



ELIAS CHIPIMO: A GODFATHER OF CORRUPTION

By Mirriam Chabala
NAREP leader Elias Chipimo says calls by President Edgar Lungu's Press Aide Amos Chanda to institute an inquiry into privatization of national assets during the MMD era is a witch hunt targeted at people who are causing them sleepless nights. And Chipimo has charged that President Lungu is a godfather of corruption. *To page 4*

...he's never interested in fighting theft - Chipimo



Lusaka Mayor Miles Sampa with Mainga Mwaanga and his 'friend' during the Mayor's "All White Birthday Bash" hosted at Pamodzi Hotel on Wednesday

The corrupt are enjoying fruits of criminality under PF, notes Lifuka
Story on page 3



Army Commander Lt. Gen. Paul Mihova with Zambia Correctional Services Commissioner General Dr. Chisela Chileshe during a Christmas visit to Lusaka Central Prison on December 25, 2018 - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

NDC won't leave opposition alliance, vows SG Musenge

By Zondiwe Mbewe
NDC Secretary General Mwenya Musenge says negative rantings will not make NDC pull out of the opposition alliance because they joined with open hands. And Musenge says the PF should discuss its own internal wrangles as opposed to talking about the

opposition alliance, saying the political coalition is genuine, solid and will not crumble. In NDC's weekly newsletter

to News Diggers! Musenge noted that there was so much talk on the newly-formed alliance by the 10 opposition political parties. *To page 2*

Don't vote for fake promises, Sikota urges Sesheke people
Story on page 2

By Geoffrey Zulu

The United Party for National Development (UPND) has described the year 2018 as a year full of scandals, bad governance and the worst economic situation for citizens. But PF deputy secretary general Mumbi Phiri described 2018 as fair in terms of governance, but challenging for women in politics because of social media abuse. In an interview, Choma

2018 a scandal-ridden year under PF - Mweetwa

UPND member of parliament Cornelius Mweetwa said 2018 was a year Zambia will look back and wished things that took place never happened. Mweetwa, who is

also UPND deputy spokesperson, lamented that the year has seen sharp increase in taxes, toll gates, speed cameras, strict enforcement of rental income tax and

health insurance tax. "The cost of living is escalating, Zesco tariffs going up, fuel prices going up, being the worst in the region, yet we have a government that has

been borrowing and borrowing; raising Zambia's debt ceiling to balloon levels," Mweetwa said "2018 has been a very bad year in terms of good governance because using

the Public Order Act (POA), the police who I believe are at the instigation and behest of the ruling party PF, have denied constitutional rights to citizens to enjoy their rights. Go well, 2018."

He also bemoaned that 2018 was marred by a lot of corruption scandals, amidst heightened citizens' suffering, people chased from the streets, no rebuilding of City Market and no alternative trading place. But Phiri described 2018 as fair in terms of governance, but challenging for women in politics because of social media.

"Because of social media, we have been damaged, ridiculed... we have been good example of... you know this social media, the lies, which have been created, which are also trying [to] even destroy our families," said Phiri. The PF nominated member of parliament has since urged women in politics to be strong and pray to God for guidance, wisdom and peace in families, further wishing the nation a Merry Christmas and prosperous 2019.

By Mirriam Chabala

Veteran politician Sikota Wina has urged the people of Western Province to strictly scrutinise all political parties contesting the upcoming Sesheke parliamentary by-elections, saying he has heard lots of political promises that have never been fulfilled. The election in Sesheke which is scheduled for February 12, 2019, was necessitated following the demise of the area member of parliament Frank Kufakwandi, who died in South Africa last month. Two political parties namely: the United Party for National Development (UPND) and the Patriotic Front (PF), have so far confirmed their participation in the elections, with each expressing a lot of confidence of emerging victorious. In the heat of the ongoing campaigns, Wina told this reporter that what the people of Western Province needed was someone who would take development to the area and not make fake promises. "All I can say is that the voters in Sesheke, like anywhere in the country, they expect government or members of parliament to bring development to their area. That is the whole purpose of having political parties and having

Don't vote for fake promises, Sikota tells Sesheke residents

elections from time to time. So the big question that the voters in Sesheke will be faced with is which political party as far as they can see has a record of bringing investment, creating jobs among youths and women and also projects, infrastructure projects on the ground. So that is what all the people in the country irrespective of their Provinces, wherever they are, that is what

they expect government to do. So these are the questions that the voters have got to ask themselves when they go to vote in Sesheke," Wina said. He said it was about time Zambians began judging their leaders based on performance.

"As a people in Zambia, we must begin to judge our political parties on the basis of their records in terms of development

and also how much they keep their promises to us. Instead of living on empty promises always, [we need to ask], do they fulfill those promises when they come into Parliament or when they come into power. That's one question that the people of Sesheke have got to ask themselves. For those who have never been in power, that's why you have election manifestos. For every election, every

political when they go out to campaign, they must tell the people what's in their manifesto. What is it they are promising to do when they are elected? What is their member of parliament going to do?, those are the questions voters must ask," explained Wina "I am most grateful that you contacted me and asked me from my experience... people everywhere in the country now are tired of empty promises. They want to see results on the ground and what can be done. I have been listening to too many promises which have not been kept."

NDC won't leave opposition alliance, vows Musenge

By Zondiwe Mbewe

NDC Secretary General Mwenya Musenge says negative rantings will not make NDC pull out of the opposition alliance because they joined with open hands. And Musenge says the PF should discuss its own internal wrangles as opposed to talking about the opposition alliance, saying the political coalition is genuine, solid and will not crumble. In NDC's weekly newsletter to News Diggers! Musenge

noted that there was so much talk on the newly-formed alliance by the 10 opposition political parties, adding that their coming together had sent shivers in the PF. He explained that the opposition political parties had teamed up to speak out with one voice on matters of national interest. "It's definitely game over for the PF. The opposition alliance has genuine men and women who are determined by ensuring that the political

playing field is levelled for all political players. Already, some hoodlums from the PF have branded the consortium as a congregation of desperate men and women. These charlatans have gone further making weird predictions that the alliance will soon crack," Musenge stated.

"Over the last couple of weeks, our secretariat has received numerous queries over the said alliance. Our supporters want to know what the alliance is all about. We

have explained to them that we have teamed up with other political groupings to speak out with one voice on matters of national interest. We have told them that for as long as we do not put our efforts together in fighting this brutal regime, our efforts will be put in vain." Musenge stated that the alliance was genuine, solid and would therefore not crumble. "Are we really serious being in the alliance? Yes, we are. We firmly believe that this alliance shall not fold. It shall not crumble. It is genuine and solid. We shall remain strong and steadfast. Money, bickering, greed for power and positions will never preoccupy us. As NDC, we have gone into the alliance with open hands. Our consultant, Chishimba Kambwili, and members of the central committee believe that the opposition alliance is founded on solid grounds on matters of common interest," he narrated.

Musenge further stated that NDC would continue collaborating with genuine political partners in finding solutions to the many challenges Zambia was facing, and insisted that they would not pull out of the alliance. And Musenge encouraged the PF to discuss its own internal wrangles and stop discussing the opposition alliance. "Despite the negative cheap talk from the PF, its sponsored thugs masquerading as independent media and political groupings, we shall not move out of the

consortium of political parties. PF should discuss its own internal wrangles and stop discussing the opposition alliance. PF will write off the opposition alliance, but we mean well. This criticism will make us strong. We are ready to brave the storm. PF and its agents will try and divide the alliance, but we are above board and will soldier on," he vowed. Musenge stated that PF members should instead discuss how they would oust President Edgar Lungu at their forthcoming 2020 party convention. "Instead of discussing and disparaging the alliance, the PF should discuss the shame and mediocrity President Lungu has brought to Zambia. PF members should discuss how this regime will dismantle the debt Zambia is facing. The PF should further discuss the stinking corruption being perpetuated by Mr. Lungu and his cohorts," stated Mwenya. "We firmly believe that a united opposition is in the best interest of our great country on matters of national interest. We know that the Lungu regime will use all available tricks and instruments to frustrate our initiatives. But with God on our side, we shall persevere. Negative rantings will not make the leadership of the NDC to leave the opposition alliance. We have entered the opposition alliance with open hands and have not made any preconditions."



Lusaka Central Correctional Facility choir sings during the Service Chiefs special Christmas visit on December 25, 2018 - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

By Mukosha Funga

Today the corrupt live large enjoying the fruits of their criminal activities, at times in full glare of public authorities, Transparency International Zambia has observed. And TIZ has asked President Edgar Lungu to demonstrate his resolve to fight corruption in 2019 by ordering lifestyle audits of everyone serving in his administration, including himself. Reviewing 2018 in a statement, Wednesday, TIZ president Rueben Lifuka noted that PF had not delivered on its promise to fight corruption. "The year 2018 marks 7 years since the Patriotic Front (PF) party swept into power on a supposedly strong anti-corruption platform...Seven years later and the levels of corruption continue to soar unabated, while transparency, accountability and integrity in the country, remains elusive. What is worrisome is that corruption has not only worsened but political impunity has equally become

The corrupt are enjoying fruits of criminality under PF, notes Lifuka

entrenched. The corrupt fear no repercussions not even the long arm of the law. The corrupt feel well secured with the political backing they often receive," Lifuka stated. "The weaknesses of law enforcement agencies and the mixed signals sent by the judiciary, facilitates this state of affairs. Our fight against corruption receives more impetus from political rhetoric than from concrete actions against all those suspected of such criminal activities. Today the corrupt do not feel threatened in their activities, they live large enjoying the fruits of their criminal activities, at times in full glare of public authorities. Yes, the authorities want to pat themselves on the back for

enacting laws like the Public Finance Management Act and introducing electronic payments- these are very welcome and we do not want to begrudge government some credit for this but this is not enough given the gravity of the problem at hand. The PF government should be reminded that the MMD government between 2008 and 2010, passed a raft of very forward looking anti corruption related laws and yet corruption was still highly prevalent. Clearly, it is not the number of laws that will win the fight, it is how well these laws are enforced." He observed that corruption was alive and well under PF. "The sad reality for the PF Government which it may

not want to hear is that corruption today is alive and well- if not healthy and given the pedestrian approach taken, corruption will soon eclipse many development gains. Corruption will start to define our ways of life unless we the people rise up and start demanding for consistent and concrete action to stem the tide," Lifuka stated. "It is time that we realised that corruption continues to hamper the development of this country, while we dalliance with all manner of trivialities. Corruption is eating away at the soul of this nation and soon and if not already there, it will pay to be corrupt and not to be law abiding." He listed some corruption

scandals that had rocked Zambia in 2018. "2018 was the year that President Lungu together with other Heads of State under the umbrella of the African Union, declared as the African Year Against Corruption. They chose an interesting theme- "Winning the fight against corruption: A sustainable path to Africa's transformation." For Zambia - can we honestly state that we are winning the fight against corruption? Unfortunately, the verdict is that there is nothing spectacularly different about 2018 - it was a year resplendent with several reports of financial misconduct, abuse of public office, misapplication of funds and several other suspicious public procurement transactions. 2018 was a continuation of the same malaise witnessed in 2017 where public goods and services were procured at unjustifiably exorbitant prices- clearly all meant to provide sufficient padding for granting of kickbacks to those in charge of such procurement. The Auditor General's reports continue to demonstrate a worrying trend of misapplication, mismanagement, misuse, abuse of office and outright embezzlement of public resources," Lifuka stated. "We started the year with a revelation of the digital migration process and the involvement of Star Times in rather curious circumstances in this single sourced procurement. We later on had to contend with the unceremonious exit of the Zambia Air Force Commander amidst allegations of high levels of corruption as well as exorbitant and unnecessary purchase of the Presidential jet. The nation was also treated to the peculiar bestowal of a gift of land to President Lungu purportedly by the leadership of the Kingdom of Eswatini. Later in the year, the social cash transfer scandal broke and this was after the donors confirmed the occurrence of unusual activities in the handling of this important social protection programme. The scandal at the Ministry of Education followed and thereafter a number of public servants were fired and some are currently investigated. It is curious to note that in the case of the social cash transfer scandal, some of the suspended officials at the Ministry of Community Development, have since reported back for work. And this is happening at a time when the Government has not endeavoured to give a full account to the Zambian taxpayers who equally contribute to this programme, what transpired and what actions have been taken following the forensic audit conducted." And Lifuka asked President Lungu to demonstrate his

resolve to fight corruption by ordering lifestyle audits of everyone serving in his administration, including himself. "In 2019, President Lungu should emulate his brother President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya and order the Anti Corruption Commission, working with the Zambia Revenue Authority and the Financial Intelligence Centre to conduct life style audits of all public officials starting with himself and his Ministers. Such an unprecedented action will send a strong signal to the investor community and the Zambians that his government means business in the fight against corruption," he stated. "We have heard too many stories of illicit enrichment involving some serving Ministers and senior government officers- these stories can be put to bed once a credible life style audit is conducted. In 2019, our central message is that we can no longer continue to handle corruption with same lack of seriousness, vigour and insincerity that we continue to witness thus far. We want to assure government that as civil society, we will heighten our advocacy and we will continue to demand for transparency and accountability from all. There will be no corruption scandal big or small that will go without scrutiny - and demands for appropriate action." He advised President Lungu to insulate the presidency from corrupt elements. "The major weakness of our fight against corruption lies in the absence of strong and consistent leadership at all levels. It is not only President Lungu who should provide leadership but Controlling Officers, Chief Executives of State Owned Enterprises, Government agencies and of course the private sector. That said, President Lungu as the elected leader of this country, has a bigger role to play than anyone else. President Lungu should not limit his role to merely talking about corruption but demonstrating personal resolve and political will to fight this scourge. President Lungu should lead by example and ensure that the Presidency is insulated from all corrupt activities and corrupt elements- the Presidency should be the epitome of public integrity and the nationals should look to this institution for inspiration. Therefore, all persons working with and for the President, should be persons above reproach and President Lungu should set high standards for his office," stated Lifuka. "The Presidency should desist the temptation to become a clearing house for public contracts. The Presidency should not allow itself to be captured by those who seek to do business with government."



Army Commander Lt. Gen. Paul Mihova shares a meal with inmates at Lusaka Central Correctional Facility during the Service Chiefs special Christmas visit on December 25, 2018 - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

ZDA records reduced jobs in 2018

By Milimo Namangala

The Zambia Development Agency (ZDA) has recorded a projected decline in the number of jobs this year of 20,709 compared to 24,660 last year, representing a 19 per cent decrease. The Agency has, however, recorded a US\$3.9 billion projected investment in various sectors of the economy and facilitated export deals worth US\$109.5 million. In a statement availed by ZDA manager of communications and public relations Faith Musonda, ZDA recorded a projected employment decrease of 20,709 in 2018 compared to 24,660 last year, representing a 19 per cent this year compared to 2017. "...In the same vein, the Agency recorded projected employment of 20,709 jobs in 2018 compared to 24,660 in 2017 denoting a decrease of 19 per cent," the statement read. But ZDA data shows that the Agency facilitated deals in form of spot sales and business deals, and that the energy sector made up 39 per

cent of the total project investment. "The Agency has also facilitated export deals worth over US \$109.5 million in form of on-spot sales and business deals that were clinched by the private sector at various export promotion platforms. Acting Director-General Mr. Cosam Ngoma said of the total projected investment, the energy sector recorded the highest valued at US \$1.5 billion, representing 39 per cent, the manufacturing sector was second with US \$708.4 [million], representing 18 per cent followed by the mining sector with US \$241 million, representing 6 per cent. Of the total recorded projected investment, US \$21.7 million was investment in the various Multi-Facility Economic Zones (MFEZs) and industrial parks around the country. During these export promotion activities, the Agency facilitated export deals worth US \$109.5 million in form of on-spot sales and business deals that were secured by the private sector at

various export promotion platforms. Participating at various export promotion platforms gave Zambian exporters enhanced visibility and exposure in order to increase export sales of Zambian products into foreign markets," read the statement. "Mr. Ngoma noted that the increased projected investment in the energy sector is a direct result of government's efforts in the promotion of increased investment in alternative sources of energy in addition to hydropower arising from power deficits faced by the country in recent years, which adversely affected the performance of the economy." Meanwhile, Musonda further stated that the ZDA assisted 1,529 Micro-Small-Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) with business linkages, which included market access support through backward and forward linkages to large enterprises, such as supermarket chains and access to finance with various financial institutions across the country.

By Mirriam Chabala
Lusaka Mayor Miles Sampa says the Lusaka City Council (LCC) will soon dispatch its officers around the city to arrest and confiscate goods from vendors who are trading illegally in the Central Business District. And Sampa says the local authority will soon roll out an exercise of removing all money transfer and other booths erected in Lusaka's town centre without the permission of the Council.

In an interview, Sampa reiterated government's position that street vending is illegal in Zambia, and that anyone found wanting of the same would be arrested and punished.

"Street vending is illegal! Unless you have a hawker's license. Soon, we will start giving hawker's license, where someone will be wearing a big badge from the Council. Those will be allowed to walk around and sell their merchandise as long as it's on their body and as long as they are moving, they are not positioned in one place. So, we will be giving those licenses, anyone wearing a big placard or a big license on their body from the Council to show that they have been authorised as hawkers. A hawker's license is allowed when someone

LCC will soon arrest vendors, confiscate goods, warns Mayor

is walking around and selling their merchandise. What is not allowed is putting your goods on the floor and start to sell on the streets, there is no license for that, it's illegal and we are discouraging that to fight cholera and to make the city clean," Sampa explained.

"But if someone is selling something and is

walking and they have our license to do that, that is acceptable. So, those trading outside shopping malls like South Gate, where we have seen people selling all sorts of perishables, they need to go back to the markets! The markets, like the ones at Lumumba bus stop there, it's been constructed by the Council, but it's

empty and people are preferring to be outside! So, when and if arrested by Council police, don't complain because even the goods they catch you with becomes exhibit at the Council court, and you don't retrieve it. So, just obey the rules and don't sell on the streets! This exercise will start soon, it's just that we were

understaffed as Council police, but in the last four weeks, we have engaged another 100 Council police. So, they are just doing trainings at Edwin Imboela stadium with the police to make them physically fit and you will see them swinging into action."

The Mayor also disclosed that the LCC would be

undertaking an exercise to remove illegal money transfer booths that have erected in the city without the Council's permission. "Over 60 or 70 per cent of the people putting up booths in town have no proper licenses from the Council. But there are some who we gave licenses to put the booths, those are okay and they are not our target. Our target are those illegal ones that are just mushrooming everywhere! They mount booths in wrong places, some places are reserved for cars, but these people are just putting without the Council's consent. So, those are illegal and those are the ones the Council police will get and remove them. So, the message to those who are sponsoring booths: make sure you have Council permission and license," advised Sampa.

Lungu is a godfather of corruption - Chipimo

By Mirriam Chabala
NAREP leader Elias Chipimo says calls by President Edgar Lungu's Press Aide Amos Chanda to institute an inquiry into privatization of national assets during the MMD era is a witch hunt targeted at people who are causing them sleepless nights. And Chipimo has charged that President Lungu and

his team are godfathers of corruption. Meanwhile, People's Alliance for Change (PAC) president Andyford Banda says the governance system, under PF, is rotten and beyond redemption. Featuring on Hot FM's Hot Seat programme, Thursday, Chipimo said it would make more sense for the President to instead

institute an inquiry into the purchase of fire tenders, among other exorbitant procurements.

"It's very concerning that we should have a government that is more concerned about a witch hunt around a few individuals who are simply doing a professional job... personally I have nothing to hide with regards my role in the privatization process. I was never in a position to make decisions in terms of who gets which assets. All the ones I was involved in really involves Zambian individuals who were being empowered, none of them were my friends or my relatives. But what's most alarming and what's surprising is that we are ready to spend money on a witch hunt, when there are more serious issues. If we really want a judge-led inquiry, let's have a judge-led inquiry into the 42 fire trucks which were purchased at more than 75 per cent of the real value," Chipimo said.

"We should also have a judge-led inquiry into why we are spending three times the amount of money to construct roads, why were are spending over US\$4 million constructing a toll gate with its related infrastructure. These are the things, if we are really serious, we should spend money trying to get to the bottom of. We should spend money trying to understand why individual ministers who have been told by the constitutional court that they were illegally in office and need to pay back the money that they earned have not

done so. These are the areas that if we are really serious about the challenges that people are going through, if we are serious that's what we should be conducting our inquiries into... yes it is important to look at this question of privatization and what happened. But not to look at it as a witch hunt for purposes of undermining a few individuals who are causing you sleepless nights."

And Chipimo charged that President Lungu and his team were godfathers of corruption.

"The current PF administration has never been and never will be interested in fighting corruption. They are the godfathers of corruption. Look at how long it took for there to even be a small a reaction from State House over the Financial Intelligence Centre report. Just think about it, a report have been published, the whole country is talking about it and the Head of State can claim that he had not yet received a copy and yet his officials are the ones who are responsible for preparing it and also for sitting on that particular board. So it is unacceptable... we cannot give any better evidence than what the Anti-Corruption Commission already has, police service already has, the Financial Intelligence Centre already has, the Drug Enforcement Commission already has, the Auditor General's office already has. There is a clear trail of very cogent evidence which can be acted upon. It's not our responsibility

now to start shedding even more light on things that he already knows about as Head of State. But there is no political will to fight corruption in this country," said Chipimo.

Meanwhile, Banda, who featured on the same programme, charged that the governance system under PF was rotten and beyond redemption.

"This system of the PF is rotten, I believe that it's beyond redemption and I don't see how if by any chance the PF were to go through in 2021 would survive. The onus really lies on the people of Zambia to speak up because they are feeling the heat themselves. We are speaking because we are feeling it too but without the support of the Zambian people, it is very difficult for us to go on. We are in a system where things that are done for politics are accepted even if they are blatant crimes, because it's politics, it's okay. I will give an example, like the abuse of the public order act where political parties are not allowed to meet, the thing is that the people that are supposed to give permits actually they are the people that are abusing their authority, denying the rights of people to meet. It's like anything anything that is done in a political name is accepted. But I think at this point, I don't expect the PF government to change or to redeem themselves, I just want to appeal to the people of Zambia to speak up in 2019. Zambians you need to really show your displeasure if you really are not pleased," said Banda.

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Farmer sues State for false imprisonment

By Zondiwe Mbewe

A farmer has sued the State in the Lusaka High Court seeking damages and an order that he was falsely imprisoned for 312 days on allegations of murder.

Sambwa Chifwambwa is further seeking special damages for loss of agricultural crops during the period of his unlawful detention, saying as a result of his incarceration, his spouse and all his workers deserted his farm in Lusaka West.

In a statement of claim filed in the Lusaka High Court, December 7, Sambwa Chifwambwa, who has sued the Attorney General, stated that he was a Zambian citizen who was unlawfully detained for 312 days, firstly at Westwood Police Station for 52 days, and later at Lusaka Central Correction Facility for 260 days.

"On August 6, 2016, the plaintiff was arrested by police officers from Westwood Police Station on unsubstantiated allegation of the murder of Lent Hamalambo and was kept in police custody for 52 days until September 28, 2016, when he was transferred to Lusaka Central Correction facility," read the statement of claim.

Chifwambwa stated that he shall aver at trial that his detention in police custody for 52 days was unlawful and became unlawful when he remained in police custody for such a long time.

He stated that he remained in detention until June 14, 2017, when the Director of Public Prosecution entered a nolle prosequi and later turned him into a State witness against the now-accused persons for the murder of Hamalambo.

Chifwambwa disclosed that as a result of his incarceration, which eventually became unlawful, his spouse and all his workers deserted his farm in Lusaka West.

He added that he had suffered loss and damages to his farm produces.

"The plaintiff shall also aver at trial that during his detention, all his workers deserted the farm, and his spouse also left the farm due to fear and the shame that came with unsubstantiated allegation of murder. By reason of the matters aforesaid, the plaintiff suffered loss and damages to his farm plants and produces," read the statement of claim.

"Particulars of damages to the farm plants; 50 stations of papayas; 200 stations of bananas; 58 stations of Moringa trees all valued at K50,000 were wiped out due to lack of care in my absence. Loss of 25 fruit-bearing citrus trees out of 155 trees; four avocado trees; three dried Mexican Apple trees; six dried guava trees; several exotic plants, all valued at K23,000."

Chifwambwa further stated that during the period of detention, his farming equipment, valued at K35,000, were either vandalized or stolen.

He also added that during the entire episode of his detention, he was subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment at the hands of the police officers with the intention that he should confess as the murderer.

"On two occasions, I was stripped naked. My eyes were subjected to bright light, such that I can no longer look without prescribed sunglasses, which I can hardly afford," read the statement of claim.

Chifwambwa stated that as the result of his arrest and detention, his story was still fresh and was still taking turns within the neighbouring farms, adding that he had continued to live in shame and had sustained great anxiety.

He is now seeking a declaration or an order that he was falsely imprisoned when he was detained for 52 days at Westwood Police Station and 260 days at Lusaka Central Correction facility; damages for false imprisonment; special damages for loss of agricultural crops during the period of his detention; interest, costs and any other damages the court may deem fit.



L-r: Army Commander Lt Gen Paul Mihova, Zambia Air Force Commander David Muma and Inspector General of police Kakoma Kankanja serve food to inmates at Lusaka Central Correctional Facility during the Service Chiefs special Christmas visit on December 25, 2018 - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Meal allowances are provided for in 2019 budget - Mwashingwele

By Mirriam Chabala

Katuba UPND member of parliament Patricia Mwashingwele says Higher Education Minister Professor Nkandu Luo should not dare scrap meal allowances for university students because it is budgeted for in the 2019 national budget.

And UPND deputy spokesperson Cornelius Mweetwa says Prof Luo must not destroy the heritage of Zambian universities just because she acquired her tertiary education abroad.

Last week, a named Copperbelt University (CBU) student phoned Prof Luo to follow-up on the delayed meal allowances for UNZA and CBU students. However, Prof Luo advised the student along with all the others to wait until Monday this week, but went further to say that university students would not receive any meal allowances come January, 2019, because of delays in the payment of such allowances led to riotous behaviour in higher learning institutions.

But commenting on the matter in an interview, Mwashingwele wondered where Prof Luo planned to take the resources meant for students.

"Why was it budgeted for, for 2019 if along the way she (Prof Luo) had that intention of taking it away? What is going to happen to that budget line? I am just thinking aloud. I don't know if people haven't time to go and read that (Yellow) Book, but I just remember that when we were looking at that budget allocation, there was actually something for student meal allowances. So when she talks about taking it away, let her first bring it to the House. Let her bring a Ministerial statement, we debate it. She should tell us exactly why the government has decided to withdraw the meal allowances for the students. It is not her call alone, it is the call of all of us; so that we prepare the parents for such a huge undertaking. Maybe she is forgetting that some children are orphans. Some children having gone to university; it's the best thing that ever happened to them. So, she cannot just decide and wake up one night and say: 'okay, this morning I am taking away meal allowances.' No, it's supposed to be collective agreement and we look at the options," Mwashingwele said.

"She cannot pass such a decision alone, she needs to bring it to all of us. Everyone

must be in agreement. The parents must be prepared, students must be prepared. What does she want to do with the money that is already in the budget line for 2019? In fact, she should have been saying: 'we are removing it in 2020 so that we give everyone a chance for one to prepare themselves'."

Asked whether she felt if Prof Luo gave people a chance to prepare themselves, removing the meal allowances was the correct decision, Mwashingwele disagreed.

"No, it's not, and I have always said on the floor of the House, the best investment is human resource. Zambia is a young nation, Zambia is a poor nation. So, if we cannot develop our human resource, it will be as good as not moving. They are talking of not leaving anyone behind. So, the majority Zambians, it's not that they are dull, they are intelligent, but they don't have the means to get the university education. So, when they are giving that bursary, they are given that loan... in fact, she's not doing them a favour because they're going to pay back what government is giving them. So, what is the fuss? These are the things that we have [been] telling PF that, one day, the country will be broke, so now, their country is broke, and they don't know where to find the money, now they want to punish the innocent students," said Mwashingwele.

"Tell them to find somewhere else to take money away. Maybe they should even take money away from the Cabinet, President's (Edgar Lungu) travels. They should take money away from all their international travels and support the students. That is not the right decision, it's a wrong decision at a wrong time and I think it's going to affect the whole country negatively. Please, you people that are in the media, can you say something so loud about it. It's going to bring unnecessary confusion in the country and we don't want to go there."

And Mweetwa said Prof Luo must not destroy the heritage of Zambian universities just because she acquired her tertiary education abroad.

"Luo cannot change the heritage and history of the University of Zambia. When Honourable Mumbi Phiri was member of parliament for Munalali, she represented that university well. UNZA

is the biggest constituency within a constituency. We have more than 25,000 students at UNZA, far much bigger than many constituencies elsewhere. Some MPs, who are sitting in Parliament, are elected by very few people. But when you are a member of parliament for Munalali, you are elected by the crème de la crème, the intelligentsia, the reservoir of knowledge, the future of this country. So, to destroy it for purposes of meeting egoism won't work. Honourable Mumbi Phiri served the University of Zambia very well, she stood for the students and defended them. But this professor has come to attack students, she has come to fight students, she has come to attack UNZA and destroy it," Mweetwa charged. He vowed that current and former students would fight Prof Luo's plans. "Professor Luo never went to UNZA, probably that's why she's behaving like that because she studied in Russia. So, let her leave her heritage, this is not Russia! In my politics, I don't like to become personal, but she has gone too far and President Lungu should not allow this kind of behaviour. UNZA represents the hallmark of intellectual prosperity in this country, you can't reduce university students as if they are kindergarten students! How do you expect students to come and anchor the pillars of democracy in future if you dwindle them like this today? UNZA has been there since 1966, why is she making it a personal programme to destroy UNZA?" wondered Mweetwa.

"Us, who went to the University of Zambia, shall fight back! Those who send their children to University of Zambia will fight back. She cannot destroy our university. Already, in terms of academic standing, our institutions of learning are beginning to become questionable comparatively to other universities. Now, she wants to begin to undermine UNZA, this is not fair, let her come to her senses. I know that she's a strong-willed person and I respect the fact that she's one of the strong women who have pushed the agenda that women should be visible and they should be in leadership. I appreciate the strength she has exhibited as Chairperson for the Women's Caucus on Women at Parliament, but let her not abuse her privilege to destroy our institutions!"



PAC
 PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE FOR CHANGE
Viva New Zambia!!
 Why we deserve your vote



THE CITIZEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION (CEEC) UNDER PAC

By Andyford Mayele Banda

The PAC government will overhaul the CEEC in order for it to focus more on ensuring that businesses succeed as opposed to giving loans. The money that CEEC gives out as loans to businesses comes from the government and in some instances, grants are given with particular focus on certain sectors of the economy. As explained in the previous article, it's not the core business of the government to give out loans but the banks and other financial institutions. PAC understands that in order to adequately empower Zambians, the banks and other financial institutions must work hand-in-hand with the government. The new CEEC will ensure that start-up businesses are adequately structured before they can access loans and opportunities to grow their businesses. This is to ensure that their businesses are sustainable and can grow to be able to pay back loans.

We need to understand that if citizens don't grow their businesses, it means that they won't be able to pay back loans and if they are not able to pay back loans, then it means other people won't have the opportunity to access these facilities. As a consequence, these empowerment programs become more of a political rhetoric than a tool to improving people's lives. Hence the new CEEC will focus more on ensuring that businesses grow through:

1. Structuring of start-ups and restructuring of existing SMEs seeking loans.
2. Providing basic business administration training tailored to the needs of various sectors.
3. Creating opportunities through various partners from government and private sector.
4. Facilitating financing opportunities for the opportunities created from partner banks and financial institutions.
5. Monitoring of businesses under CEEC.

In order for businesses to succeed, the new CEEC will also need to put in place systems that do not favour or encourage nepotism and corruption. It is a well-known fact that a significant portfolio of the loans that have not been paid back at CEEC are as a result of giving loans to relatives, friends or close associates without merit. So we will introduce systems that will favour every person as opposed to a few card-carrying members of the ruling party.

The PAC knows that there is more that needs to be done to help citizens accessing facilities to

achieve their targets. When venture capitalists provide finance, they obtain a share of equity and a measure of management responsibilities. Therefore, the new CEEC will operate like venture capitalists; they will operate like a private institution helping start-ups to access loans and grow their business. They will also own shares and manage some of the businesses until the loan is fully paid. This is in order to help start-ups achieve goals and also to help them with managing of the business and ensure that during the loan period, the start-ups do not divert from the principles agreed upon in running that business.

Even though the new CEEC will have a degree of management responsibilities in every business, it will not infer one person from CEEC per businesses. We will devise a method that will be efficient and cost effective. The point is that we will not inconvenience start-ups but rather help them achieve targets. The PAC is perfectly poised to achieving this and that explains why we have decided to go back to the basics. Our plans are simple and practical. That's why we are not just saying that we will give loans but we are saying that the scheme will be structured, will categorise who will qualify and under which category they qualify and what targets should be achieved.

Normally, government contracts are only accessible to a few privileged people who are connected to the system. Successive governments have not realised that this kind of system is what has left the majority of Zambians in poverty, slowed consumer spending and denied the creation of jobs and promoted corruption. The PAC will put an end to this.

All non-special skills contracts will be exclusively shared among numerous Zambians through the restructured CEEC in partnership with Zambia Public Procurement Authority (ZPPA). This is in a quest to break current systems that are designed to support a few individuals as opposed to supporting the majority of Zambians. A contract that would make one individual wealthy can actually make 100 people significantly improve their lives. This will be done also in an effort to ensuring that the Zambian-buying population is boosted and hopefully spur a chain reaction of waking up sleeping industries. As a committed PAC government, we will also guarantee that our partner banks finance such contracts and loan repayments

are deducted at source. This system will also minimise corruption, which has increased on the basis of monopolising opportunity and giving it to a few individuals.

The PAC government through the new CEEC will ensure that priority for such contracts is given to small entrepreneurs. Contracts not only from the government but state owned enterprises, other government wings and our cooperating partners in the private sector will be made available to small enterprises. We believe that there is enough business for the many entrepreneurs in Zambia; we just need to move from the big contracts syndrome. We should stop enriching a few individuals and ensure that we create as many opportunities as possible for the majority.

The new CEEC will ensure that the government promotes and supports commercial, technical engineering and industrial training and ensure that every citizen connects their passion to a skill. A PAC Government will breakup tendering and contracting monopolies to ensure that there are equal opportunities for all and an equitable distribution of the resources of Zambia.

The PAC Government will not be a lender but will instead introduce **venture capital supports** through the Citizens Economic Empowerment Fund, the National pensions Fund and Workers Compensation Fund. On another platform, A PAC Government will issue performance and Bond guarantees for loan and lease financing to lenders without necessarily giving out direct loans.

Under the restructured CEEC, the PAC will implement deliberate policies that will encourage the locals to buy local products. This will be in an effort to ensure that local industries are sustained and are growing. The PAC will also empower local industries in ensuring that they improve their business outlook and produce quality products so that they do not only adequately compete with imported products but also are suitable for export.

In the next article we look at how the CEEC will structure empowerment programs that we call Joint Citizen Companies (JCC).

Andyford Mayele Banda
 President
 People's Alliance for Change (PAC)

By Zondiwe Mbewe

The Lusaka Magistrates' Court has found an Immigration Consultant and two Chinese investors with a case to answer in a matter where the trio are facing five counts forgery and giving false information to a public officer, and has since placed them on their defence. The three are expected to open their defence on January 10, next year.

In this matter, Roy Kunda, 41, an Immigration Consultant; Agarwal Kumar, 41 and Chawla Vineet, 41, both directors; are facing five counts forgery and giving false information to a public officer.

In the first count, it is alleged that on March 28, 2018, Kunda made a false written statement to the Immigration director general that Kumar and Vineet had in their account numbers held at Finance Bank Zambia and Barclays Bank Zambia, 0226028090 and 10011696 respectively, a US\$250,000 financial capital to invest in Zambia, when in fact not.

In count two, it is alleged that on March 26, 2018, Kumar made a false written statement to the Immigration director general, purporting that he had US\$250,000 financial capital in his account held at Barclays Bank which he wanted to

2 Chinese nationals put on their defense in forgery case

invest in Zambia.

In count three, it is alleged that on March 26, 2018, Vineet made a false written statement to the Immigration director general, purporting that he had US\$250,000 financial capital in his account held at Barclays Bank which he wanted to invest in Zambia.

In count four, it is alleged that between March 1 and 28, 2018, Kunda and Kumar forged bank statement number 1001696 from Barclays Bank Zambia.

And in count five, it is alleged that between March 1 and 28, 2018, Vineet forged bank statement number 0226028090100 from Finance Bank.

And when the matter came up,

Thursday, magistrate Nsunge Chanda said with the evidence so far, she was satisfied that the prosecution had established a case against them. She therefore put them on their defence.

The trio are expected to open their defence on January 10, next year.

Meanwhile, two men of Lusaka's Kalundu area have been sentenced to five months imprisonment with hard labour for trafficking in marijuana without lawful authority.

In this matter, Emmanuel Simumbu, 25, businessman and Method Simangolwa, 24, a general worker, both of Kalundu, were facing

three counts of trafficking in psychotropic substances.

It was alleged in count one that on December 12, this year, Simumbu and Simangolwa jointly and whilst acting together, did traffic in 301.6 grams of marijuana without lawful authority.

In the second count, it was alleged that that on the same day, Simumbu did traffic in 16.3 grams of marijuana without lawful authority.

And in count three, it was alleged that Simangolwa, on the same day, did traffic in 11.9 grams of marijuana without lawful authority.

And when the matter came up for plea before magistrate T Mulenga, the two pleaded

guilty to the charge, saying they were smoking the drug at a market in Kalundu.

Brief facts of the matter are that on the material day, DEC officers received information that there were people with psychotropic substances in Kalundu area.

When they reached the area, they approached the accused at Kalundu market and searched them.

During their search, psychotropic substances namely, marijuana, were found on the accused persons. They were apprehended

thereafter and charged.

The accused admitted that the facts were correct.

In mitigation, Simumbu asked for leniency saying he will never smoke again.

Simangolwa equally asked for leniency saying he was married with one child and his wife was seven months pregnant.

He added that he left his family in a rented house and didn't know how they were surviving because he didn't pay rentals for this month.

However, magistrate Mulenga sentenced the duo to five months imprisonment to deter others from committing the same offence.

"I sentence both of you to three months imprisonment with hard labour in count one.

In count two, I sentence A1 to two months imprisonment with hard labour. In count three, I sentence A2 to two months imprisonment with hard labour. These sentences are to run consecutively," ruled magistrate Mulenga.

Teachers need practising certificates to continue working, says TCZ

By Geoffrey Zulu

The Teaching Council of Zambia (TCZ) says teachers countrywide working in both private and public educational institutions need to acquire practising certificates to continue working legally.

In a statement, TCZ spokesperson Ngoza Malonga stated that all teachers, regardless of which institution, need to acquire practising certificates to continue working legally as it is a requirement by law. This follows the launching of the issuance of practising certificates for registered teachers pursuant to the Teaching Profession Act No. 5 of 2013.

"The Council is urging all those that are not yet registered to immediately do so as unregistered teachers are not allowed to practice in any educational

institution in Zambia, whether public or private," Malonga stated, reminding all those not registered to quickly finalise the process to register as a teacher.

The TCZ commenced the issuance of certificates in five provinces at Kasama, Northern Province; Mongu, Western Province; Solwezi, Northern-Western Province, Choma, Southern Province and Mansa in Luapula Province, according to Malonga.

This is pursuant to Section 15 (1) of the Teaching Profession Act No. 5 of 2013, which states that:

"A teacher shall apply to the Council for a Practising Certificate in a prescribed manner and form upon payment of the prescribed fees."

Malonga explained that phase 1 of the issuance exercise commences, Thursday, December 27, 2018, after which TCZ will embark on a countrywide issuance of the practising certificates to the rest of the teachers.

"During this exercise, the TCZ will still continue to receive application forms from new entrants, verification of TCZ numbers and clarifications of any other queries," stated Malonga.

She added that TCZ will also use the occasion to distribute Code of Ethics to teachers in those areas.

According to Malonga, TCZ has a total of 148,455 teachers registered with 100,808 registration certificates issued in phase 1.



Army Commander Lt. Gen. Paul Mihova (l) with Zambia Air force Commander David Muma during the Service Chiefs special Christmas visit at Lusaka Central Correctional Facility on December 25, 2018

- Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Lusaka businessman sues UTH doctor over K170,500 debt

By Zondiwe Mbewe

A Lusaka businessman has dragged a University Teaching Hospital (UTH) medical doctor to court for failing to pay debt amounting to K170,500, borrowed between August, 2016, and June, 2018.

Kennedy Kauwo, who has sued Sihem Dhifaoui in this matter, is claiming payment of the said sum,

interest, plus legal costs.

In a statement of claim filed in the Lusaka High Court, December 14, Kauwo stated that between August, 2016, and June, 2018, the defendant, Dhifaoui borrowed money from him amounting to K170,500.

He disclosed that Dhifaoui had failed to pay him the said amount despite several demands issued to

her.

"The plaintiff will at trial aver that the defendant borrowed money, which she has failed to pay to the plaintiff. The plaintiff shall aver that no other payments have been made and the current outstanding sum stands at K170,500. Despite several demands issued by the plaintiff for the defendant to settle its indebtedness, the defendant

has failed or neglected to settle the amount outstanding," read the statement of claim.

Kauwo stated that as a result of Dhifaoui's failure to pay, he had suffered and continues to suffer damage and loss.

He now claims for payment of K170,500, interest, legal costs of the action and any other relief the court may deem fit.

Controlling officers have no control over PF cadres in Ministries

Choma Central UPND member of parliament Honourable Cornelius Mweetwa made a very insightful observation during a parliamentary Public Account Committee (PAC) sitting last week.

He was talking about the victimization that professionals are subjected to when they dare talk about the bad governance going on in the system.

“When people want to talk against impunity, embezzling and corruption, you start sending them to rural areas and you have been boasting that you have high political connections. That is why this level of high degradation in your Ministry has reached such severity,” Mweetwa told

controlling officers from the Ministry of General Education who appeared before PAC to answer to audit queries cited in the last Auditor General’s report.

“You, as controlling officer in the Ministry, how do you feel that you are associated with this level of impunity in a country where the majority of our people are poor? How do you feel to be supervising such kind of a Ministry with scandals and scams? When a DEBS officer

tell you, you send them to rural areas, you want those surrounding you to be worshipping you,” the MP continued.

In response to this criticism, a former chief accountant, Mr Frisco Mponela, made yet another very insightful observation about how professionals struggle to control some cadres employed in the civil service.

He said there were too many under-qualified accountants at the Ministry of General Education.

“When I joined the Ministry of General Education in May, 2017, I found that there were a lot of problems at Ministry as far as accounting processes were concerned. So, we had started putting in place measures of how to mitigate some of these audit queries, which, unfortunately again, they happen to re-occur. The other challenge, which was

there was the lack of education on the cadres who were there. Some of them were not qualified enough and I had to request the Accountant General’s office to see if he could give us new members of staff,” he said.

What is worse about this situation is that they don’t fire culprits who embezzle government funds; they just transfer them from one Ministry to another or from one province to another. You can be a strict and professional Permanent Secretary, trying to do your best to keep the accounting books clean so that your office doesn’t get cited by the Auditor General. But what can you do when you receive a disgruntled PF cadre transferred to your Ministry? What control can you have over such a criminal who has State House backing and the

mighty support of the PF secretariat?

This is the reason why Ministry of Agriculture Permanent Secretary Dr David Shamulenge vowed that if he were to be sent to prison over mismanagement of funds, he would make sure that his junior officers go in, too. This may sound ridiculous and may be interpreted as failure on the part of the CONTROLLING officer to do his job. But we sympathise with PS Shamulenge because we can imagine how frustrating it can be to appear before the parliamentary Public Accounts Committee and get grilled because of the theft of junior officers in your Ministry whom you have no control over.

But there is a way out of this. This is where we come in as the media. If thieves can’t be weeded out of the system because they have powerful

political connections, expose them to the public. Taxpayers deserve to know who is truly stealing their money, and that is the only way that people can direct their anger in the right direction. It is not fair for anyone to be subjected to a criminal tag for crimes committed by others.

There is a reason why those who drafted the public service management laws made it difficult for a civil servant to lose a job compared to the private sector. It was done in order to protect innocent people from being victimized by higher authorities. This is the reason why there is a long process that has to be followed before someone is dismissed from the system. It was not meant to protect thieves from facing the law.

But what we are seeing in this Patriotic

Front government is that it has become much easier for innocent civil servants to be fired than it is to get rid of criminals. Secretaries, directors, assistants and other auxiliary staff are being dismissed from government with a mere instruction from someone at the top; yet the most disgruntled criminals who are cited in the Auditor General’s report are only suspended, waiting for the dust to settle before they can get back into the system and continue looting.

We want to reiterate that, indeed, President Lungu is presiding over an administration that does not respect good governance and constitutionalism. He is nurturing a dangerous culture of intolerance and disrespect for professionals and systems that will come back to haunt him and his cohorts when they leave office.

Anyway, they better steal enough while they are still inside because when they leave, they may not live long enough to wait for their benefits – since that’s the culture they are building, that whoever leaves government just has to survive from selling tomato.

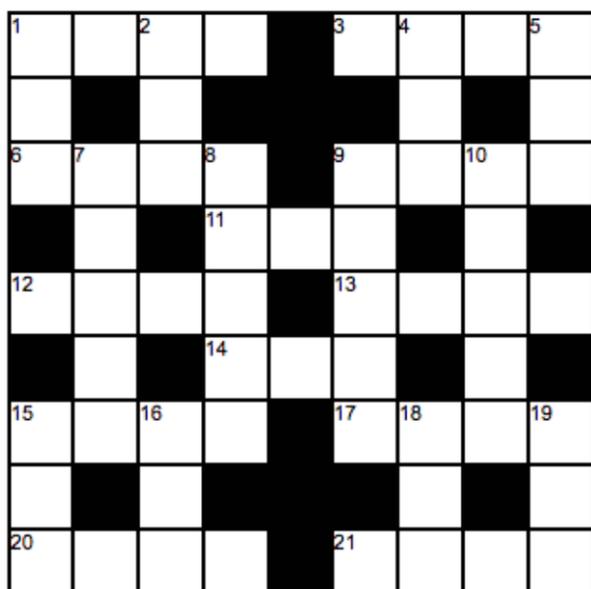
News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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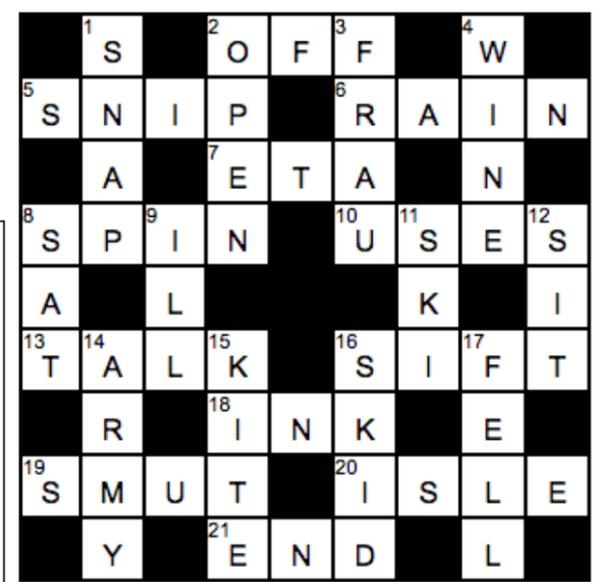
Crossword puzzle 261



“At the root of every form of ungodliness, injustice, nepotism, selfishness, every rivalry and competitive jealousy, is the monster called greed.”
- Sunday Adelaja

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Across</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Steak meat 3. Loving 6. Pronto 9. One-pot dinner 11. Unrefined 12. Molten rock 13. Not odd 14. Swab the deck 15. Hop along happily 17. Santa's bagful 20. Bump into 21. Adolescent | <p>Down</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Large passenger vehicle 2. Baseball stat. 4. Frequently 5. Condensed moisture 7. Show gratitude to 8. Vagabond 9. Won all games in a series 10. Adversary 15. Result of addition 16. Summer cooler 18. Run a deficit 19. It rises and sets |
|---|---|

Solutions to puzzle 260



Reader's feedback

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Go to our News Diggers Facebook page, select a story you like and jot down your comment. We will pick that as your feedback and get you published on this page. The shorter the comment the higher the chance of getting published.

Note that we block Facebook users who use abusive language.

Plans to abolish student's meal allowances autocratic

Dear Editor,

The asserted information that the government are planning to cut out meal allowances for the students at University of Zambia (UNZA) and

Copperbelt University (CBU), which they have been entitled since time immemorial, is amorphous and just portraying the PF's autocratic leadership style.

As a youth, I am irked by the PF government's intentions to abolish student's meal allowances in 2019.

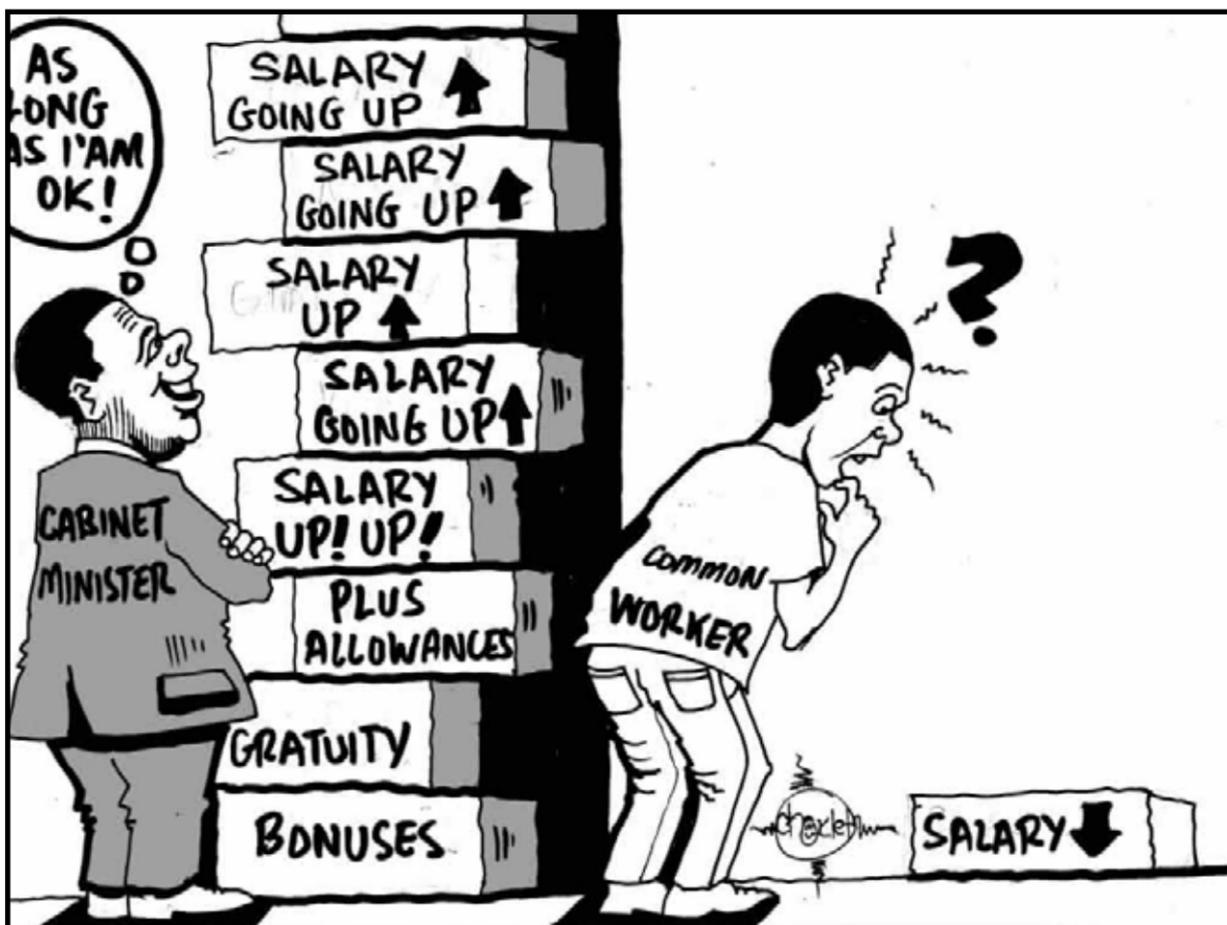
The decision is folly and meant to increase the number of uneducated and unemployed youths in our country, despite it being said that education is the key to the development of any nation. Not only that, but also to destroy and enslave the sons and daughters of the Zambian working class who are workers, farmers and the underprivileged.

Since 2015, the PF regime has been failing to solve myriad problems, which beset almost all Zambians, especially for us youths.

I am appealing to the PF regime to reduce or cut out of some of the government leaders' allowances, especially the MPs and the Ministers, including the President rather than abolishing meal allowances for the students, which is meagre compared to those allowances of the said people.

Lastly, but not at least, I am calling upon the President Mr Edgar Lungu to direct the Ministry of Higher Education to immediately withdraw the intentions of abolishing the meal allowances of the students and release Professor Nkandu Luo from her Ministry for she has failed to run the Ministry and in order to prevent any unfortunate eventualities!

Sincerely,
Joseph Kangwa,
Chingola youth activist



Church's counselling of politicians ahead of dialogue

Editor,

"Thank you, Church. Zambians have so far not heard something on the updates about the process itself. Looks like you have done a lot of talking, and now we feel it's time for real action. And the earlier, the better considering you have to bring onto the table a lot of reforms before 2019. These being electoral reforms; police reforms; judicial reforms and a general breakdown in rule of law." - Martin Nyanjagha

"The three Church mother bodies should know that it's not pride, which

delays or makes dialogue difficult; successful dialogue can only be achieved if Edgar Lungu agrees to respect the rule of law. Despite having a flawed Constitution, Zambian democrats want Lungu to stop breaching the Constitution, period." - Chivunda Samusungwa

"ECL is not comfortable with this dialogue thing; he wants to continue to suppress people's rights." - Chanda Pochoko

"People need dialogue; it has taken too long, no wonder the economy is struggling; people are complaining." - Kennedy Mungenda

ND OPINION: Imagine a Zambia under Miles Sampa's Presidency

Editor,

"I'm falling in love with the one who writes and edits the articles at News Diggers! His/her English, sentences, wording, punctuation, gives me more desire to read till the end." - Enock Samakupa

"Couldn't agree with you more, editor." - Clive Mwiinga

"From being James Bond 007 with a gun ready to shoot, our hardworking Mayor is now Father Christmas distributing sweets? What is wrong with our Mayor?" - Mwiya Akufuna

"Miles may need a psychiatric evaluation to set the record straight. Mental illness is a disease like any other, which anyone can get. In fact, he can help lead against its stigmatization, as he is a high profile individual. Meanwhile, we are praying for you, your Worship. Have the best year yet in 2019." - Kwa Mwamba

"To me, amongst the two, I never saw a leader to lead Zambia. Dr Guy Scott could have been better." - Victor Bwalya

"I also wonder if my Mayor is okay because I woke up early in the morning to cast my vote because of the work he did in Matero, but I'm disappointed!" - John Matimba

"I hate Edgar Lungu's mediocre leadership, but I came to the conclusion that he's 100 miles better than Miles Sampa in 2016. God saved us by giving us Lungu and not Miles Sampa, but the madness doesn't end with him; it also goes to the voters who have been aware of his lunacy, but still made him Mayor." - Chisala Nkandu



Former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak (C, front), who was ousted following a popular uprising in 2011, is escorted by his two sons Alaa (C, behind) and Gamal (L) as he testifies during a session in the retrial of members of the now-banned Muslim Brotherhood over charges of plotting jailbreaks and attacks on police during the 2011 uprising, at a make-shift courthouse in southern Cairo on December 26, 2018. - AFP

Failure by countries to agree rules on implementing the 2015 Paris climate agreement aimed at curbing global warming would be suicidal, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said on Wednesday. Guterres told delegates from over 130 countries meeting in the Polish city of Katowice that they had less than three days to find the political will to reach difficult compromises, sacrifices and common ground needed for a deal.

"Failing here in Katowice would send a disastrous message to those who stand ready to shift to a green economy," he said. "To waste this opportunity would compromise our last best chance to stop runaway climate change. It would not only be immoral, it would be suicidal."

Three years to the day after the Paris climate accord was adopted by over 190 countries, delegates in the Polish coal-mining city are still grappling with how the accord will be implemented. This slow progress after more than a week of negotiations prompted Michal Kurtyka, the Polish president of the talks, to tell delegates time was precious and they needed to find wordings which were acceptable to all. Environmental activists and some developing countries have also raised concern that the rule book could fall short of pushing countries towards curbing their emissions to meet the Paris targets.

"The clock is ticking. While we spend time debating texts and demanding their implementation, the planet outside is deteriorating. Species are becoming extinct. Habitats disappearing. Emissions piling up," Brazilian Environment Minister Edson Duarte said

Failure to agree climate deal rules would be suicidal, says UN chief

Guterres said a recent report by the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

acknowledged what global warming beyond 1.5 degrees will mean for billions of people, especially those who

live in small island states. The report outlined a catastrophic future if no action was taken by

countries immediately, he said, adding that the window of opportunity was closing.**REUTERS**

Iraqi leaders denounce Trump visit to US troops

Political and militia leaders condemn President Trump's unannounced visit to US troops as a blow to Iraq's sovereignty

Iraqi political and militia leaders have condemned US President Donald Trump's unannounced trip to Iraq as

a violation of their country's sovereignty.

In a surprise visit to US troops, Trump on Wednesday landed at an airbase west of the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, where he thanked the soldiers for their service.

Sabah al-Saadi, the leader

of the Islah parliamentary bloc, called for an emergency session of the Iraqi parliament "to discuss this blatant violation of Iraq's sovereignty and to stop these aggressive actions by Trump who should know his limits: The US occupation of Iraq is over".

Islah is headed by Shia leader Muqtada al-Sadr, who has long opposed the US presence in Iraq since a Washington-led invasion toppled the government of Saddam Hussein in 2003 over weapons of mass destruction and ties to al-Qaeda that both

proved non-existent. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died in the conflict, which many analysts call one of the major US foreign policy debacles in recent history and one of the most destructive invasions in modern history.

The Bina bloc, Islah's rival in parliament and led by Iran-backed militia leader Hadi al-Amiri, also objected to Trump's trip to Iraq.

"Trump's visit is a flagrant and clear violation of diplomatic norms and shows his disdain and hostility in his dealings with the Iraqi government," said a statement from Bina.

Trump did not meet any Iraqi officials during his three-hour-long stay. A scheduled meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi was scrapped and the two leaders talked instead by telephone.

Mahdi's office said in a statement that US authorities had informed Iraq's leadership of the president's visit in advance. The statement said the Iraqi prime minister and the US president held a telephonic conversation due to a "disagreement over how to conduct the meeting".**AL**

JAZEERA

Grief-stricken Indonesians queued with photos or waited on DNA tests Wednesday, to find out if their missing loved ones were among bodies being held in a hospital morgue after a devastating tsunami tore families apart.

"I'm scared," said Tubagus Cecep, 63, as he waited nervously at a hospital in devastated Carita for test results on a body he fears could be that of his son.

"But if I keep my faith in God maybe he could have been swept away somewhere and is still alive."

His son, a university student due to graduate in five months, hasn't been seen since the day of the disaster, when he was on a day trip to an island off the coast of Java.

Four of his friends are also missing.

"They found a body, a pile

Indonesians search for lost relatives after devastating tsunami

of bags and my son's shoes," the father of 10 told AFP.

"I'm still waiting for the body to be identified. We don't know yet if it was him."

Others queued up showing photos of their loved ones on mobile phones, with officials carrying out the grisly task of checking them against bodies in the morgue.

"We've been asking them about when was the last time they saw their relative, what they were wearing, if they have any identifying marks on their body," said Nariyana, head of the local police forensics and

medical services unit, who goes by one name.

The task has been made more difficult by multiple relatives making duplicate reports of missing loved ones, Nariyana said.

Also waiting was Nur Masa, who was at a Java beach with his older brother on Saturday evening when the powerful waves struck.

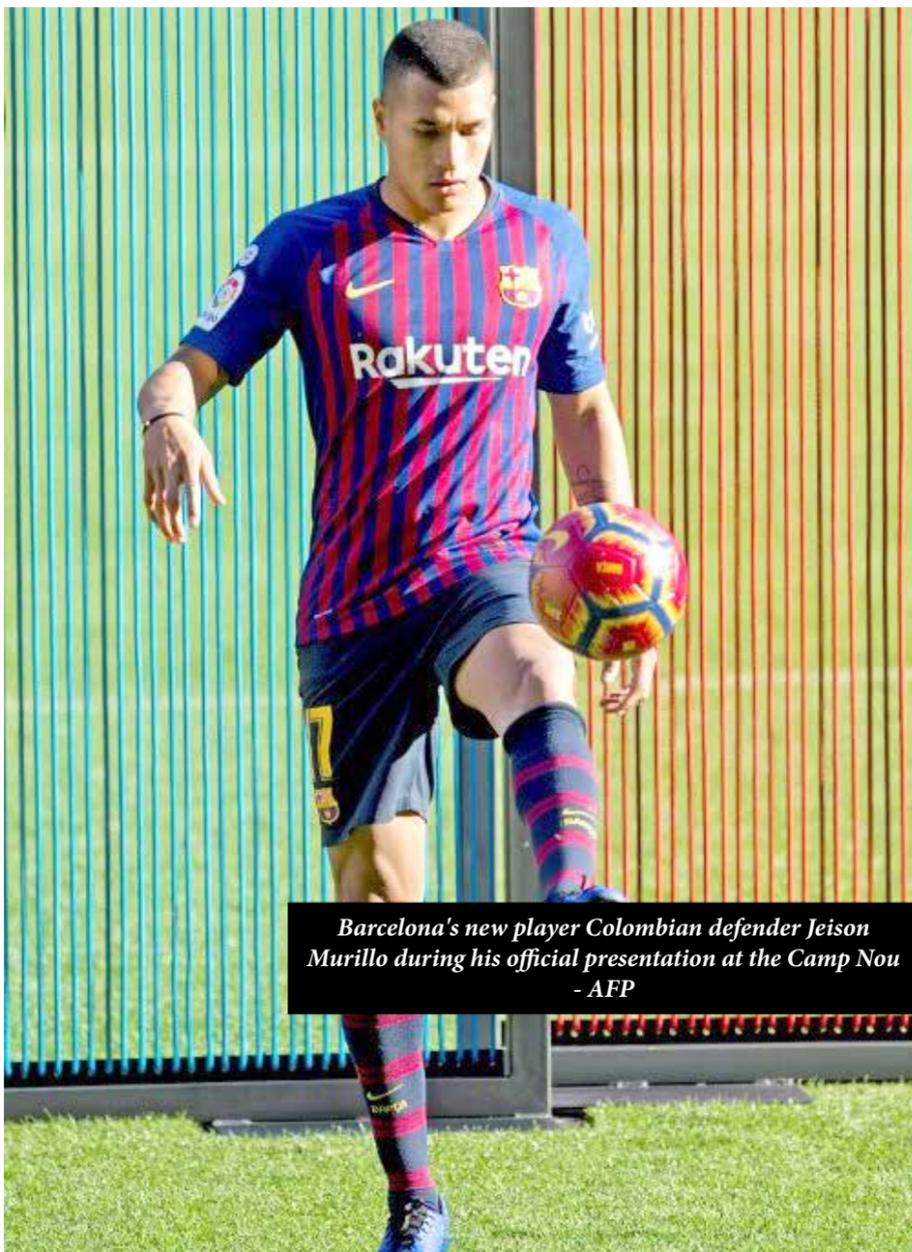
His brother -- who was fixing a fishing net into the sea when the wave crashed in -- has not been seen since.

"I still hope he can be found," the 33-year-old Masa quietly told AFP

"But it's been four days and four nights and he still hasn't been located."

An eruption at the Anak Krakatoa volcano, which sits in the middle of the Sunda Strait between Java and Sumatra islands, caused a section of the crater to collapse and slide into the ocean, triggering the killer tsunami, officials have said.**AFP**





Barcelona's new player Colombian defender Jeison Murillo during his official presentation at the Camp Nou
- AFP



Cristiano is Cristiano when it matters - Chiellini

Giorgio Chiellini acknowledges that when Juventus have needed Cristiano Ronaldo the most this season, "Cristiano has been Cristiano" for the Bianconeri. The Portuguese superstar was snapped up by the Serie A champions in an effort to bring even more match-altering

ability onto their books. He has not disappointed, with 13 goals recorded across all competitions. The most recent of those came in a Boxing Day meeting with Atalanta, with Ronaldo required to step off the bench in that contest after being handed a well-deserved rest. He was introduced in the 65th

minute with Juve down to 10 men and trailing 2-1. Within 13 minutes of entering the field, the 33-year-old had grabbed a leveller and preserved Juve's unbeaten record in the Italian top-flight. Bianconeri skipper Chiellini told Sky Sport Italia after another vital contribution from an illustrious team-mate: "This year there have been three moments in which we were in difficulty and behind in the game - the matches against Napoli, Empoli and Atalanta. "It is no coincidence that in these three games, Cristiano has been Cristiano. "Ronaldo is a decisive player, we knew it: in the fundamental moments he manages to bring out that extra something he has inside. *Goal.com*

Nkwazi will not sign players - Kaunda

By Alex Chilumbwe
Nkwazi coach Chris Kaunda says his side will not sign any new players ahead of the 2019 football season due to lack of finances in its confers. In an interview with Goal Diggers! Kaunda said that he will have to grill the available players and make them competitive enough to win all games in the two tier league that kicks off in January. "We do not have money to sign or buy new players so I will work with the available ones. We will train hard and play to win all the games just like anyone would want to win every game in the league," he said. Kaunda further disclosed that three players in Steward Chikandiwa, Edward Mwamba and Sebastian Mwansa had left the police side in the on-

going transfer window. Mwansa who was on a year-long loan deal from the army side Green Buffaloes, returned to his parent club. Chikandiwa has been loaned out to the combatants on a year-long loan deal while Mwamba

joined the Zambia National Service side, Green Eagles on another loan deal. Meanwhile in Copperbelt, Kitwe United football team manager Anthony Mwila said the team will tomorrow Friday reveal its new signings

that he approximated at five, adding that the new signings will exclusively be local defenders and strikers who already have super league experience. Mwila also said that the 'Buchi Boys' will play two friendly games against

Buildcon and ZESCO United select team on Friday and Saturday as part of pre-season training in that order. He added that the team was aiming for either the league title or a top four finish in next year's league race.

Messi wants Neymar and Pep back at Barcelona

Lionel Messi would love to have Neymar back at Barcelona but admitted Paris Saint-Germain are unlikely to let their star asset leave. Neymar swapped Camp Nou for Parc des Princes in a world-record €222m (\$253m, £200m) move back in August 2017. The 26-year-old spent four successful seasons at Barca, winning La Liga twice and the Champions League once, but a desire to step out of Messi's shadow is believed to have

motivated his unexpected exit. Speculation persists that Neymar could yet seek a return to the Blaugrana and his Brazil team-mate Arthur, who linked up with Spanish champions at the start of the season, said this week he was "praying" for the rumours to become reality. Messi shares a similar view but holds reservations over the likelihood of PSG sanctioning the transfer. "I see it as complicated," the Barca captain said in a wide-ranging

interview with Marca. "We would love him to come back for what he means, both as a player and for the locker room. "We are friends, we have lived very nice moments, others not so much, but we have spent a lot of time together. However, I find it very difficult [for him] to even leave Paris. "PSG are not going to let Neymar get taken away." The five-time Ballon d'Or winner also still harbours hope of a future reunion with Pep Guardiola.

Guardiola, now in charge at Manchester City, has previously claimed his only route back to Barca would be as a youth coach, but Messi would appreciate the opportunity to play under the Catalan once more. "Although it is difficult, I would like to work with Guardiola again," he said. "He is one of the best coaches in the world. That's why I would like [him to come back], but I'm telling you that I see it as complicated." *Goal.com*

Simataa says Zambian clubs can lift CAF trophies with local talent

By Alex Chilumbwe
Football administrator Simataa Simataa says Zambia does not need international or foreign footballers to compete favourably in Continental Football adding that the Power Dynamos squad and the Nkana squad that won the CAF Champions League in the 1990s comprised local players only. His statement was in agreement to FAZ Communications Manager Desmond Katongo who has been

cited by ZANIS and Lusaka Times saying lack of investment in players is partly the reason for the poor performance of Zambian envoys in CAF games. In an interview with Goal Diggers! Simataa said that there was no need to bring in foreign players for local super division clubs to compete in African football. "We have Power Dynamos and Nkana that won the CAF Champions league in the 90s

and they did that with squads comprising local players only. I do not see any reason why that cannot be re-lived when it is the same continental football performance we are bemoaning. Zambian envoys did not do well that is why they were either relegated or eliminated last week," he said. Simataa further called for attractive salaries for local players as a way of stopping them from leaving their parent clubs for other clubs

within Africa. He mentioned what he called 'A Turkish Approach' that has made Turkey prevent players from running to European football. "Players need to be paid enough locally so that they stay in their respective clubs. What is Orlando Pirates giving Augustine Shonga that Lusaka Dynamos can fail to give him? Why should Triple C (Cletus Chota Chama) be in Tanzania? wondered Simataa.

"In Turkey, players are well paid by their local clubs that's why you do not hear of them in the European leagues. They are being taken care of and are able to compete without needing help from foreign players. That is the Turkish approach am talking about. Zambian players are making rounds within Africa. It would have been better if it was in the English Premier league because that's a whole new level," summed Simataa.

Messi wants Neymar, Pep back at Barca

Page 11



AFP Forum
Giuseppe Maffia / SportPhoto24 / DPPI

Nicolo Zaniolo of AS Roma scores third goal during the Italian championship Serie A football match between AS Roma and Sassuolo on December 26, 2018 at Stadio Olimpico in Rome, Italy



Serena hails rule changes to protect mothers in tennis

Serena Williams has described the new changes to the 'Special Ranking' rule introduced by the WTA for 2019 as "great" and believes the move will encourage more players to

take a break from the tour to have children then come back to resume their careers.

Under the new rules, returning mothers who have a special ranking that would earn them a seeded position can be drawn as an 'additional seed' at tournaments, meaning they would not be able to face a seed in the opening round of a tournament.

This change also ensures that no seed will get bumped as a result of a returning mother given a protected seeding.

Williams, along with other mothers on tour like former world number one Victoria Azarenka, had been advocating for such rule changes that would ease the transition back for players following the birth of their children. *AFP*

Nadal confident about fitness for Australian Open

Rafael Nadal is "confident" he will be 100 percent fit when the Australian Open starts in less than three weeks' time despite enduring yet another tough battle with injuries over the past few months.

Nadal will dip his toes back into competition at the Mubadala World Tennis Championship exhibition in Abu Dhabi, where he faces either Kevin Anderson or Chung Hyeon in his opener on Friday.

"I started two weeks ago and of course doing the things step by step and I think I have time to be ready for Melbourne at my 100 percent," Nadal

told reporters in the UAE capital on Thursday.

"It's going to be good to have some matches before but I'm confident that I'm going to arrive to Melbourne with the right situation."

The 32-year-old retired during matches at two of the four Grand Slams in 2018, but still added a record-extending 11th French Open crown to his collection.

He says he remains motivated to launch yet another comeback from injury, despite a career plagued by physical problems.

"After the second part of the year, have been tough

last year in terms of injuries but that happens and that's part of my tennis career too," he added.

"Just try to stay calm, try to work the right way and when I'm back I know things are not easy, I know at the beginning you always have tough feelings and pains in the body that normally you don't have.

"But I have experience in all of this and try to be ready for the everyday practices and when (I) arrive (at) the matches I don't have to ask myself big things at the beginning, just trying to be positive with every improvement and that way normally you get the right point." *AFP*

SIMATAA TALKS UP

LOCAL TALENT

By Alex Chilumbwe

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To page 11

...Nkana, Dynamos won CAF Champions League with local players in the 1990s

