



# WE'RE NATURALLY

# DICTATORIAL

...ZNBC is expected to side with govt of the day - Kasolo

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I allowed accused to have sex with me, juvenile tells court

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## Kambwili U-turns, challenges Speaker in court over Roan Parliamentary seat

By Zondiwe Mbewe

NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili has petitioned the Constitutional Court for a declaration that his Roan parliamentary seat did not fall vacant as ruled by the Speaker of the National Assembly Dr Patrick Matibini because the latter violated various provisions of the Constitution. Kambwili who has cited the Attorney General as the respondent in this matter, is further seeking a declaration and order that the Speaker's ruling is null and void.

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President Lungu (c) poses with new High Court judges: Evaristo Pengele, Koreen Etambuyu Mwenda -imba, Kenneth Mulife, Wilfred Muma, Ruth Hachitapika Chibbabbuka, Abha Nayar Patel, SC, Bonaventure Chakwawa Mbewe and Kazimbe Chenda.

## Govt offers 4% pay rise to civil servants, leaving unions divided

By Mirriam Chabala

Government has offered unionised public servants a four percent salary increase across the board, but the

workers' unions have rejected the proposal, describing it as a disservice to the suffering workers. Union leaders, who sought

not to be named, told News Diggers! that the proposed salary increment has spurred tension within the public service, leading to the

formation of two camps of workers unions - one for those that want to accept the offer and move one and those that want to declare a dispute.

The unions are afraid that being the largest employer, government's fashion of increasing salaries for public workers by such small amounts would inspire the private sector to follow suit.

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## Private media viewed as opposition in Zambia, observes US Embassy

By Stuart Lisulo

Zambia has a lot of work to do in embracing divergent views because the private news media are still being viewed as a proponent of the opposition political fraternity, says the US Embassy's public affairs director Sean McIntosh.

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## Mutati asks govt to postpone April sales tax implementation

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## C/Belt cops nab Chinese man in Copper theft scam

Story page 4

By Stuart Lisulo

The Millers Association of Zambia (MAZ) says the new policy lifting the ban of mealie meal exports needs to be revised because some millers who accessed subsidized Food Reserve Agency (FRA) maize are restricted from participating. Commenting on Agriculture Minister Michael Katambo's recent policy pronouncement where he announced the lifting on the ban of mealie meal exports, MAZ president Andrew Chintala said the Association plans on engaging government in a bid to revise the policy because millers who accessed FRA maize will be excluded from participating in the lucrative export market. One of the conditions Katambo announced as part of the major policy pronouncement was that millers, particularly Copperbelt-based millers who accessed subsidized FRA grain, will not be allowed to get import

# Millers want new mealie meal export policy revised

permits for mealie meal. "This is actually meant to assist us on so many fronts: 1) There's a condition given in the Minister's statement with regards to who participates in the exports, that some of those who accessed the FRA maize may not be able to participate, a thing that I'd like to engage the Minister to find a win-win situation for all those that have got the capacity to be able to participate because we are looking at two markets," Chintala said in an interview. "It's not just the exports; we need to look at the domestic market. So, I wouldn't want to foresee a situation where people start concentrating on the export market when neglecting the domestic

market. For me, what is cardinal in dealing with the exports is the issue of capacity; does miller B have the capacity to be able to uptake from the private sector; to be able to produce for local consumption, export and maximize the profits from the outside market compared to the local market." He explained that as many different millers ought to be able to participate in the export market, which usually sees a 25Kg breakfast bag of mealie meal priced at around double the price compared to Zambian prices. "We need to be extra careful as we deal with this issue of exports because there are millers that may have participated in the

FRA maize who I feel should also be brought on board in the sense that they may have the financial capacity as well as the crushing capacity to be able to take care

of the local market and the export market," explained Chintala. "So, it is, indeed, a positive move, but we will engage the Ministry (of Agriculture) to try and

look at the issue of that restriction. I feel we should concentrate more on the capacity side and insist that FRA maize remains in the country for our own domestic consumption."

## Department of National Parks' negative perception worries PS

By Stuart Lisulo

Tourism and Arts Permanent Secretary Reverend Howard Sikwela has urged the Department of National Parks (DNPW) to correct the impression of under-performance seen by outsiders. Speaking during a meeting with staff at the DNPW offices in Chilanga, Wednesday, the PS said there was always room for staff

to improve and correct wrong perceptions held by stakeholders. Rev Sikwela explained that in 2019, his office would not entertain inertia and mediocre approach towards work that had dented the image of the Ministry. This is contained in a statement availed by Tourism Ministry public relations officer, Sakabilo Kalembwe.

## HRC pleads with govt to reverse Prime TV 'closure'

By Mirriam Chabala

The Human Rights Commission (HRC) has asked government to review Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA)'s decision to suspend Prime Television's broadcasting license for 30 days over alleged unprofessional conduct. In a statement, HRC spokesperson Mweelwa Muleya expressed concern that the consequences of Zambia being viewed as a human rights violator had a far-reaching negative impact on the socio-economic development of the country and on citizens' general welfare. "After engaging various stakeholders, the Human Rights Commission strongly recommends that the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) should consider lifting the suspension of the broadcasting license for Prime Television Station. The suspension of the broadcasting license of Prime TV for 30 days is excessive punishment that is likely

to seriously undermine the growth of the privately-owned television station as well as deprive millions of its viewers of their democratic right to access divergent information and views as required in a democratic state. Zambia has a relatively good record of having established a robust liberalised media industry in the quest to promote free expression of, and access to divergent views, information and opinions as a matter of human rights and good governance. It would be extremely unfortunate if such a record of human rights and good governance was undermined by a decision such as suspending the broadcasting license of the privately-run television station when the matter could easily have been amicably resolved in better way," Muleya stated. "The Commission is, therefore, confident that the government will listen to numerous voices pleading for its public interest intervention and will accordingly review

the decision made by IBA. As a national human rights institution, the Commission wishes to advise that freedom of expression and media freedom are common parameters of assessing a country's human rights and good governance record. It is, therefore, in the national interest that the government must look at a broader governance picture in resolving this matter. The consequences of a country being viewed as a human rights violator, whether true or not, has far-reaching negative impact on the socio-

economic development of the country and on the general welfare of the citizens at large. Therefore, the common good must override any sectional interests in resolving the complaints against Prime TV." HRC advised the IBA to focus on building capacity for all broadcasting institutions in Zambia in order to contribute to a professional, pluralistic and diverse broadcasting industry as a hallmark of deepening democracy, respect for human rights and good governance. "While appreciating IBA's mandate of safeguarding

the rights, freedoms and reputation of others from unprofessional broadcasting, it is the Commission's strong view that IBA should continue executing its legislative mandate in a manner consistent with the fundamental human rights principles of non-discrimination and equal protection and benefit of the law. To this effect, IBA is encouraged to be seen to be building the capacity of all broadcasting institutions in Zambia in order to contribute to a professional, pluralistic and diverse

broadcasting industry as a hallmark of deepening democracy, respect for human rights and good governance," stated Muleya. "Finally, the Commission further wishes to call upon all stakeholders, particularly human rights defenders and the media fraternity, to effectively claim their right to a robust pluralistic and diverse media industry in Zambia that will fearlessly, but factually, and fairly mirror the diverse socio-economic, cultural and political heritage of the country for sustainable inclusive development."

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By Thomas Mulenga

Senga Hill PF member of parliament Kapembwa Simbao on Wednesday moved a private member's motion that was seeking to urge government to phase out gasoline driven vehicles and replace them with electric ones by 2030. However, Choma UPND member of parliament Cornelius Mweetwa said the motion was unrealistic as Zambia could not afford to do away with gasoline and diesel driven vehicles in 11 years. And when debate resumed on Thursday, Simbao asked the Speaker to grant him leave to withdraw the motion in order for him to consult further. "I beg to move that this House urges government to phase out gasoline and diesel propelled motor vehicles and replace them with electric ones starting in the year 2030. This motion is driven by the fact that there has been a paradigm shift in the transport sector that will seriously affect

# Simbao withdraws motion after opposition shoots down his technology motion

the way we do business in the future. Before our own eyes, we are witnessing a shift from fossil, diesel and petrol driven vehicles to electric driven vehicles. Mr Speaker, this is a colossal shift which those who will be left behind will have trouble providing physical services to the people. It is no secret that in 50 years' time, oil will run out, the oil reserves as known today are at 1,688 billion barrels which is a 2013 figure," Simbao said. "Mr Speaker, it is not only the running out of oil but also the issue of clean energy, as you know, Mr Speaker, the world is said to be warming up. For example, the heat wave that we have experienced this year, has never been experienced before

in my time in this country and so the warming up of the world could be true. This situation is said to be so due to the amount of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere by petrol and diesel vehicles and industries that burn fossil fuel. It is therefore imperative that in order to save the world, burning of fossil fuel in any form must be stopped. That being the case therefore, the ready substitution is electric energy from clean sources such as hydro, solar, wind and hydrogen." However, Mweetwa said the motion was unrealistic. "Mr Speaker I must hasten to state that this motion has come at a very critical time of our country where at personal

level it becomes extremely difficult to support it. Let me state that from where I am standing that this motion appears to be derived from the realm of conjecture and human's adventure. And divorced from the reality of what Zambia is today and what it can attain in the next ten, eleven, 12 years from now, in relation to the time limit that has been given, 2030. To rid this country of gasoline and diesel by 2030, what a big joke I have never heard since I came to this House!" Mweetwa said. Mweetwa said Zambia had no technological influence to think of replacing gasoline driven vehicles, arguing that the country could not even afford to produce

needles at the moment. "I am concerned with the timing Mr Speaker. This motion is unrealistic. To borrow the words of our colleagues there when they are debating, like honourable Kampyongo, this motion is mischievous! This motion, Mr Speaker, is frivolous and vexatious. I am finding it extremely difficult to support such a motion sir, which has good intentions but it is unrealistic, it's like telling someone in this House that in the next 2 minutes, I will be in Livingstone but I am in this House, it doesn't make sense. Mr Speaker, we cannot begin talking about phasing out gasoline driven vehicles in the next 11 years, and as a matter of reality beyond partisan politics, when this House passes a motion, it is the government that undertakes it. Is the government, to which I belong, ready to commit to itself to an undertaking that in the next 11 years we are going to undertake the phasing of gasoline driven vehicles in Zambia? Who in Zambia can agree that in the next 11 years we are going to phase out all these vehicles in Zambia that are driven by gasoline? Of what technological influence is Zambia to this process, when you can't even produce a tooth pick, you can't even produce a needle?" asked Mweetwa. "Which serious investor would want to come and invest into

oil exploration in a country whose Parliament has just said in the next 10 years we are phasing out gasoline propelled vehicles? Mr Speaker isn't this a joke? Sir, this is a joke!" At this point, Speaker Matibini guided Mweetwa to remember that Simbao had the right to move a motion, regardless of the fact that he was a member of the ruling party. "Let me advise you honourable, the member who has moved a motion is entitled, he is a back bencher, he is not a minister. He is urging his government, he is entitled to urge his government as a back bencher.. you yourself earlier on pointed out that this house should be engaged in forecasts, elsewhere people are planning in terms of 50 years, 100 years and so forth, that's what they do elsewhere, they are thinking generations ahead. Now you want to use very parochial terms," said Dr Matibini. But Mweetwa accused Speaker Matibini of debating in favour of the motion, forcing the latter to curtail his debate. And when debate resumed on Thursday, Simbao asked the Speaker to grant him leave to withdraw the motion in order for him to consult further. "Mr Speaker, with leave of the House, I wish to withdraw the motion in order for me to consult on the matter," said Simbao before Speaker Matibini granted his request.

# I allowed accused to have sex with me, juvenile tells court

By Daniel Chansa

Copperbelt PF Chairman Nathan Bwalya Chanda's elder brother, Mathias Bwalya, has pulled out of the Roan Parliamentary by-election race. Bwalya was among the 11 applicants, who had applied to contest the Roan Parliamentary by-election seat on the ruling party ticket. But after declaring his intentions and application, Bwalya came under serious attacks from party members. Currently, the Chanda family including his father and mother are serving in Luanshya PF structures. "After a wide range of consideration, I have decided to pull out of the race in interest of my family. Allow me to thank all of you who gave me the support but I won't allow my ambition and desire

to serve my people destroy what others have achieved. I will not put my interest first, but to seeing others smile is my prime objective. I also pledge to continue serving my community in my individual capacity and always," wrote Bwalya. Meanwhile, the number of applicants is expected to increase as other 'big fish' have expressed interest. According to PF sources, none of the current applicants can win the Roan seat for the ruling party. "This is a serious by election. It is more like this is the election that will determine the future of PF on the Copperbelt. I can tell you that none of those who applied among the 11 will be picked. That is just an academic exercise to look like the process is transparent," the source said.

"At the moment, we are looking for the owner of Wada Chovu buses, for now maybe that guy can stand a chance to win, he is known in Luanshya because of his business. These jokers of Javen Kamanga, the DC bena Joel Chibuye, can't beat Kambwili in Roan. Ba mudala ba Kambwili has worked in

Roan. The man is so popular and has a serious following. We are in panic as at now." Speaker of the National Assembly Dr Patrick Matibini declared the Roan seat vacant when he concluded that Chishimba Kambwili was a leader and a member of the opposition NDC, meaning he had crossed the floor.

# Lusaka man gets 9 months for stealing mattress

By Zondiwe Mbewe

The Lusaka Magistrates' Court has sentenced a 42-year-old general worker, who stole a mattress worth

K600 for his personal use, to nine months imprisonment with hard labour. This is the matter in which Chispine Chembo of Chiyaba village in Nampundwe, was facing one count of burglary and theft contrary to Section 301(a) and 272 of the Penal Code Chapter 87 of the Laws of Zambia. Particulars of the offence were that during the night of February 12 and 13, 2019, in Lusaka, Chembo broke and entered into Lister Nkausu's house and stole a mattress valued at K600. Chembo had pleaded guilty to the charge saying he entered the said house around 20:00 hours by forcing the door open. He added that he managed to break the lock to the house because it wasn't strong enough. Chembo said when he

entered the house, he only stole the mattress which was on the bed and left. He told the court that after getting the mattress, he took it to his house so that he could start using it. The matter came up before magistrate Victoria Chitulangoma, Thursday, for facts and sentencing. Brief facts were that on February 12, the complainant, Lister Nkausu left his house locked and every property secured around 18:00 hours and went to sleep at his sisters place. When Nkausu went back to his house the following day around 06:00 hours, he found that the lock to the door had been tampered with. And when he entered the house, he found that his mattress had been stolen. The matter was reported to Shibuyunji police station and the accused

was later apprehended. Asked whether the facts were true and correct, the accused responded in the affirmative. In mitigation, Chembo asked for forgiveness from the court, saying what he did was wrong. He added that he was looking after his three children, wife and two orphans. "I have three children and a wife. I also keep two orphans," he said. However, Magistrate Chitulangoma sentenced him to nine months imprisonment with hard labour to deter others from committing similar offences. "I have heard what you have said in mitigation and that you are the first offender. However, there's need to deter others. I sentence you to nine months imprisonment with hard labour," she ruled.



International Women's Day, some Lusaka-based female police officers cleaned wards at Sikanze Police Hospital in Lusaka yesterday - picture courtesy of Zambia Police PR Unit

By Thomas Mulenga

Former finance minister Felix Mutati says government should postpone the implementation of the Sales and Goods tax to allow for more consultation, warning that the new tax regime might cause more problems than the Value Added Tax (VAT) that government wants to do away with effective 1st April, 2019. And Mutati says government must implement austerity measures in order to avoid the possible failure to balance the 2019 national budget due to debt servicing. In a statement, Thursday, Mutati further expressed concern that the debt servicing was growing greater than the country's reserves. "As you know there was a pronouncement that from the 1st of April, we are going to migrate from VAT to sales and goods tax. Now, from where we sit, there has been no consultation particularly with the private sector as to a framework that we are going to use as of the 1st of April. So you have a lot of questions that remain unanswered. Number one critical question is that one of the central features of sales tax is that; you as manufacturers, you as private sector, will pass on the cost to the final consumer who will pay a lot more and that invaluable feeds into inflation. And when it feeds

# Mutati asks govt to postpone sales tax implementation

into the inflation, you will have a critical impact on your monetary policy because monetary policy controls inflation. So this will be inflation that will be induced through a revenue measure. So that question remains totally unanswered, how are we going to ensure that the inflation impact of the sales tax are managed?" Mutati wondered. "It is not clear how you are going to address some of those items which you have zero rated and exempted; for example, mealie meal, flour and other basic commodities. Are you going to put a sales tax there or not? If you do, it will have an impact on an ordinary person. So all these things are actually totally unclear. So for me the next steps will be that let's address the leakages that are there in the VAT refunds, there are certain leakages. Let's have a consultative space, particularly with the private sector so that they understand the framework that they are going

to use because it will require even the alteration of accounting systems. And given the limitation of time, the implementation must be deferred because if we don't do that, we are going to endanger the revenue potential that will be raised from what was VAT, now sales tax and more so that sales tax is much more vulnerable to leakages. So our revenue targets may be compromised. So what government should think about is 'let's defer, so that we think through this new regime properly.' Otherwise, we are going to have a new regime that will be more problematic than what we have, VAT."

And Mutati said sales and goods tax had many risks such as compromising the competitive ability of goods that are exported. "When the private sector buys something, they are going to claim it, input and output. So that is self-enforcing. Sales tax has no self-enforcing and therefore the potential for leakages are a lot higher in sales tax compared to VAT, so what frame works are going to be put in place to ensure that these leakages are minimised? And the other challenge is the competitiveness of products, particularly the exports, if you are going to have exports that have a content of

sales tax, you are distorting your competitive ability, your goods externally will be less competitive and therefore it will hurt the economy. So whilst you want to generate tax revenue, you are eroding that generation because you have eroded competitiveness," Mutati said. And Mutati urged government to implement austerity measures in order to avoid the possible failure to balance the 2019 national budget due to debt servicing. "For this year, the amount that is required for debt servicing is colossal, now debt servicing takes a primary chunk from the budget and therefore you have

to deal with the debt servicing which unfortunately is growing greater than the reserves. So you get a situation where unless you do certain practical measures, you will fail to balance the 2019 budget. Now, what options are available? The first option that is available is for you to drastically curtail expenditure, is for you to implement those austerity measures that have already been pronounced, particularly those measures that are around the energy sector," Mutati said. And Mutati said government should re-engage the IMF in order to build the confidence of foreign investors to invest in the country. "There must be a reverted effort to re-engage the IMF, to build confidence, particularly foreign investors' confidence, particularly as a mechanism to boost international reserves. We need those practical actions in order to enable ourselves finance the 2019 budget," Mutati said.

## Private media still viewed as opposition in Zambia – US Embassy

By Stuart Lisulo

Zambia has a lot of work to do in embracing divergent views because the private news media are still being viewed as a proponent of the opposition political fraternity, says the US Embassy's public affairs director Sean McIntosh. And McIntosh says the US government remains hopeful that Prime Television will be given back its broadcasting license by the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) in due course. Commenting on the ongoing 30-day suspension the IBA slapped on Prime TV, McIntosh bemoaned that private news media outlets in the country are continuously being misconstrued as being members of the opposition political fraternity rather than a platform for divergent views. Asked if the IBA applies the same treatment to the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC), the country's national public broadcaster, as it gives to private entities, McIntosh noted that the latter tended to be perceived as part of the broader opposition political fraternity. "I believe your premise is a fair assessment, not just from my point of view, but I think any rational person can see that, State-owned media are under different rules than independent media. And, often times, as in many countries around the world, if you are an independent outlet, you are painted as

being the voice or proponent or advocate or even bank-rolled by the opposition. It's kind of a hard nut to crack in that regard," McIntosh told journalists in Lusaka. "But I think there is a lot of work to be done here, there's a lot of things that are possible. And if the Information Ministry and other authorities are really genuinely worried and looking at the revision of the IBA Act and the ZNBC Act, then, I am optimistic that there are some great things are in-store and that, there will be a much more level playing field for the media here in Zambia." He reiterated that the suspension of Prime TV's broadcasting license was a threat to freedom of speech. "We would like an urgent reconsideration of the suspension because the act in itself shows a very strong signal that threatens press freedoms. We believe in inherent fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of expression and the press. So, with this suspension, it's of grave concern," McIntosh noted. But he maintained that the US government remained hopeful that Prime TV would eventually be given back its broadcasting license by the IBA in due course. "So, it is our hope that the IBA make a quick, immediate re-consideration of the action because, ultimately, we want freedom of the press; we want fundamental freedoms to be

## C/Belt Police nab Chinese man in copper theft scam

By Daniel Chansa

Police in Chingola have arrested a Chinese national in connection with the attempted theft of copper concentrates valued at US\$100,000. Copperbelt Police Commissioner Charity Katanga disclosed that the attempted theft of goods in transit happened on March 5, between 13:00hrs and 22:00hrs along Chingola-Kitwe Road. Katanga said a Volvo truck Registration number ACX 2439 and trailer ACM 2321 with a totalweight of 36 tonnes was carrying copper concentrate from Kisenda town in the Democratic Republic of Congo to Ndola when the truck driver working together with his unknown friends attempted to steal the contraband. She said the truck being driven by David Daka 34, of unknown fixed abode was being escorted by a Panorama Security Guard Laston Makungu 27, of B 144



Mine area Chililabombwe. "Daka deviated the truck from Kalulushi road near Sabina in Kitwe to Chingola light industrial area near Status Hitech off Chingola-Chililabombwe

road. Zhang Lianan 42, of Chingola light industrial area a Chinese national is detained at Chingola Central police to help the police with investigation," Katanga said.

She said Daka and his helper are on the run and police have instituted a manhunt for the duo. "The truck is safely parked at Chingola Central police station," said Katanga.

## Solwezi immigration officer gets 2 years for corruption

By Thomas Mulenga

The Solwezi Magistrates' Court has sentenced an Immigration Assistant Officer of Zambezi District to two years imprisonment with hard labour, for corruption involving K116,600. In a statement, Thursday, Anti-Corruption Commission Corporate Affairs Officer Jonathan Siame said Solwezi Principle Magistrate Davies Chibwili found Ben Mpundu Sokoni, 44, guilty on 13 counts of obtaining money by false pretenses and two counts of theft by Public Servant. "The Solwezi Magistrate has sentenced an Immigration Assistant Officer to 2 years imprisonment with hard labour for obtaining money by false pretenses by theft by public servant involving K116, 600. Principle Resident Magistrate Hon. Davies Chibwili found Ben Mpundu Sokoni, 44, an Immigration Assistant Officer in

charge of Zambezi District in Solwezi of house no.A26 Ndeke Compound, guilty on 13 counts of obtaining money by false pretenses and two counts of theft by public servant contrary to section 3019 and 277 as read with section 265 respectively, of the Penal Code Cap 87 of the Laws of Zambia," Siame stated. "Sokoni has been sentenced to 2 years imprisonment with hard labour on each of the 13 counts, and two years' imprisonment with on each of the other 2 counts. The sentences will run concurrently with effect from 28th May 2017." Siyame stated that Sokoni used his position to obtain money on false pretenses that he was going to extend the temporal employment permits for employees of Stefanutti stocks construction company, when in fact not. "Particulars of the 13 counts of obtaining

money by false pretense are that Sokoni, on dates unknown but between 1st November 2012 and 31st 2014 in Zambezi District of Northwestern Province, Zambia, being an Immigration Assistant Officer, did by false pretenses and with intent to defraud, obtain K106, 100.00, purporting that he would facilitate the extension of Temporal Employment Permits for employees of Stefanutti Stocks Constructions Limited Company, when in fact not," stated Siame. "Particulars of the two counts of the theft by Public Servant are that on date unknown but between 1st January and 2012 and 31st December 2014, Soko being a public officer, namely Immigration Assistant Officer in Zambezi District of Northwestern Province, did steal K10, 500.00 which came into his possession by virtue of his employment. The convict was arrested by the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2017."

By Daniel Chansa

Copperbelt PF Chairman Nathan Bwalya Chanda's elder brother, Mathias Bwalya, has pulled out of the Roan Parliamentary by-election race.

Bwalya was among the 11 applicants, who had applied to contest the Roan Parliamentary by-election seat on the ruling party ticket.

But after declaring his intentions and application, Bwalya came under serious attacks from party members.

# Outcry forces Nathan Chanda's brother to pull out of Roan race

Currently, the Chanda family including his father and mother are serving in Luanshya PF structures.

"After a wide range of consideration, I have decided

to pull out of the race in interest of my family. Allow me to thank all of you who gave me the support but I won't allow my ambition and desire to serve my people destroy

what others have achieved. I will not put my interest first, but to seeing others smile is my prime objective. I also pledge to continue serving my community in my individual

capacity and always," wrote Bwalya.

Meanwhile, the number of applicants is expected to increase as other 'big fish' have expressed interest.

According to PF sources, none of the current applicants can win the Roan seat for the ruling party.

"This is a serious by election. It is more like this is the election that will determine the future of PF on the Copperbelt. I can tell you that none of those who applied among the 11 will be picked. That is just an academic exercise to look like the process is transparent," the source said. "At the moment, we are looking for the owner of Wada Chovu buses, for now maybe that guy can stand a chance to win, he is known in Luanshya because of his business. These jokers of Javen Kamanga, the DC bena Joel Chibuye, can't beat Kambwili in Roan. Ba mudala ba Kambwili has worked in Roan. The man is so popular and has a serious following. We are in panic as at now."

Speaker of the National Assembly Dr Patrick Matibini declared the Roan seat vacant when he concluded that Chishimba Kambwili was a leader and a member of the opposition NDC, meaning he had crossed the floor.

## Work independently, Lungu tells new High Court judges

By Mukosha Funga

As judges, you should carry out your functions independently and should never be swayed by outside influences, President Edgar Lungu told newly sworn-in High Court judges, Thursday.

Speaking after swearing in eight High Court judges at State House, President Lungu also asked them to expedite disposal of cases.

"Let me start by congratulating each one of you honourable judges on your respective appointments to serve as judges of the High Court of Zambia. The positions you have been appointed to, are not only of great honour, but also come with immense responsibility. As you join the bench, your first task is to address one of the biggest concerns by members of the public, relating to the delay in the disposal of court cases. I expect that with your appointments which has substantially increased the number of High Court judges will improve the time taken to dispose of cases. This therefore, calls for a lot of hard work from you honourable judges. You are also expected to deliver quality and fair justice. As judges, you should carry out your functions independently and should never be swayed by outside influences. As the executive, we will continue to uphold and respect the doctrine of separation of powers and the independence of the Judiciary," President Lungu said.

"I am delighted to note that a

good number of you are quite youthful. My government is passionate about creating opportunities for the youths and building their capacity as they form the majority of our population. It is a constitutional requirement as prescribed in Article 259, that appointments to public office should, among other things, take into account equitable representation of the youth, gender balance, and reflects the country's regional diversity."

President Lungu explained that he had appointed more men than women in order to balance numbers.

"Further, I am informed that of the 37 High Court judges, 21 are female and only 16 are male. The appointment of more male judges is meant to balance the numbers in the court," said President Lungu.

"It is also worth noting that you are bringing a broad diversity of knowledge and experience to the bench as you have been drawn from

the judicial service, the public service and the private sector. I have no doubt that this combination of knowledge and experience will enhance the speedy administration of justice. Let me emphasise that, as umpires of justice, you are expected to discharge your duties with independence, good judgement, competence and accountability. You should, at all times, bear in mind that judicial power and authority is derived from the people of Zambia."

Those sworn in are Evaristo Pengele, Koreen Etambuyu Mwenda - Zimba, Kenneth Mulife, Wilfred Godfrey Kopa Muma, Ruth Hachitapika Chibbabuka, Abha Nayar Patel, SC, Bonaventure Chakwawa Mbewe and Kazimbe Chenda.

The ceremony was witnessed by Chief Justice Ireen Mambilima, Minister of Justice Given Lubinda and Attorney General Likando Kalaluka among other Government Officials.

By Mirriam Chabala

Government has offered unionised public servants a four percent salary increase across the board, but the workers' unions have rejected proposal, describing it as a disservice to the suffering workers who toil so hard to produce goods and services for this country.

Union leaders, who sought not to be named, told News Diggers! that the proposed salary increment has spurred tension within the public service, leading to the formation of two camps of workers unions - one for those that want to accept the offer and move one and those that want to declare a dispute. The unions are afraid that being the largest employer, government's fashion of increasing salaries for public workers by such small amounts would inspire the private sector to follow suit and start giving their workers negligible salaries.

## Govt offers 4% pay rise to civil servants, leaving unions divided

"Government is offering four per cent salary increase to public workers under the current negotiations that are going on. But the unions are not happy with this increment because if you look at it, it's clearly nothing to write home about! The unions are not happy! But again, it appears there is a clique within the unions, which seems to be supporting government on this. They are saying 'government has no money, it's broke!' But whose fault is that? And since when did the unions become spokespersons for government? So, those are the unions that are going to retard progress on this matter. Otherwise, the four per cent is clearly not sufficient for public

service workers, looking at how the economy is biting. How does the government offer four per cent?" the union official wondered.

"And they are saying this four per cent should go up to 2020 and it looks like they are breaking through with that. But this is something the unions should sit down and critically consider because it's a disservice to the members. The members are toiling so hard to produce goods and services for this country. And the government, as an employer, should come up with a four per cent increase? This is unfair and by doing this, they are sending a message to other employers to emulate what they are

doing. Government is the biggest employer and they are sending a message to private sector employers to emulate what government is doing! They will simply say 'if government can offer four per cent to its workers, who are we to offer anything bigger than that? So, government should lead by example and offer something meaningful to the workers to enable them meet the high cost of goods and services in this country.'

The unions insisted that public workers had a lot of challenges they were grappling with, and that the four per cent proposed increment would not meet all of them.

"They have to send their

children to school on meagre salaries; they have to pay electricity; they have to pay rentals and their bank loans! So, all those should be taken into consideration by this government as an employer and offer a meaningful increment. Anything above 10 per cent could have made a lot of sense, not what they are offering. People know that the government is claiming to be broke, but should that be the fault of the workers? There should be prudence in the way government also manages its resources and ensure that the workers are given a good share of the national cake. The four per cent, which government has offered and which it has stuck to, is just unacceptable!" sources insisted.

Asked if the unions would take any action if government did not meet their demands, the source that the next course of action would be advised after the negotiations between government and the unions had been concluded.

"At this particular juncture, since it's not official yet and processions are still going on, I don't think we will take any action as unions. What it is that government has offered the four per cent increase and unions are still negotiating and discussing the way forward. So, for now, no action has been suggested. However, I would like to appeal to the unions to exercise maximum unity in the negotiations for better pay for our workers," said the unions.

## Kambwili u-turns, sues Speaker over Roan seat

By Zondiwe Mbewe

NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili has petitioned the Constitutional Court for a declaration that his Roan parliamentary seat did not fall vacant as ruled by the Speaker of the National Assembly Dr Patrick Matibini because the latter violated various provisions of the Constitution.

Kambwili who has cited the Attorney General as the respondent in this matter, is further seeking a declaration and order that the Speaker's ruling is null and void.

Meanwhile, the Electoral Commission of Zambia has announced that the Bahati and Roan constituencies Parliamentary and Local-Government by-elections will be held on April 11, 2019.

Kambwili had told journalists immediately after his seat was declared vacant that he would not contest the decision but in a petition filed in the Constitutional Court, Wednesday, Kambwili explained that he was until February 27, this year, serving his third consecutive term as Roan PF member of parliament.

He added that on the said date, he was made aware of a ruling by the Speaker of the National Assembly, declaring his Roan seat vacant.

Kambwili stated that he came to learn that the reason for the said declaration of the seat as vacant, was on account of his alleged 'floor crossing' from being a member of PF to NDC.

"The petitioner equally came to learn through various but verified news

reports that the Speaker was of the view that he was offering consultancy services to the said NDC," read the petition.

"The petitioner is equally aware that even if he had joined the NDC at the material time, a fact denied, the Speaker of the National Assembly acted on provisions in any event that do not provide for alleged floor crossing as provided for by the law in the 2016 amendments of the Constitution of Zambia."

Kambwili however, stated that he had to date not received any correspondence from the Speaker nor his subordinates in the usual manner of written communication whenever a need for communication had arisen.

He added that since learning of the

ruling by the Speaker through various media platforms, he had equally learnt of the impending by-election in Roan Constituency.

Kambwili lamented that his rights as a duly elected member of parliament had been severely infringed on by the Speaker, adding that the said Speaker violated various provisions of the Constitution of Zambia.

He is now praying for a declaration and order that the Speaker's ruling dated February 27, is null and void, as well as, a declaration that he did not cross the floor as ruled by the Speaker.

Kambwili further wants a declaration and order that his seat did not fall vacant as ruled by the Speaker, costs and any other remedies the court may deem fit.



# Women's day and Media Freedom !

*By Andyford Mayele Banda*

Today is International Women's Day. The theme for this year's celebration is 'Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change.' As People's Alliance for Change, we wish the hard working women of Zambia, a very happy celebration of this day – your day. On this day, we urge all men out there to take time and appreciate the role women play in our lives. You may not be married, but you have a mother, an aunt, a grandmother, a sister – please take time to appreciate and honour our women. Not only are our women family but also they are equal partners in the development of this country. So today we celebrate Mama Betty Kaunda, Mama Kankasa, Mama Inonge Wina, Mama Esther Lungu, Mama Christine Kasebasa, Mama Thandiwe Banda, Mama Maureen Mwanawasa, Mama Vera Tembo-Chiluba and many other women out there that have served as mothers to not only their biological children but to the nation at large.

In order for the women to Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change, we must create a platform for them. We must put in deliberate systems that will advance their lives in society. We must put in deliberate policies that will advantage women and close the wide gap in our social and economic set-up with men. This day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity. International Women's Day is all about unity, celebration, reflection, advocacy and action. Zambia still has a long way to go before the celebration of women can make meaningful sense to our womenfolk. The violence we see against women today is rising at such alarming rates that celebrating women on a day like today is insignificant. How many women have been killed at the hands of rogue husbands? Why does it continue to happen? Where is our Government in all of this?

Women are also an equal partner in the political dispensation. However, most women are discouraged to participate in politics due to the violence and insults that take place in our politics. In some instances, they are outrightly vilified for even thinking about contesting for any political position. Institutions such as the Police must do more to ensure that we stamp out cases of violence in elections and political activities in order to encourage more women participation in our politics. The Government has a major role to play in ensuring that women are respected and celebrated. PAC believes that a prosperous nation is one that can respect and honour its womenfolk. A nation that treasures women is a nation that prospers. As PAC we look forward to a day when equality and equity for women will no longer be just a slogan, but a reality in the lives of our women farmers, women marketeers, women teachers, women lawyers, women

engineers, women journalists and all women who are positive-ly contributing to any sector in our nation.

Admittedly, freedom of the Press is an integral element in advancing women's rights and participation in our democratic dispensation. Hence, cases like the one which happened in the Mukomba local government by-elections in Lundazi, where a lady journalist from Breeze FM called Grace Lungu was harassed, beaten and her money stolen by suspected PF cadres must not be entertained. These and many other tortures are what our women journalists go through every day. This takes us to another important issue that we want to tackle today which is urgent and that is freedom of the Press.

As a country, we need to know that we need a government that is tolerant to critical voices. This we must not just look in the face of those in government but the opposition, too. Any opposition political establishment that does not tolerate criticism and has a huge structure of propaganda machine to lie about their opponents and also insult those that criticise them, are no better than the PF government that is closing down critical media houses. Once given the instruments of power they would do the same, they would also come and shut down media houses, they would also come and arrest those that criticise them, they would also come and cripple those that compete with them.

The United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Every-one has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference, and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers".

We must remember that freedom of the press is important because it guarantees the rule of law, free speech and open and accountable government. In turn, freedom of expression is an essential pillar of governance more broadly, because this right enables as many citizens as possible to contribute to, as well as monitor and implement, public decisions on development. The importance of press freedom in promoting good governance is underlined by the increasing numbers of people who have access to an expanded realm of media platforms.

In particular, a free, pluralistic and independent news media, on all platforms, is important for facilitating good governance and transparency. Within the much-broadened media landscape, news media still remain central conduits for ongoing public assessments of the activities of government and other institutions that have developmental impact. Journalism is the act

of bringing in-formation and opinion into the public arena. It provides a platform for discussion across a range of issues pertaining to development, such as environment, science, gender, youth, peace, poverty and participation. Only when journalists are free to monitor, investigate and criticise a society's policies and actions can good governance take hold. The closure of Prime TV by the Independent Broadcasting Authority is another of many dents that the Patriotic Front government continue to score. A government or an individual that is scared of the truth must know that it is on a destructive path. The Bible, in the book of John 8:32 says that "Then you will know the truth and the truth shall set you free". It is clear from this book that the PF government would rather continue living a lie not knowing that they are already imprisoned. Indeed this act by the evidently not so Independent Broadcasting Authority is a clear sign of how much the PF government wants to muzzle free voices.

Just on the legacy of PF when it comes to the media, we should remember that they closed down the Post Newspaper, a business that ran for about 25 years employing many Zambians just because they can't handle critical thinking. Despite all these threats, we would like to encourage all independent media houses such as News Diggers to be courageous and brave and not lose focus. You are not your own voices, you are the people's voices, you are our voices and no one said it was going to be easy. There is no doubt the closure of Prime TV was politically motivated.

As PAC we believe that the biggest problem we are facing as a country is not laws or legislation but leadership. Hence, as PAC we believe the only solution to all these challenges is a complete leadership overhaul. We need a new breed of leaders who will tolerate divergent views and treat the media as an equal partner in development and information dissemination. Freedom of the press or freedom of the media is the principle that communication and expression through various media, including printed and electronic media especially published materials, should be considered a right to be exercised freely. Such freedom implies the absence of interference from an overreaching state.

As PAC not only are we promising a guaranteed freedom of the Press but we sincerely believe it is an integral part of the democratic dispensation.

LIFT PRIME TV SUSPENSION!

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

# Women key to food systems, healthy & sustainable diets

ACCORDING to the 2018 State of food and agriculture report published by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), globally women make up about 43 percent of the agricultural labour force worldwide, and in some countries like Zambia, women make up 80 percent of all farmers.

In addition to participating in farming, most women particularly in rural areas in Zambia are also major actors in seed saving, animal husbandry, grain processing, and other tasks related to growing food. This is in addition to cooking, cleaning, and taking care of sick elders and children. It is women farmers who produce the food that families eat. While male farmers often focus on growing commodity crops like maize, rice, and soybeans, women raise, vegetables, and small livestock that nourish families each day.

Thus, women make significant contributions to agricultural production, rural economies, food security and nutrition, land and natural resource management; and building resilience to climate change. Beyond their contribution to food production and nutrition for their families, women engaged in agriculture use it not only as a source of livelihood but also contribute towards a healthier and more resilient environment. Examples range from women in Chongwe District engaging in crop diversity through climate-adaptive irrigation strategies, to women dairy farmers in Kafue district starting a co-operative to pay for their children's healthcare and education.

While women are the majority of the Zambia's smallholder farmers, their contributions are at best largely unnoticed and at worst almost universally ignored. Women do not have equal access to resources land, credit, education, extension services etc. This lack of women's empowerment increases maternal under-nutrition, and limits women's ability to practice positive care behaviors, such as providing sufficient and nutritious complementary foods. Therefore, to achieve food and nutrition

security for all people, food assistance policies and programs must create conditions that advance, rather than undermine, gender equality and women's empowerment. To achieve this, women need the same access to land, education, and inputs that men currently are offered. According to FAO, globally, if resources were available, women's food production capacity would be increased by 20 to 30 percent and lift as many as 150 million people out of hunger and food insecurity. With about 815 million people going hungry worldwide, that's no small number.

HIVOS Southern Africa is working with women in Zambia through various initiatives and making monumental change in the food system. An important aspect that has been taken by the Sustainable Diets for All (SD4ALL) program is to promote production and consumption of traditional foods. This is because food is as important to a culture as language. Not only is it a tool for communication, and a source of social engagement, it is a platform for human expression. It embodies our Zambian culture and ought to be preserved for future generations to not only enjoy its nutrition but to understand our rich culture. Understanding the culture of our traditional food means equally understanding Zambia's culture around women's role in food systems in Zambia.

Thus, the HIVOS SD4ALL program in collaboration with International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) published a Food Values Book themed: Celebrating local food value and diversity. The book celebrates Zambian traditional foods and adds knowledge of the nutritional value contained in these foods. Additionally, the crops celebrated are crops that are adapted to the Zambian climate and therefore can be used as in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

HIVOS works with like-minded Civil Society Organizations such as the Zambia Alliance of Women, Civil Society for

Poverty Reduction, Civil Society Organizations-Scaling up Nutrition (CSO-SUN), Consumer Unity Trust Society (CUTS) and Alliance for Zambia Informal Economy Association (AZIEA). These partners together work to promote production and consumption of sustainable diets as it is a multiform phenomenon.

Ms. Chimya, the Executive Director of the Zambia Alliance of Women (ZAW) acknowledges the important role played by various actors but suggests that policymakers, community leaders, and elders need to value the work of women and youth as priority. Not only are the women farmers and food producers but they are nutritional gatekeepers, caretakers of rich agricultural traditions, and stewards of the land and biodiversity. Thus, the empowerment of women makes policy interventions more nutrition sensitive.

For Ms. Chimya, the process of women's empowerment must be supported more vigorously adding that gender equality is fundamental to justice, and it is fundamental to nutrition. Recognizing the role of women in agriculture and providing concrete solutions to eliminating hunger and malnutrition, stopping food loss and food waste, promoting nutrient-dense and indigenous crops, and realizing the vision of a more equitable food system will all lead to a healthy nation.

Therefore, creating a more sustainable food system means not only acknowledging women's pivotal role in nourishing the planet, but also uplifting women in their current efforts and potential to be pioneers of change.

*The author: Sustainable Diets For All (SD4ALL) Program Team, Hivos Southern Africa. SD4ALL is a lobby and advocacy program that is currently working on policies and plans that support diverse food production and consumption while acknowledging the role of women in the food system.*

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

We are a naturally a dictatorial society and bringing in the foreign system of democracy is a real challenge, says Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services Permanent Secretary Chanda Kasolo.

And Kasolo says putting pressure on his team to rescind the Independent Broadcasting Authority's (IBA) decision of suspending Prime TV will not work under his reign.

Meanwhile, Kasolo says the IBA is toothless when it comes to regulating ZNBC because the national broadcaster does not operate under the same Act as other electronic media.

The Permanent Secretary has further warned that his Ministry will soon start regulating journalists in Zambia because a lot of media practitioners are unqualified. Speaking when he featured on 5Fm's Burning Issue programme, Thursday, Kasolo complained that it was unrealistic for people to

## Zambia is naturally dictatorial, democracy is a challenge - Kasolo

expect ZNBC, as a national broadcaster to give equal coverage to government and the opposition, saying Zambia was a dictatorial society.

"One of my passions is to try and turn ZNBC into what it was before. Everybody wished to work for ZNBC. I know we have put in quite a lot of money into ZNBC's digital migration US \$273 million, and all sorts of things coming up still under ZNBC under that digital migration. However, the quality of reporting, the quality of reading, the quality of dressing during TV presentation must all come out. We have got to be the best and we have got to take the lead. But again, ZNBC must allow the opposition space. They must even take pictures

of opposition rallies and so on. Being a government leading media, you have to do a little bit of balance. But even BBC is not in the middle; they are leaning towards the government of the day, but they still give coverage to the opposition. So, this is something that we can achieve over time. It is difficult in our society because democracy does not come easy. We are a naturally dictatorial society [and] so to bring in this foreign system of democracy is a real challenge," Kasolo said.

He added that IBA had no mandate to regulate ZNBC.

"IBA goes back a long way, as far back as 2002. The first Act regulated all media houses but during the MMD rule, they amended the IBA Act to move out ZNBC. So now what happens is that we can't go to ZNBC and say 'come on, we are monitoring you and we don't like what you said here and you are biased on this' we can't because they are not in the Act. That is a fact... in fact, IBA is absolutely toothless when it comes to ZNBC. The only way we can go and look at ZNBC is if an individual or groups of individuals complain about a particular programme or a particular news bulletin. When they complain then we can ask them to give us the data for 90 days and we can look at it and make a decision," he said.

And Kasolo said no amount of public pressure would push his Ministry to lift Prime TV's suspension, saying if Prime TV goes to court it will waste it's money.

"Please! Distinguish between IBA and PF, not all professionals working under

IBA are PF. We have got almost all political parties represented under IBA. Prime TV can come back, and can come back stronger by just doing what they have been asked to. This issue of trying to put pressure on my team to say: 'reinstate or change what' will not happen, not under my clock! So, I proposed that we concentrate on retraining their staff and put in things like cleaning up and so on so that when they come back, they will be very strong and will have a lot of sympathy because of what has happened to them," Kasolo said.

"If they (Prime TV) want to test it (the 30-day suspension) in the court of law, they are welcome. But what will happen most likely is that they'll say 'look, the statute gives it' and so I am not breaking any law. If the statute says 'I cannot be [IBA] chair, then they have the freedom to go to the court if they wish, but my advice is I think they will be wasting their money."

He also charged that the three Church mother bodies namely the ZCCB, EFC, and CCZ had turned into "semi politicians."

"The three mother bodies, I am shocked! And I am Catholic! I am shocked that they actually kept quiet on some of the relevant issues that have been happening of late, for example, there was an outcry on the Lusaka Hustle (TV show) about issues of homosexuality, not a word, not even a whisper from the three mother bodies, quiet! I thought that that is really in their heart and they must comment on this [because] it's a morality issue,

it's a religious issue and they didn't say anything! Now this one, which is fairly a political issue, they come out. I wonder if the three [church] mother bodies are semi-politicians. I am not a politician and so they shouldn't come with politics to me," he said.

He also argued that some NGOs lashed out at government because they only wanted to please their pay masters.

"Some of these NGOs, I know they are paid money for speaking [and] maybe that's why they are speaking so that they can get more money from their sponsors, but don't interfere in IBA work [because] this is government work done professionally. If you want to question it, come to us, have a look at what we have done and then comment. Commenting without information is a fool's game! They don't even know that we were very lenient on the 30 days' [suspension] because others wanted six months, but I, as chairman, ruled the 30 days," Kasolo argued.

The Permanent Secretary further said as the chief executive of the Ministry, he would grant permission to ZNBC to start covering opposition leaders.

"I was just discussing with my Honourable Minister (Dora Siliya) that, everybody thinks that ZNBC is government because maybe the staff [as ZNBC] are scared of bringing the opposition to the programmes. So, I, as the chief executive of the Ministry, will have to write to them to give them permission to bring these people on! I don't see why we can't have, for instance,

Honourable Mwanakatwe or Siliya interviewed by Gravazio on Sunday, and then the following week we get one of the opposition, whichever it is, and bring them on and they also get interviewed. I think that is the good way forward. So, I will make sure that this starts happening. I don't want ZNBC to be seen as a biased media. I want it to be a truly Zambian, nationalistic media house. They should promote everything that deals with moving Zambia forward and includes bringing some opposition so as to bring a little bit of balance or views that are expressed. So, we are going to encourage them to start covering opposition events," Kasolo said.

Meanwhile, Kasolo said his Ministry would soon start regulating journalists.

"We need an association' just like LAZ is for the lawyers, just like CIMA, ACCA, etc. I cannot go and call myself a chartered accountant if I am not a member of that association of chartered accountants; I cannot call myself a lawyer unless I am registered with LAZ as such. So, this is what I have decided with my Honourable Minister; that we want to regulate because the journalists themselves have failed! So, we have written a draft of how this should be and we have the guidelines and we are still working on that. It will give guidelines as to who can be called a journalist? It will give guidelines to the minimum qualifications of a journalist. We will legislate it into law so that when anyone outside says: 'I am a journalist' and they are not, this association can prosecute them and make them stop passing off as a journalist! I want journalists to be highly qualified in this country and compete with those we see on CNN, BBC, the Times in England and so on," argued Kasolo.

### LEGAL NOTICE



#### THE URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING ACT NO 3 OF 2015 APPLICATION

#### FOR CERTIFIED COPIES OF THE TITLE DEED

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT Elias Muleya of plot No 2644/610 Elaine Britel Livingstone intends to apply for a certified true copy of the document described in the Schedule hereto.

#### THE SCHEDULE

- 1.0 Certificate of title deed in respect of property No. 2644/610 Elaine Britel under the names Elias Muleya
- 2.0 All persons having any objections to the said document are required to lodge the same in writing with the Registry of Deeds Livingstone City Council within 30 days of publication of this notice.

Dated at Livingstone this 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2019

Petriqella Pule Kaungu  
COUNCIL REGISTRAR  
LIVINGSTONE CITY COUNCIL

# Supplying toxic drugs is pure govt witchcraft!

Revelations that government procured a toxic Chinese-manufactured drug and supplied it to hospitals across the country is enough scandal for someone in the system to, not only lose a job, but also face prosecution. This is a serious indication of complete incompetence and negligence of duty by a group of government leaders.

And to imagine that the Ministry in charge of public health could only realise that they were giving toxic medicine to patients after they started vomiting and wallowing in excruciating pain is just pure evil! This is government witchcraft, nothing else! Surely, someone must be made to pay for endangering the lives of citizens in this manner.

The Ministry of Health cannot hide behind a finger and say they have initiated efforts to recall the drug from all hospitals across the country. This is not a scandal that can be resolved by such a remedial measure. If this scandal involved any private hospital in Zambia, their operating licence was going to be revoked!

We have not forgotten that this same government, through the Health Professions Council, shut down Fairview Hospital in Lusaka, among other private health facilities, for "stocking and dispensing expired drugs." How is that offence any different from the one committed by

the Ministry of Health on such a large scale? People should have shame when practising hypocrisy. Being in government doesn't give you any licence to kill.

We have noted that the Pharmaceutical Society of Zambia is blaming the supplier for delivering drugs, which did not match with the samples presented at the time of bidding, but that doesn't hold water. Mr Jerome Kanyika says: "What happens when someone is bringing their samples to be registered in this country, they bring the best of their samples. But in the long-run, as they win tenders or contracts, they change and bring a tablet that does not consist the amount of drugs that they talked about when registering."

We have a huge problem with that explanation. Zambians don't know and don't care whom government

contracted to supply the drugs, they know the President of Zambia; the man he appointed as Minister of Health and his Permanent Secretary. If there is any negligence, or in this case, evil practice in the delivery of health services, these people must be answerable, not the Chinese manufacturer or whoever supplied the drugs.

You cannot say, since the samples that the supplier brought during the bidding process passed the tests, then we should fold our hands and entrust citizens' lives in the hands of businessmen who are here to make profit. That kind of negligence cannot be acceptable. It's government's responsibility to verify that what it procured is what has been supplied.

Some time back during an investigation we carried out in the oil

supply scandals in 2017, we learnt that when bidders win contracts to supply fuel, their oil is sampled at the point of loading and it is also sampled at the point of offloading in Dar-es-salaam before the crude is pumped into Indeni Refinery. They don't just assume that what is on the bill of lading is the actual content being supplied, no! The reason they do this is not because they suspect that sharks may have urinated in the crude oil and contaminated it during the voyage, it's because, in this million-dollar business of supply, there is no room for error. There is so much at stake and a little negligence can cause a life-long catastrophe! Government can lose millions of dollars and people can die.

So, stop pointing fingers at the supplier, point fingers at the

Ministry of Health. Someone is not doing their job, and if they are doing it, then they are doing it to fatten their pockets and not to serve the public. These scandals are too much at the Ministry of Health and it's time heads rolled!

Last year, we reported about all these illegalities in the drug supply at the Ministry of Health, and we remember being blasted for 'rumour mongering' by the Minister and his Permanent Secretary. Our report revealed that there is a Chinese company that was providing medical supplies without subjecting the commodities to quality examinations. We further revealed the Ministry's awarding of supply contracts to companies of interest, and they didn't like us for publishing what

they described as 'speculation.'

But today, they are panicking for allowing what they could have prevented if they did their jobs. Let's not make jokes with people's lives. This is pure witchcraft and Zambians must stand up to protest against this negligence.

And talking about protesting, we are seriously concerned with the citizens' reaction to this development. What is going on in Zambia? Where are the gallant men and women of our generation to explore legal channels and save the country from this deterioration?

Zambia is, indeed, a country of docile, gullible people! This is a country of press statements and political rhetoric. We have counted that since this news of toxic medicine was reported to the public, only one politician has raised unsolicited questions around the supply of toxic medicine – and that's Mr Chishimba Kambwili. If this is how vigilant citizens operate, then we must forget about anything good coming for those who are not benefiting from all these government scandals. We are doomed!

News Diggers!

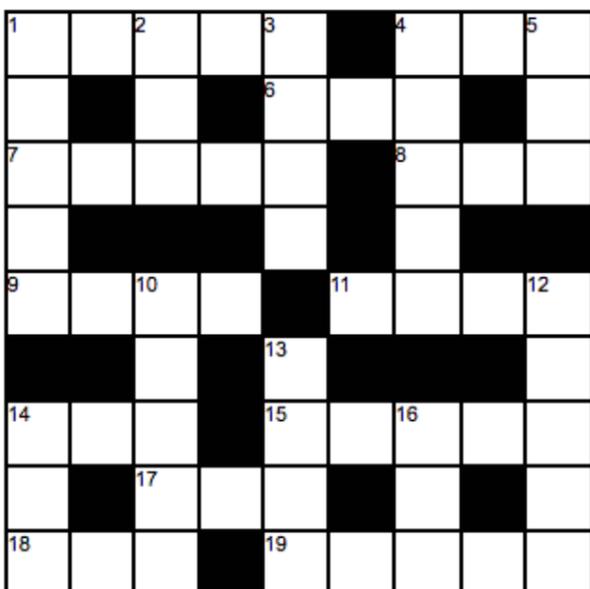
Ear to the ground

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## Crossword puzzle 309



*“Success is most often achieved by those who don't know that failure is inevitable.”*  
- Coco Chanel

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Across</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hurricane, e.g.</li> <li>4. Sticky tree fluid</li> <li>6. Make a selection</li> <li>7. Chopper blade</li> <li>8. Hearing organ</li> <li>9. Field goal attempt</li> <li>11. Sir Guinness</li> <li>14. TTYL</li> <li>15. Church keyboard</li> <li>17. Quiet and timid</li> <li>18. Understand</li> <li>19. Good weather</li> </ul> | <p><b>Down</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Movie ogre</li> <li>2. Grain</li> <li>3. Additional</li> <li>4. Rip off</li> <li>5. For each</li> <li>10. Summit</li> <li>12. ___ cane; Christmas treat</li> <li>13. Young men</li> <li>14. Piece of luggage</li> <li>16. Weapon</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

## Solutions to puzzle 308



# Reader's feedback

## 'Sven's right on Zambian football being too political'

Editor, *football coaches!" - Mazabuka Mwanakalando*

"He is right!" - Banda Greyson

"True, Sven. This country's football is on auto-pilot. Even Renard was insulted!" - Duce Elijah Mwansa

"I think he may be right." - Mugala Allan

"He is right, Zambia is just too political!" - Richard Limbikane Phiri

"True. Kamanga was at one point beat up by PF cadres at a certain church in Kabwata." - Harry Muzandu

"Great, Sven. We all need to protect our integrity and our reputation. Well explained." - Jonathan Mulaisho

"It's not politics; Zambian soccer fans are just observant and critical of coaches. I wish we would have been dealing with the politicians the same way we deal with the

"You resigned because you failed to reach your target, Sven! I would do the same. Losses kept coming. I didn't see any improvement in the team performance, but I kept on paying taxes and you continued enjoying. Bwana, go back! We need good results!" - Mwamba Mulindwa



## Ineffective running of schools: a case of Kenneth Kaunda Secondary School

Dear Editor,

Allow me space in your widely-read newspaper to air out my concerns on the manner in which Kenneth Kaunda Secondary School is being managed.

Kenneth Kaunda Secondary School is the biggest school in Muchinga Province. It is situated west of Chinsali near Lubwa Mission, the birth place of the first Republican President of Zambia Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda in whose name and honour the school was built. The school has over the years produced great men, some of whom are high-ranking government officials, others in civil service and high profile men in the informal

sector.

One is, however, likely to be dismayed with the state in which the school is today. Despite the rich background and high profile of the school, Kenneth Kaunda Secondary School remains the dirtiest and most dilapidated in the province at the moment.

Paint is peeling off some of the buildings, a sign that they have not been attended to in a long time. Walls of the inside and outside of the hostels are extremely dirty. Most of the windows do not have glass panes. They are merely frames leaving pupils exposed to mosquito bites and vulnerable to diseases such as malaria.

Questions that beg serious answers are: "where and what is the school management and the Parents Teachers' Association doing even before Government funding and help from other stake holders is solicited? Do simple maintenance works such as replacing broken glass panes, painting infrastructure and lighting up the school require funding from government?"

It is such attitudes of depending on central government that has robbed this country of the development that is greatly desired. Running of schools in this manner is not only conflicting and frustrating government's efforts in the provision of quality education, but also eroding the standards of education.

Besides being the dirtiest, the school is now the most expensive public boarding school in the province! What needs to be done for now in order to save the face of the school is to change the management of the school. Many head teachers in secondary schools in Muchinga have overstayed. Some have stayed as long as eight years at the same school! This has led to familiarity and ineffectiveness.

The school further needs forensic auditing as there are possibilities that public funds have gone into pockets of individuals. Other than this, the school needs an overhaul rehabilitation in order to restore it to its former glory and befit the name it bears. Unless this is done, the school bearing the name of our founding father of this nation will continue to lose its beauty in the public's eye. The school might in few years to come be devoid of pupils as most parents would prefer send their children to better and affordable boarding schools in the province, such as Isoka Boys; Mpika Boys; Chama Boarding, to mention but a few.

Concerned citizen

Kenneth Kaunda Secondary School,  
P. O Box 480096,  
Chinsali

## PF youths' warning to MPs positioning themselves for 2021

Editor,  
"What sort of youths are these? Do they understand the meaning of democracy?" - Muche Mambwe

"If they are positioning themselves, I think it means they are seeing something wrong with the President." - Moses Tlc Raphaels

"I have a lot of friends in PF and they say it is hell! They are scared of moving out because they fear for their businesses. They haven't known how we survive in the opposition. They say whether Lungu stands or not, he's going." - Samuel Kertis Sikalongo

## Nathan Chanda's decision not to contest Roan

Editor,

"The guy knows he can't win Roan, even if it was to be against Mulyokela. Now he claims CK caused the by-election." - Joseph Chisenga

"Roan people are loyal; I still remember the mighty MMD losing to Mr Pwele of UNIP - a man who had no money for campaign only his words made people vote for him." - Vic McKay

"Ba Chanda, you cannot face CK and win! Otherwise, deep down your heart, you have been wanting that seat for a long time. In fact, CK would have stood in Nchanga, Chingola, because even there, people love him! And he lived in Chingola; he actually has a house he bought the time he worked for the mines. Otherwise, you made a wise decision because it was going to be very embarrassing for you and the party." - Haggai Mandala

"He's just scared to contest!" - Musonda Banda

### 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.

Facebook boss Mark Zuckerberg has said he believes secure, private messaging services will become more popular than open platforms.

In a blog, Mr Zuckerberg outlined his vision to transform Facebook into a "privacy-focused platform." Facebook owns Messenger and WhatsApp, but message encryption limits its ability to make money through targeted adverts.

The social media giant has come under fire for a series of privacy scandals.

In 2018, it emerged that the data of about 50 million users had been harvested and passed on to a

# Zuckerberg outlines plan for 'privacy-focused' Facebook

political consultancy.

Some critics see the proposed changes as a way of Facebook perhaps abandoning its responsibilities, says the BBC's North America technology reporter Dave Lee.

If what happens on Facebook is

more private and temporary, he says, it may be harder to hold the site accountable for any perceived misdeeds.

What did Mr Zuckerberg say?

"Facebook and Instagram have helped people connect with friends, communities, and

interests in the digital equivalent of a town square," said the billionaire founder of Facebook.

"But people increasingly also want to connect privately in the digital equivalent of the living room."

In response, Mr Zuckerberg said he wanted to develop the

social media network into one focused around privacy, reducing permanence, and secure data storage.

As part of his privacy goals, he said Facebook would not "store sensitive data in countries with weak records on human rights

like privacy and freedom of expression."

"Upholding this principle may mean that our services will get blocked in some countries, or that we won't be able to enter others anytime soon. That's a tradeoff we're willing to make," he continued.

Mr Zuckerberg added that encrypted messaging will also create scope for new business tools, especially ones around online payments and commerce.

He did not offer a firm timeline for his vision, but said changes would take place "over the next few years." "I believe we should be working towards a world where people can speak privately and live freely knowing that their information will only be seen by who they want to see it and won't all stick around forever."

"If we can help move the world in this direction, I will be proud of the difference we've made," Mr Zuckerberg wrote.

What we are seeing is potentially a very new direction for Facebook.

You could argue that it is finally listening to what its users want and responding to their changing habits, rather than introducing its own ideas and then responding to the influx of feedback afterwards - seeking forgiveness rather than permission is not uncommon in the tech sector. **BBC**

## R Kelly back in jail in child support case

Embattled US R&B singer R Kelly has been taken into custody for failing to pay child support.

A judge in Chicago said he would be held until he paid \$161,000 (£122,000) owed to his ex-wife and their children.

It comes hours after R Kelly tearfully and angrily denied allegations of sexual abuse in a TV interview.

Last month, he was charged with 10 counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse, involving four alleged victims, three of whom were minors.

He pleaded not guilty to all the charges and was released on bail after spending three nights in jail.

If convicted, he faces three to seven years in prison on each charge.

What is the child support case?

R Kelly, 52, was detained after a court hearing in Chicago on Wednesday.

The singer's defence attorney said he was having financial difficulties - his finances were a "mess".

R Kelly has been a target of a boycott campaign, and his recording contract has been cancelled.



He was prepared to pay up to \$60,000 of what he owed to his former wife, Andrea Kelly, and their three children, but the judge required the full amount.

The singer's next court hearing is scheduled for 13 March.

What about the emotional TV interview?

R Kelly was speaking to CBS This Morning - his first interview since his arrest last month in the sexual abuse case.

"I didn't do this stuff. This is not me," he said, adding that he is "fighting for my life".

The star also denied accusations, raised in the recent documentary Surviving R Kelly, that he

held women against their will, confiscating their phones, restricting their food, and denying them access to their families.

Becoming emotional, he asked CBS news reporter Gayle King:

"How stupid would it be for R Kelly, with all I've been through to hold somebody? How stupid would I be to do that?"

"Use your common sense," he continued, raising his voice and turning to address the camera.

"Forget the blogs, forget how you feel about me. Hate me if you want to; love me if you want. But just use your common sense."

"How stupid would it be for me with my crazy past and what I've been through [to say], 'Oh right now, I just think I need to be a monster and hold girls against their will and chain them up in my basement?'"

"Quit playing, quit playing," he said, becoming tearful. "This is not me."

At this point, Kelly stood up, pounding his fist and beating his chest as he declared: "Are you all trying to kill me?" **Channel**

## Brazil leader criticised over obscene video

Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro has provoked controversy by posting an obscene video of two revellers at Carnival, saying he wanted to reveal the truth about the festival.

The clip posted on Twitter shows two men engaging in sex acts on top of a taxi shelter during a street party.

The far-right leader suggested such scenes were becoming normal.

Mr Bolsonaro, a deeply divisive figure who has made racist, homophobic and misogynistic remarks but was a clear winner in last year's election, was the focus of much criticism in many Carnival celebrations across Brazil.

The footage was shared by the president late on Tuesday - when the festivities were still under way - and includes one man urinating on another person in front of a crowd of revellers in what appears to be downtown São Paulo.

"I don't feel comfortable showing it, but we have to expose the truth so the population are aware," said the president to his 3.46 million followers.

"This is what many street parties in the Brazilian Carnival have turned into," he added, inviting people to "comment and reach their conclusions".



Some 35,000 comments followed. They included critics of the president, personalities and even people who said were his supporters and condemned his decision to post the video.

Others said they would report the president's post for offensive content. Hours later, a message of sensitive material was added to the video but it was not clear if it was an initiative by Twitter or Mr Bolsonaro himself.

Some users, however, have

supported the president - elected with strong support of conservative and evangelical voters - condemning what they called "indecent" behaviour.

The video was recorded on Monday during a street party known as a "bloco", Folha de S.Paulo newspaper reports, and it had sparked controversy even before the president's tweet.

Some witnesses said the scene was an isolated event, the newspaper adds.

Opposition lawmakers said they would ask prosecutors to investigate whether the president had broken privacy laws by posting the video.

Mr Bolsonaro, who likes to compare himself to US President Donald Trump, took office in January and often uses Twitter to engage with supporters and make official announcements.

The president's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. **BBC**

## Tanzania teacher to hang for killing pupil

A court in Tanzania has sentenced to death by hanging a 51-year-old school teacher who beat to death a 14-year-old pupil.

Respicius Mtazangira caned and hit Sperijs Eradius with a blunt object at their school in Bukoba town in north-western Tanzania last August after accusing the boy of stealing a handbag that had gone missing.

Sperijs denied the allegation, but Mtazangira still proceeded to assault him.

In his ruling on Wednesday, High Court Judge Lameck Mlacha convicted Mtazangira of murder, but acquitted fellow teacher Heriet Gerald.

Nine witnesses - including pupils - testified during their trial. A medical report presented to court showed that the beating had caused the child's death.

Mtazangira's lawyer was quoted by local media as saying that he did not rule out an appeal against the verdict.

Tanzania last carried out the death sentence in 1994.

President John Magufuli indicated in 2017 that he opposed executions.

"I know there are people who convicted of murder and waiting for death penalty, but please don't bring the list to me for decision because I know how difficult it is to execute," he said. **BBC**

For all the money spent, it is the same old story -- another year, another Champions League horror show for Paris Saint-Germain.

The bold, brash French giants talk a good game, and their Qatari owners have thrown vast sums over nearly a decade now in an attempt to build the best side in Europe.

Yet for the third year running they are out of Europe's elite club competition in the first knockout round after Wednesday's stunning defeat on away goals against Manchester United.

Coaches have come and gone, superstars have been signed, but in the Champions League all PSG seem able to achieve is to invent new and improbable ways to be eliminated.

In 2017, after the promise of four successive quarter-final appearances, there was the capitulation in Barcelona, a 6-1 defeat wiping out a 4-0 first-leg win.

Since then, Qatar Sports Investments have spent over 500 million euros (\$565 million) in transfer fees on new signings, including the two most expensive players in the world, Neymar and Kylian Mbappe.

There has been no progress, and there must be some uncertainty as to the long-term viability of the Qatari project, especially with the danger of punishment still looming for possible breaches of UEFA's Financial Fair Play rules.

Last year, there was an underwhelming defeat against Real Madrid, with Neymar injured for the second leg. This time, with Neymar again injured and Mbappe off form, PSG were ousted by a seriously depleted United.

The visitors had two untried teenagers on as substitutes when Marcus Rashford scored the last-gasp penalty -- awarded after a controversial VAR review -- that gave them a 3-1 win on the night.

# Where now for PSG after latest European horror show?



- Serial bottlers -

It feels like Goundhog day, but this time it is somehow different.

"Even worse" read the front page of leading sports daily L'Equipe on Thursday, with a nod to that night in Barcelona.

Inside, renowned commentator Vincent Duluc said PSG "owe much of their celebrity to these collapses that make them look ridiculous in the eyes of the world."

Against United, seven survivors from the Barcelona debacle either started or came off the bench. Was that game on their minds?

"I don't agree that we have a problem from losing at Barcelona that you could see," said coach Thomas Tuchel. "This is for me too easy and I don't want to step into this trap."

However, even their exit to Chelsea in the 2014 quarter-finals was similar in nature.

Abroad, PSG, founded in 1970, are often derided as having no history, seen as a club with vast amounts of money, but no substance. They are now the serial Champions League bottlers.

- 'Believe in this project' - So what comes next at the Parc des Princes?

Financially, PSG will still have made an estimated 85 million euros from their European run this season, and they recently announced a lucrative, new shirt sponsorship deal with Accor reportedly worth over

50 million euros annually.

President Nasser al-Khelaifi will come under scrutiny, and one of either sporting director Antero Henrique or coach Tuchel will probably have to go. It is more likely to be the former.

"We are here because we believe in this project and in the direction in which it is heading," insisted Brazilian defender Marquinhos.

He played in midfield against United, with French international Adrien Rabiot frozen out after refusing to sign a new deal.

With hindsight, Tuchel may wish he had started Alphonse Areola in goal rather than a 41-year-old Gianluigi Buffon, at fault for United's second goal.

Tuchel can still win a league and cup double, but winning a domestic treble was not good enough for Unai Emery last year.

"We must not say the season is finished," said Al-Khelaifi, although he admitted "it's difficult to come back from this."

As long as the current owners stay, they will try, but

Neymar's future will again now be called into question.

The Brazilian's two years in Paris have been overshadowed by injuries at key moments. His chances of winning the Ballon d'Or are surely over for another year.

In the meantime, the hangover will be long and painful.

"I need some time to rest. I want to be at home and not talk, not think. I just can't believe that this is possible," admitted a shattered Tuchel. **AFP**

## Crotch-grabbing Simeone escapes UEFA touchline ban

Diego Simeone has been fined €20,000 for his celebration in Atletico Madrid's Champions League last-16 first-leg win over Juventus, but he has escaped

a touchline ban.

The 48-year-old was charged with improper conduct by UEFA after celebrating Jose Gimenez's opening goal in the 2-0 win by grabbing his crotch.

Simeone attracted criticism for the gesture but he apologised after the match, explaining it was directed at Atletico fans to show them that the team "have cojones". He told reporters: "It means we have balls, a lot of balls."

"To start [Diego] Costa and Koke after they hadn't played for a month takes balls."

Simeone added: "I did it as a player in Lazio-Bologna and I did it again to show our fans that we have cojones."

"It wasn't aimed at the other team, I was turning towards our own supporters."

"It's not a nice gesture, I'll admit, but I felt the need to do it. It was such a tough game, we fought so hard and Diego Costa worked really hard when he wasn't 100 per cent fit. I had to show what I

was feeling.

"I can only apologise if anyone was offended, but I did it from the heart."

Simeone has now been sanctioned by UEFA's Control, Ethics and Disciplinary Body, but he will be free to be in the dugout for the second leg at the Allianz Stadium on Tuesday.

The Argentine tactician has said of a return date with Juve: "The tie is not over yet, there is still a game to play."

"For sure we will have to suffer against a great opponent, with great players."

On top of Simeone's sanctions, Atletico have been fined €38,000 for breaching regulations relating to blocking stairways and throwing objects.

Juve have been ordered to pay €30,000, while head coach Massimiliano Allegri has been warned, because of the game's late kick-off. **Goal.com**

## Don't rule us out yet, says bottom placed Maestro

By Abraham Kalito

Super division side Maestro United FC communications manager Ignitius Habeene says the club will not be relegated inspite of a dismal start in the league following promotion.

Habeene told Goal Diggers! in an interview, Thursday, that the club has brought in some new players and re-inforced the squad ahead of the game against Lumwana Radiant at Nakambala stadium on Saturday.

He said the club faced some challenges that made it difficult to settle in the league and consequently resulted into the team's poor performances in the first five games.

"So, what I can say is it's too early to

rule us out. Even though we haven't performed better in the previous games and the fact that we are newcomers, you still cannot rule us out. We are still very much in the game and we are still fighting. We will not be booted out. I can assure you that we will not be relegated at least not this season. We will put up a good fight just wait and see. For sure we are surviving," he said.

"Yeah, we have done the re-inforcements, we have brought in the players on loan. We have midfielders from Nkwazi FC Chitungu Mutukuma. We also have Kennedy Lungu from the same club. We also brought in a couple of players. We have brought in Lambart from Cameroon. And many others to

help us fight. We are now confident that we will be performing better than we started earlier in the league, that's for sure starting with the game on Saturday. We will win that game. We just started badly, we started with problem of our players not being cleared early, and that brought in confusion in our set-up. But going forward, you know after the re-enforcements, I think this is the first game that we will play as a team with cleared players. So, starting with this coming game, we are assured of a victory."

Maestro United FC is currently at the bottom of the log in stream B. The club currently has one point from five games having lost four and drawn one.



Left: Manchester United goalkeeper David de Gea, makes a save against PSG forward Kylian Mbappe. Right: Manchester United striker Romelu Lukaku scores his side's first goal on Wednesday night as PSG went on to concede 3 goals to be eliminated from the UEFA Champions League after starting the game with a 2 goal advantage from the first leg

**By Abraham Kalito**  
Out-going Zambia national soccer team coach Sven Vendenbroeck has expressed gratitude to fans in an apparently goodbye message posted on his Facebook account, Wednesday.

The coach fell out with the Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) following conflicting statements regarding his contract. The FA had announced early last month that it would not renew his contract, but Vendenbroeck revealed that he had in fact resigned two months early and was just waiting for the initial 8 months contract to elapse. The revelation seeming infuriated the FA prompting the association to send the Belgian on administrative leave until

# VANDENBROECK THANKS FANS

*...after force leave ends his tenure*

his contract expires later this month. Vendenbroeck took to social media following the development to thank the fans. "I would like to thank the fans. and most importantly the fans for the chance to coach the country," read a message on his social media account. Vendenbroeck was appointed Chipolopolo coach in just last year and handed an eight months contract subject to renewal if the national team qualified to this year's AFCON schedule for June. He constantly expressed his desire to coach the national side but having missed the target, implications were that his contract was jeopardised. His last game as coach was scheduled to be Zambia against Namibia but Vendenbroeck won't be on the bench for that match as he will be on a forced leave.

## La Liga's Tebas 'very happy' with Premier League link

La Liga president Javier Tebas told AFP he was flattered to be linked with the English Premier League's chief executive position as speculation swirls over the role. Tebas, Spanish league chief since 2013, said he was "very happy" after reports named him as a possible successor to Richard Scudamore,

who announced his departure last year. "I'm very happy that a competition like the Premier League thinks of me to be their CEO," Tebas said at the Sportel sport-business convention in Macau. When asked if he intended to quit La Liga for England, the 56-year-old

said: "No comment." The Premier League is still searching for its next chief executive after Scudamore's announced successor, TV executive Susanna Dinnage, rejected the appointment in December. The Premier League grew to become a global phenomenon under

Scudamore, generating a record £5.5 billion (\$7.3 billion) in the 2016/17 season, according to analysts Deloitte -- 86 percent more than La Liga. Tebas also said La Liga was working to schedule Espanyol games at suitable times for Chinese audiences, following the arrival of China star Wu Lei. **AFP**