

Train smashes school girl in headphones at rail crossing in Kabwe

By Diggers Reporter

A 16-year-old Raphael Kombe Girls Secondary School grade 10 pupil has died on the spot after being hit by a Zambia Railways passenger train. The accident occurred this morning at around 07:00 hours in Kabwe's Nakoli compound as Martha Chileshe, who was wearing headsets, was crossing the railway line on her way to school. Both Zambia Railways Limited (ZRL) and Raphael Kombe Girls Secondary School management have confirmed the incident to News Diggers!

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ZAMBIA IS BIGGER THAN PE, UPND

By Martha Chilasha

UPND Whip Garry Nkombo says attending Parliament this Friday will not mean his party members of parliament have recognised President Edgar Lungu as duly elected Head of State.

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...but our attending Parliament does not mean that we recognise Lungu - Nkombo



HH and UPND national chairperson Mutale Nalumango address a rally in Itezhi-tezhi - Picture by Brian Mwiinga

It's too late for Lungu to revise maize price - Wynter

By Zondiwe Mbewe

Rainbow Party General Secretary Wynter Kabimba says it is too late for President Edgar Lungu to appease farmers. Reacting to the Head of State's decision to relook the K60 per 50kg bag of maize price in an interview today, Kabimba said the damage had already been done. "There is no maize to buy! So that decision, populist as it may be, the peasant farmers have already lost. This is September and rains are six weeks away, there is no farmer that can keep maize because they don't have storage facilities so the loss has already been made by them, they have already suffered a loss. It is too late in the day for that decision because farmers have already suffered the loss," Kabimba said.

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Govt suspends move to surrender fuel procurement to private sector

By Joseph Mwenda

Government has postponed to next year March, the decision to surrender the fuel procurement obligation to the private sector, citing lack of legal framework to support the move.

says although Indeni will shut down on Friday to facilitate for maintenance, there will be no fuel shortages because the country has enough reserves. In an interview with News Diggers! Energy Permanent Secretary Brig Gen Emeldah Chola said

government has instead decided to extend the contract for current fuel suppliers to next year. "It's the process that has caused this. We have to put in place the legal framework, which hasn't yet gone through. But the tender process has started. People have

already started bidding for next year but we will still wait for the legal

framework to be put in place," Brig Gen Chola said.

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TIZ notes government negligence in procurement of "contaminated" oil

By Mukosha Funga
Transparency International Zambia (TIZ) president Rueben

Lifuka says there seems to be a deliberate ploy within government to mismanage the

procurement of crude oil in order to facilitate for corruption activities.

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Chitotela breaks down \$1.2bn for Lusaka-Ndola Rd

Story on page 5

By Mukosha Funga

The Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) in Lusaka has arrested six people for possessing a total of K500, 000 fake bank notes. In a statement, DEC Public Relations Officer Theresa Katongo said a Zambia army officer was found in possession of K400, 000, while five others were arrested for being found in possession of K100, 000 counterfeit notes.

DEC nabs 6 for possessing K500, 000 fake bank notes

"The Drug Enforcement Commission has arrested a Zambia Army Officer for being in possession of

K400 thousand counterfeit notes. Newton Sondashi, 42, a Staff Sergeant of Plot No. 2077/2078 Pamodzi

Township in Ndola District has been arrested for being in possession of K400, 000 counterfeit notes in K100

plots. The suspect was arrested in Chawama Township as he was about to transact," Katongo said.

"And in a related development, the Commission in Lusaka has arrested and jointly charged five people for being in possession of K100 thousand counterfeit notes. Among those arrested are Mulenga Simukoko, 42, of Chawama Compound, Davison Njobvu of House No. L33 St. Monica area in Chipata District and Alexander Lungu, 32, a Businessman of Kalongwezi area in Chipata District. Also arrested is Kamanga Banda, 58, of Plot No. 19/17 Chawama Compound in Lusaka and Alfred Mabeti, 38, a Businessman also of Chawama Compound for being in possession of K100,000 counterfeit notes." She said the Commission had also arrested major suppliers of heroin in Lusaka.

"Meanwhile, four (04) major suppliers of heroin in Lusaka's Chaisa Compound have been arrested by the Commission for trafficking in heroin. Those arrested and jointly charged include James Banda, 23, Moses John Mwanza, 23, and his wife Estela Phiri, 25, for trafficking in 45 sachets of heroin. Also arrested separately, is Peter Mwanza alias 'Junior Marcopolo' for trafficking in 116 sachets of heroin. All suspects will appear in court soon." said Katongo.

Don't use marketeers to clean dirty money, Kambwili tells Lungu

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

Former Minister of Information Chishimba Kambwili says President Edgar Lungu must not be using innocent marketeers to clean dirty money through Presidential empowerment fund.

And Kambwili says government should immediately terminate the \$1.2 billion Lusaka-Ndola dual-carriageway contract because it stinks of corruption.

Meanwhile, Kambwili says he has got nothing to do with a new party called National Democratic Congress because he is still PF.

At a media briefing at his house in Luanshya on Monday, Kambwili challenged the Head of State to explain the source of K10 million which he used to empower over 7 000 marketeers across the country.

"They said that they were going to be disclosing where the funds were going to come from, the donor who was going to put in the money but how long has it taken now? The innocent marketeers should be cleaning dirty money through market empowerment fund. We want to know who are the donors who are putting in that money? Zambians deserve to know, we don't want to speculate," Kambwili said.

"So Mr President, we love you, you are humble man, very humble, please tell us where you have gotten the K10 million that you have pushed in the market empowerment, very good project but where is the money coming from? We don't want our marketeers to be handling petty money, we want our marketeers to be handling clean money and clean money can only be money that is explained, the source is explained correctly to the people of Zambia."

Kambwili who is also expelled Roan PF member of parliament insisted that President Lungu should explain what business he was doing for him to acquire

K21.5 million of assets within a year.

"If you follow the President, he is a very unusual person, in 2015 when the late President Michael Sata died, he declared that total asset portfolio was K2.5 million, one year later, in 2016, he declared K23 million as his total asset portfolio meaning therefore that he had made K21.5 million within one year. We would like to know what business the President was doing to acquire K21.5 million of assets within a calendar period of 12 month. And we would also want to know if he is the one funding the markets empowerment, where has he gotten this K10 million from? We want people who are in state house to act above board, we want people who want to be President to act above board and I think Zambians deserve answers," Kambwili said.

And Kambwili said government should immediately terminate the \$1.2 billion Lusaka-Ndola dual-carriageway contract because it appeared to be marred by corruption.

"We would like to appeal to this government to immediately terminate and cancel the contract for the dual-carriageway from Lusaka to the Copperbelt, not that we don't want the road, not that the people of Zambia don't want the road, but I think there are more questions to be answered on the integrity and pricing of that contract. First and foremost, we want to know whether the contract was advertised. How many companies responded to the advert? What were the quotations of the other companies that competed for this road project? Surely \$1.2 billion can't be single-sourced. Nowhere in the world where a contract to the tune of \$1.2 billion is single sourced. If it's true that this was single sourced, we demand that the President, who went to open the project, should resign on moral

grounds," Kambwili said.

"The Minister of Infrastructure and Housing [Ronald Chitotela] should also resign on moral grounds, and people at RDA who were involved in awarding this contract should be disciplined. I think by and large, we cannot allow a few people to earn commissions on road projects. We have been so docile as Zambians not to question some of these unnecessary expenditure. Nobody had a problem with the cost of Mongu-Kalabo road because we all know the terrain of Western Province and because most of that road is suspended on very heavy concrete but what has necessitated the contract of 320 km from Lusaka into the Copperbelt, into Ndola

to cost US\$1.2 billion? I am convinced beyond reasonable doubt after consulting with engineers, very high profiled civil engineers, that this cost has been inflated because of people wanting to get commission. No wonder they rushed to go and commission this project."

Kambwili further said Zambians would not tolerate investors coming to treat them like a piece of dirty cloth.

"We welcome all the investors, but the investors must act above board. We are not going to have an investor whether Chinese, Indian, Zambian, British, South African who is going to come and treat our Zambian like a piece of dirty cloth, we are not going to accept that.

We want when the investor comes, they must realise that God knew why he put copper under the Zambian soil. If we may ask, why didn't God put copper on the land of China? He came and put copper here in Zambia son that the people of Zambia can benefit. But what we are seeing now, the people of Zambia are not benefiting so much from their rich," he said.

Meanwhile, Kambwili denied having formed the National Democratic Congress party saying he was still PF.

"Me registering National Democratic Congress party? That's Mr Musenge there, the owner of National Democratic Party. Me I am PF, I don't know anything about it, me I'm PF," said Kambwili.

Long-awaited fire tenders arrive



By Tenson Mkhala

The long-awaited fire tenders have finally been handed over to the government.

And President Edgar Lungu says his government is committed to ensuring that the lives of the Zambian

people are safeguarded by revamping fire and rescue services in the country.

In a speech ready on his behalf by vice-president Inonge Wina during the handover of 42 fire tenders to councils in Lusaka,

President Lungu said government will continue to empower local authorities with appropriate equipment to enable them discharge their duties effectively.

He said the handing over of the equipment is a clear demonstration that government desires to uphold and protect both human life and property.

The President added that in order to fully appreciate firemen and women in their role in preventing loss of lives and property from fire and other forms of accidents, government will provide policy guidance to the fire and rescue industry. He further disclose that the procurement of fire fighting and rescue equipment will remain an on-going exercise

until all the fire brigades in the country have been adequately equipped.

Meanwhile, Local government minister Vincent Mwale said the procurement of the fire tenders would see an improvement in fire fighting operations and services in the country.

"Your honor, let me say the handing over of these fire fighters and rescue equipment will positively contribute to the saving lives, protecting property in our community. As you are aware that there has never been such significant investment in the fire sector in this country in the history if this country," he said. The 42 fire tenders were bought at the cost of US\$42 Million.

Train smashes schoolgirl in headphones at rail crossing

From front page

Deputy school manager Kenneth Zyangale said the school was deeply disturbed by the death of their pupil.

"Yes, I can confirm that Martha is our pupil and this morning she was hit by a train and died instantly. This is a very sad development for us as

a school and am actually preparing a report now to forward to the higher offices," he said.

Zyangale said eye witnesses told the school that the girl had headsets on as she was crossing the road and could not hear the train approaching.

"One of the eye witnesses, a Mr Joseph Nyendwa,

who happens to be PF Nakoli Overspill Chairperson, told me that Martha had headsets on as she was crossing and efforts by the train driver who hooted several times could not draw her attention," Zyangale said. He said the school did not allow pupils to attend class with cellphones.

"These are things we always talk about to the parents and pupils. At this school we don't allow learners to come with cellphones," said Zyangale.

The body of the deceased has since been deposited in Kabwe General Hospital mortuary awaiting post-mortem.

Don't take our attending Parliament as recognising Edgar Lungu – UPND

By Martha Chilasha
UPND Whip Garry Nkombo says attending Parliament this Friday will not mean his party members of parliament have recognised President Edgar Lungu as duly elected Head of State. In an interview with News Diggers! Nkombo who is also Mazabuka Central MP explained that parliamentarians had the duty to attend National Assembly sessions with or without the President's presence. "By Constitution, that is an assembly of representatives, that is who we are, so with or without him, we are supposed to go to that Parliament. But let me hasten to say to you that

the issue of recognition is still a function of the pending matter in court and it should be known very clearly that the reason we have not been to the first opening of the Republican Assembly in 2016 was documented and the documents that we sent to the Speaker was to the effect that PF was brutalizing our people, PF have been incarcerating our people, a situation that has not improved up to this moment. The issue of recognition does not arise at this moment," Nkombo said. "What arises however, is the recognition of the fact that with the effort of people that have come to the country's aid, because the country is

much greater than UPND and it is much greater than PF, there is an effort by the Commonwealth, by the European Union, there is an effort by the church to see to it that we forestall genuine dialogue which will address the issue of the problem at hand and I think maturity is believing that there is a problem at hand." He said the UPND had resolved to put the country's needs before politics. "It is only when we believe that there is a problem at hand, we put country before self, is when we can get things right. For now, we are going to Parliament simply because we are interested in bringing society back to normal and

it has nothing to do with Mr Edgar Lungu. Because by the Constitution, we were elected to go there, we have made our point known about the bad governance system under the Patriotic Front party and we will not stop to say the same until such a time that they improve," he said. "In the absence of their improvement, they are not punishing UPND, they are punishing the whole country and the whole country stops being at peace." Nkombo said Speaker of the National Assembly Dr Patrick Matibini participated in creating a hostile political atmosphere in the country. "There are many players

who I think have contributed to the difficult situation that the country is in right now and some of those, including the Speaker of the National Assembly, we think that he has been instrumental in widening the cleavage that exists in our social structure and it is all these things that we need to deal with including the Electoral Commission of Zambia, they have been instrumental in the growing cleavage in the social structure of our country; including the police" said Nkombo.

"But we firmly believe that all these state institutions that have shown signs of compromise is as a result of PF. So the moment these institutions can start functioning in a more independent and fair manner, we will see that life will become normal again. There is a multi faceted story about going to Parliament, we are mandated by law to go to Parliament and no one must mistake us going there for submission or recognition because those issues do not arise."

Lungu's promise to revisit K60 maize price excites ZNFU

By Mukosha Funga
The Zambia National Farmers Union says President Edgar Lungu's intervention on the K60 market price has come at the right time. The Food Reserve Agency set K60 for a 50kg bag of maize as the market price but ZNFU rejected it saying it was unfair on farmers as they would make huge losses. On July 26, President Lungu said he would not interfere with the maize price because he did not want to politicize production. "When you go to the market, there should be a willing buyer and a willing seller. I think a consensus must be achieved somehow. Those who produce maize know what they put in, they know what to expect. Those who are buying also know what they are offering so find a medium somehow. I don't want to politicize production, production should be economical so those who are engaged in activities should be rewarded and I think when they are giving them too much money, that's bad, too low money, that's bad so in the end at the market there should be a willing buyer, a willing seller," said President Lungu. But his press aide Amos Chanda told journalists at State House yesterday that President Lungu was concerned about the challenges which farmers

were facing and he would relook the low maize price. Welcoming the move in a statement today, ZNFU president Jervis Zimba said he looked forward to the intervention. "The Zambia National Farmers Union welcomes the stance by Government to consider revisiting the

pricing of maize of K60 by the Food Reserve Agency (FRA). The intervention comes at the time just when farmers needed it. We reaffirm as farmers to play our part for the country to realise the dream of making agriculture the mainstay of the economy and being the food basket of the region,"

stated Zimba. "We look forward to the intervention, which as farmers gives us fresh hope of making investments that will help us grow the country's agriculture. Agriculture remains the most realistic pathway of lifting the majority of Zambians out of poverty."

Govt suspends move to surrender procurement of fuel to private sector

From front page
"We still have those suppliers who have been supplying, they are continuing upto that period next year. We don't want a situation where we have a gap. This has to be a smooth transition." She added that the country had enough stock for the transition period. "The stock as at now is still very okay. As you may be aware that Indeni will be closing on the 15th for their annual maintenance, but we have built up the stock to ensure that we go through this period smoothly," said Brig Gen Chola. Listen to the audio on www.diggers.news And News Diggers has learnt that the companies being considered to supply fuel upto next year March include Sahara, Dalbit, Delta and Worldwide.



At a meeting at Otto in Lunte district of N/Province Left to right PF MCC Susan Kawandami, Alfridah Kansembe and PF DSP Frank Bwalya dancing behind to drum up support for Simon Chanda the PF candidate for council chairperson in the new district of Lunte

TIZ notes government negligence in procurement of “contaminated” oil

From front page

Reacting to the revelation by News Diggers! that an Oil trading company Gunvor has sued the Zambian government for refusing to take “contaminated” oil, Lifuka said the development was unacceptable.

“The latest episode where Gunvor, one of the crude oil suppliers is suing the Zambian government for not taking possession of what is considered to be contaminated feedstock, is a clear indication of what has gone wrong in the oil procurement in this country. We find it surprising that this issue has continued unresolved and yet in January 2016, the Ministry of Energy through its Permanent Secretary Brigadier General Emeldah Chola, stated that Gunvor had been summoned to resolve this matter.

This saga raises more questions than answers and it is time that a lasting solution is found, Lifuka said.

“TIZ considers the handling of crude oil procurement by successive governments, including the Patriotic Front, unacceptable and a sign of negligence if not a deliberate ploy to facilitate corrupt activities. We have on numerous occasions in the past, called for transparency and accountability in the award of the contract for crude oil supply to this country and it would seem that the present government has not learnt anything from its predecessor.”

He said TIZ expected to see several measures put in place to end the wastage of public resources.

“The PF Government under the leadership of the late President Michael Sata, appointed a Commission of Inquiry on 4 October 2011 headed by its Secretary General at that time – Wynter Kabimba to investigate the operations of the Energy Regulation Board and the

procurement of crude oil. The mandate of the Commission was to inquire on a number of aspects including – the procurement methods and tender procedures for the supply of oil by the Energy Regulation Board. Secondly, the Commission inquired on the capacity and corporate profile of international and local oil suppliers. On 30 July 2015, the then Minister of Justice-Dr. Ngosa Simbyakula, made a Ministerial statement in the National Assembly and indicated that the report of this Commission and two other commissions had been submitted to the late President Sata and these had subsequently been handed over to President Edgar Lungu- who was studying the reports and cabinet would later make a decision on the way forward,” Lifuka recalled. “Surely, President Lungu should by now have finished studying the report and this report together with Government’s white paper in reaction to the recommendations of the Commission, should be made public. We call upon President Edgar Lungu in the spirit of transparency, to release this report to the public or indeed to Parliament together with the Government white paper. We need not remind President Lungu that according to the announcement made by Dr. Simbyakula in July 2015, Government spent K4.7 million on this Commission and this is public money for which Government should be made accountable.”

He said those in government needed to learn from past



Transparency International Zambia (TIZ) president Rueben Lifuka

mistakes.

“We as a nation need to learn from our past mistakes and take appropriate measures to move forward. We do recall that at the time of the Commission’s sitting, its Chairperson – Mr. Wynter Kabimba was quoted as revealing that from 2007 to 2011, the country had lost about K2 trillion through acts of malpractices in the oil procurement system. The question is what has the PF government done to stop further losses of public resources in the oil procurement? Clearly, if the procurement of contaminated oil in June 2015 by Gunvor is said to have made Government lose over US\$10 million, and Indeni suffered damages estimated at US\$2.8 million, then we possibly have lost a lot more money from 2011 to date,” he stated.

“We stand to lose even more money if this case is decided in favour of Gunvor. This is money that could have been allocated elsewhere. We want to believe that the Commission of Inquiry made recommendations to seal these loopholes and Government should demonstrate what it has done and what it will do in the immediate term to improve the system. We need a complete overhaul of the oil procurement system- because it is presently a magnet for all manner of corrupt activities.” Lifuka questioned who authorised the purchase of the contaminated Gunvor oil. “The Gunvor saga, points to a number of unanswered questions – for instance – who authorised the contract of supply for the January 2016 shipment and what specifications were given to the supplier? If wrong

specifications were given, what action is Government taking against the officers involved including the Permanent Secretary as controlling and supervising officer? Why did Government ignore the warning and advice rendered by Indeni on not importing the contaminated crude feedstock? How did we have this recurrence of supply of contaminated feedstock when in August 2015, the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Energy informed the nation that Government and Gunvor SA had agreed to test all crude feedstock consignments before loading the cargo on ships and before offloading in Dar-es-salaam. Was this testing done at the time of loading the cargo and who did the tests?” asked Lifuka.

“It is evident that there is much more than what meets the eye and we demand for a full

investigation into this matter. We also demand for an open and transparent procurement of oil and possibly, let us remove the involvement of government in this system. It is time to stop the use of oil procurement as a vehicle for illicit enrichment. We cannot go on pretending that we are a rich nation with spare cash to fritter away. We should not allow a few unscrupulous persons to literally steal the future of millions of our children through shady deals.”

Gunvor has sued the Zambian government for refusing to take the crude oil which has since been abandoned at sea in Dar-es-Salaam.

Chola told News Diggers! on Monday that government was not committed to paying for the supply until the matter is resolved in the arbitration court. She insisted that the crude oil was contaminated.

It’s too late for Lungu to please farmers - Kabimba

From front page

“They are approaching this issue not from an economical point of view but a political point of view.

Because the economics of it is that there is no way a bag of 50kg maize can go for K60. That is ridiculous. Last year when it was K85, the

economic price for a bag of maize was K150 and K160. They are still undercutting the peasant farmers.”

He said President Lungu

must not act like a semi-god who runs the country based on what mood he has woken up in.

“Edgar Lungu is adopting this patriarch or attitude where he wants people to be pleading with him as the last person. He makes an unreasonable decision and then people should start to pleading with him when he knows what is supposed to be right and then he says I have listened and now I will do this, acting like a semi-god. That is not how to govern a country” Kabimba said.

“You can’t govern as if you are a chief. He is an elected president elected by the people of Zambia to do that which is right by the people.

And the people should not be seeking favours from the President. You remember even last year that’s what he did, they put the price at K65 and then people went and pleaded with him and he said put it at K85. A country cannot be at the beck and call of one man called the President, that is the problem with Africa. If that is the decision that he made then let him tell us why he has changed his mind that this has now become about his personal feelings where everything depends on what mood he has woken up in and the dream that he has had at night, that is not how you must govern a country, it is very disappointing.”

LWSC announces supply interruption

By Martha Chilasha

The Lusaka Water and Sewerage Company has announced that there will be an interruption of supply in most parts of the city from September 18-24.

According to a joint statement by LWSC and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), this is to pave way for rehabilitation works at the Lolanda Water Treatment Plant in Kafue.

They stated that the rehabilitation works were part of the US\$355 million

Lusaka Water Supply, Sanitation and Drainage Project funded by the US government through MCC.

It stated that once completed, the water treatment plant would be restored to its original capacity and provide a more reliable supply service to the capital city.

Residential areas to be affected include Kabulonga, Kalingalinga, Hellen Kaunda, Chudleigh, Chainama, Chelston, PHI, Kaunda Square, Handsworth, Jesmondine, parts of Kalundu, Sunningdale, Mtendere,

parts of Avondale, Kamwala South, Lilayi Housing, John Laign, Kuku, Chilenje, Chilenje South, Libala, Kabwata, Kamwala, UTH area, Woodlands, Chalala, Woodlands Extension, parts of Nyumba Yanga, Industrial area, city centre area, Villa Elizabeth, Emmasdale, Matero, Mandevu, Kabanana and Chipata compound.

“Customers are therefore advised to store sufficient water for use for the five-day period as supply will be intermittent,” read the statement.

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
Housing and Infrastructure Development Minister Ronald Chitotela

Govt explains \$1.2bn cost for the Lusaka-Ndola road

has explained that the announced \$1.2 million total cost of the construction of the Lusaka-Ndola dual carriageway will also include among other things, the construction of bypass roads from Kabwe and Kapiri Mposhi as well as toll plazas.

Chitotela said the project would also include the construction of weigh-bridges and three service stations along the dual carriageway.

He further explained that the project would include rehabilitating the existing High Way which will run alongside the one to be constructed.

“The contract entails the construction of about 800km conventional road in total. The Lusaka-Ndola Dual Carriage way road project covers a distance of approximately 321 km of road from Lusaka to Ndola passing through Kabwe and Kapiri Mposhi. The project also includes a 45 km stretch of road from Kafulafuta to Masangano road. The contract sum for the project is US\$ 1,245, 775, 986, 98,” Chitotela said.

He added that the project would also include the construction of a bridge across the Mulungushi river.

“The scope of works for the project will include among others, (a) construction of a new carriageway from Lusaka to Ndola, alongside the existing one; rehabilitation of the existing carriageway; construction of a bridge across the Mulungushi River; and construction of bypass roads of the Kabwe and Kapiri Mposhi Central Business District (CBD),” Chitotela said.

“Further, the project will include the construction of Toll Plaza and Weigh-bridge infrastructure;

construction of three service stations along the project road; upgrading of the 45km Kafulafuta to Masangano road to dual carriageway; construction of about 20km bypass road in Kabwe, construction of about 20km bypass road in Kapiri Mposhi; and the shifting of services lines such as Zesco.”

The minister said the project would be completed in 48 months. On Tuesday Chitotela said road construction projects in Zambia were more expensive compared to other sub-Saharan countries because the country was importing most of the raw materials required.

Responding to a question from a journalist who wanted to know why road works in Zambia were more expensive than other countries in sub Saharan Africa at a media briefing in Lusaka today, Chitotela said most materials like bitumen were imported.

“How much is the cost of cement in South Africa? And how much is the cost of cement in Zambia? Because these are the



Housing and Infrastructure Development Minister Ronald Chitotela

raw materials which are used heavily in the road construction. That is why this government wants to invest in the manufacturing industry because His Excellency President Lungu went to commission the construction of a new cement plant in Ndola under ZCCM because

once there is enough production of cement in Zambia, the law of demand and supply will come into play, the cost will reduce,” Chitotela said.

“Where do we manufacture bitumen in Zambia? We import it from South Africa, the cost of cement in South

Africa is five or six times lower than the cost of cement in Zambia. We import bitumen from South Africa to come and do a road in Zambia. How many kilometers does the contractor transport bitumen from South Africa to Zambia? Over a thousand kilometers, so you add

all those costs. I will give you an example that we are doing township roads in Lusaka, ask me how much the contractor was charged just to move a Zesco service cable K11 million (\$1.1 million dollars) to move a service cable less than a kilometer. So those are costs that add up.”

New Constitution needs cleaning - NGOCC

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
Non-Governmental Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOCC) Executive Director Engwase Mwale says government should put in place enabling legislation for actualising the amended Constitution.

In a statement issued to News Diggers! today, Mwale said as President Edgar Lungu officially opens Parliament on Friday, It was expected that government would spell out the roadmap for the harmonisation and cleaning up of the amended

Constitution of 2016. “We call upon Government to facilitate for the actualisation of the amended Constitution by putting in place enabling legislation as Republican President Edgar Chagwa Lungu officially opens the Second Session of the Twelfth National Assembly on Friday, 15th September 2017. It is our expectation that Government will clearly spell out the road map for the harmonisation and cleaning up of the Amended Constitution of 2016 to eliminate the lacunas

that were occasioned by the rushed enactment process. NGOCC expects the President to spell out when Government will start the process of enacting enabling legislation for the full operationalisation of the amended Constitution,” Mwale said.

Mwale also said NGOCC expects President Lungu to state how his government intends to promote national unity and peace following the division which ensued after the 2016 general elections.

“The Amended

Constitution has created a number of institutional mechanisms and processes that will require subsidiary legislation. Of interest to the women's movement is the Gender Equity and Equality Commission which has not yet been operationalised. Further, NGOCC expects the President to announce when the government intends to facilitate for the holding of the National Referendum for inclusion of the expanded Bill of Rights in the constitution,” she said. Mwale further urged all Members of Parliament (MPs) to put national interest first as the Twelfth National Assembly convenes.

“In addition, NGOCC notes that the last General Elections in 2016 left the nation largely divided with violence having been the main contributory factor. It is therefore our expectation that the President will give very clear indication

in his address on how his Government intends to promote national unity and peace which are critical for national development. We are however happy that there is an ongoing process of dialogue by various stakeholders. NGOCC expects that all the stakeholders will commit to the process,” said Mwale.

“In conclusion, NGOCC would also like to urge all the Members of Parliament (MPs) to put national interest first as the Twelfth National Assembly convenes this Friday 15th September 2017. As the people's representatives, MPs should ensure that they put their people's interests first and work in unison to shape the legislative direction of the nation. We wish to reiterate the need for our political leaders to focus on national development devoid of the usual politicking that mostly preoccupy national discourse.”

Lusaka Man jumps to his death from Findeco building

By Mukosha Funga
A 62-year-old Lusaka man today committed suicide by jumping off the Findeco House.

According to a statement issued by police spokesperson Esther Mwaata Katongo today, the man, whose identity has been withheld “until his next of kin is informed”, was found

with a smashed head. “A male adult aged 62 of unknown residence jumped from one of the floors at findeco house and fell on a balcony and died instantly. He was found with a smashed head, fractured legs and hands,” stated Katongo.

“This occurred today 12th

September, 2017 at 1720 hours at findeco house on Cairo road in town. The body of the deceased has been picked and has since been deposited in UTH mortuary. Particulars of the deceased person have been established based on the driving license but has been withheld until the next of kin is informed.”

Court hears how suspected ritual killers led cops to crime scene

By Diggers Reporter

Two investigations officers have told the Lusaka High Court that one of the suspected ritual killers Lucky Siame led them to the crime scene.

Jimmy Phiri told judge Florence Lengalenga that on April 14, Siame led them to Lilanda compound near a place called Musanide Car Park where one of the victims body was picked by police.

Phiri narrated that when they reached at the crime scene, Siame wanted to demonstrate how the victims were allegedly murdered but before he could conclude his sentence, his lawyer Humphrey Mweemba objected saying Siame did not voluntarily lead them to the crime scene.

Mweemba argued that Phiri's evidence was tantamount to a confession.

In their response, the state argued that the evidence was admissible because it was done after a warn and caution statement had been administered.

The state argued that Phiri led them to the crime scene voluntarily and asked the court to overrule the objection.

In his response, Mweemba urged the court to take a position where a confession of leading or directing was

involuntarily obtained in order to prevent trial within trial.

Ruling on the matter has since been reserved to September 21st.

Earlier 43-year-old David Siloka, another crime investigation officer, told judge Lengalenga that during investigation, Lwambazi Mumbo, a witch doctor revealed that he cleansed the four suspected ritual killers.

Siloka said Mumbo told him that he cleansed the accused persons because they were haunted by ghosts of the deceased who they allegedly murdered in cold blood.

Siloka further narrated that Mumbo led him and other police officers to Lusaka West where he performed the cleansing on Kasupe Road.

The investigations officer said on April 29, he travelled to Solwezi where he apprehended Collins who he came to know as Elvis Nyanga. He testified that he went after Nyanga when Mumbo gave him his contacts.

Siloka further narrated that he ferried Nyanga to Lusaka where an identification parade was conducted in which Mumbo recognised

Nyanga.

In this case, Siame, Lewis Chishimba Bwalya, Christopher Kasapo and Elvis Nyanga are accused of being

behind the spate of the ritual killings that hit Lusaka early last year.

The quartet is alleged to have murdered Clever Changwe,

Amon Sichamba, Alex Zulu, Elias Phiri, William Chella, Boris Muzumara and Anthony Mwaba between March 5 and April 17.



Woman gets 5 years for burning step-daughter over bed wetting

By Diggers Reporter

Lusaka magistrate Alice Walusiku has sentenced a 36-year-old woman to five

years simple imprisonment for burning her 9-year-old step daughter on the buttocks for urinating on

the bed.

When the matter came up for plea today Elizabeth Phiri readily admitted the charge of child assault.

She told the court that she burnt her step daughter because she was upset that the girl didn't comply with her orders to change her clothes after wetting the bed.

Magistrate Walusiku described the convict as an evil woman who needed to be taken away from society so that the children at home could have a breather.

In her judgement, the magistrate wondered why the convict burnt the child over trivial matters which could have been resolved by way of talking.

Magistrate Walusiku said she would be failing in her duties if she didn't punish Phiri so that other step mothers and biological parents in the habit of mistreating children could learn a lesson.

She regretted that cases of women brutalizing their step children had become so rampant in our communities.

Earlier, in mitigation, the convict asked for leniency as she didn't know what she was doing.

She further said that she was pregnant and that she had a duty of taking care of her disabled child.

Facts before the court were that on June 3, 2017 Phiri assaulted her step daughter

thereby occasioning her actual bodily harm for urinating on the bed.

The victim was burnt on her left buttock with a pressing iron after her step mother called her in the bedroom to ask her why she had not changed her clothes.

After assaulting the girl, her step mother then sent her to wash the blankets.

And the victim's father only learnt of the incident after the girl failed to sit down when he wanted to talk to her.

Phiri then started cleaning the sore.

And according to neighbors who reported the case of child abuse to the police, this was not the first time the girl was being abused.

Kabwe council director gets two years for corruption

By Mukosha Funga

The Lusaka Magistrates' Court has convicted and sentenced to two years imprisonment with hard labour Kabwe Municipal Council director of engineering for corruption. According to a statement issued by Anti Corruption Commission acting spokesperson Dorothy Mwanza today, Cosmas Mpundu was dragged

to court for abusing his authority of office in the manner he facilitated the engagement of a surveyor.

"This is in a matter in which Cosmas Mpundu was arrested by Anti-Corruption Commission for abusing the authority of his office in the manner he facilitated the engagement of William Mhango to survey land on behalf of the Kabwe Municipal Council

without following laid down procurement procedures contrary to Section 99 sub Section 1 of the Penal Code Chapter 87 of the Laws of Zambia," stated Mwanza.

"Honourable Mutafela Chimuka sentenced Cosmas Mpundu aged 47, of house number 6A Egypt Avenue, Highridge in Kabwe to two years imprisonment with hard labour of which one year has been suspended."

LEGAL WASTE

OF

PUBLIC RESOURCES

IS A

BIGGER

PROBLEM THAN

CORRUPTION

Alliance for
community
action ▶▶

You're President not an Octopus

"There is no project too small for me to commission; it's unfortunate that I can only be in so many places at the same time. But if time allows, I'll be everywhere to commission all projects, even if it meant commissioning just a toilet I would gladly do so," says President Edgar Lungu.

We disagree with the President's availability to commission projects as small as toilets. In fact we don't even think it's proper for a Head of State to desire to be everywhere to commission every developmental project, unless he thinks all his Cabinet ministers are useless.

But before we disagree with President Lungu any further, we would like to first congratulate him and the PF government for actualising the Lusaka-Ndola dual carriageway. The President also spoke very well and we totally agree with his thoughts on how many lives this road will save, especially given the great economic importance attached to it.

"Road safety is a huge component of public health. It saves us money. It saves lives. This road, the Great North, is the main artery to the heart of the country. We need it in good shape always, so that we can cut on the unacceptable high number of accidents we currently witness. This is an important route connecting southern and central parts of Zambia to mining towns on the Copperbelt and Northern parts of the country. I am glad to note that during construction period, this project will create over 3,000 jobs to

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Ear to the ground

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our people. I am therefore hopeful that the contractor will give an opportunity to residents within the area where the road construction project is being undertaken," said President Lungu.

We note that the announced cost for the construction of this dual carriageway is under very heavy criticism from Zambians who feel US\$1.2 billion is too much for the Lusaka-Ndola stretch, but we would like to leave that argument to technocrats. Instead we want to appreciate the significance of the project.

The Great North Road has become notoriously famous for road accidents, as it takes hundreds of people's lives every year. A month doesn't

end without hearing of fatal accidents on this High Way. Politicians have come and promised to do something about this road, but they have left office without delivering.

That is why we would like to congratulate the President and the PF government for making the dual carriageway construction a reality. No doubt, the separation of south-bound and north-bound traffic will significantly reduce fatal road accidents on this High Way. We always read Cabinet resolutions to borrow money for the same "Water and Sanitation" projects every year but citizens remain with water problems. People complain when the government is borrowing for

useless project which hardly affect them. They hate it when their government gets Eurobond money to build new hydro power stations but loadshedding does not end. We are sure that when Zambians hear that their government borrowed money for this project, very few of them will complain because the Lusaka-Ndola road has been a death trap.

We also agree with the President that, for non-expatriate labour, the contractors must consider employing the local people where the road will pass. We want the villagers at John Chinena to have more money in their pockets because once this road is closed for

construction, there will be no one to buy their roadside tomato and other farm produce they sell to earn a living. We need to see more of such projects, which directly affect the people, being launched.

That said; we disagree with President Lungu that all projects are big enough to warrant being commissioned by a Head of State. While we appreciate that there is a campaign in Zambia to end open defecation, we don't want our President, humble as he might be, to add commissioning of pit latrines on his busy schedule.

A President has State House assistants, ministers, permanent secretaries and

directors to assist him oversee development projects in their line ministries. If he thinks they are all lazy to do their jobs, we insist that he involves traditional leaders to launch construction of minor projects. He is a President and not an octopus. Let him stay in his office and concentrate on his job, until there is a worthy trip to make.

And what is the significance of a President launching a project other than politics? What role does a Head of State play at a road construction-commissioning ceremony? Is it not just to gain political mileage for his political party? But does he expect Zambians to give credit to the Rainbow Party for the construction of the dual carriageway? Of course it's the Patriotic Front in power who takes the credit, so there is no need for a President to waste money travelling to these construction sites to lay foundation stones or unveil plaques.

This is just a stupid tradition that has been abused over the years with all the political parties that have governed this country. It's like marching on Independence Day, Labour Day and all the other national events. Somebody in some government office somewhere thinks marching is the best way to celebrate our national events - printing T-Shirts and walking past the President or whoever it is they have invited as guest of honour. Surely, these are useless traditions that we need to stop wasting time on, if we want to develop the country.

the incumbent was attempting to fix the outcome, Lungu had warned that he would sort out his main political opponent if he refused to concede defeat: 'If Hichilema refuses to accept the results, he will see what I will do to him. When we win, whoever does not accept the results will see what I will do to them... I want to warn Hichilema to get out of the game if he is not prepared... [to] accept the results.' These comments suggest that Lungu had foreseen that he would win the election and that his main political opponent would refuse to accept the results. What these comments further demonstrate is that even before the election was held, Lungu was already seeking a pretext on which he could detain Hichilema or intimidate him into accepting the results. A treason charge was especially useful for this purpose because it is a non-bailable offence under Zambian law. The pretext was finally found in the infamous motorcade incident. The primary motive behind the treason charge was not to convict Hichilema - any trial would have revealed the glaring errors in the

The inevitable outcome: Understanding Hichilema's release from prison

On 16 August, opposition United Party for National Development (UPND) leader Hakainde Hichilema walked to freedom after spending four months in detention. To recap: Hichilema was arrested on 11 April over an earlier incident in which a convoy carrying him to the Kuomboka - an annual traditional ceremony of the Lozi-speaking people of Western Province that has long been a central feature of Zambia's calendar - failed to give way to President Edgar Lungu's motorcade heading to the same event. (Another charge was later added: that Hichilema and others had 'conspired to mobilise an advance party to ensure that Hichilema was to be accorded the status of the President of the Republic of Zambia at the Kuomboka Ceremony.') What a dispassionate observer may have regarded as a possible violation of traffic rules, a needless departure from established protocol in relation to presidential travel, or a reckless driving manoeuvre motivated by a childish desire to arrive at the ceremony first, was soon inflated into a treason charge.

A few days after the 8 April clash of motorcades, police violently arrested Hichilema for alleged obstruction of the presidential motorcade, 'an act that was likely to cause death or grievous harm to the President of the Republic of Zambia, in order to usurp the executive power of the state.' The arrest appeared closely related to the UPND's refusal to acknowledge Lungu as the legitimate winner of the 2016 elections, and, more revealingly, came almost directly after a press conference where the ruling Patriotic Front (PF) Deputy Secretary General, Mumbi Phiri, demanded that Hichilema be charged with treason.

For the next four months, condemnation of the government's actions against the leader of the opposition grew both within and beyond Zambia's borders, but Hichilema's treason case was never heard. The ruling authorities seemingly used every legal manoeuvre possible to delay the start of trial and keep Hichilema in prison, further stoking political tension. Repeated attempts

by domestic actors, notably the Catholic Church Bishops led by Lusaka Archdiocese Telesphore Mpundu, to diffuse the tension by brokering dialogue between Lungu and Hichilema appeared to be heading nowhere. It was not until after the intervention of Patricia Scotland, the Commonwealth Secretary General whose four-day visit to Zambia in early August was marked by a red-carpet reception from State House, that there was a noticeable movement on the treason case after Lungu and the detained Hichilema committed themselves to a process of dialogue. Following a series of meetings with both leaders, the Commonwealth intermediary left the country on 10 August, four days before Hichilema finally had a chance to take his plea before the Lusaka High Court. Trial was to start on 16 August, but when the day arrived, the case was brought to a halt when the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Lillian Siyuni, entered a nolle prosequi in relation to Hichilema and his five co-accused.

Now that the initial euphoria

that accompanied the release of Hichilema from Mukobeko Maximum Prison has subsided, a sober assessment about the process leading up to his freedom and the fate of the Commonwealth-brokered dialogue between him and Lungu ahead of the 2021 elections is needed. The existing explanations for Hichilema's release - the decisive intervention of the Commonwealth Secretary General, who reportedly issued a vague threat of an international travel ban that would ground Lungu, a noted frequent flyer, if the Hichilema case was not resolved; the restoration of judicial independence in the country; or the magnanimity of President Lungu - are all lacking. As I demonstrate below, Hichilema's discharge from prison is better understood as a result of the internal political dynamics in Zambia, and was ultimately inevitable given the wider context leading to his arrest.

Indeed, Hichilema's ordeal was long planned. Campaigning in June 2016 ahead of the August elections, amidst opposition claims that

prosecution's case - but to force or intimidate him into accepting the election results. What Lungu underestimated, however, was the strength of reaction to the arrest. He seemingly did not anticipate the level of domestic and international criticism and the consequent tension that the incarceration of the country's main opposition leader bred.



Sishuwa Sishuwa is the last Zambian nationalist. He is obsessed with all things Zambian, particularly politics and history which he teaches when UNZA is not closed. Sishuwa is a cadre of Nkana Football Club and has a PhD in History from Oxford.

Understanding HH's release from prison

From page 7

Condemnation of Lungu's actions came from leading opposition figures in Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Nigeria, all of whom publicised the arrest of Hichilema and demanded his release. The most significant opposition came from within Zambia, from the influential Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB) led by Mpundu. Barely a week after Hichilema's arrest, Mpundu issued a statement that, aside from condemning the treason charge against Hichilema and demanding his release, damned Lungu and accused him of dictatorship. Attempts by the ruling elites to discredit the statement as not representative of all Catholic Bishops only prompted the other two Christian church bodies, the Council of Churches in Zambia and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia, to subsequently reiterate the ZCCB position at a joint press conference that precipitated the Bishops' first mediatory meeting with Lungu. The deportation, on 25 May, of South Africa's Democratic Alliance leader Mmusi Maimane from Zambia, where he had arrived to attend Hichilema's court appearance, highlighted the erosion of democratic principles under Lungu's watch and the growing international pressure on Lungu (who insisted that he could not interfere in a case that was properly before court) to release the UPND leader.

By July, when the Catholic Bishops led by Mpundu started the mediation efforts aimed at brokering dialogue between Lungu and Hichilema, it was increasingly evident that the President was searching for a way to release his nemesis without causing himself any further political embarrassment. What possibly stopped him was the fear of creating the impression that he was capitulating to domestic opposition. Most importantly, Lungu was probably scared that if the Catholic Bishops succeeded in bringing the treason case to a halt and securing Hichilema's release, that would embolden them and confirm their influence, with adverse repercussions for his third term bid. In other words, the 16 August nolle prosequi that the DPP entered in respect to Hichilema's treason case would have arrived earlier if Lungu had found a non-threatening intermediary who could free him from a self-inflicted mess without any further humiliation. The role of the Commonwealth's Scotland should be understood in this context: as the missing link.

On the eve of Scotland's entry into the Catholic Bishops' mediation efforts, it was clear to many that the treason charge against Hichilema was entirely cooked up, possibly by Lungu himself, and that the President had got himself into an untenable position. His claims concerning the independence of the judiciary and his own respect for the separation of powers were now widely seen as hollow. In accepting Scotland's intervention, Lungu may have reasoned that it was easier

to deal with a civil servant employed by an external organisation desperate to reclaim its relevance in international affairs rather than a domestic political actor, especially one that had already accused him of sliding Zambia into a dictatorship. The Commonwealth Secretary General – who is said to have been recommended to Lungu by Zambia's founding president Kenneth Kaunda, a man from a previous age who cultivated close ties with the organisation during his time in power – was therefore the perfect candidate to assist Lungu in avoiding the natural and more just end of the treason case, which would have fully exposed him as the villain.

In effect, therefore, Scotland let Lungu off the hook because if the treason case had run its course, as it was about to when the DPP entered a nolle prosequi, all the inadequacies of the case, the complete bogus nature of the charges against Hichilema and the possible extent and implications of presidential involvement would have been laid bare for all to see. Scotland did not save Hichilema; she saved Lungu. The release of Hichilema was not a result of the Commonwealth or Scotland's intervention, but an inevitable outcome, one that would have been secured by either a complete acquittal if the treason case had run its course (it is highly unlikely that even the most incompetent and partisan judge in the Zambian judiciary would have convicted him on the transparently silly charge that a possible violation of traffic rules constitutes treason), or the discontinuation of the case through a nolle prosequi. In the extremely unlikely event that Hichilema was convicted on the basis of such flimsy evidence, it would have been a serious indictment of the judiciary, and many would have concluded that the rule of law no longer applied in Zambia. The DPP's decision, or the supposed independence of the judiciary, should be seen in this context: as a belated attempt to salvage a modicum of judicial integrity.

Recent efforts by some commentators and even the Commonwealth itself to present its intervention in the release of Hichilema as decisive are therefore misleading and should be treated with caution. If anything, Scotland and the Commonwealth were easily duped into a case that, more than anything else, reveals their desperate quest for relevance. If anyone deserves credit for the release of Hichilema, it is the Catholic Church Bishops and particularly Mpundu, who, in spite of repeated attempts by the ruling elites to intimidate and discredit him, refused to be silenced. This is not to downplay the role of external actors, but simply to place their efforts in context. If anything, the Commonwealth, a relic in search of a function, needed Zambia more than Zambia needed the Commonwealth. Appearing to negotiate a successful political settlement in Zambia gives the organisation a sense of purpose. In reality, dialogue had

already begun under the auspices of the Catholic Church, and it was only Lungu's unwillingness to accept any local intervention that provided Scotland with a fortuitous opening.

Scotland's role seems to overlap considerably with the job description of the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) in Zambia, whose inaction over the Hichilema case is somewhat baffling. The position of UNRC, currently occupied by Janet Rogan, is not that of a disinterested spectator. Any Resident Coordinator as inactive as Rogan would resign if they had any conception of the importance of their job or the magnitude of their failures. The primary role of a UNRC is to prevent or arrest a slide into chaos and conflict. Precisely what Rogan – seen by many Zambians as too close to the levers of power and easily mistaken for a PF functionary – has been doing over the last year is unclear. The UN's apparent inability to recognise the inadequacies of its coordinator in Zambia, especially given the positive record of Rogan's predecessors, is a serious indictment of the organisation. What is the purpose of the UN if not to intervene in situations of escalating political tension and violence that threaten to descend into chaos?

Another important point to note about the process leading to the release of Hichilema is that Lungu and the PF's pan-Africanist credentials are in tatters. Attempts at mediation from institutions within Zambia, such as the Catholic Church, and from African political actors such as former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo, were either rebuffed or wilfully obstructed. When one contrasts the spectacle of a prominent African politician, South Africa's Mmusi Maimane, being physically prevented from disembarking from an aircraft in Lusaka with the red-carpet treatment accorded to a representative of Zambia's former colonial power, the hypocrisy is staggering. The only intervention that Lungu, who decries foreign intervention when it suits him, was willing to accept was from an international organisation whose membership comprises the countries that were colonised by Britain (plus one or two that wish they had been). It could hardly be more damning: prioritising links with the successor organisation to the British Empire over relations with local institutions and African political actors is a total rejection of the idea of 'African solutions to African problems' and exposes Lungu's criticism of external intervention as entirely self-serving.

The final broader point to note about the release of Hichilema relates to the publicised dialogue between Hichilema and Lungu, spearheaded by the Commonwealth. At the conclusion of her mission to Zambia, Scotland announced that the two political leaders had committed themselves to a process of dialogue aimed at diffusing tension, preserving peace and resolving their

key differences ahead of the 2021 elections. She subsequently appointed a special envoy, Ibrahim Gambari, to oversee the talks in conjunction with local civic organisations, including the Catholic Church. A month after Hichilema was released, nothing concrete in relation to those talks has happened. Gambari recently travelled to Zambia and met the two leaders separately. According to a well-placed source, Gambari is said to be of the impression that President Lungu appears unready for dialogue. This observation is unsurprising and should be understood as a consequence of the marginal role that the Commonwealth played in securing Hichilema's release.

To begin with, Lungu is likely to delay the talks for as long as possible because this prevents Hichilema from engaging in serious criticism of his rule. Furthermore, it is widely believed that Hichilema agreed to stop contesting the legitimacy of Lungu's rule in return for unspecified institutional reforms relating to electoral law, judicial independence, media freedom and the police. These demands for reforms, we are told, are to be tabled at their meeting when it finally takes place. If this is true, Hichilema is likely to be disappointed: Lungu is unlikely to institute any reforms that would undermine his own position and bid for absolute power. There is also no mechanism to enforce any agreements reached through these talks. As far as I am aware, the terms and conditions of the agreement for the release of Hichilema have not been made public, and all that is known about them comes from leaks from various sources. How is Lungu to be held accountable for the undertakings he has made if these undertakings have not been made public?

In addition, if Hichilema agreed to stop challenging the conduct and result of the 2016 election, this would seem to give legitimacy to all the deceptions that produced such a flawed and questionable election result, thereby giving us every expectation of seeing exactly the same outcome or even worse in 2021. If Scotland imagines that she has made an agreement with Lungu, then she is naive. But then this perhaps explains why Lungu gave consent to her intervention. Scotland and her envoy are easier to manipulate than Catholic Bishops who understand the cut and thrust of African politics as the ruthless pursuit of political power, and the slippery nature of any undertakings made when trying to change the behaviour of a leader with authoritarian tendencies. By contrast, Scotland – as far as I am aware – has neither the experience of such politics nor of mediating in such a political dispute, and is instead relying on a vocabulary of 'democracy, peace, good governance and the rule of law' which has little or no interpretive power for understanding African politics, but which has considerable potential for occluding the problem that she is supposed to be addressing.

Govt must stop overpricing contracts - TIZ

By **Miriam Chabala**
Transparency International Zambia (TIZ) says government must end the trend of over pricing contracts especially in the road sector. In a statement yesterday, TIZ executive director Wesley Chibamba noted that government spent inconceivably large amounts of money when procuring goods and services which did not even reflect the market value. "TIZ has challenged every sitting government to be more accountable to its citizens especially in the area of public resource management. The main area of concern is public

procurements. As the largest consumer of different goods and services, the government spends a lot of money on public procurements and loses a lot of that money in the process. The government has a responsibility to be diligent and prudent in the way they spend tax payers' money. What is of concern is a trend of government agencies procuring goods and services at non market reflective costs," Chibamba stated.

"Always when government is procuring goods and services, they do so at astronomical amounts which do not reflect the market value. Even simple things like stationery, or

the shirts for Labour Day or any other public events, these items are procured at very high prices, probably double the normal amount if you were to buy the same product at an open market. Even in construction, Zambia is always paying higher contract amounts than what should be normal comparatively in the region, especially in the road sector. This trend should not be allowed to continue. Usually this is as a result of collusion between suppliers/contractors and the people in charge of procurements." Chibamba also observed that there is a lot of corruption in the awarding of procurement contracts.

"People are viewing government as a milking cow when they are awarded contracts to supply goods and services. There is a lot of corruption in the awards processes of these contracts, on top of that, the corrupt lot still exploit government by charging exorbitant prices for their goods and services. There is a clique of people that feel entitled to be awarded government contracts to supply goods and services simply because they support the ruling party. Whatever the case, this amount of exploitation should end forthwith. This level of institutionalization of corruption should come to an end. We urge all

government departments and agencies to engage in business transactions that are premised on integrity," he stated.

Chibamba further called on government to come up with reforms to revise the policies to do with public procurements so that the procurements could work for all Zambians and not just the corrupt few.

"If the government was procuring goods and services at 'normal' prices and not exaggerated exorbitant prices, they would have more resources to obtain more goods and services. Also this would free resources to be redirected towards other competing

interests for which there are no resources. We can manage to provide decent public services to the citizens if we can manage the meagre resources very well," stated Chibamba.

"We are therefore calling for institutional, legal and policy reforms around public procurements. Transparency International Zambia is ready to work with the government in bringing about these reforms such that public procurements work for the Zambian people and not the corrupt few with ties to government officials. The government has a responsibility to obtain value for money in every transaction."

Kenyan opposition MPs boycott Uhuru Kenyatta's speech



President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya

Opposition MPs in Kenya have boycotted the opening of the new parliament to protest against President Uhuru Kenyatta's decision to address it after a court annulled his election win. They say that parliament should not have been convened until after the election re-run slated for 17 October.

The MPs instead joined opposition leader Raila Odinga for a campaign rally in the capital, Nairobi. Mr Kenyatta said he still had the power to convene parliament.

"The set term of a president is embedded until a new one is sworn in as per the constitution," he told lawmakers.

"I want to assure every Kenyan and the world that every arm of government is in place and operational," he added.

Mr Kenyatta was declared winner of the 8 August poll, garnering 54% of the vote against Mr Odinga's 44%.

Mr Kenyatta had dared opposition MPs to skip the opening of parliament

saying that his Jubilee Party had enough MPs to carry on with parliament's activities.

Only one MP from the opposition was present, according to Kenya's privately-owned Star newspaper.

The Standard publication reports that Supreme Court judges, who traditionally attend the official opening of parliament, were absent. Chief Justice David Maraga's office however told the BBC that the judges had not been invited.

Written judgement The judges are expected to make public their written judgment explaining why they annulled Mr Kenyatta's win before the end of next week.

A majority of the six judges who listened to the election petition ruled that there had been some "irregularities and illegalities" in the election.

Mr Kenyatta, who has been critical of the judges, said in his parliamentary speech that their decision had overturned the voters' will.

He also repeated his strong disapproval of the ruling but said he respects it.

He said that he had a track record of respecting the justice system: "I have previously demonstrated this before, when I conceded defeat in 2002 and heeded summons from an international court [ICC] when I knew I was facing trumped up charges."

His initial reaction to the 1 September ruling was however scathing, with him calling the Chief Justice and his five colleagues "thugs" and promising to "fix" the court after the re-run election.

He was widely condemned for the comments but he has maintained that he has a right to criticise the court. Meanwhile, Mr Odinga repeated his threat to boycott the election re-run unless some officials of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), which is in charge of elections, are fired.

He accuses them of deliberately interfering with the electoral systems to favour Mr Kenyatta. IEBC chairman Wafula Chebukati told a press briefing on Tuesday that the commission was reviewing its structures to ensure that it is ready for the re-run election. **BBC News**

Brazil's president slams judiciary

Brazil's President Michel Temer has accused his country's judiciary of using allegations of corruption to destroy reputations.

Mr Temer's statement came just hours before a Supreme Court justice authorised a new corruption investigation into the president.

The president, like dozens of other Brazilian politicians, is already implicated in Operation Car Wash.

Mr Temer has denied all accusations of corruption.

In a statement released ahead of the anticipated announcement of the new charges, Mr Temer's office slammed those investigating alleged corruption.

The biggest investigation of all is known as Operation Car Wash, said to involve bribes at the highest level. Among those implicated in the three-year investigation are two former presidents.

"We have reached the point where they try to convict people without even hearing them - without ending the investigation, without verifying the existence of real proof," Mr Temer's office said. "Individual rights are being violated every day without the slightest reaction."

The statement went on to question prosecutors' methods, which favoured the use of wire taps and statements from those who make plea deals.

The latest investigation is hinged on a recording of one of Mr Temer's former aides, according to news agency

Reuters.

"Reputations are shattered in conversations founded on clandestine actions," the president's statement said. "Bandits concoct versions

based on hearsay in exchange for impunity or to obtain a pardon, even partial, for their innumerable crimes."

Supreme Court justice Roberto Barroso decided

on Tuesday investigators could probe Mr Temer's link to corruption allegations surrounding a decree regulating ports that the president signed. **BBC News**

Controversial Australia vote on same-sex marriage begins

A contentious postal survey on same-sex marriage began in Australia Tuesday, with ballots delivered across the vast continent ahead of an expected fractious campaign between the "yes" and "no" sides.

While there has been growing support for marriage equality, with 70 percent of those surveyed in a Fairfax Media poll on Tuesday backing the "yes" campaign, Australia has yet to legalise such unions despite more than a decade of political wrangling.

The conservative government chose an unusual approach -- a voluntary and non-binding postal vote -- after an election promise of a national plebiscite was twice rejected by parliament's upper house, the Senate.

If most Australians vote "yes" to same-sex marriage the government will move to hold a parliamentary free vote on changing the marriage laws. It will not do so if there is a "no" outcome.

"I encourage everyone to fill in the survey and return it. I'll be voting 'yes' as will (my wife) Lucy," Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull told commercial radio this week.

Turnbull, a moderate, is opposed by some members of his conservative ruling Liberal-National coalition on the issue and the postal vote is seen as a compromise.

The start of the ballot process followed weekend rallies for and against changing marriage laws, with thousands of people dressed in rainbow colours packing central Sydney on Sunday to back the "yes" vote.

Hundreds of "no" campaigners marched on Saturday, arguing that changes would infringe religious freedom and children's rights.

But "yes" campaigners have said this method of collecting votes, via the postal system, could be less effective at engaging younger tech-savvy Australians, who are seen as more supportive of changing the laws. National Party MPs have also voiced concern about Australia Post's abilities to deliver the ballots to rural areas across the vast country.

Anti-hate laws

The postal vote will close on November 7, with the result released on November 15.

National non-binding plebiscites -- different to referendums, which affect the constitution -- are rare in Australia. Just three have been held -- two on conscription in 1916 and 1917, and one on which song should be the national anthem in 1977.

But all were held under the Electoral

Act, unlike the postal survey which is being carried out by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

The bureau was given the task to avoid the need for parliamentary approval, but that meant the marriage poll did not attract advertising protections against malicious campaign material which are in force during elections. This is a key concern for activists, who fear the vote could unleash a barrage of homophobia.

Politicians this week were scrambling to pass election-type safeguards restricting material that might be misleading and deceptive.

Among the proposed penalties are fines of up to Aus\$12,600 (US\$10,100), The Sydney Morning Herald reported. "It will be unlawful to vilify, intimidate or threaten to harm a person either because of views they hold on the survey or in relation to their religious conviction, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status," a government spokesman told the newspaper.

The laws -- which are expected to attract bipartisan support from the government and the main Labor opposition party -- will apply to advertising, leaflets or behaviour during the campaign period, the Herald added. **AFP**

Lady Gaga is opening up about the painful illness that has plagued her for years.

In her new documentary, *Gaga: Five Foot Two*, Gaga, 31, gives fans an intimate look at the chronic pain she has long dealt with. And in a Tuesday Twitter post, the singer confirmed that she suffers from fibromyalgia – something others afflicted with the condition had long suspected.

“In our documentary the #chronicillness #chronicpain I deal w/ is #Fibromyalgia,” she wrote. “I wish to help raise awareness & connect people who have it.”

Fibromyalgia is a disorder that causes widespread muscle pain and tenderness, according to the Mayo Clinic. Other effects of the illness include fatigue along with sleep, memory and mood issues. Although this is the first time she has publicly stated the name of the illness, the “Born This Way” singer has spoken about her pain in the past.

In August, Gaga (whose real name is Stefani Germanotta) shared a photo of her shoulder being treated by a doctor.

She captioned the image, “Having a frustrating day with chronic pain, but I find myself feeling so blessed to have such strong intelligent female doctors.” A day later, she thanked fans for their empathetic responses to the post. She even added a list of “personal remedies” that have helped her with the pain.

In 2013, Gaga was forced to cancel several tour dates to have surgery on her broken hip. Though she’s discussed the injury before, her new documentary sheds light on the extent of her pain.

Throughout the film, the “Bad Romance” singer is shown undergoing treatments to help ease muscle spasms, which cause her to feel pain on the entire right side of her body.

Gaga was often forced to stop working to deal with the pain and the star regularly had multiple people rubbing her muscles and putting ice on her.

“Do I look pathetic?” she asked in one scene, putting her hands over her face to cover her tears. “I’m so embarrassed.” *Yahoo News*

Lady Gaga reveals she suffers from fibromyalgia



Jean-Claude Van Damme’s son arrested, allegedly held roommate at knifepoint



Jean-Claude Van Damme’s youngest son got busted for allegedly holding his roommate at knifepoint, TMZ has learned.

Law enforcement sources tell TMZ that 21-year-old Nicholas Van Varenberg was arrested Sunday in Tempe, AZ. We’re told cops got a call to check on him because he’d punched the elevator in his building. Cops say they found a trail of blood leading to his apartment, and after speaking to him and a roommate, discovered Nicholas injured his hand.

Officers left, but 20 minutes later, the roommate ran downstairs, claiming he’d escaped the apartment where Nicholas was holding him at knifepoint. He told officers Nicholas was pissed he’d opened the door for them.

Cops immediately searched the apartment, and say they found the knife and marijuana.

Nicholas was booked for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, unlawful imprisonment, marijuana possession and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Yahoo News

David Beckham hits back at Instagram user for Botox accusations: ‘I Don’t Agree with Botox’



David Beckham will not be cyber-botoxed. The 42-year-old star was quick to respond to an Instagram user who mused that he had some filler work done after seeing the athlete’s youthful glow at wife Victoria Beckham’s fashion show. British Vogue shared the above photo on its Instagram account featuring Editor-in-Chief Edward Enninful sitting front row alongside Beckham and his son Brooklyn, 18, at Victoria’s Spring 2018 fashion show on Sunday in New York City. The snap prompted follower @stasdoeshair to comment, “Botox looks good on David !??”

Beckham quickly set the record straight replying, “I don’t agree with Botox miss @stasdoeshair but I’ll take it as a compliment.”

While David has denied plastic surgery, his wife Victoria has been very open about going under the knife. Earlier this year, she wrote a letter to her 18-year-old self for British Vogue where she admitted to regretting her breast augmentation surgery.

“I should probably say, don’t mess with your boobs,” she wrote to herself. “All those years I denied it — stupid. A sign of insecurity. Just celebrate what you’ve got.”

She also shared that the secret to a successful marriage is to “preserve a bit of mystique.”

“Never let yourself go completely (at least brush your hair, clean your teeth, have a bit of a brow going on because you will always want him to look at you and feel attracted).”

And when her husband was crowned PEOPLE’s Sexiest Man Alive in 2015, she couldn’t help but gush over his appearance. “He does look after himself, he’s got a great body, dresses really well, and has got a great smile,” Victoria told PEOPLE, adding, “He’s got fantastic abs.” *Yahoo News*

Allegri slams Juventus defending



Massimiliano Allegri bemoaned a collapse in the defensive standards that humbled Barcelona five months ago following Juventus' 3-0 Champions League Group D defeat at Camp Nou. Juve shut out Barca over

the course of 180 minutes as they triumphed 3-0 on aggregate in last season's quarter-final between the sides, but the LaLiga leaders found their Serie A counterparts a far less robust proposition this time around.

A brilliant Lionel Messi goal put the hosts in front towards the end of a first half as even as the second period was one-sided. Messi created Ivan Rakitic's goal and helped himself to another as a Juve defence without the

injured Giorgio Chiellini and still adjusting to life without Leonardo Bonucci provided increasingly flimsy resistance. "We played a good first half but when you play these kind of games you have to take your chances," Allegri

told reporters. "We didn't and we were punished at the end of the first half. Ironically we conceded three goals from counter-attacks but this was our worst mistake because we had to remain compact after Barcelona's goal.

"Obviously they have this player who can change every game but we had to do better in the second half. "You cannot expect to come here and dominate the game so we have to play better at a mental level, always trying to remain in the game even when everything seems difficult.

"If you leave spaces to Messi, you get punished." It meant a Champions League debut to forget for Rodrigo Bentancur, who earned a maiden Juventus start.

The Uruguayan midfielder, who cut his teeth with Argentine giants Boca Juniors, was left to marvel at Messi's otherworldly talents.

"We are sad for the defeat but we gave everything we had. Unfortunately it was not enough," he told UEFA.com.

"I'm happy with my performance, the Champions League is different from the Copa Libertadores, there is more pace and better technique." Bentancur added: "Messi is incredible, he is a player from another planet."

Messi used to make me suffer: Barca's Valverde delights in leading superstar

Barcelona head coach Ernesto Valverde is enjoying being on the right side of Lionel Messi masterclasses after seeing his star man inspire a comprehensive 3-0 win over Juventus in the Champions League.

Valverde replaced Luis Enrique in the Camp Nou hotseat for this season, having led Espanyol, Villarreal, Valencia and Athletic Bilbao against the Catalan giants over the past decade.

Messi has been a majestic constant for Barca during that period and he was at his brilliant best in Tuesday's Group D opener, scoring on the stroke of half-time and completing a fabulous brace after creating the second for Ivan Rakitic.

It was a virtuoso display on the back of a hat-trick in Saturday's 5-0 derby triumph against Espanyol, and it left Valverde purring.

"With Leo Messi, the feeling you have is that something good will always happen for us," he told reporters.

"I suffered a lot when I had to face him as a coach but now I get to enjoy him. He's involved in everything.

"The first goal just before the break changed everything. We were about to finish the

first half and we had some problems because the rival was making it difficult for us.

"Nobody saw the gap and he found it, but I emphasise the involvement of Messi from all points of view.

"He is one of the best players in the history of the club, it is normal to talk about him. He also has a great tactical understanding."

A player who will one day hope to be spoken of so loftily is Barcelona's record signing Ousmane Dembele, who showed flashes of inspiration but sometimes erred in the final pass on a mixed full debut.

"It is clear that he still has to

improve although he did show good moments," Valverde said.

"He has worked well but we have to go little by little. We're going forward."

Beating the team that eliminated Barcelona in last season's quarter-finals continued a fine start to life at Camp Nou for Valverde, with his team having won three out of three in La Liga without conceding on the back of the Supercopa de Espana reverse against Real Madrid.

"There's a lot still to do but it was an important win," he added. "It's essential to win games to get the fans on our side." *Yahoo Sport*



UEFA charges Celtic after fan attempts to kick Mbappe

The Glasgow side face sanctions after a supporter got past security and tried to hit the Paris Saint-Germain star on Tuesday

UEFA has opened disciplinary proceedings against Celtic after a fan invaded the field and tried to kick Paris Saint-Germain striker Kylian Mbappe in Tuesday's Champions League match.

In the first half of PSG's 5-0 victory at Celtic Park, the spectator ran on and swung a leg at the 18-year-old, but only hit fresh air.

The fan was caught and escorted

off the field by security, and police confirmed he had been arrested.

Celtic themselves are in trouble, though, as European football's governing body has charged the Glasgow side with a violation of the disciplinary regulations.

Manager Brendan Rodgers condemned the pitch invader's actions after the match.

He said: "That reaction [jeers from the Celtic fans] said it all really. It's disappointing for any ground, any club, a supporter getting on to the pitch like that.

"It was bitterly disappointing and I'm sure the club will deal with that. Whoever that person was, it shouldn't be anything we see, especially on a football field.

"I think the stewards dealt with it at the time and I'm sure the club will deal with it. The crowd and their reaction told you everything you needed to know."

Celtic have been at the centre of no fewer than 12 disciplinary offences in the last six years, with their most recent one coming in July when a section of the club's support

unfurled an "illicit banner" in a Champions League qualifier with Northern Ireland's Linfield.

The club will learn the extent of their sanctions after the case is dealt with by the UEFA Control, Ethics and Disciplinary Body on October 19.

A fine is the most likely outcome facing Rodgers' side, according to precedent. Last season, Arsenal had to pay up €5,000 when a supporter invaded the field during their match against Bayern Munich at the Emirates Stadium. *Goal.com*

The Brazil international claims his concentration is on helping Paris Saint-Germain win trophies rather than picking up individual prizes

Paris Saint-Germain star Neymar insists team trophies are more important to him than winning a first Ballon d'Or. The Brazil international joined from Barcelona in a world-record €222million transfer last month, in a move that many considered to be motivated by a desire to escape the shadow of Lionel Messi and challenge for football's top individual prize.

Neymar's form for the Ligue 1 side has certainly added weight to any hopes of winning the award, the 25-year-old having taken his tally to five goals and five assists in as many games after inspiring PSG to a 5-0 thrashing of Celtic on Tuesday.

However, the former Santos man says his focus is on helping the team to enjoy success, rather than claiming individual accolades.

"Of course a football player

Neymar: I am not obsessed with the Ballon D'Or



wants to win the Ballon d'Or," he said after the Champions League win in Glasgow. "But I don't have

to think about it. I have to think about what's better for our group, our club. "This is a great team and,

if we keep going like this, we have a big chance of doing it [winning the tournament].

"I'm very happy to start with a win. Of course, it's not only about getting goals, but that's the most

important. That's what we came for. I'm very happy with this game." **Goal.com**

Shipolopolo beats Malawi 6-3 in Cosafa challenge

By Ruth Tembo

The Zambia national female team "Shepolopolo" has beaten Malawi 6-3

in an on-going Cosafa tournament in Zimbabwe this afternoon.

The Zambian line up

involved Hazel Natasha Zulu, Rhoda Chileshe, Grace Zulu, Anita Noria Sosala (C), Barbra Mulenga, Grace Chanda, Mary Wilomba, Misozi

and Annie Kibanji.

After the full 90minutes of play Zambia's Barbra Banda was voted woman of the match.

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