

Kambwili queries suspension of ZNBC employee linked to NDC

By Mukosha Funga
 Chishimba Kambwili says he is wondering why ZNBC decided to suspend its Copperbelt-based staffer Misheck Moyo for associating himself with NDC, when he was not suspended for applying to stand as Mufulira mayor on the PF ticket in 2016. Meanwhile, Kambwili says if a President can appoint a fool as minister, then people can assume that he is also a fool. Recently, ZNBC suspended Moyo for "bringing the name of the institution into disrepute" after he attended a church service at St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Mufulira along with National Democratic Congress officials.



Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairperson Howard Kunda (l) speaks to acting Auditor General Ron Mwambwa when the Judiciary appeared before the committee at parliament building today - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

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LUNGU RECALLS DRUNK, DISLOYAL DIPLOMATS

By Joseph Mwenda
 President Edgar Lungu has recalled Zambia's High Commissioner to Australia George Kanyamula Zulu, deputy High Commissioner to South Africa Philemona Kachesa and first secretary for press and tourism at the mission in Malawi Chrispin Mukwita.

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Agriculture is dying; Siliya makes decisions without consulting farmers - ZNFU

By Zondiwe Mbewe
 Zambia National Farmers Union president Jervis Zimba says farmers have no appetite to participate in this year's farming season because the PF government has destroyed the agriculture sector. And Zimba says the farming sector is in distress because Agriculture Minister Dora Siliya makes decisions without consulting stakeholders. In an interview, Zimba said that agribusinesses had been affected due to farmers zero-eagerness to participate in the marketing season. "The current happenings in the agricultural sector are at the lowest moment.

Traders have not participated in marketing this season, they participated on a very low note. Their eagerness to participate this year was zero because of what transpired last year when they made huge losses because of the export ban which was put in place," he observed.

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Being in good standing with govt may have helped Savenda get ambulance contract - Minister

By Zondiwe Mbewe
 Health Minister Chitalu Chilufya says he has to investigate why Savenda is regularly cited in the Auditor General's report but being in good standing with government may be one of the reasons considered for the company to be awarded the contract to supply ambulances. And in response to queries on exorbitantly purchased ambulances, Dr Chilufya says the high cost will not deter his ministry from investing in equipment that will save people.

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Fire tenders were insured, says Malupenga without disclosing insurance cover for each unit

By Sipilicwe Ncube
 Ministry of Local Government Permanent Secretary Amos Malupenga says all 42-million-dollar fire tenders were insured with the Zambia States Insurance Company (ZSIC), but could

not disclose the insurance cover for each of them. And the Alliance for Community Action has challenged the Local Government Ministry to explain the nature of the accident in which one of the 42 fire

tenders was involved, and to disclose if the full insurance cover for all the 42 units was paid to ZISC. Malupenga said in an interview today that the fire tenders were all insured but could not disclose at what cost.

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Zimbabwe situation worries EL

By Mukosha Funga
 President Edgar Lungu has called for a quick resolution into the Zimbabwe crisis. The army has taken over control in Zimbabwe, confining 93-year-old President Robert Mugabe to his house. Last night, the Zimbabwean defence forces seized control of the state broadcaster ZBC, with their spokesman Maj Gen Sibusiso Moyo issuing a statement declaring that President Mugabe was safe as they were "targeting criminals" around him.

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PF has created more enemies than friends - Mike Mulongoti

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CK questions suspension of ZNBC employee for associating with NDC

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Moyo was initially transferred to Livingstone before receiving a suspension letter.

But in an interview today, Kambwili, who is NDC political consultant and PF Roan member of parliament, said Moyo had been involved in politics for a long time but wasn't suspended because it benefitted the ruling party.

"Moyo and I campaigned for PF throughout the Copperbelt and he applied to stand as Mayor on PF ticket in the previous elections, nobody raised an issue because he was supporting PF and he was found at all PF campaign meetings, nobody raised an issue, today because he is found with Chishimba Kambwili at church it is a reason for him to be fired? You can see people of Zambia that this administration is dictatorship of the worst kind and I think they think that it is time for the party and its government and they think that those who work in government or parastatals must be PF, it can never be like that," Kambwili said.

"We are going to find lawyers and Misheck will go to court and he who laughs last laughs the loudest. It is very unfortunate that a man comes to church and we meet at church where he goes and because of that he is dismissed from employment.

One thing people should not forget is that I was Minister of Information and Moyo and I have been getting along for a long time, even when I was minister so when we met in Mufulira, we chatted and all that and by mere fact that a person was talking to me, that should not make PF jittery and have him removed."

He observed that there were a lot of civil servants who were involved in politics.

"The Bible says 'why do you look at a spec in your brother's eye and leave the plank in your own eye?' these people have suspended Moyo on the basis that he is aligning with NDC but their own Mufulira district chairperson Dr Mwale is a civil servant who works

for a hospital and there are many civil servants that we know who are holding party positions in PF. We have seen district commissioners involving themselves in campaigning for PF. Even if we say civil servants should not be involved in politics, obviously, quietly, they have political parties which they belong to, they have got someone they support so on this one, someone just merely being found with me becomes an offense? It is very unfortunate. The former mayor of Luanshya Mr Mulenga was headmaster when he was mayor of Luanshya on the MMD ticket, he was never fired. Why are people behaving like this? Because you have got ministers and cadres for ministers," Kambwili argued. He accused Copperbelt Minister Bowman Lusambo of instructing ZNBC to suspend Moyo.

"It is very unfortunate. We are reliably informed that Bowman Lusambo is the one who phoned ZNBC to tell them to fire Misheck Moyo and also the DC for Kitwe also phoned officials from ZNBC and the district chairman also for PF Mr Kainga also phoned ZNBC management. Three people put pressure on the ZNBC management to have Misheck Moyo suspended," Kambwili



charged.

Meanwhile, Kambwili said people could assume that a President was foolish if he appointed a fool as minister. "The type of minister reflects the kind of President who

appointed him. If you can appoint a fool, people will suspect that you may be a fool yourself as well. How can a President go and appoint a person like Bowman Lusambo as minister? Instead

of working for the people, there are just billboards all over the Copperbelt. Have you ever seen that in the history of Zambia? How many ministers have mounted billboards

congratulating themselves for being appointed, the whole Ndola just billboards! Anyway, when a government is nearing its end, it is evident in their deeds," said Kambwili.

Being in good standing with govt may have helped Savenda get ambulance contract – Minister

From front page

Dr Chilufya was responding to a question from Monze Central UPND member of parliament Jack Mwimbu, who wanted to find out why the ministry chose Savenda, which was regularly cited in the Auditor General's report for failure to oblige to conditions of tendering.

"Honourable minister, we are all aware that Savenda is not a manufacturer of any vehicles nor is it a manufacturer of any medical equipment. Honourable minister, you may also

be aware that Savenda is one of the companies that is regularly cited in the Auditor General's report pertaining to failure to oblige to the conditions of tendering. What motivated your ministry to pick on Savenda taking into account what I said earlier and that this particular manufacturer is going to be a middle man and will engage other manufacturers of medical equipment and vehicles which will be used to assemble and produce the requisite ambulance?" asked

Mwiimbu yesterday.

But in his response, Dr Chilufya said past performance and good standing with government may have mattered.

"Mr Speaker, I may not be privy to the specific issues that Savenda may have been cited for. And Mr Speaker, given time, I would investigate and come up with that. But in the tender process there are conditions that are clearly laid out and I'm confident that, if previous performance or being in good standing with

government was a factor that was put in there, and things were brought to the fore, I'm sure that those would have been considered. But I might see Mr Speaker, as to what Savenda may have done over the years and I would request for time to investigate," Dr Chilufya said.

He said although Savenda was not a manufacturing company, it met the conditions of the tender.

"I would like to respond by saying, this tender was advertised and people participated according to their strengths. Mr Speaker,

there is also provision in the procurement law to get manufacturers authorisation to participate in a tender. So Mr Speaker, it is important that we note that any business entity is authorised or is at liberty to participate in a tender and if they are not actual manufacturers they must obtain and must include within the tender documents, manufacturers authorisation. As a matter of fact before the award is finally given, in some tenders it is written 'subject to some inspection of the manufacturer that is cited'. I just want to console the honourable member of parliament that the provision of the tender was such that manufacturer authorisation

could suffice but we are conscious of the fact that he may not be a manufacturer. Mr Speaker I thank you," Dr Chilufya said.

And Dr Chilufya said cost could not deter the ministry from investing in equipment that would save people.

He was responding to Sesheke Central UPND member of parliament Frank Kafakwandi who asked for a comparative price of similar ambulances supplied around the world to see if the ambulances procured were within acceptable range.

"We have embarked on a robust transformation agenda where we want to provide access to health services for all Zambians. In our quest to attain universal health access we will need to invest in various infrastructure and equipment to ensure that we save every life. I must emphasize that there is justification in investing in an intermediate life supporter ambulance, in a basic life support ambulance, in an advanced life support ambulance because any of these can save a life at any time. Therefore the issue of cost is basically not to deter us from investing in equipment that will save our people," said Dr Chilufya.

Lungu calls for quick resolution of Zimbabwe crisis

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"We wish to make this abundantly clear this is not a military takeover of government. What the Zimbabwe defence forces is doing is to pacify a degenerating political, social and economic situation in our country, which if not addressed may result in violent conflict," said Maj Gen Moyo.

Meanwhile, Grace Mugabe, who was being positioned to eventually take over from her husband, is rumoured to have fled to Namibia.

But the statement made it clear the army had acted in response to a purge of ZANU-PF members, including the vice-president, Emmerson Mnangagwa, who was sacked by President Mugabe last week, and had been angered by the failure

of state media to report on a warning issued by the army chief, Gen Constantine Chiwenga, on Monday.

Armoured vehicles and troops this morning blocked roads in central Harare around government buildings and the presidential residence.

But in a statement issued by Special Assistant to the President for Press and Public Relations Amos Chanda today, President Lungu, who is on a state visit to Egypt, called for a quick resolution to the crisis.

"We are carefully monitoring the evolving situation in Zimbabwe. We are maintaining open lines of communication with the administration and exchanging with our other regional neighbours. I have encouraged all parties in Zimbabwe

to work towards a quick and peaceful resolution to the impasse and to uphold human rights," said President Lungu.

Meanwhile, Foreign Affairs Minister Harry Kalaba has flown to Gaborone, Botswana to attend meetings of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Troika on Defence and Security to discuss the same crisis.

The Foreign Ministers of South Africa, Angola and Zambia are each serving members of the Troika.

"Zambia will continue to push for measures to safe-guard security within our framework of regional cooperation. SADC and the African Union (AU) are both clear and unambiguous when it comes to the sanctity of national constitutions," said Kalaba.

Fire tenders were insured, says Malupenga without disclosing the insurance cover

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“All the fire trucks are insured with ZSIC. The preliminary report we have received so that is that there was a call of an emergency that there was a truck that was on fire between Chililabombwe and Chingola. So they rushed to that scene and they managed to successfully put out the fire on that vehicle which was burning. And as they were leaving that scene to go back to the station, they received another call that there was another vehicle on fire somewhere around Kasumbalesa boarder and so they diverted now from there rushing to Kasumbalesa to go and attend to another emergency,” Malupenga said.

Malupenga said out of the five officers who were on board, two were unhurt while three sustained minor injuries.

“So it was in that process when they were driving to Kasumbalesa but you know when there is an emergence they usually drive on high speed and there was a curve. So I think the driver failed to negotiate that curve and thats how they overturned. They were five officers on the truck, two were okay and three had some minor injuries and were rushed to the hospital. I think the extent of the damage is still being investigated, I cannot tell as at now what extend. Maybe at a later stage I can tell the extent of the damage to the vehicle. Insurance usually it is done over a period of one year and you renew after every year,” said Malupenga. Asked at what cost each fire tender was insured for, Malupenga said he needed to check his records and get back to this reporter but he did not do so by press time.

And ACA information and advocacy officer Jimmy Maliseni challenged the ministry to disclose at what cost the fire tenders were insured at in a letter today.

“We would like to seek your clarification on the following aspects of the

trucks which were not fully made available to us as well as aspects of the accident as follows: 1. Was the premium to ZISC fully paid, what was the premium and for what amount was each unit covered? 2. Was the driver of the fire tender involved

in the accident one of the trained firemen/women? 3. Considering that we do not have a local branch of the fire tender component manufacturer, Rosenbauer (we note that Zambia has a Scania dealership) was the insurance cover for local or international replacement/

fixing?” asked Maliseni. “The information is important to us because we have noted a lot of speculation in the public domain, especially social media on the perceived loss and possible waste of this public resource. However, as we pledged in

our communication with you, it is our policy to seek official answers to all our questions before we make public statements. We therefore look forward to your usual forthrightness with the information we request. We hope to hear from you soon.”



Lungu recalls drunk, disloyal diplomats

From front page

A government official told News Diggers! that President Lungu gave instructions to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to recall the three diplomats for various reasons.

The official said Kanyamula, who is former Permanent Secretary at Foreign Affairs, was viewed as being disloyal to President Lungu because he expressed remarks that the Head of State had turned against late president

Michael’ Sata’s people .

“On High Commissioner Kanyamula, the President ordered his recall for disloyalty. Apparently, there is a recording which was availed to H.E in which the High Commissioner was heard saying that ‘ECL has turned against Sata’s people’. On a number of occasions, he was heard grumbling against the President. That is what led to his recall with immediate effect,” stated the source.

Zulu was moved from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in April 2015, about three months after President Lungu took over the presidency, from Sata who died on October 28, 2014.

And the source said, Kachesa who had served seven years in foreign service, was supposed to be recalled last year but her contract was extended.

“On Kachesa, she was supposed to be recalled in 2016, but it (the contract)

was extended for another year. If you recall she was in Belgium, then she moved to France before swapping with Joe Kaunda who was in South Africa,” said the source.

“But the scandal is on Mukwita who has hardly served six months in Malawi. This boy is the young brother to Ambassador to Germany Anthony Mukwita, but his conduct was a disgrace. He was drinking recklessly and we

understand that he was even mingling with the Malawian intelligence, which brought his diplomatic conduct into question. So the Zambian intelligence officer there wrote a very bad recommendation against him.”

The government official said Mukwita, and President Lungu’s press aides tried to save young Mukwita’s job, but the President personally ordered his recall.

“The President said ‘misconduct, drunkenness and unethical conduct in foreign service will not be tolerated’. His brother tried to intervene, it didn’t work. He has actually been given up to this Friday to leave Malawi.”

Muwkita was posted in foreign service earlier this year along with Kelly’s Kaunda who was posted to Germany in the same capacity, Seth Kasabo (Botswana), Inutu Mwanza (Ethiopia/African Union), Cosmas Chileshe (Washington DC), Jeremy Munthani (Turkey), Wallen Simwaka (New York/United Nations), Yande Musonda (France) Phyllis Chilekwa (Belgium), Yotam Mugara (Japan) and Bangwe Naville (India).

PF has created more enemies than friends - Mulongoti

Mukosha Funga

Mike Mulongoti says Zambians should not take seriously remarks made by PF Secretary General Davies Mwila that nothing will stop President Edgar Lungu from standing in 2021, saying the PF official was speaking as a cadre without any judicial authority.

And Mulongoti says PF must be very careful with what they intend to do in the country because they have less friends and more enemies who would stand against them in an event that chaos broke out.

Mwila recently said although PF would wait for the courts’ ruling on President Lungu’s eligibility, the ruling party had already made a resolve to field him as a candidate in 2021, a decision that would not be changed.

But Mulongoti who is People’s Party leader, wondered where Mwila was drawing his mandate to speak

authoritatively over a matter that was in court.

“Mr Mwila was speaking as a what? A party cadre or a legal mind? Because the interpretation of the law is for the courts and Lungu’s eligibility was taken to the Constitutional Court by Rev Pule and his friends. So for Mr Mwila to say that, it is a mark of arrogance and that the laws of Zambia that exist are irrelevant to them. For us, we take it that he was speaking as a party cadre and not that he is anywhere near a legal mind. So it must be dismissed with the contempt it deserves. Within the party, yes he can be their candidate as president for the party but not for the Republic because within the Republic, there is a Constitution that we must all respect and obey,” Mulongoti said.

“Mr Mwila knows very well that according to the Constitution, one who has been twice elected cannot

stand again so I don’t know from which position he was speaking. That’s why I am saying he must restrict himself as a party cadre and talk about the position in his own political party and not in the Republic. If the statement came from the PF chairperson for legal, who is Dr Simbyakula, I would have taken it seriously but where it is coming from, I know that it is being said by a very innocent citizen whose appreciate of the law is limited, so to be fair to him, I would like to think that the authority he is using is not the law.”

And Mulongoti says PF has more enemies than friends.

“Do they have support anymore in the country? You create chaos if the majority of the people are with you. They have more enemies now than friends so it’ll be very risky to take that position of chaos. They have run out of tricks now. The question of Mr

Lungu contesting, there are two things, one, if there is an order from the court for a rerun, he can participate but not a normal election. If there is an order of the court for a rerun following the petition, yes he can run because he will not have been formally elected as per law,” said Mulongoti

“And President Lungu committed treason. One, he did not hand over power to the Speaker when the petition was taken to court, two, he allowed ministers to remain in office when they should have vacated and three, he was even threatening the judges when he was in Solwezi. So how does he qualify? All things being equal, even last time he should not have been allowed to stand when he abrogated the Constitution when he allowed ministers to remain in office. In a mature democracy, he would not have been allowed to go anywhere near the ballot paper after that.”

D/Speaker orders UPND MP to stop mentioning HH's name in Parliament

Zondiwe Mbewe

Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Catherine Namugala yesterday threatened to stop leader of the opposition Jack Mwiimbu from debating after he mentioned Hakahinde Hichilema on the floor of the house.

This was when Mwiimbu, who is also Monze Central UPND member of parliament rose to debate the 2018 budget allocation for the Ministry of Mines and later on said Hichilema had never sold any mines on behalf of government.

"And I want to make it very clear that the individual who is being mentioned on the floor of this house and outside, Mr

Hakahinde Hichilema never sold any mines on behalf of government in this country," Mwiimbu said.

But when guiding the debate, Namugala warned Mwiimbu to desist from mentioning names of people who could not defend themselves in the House.

"Honourable leader of opposition, you have enough experience to know that when you start mentioning names of people who are unable to come here, and defend themselves, there will be a reaction. They will be mentioned and you will be the first one to complain. Please desist from that," she said.

However, Mwiimbu insisted

that it was only him and his colleagues from the opposition who could defend Hichilema since he was not a member of the house.

"Madam chairperson it's a fact that members on your right have mentioned the name 'Hakahinde Hichilema' on the

floor of this house and it's only me and my colleagues who can defend him on the floor of this house," Mwiimbu said.

Namugala then threatened to stop Mwiimbu from debating if he continued disregarding the advice given to him.

"Not in that manner

Honourable leader of opposition. If you continue to mention the name of that individual I'm afraid I will have to stop you from debating because the rules are very clear. Very very clear. He is not one of us, he cannot defend himself so we cannot expose him to

that kind of debate as I have said. There will be a reaction from government, you will be exposing him in such a manner that he will not be able to defend himself. Please continue with the debate in the manner you know you should debate," said Namugala.



PAC questions Judiciary's copy and paste responses to audit queries

Sipilisiwe Ncube

The Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee has complained that the Judiciary provides the same responses to audit queries every year.

But the Judiciary says that it is because PAC asks the same questions every year.

Meanwhile, PAC has been angered by news that keys to the safe at Namwala Magistrates' Court have been missing since 2010 without any action being taken.

The Judiciary, led by chief administrator Nalishebo Imata today appeared before PAC to present responses to audit queries cited in the Auditor General's report.

But Committee Chairperson Howard Kunda and Nkana PF member of parliament Alexander Chiteme noted that the Judiciary's submission was a duplicate of the previous year's submission.

"From 2010 to today, surely should we be waiting for instructions from somewhere to

deal with the matter? Thanks very much for that submission which looks like the same as what you submitted last year. To me it looks like cut and paste," Kunda noted.

Chiteme added; "Just like you stated in your preamble, chair, this submission is a copycat of what was submitted last year prompting me to think that there has been no improvement whatsoever on all the matters that have been raised and on the recommendations that were made on the last Auditor General's report. My question is, honorable chair, is the administrator seriously dealing with the issues that are brought to them in the Auditor General's report year after year considering that no serious attention has been paid to the issues because they are the same issues. No safes, under banking, delayed banking, everything academic. Does the administrator have the capacity to control the officers under her charge or do the officers under her charge have the capacities to

deal with these simple accounting issues per se?"

In response, Imata said the queries made by the committee to the Judiciary were equally repetitive.

"Chair I wish to state that the queries are repetitive and our responses may appear to be repetitive because we are dealing with the same issues," Imata said. She however assured PAC that some erring officers had been dealt with.

"But chair, I wish to state that the officers that appeared in last year's report, if we had to give an action taken report, you will note chair that they have

been dismissed, they have been disciplined. Yes, we started on a journey last year when we came we said we are going to sensitize our officers which we have done. Sensitization, behavioural change, some are slow, some do react quickly. So far we have trained eight provinces, we are remaining with two and after the training there will be no excuse. And in fact chair, in our submission, those that are actually found to have stolen, we charge and they are appearing before the disciplinary committee. So chair, I wish to state before the committee that this is not an academic exercise, us in the Judiciary we take this to

be very serious," Imata said.

Meanwhile, the Judiciary angered PAC when it reported that keys to a safe at the Namwala Magistrates' Court had been missing since 2010.

"In the Auditor General's report on page 24, special reference to Southern Province in Namwala at the magistrates court. They said the safe has not been used since 2010 due to missing key and no action has been taken to-date. My question is, what was in the safe when the key went missing? If there was government money, why haven't they even taken the locks there? This simply shows that they have got no use for

these safes. Even when we say we buy them safes, they don't use them because there is a tendency in the Judiciary for people to take money and put it in their pockets and when the auditors come, that is when they scamper to look for money everywhere else. So that is a tendency that the controlling officer should be looking at. And not the provision of safes. My other concern Mr Chair is that the controlling officer here on the floor of the house that she is incapable of providing supervision to her officers because her stating in this house that they lack supervision, but she should also be reminded that those supervisors fall under her charge. Therefore I pose the same question, is she capable?" Chiteme asked.

In response, Imata said there was no report of any money inside the safe at the time the key went missing.

"When the safe was found to have a problem, first of all I was not aware and there was no report of any money because as it is, the safe is open. So the safe cannot be used to put in the money according to my magistrate in charge of the station," said Imata.

"The officer in charge of that station should have written to notify the one in charge of the province that the safe is not working due to loss of the keys. Chair, in my submissions you will see that I have dealt with the officers that are erring. I have the proof here. I have charged the supervising officers that they are not doing their job. So chair, I feel that my office has taken the necessary measures. And the one for Ndola High Court, the matter was reported to police. I will address the issue of safes. The chief resident will respond to what happened to the safe when the keys went missing. Chair, the lack of action also shows that the people that use these safes, they should have notified the officers in charge because it is very easy."

Continued theft of public resources will force people to start evading tax - CTPD

Sipilisiwe Ncube

CTPD executive director Isaac Mwaipopo has warned government to be cautious of how abuse of public resources will affect tax compliance if the general public loses confidence in those entrusted with public funds.

Commenting on revelations of the Auditor General for the year ended 2016, Mwaipopo observed that Zambia had potential to finance its own development if theft was stopped.

"The revelations of the Auditor General's report and newly leaked Paradise Papers are an indication that the country has potential to finance its own development if tax leakages are sealed and misappropriation of funds is treated with tough punitive measures. The government needs to be cautious of how abuse of public resources will affect tax compliance if the general public loses confidence in those entrusted with public funds. This should also be a call to the government to improve the performance of corporate taxes as the recently leaked paradise papers have revealed how the country is losing significant revenues through tax avoidance of which

Zambia is cited to have been deprived of around \$3 million in taxes from a named company. This needs appropriate legislation to be enacted such as compelling Multinational Corporations (MNCs) to report their business activity on a Country by Country basis and mandatory disclosure of beneficial owners of various companies in order to monitor transactions," Mwaipopo stated. He stated that it was sad that government was exploiting the poor through taxes.

"We further note with sadness that the majority poor have continued to subsidize the rich on tax contribution, for instance, the Auditor General's report shows that ordinary citizens are the biggest contributor towards tax in the form of Pay as You Earn, the report shows that a total of ZMW8,060,754,503 was collected through Pay as You Earn, this is way above the contribution of key economic sectors such as mining which contributed ZMW3,077,421,437 through mineral royalty tax leaving the burden to the few employed population while companies continue making supernormal profits," Mwaipopo stated. Mwaipopo stated that there was urgent

need to end the scourge of theft and abuse of resources meant to support the vulnerable in our society.

"There is urgent need to end the scourge of theft and abuse of resources meant to support the vulnerable and struggling majority in our society. It is sad to note that over the years, there has been no stiff punitive action taken to perpetrators of the financial scandals showing serious weakness in the current public financial management system. Key poverty reduction programmes such as the Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) have continued to record many weaknesses such as issuance of inputs to unqualified farmers, late delivery of inputs and so on and spending beyond stipulated support amounts," Mwaipopo stated.

He noted that the issuance of farmer inputs to unqualified farmers also posed as a weakness to poverty reduction programmes.

"We find it deeply concerning to learn that 1,819 E Voucher cards were loaded with K8,275,981 instead of K3,819,900 resulting in the cards being loaded with an excess amount of K4,456,081. What

confidence do we have that the 2018 proposed allocation towards the 100% E Voucher roll out will be put to good use? He asked.

And Mwaipopo stated that the continued mismanagement of public funds defeated the purpose of government achieving its poverty eradication goals through key sectors such as agriculture.

"This continued mismanagement defeats the purpose of government achieving its poverty eradication goals through key sectors such as agriculture. Additionally, the report revealed many cases of questionable payments amounting to millions of kwacha, over payment of allowances, and unauthorized excess staff on government payroll with different individuals being cited in the report. The continued embezzlement of public resources earmarked for development makes it difficult for government to achieve targets, resulting to total waste of the nation's scarce resources," stated Mwaipopo who also appealed to President Edgar Lungu and law enforcement agencies to act on the evidence provided by the Auditor General.

There is no illegality in investing money offshore - Kanyama

Miriam Chabala

Economist Chibamba Kanyama says there is no illegality in the investment of money in offshore accounts, except that many individuals who have had chance to enjoy such incentives have been abusing them to a point where they completely evade the payment of tax obligations for their investments.

And Kanyama who is former IMF communications advisor, says tax evasion has a lot of implications on companies and individuals.

Speaking during a Zambia Revenue Authority Tax Reporting Workshop in Siavinga yesterday, Kanyama noted that some countries take advantage of offshore investment incentives to evade tax.

He said tax evasion was a destructive habit that had

potential to destroy people's reputations.

"Do you see how tax evasion can be a reputation challenge on an individual or a company? No company wants to be mentioned for tax evasion, no one, its destructive and it's a human interest story, it's a name and shame kind of situation. No one wants to be named or prosecuted for not paying tax. Even in the political dynamics everyone now wants to talk about HH because tax has implications not only on an individual but its a campaign tool as well. Many governments actually campaign over the same issues of tax," Kanyama said.

"However, there are treaties that

are signed for instance these bilateral agreements where countries agree on how they are going to treat investors. So Zambia will sign with other countries that are trading within but the problem is that some businesses take advantage of those incentives. For instance a country which trades in another country would deliberately want a shelf to own a company where they have a bilateral agreement so that they can exploit those low tax rates which we call treaty shoppings. So this is a good arrangement which is in existence but a person who ordinarily does not qualify begins to structure himself in such a way that they take advantage of that."

Kanyama added that: "In Zambia we have these incentives which we call the Multi-Economic Facility Zones (MFEZ) and you can go and invest in a rural area. So you can imagine if I am based in Lusaka [obviously] I would want to take advantage of that investment in the rural area so I go and open a small business in the rural area. But I am operating on tax just to take advantage of all that incentive. So when you abuse incentives in that sense it all becomes bad because the whole essence of having incentives in place is to help people succeed in their business operations." And Kanyama said People must not consider paying tax a punishment because it created

a better environment for businesses to thrive.

"Today we are being starved of information because you (the media) have assumed that no one is interested in the type of news that has to do with tax and this is affecting compliance because informations is power. The more people understand the value of things, the better and they will pay more. I can assure you, the more people are compliant to paying tax, the less demanding government will be to intervene in the banking sector to borrow money. The more people are complaint to paying taxes, the more ZRA will reach its targets and the higher the revenue for government. Then the whole climate for

business will be better and the economy will thrive. Countries where there are high levels of tax compliance have very low interest rates, there is a relationship between tax compliance and low interest rates in countries where citizens are tax compliant," said Kanyama.

Meanwhile, ZRA director for research and policy Ezekiel Phiri said the authority had embraced technology to encourage compliance levels among tax payers.

"We are living in a world that is technologically advancing and there is no reason for us as ZRA; much as we may be thinking that we don't have competition, there is no reason why we shouldn't be adopting the technologies that is there like e-payment, mobile transactions and everything. The need for modernisation is convenient because what we want is for our tax payers to have no friction when it comes to tax compliance. We want to make things as easier as we possibly can for our clients so that people do not have complications when dealing with our services; either self-service whether in the use of internet or by whatever means. We called for this workshop because we believe that you the media partners have a pivotal role to play in this. We have embarked on a number of reforms that are underway and all this is in our effort to improve service delivery and compliance levels among tax payers," said Phiri.

It is time for Zambians to hold selfish leaders to account - COBUSU

Sipilisiwe Ncube

Copperbelt University Students Union (COBUSU) president Njikho Musuku says it is selfish for leaders to plunder public resources at the expense of suffering citizens.

The recent Auditor General's report revealed that the Ministry of Higher Education paid K8.5 million to non students in the year ended 2016.

Reacting to the revelation in an interview yesterday, Musuku said it was high time Zambians demanded accountability from leaders.

"Zambian people should rise to the occasion and hold selfish leaders, who are up to plunder and are deeply inclined to dubious and corrupt acts of obtaining public funds, accountable and answerable for their sins. We demand that the law visits them. It is high time we spoke against such financial irregularities taking place in these offices; more especially in times where these same public office barriers come out in public to make false claims that government do not have sufficient resources to run the affairs of the nation whilst they are handsomely funded," Musuku said.

He said it was unjustifiable for the ministry to fail to meet its obligations to students whilst top officials plundered the resources.

"This has been the case with the Ministry of Higher Education where monies have never been enough to sponsor vulnerable students and crediting their meal and book allowances when it's due, fund the universities and colleges for normal operations but conspicuous misappropriations of funds are taking centre of its operations," Mususu said.

"We urge Anti-Corruption Commission to with immediate effect institute investigations and thoroughly probe the ministry of Higher Education Ministry for misapplication of public

funds and the possible embezzlements of public resources. We would also want to lodge in our humble appeal as students that His Excellency President Edgar Chagwa Lungu should not let all those individuals with issues to sort and cleanse themselves with investigative agencies as they continue holding on to their respective ministerial positions as this will enhance transparency and equal application of law without interference."

He revealed that over 500 CBU students did not receive their project allowances in 2016.

"In 2016, over 500 CBU students did not receive their project allowances and no reason was given as to why that happened. In addition, up to this time we still have over 550 unregistered first year CBU students who have not been given bursary hoping a listening government will positively respond to them. Over months now, the ministry which is fully aware

of this has been silent after asking students to appeal for consideration. It is inhuman to keep students in uncertainty as they do not know their fate. This kind of recklessness must be condemned by all well-meaning Zambians. Such levels of rapacity and venality should not be left unchecked," Musuku said.

He lamented that university infrastructure was dilapidated. "We are very nonplussed with the report generally that came from the Ministry of Higher

Education which has revealed about K 8,369,665 colossal monies were embezzled and misapplied. Our public universities and colleges are in a dilapidated state where labs are no longer functional, no furniture in classes and [lack of] teaching aids and poor sanitation. Furthermore, construction of student hostels has been slow due to lack of funding and yet individuals keep misusing funds meant for the development of this nation," said Musuku.

Accusing us of stealing donor funds is malicious - YALI

Zondiwe Mbewe

Young African Leaders Initiated president Andrew Ntewewe says his organisation is still preparing a reaction to allegations that its officers were involved in theft of donor funding, adding that the claims were malicious.

And FODEP says the British Council has not yet availed the institution with the findings of the preliminary audit report for it to issue appropriate responses while SACCORD, which is one of the NGOs cited, could not comment as officials were reported to be in a meeting.

Meanwhile, ActionAid says the development has dented the image of the civil society in Zambia.

On Monday police confirmed fraud, implicating Civil Society Organisations, among them SACCORD, YALI and FODEP for financial impropriety involving one of UKAid funded programs called Zambia Accountability Project, a £26 million project.

The project was meant to run from 2014-2018, aimed at supporting effective collaboration among elected leaders, government officials, civil groups and private businesses on prioritized government reform and development problems.

But Ntewewe said in an interview with News Diggers! that it was unfortunate that people were orchestrating an evil campaign against the organisation.

"Right now I want to remain tight lipped because most of the information that is out there is very malicious and very fabricated. We

are going to inform the nation in detail, our side of the story. What we have seen on social media is very fabricated and very malicious. Its absolutely unfortunate that people are orchestrating this very evil campaign against us. We will inform the nation very soon. Right now what is clear is the fact that people are shooting in the air," said Ntewewe.

"Everybody is shooting in the air, even political parties, some of them that speak unpalatables against us, are shooting in the air. So we can only say to them that 'please we wish you well, continue shooting in the air' because they have no single fact whatsoever. And they don't even know anything as to what actually happened, whatever happened and so forth. They know nothing so they can continue shooting in the air. Because rules of natural justice demands that everyone must be heard. So, we are going to have our say and we are going to say what we know and what the truth is because right now they are all fabrications."

And in a statement, FODEP national secretary Jacob Goma stated that the prelimi First of all, FODEP has promoted good governance and accountability in Zambia for over 25 years and finds it unfortunate that its name has been embroidered in these serious allegations. Secondly, the organization would like to inform the public and its stakeholders that having monitored elections for many years, FODEP has



proven commitment to financial accountability of all donor resources and remains focused to spearhead its mandate in spite of the current allegations and ensure that it is not detracted.

FODEP wishes to put it on record that it signed a contract with The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) to implement the 2016 general elections activities and to the best of our knowledge, we met contractual obligations and terms leading to the closure of the project by the project manager, EISA. To this date, the Project Manager has not expressed any misgivings to

FODEP. Further, the public may wish to know that FODEP has not been availed the preliminary audit to enable the institution appreciate its findings and respond.

FODEP relishes financial accountability to both the public and donors.

Therefore any information regarding the forgoing will be made known to the public through official sources.

And ActionAid country director, Naluca Ziba said investigative wings must carry out an investigation in order to exonerate the accused NGOs.

"With regard to Civil Society

Organisations who have been cited in issues of accountability, as civil society we are always at hand to demand for transparency and accountability from government. So what that case has done is that, it has just dented the civil society image in Zambia. We call upon the investigative wings to carry out the investigations because money is involved. Its quite unfortunate that civil societies can find themselves in such scandals. So for us civil societies, before we ask to remove a speck in the governments eye, probably we need to start removing those specks within ourselves," said Naluca.

By Diggers Reporter

Chilanga member of Parliament Keith Mukata has u-turned on his decision to remain silent in his murder case.

This is in a matter in which he is jointly charged with his lover Charmaine Musonda for allegedly murdering his security guard Namakabwa Kwenda.

When the matter came up for commencement of

Mukata u-turns, opts to testify in his murder case

defence before High Court judge Susan Wanjelani yesterday, Mukata told the

court that he would give evidence on oath and call witnesses.

But Charmaine maintained that she would remain silent.

The matter was adjourned to November 29, 2017 for commencement of defense.

Mukata and Charmaine were last week found with a case to answer.

Precious' boyfriend finally appears in court for murder



By Diggers Reporter

A 34-year-old man has appeared in the Lusaka Magistrates' Court on murder and attempted murder charges.

Shinka Kaputo of house number 600 Meanwood area alleged to have murdered his lover Precious Mangesana on October 5, 2017.

Kaputo is on the same date accused of attempting to kill his daughter.

The 34 year old allegedly killed his lover and attempted to kill his 2-year-old daughter using a gun.

When magistrate Kenneth Mulife asked him if he understood the charges, he replied in the affirmative.

Kaputo will be appearing before the subordinate court for mention until the DPP issues instructions to commit him to the High Court.

Court fines Muteteka in one count, sentences him to one year in another, for abuse of office

By Diggers Reporter

The Lusaka Magistrates' Court has fined former Chisamba MMD member of parliament Moses Muteteka K10, 000 for abusing the authority of his office by giving a hammer mill he obtained from government to his sister Rosemary Mulongwe in 2010.

In another count, the court has sentenced Muteteka to 12 months imprisonment and two years suspended for stealing another hammer mill valued at K21,000 from Chibombo District council between January 1, 2011 and December 1, 2011.

But the court acquitted Muteteka on five counts alleging that he gave

hammer mills to his relatives in Chibombo district.

Meanwhile, Muteteka was discharged in a charge theft for the procurement of 26 bicycles, two solar panels, a solar inverter, a solar regulator and a Solar battery between January 1, 2011 and August 31, 2011.

Muteteka was also acquitted of allegations that he directed Chisamba Constituency Development Committee to purchase six hammer mills from SARO Agro Industrial Limited, as the highest bidder.

Lusaka magistrate Faidess Hamaundu said the state failed to prove seven cases beyond



reasonable doubt.

Earlier, in mitigation, Muteteka through his lawyer; Maureen Mwanawasa stated

that the property had been recovered and sending him to jail would be detrimental to his health as he had

suffered stroke in the past recent years.

In 2015, President Edgar Lungu pardoned Muteteka, who

was serving a five year jail sentence at Chimbokaila prison, for theft of a motor vehicle.

From front page

“And what we are now seeing is that some seed companies are getting affected, they are at the lowest in terms of sells. Fertilizer companies are also low on their sells and are equally getting affected and also, most of the commercial farms are now under stress from the bank.”

He said Zambia needed a serious Marshall plan.

“We need a very serious Marshall Plan like it happened under World War One and Two where they put a Marshall Plan. If no Marshall Plan is put in place, it will be extremely difficult for the agricultural sector to pick up,” Zimba said.

“At the moment, yes the season is already on but FRA is still owing about K600 million to farmers and E-Voucher has been opened up but the deposits are minimal. So we are looking at a lot of issues and our prediction is that we are headed for imports after 18 months as a country. If an urgent Marshall Plan is not put in place, we are headed for imports after 18 months.” He said farmers had been placed under duress because they had obtained loans from banks which they could not repay.

“The recovery of loans by the banks is very low such that 30 percent of the farmers are under threat from the banks. Although 15 per cent of the 30 per cent loans have been rescheduled, it does not help matters. Farmer Input Support Programme alone can not feed the nation as that is only food security for rural farmers. The agriculture minister is on public record saying that farmers should stop growing maize, which is confusing to farmers. Traders are under stress, farmers are under stress, agribusinesses are under stress, banks are under stress, only millers are happy because they never loose,” Zimba observed.

“The union believes someone wrongly advised government. Look at the systematic destruction on agriculture in a short period yet our neighbouring countries have offered a good prices to the farmers? When farmers make loses due to government policies it becomes a hopeless situation for farmers to grow anything. Look at the cotton uptake this season, it is poor.” He further expressed disappointment with the ministry of agriculture’s failure to engage his union on issues that concerned farmers.

“We tried our best to advise the Ministry of Agriculture on what steps and measures to take, but I think they had not heeded. Currently, we are in the wait-and-see situation. We are also under serious stress, regarding the army worms. So when you look at the farmers faces, they are all miserable as they don’t know what to do next. In the absence of this serious Marshall Plan to look at how to survive agriculture, I’m afraid, we might be the next importer. However, its up to the minister herself to try and

Siliya doesn’t consult farmers before making decisions - ZNFU

“You see, where we get speak to the doers (unions),” Zimba said.

He complained that Siliya made decisions without consult farmers.

“You see, where we get

confused as an institution of farmers, the minister doesn’t consult us, but then, who she consults to make all these decisions, we don’t know? This is where we have some

problems because even in a home if there are issues to sort out, you consult your wife and family because you stay with them. And that’s why when we the doers see

something happening, we try to advise the minister in writing,” said Zimba.

“It’s a warning to the country as things are now. The current situation does not look good.

All agribusinesses will suffer equally. So in the absence of a Marshall Plan, try and seat down with the doers. I’m afraid the agriculture sector is not doing well,” he said.

We can’t collect all tax because some companies have gone down - ZRA

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

ZRA Commissioner General Kingsley Chanda says Zambia may reach a stage where the Ministry of Finance will have to deal with the tax debt accumulated by some companies that have gone under.

Speaking when he appeared before the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chaired by Howard Kunda, Chanda said it was difficult to collect tax from companies that had gone under hence the need for the Ministry of Finance to step in in order to clean the books.

Meanwhile Secretary to the Treasury Fredson Yamba said misappropriation of public funds was outright theft which required erring officers to be fired immediately.

“We have signed time-to-pay agreements with companies that were owing who came

voluntarily. We have also started enforcements on those that are on our debt list but they haven’t stepped forward during the amnesty. There is also a component of debt and a big chunk of that, that is what government is dealing with and that is why ST (Secretary to the Treasury) was talking about. When you look at companies that have gone under where we can’t collect the tax at all, we may have to reach a stage where the Ministry of Finance has to deal with that debt so that we clean our books,” Chanda said.

Chanda also told the Committee that there was a mismatch of 44,000 motor vehicles between the commission and the Road Transport and Safety Agency (RTSA).

“Our engagements with banks or indeed any other

third party, providers of ZRA is largely based on legal provisions. These companies whether they are clearing agents or banks or indeed any other tax agents are appointed under specific provisions in the laws and those laws also have penal provisions where if there is non-compliance with what they are required to do, the law specifies what action should be taken. For example for banks, if they don’t remit money on time, they get penalised and the fines are specified in the Act,” Chanda explained.

Chanda said car smuggling was rampant in Zambia.

“We have done a reconciliation. Between ZRA and RTSA, there is a mismatch of 44,000 vehicles. If you may recall that in November 2016, we declared an amnesty for motor vehicles and some people stepped forward with

fake number plates and we collected about K3 million on those vehicles. We declared that amnesty because when we did that match between ZRA and RTSA in terms of the vehicles that have been cleared, there was a mismatch of 44,000 vehicles. It is a big problem and no one would really brush that aside, its a serious issue. Motor vehicle smuggling in Zambia is a serious problem.”

He revealed to the Committee that the Commission would stop clearance of imported vehicles inside the country.

“There is so much border shopping in Zambia. We want to ensure that taxes on motor vehicles are predictable. If you buy your vehicle at \$10, you must know that your taxes will be \$8, \$7 without negotiating with anyone, without knowing anyone. We want to stop clearance of the

vehicle inside the country, so we want our people to plan, to import vehicles and plan for taxes. You get to the border you pay the taxes, get all the RTSA formalities done and ZRA formalities done. Where you take your vehicle whether you want to smuggle it afterwards, that would be up to you. So we want to simplify the evaluation because we feel that the smuggling of these vehicles has been driven by the fact that people think the taxes for motor vehicles are very high. Right now as we are sitting here, we have over 58 trucks that we have impounded for such kind of activities,” Chanda said.

He said the smuggled trucks would be donated to deserving institutions soon. Meanwhile Dr Yamba said the Ministry of Finance was in the process of revising the Public Finance Act which would spell out what punitive action to be taken against erring officers.

“If you look at the current Public Finance Act, issues to do with a number of queries raised like un-vouchered expenditure, this simply means that there was no voucher when the auditor general went on site, but the payment was done. And later on when the officers appear before this honorable committee, they will say ‘look the vouchers were actually available. Now what should bring to the mind of the person is that was money stolen or not? Misappropriation is outright theft and its Cristal clear in the Public Finance Act that if somebody steals public money, that person must be taken by the controlling officer to the police immediately and the appropriate action is to fire that erring officer,” said Yamba.

“But going forward, we want to ensure that there is appropriate penalties to be paid, hence the revision of the Public Finance Act. And I want to agree with the Minister of Finance that currently, the legislative committee is sitting and the Public Finance will be brought to parliament for approval. And then we can see punitive action that will be taken against erring officers because without that, what will happen is that in the minds of people, we would love all these audit queries appearing here.”



Parliament has no powers to examine Kambwili’s mental capacity, Parliament tells Munir

By Mukosha Funga

The National Assembly has thrown out PF cadre Munir Zulu’s request to have Chishimba Kambwili’s mental status checked.

In a letter dated November 2, 2017 signed by the Clerk of the National Assembly, Speaker of the National Assembly had no capacity to check the

Roan PF member of parliament’s mental well-being.

“I am directed to acknowledge, with thanks, your letter dated 11th October, 2017 in which you petitioned the Hon Mr Speaker to constitute a Medical Board to inquire into the mental status of Mr C Kambwili, member of parliament for Roan Constituency,”

read the letter.

“I am further directed to inform you that currently, there is no law that empowers the Hon Mr Speaker to constitute a Medical Board to examine the mental status of a member of parliament. In the circumstances, the Hon Speaker is unable to grant the relief that you are seeking.”

We would like to draw the attention of our fellow citizens to our recent interview with the Secretary General of the Patriotic Front, Mr Davies Mwila, over President Edgar Lungu's candidature for the 2021 general elections.

This interview, which our reporter Mirriam Chabala conducted on Saturday November 11, 2017 may appear like any other ordinary discussion; but it revealed the PF's intentions and political agenda ahead of 2021.

For the benefit of those who did not have an opportunity to listen to the interview, our reporter wanted Mr Mwila to explain why the ruling party was insisting on President Lungu standing again, when the Head of State publicly stated that he would only go upto 2021.

Mr Mwila said the ruling party has already decided that President Lungu would be the candidate and nothing would stop him. He said, although the party would wait for the Constitutional Court to rule on the President's eligibility, the judgment would not have any effect on the resolve made by the PF Central Committee.

Although, Mr Mwila refused to categorically state that the Constitutional Court judges who are presiding over the matter were wasting their time, even a dumb person could read that he was saying

PF wants Lungu the magician

News Diggers!
Ear to the ground

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exactly that.

In our interview with Mr Mwila, we learnt that the PF doesn't respect the autonomy of the Judiciary. We are told that the Central Committee of the ruling party made a decision that no judge can overturn. By saying that nothing will stop President Lungu from standing, Mr Mwila was telling the nation that if the Constitution becomes an impediment, it would be done away with until the party gets what it wants.

Why then do we have laws that we can't follow? Why do we have courts and judges if judgments are not

respected by those who are being cautioned? Isn't this conduct by Mwila likely to cause a breach of the peace in our country? We ask because from our understanding, no matter how much the UPND central committee pushes Hakainde Hichilema to go and live in State House today, it will not happen because the law does not recognise him as Head of State. Therefore, we are at pains to appreciate the PF arrogance of saying President Lungu will stand in 2021, regardless of the court's decision because the Central Committee has resolved so.

But this is only a small part of the big problem. Our main

concern is that the PF seems to take it for granted that if President Lungu stood, he would be President until another election in 2026. For some reason, Mr Mwila is ignoring the fact that the people of Zambia will have to first vote for him in order for the President to continue in office. It is not Mwila alone, those who have thrown their weight behind President Lungu's candidature are speaking as if the 2021 elections will be a formality exercise with an already determined outcome.

We noticed that it was difficult for the PF chief executive to state that, "if

the court disqualifies Lungu, then we will pick another candidate". It seems the PF Central Committee endorsed the incumbent because he is the only magician who can make it happen again, even against the will of the Zambian people. It's like there is some spectacular voodoo that President Lungu performed in the last election that Mr Mwila and other top ranking PF officials want him to repeat.

But the PF determination to get President Lungu on the 2021 race, even before he gets midway into his 2016 course, does not come as a surprise to us. These are things we

have written about before. Indeed, just like Mr Mwila and others, we also believe that the voodoo man can win it again. The humble great leader of this great country has the capacity to stay in power beyond 2021. All what the party needs to do is to pave way for him to enter the arena and perform his magic; they just need to get him on the ballot paper and the rest will be sorted systematically.

This is exactly the reason why we hoped that the Constitutional Court would be allowed to exercise its autonomy when adjudicating the eligibility case. We prayed that the law could first clear President Lungu to stand because we understand the power and influence that comes with a sitting candidate.

But since the PF Central Committee has already declared that President Lungu's eligibility cannot be overturned by anyone, we can only hope that the Constitutional Court judges will have the decency of informing the nation that the ruling they are expected to make will not be theirs.

We can also add that since President Lungu's participation and winning the 2021 elections is as certain as the food we eat coming out in a different form, we can only pray that no life threatening malaria touches him between now and 2026.

What we know so far about the military and events in Zimbabwe

The events taking place in Zimbabwe, though still fluid and murky, represent the breaking of the umbilical chord between President Robert Mugabe and the army - the last pillar that was holding up the ruling party, ZANU-PF.

At one in the morning after General Constantino Chiwenga's press statement, in fast moving events, which cannot be independently confirmed:

President Mugabe and his wife were placed under house arrest; the Zimbabwe Radio and Television Broadcasting Corporation was seized; and the homes of prominent ministers known to be part of the Grace Mugabe-aligned "G40" faction were raided; we gather the G40 supportive Youth League leader, Kudzanai Chipanga has been arrested as has been the Minister of Finance, Dr Ignatius Chombo, while others are on the run.

The military has seized government institutions and has arrested the equivalent of the Chinese Gang of Four. Viewed in context, Chiwenga and Co have simply moved

before the President and G40 had launched the removal of a planned 38 senior ministers, party and public officials associated with Emmerson Mnangagwa and the military. The events now have a name: the National Democratic Project (NDP). The intervention is led by General Chiwenga, flanked by 90 senior military officers. In future and even as we write, it is significant to note who was there and not there - not there were the Police Chief, Commissioner General Augustine Chihuri and the Air Force Chief, Air Marshall Perence Shiri. It is reported that Commissioner Chihuri has been arrested.

These events, which follow Monday's unprecedented press briefing by General Chiwenga at Army headquarters, appear to have taken a half way approach: warning the President and ruling party to stop the targeted purging of former liberation stalwarts and denigrating the armed forces or face military intervention to save the revolution.

The major point of disagreement with the

Presidency appeared to centre on the seemingly unrestrained actions of the abrasive First Lady, Grace Mugabe, and her close ministers and aides as well as what they correctly note as "the absence of leadership and coherence and towards responding to the severe economic hardships faced by ordinary Zimbabweans over the last five years."

On this, the military's Damascan moment has come rather late. If they had cared to engage fellow Zimbabweans at home or in the 'forced diaspora' during the last two decades or more, they would have been readily informed how people have struggled to make ends meet: pensioners wilting in pointless queues outside banks and the Post Office for worthless paper bonds that are unavailable; a leadership that is insensitive, capricious, ostentatious, self-centred, corrupt and naïve in guiding one of the most industrious people who have since been reduced to humiliation and penury simply by the adoption and pursuance of bad policies.

For ordinary Zimbabweans

the yoke of oppression from a liberation movement has been the greatest dereliction of duty, culminating in the brief, forced departure of Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa.

As usual, Minister of Higher Education, Professor Jonathan Moyo tweeted, rubbishing the press briefing by the General and challenging the generals to shed their uniforms and openly come into the political arena. Next, Chipanga called a counter press conference asserting that he was prepared to die protecting the presidency.

However, as they say, when you intend carrying out a coup, you go the whole way, otherwise events may turn against you. Hence the NDP has been dubbed "bloodless" although already - lives have been lost.

What is likely to happen next? Now that former VP Emmerson Mnangagwa is reported to have 'returned via Manyame military airbase' we expect by the end of the day a statement issued providing the political face of the currently military led

NDP. The succession loop may be now complete with the president deposed and his nemesis Mnangagwa taking over, supported by the military. This development may offer wider opportunities to other political forces or be confined the now dominant faction of ZANU (PF) that has succeeded to oust the leader.

In this development, the scheduled elections of August 2018 may be suspended while serious political, socio-economic and institutional reforms are undertaken.

Where does this leave SADC and the AU? These are institutions that ordinary Zimbabweans had approached seeking structured intervention. This has now been by-passed by the military's Operation NDP. Where does the institutional re-alignment of ZANU (PF) and the security establishment leave the democratic process in Zimbabwe? While this means a firm displacement of President Mugabe from power, again unconfirmed sources have indicated that he has sought to negotiate the release of his wife into

exile. But, given her track record, the example we saw in October 1976 in China, the Project cannot afford to have them outside the country where they are likely to inspire insurrection. For now, the Project has only been "bloodless" in relation to the leaders but ruthless with guards and other minions. Consequently, our assumptions and guesses must remain cautious.



Assoc. Prof. Lt Col (ret) Martin R. Rupiye PhD, is an academic with the Institute for African Renaissance Studies (IARS), University of South Africa (UNISA) and Executive Director of The African Public Policy & Research Institute (APPRI) based in Pretoria.



Zimbabwe crisis: Army seizes broadcaster but denies coup

Zimbabwe's military has read out a statement after taking over the national broadcaster, ZBC, saying it has taken action to

are safe and sound and their security is guaranteed."

The statement added: "We are only targeting criminals around him who are committing crimes... that are causing social and economic suffering in the country. As soon as we have accomplished our mission, we expect that the situation will return to normalcy." The statement did not name those targeted but a government source quoted by Reuters said Finance Minister Ignatius Chombo was among those detained. It is not clear who is leading the military action.

"currently in Harare to remain safely at home or in their accommodation until the situation becomes clearer."

The US embassy in Harare tweeted that it would be closed on Wednesday "due to ongoing uncertainty". It also advised US citizens in Zimbabwe to "shelter in place" until further notice. Alex Magaisa, former adviser to Zimbabwean opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai, told the BBC he believes the military's claim that they haven't carried out a coup is untrue. "They have decided not to call it a coup

Mugabe's Zanu-PF party.

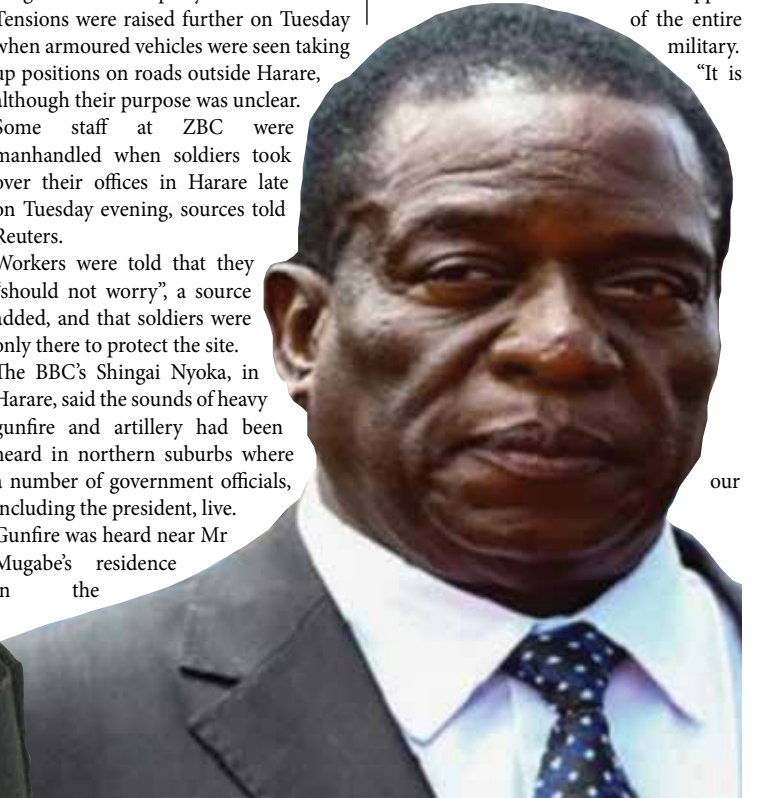
Tensions were raised further on Tuesday when armoured vehicles were seen taking up positions on roads outside Harare, although their purpose was unclear. Some staff at ZBC were manhandled when soldiers took over their offices in Harare late on Tuesday evening, sources told Reuters. Workers were told that they "should not worry", a source added, and that soldiers were only there to protect the site. The BBC's Shingai Nyoka, in Harare, said the sounds of heavy gunfire and artillery had been heard in northern suburbs where a number of government officials, including the president, live. Gunfire was heard near Mr Mugabe's residence in the

not have the full support of the entire military. "It is



"target

because they know that a coup does not



our

criminals". However, it said this was not "a military takeover of government" and President Robert Mugabe was safe. Heavy gunfire and artillery were heard in northern suburbs of the capital, Harare, early on Wednesday. Zimbabwe's envoy to South Africa, Isaac Moyo, earlier dismissed talk of a coup, saying the government was "intact". The statement read out by Maj Gen Sibusiso Moyo came hours after soldiers overran the headquarters of ZBC. He said: "We wish to assure the nation that his excellency the president... and his family

Other key points of the statement included: Citizens should remain calm and limit unnecessary movement The military assures the Zimbabwean judiciary that its independence is guaranteed Security services should "co-operate for the good of our country" and any provocation would "be met with an appropriate response" All leave for the defence forces is cancelled and personnel should return to barracks immediately The UK Foreign Office advised Britons

sell, it will be condemned," he said. "But as far as authority is concerned it seems very clear that President Mugabe is now just a president in name and authority is now residing in the military." The latest events came hours after Zimbabwe's ruling party accused the country's army chief of "treasonable conduct" after he warned of possible military intervention. General Constantino Chiwenga had challenged 93-year-old President Mugabe after he sacked the vice-president. Gen Chiwenga said the army was prepared to act to end purges within Mr

suburb of Borrowdale early on Wednesday, a witness told AFP news agency. Mr Mugabe sacked Vice-President Emmerson Mnangagwa last week, amid a row over succession. Mr Mnangagwa had previously been seen as an heir to the president, but First Lady Grace Mugabe is now the clear front-runner. The rivalry between Mrs Mugabe and Mr Mnangagwa has split Zanu-PF. Last month, Mrs Mugabe warned of a possible coup plot, saying allies of Mr Mnangagwa were threatening the lives of those who didn't support him. The Zanu-PF party said Gen Chiwenga's comments were "calculated to disturb national peace... [and] incite insurrection". The party said it would never succumb to military threats, and that it "reaffirms the primacy of politics over the gun". The leader of Zanu-PF's youth wing, Kudzai Chipanga, said the general did

country and future at stake and we will not let any individual military man interfere with the leader of the party and legitimately voted president of this country," he told reporters on Tuesday. The youth wing is a strong supporter of Grace Mugabe. Gen Chiwenga's warning of possible military intervention came on Monday at a news conference at army headquarters where he was surrounded by senior army officers. He said the "purging" within Zanu-PF was "clearly targeting members of the party with a liberation background", referring to the country's struggle for freedom from white minority rule. "We must remind those behind the current treacherous shenanigans that when it comes to matters of protecting our revolution, the military will not hesitate to step in," he said. Mr Mnangagwa is one such veteran of the 1970s war which ended white minority rule. **BBC**

Blake Shelton is sexiest man alive

Country superstar Blake Shelton might have made a name for himself as a judge on NBC's hit series, *The Voice*, but he's got another title now: 2017's Sexiest Man Alive!

So what went through his mind when he first heard the news? "That y'all must be running out of people," he tells *PEOPLE* in this week's cover story. "Like, Wow, we're down to somebody who is somewhat symmetrical."

All kidding aside, Shelton, 41, credits his girlfriend of two years, Gwen Stefani, for convincing him to embrace the crown. "She goes, 'Listen to me, you're going to regret this for the rest of your life if you don't take this gift and just live in the moment,'" Shelton says of his "You Make It Feel Like Christmas" duet partner.

But a bigger incentive for the singer was being able to stick it to his fellow judge (and 2013 Sexiest Man Alive) Adam Levine. "I can't wait to shove this up Adam's a**," Shelton adds. "As proud as I am and honored that you guys asked me, that's really the only thing I care about."

Despite being a heartthrob with a fan base of millions, the 6'5 inch Oklahoma-bred Shelton — whose latest album, *Texoma Shore*, hit No. 1 on the Billboard Top Country Albums this week — insists he had a few awkward phases while growing up. "I think to describe myself as a child, one word comes to mind. And that's fat," he says. "People say I haven't changed since before I made it. And I'm still fat today. That's proof!"

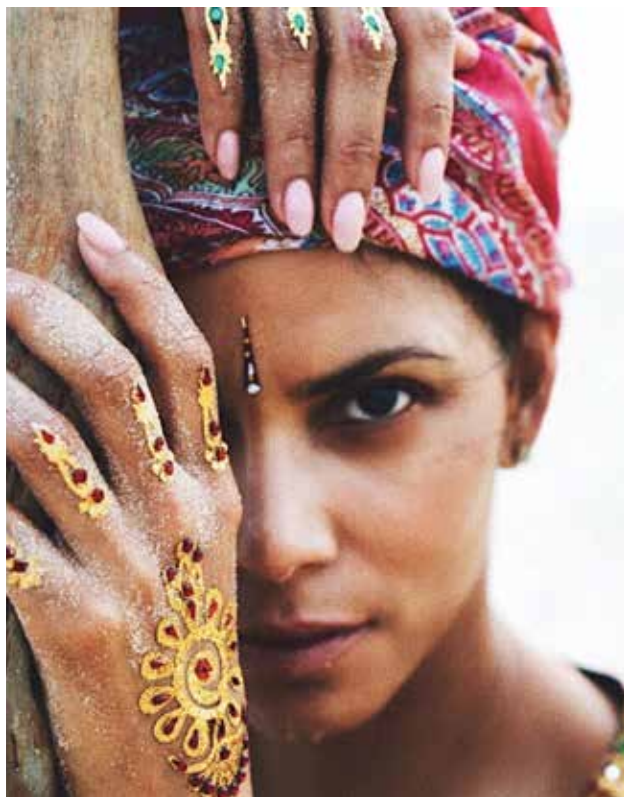
Shelton does try to stay in shape by exercising on the treadmill and eating as healthy as possible, though all bets are off when he's home in Tishomingo, Oklahoma. "It could be 2 o'clock in the afternoon before I eat and then I realize I'm starving, so then it's a bag of Cheetos," he says. "And there's a Sonic in town, they got jalapeno poppers. And then I'm not hungry again until 10 o'clock, well what's in there? Fishsticks. And like a big pickle, those pickles that come in its own package with juice? It is really bad."

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Even with his weakness over food (he calls his love for chips and dips "a problem"), Shelton says his new title is "like a confirmation" that he'll enjoy for the rest of his life.

"It's going to be used in every conversation, whether it's at *The Voice*, or at the feed in Tishomingo, Oklahoma, or in a conversation with a doctor," he says. "When [people] would say to Adam, 'Mr. Sexy,' you'd always see him go, 'Well, awww...' If you say that to me, it's going to be, 'You're damn right, I'm Mr. Sexy! I've been ugly my whole life, if I can be sexy for a year, I'm taking it. I'm taking it.'" **Yahoo**

Halle Berry, glows, gets 'lost' during dreamy India trip



Halle Berry's fans are getting a guided tour of India through her dreamy Instagram account.

The 51-year-old actress has been quietly decorating her social media page with images of herself on vacation in India — wearing a sundress while wandering the cobblestone streets, catching a brilliant sunrise, hitting the beach, and kicking back with vino. According to the Indian English-language news outlet the *Hindustan Times*, Berry landed in Kerala last week and headed to an undisclosed beach resort.

"She and her group were here with us for two nights and checked out yesterday morning," an unnamed employee told Indian news agency IANS, according to the *Times*. "She spent time at the beach and had no problems moving around. Yes, none knew who she was and we were also told that since this was a private visit, none should also come to know."

Berry also visited Mumbai where she went sight-seeing and snapped photos of herself wearing traditional jewelry. **Yahoo**



Roger Federer downs Alexander Zverev in 'generation game'



Roger Federer marched into the semi-finals at the ATP Finals once again on Tuesday but he made hard work of the task before finally prevailing 7-6(6) 5-7 6-1 in a high-quality battle of the generations with Germany's Alexander Zverev. The 36-year-old six-times champion may have been giving away 16 years to the youngster fancied to be the game's next major force but Federer proved in a dominant third set that, for the moment, he still remains a cut above his young pursuers. The triumph in two hours and 11 minutes ensured the 19-times grand slam champion booked a place in the last four for the 14th time in 15 appearances and with the tournament still only three days old. It also meant that Zverev and

Jack Sock will now meet on Thursday to decide the other qualifier from the Boris Becker group. Sock earlier lived up to his childhood nickname of "Showtime" by producing a dramatic comeback triumph 5-7 6-2 7-6(4) over the erratic Marin Cilic, who is now eliminated after two straight defeats. World number two Federer looks even more of an overwhelming favorite for a seventh crown in the absence of Rafael Nadal, who has pulled out injured from the tournament. "It sounds great," Federer told the O2 Arena crowd after being told of his record of 14 semi-final appearances. He had high praise for 20-year-old Zverev, too, after being tested for two fierce sets before finally dismantling the increasingly weary-looking world number three. "I'm very excited for his future. He's a wonderful guy and a great, great player." With no classic Nadal clash on the horizon, the duel between Federer and Zverev, who had shared the spoils in their previous four meetings, was the most eagerly anticipated of the week. **Yahoo**

I don't care about Messi, Ronaldo comparisons - Kevin De Bruyne

Manchester City star Kevin De Bruyne says being compared to Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo means nothing to him. Belgium head coach Roberto Martinez claimed last week that the 26-year-old has the ability to match the standards set by the Barcelona and Real Madrid forwards. The comments came in the wake of De Bruyne's spectacular start to the season, the midfielder having scored twice and registered six assists in 11 appearances during City's unbeaten run in the Premier League. The former Chelsea man was included on France Football's 30-man shortlist for the Ballon d'Or and has been tipped as a contender to win the prize either this year or in 2018. However, De Bruyne says he is only interested in individual accolades if he can win

silverware with City. Asked about Martinez's remarks, he told Sky Sports News: "I don't care. I really don't care. People compare too many players with each other, you have too many good players in the world. "In the end, I will only win individual awards if I win something with City. "I try to play the way I am playing at the moment and obviously the way we are playing is very positive and for us it's nice. "Everybody is in the same spirit. We want to play the football that we play." De Bruyne also again rejected suggestions City will match the achievement of the Arsenal 'Invincibles' and go the entire league campaign unbeaten. "I don't think that will be possible because I think you have so many games and too many important games," he

said. "The power of the Premier League means every team has a lot of money and every team has a lot of quality players, so I think one day or another you will face a team who find a system to beat you, or they have a better day." **Yahoo**

Real Madrid decide to sell Bale



A report from AS in Spain says that Real Madrid have decided to offload Gareth Bale. The Welsh international, 28, has suffered multiple injuries over the past 12 months, which has led to him playing in just nine of Real's 19 games in all competitions this season. Coupled with criticism from Real's fans, it appears Bale could be ready for a move back to the Premier League next summer and per the report he would be available for just over \$90 million. That sound you can hear is Jose Mourinho and Manchester United licking their lips with delight after they failed with a \$140 million move for Bale last summer. It's safe to say that despite three UEFA Champions League titles in four years at

the Santiago Bernabeu, Bale hasn't been as influential as expected. Cristiano Ronaldo is still the main man for Zinedine Zidane, Karim Benzema is going nowhere soon and the reports suggests that the reigning European champs will bring in Kylian Mbappe next summer to replace Bale. The French teenager is only on loan at Paris Saint-Germain and with PSG likely to face Financial Fair Play difficulties next season if they make Mbappe's loan deal permanent, the youngster could be on his way to the Spanish capital. Regardless, Bale's strengths seem better suited to life in the Premier League and his final season at Tottenham in 2012-13 remain a thing of beauty when looking back

on it. With Mourinho waxing lyrical about Bale last summer and Real seemingly willing to let him go, the former Spurs star seems like he has a more than adequate escape route lined up for Old Trafford. Would he start at United though? Of course. But his arrival could block the progress of Marcus Rashford, however with Mourinho favoring a 3-5-2 formation in recent weeks, Bale could easily line up in the No.10 role behind Romelu Lukaku and Rashford. Imagine that pace and power. It doesn't get more Mourinho-esque than that. This is one of those transfer reports which you nod your head to and say "yep, this all seems to add up nicely for everyone concerned." **Yahoo**

Sunzu will have to earn his space in U20 - Numba

Nyambe Lubasi

Zambia Under-20 coach Mumamba Numba says midfielder Ngosa Sunzu will have earn his place in the team despite his 2017 FIFA U20 World Cup stint. Sunzu is part of the 45-member players summoned for trials in Lusaka as Zambia prepares to host the 2017 COSAFA U20 Cup from December 6-16 on the Copperbelt. "It is up to him. I believe everyone has to earn their place on merit. There nothing like he played in the last World Cup," Numba said. "He has to prove himself in the team." Sunzu is currently at FAZ Super Division side Napsa Stars after two seasons in Israel. He played just one match in the group stages in South Korea in Zambia 1-0 loss to Costa Rica en route to a quarterfinal exit. And Numba said they were no foreign-based players in his preliminary plans for the 2017 COSAFA U20 Cup. The core of the team is expected to comprise of the side Numba coached to victory in the 2017 COSAFA U17 Cup hosted by Mauritius in July. "For the Cosafa, we will and maintain the local players but we will try and look at others outside when we start preparing 2019 U20 AFCON qualifiers," Numba said. "We will give these players a chance to gain the experience from this tournament." Zambia are in Group A where they have been drawn against Malawi, Swaziland and guest side Uganda. Numba's side will kick off its COSAFA U20 Cup title defence on December 6 against Uganda at Arthur Davies Stadium in Kitwe.



ZAMBIA DODGES

NIGERIA IN CHAN

By Nyambe Lubasi

Zambia will avoid their 2018 FIFA World Cup Group B opponents Cameroon and Nigeria in the group draws for the 2018 CHAN finals in Morocco.

Zambia will on Friday know their 2018 CHAN opponents when the tournament draws are made in Rabat for the finals Morocco will host from January 12 to February 4.

Chipolopolo are seeded in Pot 2 together with Cameroon, Nigeria and 2016 CHAN semifinalists Guinea who eliminated them from the quarterfinals of that tournament in Rwanda.

However, Zambia face a strong prospect of being drawn against hosts Morocco who are in Pot 1.

That potential draw would see a reunion their celebrated ex-coach Herve Renard.

Renard led Zambia to a third place finish at the inaugural tournament held in Cote d'Ivoire in 2009 before guiding them to their 2012 AFCON triumph.

2016 third place finishers Cote d'Ivoire, 2011 runners-up Angola and 2014 CHAN champions Libya complete Pot 1. Other prospective group stage suitors are Congo, 2016 hosts Rwanda, 2011 hosts Sudan and Uganda who are in Pot

3. Pot 4 contains Burkina Faso, Equatorial Guinea, Namibia and 2014 CHAN surprise package Mauritania.

Defending champions and record two-time winners DR Congo did not qualify for the first time in the tournaments four-edition history and neither did runners-up Mali.

The draw procedure will see teams in

Pot 1 ranked as the top seeded teams running from Group A,B,C and D.

Morocco as hosts are automatically in Group A and the first, second, third and fourth team picked from Pot 2 will join them Cote d'Ivoire, Angola and Libya in the order of draws.

The sequence will be repeated for the other two Pots until the 16 teams are completed.

