



COVID DONATIONS RAISE CONCERNS

...Ng'andu, Chilufya in strong verbal exchange over accountability

By Stuart Lisulo

THE Ministry of Finance has ordered that all government entities must submit income and expenditure returns on all COVID-19 funds received from the Treasury by 5th of every month to the Office of the Accountant General.

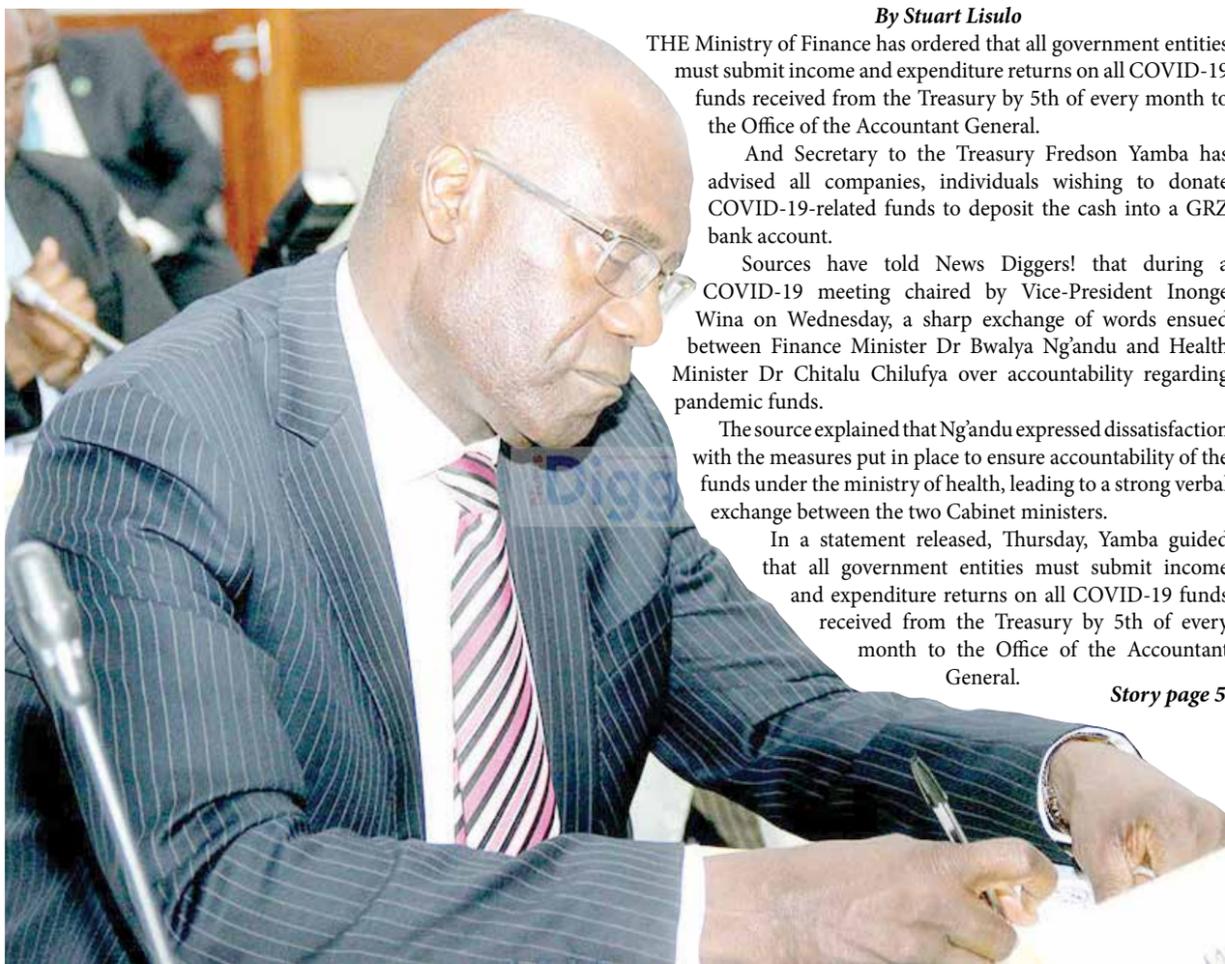
And Secretary to the Treasury Fredson Yamba has advised all companies, individuals wishing to donate COVID-19-related funds to deposit the cash into a GRZ bank account.

Sources have told News Diggers! that during a COVID-19 meeting chaired by Vice-President Inonge Wina on Wednesday, a sharp exchange of words ensued between Finance Minister Dr Bwalya Ng'andu and Health Minister Dr Chitalu Chilufya over accountability regarding pandemic funds.

The source explained that Ng'andu expressed dissatisfaction with the measures put in place to ensure accountability of the funds under the ministry of health, leading to a strong verbal exchange between the two Cabinet ministers.

In a statement released, Thursday, Yamba guided that all government entities must submit income and expenditure returns on all COVID-19 funds received from the Treasury by 5th of every month to the Office of the Accountant General.

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PF suspends its N/Western chair over corruption allegations

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Chingola couple tests positive for COVID-19

By Zondiwe Mbewe

HEALTH Minister Dr Chitalu Chilufya says a Chingola couple that recently traveled to Dar-es-Salaam via Nakonde on a business trip has tested positive to COVID-19, bringing the countrywide total to 76.

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ECZ sets June 9 for by elections

By Ulande Nkomesha

THE Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) has set June 9 polling day for the Nakato and Imalyo wards in Mongu and Bulilo wards in Chilubi.

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ERB rules out fuel price cut

By Stuart Lisulo

FUEL prices in Zambia will not be reduced despite falling oil prices on the international market because the kwacha's rapid depreciation against major currency convertibles has negated any potential reduction, says the Energy Regulation Board (ERB).

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Chingola couple tests positive for COVID-19

By Zondiwe Mbewe

HEALTH Minister Dr Chitalu Chilufya says a Chingola couple that recently traveled to Dar-es-Salaam via Nakonde on a business trip has tested positive to COVID-19, bringing the countrywide total to 76.

And Dr Chilufya says two individuals have been discharged after recovering.

Meanwhile, Information Minister Dora Siliya has urged Zambians to be afraid of COVID-19, adding that there's no need to travel during this time.

At a briefing, Thursday, Dr Chilufya said there were now four COVID-19 cases on the Copperbelt.

"In the last 24 hours, we conducted a total of 459 tests and out of these tests, we recorded two new positive cases. These two new positive cases were recorded in Chingola, and this involves a couple; a 45-year-old man and a 45-year-old woman who traveled to Dar es salaam and Nakonde in the last two weeks on a business trip. They came back and on testing, they tested positive. They are currently admitted to our isolation facility. That brings the number of patients on the Copperbelt to four. Cumulatively, we have gone up to 76 [cases]. We still remain at three deaths. In fact we have recorded two more discharges and therefore the number of cases in our facilities is 36 and the number of recoveries has moved up to 37," he said.

Dr Chilufya said boarder control in Nakonde and Southern Province needed to be tightened to ensure that more COVID-19 cases were not imported.

He reiterated his calls for people to stay home, among other measures.

And Dr Chilufya said out of the mass screening in Kafue and Lusaka, no new cases were recorded in the

last 24 hours.

"However, we have continued and even upscaled the testing and screening. Today (yesterday) we were in Emmasdale and Chaisa and there will be a number of tests that would be done. We will continue in a targeted manner, to test particular parts of the city and ensure that we establish the extent of the disease. Targeted community testing and screening will continue in various parts of Lusaka this coming week. Remember that even if we are not in your area, ensure that you alert us if you have seen an alert," he said.

And Dr Chilufya said the results of the suspicious death involving a 52-year-old Choma resident who died at the University Teaching Hospital on Monday were negative for COVID-19.

He, however, said they were investigating another death involving a woman from Mongu who was taken to the hospital with respiratory symptoms and a fever.

He said she died shortly after arrival but was reportedly ill at home for more than five days.

Dr Chilufya further explained that, "We use various chemicals to disinfect places, surfaces or public trading places. The common ingredients in there is chlorine and alcohol. Usually 20 percent of alcohol and about three percent of chlorine and other ingredients like water."

And Information Minister Dora Siliya urged Zambians to be afraid of COVID-19.

"Ladies and gentlemen, let us be very afraid of the coronavirus. The Minister

of Health has this week graphically shown us how the disease is spreading especially here in Lusaka which is the epicenter. There's no need to travel and contract the coronavirus because then you end up endangering other people especially the health staff. We should be very afraid of Bowman Lusambo when he says 'please let us not gather, let us not be drinking in shabeens. Lets us observe personal hygiene. The coronavirus has no legs, we facilitate its travel and as a result we put lives of our family and others in danger. Stay at home,' she said.

Meanwhile, the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) has donated K200,000

towards the front-line staff welfare to ensure food and other basic supplies were provided to them.

ZRA has further re-allocated its advertising space worth K800,000 for a period of one month on 40 different radio stations country wide to scale up sensitization on COVID-19.

This will also be done on ZNBC, Diamond TV, ZED TV, Zambia Daily Mail, Times of Zambia and Daily Nation newspapers.

Standard Chartered Bank, partnering with Water Aid, has also donated 100 liter tanks to scale up hand washing facilities as preventative measure for COVID-19, among other donations.



Escalating GBV cases worry NGOCC

By Natasha Sakala

THE Non-governmental Gender Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOCC) has expressed concern over the escalating cases of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) as the country is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic.

And the council has called for the immediate arrest of a health practitioner who raped a SGBV survivor at a named facility in Lusaka.

In a statement, Thursday, NGOCC board chairperson Mary Mulenga noted that three women had been killed by their spouses during the last few weeks.

"The Non-governmental Gender Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOCC) is deeply concerned with the escalating cases of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) reported in the last few weeks when

the country and the world at large has been grappling with the Coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic. NGOCC is particularly perturbed with the three cases of women that have been slain in cold blood by their spouses. According to the Zambia Police, a 32-year old man of Mtendere compound in Lusaka, Crispin Kawanga, is reported to have murdered his 16-year old girlfriend, while another man of Maamba murdered his wife after stabbing her," Mulenga stated.

She added that the surge could be attributed to the economic and social stress that had been brought by restrictions on movements in most countries, as observed by the United Nations.

"Whether or not the advent of COVID-19 in Zambia, and/or the measures that have been put in place to address the same have led to the gruesome SGBV cases mentioned above, it is clear that Zambia is recording a surge in the number of SGBV cases in the wake of COVID-19. The combination of economic and social stresses brought by the pandemic, as well as restrictions on movements, have dramatically increased the number of women and girls facing abuse in almost all countries, according to the United Nations," she noted.

She stated that people should use this time of isolation to consolidate family ties rather than resorting to violence.

"This is the time when families need to be sober and

help the nation if the fight against COVID-19 is to be won. The proposed measure for people to stay at home should not be a cause for SGBV but a time to consolidate family ties. It is therefore, disheartening that instead of spreading love within the family, people are resorting to violence. NGOCC is appealing to all Zambians to be each other's keeper and ensure that we all report any cases of SGBV or indeed any suspicious incidences to law enforcement authorities. It is our expectation that government will leave no stone unturned in ensuring the safety of women and children as the country responds to the COVID-19 pandemic," stated Mulenga.

Ignore fraudsters offering fake jobs at National Development Ministry – Silwamba

By Mirriam Chabala

THE Ministry of National Development Planning has warned members of the public to be wary of unscrupulous individuals swindling them of their monies after promising to find them employment in the public service.

In a statement, Ministry Spokesperson Chibaula Silwamba cautioned unsuspecting members of the public to resist paying any third-parties funds to apply for non-existing vacancies at the Ministry or elsewhere in government.

He explained that there was no fee required for anyone wishing to join the public service, adding that the Ministry currently had no vacancies for both temporal and permanent employment.

"The Ministry of National Development Planning wishes to dispel and warn unscrupulous individuals that are swindling innocent members of the public under

the pretext that they are recruiting personnel for the Ministry. It has come to our attention that some fraudsters are defrauding job seekers and collecting 'fees' as high as K700, purporting to be a charge for the applicants to be employed in the Ministry of National Development Planning. The fraudsters are even signing fake contracts with applicants, with assurances that the latter will be engaged to be field agents for a six-month period to sensitize the public about the 7th National Development Plan (7NDP). This is totally false and members of the public should be wary of these fraudsters and report them to law enforcement agencies," stated Silwamba.

Following receipt of complaints from members of the public concerning these fraudulent activities, the Ministry of National

Development Planning has reported the matter to the Zambia Police Service to institute investigations and bring the culprits to book. Ministry of National Development Planning Permanent Secretary (Development Planning and Administration) Mr Chola Chabala wishes to categorically state that there is no on-going recruitment of personnel to support the sensitization on the implementation of the 7NDP. The Permanent Secretary further wishes to inform members of the public that there is no requirement of payment for anyone to be engaged on temporal or permanent basis in the public service. Mr Chabala advised that any advert prescribing payment of a fee is fraudulent and culprits must be reported to law enforcement officers for appropriate action."

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By Mirriam Chabala

NATIONAL Democratic Congress (NDC) leader Chishimba Kambwili has urged President Edgar Lungu to remove Lusaka Province Minister Bowman Lusambo from his position for embarrassing government and misconducting himself.

And Kambwili has offered the services of NDC lawyers to all the public transporters and commuters who have suffered any losses owing to Lusambo's harassment.

In an interview, Kambwili wondered whether Lusambo's actions had the President's blessing.

"It is very disappointing the way Bowman Lusambo has been acting. My question is; is the President

behind Lusambo's lunatic behaviour? Why is the President quiet about it? How can a minister be saying that he's going to use the law within himself? Since when did ministers start having their own laws to do things? First and foremost, this issue of masks is not mandatory by law, it is a request from the President that he wished every Zambian could wear a mask. But even that is

done for the good intention of not spreading Covid-19, we should also be weary of affordability; can all our people afford masks? Because some of the people in this country work the whole day just to earn K10 and that K10 they use it to buy a bit of cooking oil, some vegetables and some mealie meal to feed their families," Kambwili said.

"Now, if we want to force

people to wear masks, give them free masks. As people are entering the buses and entering shops, there must be masks displayed to pick and wear. By the way, these masks are disposable; if you buy a mask today at K10 or K15, immediately after using it you throw it away, how sustainable is that? If Lusambo and his family can afford those masks, he should not think that everybody

else can afford. And people have donated masks to this government, where are those masks that people have donated? Because we are supposed to see those masks at the entrance of shopping malls, markets and at the bus stations so that as people as getting on buses, they are picking the masks."

Kambwili said it was inappropriate for Lusambo to be punishing people who weren't wearing masks when the masks were not being distributed for free.

"If you don't buy people masks, why beat them and harass them like that? Some struggle to find a K4 to pay for the bus from Kalingalinga then you go and stop that bus on the middle of the road and ask someone to get off the bus for not wearing a mask, when they've already paid for the bus? What are we are doing to our poor people? And then someone says he's using the law from within himself and the President is quiet about it. I want the President to tell us whether he's the one who instructed Lusambo to be harassing people without masks in public buses and beating people who are going to bars," Kambwili said.

"If indeed the President allowed this hooliganism, Kabova (thuggery) kind of behaviour, where is the country going? Is Lusambo above the law? Tell us what he has done to President Lungu that he cannot remove him from his position for embarrassing the government because what Lusambo is doing is an embarrassment to the entire PF leadership and PF government. Surely, how can an entire minister just leave his home to go and stand in the middle of a road, start stopping vehicles and getting out people without masks from the buses? Which law is he using? We have told President Lungu, lock up



the country and control this spread of Covid-19 because when you lock up the country, you invoke certain provisions of the law and when you do it through a state of emergency, it means you have suspended the Constitution, and people can do as they wish. But at the moment there is a Constitution that must be respected."

Meanwhile, Kambwili offered NDC lawyers to all transporters and commuters who had suffered losses as a result of Lusambo's actions.

"I am calling upon all those people who were dropped in the middle of the road and the minibus drivers who made a loss as a result of that action to come to the NDC secretariat so that we can give them lawyers to go to court because this is unacceptable. Bowman has become a law and I have never heard any minister who says 'I am the president of this Province', how can the President allow Bowman to be saying he's the President of Lusaka? What a shame! I have said this before and I will say it again, people like Bowman don't need to be in government. Those are supposed to be call boys at the stations. We don't need this stupid uncalled for behaviour, Bowman must be caged, he's a danger to society, and he's an embarrassment to Zambia," said Kabwili.

I have baptism certificate in UPND – Kang'ombe

By Julia Malunga

SESHEKE UPND member of parliament Romeo Kang'ombe says he resigned from being a member of the opposition party's Western Province interim committee because of a conflict of interest, but vows that he doesn't plan on ditching the party because he has "a UPND baptism certificate".

Last week, UPND chairperson for elections Garry Nkombo said that the party had dissolved the Western Province Provincial committee and accused the PF of bribing its councillors to resign from the party.

Nkombo said the party established an interim committee headed by Nkeyema UPND member of parliament Kapelwa Mbangweta in a bid to stop the PF from buying and targeting councillors in that province.

And in a Facebook post, Wednesday, Kang'ombe announced that he had resigned from the interim committee, news which was widely shared on ruling PF blogs.

In an interview, Kang'ombe explained that he resigned because he was a member of the dissolved committee and therefore, did not want to be a member of the interim one as it would be seen as though he was undermining his colleagues.

"There was a meeting prior to the dissolution of the old committee, a committee which I happened to be provincial youth chairperson. A resolution was made that all members of the old committee should be stripped off and an interim committee in readiness for convention should be constituted and none of the old members should be part of the interim committee. I was in the old committee so I see it not fit to include me in the interim committee because it conflicts with the resolutions of the meeting that was conducted prior to the dissolution of the committee. So if an error was made, I think it is prudent and imperative to correct that error and not be part of the interim committee because it is going against the resolutions. I would rather trade on a fair

foundation without people questioning me. I don't want to be a subject of discussion over a very straightforward matter and also to undermine my colleagues that I was working against them," Kang'ombe said.

When asked if he had plans of leaving the party, Kang'ombe replied in the negative.

"I leave UPND to go to which party? As far as I am concerned, there is no sound political party that I can go to. If I left UPND, I would go to my farm. Unfortunately, I am not leaving UPND before we form government. I was firing

on a single piston, not now. I have a baptism certificate in the UPND. I have corrected my mistake it is prudent for a leader it's not all about jubilating when you receive an appointment. I accepted basically because I was not aware of the resolutions that were made prior to the dissolutions. How the appointment came about should be the basis of staying in the position. If it has become because of defying certain resolutions, then it is not viable. People will look at you like a compromised person who is not principled and I

am not in that bandwagon," he said.

Meanwhile, Kang'ombe said President Edgar Lungu should not measure his popularity by creating by-elections.

"If Lungu would want to come here and camp in Sesheke let him come, I will hammer him. In Chilubi where he had camped for seven days and chased us, if he thinks he is popular by conducting politics like that to measure his popularity on the ground, then he needs to be sat down and lectured by people like me," said Kang'ombe.



(From L to R) SESHEKE UPND member of parliament Romeo Kang'ombe, UPND deputy secretary general Patrick Mucheleka with UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema.

DMMU bemoans desperate situation in drought-hit Luapula, Northern provinces

By Mirriam Chabala

DISASTER Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) national coordinator Chanda Kabwe has described the aftermath of the droughts in Luapula, Northern and Muchinga provinces experienced in the just-ended rainy season as desperate.

In an interview, Kabwe said a lot of damage had been caused by the floods in the affected areas where most families had been left homeless, and that government was still assessing how the victims could be assisted.

"The damage is very heavy and the situation on the ground is very desperate! The level of destruction

these floods have left in Luapula, Northern and Muchinga provinces is a very destructive one, and the livelihood of our people has been disturbed so much. It is overwhelming to look at the extent of the damage! In Northern Province, we were told that the last floods they experienced were in 1950, that's the briefing we got from Paramount Chief Chitimukulu. So, really, the situation in these areas is very desperate and very serious. I will tell you that in some of the districts where they experienced floods, some of them don't even have toilets. So, we don't even understand how they get to answer the call of nature because they use pit latrines in the rural

communities and these pit latrines got flooded, so we are able to see fecal matter because as the water levels rise, the pit latrines are also rising. People don't even have water to drink because water has been contaminated by fecal matter," Kabwe narrated.

He, however, explained what government had done so far to help the flood victims.

"What we are doing as government is that we've continued to provide food for these people, we also continued to provide chlorine to try and help out on contamination of water. In some areas, government has asked utilities not to disconnect people who are on their systems because

they need water and also because of COVID-19. Government has just finished the procurement of temporal shelters. Then, government, with its cooperating partners, will soon start supporting people through emergency cash transfers and Social Cash Transfers to support communities, and government has a principle of duty back. So, as I am speaking, a team from the United Nations systems that includes the World Food Programme (WFP); the Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Infrastructure, Defense and DMMU are on the ground doing further assessments to see how we could help the 1.5 million people that are affected," said Kabwe.

By Stuart Lisulo

FUEL prices in Zambia will not be reduced despite falling oil prices on the international market because the kwacha's rapid depreciation against major currency convertibles has negated any potential reduction, says the Energy Regulation Board (ERB).

Brent Crude Oil prices on the international market have dropped to a five-year low to reach US \$20.37 per barrel by Wednesday, compared to US \$70 by the end of last year.

In a statement, Thursday, ERB public relations manager Kwali Mfuni, however, stated that the regulator would not cut fuel prices, locally, on account of the kwacha's lost value.

The ERB hiked fuel pump prices to an unprecedented K17.62 per litre of petrol effective, Friday, December 27, 2019, when the kwacha was around K14 per dollar.

Currently, the kwacha's trading at an average K18.45 per dollar.

"...As prices are reviewed for every cargo, on average every sixty days, the March, 2020, price preview that was conducted on a cargo procured in January, 2020, when the international oil prices had not yet started to experience a downward trend,

ERB rules out fuel price cut amid falling intl oil prices

and the kwacha had started to depreciate steeply, did yield minor price variations. However, due to the projected extreme volatility in the two fundamentals at the time and also considering that the changes would have been below the 2.5 per cent trigger band for price adjustment, it was prudent to maintain the prices," Mfuni stated.

"The ERB has determined that the current gains from the sustained reduction in international oil prices have been negated by the depreciation of the kwacha during the same period, resulting in there being no price changes made since the last review in December, 2019. Since the last adjustment on December 26, 2019, international oil prices have dropped from around US \$69 to below US \$30 per barrel, while the exchange rate of the kwacha against the US dollar has risen from K14.40 to about K18.66.

The ERB has particularly been monitoring movements in international oil prices vis-a-vis performance of the kwacha against the US dollar because the two are the major factors that directly impact local fuel prices."

She added that a 12-month analysis of the oil price drop coincided with a correspondingly sharp kwacha depreciation, further illustrating why fuel prices cannot be cut, locally.

"Over the last 12 months, international crude oil prices have been decreasing on the global market by over 50 per cent between April, 2019, and April, 2020. The decrease is largely attributable to the collapse of the OPEC Agreement; market share wrangles between Saudi Arabia and Russia and the drop in global oil demand in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns in different countries. During the

same period, April, 2019, to April, 2020, the kwacha, on the other hand, has been constantly depreciating against the US dollar by as much as 50 per cent," stated Mfuni.

"Notably, a steeper

depreciation was recorded in the first four months of 2020 when the kwacha depreciated by K4.22 from K14.44/US \$ in January, 2020, to K18.66/US \$ in April, 2020. As can be seen from the trends, the two key

fundamentals that impact local pump prices have been moving in opposite directions, thereby, cancelling out the gains that would have translated into reduced local pump prices over time. It should also be noted that, unlike other countries, Zambia's fuel needs are met through the importation of commingled feedstock, a mixture of crude oil, finished products and other components on one hand, and refined petroleum products, such as petrol and diesel on the other."



Nkandu Luo washes her hands after donating a portable water tank, hand sanitizers and some basins to Mtenedere police station on Tuesday - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Patrick Mwanawasa denies committing adultery with Lsk businessman's wife

By Zondiwe Mbewe

FORMER Central Province deputy Permanent Secretary Patrick Mwanawasa, who has been accused of engaging in a sexual relationship with an investments officer at the Development Bank of Zambia, has denied the allegations, saying the two are merely friends.

This is a matter in which businessman Lombe Okpara, has dragged his wife, Musamba Mulenga, to the Lusaka High Court for dissolution of their eight-year marriage for allegedly engaging in adultery with Ministry of Foreign Affairs permanent secretary Ronald Simwinga and Mwanawasa.

He has also cited Simwinga and Mwanawasa as first and second co-respondents in the case.

According to his petition for the dissolution of marriage, Okpara claimed that his wife admitted committing adultery with Simwinga and Mwanawasa.

He further claimed that on November 3, 2018, his wife and Mwanawasa spent time together at a short-term rented duplex apartment situated on Lukanga road in Roma township.

Okpara stated that his wife and Mwanawasa spent about five hours in the said apartment from 17:00 hours to 21:45 hours after which Mwanawasa allegedly complained of pain

on his manhood following the alleged sexual encounter.

He also cited unreasonable behaviour among other reasons, claiming that his wife arranged and hosted a party for Simwinga at her sister's house and convinced him that it was a kind gesture to appreciate Simwinga for the favours that he did for her family.

But in a reply to the petition, Mwanawasa, a second co-respondent denied Okpara's allegations, saying Mulenga was a mere friend whom he had the privilege of discussing business by virtue of their employment.

He added that at no time did he rent an apartment as alleged by Okpara in the petition and further stated that Okpara's allegations were malicious and not tantamount to adultery which was the main issue in the petition.

Mwanawasa stated that at no time did he discuss issues of money laundering with the respondent, adding that Okpara was fishing for evidence as contained in his petition.

He urged the court not to award Okpara damages and costs as it would amount to unfair and unjust entrenchment.

Mwanawasa said Mulenga was an adult and no one would take peculiar advantage of her as a married woman.

Giving stimulus packages to all may affect govt revenue – Ng'andu

By Natasha Sakala

FINANCE Minister Dr Bwalya Ng'andu says government cannot afford to give stimulus packages to all sectors of the economy at the same time as it still needs to safeguard revenue.

In a statement on Wednesday, the Chamber of Mines warned that they had become increasingly desperate because they currently lacked a robust stimulus package to continue functioning sustainably given the country's deteriorating economy.

But in an interview, Dr Ng'andu said government would continue reviewing which sectors can be granted stimulus packages without negatively affecting government revenue.

"You see, the whole relief

program is a gradual program and every time you give an incentive, that is money, you are reducing revenue. So you have to keep balancing the need for revenue for the government and the relief that may be given to industry. So we give as we see it fit and as we calculate that by giving certain incentives, we are not going to dig too much into government revenue because government has to continue running as well. So it's not a one off, if you remember we had a first set of incentives given, we had a second wave of incentives given and it's a process that we shall review continuously as the situation evolves. I don't know where the situation is going, if goes further than it is, obviously we have to relook," he said.

"So it's a continuous thing, we can't give all the incentives at once for everybody, it just can't work that way. So it's a progressive thing, we will review the situation as it develops, if it evolves, if it improves, we will respond appropriately. If it's worse, then we will respond appropriately. The spirit here is to support industry, commerce and to go to the next period while at the same time ensuring that government has a flow of revenue for it to carry on its business. So it's a balance."

Dr Ng'andu said government would continue acting appropriately to any emerging issues.

"It's an evolving situation which requires responding to things as they develop. And the fiscal situation is one of the factors, you will be looking at the level of tax revenue, how much have we dropped by, if the situation will be that the deterioration in revenue is severe, then obviously we have to respond appropriately. In an event that it improves further than we expected, then we would attempt to support the commerce industry in whatever way we can, it's a question of arithmetic. So what measures, what am I going to give them, I don't know because like I said, we keep looking, we keep talking with industry and what we have said to the Chamber of Commerce, institutions representing tax payers and the Chamber of Mines also is that let's keep talking, let's keep reviewing the situation, what is possible will be done, what is not possible will not be done," said Dr Ng'andu.

Wear face masks every time you're out, HPCZ urges public

By Natasha Sakala

THE Health Professions Council of Zambia (HPCZ) has called on the public to ensure that they wear masks whenever they leave their homes to protect themselves and those around them.

HPCZ has, however, backed the Ministry of Health's scientific approach and evidence-based testing so that the country avoids wasting COVID-19 testing kits.

In an interview, HPCZ Registrar Bwemba Bwalya said despite patients wearing masks, health workers must ensure they wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at all times to protect themselves from the novel Coronavirus.

"Our appeal to the patients themselves, every time they are going out of their homes, let them put on a

mask. And I would also like to appeal to all health workers, you know in health facilities, we are deeming health facilities as potential hotspots, so whenever they are attending to patients, they should wear protective equipment, they should be in PPE, face mask and shields, whatever equipment that they have available, they should put it on. Remember, the President (Edgar Lungu) has directed that everyone going out should wear masks, much more the people that are on the front-line and the people that are seeing patients coming from different backgrounds, they ought to be in protective equipment all the time because they don't know the kind of patient that they are screening; it could be a COVID-19 patient so they will only be able to protect themselves if they have the equipment," Bwalya said.

"We just need to urge the public out there to mask-up whenever they are going out, it's only for their good and they will help us also to protect health workers because in an event that they are found positive and they are wearing masks, then the health workers are also protected. So, it's a way of avoiding transmission from person-to-person. So, whoever is wearing a mask, they are doing for themselves and they are also doing it for the other person."

And Bwalya observed that suggestions for the Ministry of Health to test everyone was not feasible.

He, however, added that there was need to continue with the scientific approach and ensure prudence in the use of test kits.

"I think the Minister (Dr Chitalu Chilufya) has alluded to that in his remarks whenever he is addressing

the public, they are using a scientific approach. And he has assured the public that they have the capacity to do, even massive tests, but they are looking at the information that they are getting in the ground. So, they don't want to just go out and waste testing kits, there has to be a lead, it has to be evidence-based and it's a good approach, we applaud it. We don't need to just go out and test everyone, I think we have to have a scientific approach and prudence in the utilization of testing kits that we have. Remember, there's a cost attached to that so we can't just go out and react and do the testing. I think it has to be evidence-based. Of course, the general public have their own ways, which they feel that it needs to be done, but I think it needs to be appreciated from a prudence point of view," said Bwalya.

By Zondiwe Mbewe
DEMOCRATIC Party president Harry Kalaba says Zambians should brace for tougher times because government doesn't seem to have a grip on the economy.

And Kalaba says that Zambians must forget about mealie meal prices and other commodities reducing and must brace themselves for an even higher cost of living.

Meanwhile, Kalaba has urged government to ensure that contributions from well-wishers go in ensuring that citizens have basics like face masks during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finance Minister Dr Bwalya Ng'andu estimated that Zambia's budgeted revenue would fall short of target by at least K14.8 billion, which is 19.7 per cent of the approved 2020 budget.

He also said that Zambia's economy had been revised downwards and projected to grow at -2.6 per cent on

Mealie meal will hit K500 if PF survives 2021 – Kalaba

account of the COVID-19 impact.

But speaking when he featured on Hot FM's Hot Seat programme, Thursday, Kalaba said Dr Ng'andu's projection meant that Zambians should brace themselves for harder times amid a spike in commodity prices.

"...This means that the ordinary Zambian must forget about the price of mealie meal, about the price of cooking oil [and] rentals from their landlords coming down. They must brace themselves for harder times. They are basically telling you

that, 'we expect hard times to come ahead.' They are only giving you an excuse that this is the problem that we have. Government being government must find ways of ameliorating their deficits so that citizens are cushioned. That is why countries all across the globe are now talking to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). That's why IMF has even relaxed its measures on countries like Rwanda, those that had borrowed from them. In fact, they have even given money to fight COVID-19 because they understand that there will be

challenges. So, if you are not talking to IMF, the World Bank, whom are you talking to?" Kalaba asked.

And he said if PF survived 2021, mealie meal would become as expensive as K500.

"For the PF, there is no way out of this. The PF has

reached a dead-end! There is no way they can get out of this quagmire. You are planning on how you should win the elections, but you are not telling us why you should win those elections. Because even if the PF was to win elections, civil servants will

lose their jobs! You will start buying a bag of mealie meal at K400, K500, one (25Kg bag) because, now, they will say, 'after all, I'm going, my five years is finishing so it's okay.' The PF, as a government, has lost credibility before the international community. The PF, as a government, has reached a dead-end and you don't expect much from a regime as tired as this one. All they know is to suppress people's freedom," he added.

Accountability of COVID-19 funds raises concerns

By Stuart Lisulo
THE Ministry of Finance has ordered that all government entities must submit income and expenditure returns on all COVID-19 funds received from the Treasury by 5th of every month to the Office of the Accountant General.

And Secretary to the Treasury Fredson Yamba has advised all companies, individuals wishing to donate COVID-19-related funds to deposit the cash into a GRZ bank account.

Sources have told News Diggers! that during a COVID-19 meeting chaired by Vice-President Inonge Wina on Wednesday, a sharp exchange of words ensued between Finance Minister Dr Bwalya Ng'andu and Health Minister Dr Chitalu Chilufya over accountability regarding pandemic funds.

The source explained that Ng'andu expressed dissatisfaction with the measures put in place to ensure accountability of the funds under the ministry of health, leading to a strong verbal exchange between the two Cabinet ministers.

In a statement released, Thursday, Yamba guided that all government entities must submit income and expenditure returns on all COVID-19 funds received from the Treasury by 5th of every month to the Office of the Accountant General.

"All Institutions or Individuals who would like to make 'cash donations' towards the fight of COVID-19 are advised to deposit such funds to any of the GRZ COVID-19 Commercial Bank Accounts. These funds will in turn be transferred to a designated account held at Bank of Zambia to be managed by the National Treasury to deposit such funds to any of the GRZ COVID-19 Commercial Bank Accounts. These funds will in turn be transferred to a designated account held at

Bank of Zambia to be managed by the National Treasury," Yamba stated.

"All Ministries, Provinces and Public Service Controlling Agencies are expected to submit income and expenditure returns on all COVID-19 funds received from the Treasury by 5th of every month to the Office of the Accountant General in accordance with Section 11(1) (p) of the Public Financial Management Act, 2018. In the case of Aid-In-Kind, Ministries, Provinces and Public Service Controlling Agencies are expected to receive and dispose such through the procedures stipulated in the law. In view of this, Ministries, Provinces and Public Service Controlling Agencies will be required to submit monthly returns on all Aid-In-Kind transactions to the Office of the Accountant General, Ministry of Finance. All recipient Ministries, Provinces and Public Service

Controlling Agencies are expected to maintain separate records and reports on the utilisation of donations from Cooperating Partners."

And Yamba stressed the need for all the COVID-19-related funds to be properly managed and accounted for.

"Ministries, Provinces and Public Service Controlling Agencies are expected to ensure that appropriated and donated resources are used only for activities related to COVID-19. On a frequent basis, the Treasury will submit a consolidated return of receipts and expenditure from Ministries, Provinces and Public Service Controlling Agencies to the Controller of Internal Audit and Office of the Auditor General for verification. The need to ensure accountability of resources can never be over emphasised, especially in the prevailing situation of this deadly pandemic," stated Yamba.

PF suspends its N/Western chair over corruption allegations

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
Patriotic Front (PF) Secretary General Davies Mwila has with immediate effect suspended Provincial Chairperson for North Western, Jack Kungo, for corruption allegations committed at Kansenseli Mine in Mwinilunga District.

Sources have told News Diggers that the suspended official allegedly colluded with the recently recalled Police Commissioner in the province to conduct suspected illegal mining activities, a move which has irked President Edgar Lungu.

And the PF in Northern Province has indefinitely suspended its women's provincial information secretary Mable Ngosa and recommended her for expulsion from the party.

Meanwhile the party has lifted the suspension of its two security sub-committee members Matthews Mwamba and Erick Nsofu who were recently suspended from the party.

In a statement, Mwila stated that Kungo's suspension was meant to pave way for smooth investigations into his allegations.

"Patriotic Front Secretary General Hon. Davies Mwila has announced the suspension from all party

activities Hon Jack Kungo – Patriotic Front North-western Province Chairperson. The suspension is with immediate effect in order to facilitate investigations at Kansenseli Mine- Mwinilunga District North-western Province. Patriotic Front Chairperson for Legal affairs Hon. Brian Mundibile will on Saturday 25th April 2020 be leading a delegation of Senior party officials comprising: Hon. Nicksom Chilangwa MP; Hon Syacheye Madyenkunku; Hon Mulenga Chewa Kampamba; Hon Andrew Lubusha; and Mr Alick Tembo," read the statement.

"As you are no doubt aware, President Edgar Chagwa Lungu- The President of Patriotic Front -who is also our Head of state, has vowed to uproot corruption in the party and government and will not shield anyone found wanting by the law. This suspension will be reviewed subject to the outcome of investigations by the relevant authorities."

In another development, Northern Provincial chairperson Lazarous Bwalya has indefinitely suspended Ngosa for allegedly going round public institutions and intimidating staff telling them that she would have then fired if they did not meet her

demands.

"It has been established that you, Mable Ngosa being a PF official went to Mbala School of Nursing where you intimidated the staff members and boasted that you were connected to the President and cabinet ministers respectively, bringing the name of the President and the Party into disrepute. It is also established that you, Mable Ngosa being a PF official has been going round government institutions in Kasama such as Police Service, Road Development Agency, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health insulting and intimidating staff in order to have them serve you," Bwalya stated in a suspension letter to Ngosa.

Bwalya has since asked Ngosa to surrender all the party materials in her custody and advised her to appeal the decision within 14 days.

"You have therefore been found guilty of acting in the manner that is likely to bring the name of the President and the Party into ridicule, contempt or disrepute. Therefore, I have no option but to suspend you Indefinitely and further recommend for your expulsion from the Party. During your suspension you are not supposed to carry out any party functions and you are directed to hand over all party property in your custody. However, I wish to advise you that you can appeal to the Central Committee of the Patriotic Front Party within 14 days upon receipt of this letter," he stated.

Bwalya also lifted the suspension of Mwamba and Nsofu who were suspended from the party for insulting State House security at Kasama Lodge when President Lungu toured the province.



ECZ sets June 9 for 3 ward by elections

By Ulande Nkomesha
THE Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) has set June 9 polling day for the Nakato and Imalyo wards in Mongu and Bulilo wards in Chilubi.

In a statement, Thursday, ECZ public relations manager Margaret Chimanse stated the commission had also set May 19, 2020 as day of nominations for candidates.

All the by elections were necessitated following the resignations of the councilors.

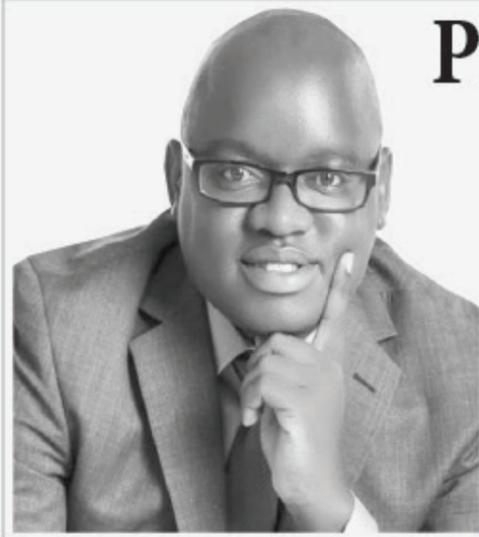
"Electoral Commission of Zambia has prescribed Tuesday 9th June as the date on which to hold the polls for local government by election In Nakato and Imalyo wards of Mongu Town council in Western Province and Bulilo wards of Chilubi Town Council in Northern Province. The elections in Nakato, Imalya and Bulila wards had been necessitated by resignations of incumbent councillors," Chimanse stated.

"Aspiring candidates in the by election should lodge completed and attested statutory declaration and nomination papers subscribed before a magistrate, local court magistrate, Head of government primary or secondary school, principal of a college, commissioner of oaths, election officer on Tuesday 19th May 2020 between 09:00hrs and 15:00hrs. Aspiring candidates in the local government ward by election should take along with them nine supporters who must be registered voters in the affected wards. Aspiring candidates will be required to pay K750 for city and and municipal councils and K400 for district councils. The campaign period for these elections commences on Tuesday 19th of May 2020 after 15:00 hours and will end 18:00hrs on Monday 8th June 2020."

Chimanse stated that political parties were discouraged from holding public rallies and instead use appropriate campaign strategies such as mobile

public address systems to avoid the contraction of COVID-19.

"The stakeholders and participating political parties are all required to observe the Ministry of Health guidelines and procedures on the prevention of COVID-19 at all times. The commission has also put in place measures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 and is appealing to the various stakeholders in the electoral process to observe the following: one; political parties are discouraged from holding public rallies to avoid the contraction of COVID-19; political parties and other stakeholders are encouraged to use appropriate campaign strategies such as mobile public address system, distribution of flyers and other political party materials with minimal or no contact with a crowd; political parties should desist from ferrying cadres from one district to the other for campaign in districts where by elections are taking place," stated Chimanse.



PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE FOR CHANGE

(PAC)
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Why we deserve your vote



DEVELOPMENTAL CULTURE - LAND AUDIT AND REDISTRIBUTION

By Andyford Mayele Banda

After the coronavirus pandemic, we need a serious change of culture. Zambia needs a developmental culture. A developmental culture is a culture in our own understanding as PAC where whatever we do as citizens contributes to the development of this country. Whatever we do whether it is dancing or tourism or travelling has a positive impact on the economy. For those who have been privileged to travel to South Africa especially on long weekends and holidays, you will hear many South Africans saying I am going home. They love to visit their homes and these are their villages, where they come from, where their relatives live, where their ancestors are sleeping. I am not sure if what they go to do has an impact on the economy maybe they come back fresh to contribute to the economy or something but they are accustomed to I am going home this long weekend. It is their culture.

Last week we posed a question, what do we have in our powers that we can use to advantage ourselves as we emerge from the coronavirus fiasco? As PAC the answer is that we have land and water. Yes Zambia is blessed with so much fertile land and water. As we indicated from last week's article we need a vision. After the coronavirus which I am sure we will survive, it will be like we use to sing in the young days, 'aliyense kwabo, kwabo aliyense kanjila kakwabo'. This means that each one has to take a road that leads to his or her place. Simply means God for us all and each one for himself. Many nations will be looking for ways to recover and giving aid to Zambia will be at the tail end of their priorities. As PAC we believe that more than ever it's time to create local solutions and ideas and ensure we come up with policies

that will support the local people. The quickest way to empower people is to give them land. Every citizen deserves a piece of land.

Getting back to the preamble we need a developmental culture. We have the partial lockdown as it is, imagine if our culture was to go back to our farms small as they may be at least that will be the safest place for us to social distance. But not only will we be social distancing but we will be working hard to produce something on our land. Since Zambia is not on total lockdown, this time instead of saying stay at home, we would say stay at your land and produce. Many people currently are just locked up indoors and doing nothing and yet the world is transforming and we need to come up with solutions and ideas for the transforming world. What ideas can we best bet on as it stands? It's just producing food. We need that culture of going back to the land and produce something. We need systems that will support Zambians to venture into small scale farming. But we have a problem!

Like we have mentioned before, a lot of Zambia's land is in a few individuals. Those that are privileged keep accumulating land and reselling to fellow citizens at exorbitant prices. That is criminal and must change. Many people have acquired massive land which is just sitting somewhere as a decoration. They are keeping land without doing anything as if it is a National Registration Card (NRC). **Yes we need a LAND AUDIT AND REDISTRIBUTION OF LAND.** Yes let's grab all land that is idle and redistribute to Zambians who will apply to become small scale farmers. Most politicians are a culprit to getting cheap land and do nothing with

it. I have a farm this side but you are doing nothing on that farm all because of the politician's position they got land which they had no plan with. If President Edgar Lungu does not institute redistribution of land, we as PAC we shall institute a land redistribution once we assume office in 2021. We need to redistribute land to the many Zambians who are ready and passionate about farming.

It will be in the interest of country to venture into mass production of food not just for local consumption but for exports because the world will need food after the coronavirus. So this is not the time for our government to be ndwii! It's time to be serious and institute the land audit immediately and redistribute idle land to passionate Zambians not to PF cadres. I know many Zambians want to be small scale farmers but they fail because land is expensive and they do not have the necessary support for basic equipment such as a borehole to start their farming activities.

As PAC we will empower new farmers with land and basic equipment to start their farming activities. We shall ensure that we empower them to start farming crops that have the local and international markets. Giving farmers land and start up equipment is not enough. We have a lot of Agriculture and Water engineers that can be engaged to train the farmers on the best farming methods and how to manage water. As PAC we do believe that the knowledge that is readily available should be utilized to minimize the rate of failure. We have so much potential to venture into fish and goat farming. Pronouncements of encouraging young people to venture into farming are not enough. There has to be a support base of the young farmers.

Like we mentioned before, there is no good project that will succeed with the current politics. Corruption has to be stamped out. Nepotism has to be stamped out. Cadrerism has to be stamped out. Doing projects for political mileage has to be stamped out. Only deserving citizens with no political connections but talent and passion must be empowered with land and water and basic start up equipment. Then we need to create a structure that supports small scale farmers, from construction to production to markets. We need to make targets to grow them. Eish we are so passionate and we know once voted in we can achieve it.

The coronavirus era should teach us valuable lessons as individuals even as a country. For starters it's no time for business as usual. We need to do things differently and innovatively. Hmmm we are not sure though if the PF would like to make political sacrifices and do things differently for the sake of our beloved country Zambia. Zambia has so much potential to achieve greatness even after the coronavirus, but a lot needs to change especially in the political arena.

So under the PAC government we shall create what we will call a developmental culture. In agriculture people will have the culture to go and have fun in their farms. In tourism Zambians will tour Zambia. In block making Zambia will buy Zambian blocks and the list goes on. Yes the visionary must rule for the good of Zambia. We shall uplift lives and transform the economy for many. We shall empower our local people and create policies that will support Zambians. YES! YES! YES! PAC 2021 is the way to go.

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

By Julia Malunga

FORMER Special Assistant to the President for Policy Implementation and Monitoring Jack Kalala says it is common knowledge that most of the debt the country has accumulated was contracted under former finance minister Alexander Chikwanda's reign.

And Kalala has wondered why Chikwanda dismissed an open letter written to President Edgar Lungu as nonsensical when he had not read it.

Earlier this week, Chikwanda said the open letter to the President on the state of Zambia's economy written by six former government officials was nonsensical, adding that he was not responsible for Zambia's problems because he did his best in his time.

But in a statement, Thursday, Kalala said Chikwanda used to insult people who dared to advise the government to slow down on borrowing.

"Mr. Alexander Chikwanda served as Minister of Finance from 2011 to the time when Mr. Felix Mutati replaced him in 2016. It is an open knowledge that most of the debts, if not all, that Zambia has accumulated under the PF Administration were contracted under his superintendence as Minister of Finance. All the key economic indicators started their spiral degradation during his time. The debt blew up during his time and he used to insult people who dared to advise the government to slow down on borrowing. If it is not him who else is responsible for the unprecedented huge debt, with very little to show, in the history of the country? Let him tell us in detail since he is an excellent writer," Kalala stated.

"It would be collective irresponsibility and recklessness to let the country continue in spiral degradation while all of us remain silent and indifferent in the hope that things will change for

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Zambia's debt rapidly accumulated under Chikwanda – Kalala



Jack Kalala

the better on their own or through prayers. It would be foolish naivety to reason that the situation would resolve itself without taking any corrective measures. How can anyone hope to get to a desired destination by remaining still in one place without making any movement? In addition if one has to reach an intended destination one has to move in the right direction. It would be a mark of insanity to get on a Livingstone bound bus when the intended destination is Solwezi. There cannot be any achievement if no action is taken. You can't expect to harvest without ploughing the land and sowing the right seeds. This is not rocket science but simple facts that require common sense to understand."

Kalala stated that it was only sensible to publicly rebuke the government because they had been adamant.

"In his criticism of the Group of six former officials, he claimed that the former officials should have made direct behind the scene contact rather than an open letter. He forgets that advice had consistently and timely been rendered to the PF Government for more than seven years, which they chose to ignore and labeled whoever dared to give them advice as being bitter and jealous. In the light of this it is only sensible to publicly rebuke them and tell them to act in the

manner that will be beneficial to the country. It should be appreciated that the country is bigger than any one individual or group of individuals," Kalala stated.

He said Chikwanda's response to the letter was dismissing.

"Mr. Alexander Chikwanda's insulting response to the letter by the six former government officials is unbecoming and dismaying to say the least. To make matters worse, he confessed that he had not even read the letter. Really how could one sensibly and objectively comment on a letter or document whose content he did not know? It makes no sense and only demonstrates lack of respect for the opinion of others. It is also a mark of impunity and lack of moral and civil decency. The wise and sensible thing he could have done was to ask for the letter and read

it to acquaint himself with its content before commenting on it. What he did was not only unprofessional but also demeaning to his status. Although he has not been one of the most illustrious and highly performing leaders in Zambia, he is still held in very high esteem because of his seemingly honorable and respectable conduct," Kalala stated.

"For me I am aware that, as a youth he made a valuable contribution to the liberation of this country, like his friend Vernon Johnson Mwaanga and many others, most of whom remain unsung heroes like my elder brother Jacob Kalala. We cannot take this credit from them. For him to continue inspiring respect and wisdom, he should learn to remain calm and reasonable instead of having an emotional reaction to everything that is said about him. He should always sit back and consider things with logic and restraint. It is therefore dismaying that Mr. Chikwanda, a Former Minister of Finance, should disparage and ridicule, the wise and timely advice given by fellow eminent citizens who have the concern of the country at heart. His temperamental reaction, without even reading the letter to acquaint him with its content and substance, was not only unbecoming but also lacked level-headedness for a person of his status,"

Kalala said Zambia's economy was in a dire situation because of excessive borrowing.

"It is an undisputable fact that the economy in Zambia is in dire situation but not necessarily due to external factors or the recent COVID-19 as some people and Mr. Chikwanda would like us to believe. The main causes are self-inflicted such as excessive borrowing, wrong priorities and abuse of the borrowed moneys that rendered the economy moribund. The economy has been in decay for a long time without anything tangible being done to revive it. The call was made in good faith and out of genuine concern for urgent and decisive action to be taken by those in power

to resuscitate the economy for the good of the nation. It would be unreasonable for any sensible person and perilous for the nation to ignore the timely and sound advice given by these well meaning and well-informed citizens," stated Kalala.

"It would be a lack of logic to expect people who are the principal stakeholders to remain silent and indifferent at a time of a national crisis as the one Zambia is currently experiencing. Those holding and those who have held offices before should strictly be held responsible and accountable for their actions. No one in public office should be above accountability. Any one who does not want to be scrutinized or to be held accountable should not occupy public office. It is self-deceiving and an affront to public interest for some people to believe that they hold the freedom to do anything in public office and to consider that if anyone dares to express concern or suggest anything is an infamy."



Alexander Chikwanda

Intensify mass screening, JCTR urges govt

By Zondiwe Mbewe

THE Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) has called on the Ministry of Health to intensify mass screening and testing in communities as opposed to just relying on alerts from the public.

In a statement, Thursday, JCTR deputy Director Father Alex Muyebe stated that there was need for extensive testing as it was possible to have a lot of undetected cases in communities since

social distancing and wearing of masks were not being observed in most townships.

"JCTR is concerned that the Ministry of Health is very slow in getting its acts together to conduct mass screening and testing in these communities where some of the recent cases have been reported in order to ensure that human-to-human transmission is prevented. It is evident that in most townships, social distancing and wearing of masks are

not being observed, meaning the risk of the virus being spread is high, hence the need for extensive testing. JCTR urges the Ministry of Health to proactively intensify mass screening and testing in the communities instead of just relying on alerts being received from members of the public," Fr Muyebe stated.

"We believe this will help in preventing our public health system and our country from being overrun by COVID-19. It is a shuddering possibility that there might be a lot of undetected cases out there in our communities. The Ministry of Health must act very quickly to stop the spread of the virus in its tracks."

Fr Muyebe also commended government for mass screening and testing done so far in Kafue and some townships in Lusaka.

He further commended government for undertaking to train health workers at private hospitals in surveillance, case management and infection prevention.

"JCTR commends Government for mass screening and testing done so far in Kafue and being conducted on Thursday April 23 in Emmazdale and Chaisa townships. JCTR also commends Government for undertaking to train health workers at private hospitals in surveillance, case management and infection prevention. Through the Minister of Health's daily national updates, we have learnt in the recent past that there are also some other townships and communities in Lusaka that are on the spotlight such as Marapodi, Bauleni, Matero and George townships," stated Fr Muyebe.

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MEN'S CLINIC

Prof. Ali has been legalized to import the (Muvule) herbal remedy which has been naturally pounded and squeezed from the roots of the muvule tree, used for thousands of years ago in East Africa make men's penis big and strong permanently. It

increases blood flow into the penis leading to more energy harder and stronger erection. It also helps to control early ejaculation so soon as you start using this herbal remedy it will increase the girth and length to the size of your choice.
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IN OUR editorial opinion yesterday, we outlined all the official loans that Zambia contracted between 2012 and 2016. Our research data showed that during the period under review, the current Patriotic Front chairman for finance, Mr Alexander Bwalya Chikwanda, was responsible for contracting more than US\$9 billion external debt on behalf of taxpayers.

If Zambia today is in a desperate financial crisis with US\$11.2 billion in external debt, it has been demonstrated that there is one person who cannot distance themselves from this crisis, and that is the PF Central Committee Chairman for Finance, Mr Chikwanda. When the former Bank of Zambia Governor, and former finance ministers wrote to the President of the Republic of Zambia and his incumbent Minister of Finance, giving advice on what government could do to come out of this crisis, there is one person who should not describe that advice as nonsensical, and that's the PF Central Committee chairman for Finance, Mr Chikwanda.

We are saying, there is a very good reason why the incumbent Finance Minister Dr Bwalya Ng'andu must listen to his predecessors like Ng'andu Magande and Situmbeko Musokotwane. Our research went a little further to look at how much government borrowed under the two past ministers.

In 2007, under

How govt loans were used for PF campaigns

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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Magande, government contracted six loans amounting to US\$140.2 million. In 2008, President Levy Mwanawasa died in the middle of the annual budget cycle, meaning we had a new finance minister taking over from Mr Magande to implement the remainder of the cycle from November 24, and thus Mr Musokotwane. Ministry of Finance data shows that in the whole of 2008 government procured five loans only, amounting to US\$132 million. In 2009, Musokotwane contracted seven loans amounting to US\$233.3 million.

We are not here to eulogise these former ministers who are advising government today. They, too, have their own skeletons in the closet. We have not forgotten how they contracted a US\$53 million Chinese loan to buy helpless mobile hospitals. We have not forgotten how government under them procured 100

hearses from China, to escort taxpayers to the grave. But the debate today is about who is responsible for the reckless borrowing that has crashed Zambia in this debt mountain.

Our research shows that between 2007 and 2009 government borrowed US\$0.5 billion under these two ministers whose advice is being described as nonsensical today. Compare and contrast that with how much Zambia borrowed in 2016 alone. How can we believe that a man who borrowed US\$3 billion in one year tried to stop financial irresponsibility? We don't mean to be rude to ba shikulu ba Chikwanda, but if this is not reckless borrowing, then he must tell us what is. To us, it does not make sense to claim that you pushed for fiscal discipline yet you went out to borrow more whenever the country ran out of money to waste.

The PF argues that there is nothing wrong with borrowing as long as it is for a good purpose, and we agree absolutely. But can they explain to the taxpayers of this country, what is the return on investment for all these loans? Can they show us how much profit we've generated from the Eurobond money invested in Zesco and Zambia Railways? We are saying it's better NOT to borrow if you don't have a profitable plan with the money, than to borrow and plunder the money through corruption, leaving substandard infrastructure for political expediency.

You claim to have built infrastructure, that's okay. But your tax revenue base has not increased as a consequence of those loans you borrowed. You didn't think about investing in the productive sector so that you use the profit to build infrastructure like police houses and roads. Now

you have to pay back the loans plus interest from the same tax revenue sources as before. Does that make economic sense?

Look at the loans contracted in 2016. A whopping 24 loans, amounting to US\$3.4 billion. Look at the 72 loans contracted between 2012 and 2016. How much of that money was spent on its intended purpose? We borrowed US\$80.4 million from AfDB for the construction of Kazungula bridge and another US\$36.7 million from JICA for the same purpose. But the news from Kazungula is that the contractor had to suspend work because Zambia was not paying its share of the cost. Where did the money go? We borrowed hundreds of millions of dollars for the Kariba North Bank, but Zesco is reducing in generation capacity instead of increasing. How many unemployed citizens benefitted

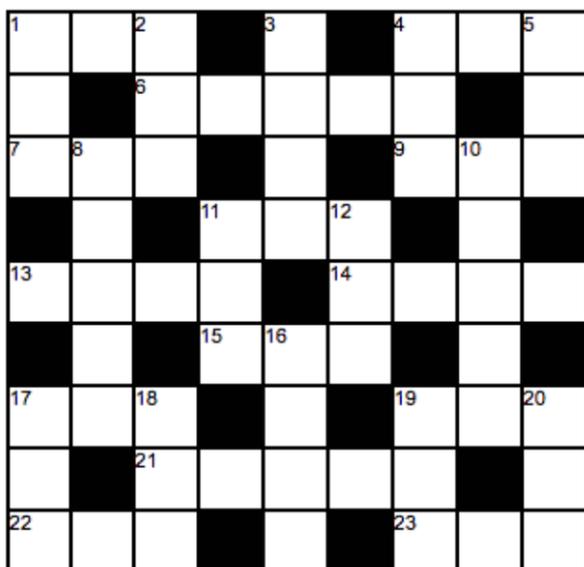
from the hundreds of million borrowed under "Youth and Women" empowerment loans?

It goes without saying that this is the reason why the PF will never commit to an IMF programme, especially with the next election looming. This is why they don't want parliamentary approval before borrowing. That's the plan. If they don't borrow, they will not have money for campaigns and they will lose in 2021. So expect more loans this year and next year.

Remember how the PF presidential candidate went round the country to launch fake investment projects in 2016, like the reopening of Mulungushi Textiles in Kabwe? That is the same way that they acquired loans that ended up as campaign expenditure for the ruling party. From our research data, one can tell that some of the loans that the PF government contracted in 2016 were for campaigns. Some of the projects mentioned in the loans never even took off, meaning the money was diverted towards unaccounted for expenditure.

We will end by reminding readers about this leaked audio recording from 2016, where a Finance Minister discusses cash transactions for campaigns with the secretary general of the ruling party. Rewind and listen again until you form your own opinions about the source of the money which was being discussed here. <https://wp.me/p86XRW-il5>

Crossword puzzle No 589



"The quality of life that you have is determined solely by the effort you put into giving your life value, purpose and a reason."

- Steven Redhead

- | | |
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| <p>Across</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Round baked dessert 4. What you do with eyes 6. Put into words 7. Snooze 9. Pen filler 11. Peak; uppermost 13. Popular pop 14. Has a meal 15. No-frills bed 17. Iota preceder 19. Shade tree 21. Bumbling 22. Mess up 23. Horror movie street | <p>Down</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shallow cooking vessel 2. Psychic's claim 3. Let someone borrow 4. Hit the slopes 5. Large deer 8. Regarding 10. Do, re, mi, etc 11. Small mint, tic ___ 12. Fido or fluffy 16. Stove 17. Ram's mate 18. Tire filler 19. Consumed 20. Kind of meat from pig |
|--|--|

Crossword puzzle No 588



Readers' Feedback

Leave Bester, the police in conjunction with Bowman are doing the same

Editor,

"Yet the police are doing the same and more in conjunction with Bowman Lusambo". - Chonta Malinga

"This is unacceptable in my opinion, that's his son whom he works hard for to ensure he lacks nothing. The police have several things to do and this isn't one of them". - Paul Malata

"They failed to find the gassers, owner of the 48 houses now they want to show their energies on a simple matter". - Abel Ngoma

"Police should be the last ones to condemn George because their record on human rights isn't any better than Bester's!! In fact they are the worst abusers of the citizens they are supposed to protect!" - Cimbulu Matanga

"Its very sad for us who know this brother closely. In his intent there was no evil when disciplining his child, If anything the pain of what would become of the son in future over rode any other consideration". - Jerry Nyambe

"Leave this innocent man alone. He fathered that boy and has the right to discipline him. Teenagers are really hard to control, hes only doing what every parent must do to get their child back on track. Arrest Kaizer, and yourselves for brutality!" - Janet Mundando

Reopen Prime TV

Editor,

"When I read comments on these platforms regarding the closure of Prime TV my heart sinks, it look like scores of citizens think that because Prime TV does not support the ruling party it should be closed when it is a private entity that can chose who it want to support. I think people are advocating for one party state going back to the UNIP days which is

bad for democracy in this day and age". - Mutinta Mulonda

"They should just unconditionally reopen Prime TV. Some of us nolonger watch TV news because there is no Prime TV. Currently my source of news is social media". - Chanda Pochoko

"We need Prime TV back". - Charles Chivwindi

"Some Zambians here are like that proverbial man who blissfully fed a man-eating crocodile without realizing that he would end up being eaten. As they say, those who go to dinner with the devil must carry a long spoon. If you believe that Zambia in the way it's governed is a democracy, you really need assistance in understanding the value of diversity in democracy". - Evans Kaimoyo

In short, our growth forecast is 0%

Editor,

"When they made the 2020 budget didn't we all ask where they'd get the money? They even wasted so much on buying army trucks etc as if we were going to war! Priorities! The budget should have heavily supported sectors that would give us profit returns, those profits would then support 2021 budget and the extra change would finance things like army trucks! As of now we have no profit returns! Even the debt we accumulated wasn't invested properly!" - Henrietta Buwalda

"Are we not as a country sliding into a recession! In short the growth forecast is 0%". - Bo Ndate Lilato

"PF very good at announcing problems but NO solutions". - Mwimanenwa Kamona

"The worst is yet to come, the ripple effects of global recession from industrialised countries to developing countries will be felt more in the aftermath of the coronavirus. The urban dwellers will take the worst hit more than those in villages, in certain cases, wages will be difficult to pay as cash flow from state

coffers will be very limited". - Mwewa Kapiri Kapiri Chanda

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.



Why not just close the route if European Airlines comes into Zambia with 1 passenger?

Dear editor,

"Why not just close the route?" - Mwale Lameck

"And yet the Zambian Government wants to invest and go in the same aviation industry, with the same routes, on borrowed funds". - Nomsa Kalenga

"This is not the time to cry for money. Save the lives of people you have put in danger with your reckless policies. Had you suspended incoming flights on time, we would

have been talking a different story now". - Mo Ze

"Admitting such stark facts and they still insist on pouring money into making a National Airline. How can one describe this type of thinking?" - Lawrence Wakung'uma

"Uhhh this is highly uneconomical. How do they cover the costs?" - Lawrence Atta Mills Jr

"Hmmm, surely Ethiopian airlines can allow the plane to burn all that fuel only to bring 1-passenger into the country?" - Happy Mcsilz

"He is lying, the cost of flying one person cannot generate revenue. Not even 12 people can!" - McElvis Sims

THE new coronavirus, against which vaccine trials are underway, is not about to be defeated, warned on Wednesday the World Health Organization at a time when containment measures are gradually being eased in certain countries.

"Make no mistake: we still have a long way to go. This virus will be with us for a long time," warned WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus from Geneva.

While anti-containment demonstrations arise here and there, as in the United States and Brazil, the head of the WHO estimated that these "rallies will only fuel the epidemic".

In countries, especially in Europe, where the measures to contain populations implemented last month are starting to be eased, fear of a second wave of contamination is omnipresent and calls for caution frequent.

"One of the greatest dangers facing us today is complacency" in the face of the pandemic, added the head of the WHO, stressing that "the first elements indicate that the major part of the world population remains susceptible "to be

Fight will be long, warns WHO

infected.

- "We will get by" -

The new coronavirus pandemic has killed more than 180,000 people worldwide since its appearance in December in China, according to a report drawn up by AFP from official sources.

While 759 deaths have been recorded in Britain in the past 24 hours, bringing the nation's death toll to 18,000, British health chief Chris Whitty has showered the hopes of those hoping that London will follow suit. European tendency to lighten containment measures in the coming weeks.

"In the long term, we will get by (...) ideally with a very effective vaccine (...) or very effective drugs which will allow people to no longer die from this disease, even if they catch it", he said.

"Until we have these - and the probability of having them in the coming year is incredibly low, and I think we have to be realistic about it - we will have to count on other measures, social, which are of course very disruptive," he warned.

The global race to develop a vaccine, in which all nations

and all major laboratories and pharmaceutical companies are participating, was relaunched Wednesday with the green light given by the German federal authority responsible for the certification of vaccines to a clinical trial on humans by the BioNTech laboratory, based in Mainz, in association with the American giant Pfizer.

Currently, five vaccine projects around the world are in human trials, but the development of an effective and safe formula should take no less than twelve to 18 months, experts say.

While waiting for this vaccine, which the whole world will want to have at the same time and the obtaining of which risks giving rise to fierce competition, the pandemic will continue to fuel a global economic crisis with unprecedented repercussions.

US President Donald Trump announced Wednesday night that he has signed a decree temporarily limiting immigration to his country.

"This will help ensure that unemployed Americans (...) are the first to benefit from jobs as the economy reopens," he said.

Having become the world's

main focus of the epidemic with more than a quarter of the 180,000 deaths recorded, the United States is paying a heavy price, 22 million Americans having registered unemployed in a few weeks.

Accused of having long minimized the scope of the pandemic which forces more than half of humanity to remain confined, Mr. Trump said he suspended the issuance of green cards offering permanent resident status for at least 60 days.

In a world that has come to a standstill, leaders are still trying to curb the effects of an economic crisis that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) describe as the worst since 1945.

The UN is alarmed by a "global humanitarian disaster": the number of people suffering from famine is likely to double to reach "more than 250 million by the end of 2020", she said.

In the United States, as in France or the United Kingdom, many unemployed people must already turn to food banks.

And the temptation

is great to revive certain economic activities in the face of the specter of recession.

But "going too fast would be a mistake," said German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Tuesday, whose country has, among other things, decided to reopen certain supermarkets.

Berlin and ten of the 16 German federal states have decided to impose the wearing of masks on public transport. Bars, restaurants, cultural places, sports grounds remain closed. Schools and high schools will gradually reopen.

In addition to Germany, Austria, Norway and Denmark

are on the way to relaxing their containment measures, while retaining measures of "social distancing".

Second wave -

Italy, France, Switzerland, Finland and Romania are also preparing cautious deconfinement.

Car maker Renault has started to boost production in France, which was halted on March 16.

Despite signs of deceleration, the threshold of 112,000 dead has been exceeded on the Old Continent. Italy (25,085 dead) and Spain (21,717) are the most affected countries in Europe, followed by France (21,340) and the United Kingdom (18,100).AFP

Kenya quarantine escapees arrested in bar

POLICE in Kenya have arrested two people who escaped from a coronavirus quarantine centre in the capital, Nairobi.

They were among dozens of others who were filmed jumping over a wall of the quarantine centre, drawing public condemnation.

The two were arrested while drinking at a bar in Roysambu area, north of the city, and were taken back to the quarantine centre.

During their arrest they said they had planned the escape as no testing was being conducted on them.

They also said the order to foot their bills during their enforced confinement was a factor as they could afford the money.

Kenya's Citizen TV shared a video of the two talking to reporters after their arrest.BBC



Discussion on a market in central Rome between several people who respect safe distances, April 21, 2020

Mozambican killed for threatening police



Mozambique is currently under a state of emergency because of coronavirus

TWO police officers are to be charged for beating to death a man who had threatened to film them playing football in contravention of coronavirus restrictions in Mozambique

Abdul Razak, 44, confronted officers on Sunday in the Munhava area of Beira city, saying they were not observing social distancing rules.

According to private television channel STV, the same officers had earlier dispersed young people who had converged in the same area to play football.

The police chief's spokesman, Orlando Mudumane, said the two officers involved were in detention and would be held accountable for their actions.

"Criminal and disciplinary processes are under way," he said.

"The police will provide the bereaved family with the necessary support, according to the law," the spokesman added.

The southern African nation currently has 41 cases of Covid-19, the respiratory illness caused by coronavirus.BBC

MADAGASCAR'S President Andry Rajoelina says he has been congratulated by his counterpart in the Democratic Republic of Congo for launching a herbal coronavirus "cure".

The World Health Organization (WHO) says there is no proof of a cure for Covid-19 and the country's national medical academy (Anamem) has also cast doubt on the efficacy of Mr

Madagascar leader 'congratulated for herbal cure'

Rajoelina's touted prevention and remedy.

But President Rajoelina tweeted that he and Félix Tshisekedi had chatted via a video conference about the Malagasy plant-based tonic, dubbed Covid-Organics.

"Africa is united and develops solutions against

#Covid19 thanks to its natural heritage. The Malagasy stand beside their brothers," he said in the post.

When the herbal concoction was launched on Monday, Anamem said it had the potential to damage people's health as its "scientific evidence had not been established".

Developed by the Malagasy Institute of Applied Research (Imra), it is made from the artemisia plant - the source of an ingredient used in a malaria treatment - and other Malagasy plants.

The Indian ocean island, which has a population more than 25 million, has so far recorded 121 cases of coronavirus, and no deaths.

DR Congo, with a population of 51 million, has recorded 359 cases, including 25 deaths.

The president of Madagascar Andry Rajoelina has officially launched a local herbal remedy claimed to prevent and cure the novel coronavirus.

"Tests have been carried out -- two people have now been cured by this treatment," Rajoelina told ministers, diplomats and journalists at the Malagasy Institute of Applied Research (IMRA), which developed the beverage.

"This herbal tea gives results in seven days," he said.

Downing a dose, he said: "I will be the first to drink this today, in front of you, to show you that this product cures and does not kill."

The drink, which has been called Covid-Organics, is derived from artemisia -- a plant with proven efficacy in malaria treatment -- and other indigenous herbs, according to the IMRA.

But its safety and effectiveness have not been assessed internationally, nor has any data from trials been published in peer-reviewed studies. Mainstream scientists have warned of the potential risk from untested herbal brews.

Rajoelina brushed aside any such reservations and said the concoction would be offered to schoolchildren, as it was his duty was to "protect the Malagasy people".

"Covid-Organics will be used as prophylaxis, that is

for prevention, but clinical observations have shown a trend towards its effectiveness in curative treatment," said Dr. Charles Andrianjara, IMRA's director general.

The large Indian Ocean island has so far detected 121 cases and no fatality.

The pandemic has triggered a rush for herbal formulas, lemons and ginger in the belief that they can protect against the virus.

The World Health Organization (WHO), which has warned people to be vigilant about claimed cures for Covid-19, did not attend the event.

The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), referring to claims for herbal or tea remedies, says: "There is no scientific evidence that any of these alternative remedies can prevent or cure the illness caused by Covid-19. In fact, some of them may not be safe to consume."BBC



By Abraham Kalito

NKANA FC fans have demanded for the removal of two top officials, citing poor management of the club as reasons.

In a petition directed at club sponsors Mopani Copper mine, the fans demanded that club president Everisto Kabila and Chief Executive Officer Charles Chakatazya be relieved of their duties immediately.

"Arising from the unpleasant reports of mismanagement at Nkana

Nkana fans want club president, CEO out

Football Club and on the back drop of the reports of the arbitral termination of the contract for the Ghanaian Goal Keeper Stephen Adams which resulted in FIFA banning Nkana Football Club from signing players for three transfer windows after the club failed to settle as ordered the amount of \$28,350 equivalent to K523,227.60 at today's rate of \$1 - K18.4560 as monitored

by FNB and the reports of the bailiffs having had impounded the Nkana Football Club Bus for failure to settle undisclosed amount of money owed Aaron Katebe, the National Executive Committee of Nkana Football Club Fans requested for a meeting with Nkana President Mr. Everisto Kabila through the Chief Executive Officer Mr. Charles Chakatazya on March 17 2020," read a statement.

"A follow up was made on March 22, 2020 with Mr. Chakatazya who informed the Nkana fans Exco that no meeting had been scheduled and that he would either communicate later or alternatively, the fans Exco could schedule a meeting with the newly appointed Nkana Treasure Ms. Kunda Bowa.

In addition, more reports have since emerged where the

club is alleged to be owing a number of players and a named former coach substantial amounts of money. These and many well documented issues speak to the unprecedented mismanagement that has befallen Nkana Football Club largely instituted by Nkana Football Club Chief Executive Officer Mr. Charles Chakatazya and abated by Nkana Football Club President Mr. Everisto Kabila who are tasked with running the club."

The fans petitioned Mopani Copper Mines following a meeting, Wednesday, to appoint officials on an interim basis and that the appointed should secure accounts.

"In view of the foregoing, the Nkana Football Fans National Fans Executive Committee held an emergency virtual meeting on 21st April 2020 and 22 April 2020. This emergency meeting was held on the backdrop of the fans exco having been petitioned publicly and privately by the agitated Nkana Fans as a result of these recent events at the club. The meeting unanimously resolved the following: The paid-up members of Nkana Football Club to urgently petition Mopani Copper Mines for the urgent removal of Mr. Everisto Kabila as Nkana President.

The Petition will urgently be designed and circulated to the membership," read a statement.

"The Fans National Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Nkana Fans to urgently write to Mopani Copper Mines and the Nkana Vice President - Administration to immediately place both Mr. Everisto Kabila and Mr. Charles Chakatazya respectively on an indefinite forced leave from Nkana Football Club and to cause them to cease handling any issues pertaining to the club until such a time the petition from the fans is deliberated upon conclusively by Mopani Copper mines. Mopani Copper mines to appoint stand in officials to act as President and CEO of the Club once Mr. Kabila and Mr. Chakatazya are placed on forced leave. The Nkana Fans Exco to write to the would be incoming appointed officials to secure the accounts and all records held by Mr. Chakatazya. The Fans National Executive Committee to invite the would be appointed interim President and the Treasure for a virtual meeting at a date to be set to discuss the actual state of affairs of the club so as to chart the way forward on the levels of engagement between the fans and the club."

Adebayor refuses to donate amid COVID-19 crisis in Togo

FORMER Premier League striker Emmanuel Adebayor has hit back at those who have called him out for not donating money to his home country of Togo amid the global coronavirus crisis, stating that he will not be parting with his money purely because others wish him to do so.

Football has ground to a halt across the planet in the wake of Covid-19's rapid spread, with most countries in some state of lockdown as authorities attempt to get the virus under control and treat those who have been infected.

With players having so much time on their hands due to a lack of matches and training while social distancing protocols are in place, many footballers have spent their time helping to raise funds or awareness for charities that directly benefit those on the front line of the fight.

Samuel Eto'o has donated relief packages to his home nation of Cameroon, with items such as food, soaps, sanitisers and protective equipment handed out in the country's economic capital of Douala.

Didier Drogba, another African icon, joined Eto'o in roundly lambasting French professors for suggesting their continent should be used as a testing ground for a vaccine due to developing nations having little protection to begin with.

The former Ivory Coast international also donated the soon-to-be-completed Laurent Pokou hospital, built by his Drogba Foundation, to his home nation's government as a facility to screen for the disease.

Such charitable moves prompted some to ask Adebayor what he would be doing with the wealth he has accumulated across his long career, but the former Arsenal, Manchester City and Tottenham striker says that he is his own man and won't be swayed by the actions or opinions of others.

"I always do things according to the wishes of my heart and not according to the words of others," Adebayor said in a Facebook live video.

"I'm sorry that people compare me to Samuel Eto'o and Didier Drogba by asking me why I don't have a foundation or why I don't donate, as if I was the one who brought the coronavirus to Togo..."

"I am neither the one nor the other, I am me, Sheyi Emmanuel Adebayor. A word of advice for the guys regarding donations, I will not do that. Everything is clear and very simple. Thank you and good day."

Adebayor, now 36, had signed for Paraguayan side Olimpia shortly before football was halted due to the coronavirus pandemic. **GOAL**



Kamanga won't stand if those barred are not re-instated, vows Siwale

By Abraham Kalito

SEASONED Soccer administrator Blackwell Siwale says FAZ president Andrew Kamanga will not contest the 2020 elections if those who have been disqualified by the association are not re-instated.

Siwale clarified in an interview with goal Diggers that because Andrew Kamanga is in a similar situation as those who have been disqualified, he too cannot stand unless those who have been penalised are allowed to contest the elections.

He vowed that there will be no way Kamanga will contest the elections while the others remain disqualified.

"If I don't stand for election then Kamanga is not standing. If all those who filed their nominations and were disqualified are not standing for the 2020 elections, then Kamanga is not standing. I can repeat that if all the people that have been penalised will not stand, then Kamanga will not be on the ballot paper as well. I mean what I am saying and I have no apologies for

what I am saying because I'm just telling you the truth. Football is for all. He is afraid of letting others stand because he has failed. If he had done a good job managing football, he wouldn't have been this afraid. Under Article 38 of the Football Association of Zambia, Andrew Kamanga is the overall superintendent of the secretariat so if the secretariat is being investigated, he too is. Meaning he cannot stand. These politics in football were actually brought by Kamanga himself. We are people who are willing to work with anyone, but then he brought division," he said.

Meanwhile Siwale says FAZ has misinterpreted the court ruling made on 20th April 2020.

"In my understanding, and according to the explanation given to me by my lawyers is that the status quo to hold the elections and election process is still in force. FAZ lawyers can seek interpretation from their learned colleagues and friend but they cannot conduct

election. Let them election and see who will be cited for contempt of court. They Kamanga knows and Kashala knows they are just playing with words. The matter was halted because they had gone to court seeking an injunction. Its again a contempt of court. If they commit another contempt of court they are brave men, I would be very excited," Siwale said.

"But then I wouldn't be surprised because Andrew Kamanga and his general secretary are people that have no respect for the law. But in this one they can't dare hold elections because they know the Ex parte order is still in place. Look in these wrangles I am very much involved. So, I know what they are doing. Even the information they have been giving about the ECM they have been lying, look National Sports Council have five people and then there were nine people as stakeholders, you mean we all misunderstood what transpired in that meeting and only FAZ got everything

correct? They know what they have done, how can a server containing serious

information go missing? A server? There is a lot they have done that they are afraid of."

Sporting merits will decide CL qualifiers - UEFA

UEFA has stated that qualification for its club competitions next season must be done on "sporting merit", while reaffirming its belief that the 2019-20 season should be played to a complete finish where possible.

The football season has been postponed across the majority of Europe due to the coronavirus outbreak, with the Champions League and Europa League on hold and all major domestic leagues being suspended, or in some cases, abandoned.

The Belgian Pro League was the first to be called off early, while Scottish lower league clubs recently voted to end their seasons and the Dutch Eredivisie is set to be abandoned after all football in the country was banned until September 1.

The UEFA executive committee met in a video conference on Thursday to discuss how the league seasons could be ended, and also how qualification for the 2020-21 Champions League and Europa League could be decided.

A UEFA statement read: "As a result of representations made by the football authorities in Belgium and Scotland, the committee recognises the issues raised and approved the guidelines on eligibility principles for 2020-21 UEFA club competitions. The guidelines reflect the principle that admission to UEFA club competitions is always based on sporting merit. **GOAL**

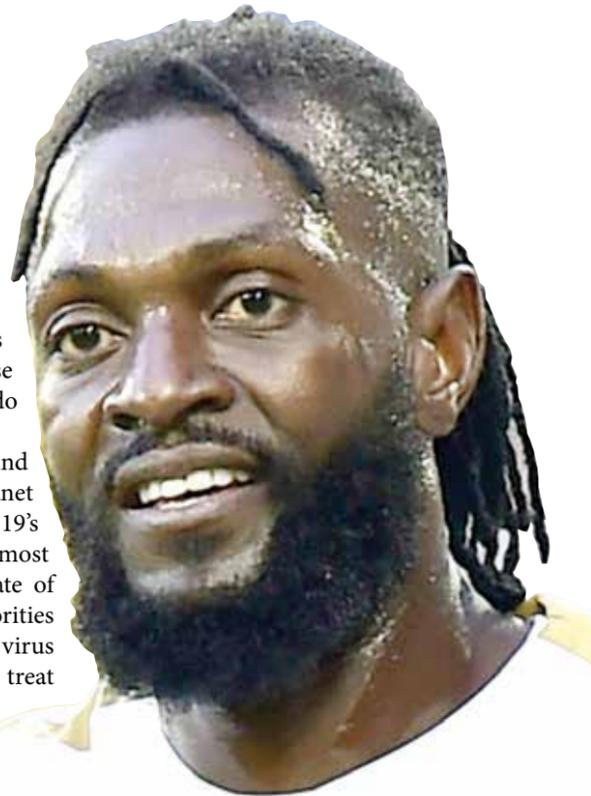
I DIDN'T BRING CORONAVIRUS TO TOGO

FORMER Premier League striker Emmanuel Adebayor has hit back at those who have called him out for not donating money to his home country of Togo amid the global coronavirus crisis, stating

that he will not be parting with his money purely because others wish him to do so.

Football has ground to a halt across the planet in the wake of Covid-19's rapid spread, with most countries in some state of lockdown as authorities attempt to get the virus under control and treat those who have been infected.

Story page 11



FAZ embarks on mitigation campaign against Covid-19

By Abraham Kalito

FOOTBALL Association of Zambia (FAZ) has embarked on a mitigation campaign against Covid-19 aimed at finding the best ways of finishing the season amidst the pandemic.

According to statement by FAZ acting spokesperson Sydney Mungala, the association has proposed a mitigation package but will first assess the situation to ascertain the impact of the pandemic on the operation of the clubs.

Mungala said clubs will be expected to give FAZ details of the hardest hit aspects of their operations through a questionnaire and that the information will be used to determine

"The Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) Executive Committee has proposed a mitigation package for its member clubs arising from the impact of the Covid-19. During an Executive Committee meeting this morning (Wednesday), FAZ has resolved that it will assess the impact of the Covid-19 on its members and see how they can mitigate the damage. Members will be expected to give FAZ details of the hardest hit aspects of their operations through a questionnaire that will be circulated. FAZ has urged members to remain compliant with the guidelines provided by the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization in the fight against the Covid-19. Member clubs are also advised to observe the labour laws in the wake of Covid-19 which has affected their financial status," he said.

Mungala quote association secretary general Adrian Kashala as saying that there is optimism within FAZ that the Covid-19 threat will be curtailed soon to ensure that football returns to the pitch.

"We continue to monitor the situation around the Covid-19 and we are hopeful that football will return to the pitches soon. In the meantime, we are urging all our members to play their part in the fight that has plunged the whole world into a health crisis. The Football Association of Zambia remains shut in respect of the Covid-19 threat. Play Safe, Stay Home and Keep Safe. Or come up with something different to speak to the Covid-19 fight."

Bundesliga ready to resume on May 9

BUNDESLIGA CEO Christian Seifert has said that the league will be ready to return to competitive action as early as May 9, although government approval will be required before an official decision is made.

Representatives of each of the 36 clubs in the top two German tiers decided on the date after a meeting on Thursday, with it very much the intention of said teams to finish off the season.

Doing so will undoubtedly see matches played behind closed doors and involve rigorous testing of players and staff for coronavirus, as well as frequent deep cleaning of stadiums.

Seifert told the press: "The Bundesliga is ready to resume, no matter whether it's on May 9 or a later date. But it's not up to us to find a date. The political decision makers decide.

"We have not defined an exact date today. The fact that we are even able to think about resuming games underlines the performance of the German authorities.

"It would be presumptuous for the DFL to name an exact date for the restart." **GOAL**

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