

Maid gets 4yrs for faking a break-in, stealing boss' property

To page 6

LAZ condemns Hichilema for attacking judges and Judiciary

By Mirriam Chabala

The Law Association of Zambia has condemned UPND president Hakainde Hichilema for accusing some Constitutional Court Judges of corruption without valid evidence.

In a statement today, LAZ president Linda Kasonde stated that it was wrong for HH to start accusing judges of corruption without lodging in a complaint with relevant authorities like the Judicial Complaints Commission where he could present his evidence against them.

Kasonde stated that the issuance of careless and unsubstantiated allegations of corruption against public officers had the potential of creating anarchy and eroding public confidence in institutions such as the Judiciary.

To page 2

I'm one of those who condemned the church for being political...

I WAS WRONG

- LUNGU

...politics and religion are the same

By Mukosha Funga

President Edgar Lungu says he has come to the realisation that politics and religion are one and the same thing, adding that he was wrong to condemn the church for being political.

And the Head of State says it was not feasible for him to consult everybody before coming up with the National Day of Prayer and Fasting.

Speaking in Lundazi when he met the clergy yesterday evening, President Lungu said he had humbled himself before the servants of God to receive counsel.

Story on P2

Kambwili hits back at Amos

By Mukosha Funga

Expelled Roan PF member of parliament Chishimba Kambwili says he will expose State House press aide Amos Chanda's corruption on Saturday.

In a Facebook post today, Kambwili vowed to teach Chanda a lesson he would never forget.

"Amos Chanda, on Saturday I will tell the nation about your dirty corruption. I will teach you a lesson that you will never forget because you have lost fear and you are now stealing as though this is your personal to holder country," Kambwili said.

To page 4



Patriots for Economic Progress leader Sean Tembo with other fire tender protestors on Lusaka's Church Road - Picture by Tenson Mkhala.

Police turn fire tender joke into defamation of the President

By Mukosha Funga

Police in Chingola have arrested a 49-year-old businessman for allegedly defaming President Edgar Lungu.

Alex Mwale was picked up by police yesterday in connection with a video which went viral on social media last week in which he stood in front of one of the infamous fire tenders and called the Head of State a criminal.

Copperbelt Police Commissioner Charity Katanga confirmed the arrest in an interview today.

Full story P3

Zambia at high risk of debt distress - IMF

By Joseph Mwenda

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has observed that Zambia's ballooning external debt puts the country at high risk of debt distress.

And the IMF says although the near-term outlook for the Zambian economy has improved in recent months,

the country's fiscal imbalance has remained very high.

In a statement published on the IMF website yesterday, the Fund's directors who visited Zambia recently noted that the country needed to slow down on borrowing.

Below is the full statement. On October 6, 2017, the Executive Board of the

International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation with Zambia.

The near-term outlook for

the Zambian economy has improved in recent months, driven by good rains and rising world copper price.

Full statement on P7

I can't work for Lungu, I do not recognise him - Nevers

Story on P4



Dialogue with Lungu won't be about recognising him – HH

By Zondiwe Mbewe

Opposition UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema says the planned dialogue between himself and President Edgar Lungu will not be about recognition the Head of State or withdrawing the 2016 presidential election petition, but about corruption and other injustices in the country.

And Hichilema alleged that the PF government has sold land where Lusaka Central Prison is located as well as the Natural Resource Development College (NRDC).

Meanwhile, UPND National Chairperson Mutale Nalumango questioned why the police were allowing PF members to hold public meetings while denying opposition members their right to do the same.

Speaking when he addressed the press at his residence in Lusaka today, Hichilema said the dialogue process needed to be understood well in order to resolves all ills.

"We need to use this dialogue process properly in order to address all these ills. We need the dialogue to restore the fundamental human rights, rule of law and freedoms. We need a dialogue to reform the criminal justice system so that citizens are not guilty before proven innocent. We need a situation where cadres do not direct the police. We need a dialogue to stop the executive from controlling the judiciary, controlling the legislature, and now, controlling the media. The dialogue is about these issues, it is about corruption and all the other matters. The dialogue is not about recognition or withdrawing the petition, no. We need a dialogue to reform the Electoral Commission [of Zambia]. I don't want [Judge Essau] Chulu there in the electoral commission because he is corrupt. We want a truly independent electoral commission. We don't Chulu there. He should actually take an honourable state to resign because he has no value to Zambians," Hichilema said.

"And Speaker [Patrick]



Matibini must be told immediately, I think he is tired. The 47 members of parliament [UPND] exercised their right not to listen to a speech of somebody. That is a parliamentary preference. That's how you protest peacefully and they got suspended. We need that suspension to be rolled back. We need in future, not for MPs to be suspended by Matibini for falsehood. PF MPs shout a lot of staff in Parliament, the speaker watches them. Where is the freedom in that. We need a dialogue to restore that. You know sometimes its better to take a walk on your

own. People like Matibini must take a walk on their own."

He said the 2018 budget presented by the finance minister Felix Mutati was empty.

"The overall size of this economy is shrinking. Don't listen to Felix's flowers. It is an empty budget. He wants to keep his job. The true owners of PF are pushing him out so he has to show some flowers. Deep down Felix knows that what he is saying is not feasible. It is an empty budget. We are now sitting on a debt that we have never seen in this country before on even in the 27 years of

UNIP," Hichilema said.

"Felix, you and your government have been lying to us on the debt position. You don't say you owe \$7.5 billion when government owes \$14 billion. You are borrowing more than the size of your economy. So you own nothing. Wait and see when the Chinese say 'for the money you owe us, you haven't paid, we are taking Kafue national park, we are taking NRDC. That is why you hear they are selling NRDC and relocating it to a bush in Shakumbila. NRDC has been sold because your government has borrowed more than its

capacity to service the debt. Chimbokaila has been sold. These people are fearless. They are closing Prime [TV] so that you do not know about the sell of Chimbokaila and NRDC. Now they are talking about the sell of Kafue National Park, Lwangwa National Park. By the time your grandchildren will be in government, there will be no asset to talk about."

Hichilema also said that the Independent Broadcasting Authority was not independent but an arm of the PF.

"Press freedoms have been lost. PF is using visible and invisible hands to oppress the media

not to cover the opposition like UPND. I'm talking about legal rights provided for in the constitution. Our freedom are being taken away. Today I can assure you that IBA is an arm of PF. And we ask them to stop this nonsense. And Kampamba says 'HH is interfering with the operations of IBA. Niwebo ulechita interfere (it is you interfering) with the freedom of the people of Zambia,' said Hichilema.

Meanwhile, Nalumango urged citizens not to allow the government to oppress them.

"The Patriotic Front can hold a meeting anywhere, can demonstrate anywhere can do anything anywhere but the rest of the Zambians particularly UPND that keeps the PF sleepless cannot be allowed. This is not the Zambia we want, Zambians wakeup don't keep watching, rise up and speak against this oppression," said Nalumango.

"There is oppression in our country but we should not allow it. I'm appealing to you Zambians that may have an opportunity to watch this, don't allow it. Don't wait until they come into your home to realise. They will tell you 'madam, you can't hold a meeting, madam you can't be here because PF will attack you'. Is that the Zambia we want? Why are you protecting PF, leaving law abiding citizens? I just wanted to say this, it is a very sad situation that has developed in our country and we have to stand up, we need our rights as enshrined in the Constitution.

I was wrong about church being political - Lungu

From front page

"When you tell us this is wrong, we shouldn't say 'the church has become political'. Obviously, I was one of those, in those days, who used to believe that the church was political when they tell me, I remember responding to one colleague who was talking to us to say 'join politics' but I think that was wrong. Politics and religion are the same," President Lungu said.

"We are dealing with the same mankind spiritually. They nourish your soul and make people whole but physically, we are providing schools, health, housing, clean water and so on. So we are brothers and I think don't be ashamed to talk to us because we belong to one family."

The President said it was sad that people were not interested in participating in the National Day of Prayer.

"I know some church leaders have said they will not participate in the events of 18th October because 'the President never consulted us when he declared 18th a national holiday and he said it was going to be a day of prayer'. But I cannot consult everybody. Those church leaders who are complaining that I did not consult them, let them just take that declaration for what it is," he said.

"We belong to the same body, that's all I can say but I seek forgiveness because I understand that some churches are complaining that 'you should have consulted us'. That it was wrong not to consult, but sometimes we make mistakes and we discover that there are consequences but in this case, let us look at what it is, let's worship together, let's seek the face of God, that's all. It is

not about Edgar Lungu, PF or anything."

President Lungu asked the church to pray for him.

"We are here to be counselled, to be guided, to be prayed for so that we keep growing in the body of Christ and the church should continue praying for us during times like now when we are not in a season of politicking and campaigning and saying things on policy. It is time to work, it is time to reflect on the lives of people. So for me, I take this visit, this welcome very seriously," said President Lungu.

"Time for campaigning, time for politics will come. I have heard you have talked a lot about the development that we can do, I think we all belong to the same body of Christ, a person who is in poor health will not listen to you so I think we need to work together, that is why some churches have taken it upon themselves to help us, and we will keep coming back to the church to work together on these social services."

And a clergy representative said: "We will continue praying for you our President, just like the Bible asks us to pray for our leaders. We pray that God gives you good health and wisdom together with the first family"

LAZ condemns HH for attacking Judiciary

From front page

"The Law Association of Zambia is gravely concerned at very serious allegations that have been leveled against members of the Judiciary by United Party for National Development president Mr Hakainde Hichilema. In particular, LAZ is concerned about allegations of corruption on the following judges of the Constitutional Court: Judge Anne Mwewa Sitali, Judge Palan Musonda and Judge Mungeni Mulenga," Kasonde stated.

"LAZ strongly condemns the making of any

unsubstantiated claims, particularly of corruption, against any member of the judiciary. As LAZ has advised on several occasions, any member of the public with evidence of corruption against any judicial officer or public servant should lodge a complaint with the relevant authorities, such as the Judicial Complaints Commission, together with substantiated evidence."

Kasonde implored the UPND leader to desist from making allegations against judicial officers without caution and consideration in future.

"LAZ, like any concerned member of the public is interested in the preservation of the Judiciary as an institution that is mandated to uphold the rule of law, justice and integrity in the nation. Judicial officers by virtue of their positions cannot publicly defend themselves. We therefore implore the UPND and the public in general to desist from making allegations against Judicial officers without caution, due care and consideration as careless and substantiated allegations have the potential of creating anarchy and eroding public confidence in this institution," stated Kasonde.

Women are critical tools for economic emancipation - Masebo

By **Mirriam Chabala**

Former Minister of Tourism Sylvia Masebo says African leaders must stop looking at women as “statistical guinea pigs” but as critical tools for empowerment and economic emancipation. And Masebo has called for close collaboration of all relevant UN wildlife monitoring bodies and international organisations to arrest the dwindling numbers of wildlife on the African continent. Speaking during her solidarity address at the 5th session of the 4th Parliament of the Pan African Parliament in Midrand, South Africa yesterday, Masebo said nations that prioritized women empowerment programmes reaped quicker economic progress than those that dragged their feet. She said Women economic participation was a quicker vehicle to economic progress because it carried along with it entire family units that translated into the empowerment of entire communities, especially in Africa’s rural setups. “Mr President, it is indisputably and abundantly clear that nations that have prioritized women empowerment processes and programmes have reaped quicker economic progress than those that drag

their feet. Women economic participation is a wider and quicker vehicle as it carries along with it entire family units that translates into the empowerment of entire communities, especially in Africa’s rural setups. It is often said, if you empower one woman, you empower an entire village. The PAP must seek to ensure that African governments recognise the critical role women and girl children play in our people’s traditional family extended systems. We must therefore, stop looking at women as statistical guinea pigs for laboratory research and unending economic experiments,” Masebo said. “Let’s instead get on the hard ground and engage them on heart to heart fellowships, and in that way we will identify them as special and critical tools for empowerment and economic emancipation. Among their immediate needs are affordable housing, access to education that will help them appreciate safe motherhood, reproductive health and eventual eradication of poverty. I am reminded of the success story of the Nation of Rwanda that has recognised the sanctity of education of Women and the Youth and has further availed these groups with access to the technological power of the internet. The



Former Chongwe MP Sylvia Masebo with lawyer Keith Mweemba at Court-picture by Tenson Mkhala

result is that more and more women have now entered the ranks of small scale entrepreneurs as more and more of them qualify to borrow from banks. These small businesses have potential to grow into big enterprises that in turn will help grow the wealth of the Nation.” And Masebo, who is now a UPND member, said there was need for close collaboration of all relevant UN wildlife monitoring bodies and international organisations to arrest the dwindling numbers

of wildlife in the African continent. “Mr President, allow me to address the issue of our rich African wildlife. The Committee responsible for tourism must focus on sustained and concerted efforts in addressing the challenges of commercial poachers that have invaded our wildlife parks around Africa. Here I am not referring to small scale poachers that kill for the pot, but well organised and well coordinated international cartels that work in close collaboration

with corrupt government officers who have dubiously granted them huge hunting concessions and licences to kill for massive international trade. If Africa does not wake up to a full realisation of the dwindling numbers of our wildlife, this current generation will leave nothing for its children,” she said. “The evil of commercial poaching must be raised to the same levels of international terrorism and climate change and Africa must aggressively lead the way in this fight, because approximately over 70% of the World’s wildlife is found on our continent. I therefore call upon the PAP to work in close collaboration with relevant UN wildlife monitoring bodies and other international organizations, NGO’s and wildlife watchdogs, but most importantly, with local populations.”

Meanwhile, Masebo also noted that there was need to aggressively address certain matters that required change of attitude and behaviour patterns in fighting climate change. “In redrawing our destiny and reclaiming our history, let us be reminded of what drove and inspired our founding Fathers towards their goals. Oppression, colonisation, apartheid and slavery gave way to the painful contractions and eventual birth pangs of freedom and subsequently,

to new governors of our nations through our own choices. It is therefore, the duty of this distinguished House to teach our people to demand for nothing less than true democracy, transparency, accountability, full civil liberties and economic development from their new rulers,” said Masebo. “It is such a coincidence that the 5th Ordinary Session of the 4th Parliament of the PAP is being held in the realm of time of the severe unprecedented and devastating hurricanes in the Western hemisphere, that have literally razed down and wiped out entire cities in some cases, our prayers and thoughts should go out to the citizens of those countries. Climate change is not ‘fake news’ to borrow a rather infamous term from one leader. It is a stark reality that calls us to urgent duty by not only seeking answers, but by also aggressively addressing certain matters that require change of attitudes and behaviour patterns in the way we handle our planet.” Masebo was invited by the Pan African parliament as its special guest to deliver a solidarity statement to the assembly yesterday morning in Midrand. The 5th session of the Pan African Parliament was graced by President of the Pan African Parliament Roger Nkodo Dang.

Speaker surrenders Kambwili, Lusambo fight to Parliamentary committee for probe

By **Sipilisiwe Ncube**

Speaker of the National Assembly Dr Patrick Matibini has asked the Parliamentary Committee on Privileges, Absences, and Support Services to investigate and make recommendations on the scuffle between Chishimba Kambwili and his fellow PF MPs. Making a ruling yesterday, Speaker Matibini observed that Kambwili’s point of order contained a conflicting version of events from his Mandevu counterpart Jean Kapata’s counter point of order. “The House will recall that on Tuesday 3rd October 2017 when the House was considering questions for oral answer No.41 and Mr Kasuta Michelo MP for Bweengwa constituency was speaking, Dr Chishimba Kambwili member of parliament for Roan constituency raised a point of order against honorable Bowman Lusambo MP and Minister for the Copperbelt Province and honorable Jean Kapata MP, Minister of Lands and Natural Resources. In his

point of order, the member of parliament for Roan wondered whether the two honorable Ministers were in order to physically assault him within the precincts of parliament,” Dr Matibini said. “The House will further recall that the point of order by the honorable member of parliament for Roan was followed by another point of order by the honorable Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, in her point of order, the honorable Minister wondered whether the member of parliament for Roan was in order to call her a thief on several radio stations as well as within the precincts of parliament.” Dr Matibini said because the two points of orders had conflicting versions, he referred the matter to the parliamentary committee on privileges, absences and support services for further investigations. “In my immediate remarks, I reserved my ruling on both points of orders to enable me investigate both the matters. Honorable members, in view of the

fact that the points of orders raised by Dr C Kambwili MP raises potentially conflicting versions or a context of what transpired on the material day, I have found it necessary to refer this matter to the committee on privileges, absences and support services to enable the committee fully investigate what transpired on the material day and in due course, make appropriate recommendations to the House. Similarly, I have decided to refer the point of order raised by honorable Jean Kapata MP again to the committee on privileges, absences and support services for further consideration

and making appropriate recommendations, I thank you,” said Matibini. The Parliamentary Committee on Privileges, Absences and Support Services is composed of Monze UPND member of parliament Jack Mwiimbu, Chiengi FDD member of parliament Given Katuta, Kanyama PF member of parliament Elizabeth Phiri, Mazabuka Central UPND member of parliament Garry Nkombo, Chililabombwe PF’s Richard Musukwa, Kabwata PF member of parliament Given Lubinda, and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Catherine Namugala.

Police nab Chingola man for calling Lungu a thief

By **Mukosha Funga**

Police in Chingola have arrested a 49-year-old businessman for allegedly defaming President Edgar Lungu. Alex Mwale was picked up by police yesterday in connection with a video which went viral on social media last week in which he stood in front of one of the infamous fire tenders and called the Head of State a criminal. Copperbelt Police Commissioner

Charity Katanga confirmed the arrest to News Diggers! in an interview today. “Yes, we picked him up for the subject offense of Defamation of the President and he is in custody in Chingola. He will appear in court soon,” said Katanga. “He was captured on a video clip defaming his Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu by calling him a

criminal and a thief.” In the video, Mwale said the fire tenders were not worth one million dollars. “Lungu you are the one I am telling, is this where you can spend 9.5 million?” Mwale asked whilst pointing at the fire tender. “A thief is a thief! Lungu you are a thief. This vehicle cannot cost 9.5 billion old currency. You are a criminal bring our money back.”

I can't work for Lungu, I don't recognise him - Nevers

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

MMD leader Nevers Mumba says reports that he is looking for a job in the PF government are false, adding that he cannot work for a President whom he does not recognise as legitimately elected into office.

And Mumba has appealed to all MMD members who left the former ruling party to apply for readmission before the next convention.

Mumba said this when he featured on a Pan-African radio programme today.

"Ba Lungu even if he stays for five years in office, he goes down in the history as a President who stole an election, and he will be called a thief for that. If I were his friend I would tell him 'regularise your presidency, legitimise your presidency'. I haven't been speaking to President Lungu but you are saying that am looking for a job, which job? How can I look for a job in a government that is soon to collapse because of the corruption that its engulfed with? I don't think it will last," Mumba said.

"If President Edgar Lungu says come and take over and work with me on this issue, the difficult we will have, especially myself as an individual, is that I do not recognise him as having been legitimately elected. And so we consider his government as illegitimate until the petition is head. If it's not heard, this dialogue we are talking about should bring us face-to-face in order to allow him understand how we feel because he has really disenfranchised himself by not allowing the process of the court to legitimise him. So basically I will not say lets work with an illegitimate administration."



Mumba said President Lungu's failure to fight corruption would destroy his legacy.

"If President Lungu doesn't effectively tackle corruption, every little effort that he has made will be destroyed. There is no president that has been close to corruption who has made it in the following election. president Rupiah Banda was moving economically, but when the election came, he could not be re-elected. So even Mr Lungu, he can be protected by Mr Governor, but I am more useful to President Lungu, I am more of a friend to President Lungu, I am more of a comrade to Mr Lungu than the Governor. The Governor is trying to allow

Mr Lungu not to see what the country is saying about him. I am telling him 'my brother you can change this. The only way to change is for you to rise up, face the nation,' Mumba said.

He said PF members were trading on thin ground by acting above the law.

"This government thinks they are above the law, they can do what they want without being questioned. I tell you what, they are trading on dangerous grounds. We have all been in government, I can tell you the temptation of being arrogant. The moment you discern from that position, you will regret the day that you became part of an administration. Right now as we speak, all the heavyweights

of the Patriotic Front have left Mr Lungu. President Chiluba when he started talking about the third term, both his vice presidents, all his 21 ministers left president Chiluba. People don't want to continue serving in a certain way," he said.

Meanwhile, Mumba said that all those who misappropriated MMD funds would be individually charged soon after the court case was disposed off.

"I want to clarify to the Zambians that there are no two MMDs. Once the case is through in the courts, we are going to securely take over all those facilities and they are going to have to pay a very high price for the mismanagement of resources and the vehicles of the Movement for Multi-party Democracy in the time they have been purporting to be in leadership. And they are going to be individually

charged with criminal offences after the court case. Fidgeting with the names of the leadership of the MMD at the Registrar of Societies, that will be a separate criminal charge," said Mumba.

"Let me assure the nation that this party, we are going to another convention. Shortly after the court case, we are going to another convention. I want all those who left to apply to be readmitted to this party."

Lubinda announces end of Threatened State of Emergency

Miriam Chabala

Justice minister Given Lubinda has announced that the

Threatened State of Emergency which President Edgar Lungu declared following suspected

acts of sabotage earlier this year, will expire at midnight tonight. And Lubinda says police will continue investigating the fires that rocked the country in the past few months despite the expiration of the Threatened State of Emergency. Announcing the development in Parliament this afternoon, Lubinda said the expiration of the Threatened State of Emergency should not be misconstrued as an invitation for anyone to break the law because there will some other laws in force which could still be applied.

Kambwili hits back at Amos

From front page

"Your friends at state house have sold you out because of your arrogance. You will hear from me soon. The picture shows Amos Chanda's luxury double story villas located behind Nyumba Yanga market. He must explain to the nation where he who is just a civil servant with no business acumen has gotten the money to build all over Lusaka," wrote Kambwili. On Monday, Chanda told News Diggers! that he had not stolen any money from government, but people should not expect him to be worth the same as he was, because he was earning an income.

And Chanda said people

should stop clapping for Kambwili's nonsensical talk because the Roan PF member of parliament is "a down right thief" whose criminality was well documented.

"People have been poisoned by a poisonous elite, people who are accustomed to lies like Kambwili, a scrap metal dealer, a downright straight thief. He can question about me and say 'a simple journalist' [has acquired wealth] let's assume I am a simple journalist but I am qualified, more qualified than he is, but he goes and says a simple journalist. A scrap metal dealer, and you have a population clapping in the context like that one. Kambwili is

talking nonsense and the population is clapping for him, he goes to malign an innocent person and the population is cheering on. He is a metal thief, well documented. He is not even a scrap metal dealer, he is a

thief," charged Chanda.

"I am not saying I will steal; even if I did not steal, I will earn some money and earning some money is acquiring wealth. So the point I am making is that, the allegations against

me, unless you have heard anything, I have not heard anyone who is saying... they are just saying 'Amos has acquired wealth', so what do they expect me to acquire, poverty and diseases? I am asking this question."

Police finally charge 'Precious' boyfriend with murder

By Diggers Reporter

Police in Lusaka have formally arrested and charged Shinka Kaputo with murder and unlawful wounding. Last week Thursday, Kaputo, 34, allegedly shot his 26-year-old girlfriend Precious Mangesana after a dispute.

The couple's daughter was also injured in the process when a bullet projectile got stuck in her neck.

In a statement today, acting police

spokesperson Danny Mwale disclosed that Kaputo had been charged with murder.

"Police in Lusaka have formally arrested and charged Shinka Kaputo aged 34 of unknown house number in Meanwood Ibex Hill area with two counts: 1. Murder- contrary to section 200 of the Penal Code Cap 87 of the laws of Zambia in which he is alleged to have killed his girl friend Precious Mangesana aged 26 of unknown

house number, Lusaka West using a firearm. 2. Unlawful Wounding- contrary to section 232 of the Penal Code Cap 87 of the laws of Zambia in which he is alleged to have unlawfully wounded his daughter aged two years seven months who sustained a bullet wound on the neck. The suspect remains in custody and will appear will in court soon," stated Mwale. Mangesana was put to rest at Lusaka's Memorial Park yesterday.



Contact: Isaac Mwaipopo-ED
 Centre for Trade Policy and Development
 Phone: +260 211 264409 | +260 955623226
 Fax: +260 211266234

Plot 123, Kudu Road Kabulonga www.ctpd.org.zm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: 11/10/17

SLOW DOWN ON DEBT CONTRACTION- CTPD URGES GOVT

The Centre for Trade Policy and Development urges government to take seriously the red

flags raised by the International Monetary Fund if Zambia is to move towards the Economic Growth and stabilization path. The conclusions of the IMF's Article IV consultations demonstrate the need to consider slowing down on debt contraction and minimize wasteful

expenditures in order help improve budget credibility. This seems to be the underlying reason

for the failure to secure a deal, and the Government needs to priorities getting a grip on debt

in order to accelerate progress toward agreeing to the IMF financing CTPD have long-argued

Zambia needs. In their analysis and conclusions, the Board of the International Monetary Fund observed that

despite recording some improvements in economic performance, public debt has been rising to unsustainable levels and this is negatively affecting lending towards private sector players. According to the IMF, the outstanding publicly guaranteed debt rose sharply from 36% of GDP in 2014 to 60 % at the end of 2016 driven by external borrowing and the impact of exchange rate depreciation.

Recently, the Minister of Finance presented the 2018 National budget before parliament, the proposed 2018 national budget comes at a time Zambia is still facing a number of economic

challenges, it is highly anticipated that if well implemented, the budget can help steer the

country to a path of growth and stabilization as espoused in the recently launched seventh

National Development Plan that seeks not to leave any one behind. The theme for the 2018

National Budget is accelerating fiscal fitness and growth without leaving anyone behind, drawn

from the 7NDP, the budget continues to try foster fiscal fitness while embracing the five

strategic growth areas of focus under the seventh National Development Plan of promoting

economic diversification, poverty reduction, reducing inequality, enhancing human development, and creating

a conducive governance environment for a diversified and inclusive economy.

It is CTPD's hope to see a properly structured economy that will see the creation of decent

jobs, better health care service delivery, enhanced social protection and overall fiscal prudence

in the management of public resources. From the speech delivered, CTPD notes that government has stipulated the macroeconomic objectives for the 2018 national budget, which

will be to: achieve real GDP growth of at least 5%; preserve single digit inflation within the

range of 6.0% to 8.0%; attain domestic revenue mobilization of at least 17.7% of GDP, limit

domestic financing to no more than 4.0% of GDP and maintain international reserves of at

least 3 months of import cover. While we appreciate the ambitious projected macroeconomic indicators, the revenue and

expenditure estimates for 2018, CTPD is equally deeply concerned with the growing public

debt. The Honorable Minister in his address to parliament told the nation that Zambia's total

debt level is now at US\$ 12.45 billion (ZMW 114.9 billion in kwacha) , this is outstripping the

total 2018 budget which stands at ZMW 71.6 billion) representing 47% of GDP. CTPD has noted the jump in

interest payment to 23.0% in the first half of 2017 compared to 6.7% in 2012. The rate of

contracting debt is what has skyrocketed the debt repayment and

this has suffocated expenditure on critical social sectors such as education, health, and social

protection that could uplift peoples' livelihoods. During last year's (2017) budget presentation

to parliament, Finance Minister, Hon. Felix Mutati made a pledge to the effect that Zambia

was not going to spend what it did not have. However, CTPD notes that Zambia has not lived

up to that pledge. Further, we also noted that in 2017 government had exceeded the debt

ceiling on domestic borrowing which crowded out private

sector participation thereby worsening the vulnerability of the economy.

CTPD would like to appeal to Government to seriously consider slowing down on debt

contraction and minimize wasteful expenditures in order help improve budget credibility and

fiscal prudence. Instead of acquiring commercial loans at high interest rates, we urge government to priorities

finalizing the bailout package from the International Monetary Fund,

this will help improve the balance of payments as well as offer technical assistance on macroeconomic policy design and implementation. Beyond

developing a debt management strategy, it is very important to adhere to provisions of the strategy because left on its own

terms, it becomes a mere policy document that may not touch light of day

On the other side, IMF must give a clear position on Zambia's request for a bailout package,

there has been a lot of uncertainty around the outcomes of the negotiations which have

dragged for quite some time now, as a concerned Civil Society, we would like to know in clear

terms whether Zambia will be granted the bailout or not, if yes, when exactly?

Mr. Isaac Mwaipopo
Executive Director

For more information visit our web site [www.ctpd.org.zm] or come to our office Plot 123, Kudu Road Kabulonga

There are no documents to prove that Mumba Yachi is Congolese – Witness



By Diggers Reporter

An immigration officer has told the Lusaka Magistrates' Court that there are no documents to prove that Mumba Yachi is from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

This is in a matter in which Mumba, whose real names are Shadrick Chite Mukenge, is facing a charge of unlawful stay in Zambia and two counts of giving of false information to public officers in a bid to obtain a national registration card and passport.

When the matter came up before magistrate Ruth Kapulo today, immigration officer Hillary Namunji narrated that on July 1, 2017, he was tasked to investigate Mumba's parentage.

Namunji testified that he discovered that Mumba is a Congolese national who was born at a Catholic mission hospital in 1985 at Mokambo border post on the side of Democratic Republic of Congo.

He said the investigations

revealed that Mumba's parents are Congolese nationals who resides at house number 17 Mweenda avenue, Pedicle Road, Congo DR. Namunji named Mumba's mother as Mary Kori Clare while the father is Mr Funji.

He told the court that a couple which the accused purported to be his parents, Francis Nonde Mumba and his wife Rhodia Mwitwa Mumba; a Congolese national, denied knowing him.

Namunji told the court that he had known Mumba for five years as he used to frequent the border post to see his parents.

He said Mumba never renounced his citizenship of origin for him to qualify to be Zambian.

But in cross examination, Namunji said he did not retrieve any documents from DRC over the nationality of the accused.

He said, there were no documents to identify that Mumba is from Congo

Maid gets 4 years for stealing boss' property worth K100,000

By Diggers Reporter

A 42-year-old maid has been sentenced to four years imprisonment for stealing household goods from her employer worth K100,000.

When the matter came up yesterday, Lusaka magistrate Nthandose Chabala convicted Brenda Phiri after she admitted hiring a Mitsubishi canter to transport the stolen property to her house in Garden Compound.

Brenda was facing two counts of theft as she first stole on February 28, 2016 two television sets, one Samsung home theatre, a carpet, Toshiba laptop and an LG microwave altogether valued at K25,000.

The incident happened when

the complainant was at church.

In the second count, Brenda, on September 14, 2017, being a person employed as a maid, stole one seat of lounge suit, fridge, washing machine, plasma tv set, freezite making machine, a cctv recorder, 8 pairs of mens shoes and a suitcase altogether valued at K75,000.00 which came into her possession by virtue of her employment, the property of Leevani Like.

The convict, who pleaded for the court's mercy, however said she had no justification for her actions.

In handing down the sentence, magistrate Chabala said the convict's action to her employer was so aggravating. The court ordered that the

recovered goods be taken back to the rightful owner after 14 days.

Earlier, a public prosecutor read out the facts in which he stated that the complainant received a call from his neighbors that criminals had broken into her house and later raped the maid.

After police officers from Chelstone police station instituted the investigations into the matter, a canter was impounded in Kaunda Square Stage one together with the driver and its occupants.

After questioning the suspects, they revealed that Brenda hired them to transport the goods to her house in Garden saying her husband had died.

Lusaka woman gets 4 yrs for burning stepson

By Diggers Reporter

The Lusaka Magistrates' Court has sentenced a 30-year-old woman to five years imprisonment with hard labour for burning her four-year-old stepson after he defecated in his pants.

The court described Catherine Namonje of Chipata compound as a heartless and evil woman. Namonje was facing one

count of assault on a child. According to the prosecution witnesses, the convict beat the child after which she put him on a hot brazier.

After the incident, Namonje sent her step son's sister to buy glycerine, which she applied on the baby's wounds.

The victim's biological mother, Elizabeth Kapenda,

who was on separation with the victim's father, said was only called by the police to check on her son who was burnt.

And in his testimony, the juvenile said he was put on brazier by his step mother when she discovered that he had defecated in his pants.

He said after he was burnt, his step mother asked him to hide under the bed.

WE VOTE
EVERY FEW
YEARS BUT



WE CAN BE
HEARD
EVERY DAY.

Alliance for
community
action ▶▶

From front page

On October 6, 2017, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation [1] with Zambia.

The near-term outlook for the Zambian economy has improved in recent months, driven by good rains and rising world copper price. The economy was in near-crisis from the fourth quarter of 2015 through most of 2016, reflecting the impacts of exogenous shocks and lax fiscal policy in the lead up to general elections. Low copper prices reduced export earnings and government revenues, while poor rainfall in the catchment areas of hydro-power reservoirs led to a marked reduction in electricity generation and severe power rationing. A sharp depreciation of the kwacha fuelled inflation which rose from an annual rate of 7 percent in mid-2015 to nearly 23 percent in February 2016. Tight monetary policy succeeded in stabilising the exchange rate and slowing down inflation to 6.3 percent in August 2017, but contributed to elevated stress in the financial system evidenced by a sharp rise in nonperforming loans and a plunge in the growth of credit to the private sector. Stress tests suggest that the banks are resilient to credit and liquidity pressures, but the financial system faces considerable risks, owing to high dependence on copper exports, rising public debt and funding pressures.

Fiscal imbalances have remained high. The fiscal deficit on a cash basis reached 9.3 percent of GDP in 2015, twice the budgeted level. On a commitment basis—taking into account accumulation of arrears and delays in paying VAT refunds—the deficit exceeded 12 percent of GDP in 2015, and remained elevated at about 9 percent of GDP in 2016. The deficit on a commitment basis is projected to decline significantly in 2017, but the cash deficit will remain elevated as the government clears arrears.

Public debt has been rising at an unsustainable pace and has crowded out lending to the private sector and increased the vulnerability of the economy. The outstanding public and publicly guaranteed debt rose sharply from 36 percent of GDP at end-2014 to 60 percent at end-2016, driven largely by external borrowing and the impact of exchange rate depreciation. Increased participation of foreign investors in the government securities market has eased the government's financing constraint but has made the economy more vulnerable to swings in market sentiments and capital flow reversals.

The medium-term outlook for the economy is contingent on policies. Real GDP growth has picked up after a marked deceleration from 7.6 percent in 2012 to 2.9 percent in 2015. Growth is projected to reach 4 percent in 2017. However, achieving sustained high and inclusive growth requires a stable macroeconomic environment as well as policies and reforms to increase productivity, enhance competitiveness,

Zambia at high risk of debt distress - IMF



IMF leader of delegation Tsidi Tsikata during a press briefing in Lusaka-picture by Tenson Mkhala

strengthen human capital and support financial inclusion for small and medium scale enterprises. Domestic risks to the outlook include delayed fiscal adjustment which would continue to crowd out credit to private sector and entrench an unsustainable debt situation, and unfavorable weather conditions which would affect hydro power generation and agricultural output. External risks include tighter global financial conditions and volatility in the world copper price.

Executive Board Assessment [2]

Executive Directors welcomed the recent improvement in Zambia's economic outlook. However, Directors noted that

domestic and external risks pose significant challenges. They advised the authorities to take advantage of the current favourable conditions and implement decisive and prudent macroeconomic policies and reforms to place public finances and debt on a sustainable path, build international reserves, increase the economy's resilience to shocks, and achieve higher and inclusive growth. In this regard, they welcomed the launch of the Economic Stabilisation and Growth Program and the Seventh National Development Plan.

Directors commended the authorities for taking strong measures to phase-out

regressive fuel and electricity subsidies, and for scaling-up spending on social protection programs. At the same time, they noted that achieving the government's fiscal consolidation goals will require stronger efforts to increase domestic revenues, including by addressing widespread exemptions and broadening the VAT and income tax bases. Directors emphasised the importance of containing recurrent spending, improving commitment controls, phasing out subsidies, and strengthening public financial management.

Directors expressed concern at the pace at which public debt, especially external debt,

has increased and now put Zambia at high risk of debt distress. They commended the progress made in developing a medium-term debt strategy. While recognising the need to address infrastructure gaps, they emphasised that to maintain debt sustainability, it is critical to slow down on the contraction of new debt, especially non-concessional loans, strengthen debt management capacity, and improve project appraisal and selection processes.

Directors welcomed the recent easing of monetary policy. They commended the Bank of Zambia (BoZ) for unwinding the quantitative and administrative measures it had used to tighten monetary

conditions. Directors underscored that greater reliance on interest rates and market mechanisms would enhance the transparency and effectiveness of monetary policy. They stressed that credible fiscal consolidation is necessary to sustain the current monetary policy stance.

Directors emphasized the importance of safeguarding financial stability. They welcomed BoZ's positive response to implementing the Financial Sector Assessment Program (FSAP) recommendations, including taking steps to strengthen supervision capacity and the crisis preparedness framework. Directors endorsed BoZ's plans to complete on-site inspection of all banks within 12-18 months, and advised the BoZ to take action to address weaknesses that may be revealed. Directors encouraged the authorities to accelerate the process of revamping the BoZ Act, to give the central bank more operational autonomy while enhancing its transparency and accountability.

Directors emphasised that macroeconomic stability, policy consistency, and investment in human capital are critical to addressing Zambia's high rates of poverty and income inequality and promoting sustainable growth. They encouraged the authorities to address policy uncertainties that are clouding the investment climate, including clarifying the roles of the state and the private sector in the energy and agriculture sectors.

CTPD welcomes lifting of 5-year tax holiday

By Mirriam Chabala

CTPD says government's decision to discontinue the five-year income tax holiday for companies will broaden Zambia's revenue base.

And CTPD says research has revealed that about K1 billion of the country's revenue is realised from incentives, such as provisions under the COMESA and SADC Trade protocols.

In a statement yesterday, Centre for Trade Policy and Development executive director Isaac Mwaipopo noted that the abolishment of the five-year income tax holiday could help increase and improve equity within the tax system by further reducing the burden on formal employees.

"The proposed scrapping off of the five year income tax breaks by the Minister of Finance beginning 2018 is a welcome move as it will enhance government's ability to collect the much needed revenues for provision of public services. The finance

Minister announced an ambitious K71.6 billion [2018] budget which requires aggressive efforts towards broadening the country's tax base and the phasing out of tax incentives such as the tax break is one such measure. Abolishment of the 5-year income tax holiday can help to increase and improve equity within the tax system by further reducing the burden on formal employees," Mwaipopo stated.

Mwaipopo stated that tax incentives were particularly an ineffective way of promoting investment in any country. "Reports have shown that tax incentives are not a key driver for investment decisions in the country. Market access, political stability and other broad economic features are more important in attracting investments in a country like Zambia. Therefore, tax incentives are particularly an ineffective way of promoting investment. Tax incentives should be minimized and their applicability restricted to where there is

proven benefit outweighing costs or else they could be an avenue upon which colossal loss of tax revenues could take place. CTPD would like to emphasize that decisions regarding tax incentives should be based on informed clear empirical data."

He observed that having too many tax incentives in the country had led to poor performance of tax collection.

"Numerous tax incentives have led to a poor performance of taxes collected through corporate income tax and led to over burdening of taxes from low to middle income earners who are the largest contributors to the tax base. According to a study done by the Jesuit Centre for theological reflections, it was estimated that close to K1 billion worthy of revenue is through various tax incentives among which includes provisions under COMESA trade protocol as well as the SADC Trade protocols," stated Mwaipopo.

Toilet tissue should not be an issue

It's not a long time ago when we described former information minister Chishimba Kambwili as "a good bad man". In our analysis, we did state that Mr Kambwili or Honourable Doctor Kambwili, as he prefers to be called, was a perfect opposition figure. We observed that since he was removed from his ministerial position and expelled from the ruling party, the Roan member of parliament attracted support from many Zambians because of the fearless manner in which he started naming and shaming corrupt individuals in government.

That's not all; we went further to state that Mr Kambwili could not make a good Republican President because he was an emotional and vengeful leader. However, that criticism did not sit well with his supporters who felt we were being sadistic. In fact, Mr Kambwili himself called our editor to register his displeasure with us for publishing an article which he felt was in bad taste. Anyway, that's not the issue. The issue is that shortly after he questioned our judgment of his character, his emotions vindicated us.

"My dear sister Mumbi Phiri, if you live in a glass house, don't throw stones. Don't go on the radio and start defending yourself 'no me I was married to a man who was very wealthy that's why I built that house' ...I

used to buy toilet tissue for you and bathing soap for you who is married to a wealthy man, *mulekwatako insoni* (you should be ashamed), I would go into your house Mumbi, *elo nasanga namulepula inyunshi esho mulebomfwa mu toilet elo natila Mumbi, MP inyunshi mu toilet* (I would find you have cut pieces of newspapers for use in your toilet then I would say 'Mumbi, an MP using newspaper in your toilet?') And then I would go to Shoprite and buy for you," said Mr Kambwili.

To those who didn't follow this story, Mr Kambwili was trying to make a point that many people in the ruling party had acquired wealth through corruption. First, we must state that there was absolutely nothing wrong with his observation. In fact, we agree with him that there is corruption in the PF government and the epicenter of that corruption is State House. But look at how Mr Kambwili's emotions spoiled the important point he was trying to make.

To begin with, we wonder if Mr Kambwili realised before attacking Mumbi that the former Munalu member of parliament has had a soft spot for him. Ever since Mr Kambwili started facing his

tribulations, we have never recorded a statement from Mumbi attacking Kambwili, which as journalists we found very strange – considering the diarrhea of the mouth that Mumbi herself suffers from. But a quick inquiry within the PF circles brought us a revelation that Mumbi was among those in the ruling party who felt Mr Kambwili's case needed to be handled a little differently to avoid the prevailing antagonism that his expulsion brought about.

Now, we do appreciate that when he was expelled from the PF, Mr Kambwili vowed to take on the PF, punch for punch. He made it a point to hit back whenever he was attacked by a

government or party official. He promised to spill the beans and let the Zambian people know the true colours of the leaders they voted into power. Again, we found nothing wrong with that because that is what is expected in a functioning democracy. But they say a good boxer knows when to punch back and when to duck. Kambwili punched when he should have ducked.

In his defence, Mr Kambwili apologised to his 'sister' saying 'I am sorry, I got carried away in the moment but I have reflected on my statement and I withdraw it. That is exactly what we meant by stating that Mr Kambwili's emotions were his greatest weakness. There

was no need for Mr Kambwili to humiliate a mother in that manner. Genuine help means giving and forgetting. You cannot go back to the person you bought underwear for, and say "stop running around, you will destroy the *kaputula* I bought you".

It is good that Mumbi acted wisely by ducking and not punching back. As a matter of fact, Mumbi did not need an apology from Mr Kambwili because that statement backfired and killed the momentum that the rebel MP was enjoying. This careless statement disappointed us because we want Mr Kambwili to continue hitting the PF and making them sit up. We would

like him to continue exposing corruption because a corrupt regime is not different from a dictatorship.

Our only advice to Mr Kambwili is that he should not act on impulse when he gets agitated. Most importantly, as a leader, he should not take pride in reminding the poor what he did for them. There was nothing wrong in Mumbi using newspapers if she couldn't afford toilet tissue. After all, Kambwili himself used Mumbi's newspaper on that same day after doing what he went in the toilet for, unless he tells us that he boycotted the newspaper, drove to Shoprite to buy tissue and came back to use it.

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

Diggers! is published by NEWS DIGGERS MEDIA LTD
Temp 8, Alex Chola Road, Nyumba Yanga, Lusaka.
PO Box, 32147. Cell: +26077122344/0965815078
Email: editor@diggers.news/mukosha@diggers.news

To advertise in the Diggers! ePaper or website:
Call +260953424603/+26077122344 or
Email: advertising@diggers.news or visit us at
Temp 8, Alex Chola Road, Nyumba Yanga, Lusaka.

From Miami and Puerto Rico to Barbuda and Havana, the devastation of this year's hurricane season across Latin America and the Caribbean serves as a reminder that the impacts of climate change know no borders.

In recent weeks, Category 5 hurricanes have brought normal life to a standstill for millions in the Caribbean and on the American mainland. Harvey, Irma and Maria have been particularly damaging. The 3.4 million inhabitants of Puerto Rico have been scrambling for basic necessities including food and water, the island of Barbuda has been rendered uninhabitable, and dozens of people are missing or dead on the UNESCO world heritage island of Dominica.

The impact is not confined to this region. The record floods across Bangladesh, India and Nepal have made life miserable for some 40 million people. More than 1,200 people have died and many people have lost their homes, crops have been destroyed, and many workplaces have been inundated. Meanwhile, in Africa, over the last 18 months 20 countries have declared drought emergencies, with major displacement taking place across the Horn region.

For those countries that are least developed the impact of disasters can be severe, stripping away livelihoods and progress on health and education; for developed and middle-income countries the economic losses from infrastructure alone can be massive; for both, these events reiterate the need to act on a changing climate that threatens only more frequent and more

Climate Change is a Threat to rich and poor alike

severe disasters.

A (shocking) sign of things to come?

The effects of a warmer climate on these recent weather events, both their severity and their frequency, has been revelatory for many, even the overwhelming majority that accept the science is settled on human-caused global warming.

While the silent catastrophe of 4.2 million people dying prematurely each year from ambient pollution, mostly related to the use of fossil fuels, gets relatively little media attention, the effect of heat-trapping greenhouse gases on extreme weather events is coming into sharper focus.

It could not be otherwise when the impacts of these weather events are so profound. During the last two years over 40 million people, mainly in countries which contribute least to global warming, were forced either permanently or temporarily from their homes by disasters.

There is clear consensus: rising temperatures are increasing the amount of water vapor in the atmosphere, leading to more intense rainfall and flooding in some places, and drought in others. Some areas experience both, as was the case this year in California,

where record floods followed years of intense drought.

TOPEX/Poseidon, the first satellite to precisely measure rising sea levels, was launched two weeks before Hurricane Andrew made landfall in Florida 25 years ago. Those measurements have observed a global increase of 3.4 millimeters per year since then; that's a total of 85 millimeters over 25 years, or 3.34 inches.

Rising and warming seas are contributing to the intensity of tropical storms worldwide. We will continue to live with the abnormal and often unforeseen consequences of existing levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, for many, many years to come.

In 2009, Swiss Re published a case study focused on Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties, which envisaged a moderate sea level rise scenario for the 2030s which matches what has already taken place today. If a storm on the scale of Andrew had hit this wealthy corner of the US today, the economic damage would range from US\$100 billion to US\$300 billion. Now the estimates suggest that the economic losses from Harvey, Irma and Maria could surpass those numbers.

Reduce disaster risk now; tackle climate change in the

long-term

Miami is working hard on expanding its flood protection programme; US\$ 400 million is earmarked to finance sea pumps, improved roads and seawalls. Yet, this level of expenditure is beyond the reach of most low and middle-income countries that stand to lose large chunks of their GDP every time they are hit by floods and storms.

While the Paris Agreement has set the world on a long-term path towards a low-carbon future, it is a windy path that reflects pragmatism and realities in each individual country. Thus, while carbon emissions are expected to drop as countries meet their self-declared targets, the impacts of climate change may be felt for some time, leaving the world with little choice but to invest, simultaneously, in efforts to adapt to climate change and reduce disaster risk. The benefits of doing so makes economic sense when compared to the cost of rebuilding.

This will require international cooperation on a previously unprecedented scale as we tackle the critical task of making the planet a more resilient place to the lagging effects of greenhouse gas emissions that we will experience for years to come. Restoring the ecological

balance between emissions and the natural absorptive capacity of the planet is the long-term goal. It is critical to remember that the long-term reduction of emissions is THE most important risk reduction tactic we have, and we must deliver on that ambition.

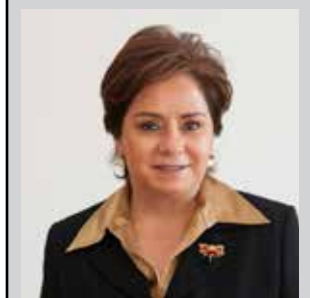
The November UN Climate Conference in Bonn presided over by the small island of Fiji, provides an opportunity to not only accelerate emission reductions but to also boost the serious work of ensuring that the management of climate risk is integrated into disaster risk management as a whole. Poverty, rapid urbanization, poor land use, ecosystems decline and other risk factors will amplify the impacts of climate change. Today on International Day for Disaster Reduction, we call for them to be addressed in a holistic way.

Achim Steiner is Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme www.undp.org
Patricia Espinosa is Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change www.unfccc.int

Robert Glasser is the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction and head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction www.unisdr.org



Achim Steiner



Patricia Espinosa



Robert Glasser

Kenya's Raila Odinga quits election re-run

Kenyan opposition leader Raila Odinga has pulled out of October's election re-run.

Mr Odinga said his withdrawal would give the electoral commission enough time to introduce reforms that will help deliver a more credible election.

The Supreme Court annulled the result of the original 8 August poll, which saw Uhuru Kenyatta declared winner, after finding irregularities.

But Mr Kenyatta says he is ready to proceed with the new vote as planned.

The country's electoral commission said Mr Kenyatta had won the August vote by a margin of 1.4 million votes - or 54% of the total, compared to Mr Odinga's 44%.

Kenya's vice-president, William Ruto, has now called on the commission to declare Mr Kenyatta president as a result of Mr Odinga's announcement.

The election re-run was due to take place on 26 October, but Mr Odinga said on Tuesday: "We have come to the conclusion that there is no intention on the part of the IEBC [electoral commission] to undertake any changes to its operations and personnel... All indications are that the election scheduled for 26 October will be worse than the previous one."

As a result, he said, "considering the interests of the people of Kenya, the region and the world at large" it was best that he withdrew from the race.

Mr Odinga's coalition party believes the election will have to be cancelled as a result of his withdrawal, allowing "adequate time to undertake the reforms necessary to conduct an election that is in strict

conformity with the constitution, the relevant laws and the constitution".

But Mr Kenyatta, speaking at a rally in the southern town of Voi, said: "We have no problem going back to elections. We are sure we will get more votes than the last time."

He added: "We are also telling him it is the people's right to choose their leader. It is their sovereign right to choose their leader of choice."

Uncharted territory

The withdrawal could be a strategy for Raila Odinga to exit the political scene on his own terms.

The annulment of President Uhuru Kenyatta's victory in the 8 August election was a much-needed political high for Mr Odinga.

He felt vindicated for challenging the election and pushed for changes to the electoral system as a condition for his participation in the re-run.

The electoral commission has rejected the changes he demanded, largely because of contractual agreements with the companies providing key services for the election.

With President Kenyatta's party having won a majority of MPs in both houses of parliament, it is likely that Mr Odinga was headed for another defeat and that would be too much for a man, who has been nicknamed the enigma.

The legal consequences of Mr Odinga's withdrawal are unclear.

Constitutional lawyers disagree on the way forward and whether the 26 October election can still take place and if, despite his withdrawal, Mr Odinga will still be on the ballot.



Although many Kenyans are jaded by the never-ending political drama, they will now have to belt-up for a drive further into uncharted territory.

Mr Odinga's opposition coalition - the National Super Alliance (NASA) - has previously made clear its participation in the election was contingent on

reforms being made. But Kenya's Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) says it has made the necessary changes.

Prominent opposition senator James Orengo has called on people to protest on Wednesday, using the slogan "no reform, no elections". *BBC News*

Madrid scorns Catalan leader's independence statement

The Spanish government has rejected a statement of independence signed by Catalan leader Carles Puigdemont and dismissed calls for mediation.

Spain's deputy prime minister described Mr Puigdemont as someone "who does not know where he is, where he's going".

Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy is due to hold an emergency cabinet meeting to discuss the government's next steps.

Mr Puigdemont signed a declaration of independence on Tuesday, but halted

implementation to allow negotiations.

There had been speculation that the Catalan president might declare independence and put the move into effect, plunging Spain into an even deeper political crisis.

Spain has been in turmoil since a disputed referendum on 1 October which was declared invalid by the country's Constitutional Court.

Addressing the Catalan parliament in Barcelona, Mr Puigdemont said the autonomous region had won the right to be independent

as a result of the vote.

"We call on international states and organisations to recognise the Catalan republic as an independent and sovereign state," he said. He said the "people's will" was to break away from Madrid, but he also said he wanted to "de-escalate" the tension around the issue.

"I propose suspending the effects of the declaration of independence to undertake talks in the coming weeks without which it is not possible to reach an agreed solution," Mr Puigdemont told MPs.

He and other Catalan leaders then signed the declaration of independence. It is not clear if the declaration has any legal status.

Crowds of independence supporters in Barcelona cheered Mr Puigdemont's initial remarks, but many expressed disappointment as he clarified his stance.

In Madrid, Spanish Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Saenz de Santamaria rejected Mr Puigdemont's proposal for talks through an international mediator.

"Neither Mr Puigdemont nor anybody else can claim... to impose mediation," she said.

"After having come so far, and taken Catalonia to the greatest level of tension in its history, President Puigdemont has now subjected his autonomous region to its greatest level of uncertainty.

"The speech the president... gave today is that of a person who does not know where he is, where he's going, nor who he wants to go there with."

Puigdemont's announcement - reaction and analysis

Spain's Justice Minister Rafael Catala reiterated the government's position that the referendum was illegal and its results invalid.

Almost 90% of voters backed independence with a turnout of 43%, Catalan officials say. Anti-independence voters largely boycotted the ballot and there were several reports of irregularities.

National police were involved in violent scenes as they tried to stop the vote taking place. *BBC News*

Malawi curfew over 'vampire' killings

At least five people have been killed in southern Malawi after they were accused of behaving like vampires.

The UN says it has pulled staff out of two districts as the vampire scare sweeps across the south of the country. According to reports, the victims were killed by vigilante mobs who suspected them of drinking human blood as part of magic rituals.

A night-time curfew has been imposed by the government to prevent any more deaths.

The curfew restricts movement to 10

hours a day, from 07:00 until 17:00 local time.

The UN said in a report that the vampirism rumours appear to have originated from Mozambique, and spread across the border to the Malawi districts of Mulanje and Phalombe.

It is unclear what sparked the fears, but - according to a UN report seen by news agency Reuters - villagers had set up road blocks as they tried to hunt the "vampires" down.

As a result, it had instructed all staff to temporarily relocate to a safer area.

Malawian President Peter Mutharika has vowed to launch an investigation into the killings, with his office releasing an official statement saying the matter was "of grave concern" to the entire government.

Many aid agencies and NGOs work in Malawi, one of the world's poorest countries,

Education standards are low, with belief in witchcraft widespread. A spate of vigilante violence linked to vampire rumours also erupted there in 2002. *BBC News*

Hollywood mogul accused of rape



Italian actress Asia Argento Argento, seen here in Cannes earlier this year, said that Harvey Weinstein forced oral sex on her 20 years ago



Oscar-winning producer Harvey Weinstein was sacked this weekend from The Weinstein Company following a series of sexual harassment allegations

Italian film star Asia Argento and two other women claim that disgraced Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein raped them, in a bombshell New Yorker expose published

Hotel worker tells negative reviewer that she should be 'put on a diet'

When you're faced with a less-than-desirable hotel on vacation, it can only be described as one thing: disappointing.

It's not unusual for people to leave negative reviews on hotel booking sites to let others know that the hopefully idyllic stay may not be so dreamy after all. One mom did just that after she booked a two-night stay at a budget hotel in Blackpool, England, to celebrate her second wedding anniversary, finding that the room left much to be desired.

Paying an admittedly small sum of the equivalent of \$50, Emily Chance still wasn't pleased to find that the property needed a lot of maintenance.

"The smell is horrendous when you walk in and it lingered in my clothes and belongings," Chance wrote in a review on Booking.com.

"The shower had grime in the corners and a big chunk of the plastic covering was missing. The towels weren't changed either so basically you were expected to use [the] same towel. ...

"The overall decor is in a bad way from the carpets to the windows. ... Very disappointed considering the high living standards and environment I and my husband are used to living in. Having OCD,

I suffered badly in Nelcon Hotel's environment."

After leaving the review and giving the hotel a measly 3.8 out of 10 rating, Chance

was surprised to see a reply from an employee that read, "Can I ask just what did you expect for what you paid? Most of what you

describe I do not recognize as a matter of interest. I think you possibly were expecting a 4 star hotel. We are a budget hotel." *Yahoo*



on Tuesday.

The women's allegations against the 65-year-old movie mogul, according to the magazine, include unwanted oral sex and forced oral and full sex. Weinstein denies all charges, according to a statement from his spokeswoman Sallie Hofmeister, circulated among US media.

The accusations will be seen as a hugely damaging escalation of the scandal engulfing the Oscar-winning producer, as the numerous allegations which led to his weekend sacking from The Weinstein Company had so far been limited to complaints about harassment.

New Yorker writer Ronan Farrow spent 10 months interviewing 13 women who reported they were harassed or assaulted by Weinstein. Argento, the 42-year-old daughter of horror director Dario Argento, said Weinstein forced oral sex on her 20 years ago.

She told the publication she had maintained her silence until now for fear that Weinstein would "crush" her, adding: "I know he has crushed a lot of people before." She said Weinstein, who has weighed up to 300 pounds (136 kilograms), terrified her due to his immense size.

"It wouldn't stop. It was

a nightmare," she added, revealing that she had felt forced to pretend she was enjoying the attack in hopes that it would be over with sooner.

Lucia Evans, an aspiring actress, said she met Weinstein at the Miramax office in New York in 2004 and that he forced her to perform oral sex on him.

"I said, over and over, 'I don't want to do this, stop, don't,'" she told the New Yorker.

"I tried to get away, but maybe I didn't try hard enough. I didn't want to kick him or fight him." Evans said she was overpowered and "just sort of gave up."

"That's the most horrible part of it, and that's why he's been able to do this for so long to so many women: people give up, and then they feel like it's their fault," she added.

Another woman, who was too afraid to allow her name to be published, told the New Yorker Weinstein brought her to a hotel room for a meeting.

He changed into a bathrobe, she said, and "forced himself on me sexually."

She felt "horror, disbelief, and shame," and thought about going to the police, but decided it would be a case of "he said, she said," and worried about how powerful his legal team would be, and how much she had to lose. *AFP*

Magical Messi sends Argentina to World Cup

The striker's incomparable talents came to the rescue in Quito as a 3-1 victory meant Argentina sealed their place in Russia. Cometh the hour, cometh the man. An entire nation sat in front of their televisions on Tuesday, biting their nails and waiting for inspiration to come from a single diminutive individual with the No. 10 on his back. And Lionel Messi, the Messiah and the Albiceleste's hat-trick hero, did not disappoint. Argentina's 3-1 triumph over Ecuador that sealed qualification was tense, scrappy, and more than a bit fortunate. But ultimately their magnificent captain put in the display 43 million people were waiting for to drag them kicking and screaming into the 2018 World Cup. With another result it may even have proved Leo's final game with the national team – it would at least have been difficult to imagine him soldiering on for another five years for another crack at the apple in Qatar.

The result itself was anything but a foregone conclusion. Aficionados of ominous statistics oft repeated in the build-up to the game that Argentina had won just once in the heights of Quito, the altitude of the Ecuadorian capital proving a daunting barrier to success over the years. And only a win would guarantee the Albiceleste at least a spot in the play-off, with automatic qualification out of their hands and depending on results elsewhere on a frenetic night of South American action. Another less than encouraging statistic also weighed heavy on Argentine minds. Not since November 2016 had one of their players manage to score from open play, a fact almost incomputable when set against the rich attacking talent the nation is capable of fielding. Messi himself had netted the last goal from someone in an Argentina shirt way back in March, a rather soft penalty against Chile. But the Barcelona magician



cocked his thumb at those heavy omens and instead put in a match-winning performance to down chaotic yet brave Ecuador. At first, it appeared that disaster was set to strike.

Just 39 seconds into the encounter the hosts took advantage of some atrocious defending to go ahead through Romario Ibarra. It was precisely the start Jorge Sampaoli must have wished

to avoid, forcing Argentina to push even further forward in Quito's paper-thin atmosphere to seek parity and then superiority. Luckily Messi was on the field to put things right – and this time, in a welcome change, he was not alone. So often left a forlorn, frustrated figure shorn of company in international colours, the neat pass received from Angel Di Maria 12 minutes into the clash must have felt like manna from heaven. He made no mistake, sliding home past Maximo Banguera to level the score and keep the World Cup dream alive. The second was testament to his perseverance and commitment to the Argentina cause. Chasing up a loose ball, he powered past his marker and powered the ball into the net from an uncomfortable angle for 2-1. And the third of the evening, to mark the 44th perhaps the most important hat-trick of his entire career, was pure unadulterated inspiration. Banguera was left stranded by a lob that came out of nowhere, the mark of a true genius coming through when it really counted. No wonder that even the home fans were reduced to applauding their executioner, a scene of graciousness in defeat seldom-seen in hyper-competitive South America and a mark of the effect Messi has on his rivals.

It was not quite Messi against the world in Quito. Di Maria veered in and out of the game as is his wont, but came up with that neat one-two to grab a vital equaliser. Enzo Perez formed the link between midfield and attack so sorely lacking in recent outings, while wide out on the right Eduardo Salvio put in a workmanlike performance to keep an adventurous Ecuador at bay and push his team forward on the counter. Nor will it escape an immensely relieved Sampaoli that their opponents on Tuesday, having nothing to lose after early elimination, attacked and left spaces in a way that few other adversaries will come Russia 2018. When it counted the captain shouted loudest, however, and dragged his team into a World Cup after 18 games of under-achieving, sub-standard performances and bedlam behind the scenes. Sampaoli will certainly be under no illusions as to the task ahead of him in whipping this team into shape, after so many years of mis-management. But at least he can do so knowing that catastrophe has been averted and his nation are on their way to Russia and for that he has one man to thank above all others. Argentina's messiah arrived to save the day, and when he is at his incomparable best the Albiceleste should never be written off.

Goal.com

Serena plans to defend Australian open

Australian Open officials are hopeful Serena Williams will make her competitive comeback to tennis next January to defend her title at Melbourne Park. At a news conference Tuesday called to announce an increase in prize money for the year's first major, tournament director Craig Tiley said Williams was planning on playing the Jan. 15-28 Australian Open. Williams was pregnant last January when she beat her sister Venus in the final. Serena gave birth to a daughter, Alexis Olympia Ohanian Jr., on Sept. 1 and has previously said she plans to return to playing in 2018. If that's in Melbourne, she'll be competing for more money. The tournament's overall prize pool will increase to be 55 million Australian dollars (\$42.7 million), and the men's and women's singles champions will earn \$A4 million (about \$3.1 million depending on exchange rates), an increase of 20 percent. Tiley said Williams was



back in training to defend her title. "Serena will be back," Tiley was quoted as saying. "We look forward to welcoming her and again go on that journey of breaking the all-time record for the most number of Grand Slams." Williams has won 23 Grand Slam singles titles, one more than Steffi Graf for the Open-era record.

Australian Margaret Court is the all-time leader with 24. In the men's field, Tiley confirmed six-time winner Novak Djokovic and fellow former world No. 1 Andy Murray, who have both had injuries this year, would play in Melbourne 2018 along with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal, who contested a classic final last

January. "I've been in contact with all the top players and am pleased to announce we'll have the full top 100 men and women returning to the Australian Open," Tiley said. The women's singles trophy will be presented by Billie Jean King, 50 years after she won her first Australian Open title. **Yahoo Sports**

WADA DEFENDS NG'ONGA

By Nyambe Lubasi

Zambia coach Wedson Nyirenda has slammed attacks striker Alex Ng'onga and his family have endured over his misses in the 1-0 away loss against Nigeria. Ng'onga was at the end of a backlash from fans over Zambia's exit from the 2018 FIFA World Cup qualifiers and some alleged fans

stormed and damaged his mother's home in Kitwe on Saturday after the game. Nyirenda said he has faith in Ng'onga's abilities and that those attacking him have been very harsh on the combustible Power Dynamos striker. "Instead of thanking your own man you want to attack him. I

would like the law to take its full course on people who have done that because we cannot allow a few disgruntled people to take charge of the nation's game by propagating hate," Nyirenda said. "There's this culture of hate that has come to Zambian football which we have to cut down now and those people have to

be a good example." Ng'onga came into the team following injuries to Brian Mwila and Patson Daka.

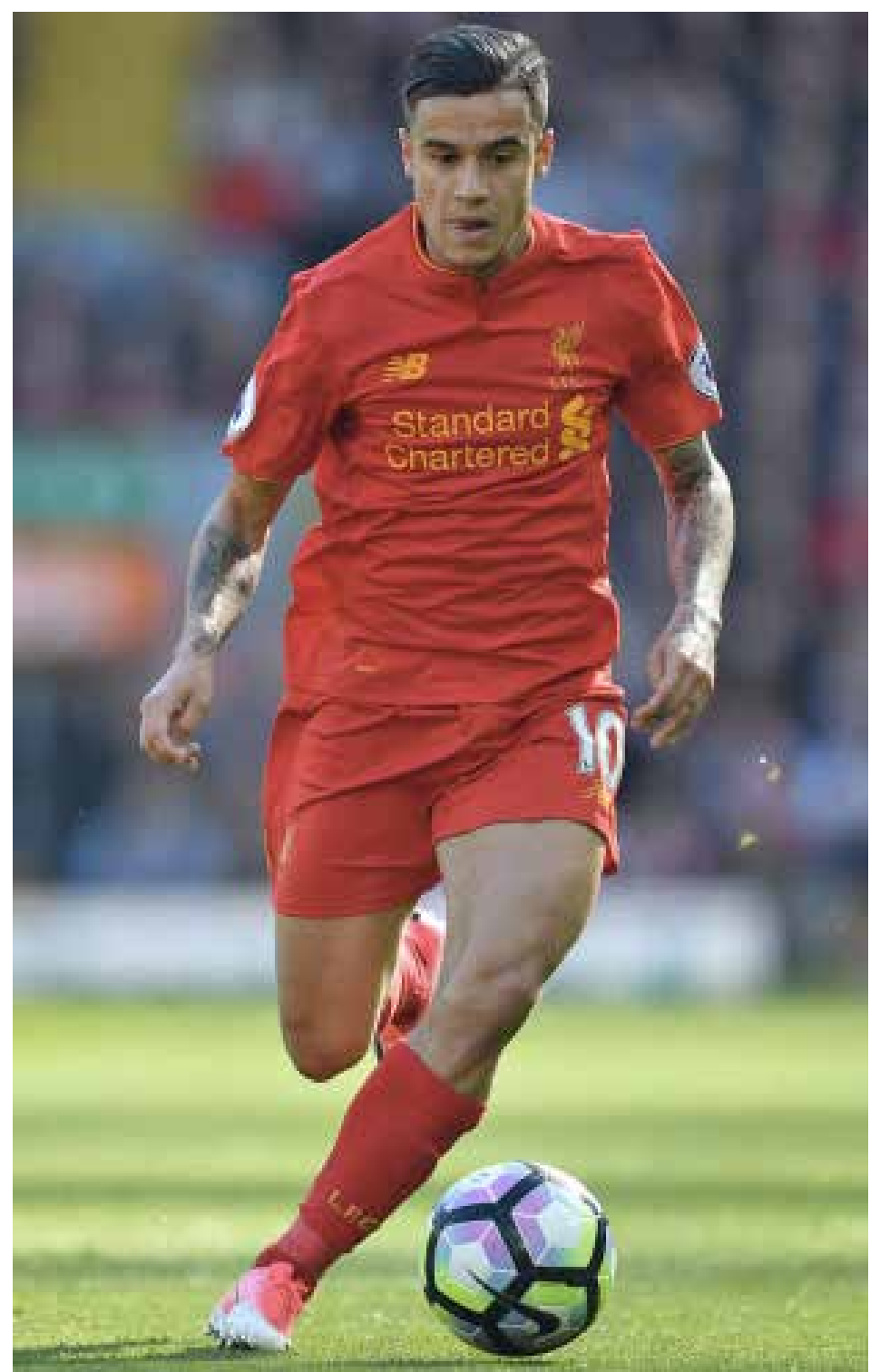
"Ng'onga had the best game in Nigeria. From yesterday he has not rested people wanting to get pictures with

him, you come back home he's an enemy of the state. What kind of people are we?" asked Nyirenda.

Barca ready to buy Coutinho

The Brazil international's move to the Catalan club broke down over the summer but he is still wanted in the New Year. Barcelona are ready to make another move for Liverpool star Philippe Coutinho, club CEO Oscar Grau has confirmed, though his arrival will come at a cost. The Camp Nou side were desperate to land the 25-year-old Brazil international in the summer window, with Coutinho himself attempting to force a deal through by telling the Reds he wanted to leave. A transfer failed to materialise, however, with Liverpool instantly dismissing all offers from Barca before the end of the transfer deadline. Barca director Albert Soler later revealed that Liverpool had requested €200 million for the diminutive playmaker, just short of what Neymar joined Paris

Saint-Germain for weeks earlier. Rumours then emerged that the Premier League club would let him leave Anfield in the January window if Coutinho agreed to play out the rest of the calendar year for the club. And the Liga leaders have not given up their chase for the attacker after confirming their intentions to make another move. They have, though, conceded there will have to be players sold to fund the deal. "We are ready to buy Coutinho in the winter market, or any player the technical staff request," Grau said in a press conference. "But it is important to adjust ourselves, so if there are to be arrivals, there must be exits as well. "We must forget about the price paid for Neymar last summer. After taxes we received about €188m in income and a direct financial impact on the club's treasury of €144m."



News Diggers : The Face of Evidence Based Digital Journalism

International Press Institute

WAN-IFRA
journalism in Zambia