and whilst acting together, willfully and unlawfully damaged two hostel window panes and a rear window screen of a motor vehicle registration number BAD 1122, properties which belonged to the

institution, all valued at K13,500.

When the matter came up for plea before magistrate Mwandu Sakala, Thursday, the seven students denied having committed the offence.

And addressing the court, NRDC registrar Manda Sinkala, 46, said the college had decided to withdraw the matter so that it could be handled administratively.

"After extensive consultation from stakeholders, we wish to withdraw the matter so that we handle the matter administratively. This is in consideration that we are dealing with students and we feel that the option of handling it administratively will be more convenient for all parties," said Sinkala.

After the application, the State applied to have the complaint withdrawn.

The defence lawyers did not object to the application.

They however added that once a

complaint was withdrawn, the next step was to acquit the accused persons in compliance with the law under the provision of section 201 of the CPC.

In her ruling, Magistrate Sakala granted the state the application to withdraw the case and acquitted the seven.

"In accordance with section 201 of the CPC, I hereby grant the application by the registrar to withdraw the matter and hereby acquit all seven accused persons. They are free to go," she ruled.

And speaking after the court session, one of the accused persons, Given Nyimbili, said he was grateful to God for being set free.

He urged his fellow students to avoid finding themselves in such situations.

"I just thank God for everything. I urge my fellow students to avoid finding themselves in this situation and refrain from such (acts)," said Nyimbili.

Mr Miles Sampa never ceases to amuse us. If there is one politician who knows how to blunder, surely, this man deserves a medal for his consistent self-inflicted humiliation.

At this stage, we are not sure if His Worship the Mayor is wallowing in political naivety or this is a manifestation of a man who has failed to find his lost identity. We are wondering if Mr Sampa knows what he stands for in life any more. What we are certain of is that he has traded his dignity for, God knows what. We can sense a loss of social intelligence around him.

What are we talking about? On Tuesday, our Mayor of Lusaka went to attend to complaints from women in Matero Township who sought his intervention in a displacement wrangle. After inspecting the area, he found that indeed, the poor women had been displaced from their trading space by senior PF cadres; and he went ahead to halt construction works.

On his way back to the office, a mob of "hired PF cadres" waylaid him in an ambush and held him hostage while threatening to kill him if he ever tried

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

Diggers! is published by NEWS DIGGERS MEDIA LTD
Temp 8, Alex Chola Road, Nyumba Yanga, Lusaka.
PO Box, 32147. Cell: +26 0965815078/0977708285
Email: editor@diggers.news/mukosha@diggers.news

To advertise in News Diggers or on the website
Call : +26 0967713093/0977708285 or
Email: advertising@diggers.news or visit us at
Temp 8, Alex Chola Road, Nyumba Yanga, Lusaka.

Apologising for being abducted

again to tamper with their activities in the Constituency.

After the incident, a portion of Mr Sampa's brain told him that what the PF thugs had done to him was criminal and unacceptable. So he took two courses of action. First he decided to narrate the ordeal to international and local media and also chose to posture with a gun on social media in order to scare off the unruly cadres.

"I was kidnapped and held hostage for close to one hour by thugs who were about 20 or so. The thugs came out drunk and threatened violence on me, pushing me and said 'we'll kill you, we voted for you [and]

what you are doing now is unacceptable.' They were claiming that they were representing those who had interest in that land that I went to inspect," said Mr Sampa

"In the morning, I realised that they could have killed me over nothing, I am only trying to do my job. But I have bought a gun, it's not the only one, I have other guns as well for my protection when my life is in danger. I am even going to join the gym now and start lifting weights and I will start boxing"

We are going to be very helpful to the Mayor of Lusaka by telling him what his close relatives

and friends may be uncomfortable to say to his face. Mr Mayor sir, you have succeeded to convert yourself into a city clown, and you must not blame people for laughing at you because you chose this path.

Listen Mr Mayor, you cannot say the PF thugs would have killed you for nothing, unless you are really ignorant about the position that you have found yourself in today. They would have killed you for attempting to reintroduce law and order which the PF discarded a long time ago.

Did you really think that in your absence the PF had magically transformed itself

to be a law-abiding party? You thought you could just return and become the hero of the city by giving civic orders to those thugs?

This is why we were laughing at all your campaign promises, because you were tabulating them as if someone promised you super powers. You said you were going to chase away the cadres from the bus stations; let's see you do it. You said the council would regain control of the markets, they are waiting for you. You promised that there would be no more land grabbing in the Capital City; well, Matero has given you a warning shot.

This is the PF

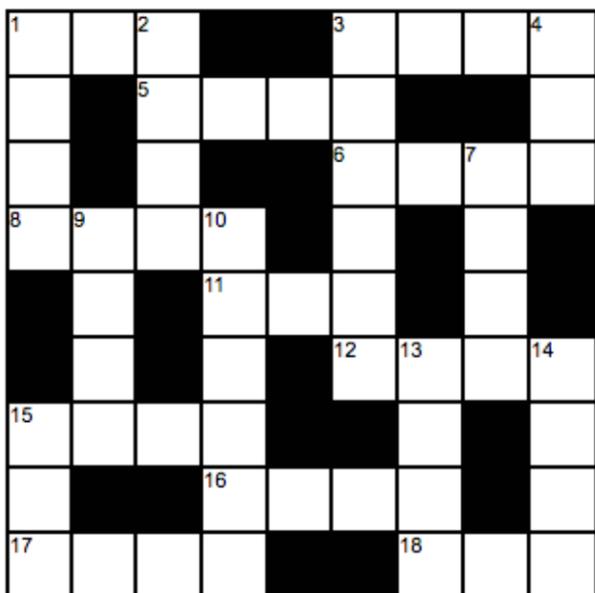
bwana. If you don't agree with their ways of doing things, get out of that seat before they kill you because those threats are not empty. Don't even dare incite them by posturing with that gun because you will cause another by-election if you are playing.

And by the way, the cadres should be the least of your problems because you have people within the party hierarchy who are deeply unhappy with your return. Your election as Mayor only added salt to their injury and your struggle has only just begun.

You lost this battle when you decided to lose sight of your principles. The day you decided to satisfy personal interests is the day that karma started following you.

Look at the humiliation you are subjecting yourself to from your bootlicking rival called Bowman Lusambo. How can you apologise for being abducted? You say the thugs held you hostage while physically abusing you for an hour, but you are ordered to say sorry to your aggressors. How can that be normal in any society? Anyway, you prepared the bed Mr Mayor, it's now time to lie in it.

Crossword puzzle 177



*"Two things are infinite:
the universe and human
stupidity"*
- Albert Einstein

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Across</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mineral containing metal 3. Ranch worker 5. Strong affection 6. Poker pot starter 8. Smell 11. Sculpture or painting 12. Two quarters 15. Carve into 16. Make money from work 17. Finished 18. Furniture wood | <p>Down</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Round cream filled cookie 2. Girl's building toy 3. Well-being 4. Expire 7. Towering 9. Pub missile 10. TV Newsman Dan 13. Teen affliction 14. To: You, ____:Me 15. Self perception |
|---|--|

Solutions to puzzle 176



Reader's feedback

Brebner's exposure of Solicitor General in criminal conspiracy to remove DPP Mutembo

Dear Editor,
 "As a country, we fast moving towards a failed state. When the President and some lawyers conspire to 'fix' a perceived enemy rightly or wrongly; when eminent former chief justices are used to proceed to confirm the 'fix.' God save Zambia!" - Anderson Chibwa

"It is very sad to read that some of the most prominent lawyers in this country participated in this wicked thing. I wonder how many people have been wrongly implicated and are sent behind bars simply because someone had personal interest somewhere. God will vindicate the innocent at the right time." - Evans Mulumba Chikasa

"Nothing is hidden under the sun indeed." - Malambo Malambo

Kambwili's teaming up idea to kick out PF

Editor,

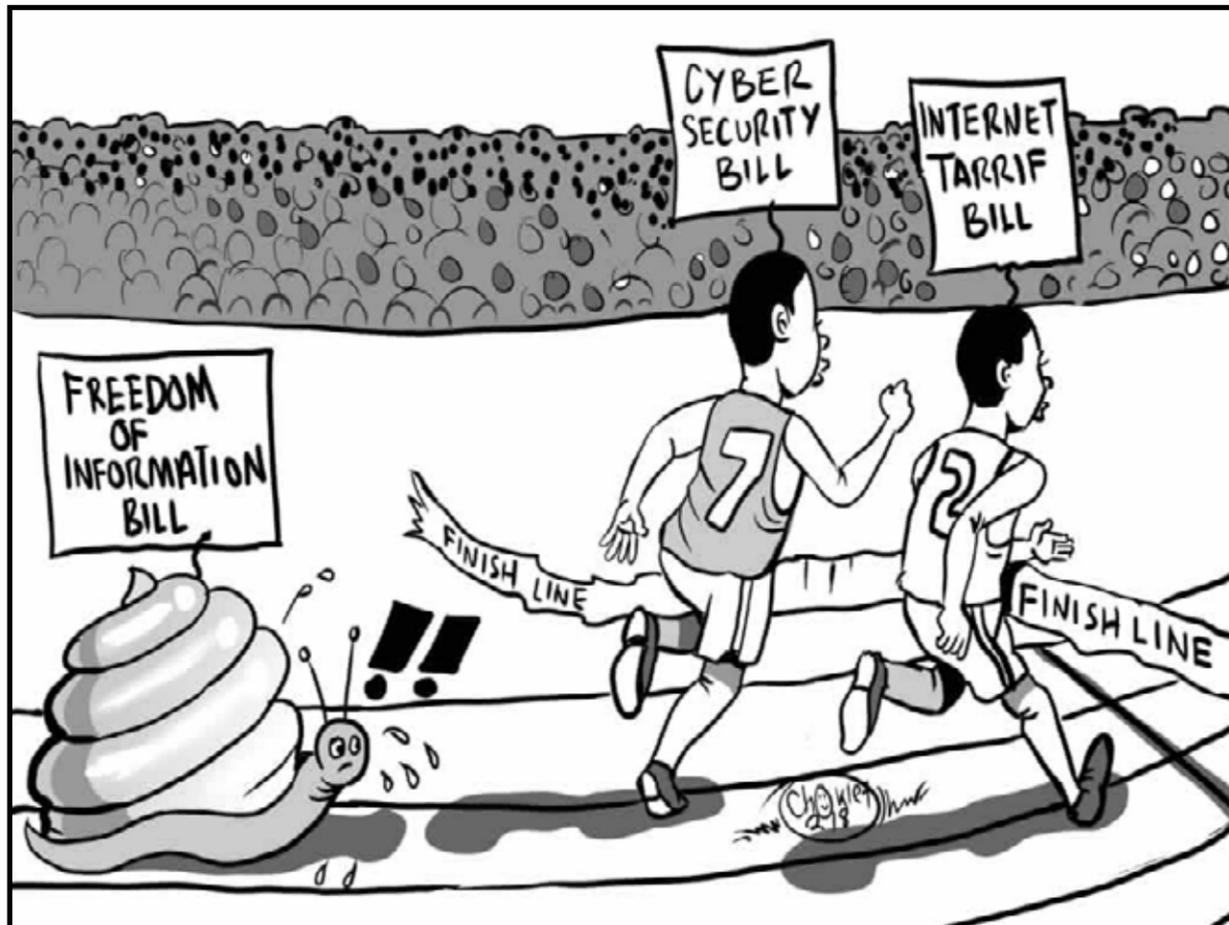
"Do that, Dr CK. Good idea. Let other positive-minded opposition political leaders think in that manner. We need change! Just form an alliance." - Abson Musesa

"Good. That is the way to go; you've my support." - Joseph Chisenga

"Ba CK, you won't be the first one from the mighty PF to work with UPND to unseat PF. Your colleagues, GBM, Miles Sampa, Dr Guy Scott, Mulenga Sata, Bob Sichinga and so on and so forth tried but no success. UPND had even appointed GBM as a vice president for administration and subsequently HH's running mate for 2016 general elections hoping that they could get Northern Province votes; still with no success. And the very people had left the party to join UPND prior to 2016, are coming back to PF." - Lawrence Chimukwaya

"If the purpose of teaming up is to remove PF the forget. If anything, you only need to convince Zambians with good ideologies. Muzakaluza pamozi if don't have a plan for Zambia." - Chileshe Mfunne

"HH, GBM and CK are political pollutants. Grouping them together will provoke mass defections to PF and gives more changes to PF to win with a landslide." - Emilio Milambo



Sumaili asking Zambians to pray for National Day of Prayer

Editor,
 "We are still waiting for this so called Ministry of Religious Affairs to give a comment on Presidential Aid's insults and disparaging remarks about people living with HIV. You been mute. Now you want to tell us about 18th October? Awe mwandi." - Agrey Siyunda

"Madam, to me, you're simply a minister of 18th October & nothing else!" - Keith Moono

"She has the best job on earth; just talking about prayers and she gets a minister's salary, house, car and all that comes with that post." - Biko Ama Steven

"No wonder IMF can't bail us out; too much wastage of resources. Some of these ministries shouldn't exist." - Chris Chisola

"The ministry itself is useless, just wasting our money in running that unfruitful ministry. So, they want us to be praying for the thieves; we have got better things to do." - Twaambo Derrick

"Ms Sumaili is living in the past; Zambians are tired of living under the tribal and corrupt PF regime, they can't pray for a dictatorship." - Chivunda Samusungwa

"Praying for the day of national players! Does it mean that the day is now more important than the event? This is how we lose track of the intended purpose.

Very soon we may be told to pray for a person on the day of national prayers. We are now playing and not praying." - Sikaanka Kabbudula

ND Opinion: What is Lungu's talent?

Editor,

"Diggers! have posed a very important question." - Patrick Komc Chayinda

"When someone confesses that they have no vision, it means you are in for it...." - Wells Milambo

"Very well written. Who pays him and feed his children? It is us hard workers and tax-payers, we gave him a living and made him rich and famous with our money he is now a king. On his own, he had never dreamed of owning land in a foreign country, now he owns. He used to borrow, but now he is lending. He never thought of building a mansion, but he is the mansioneer, he was one of the poor, but now, he is one of the wealthiest people in Zambia." - Elias J Namukamba

"What kind of talent does he have? Is he using his talent to make money? Just face the reality that you have failed to create jobs for most youths." - Timothy Manda

"The best, your Excellency, is to create an enabling environment for business and people will stop complaining. Allow people to start business and give them at least one year tax break, business permit beak and zero annual returns so that they use the returns of the first year to stabilize in business. Not what is done - too much taxes, levies etc." - Poza Nom

India may face sanctions if it buys Russia's S-400 missiles: US

The US cannot guarantee India will be exempt from sanctions if it purchases weapons and defense systems from Russia, a top Pentagon official said.

Randall Schriver, the Pentagon's top Asia official, called into question on Wednesday the idea that the US will protect its relationship with India and that it will be insulated from any fallout if the purchase happens.

"I would say that is a bit misleading. We would still have very significant concerns if India pursued major new platforms and systems (from Russia)," Schriver said at a think tank event according to Reuters news agency.

The US has imposed sanctions on Russia for its annexation of the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea, which means any country that engages in defence or intelligence sharing with Russia could also be subject to sanctions. "I can't sit here and tell you that they would be exempt, that we would use that waiver, that will be the decision of the president if he is faced with a major new platform and capability that India has acquired from Russia," Schriver added.

The waivers would be possible according to a new US defence bill, which gives President Donald Trump the authority to exempt countries.

Despite Secretary of Defense James Mattis saying he is a strong proponent of granting India waivers, Schriver said that just because Trump

has the ability to apply these waivers it does not automatically mean he will. India is in the final stages of acquiring S-400 long-range surface to air missile systems from Russia, a deal worth \$6bn.

The agreement is expected to be signed by Russia later this year.

The acquisition of the S-400 system would be the latest in a long series of Indian defence purchases, as the country has previously bought combat planes, ships and submarines from Russia.

Schriver stated that the US is concerned about this planned purchase, and is willing to talk to India about potential alternatives to the Russian missile system. **AL JAZEERA**



The Russian S-400 missile system India is planning to buy is considered as one of the best missiles in existence [Vasily Fedosenko/Reuters]

Air raid warning tech gives Syrians life-saving minutes

Khaled al-Idlibi was still speeding away with his brother perched on the back of his motorbike when he heard the air strike that levelled his neighbours' house in northwest Syria.

Those crucial extra minutes were thanks to a warning system that could help save civilian lives in an expected regime offensive on Idlib province, home to the last significant rebel-held area.

The Sentry programme,

launched two years ago by two Americans and a Syrian coder, uses human observers and a network of sensors to compute a predicted impact location when Syrian or allied Russian warplanes take off.

The resulting estimate can then trigger air raid sirens near the target zone and send warnings to mobile phone applications, giving residents more time to take cover.

Idlibi, a 23-year-old media activist, lives in Maaret al-

Shureen, a rebel-controlled town in Idlib.

On June 10 last year, he was picking up belongings he had left behind while fleeing from an earlier air strike when his smartphone suddenly lit up.

"I received an alert on Telegram that a new warplane had taken off towards the same area," he said, recounting that he and his brother jumped on their motorbike and rode to about a kilometre from the predicted impact spot.

Idlibi said "only three children were wounded that day" and estimated that up to 15 lives may have been saved by the Sentry alert.

First launched in August 2016, the Sentry technology has become a sort of weather forecast service for many Syrians.

The system's creators say that it has proved its worth, including during the intense air campaign against the rebel stronghold of Eastern

Ghouta, earlier this year.

"We saw a huge spike in use as the campaign ramped up," John Jaeger, a co-founder of the Hala Systems firm that developed the technology used in Sentry, told AFP.

Jaeger, a former US diplomat and technologist who was looking for new ways to prevent civilian deaths in Syria, created the system with US entrepreneur Dave Levin and a Syrian coder whose identity is kept secret.

The system -- which Jaeger says is currently funded by Britain, Canada, the Netherlands and Denmark -- requires a human network on the ground to monitor areas and set up sensors.

It is therefore limited in which zones it can cover. It does not, for example, provide updates on US-led coalition warplanes targeting the Islamic State group in air strikes that have also routinely killed civilians.

Hala Systems estimates that its warning system is available to around two million people in Syria, most of them in Idlib.

Jaeger said that, while reliable statistics were hard to come by, data analysis showed that 27 percent fewer people died in air strikes on areas where Sentry was used.

Residents who get an alert via social media, local radio stations or the air raid sirens that Hala triggers remotely have an average of eight minutes to seek shelter, Jaeger said. **AFP**

Foreigners flee deadly attacks in Soweto

Immigrants have fled South Africa's main township, Soweto, following xenophobic attacks which killed three people on Wednesday, the BBC's Nomasa Maseko reports from Johannesburg.

Violence broke out after locals accused a Somali shop owner of shooting a teenager and his friend who allegedly tried to break into his store.

Police believe this triggered the chaotic scenes of looting and violence, which spread to other areas of Soweto, our correspondent says.

Residents also accused shop owners of selling expired foods.

A total of 27 people have been arrested, a police statement said.

It condemned those who had taken the law into their own hands, and described the

disturbances as tantamount to anarchy.

Reports suggested that the unrest continued into Wednesday evening, according to

A WhatsApp message has been doing the rounds in South Africa warning anyone who has rented rooms to Somalis to evict them, our correspondent says.

According to the message if this does not happen by 8 September homes and shops will be burnt down.

A number of these shops are built in the backyards of residents, and are owned by immigrants, including Ethiopians, Zimbabweans, Pakistanis, our reporter says.

Many shop owners have now packed up their goods and are leaving the township, fearing further violence, she adds. **BBC**



'Aubameyang & Lacazette an Emirates pairing'

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Alexandre Lacazette have shown a promising "connection",

says Martin Keown, but Arsenal are only expected to use them in tandem when playing at home.

The Gunners often line up with a lone frontman, with attacking support provided by deep-lying playmakers.

Aubameyang is the favoured option to lead the line at present, with Unai Emery sticking with a 4-2-3-1

approach since inheriting the reins from Arsene Wenger.

France international Lacazette has, however, impressed during recent outings to stake a serious claim for a regular starting berth.

Keown believes he is deserving of such a role but feels he may only get the nod at Emirates Stadium, telling the Daily Mail: "These two seem desperate to play with one another. When Lacazette plays, Aubameyang comes to life. There is undoubtedly a connection between them.

"When Lacazette came on against West Ham, it gave Arsenal a focal point. Everything stuck and without him, Arsenal lacked a target man.

"It may be that Unai Emery has one team for Arsenal's home games and another for when they play away.

Arsenal recorded their first victory of the 2018-19 campaign when facing the

Hammers last time out, with Emery relieved to collect a 3-1 success after seeing his side fall behind on derby day.

The Gunners are now up and running after taking in a testing start but Keown believes there is still plenty of work to be done, particularly at the back.

The former centre-half added: "Arsenal gifted so many chances to West Ham. I agree with Arsenal playing a high line because it condenses the space for the opposition.

"But you have to play a high line with caution. As a defender, you have to be prepared to drop off if someone makes a good run. "At the moment, none of the Arsenal defenders are seeing the runs or dropping off to deal with them.

"Saturday was a timely win that will have done the team's confidence the world of good. But it is vital they persevere with what Emery wants to do." *Goal.com*



Serena, Venus to clash for 30th time as Cornet shrugs off US Open sexism storm

Serena and Venus Williams set up a 30th career meeting on Wednesday as the US Open reeled from a sexism row sparked when a player changed her shirt on court.

Six-time champion Serena eased into Friday's third round encounter against her sister with a 6-2, 6-2 win over German world number 101 Carina Witthoef on the back of 30 winners and 13 aces.

Venus, the 2000 and 2001 champion, made the third round for the 17th time with a 6-4, 7-5 victory over Camila Giorgi of Italy.

Friday's match will be the earliest the sisters have met at a Slam since the 1998 Australian Open in what was also their first ever clash. It will be their sixth face-off in New York.

"Friday will be incredibly hard," said Serena before jokingly hitting back at Venus's claim that when they last met at a Slam in the final of the 2017 Australian Open her sister had an advantage as it was "two against one."

That was a reference to Serena being in the early stages of pregnancy with her daughter Olympia.

"I guess I had a little advantage but it's going to be hard for me on Friday," said 36-year-old Serena.

Since Venus won their first ever clash in Australia, Serena, bidding for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title, has built up an advantage over the last two decades, enjoying a 17-12 head-to-head superiority.

"It's a tough match to have so early in the tournament.

We would have liked to have played later but it is what it is. It's not the end of the world," added Serena.

Venus, 38, and playing her 80th Slam, notched up her 775th career win by seeing off Giorgi.

However, she was reluctant to discuss Serena when asked to describe the specific challenges.

"You're beating it up now. Any other questions about anything else?" she barked.

Defending champion and third seed Sloane Stephens also made the third round with a marathon 4-6, 7-5, 6-2 win over Ukraine qualifier Anhelina Kalinina.

Stephens triumphed after 2 hours and 46 minutes on Arthur Ashe Stadium and will next face two-time Australian Open champion and former world number one Victoria Azarenka.

The American needed treatment on a blistered right hand in the second set as the crushing effect of the heat and humidity took its toll.

However, the 10-minute heat-break between the second and third sets proved a timely boost.

"I just sat on the floor, changed my outfit, had two bites of Sushi and a slushie," said the 25-year-old Stephens after seeing off world number 134 Kalinina.

Azarenka, the 2012 and 2013 runner-up, made the third round for the first time in three years with a 6-1, 6-2 win against Australian 25th seed Daria Gavrilova.

- '10,000 times worse' -- Azarenka was amongst the first players to condemn the United States Tennis Association (USTA) for handing French player Alize Cornet a code violation for

changing her shirt on court on Tuesday.

The incident sparked an immediate storm over sexism.

The Belarusian said the USTA displayed double standards for sanctioning Cornet while male players routinely remove their shirts courtside when the heat and humidity bite.

"If I would say my true feelings, it would be bleeped out, because it was ridiculous," said Azarenka.

The USTA admitted they were wrong to hand Cornet a warning for slipping off her shirt on court after realising she had put the garment on back-to-front during a heat-break.

Cornet said she was stunned that the furore had caused so much controversy and was happy to accept the USTA's apology. *AFP*



Let's twist again: Serena Williams celebrates after defeating Carina Witthoef

Handball player opens academy

By Alex Chilumbwe

Handball national team goalkeeper Nathan Shiluwe has vowed to supplement the Handball Association's effort to growing the sport in the country by starting a Handball academy that comprises three categories in Lusaka.

The academy houses the under 16s, 14s and 12s categories as a way of trying to absorb all the interested children in his community.

In an interview with Goal Diggers! Shiluwe said he had found happiness in the sport and was encouraged to start an academy after noticing the great interest children around his community had in the sport.

"Am both the owner and coach of the academy, and am being helped by Monica Kayombo, Kingston Kayanika, Laika Malimbi and Likemore Mahunje. We have different ages under the academy ranging from under 12s, 14s and 16s. This is because it did not feel right to pick only one age group because a lot of them showed interest in the sport. The handball national team is also at three levels so it is also as if I was targeting the age demands at national team level. The academy is coming up well and there is always a special kind of joy I feel when they all show up for training. The number keeps increasing especially now that

they are on school holiday," Shiluwe said.

Shiluwe, 24, also elaborated how the academy came about and some of the things his children learnt under the academy beside the game.

"We started as a small team but seeing a lot of kids getting interested and wanting to play the game. I thought of coming up with an academy where we can train and groom kids to become better players. My aim to make good players out of these kids so that they can be used in future competitions at all levels. I also have another agenda of helping these kids to grow into the right path so that they can be saved from vices that can ruin their

future. Everyday after training, we teach these kids life skills, discipline, respect and obedience among other things. This is because one cannot be called a good player if his or her outside behaviour is not okay. Most importantly, they learn about gender issues on a basis of Handball being a gender-balanced sport. It has four females and four males on each team," explained Shiluwe.

He added that he was yet to draft letters to possible sponsors that would be sponsoring some of his less-privileged players in school. The players train from the Olympic Youth Development Centre (OYDC) from Tuesday to Friday.

Zesco, Buffaloes take title chase to the wire...

IT'S DO OR DIE



Usain Bolt prepares for football debut

Usain Bolt is set to get a first taste of competitive football on Friday in a much-hyped game, but the sprint superstar admits he is nervous with his fitness

"I think that will be a bit weird, but not too weird," Bolt, who favours playing left wing, joked of the masks. "I've seen a little bit of that in track and field. But it will be something new to play the first game and see that."

Despite being used to running in front of 100,000 spectators and millions of TV viewers, the nerves are jangling as he enters a new phase in his career, having tried out with several other clubs around the world to no avail.

"There will be nerves, definitely. It's not like a charity game anymore, this is a career I'm pursuing," said Bolt.

"I expect to make mistakes, but I also expect to go in, make myself proud and push myself."

His football dream is still a work in progress, with Bolt admitting this week to struggling with the constant

stop-start of the sport, unlike his usual quick fire sprint on the athletics track. **AFP**

Luka Modric wins UEFA player of yr



By Alex Chilumbwe

The FAZ/MTN super league is expected to hit a climax this weekend with crucial games on both ends of the table as leaders ZESCO United and second place Green Buffaloes face off in what could be a winner takes all affair.

ZESCO coach George Lwandamina was cautious and praised Buffaloes' qualities as he spoke to Goal Diggers! about the upcoming fixture.

"We will not underrate or be casual with Buffaloes. They are a good side and they have managed to collect maximum points in tough games, scored goals and defended quite well. Only a point separates us and things can change either in their favour or ours. We will only play with our everyday aim and that is winning," said Lwandamina.

Meanwhile, his counterpart Biltone Musonda promised fans that the team will do their best to win the game as he highlighted recent failures.

"It would be such a big setback to lose twice consecutively. We last weekend lost to Nkana and we have been training to make amends and do better in our next encounter. We all play for a win but sometimes it is simply not your day. We have trained well for the big game and we will do our best. We have no injuries that are worrying so we will play to win," said Musonda.

From the bottom end of the table, NAPSA Stars will be looking for more maximum against 'aba yellow' Power Dynamos as their battle against relegation continues. Dynamos will themselves be looking for full points as they chase a fourth place finish and continental competition. It's game on this weekend!



North Korea's Ro Suk Yong (L) and South Korea's Park Ji-su were two of the stand-out players for the Unified Korea team. **AFP**

