



Govt fraud worries donors

UK PROBING 3

MINISTRIES

By Mukosha Funga

Africa Confidential has revealed that Britain's Department for International Development is investigating three ministries for fraud. And Africa Confidential says Zambia risks losing its sovereignty to China as that country will seize national assets once government defaults on loans. *To page 5*

Lungu is lying, even PF has rejected 30 ngwee – UPND

By Mukosha Funga
UPND deputy spokesperson Patricia Mwashingwele has challenged President Edgar Lungu to name the people who he says have accepted the 30 Ngwee internet calling

tariff because even his party members have rejected it. And UPND says it is time Zambians put their foot down and stopped the PF from robbing them in broad daylight.

On Sunday, President Lungu directed the Ministry of Communications to finalise the statutory instrument to effect the 30 Ngwee internet calling tariff saying people have already accepted it. *To page 4*

Speculation around debt crisis injuring govt image, laments Dora

By Mukosha Funga

Dora Siliya says there is no debt crisis in Zambia and the austerity measures being rolled out are simply a way to prepare for repayments falling due in the next few years. *To page 3*

Zambia records 44,000 new HIV infections a year – NAC

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President Edgar Lungu with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping

LCC closes 12 bars, arrests ten patrons

Story page 2



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Zambia records 44,000 new HIV infections annually - NAC

By Daniel Chansa

The National AIDS Council has revealed that 1,200,000 people in Zambia are HIV positive, making the country the one with the highest burden in sub-Saharan Africa.

In a presentation at the four days Orientation of DACAs in HIV and AIDS multisectoral Coordination functions in the local Authorities workshop in Ndola, National Aids Council Centralized response coordinator William Sikazwe revealed that Zambia records 44,000 new cases annually.

“Zambia has the highest HIV burden in sub Saharan Africa at 11.4%. This is the seventh highest rate globally. The annual incidence of HIV among adults aged 15-49 is higher in women (1.08%) compared to men (0.33%). It is estimated 44,000 new cases annually. Out of the total population of the country, it is estimated to have an HIV population of 1,200,000,” revealed Sikazwe.

And NAC acting director Fortune Chibambo said placing activities aimed at fighting HIV at local authorities was aimed at achieving the decentralization policy.

“Citizens should have

control of the local governance systems. It is therefore the collective responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure that there is coordination in the local authorities. HIV related functions should be devolved completely to fight the

scourge,” Chibambo said. Meanwhile, Alliance of Mayors and Municipal Leaders Initiative for Community Action on AIDS at Local Level Zambia chapter president Nathan Chanda said the absence of District Aids Coordination Advisors

was a challenge to fight against HIV at local levels. “The coordination and management of HIV is now the responsibility of the local authorities. It is therefore important that mayors and chairpersons come up with committees to deal with matters of

HIV and AIDS. DACAs appointment has come at a time that we are preparing the 2019 budgets. Therefore we should include HIV and AIDS in the budgets,” said Chanda.

“The implementation of HIV/AIDS programs

could not be achieved without the DACAs in the various districts. There was lack of HIV and AIDS coordination in district thereby defeating the fight against HIV. We need to end HIV and AIDS or reduce the vice in our districts.”

Govt must be transparent on Chinese debt – CTPD

By Stuart Lisulo

There needs to be transparency in the acquisition, terms and structure of Chinese loans, says CTPD.

And the Centre for Trade Policy and Development (CTPD) says there is serious need to put heads together in finding lasting solutions as the current debt situation might get severe.

Zambia's debt arising from Chinese loans in the year 2016 rose by 350 per cent from two loans contracted in 2015 to nine the year after.

New loans from China increased by a staggering 259 per cent (from US \$484 million in 2015 to US \$1.6 billion in 2016), according to data obtained from

policy think tank, ZIPAR.

In a statement, CTPD executive director Isaac Mwaipopo appealed to President Lungu to take advantage of the ongoing 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, which kicked-off yesterday and concluding today, to renegotiate Zambia's Chinese debt.

“Renegotiation of Chinese debt; Zambia is at high risk of debt distress, and the Chinese government has time and again signalled that China might be open to supporting the Zambian government to restructure its debt portfolio. Zambia must, therefore, take advantage of this platform and bring to the table a conversation around the

need to renegotiate its Chinese debt,” Mwaipopo appealed in a press release, Monday.

“Zambia should avoid at all costs acquiring more debt during this summit.”

He, however, cautioned the Zambian delegation currently in Beijing to ensure that any restructuring of the country's loans must be transparent.

“Transparency and Accountability in loan acquisitions; the terms and structure of Chinese loans to Zambia – and details about how they are secured – must be transparent. Not only will this help to allay market concerns on the basis that investors should be provided with the key commercial

terms of Zambia's debt portfolio (thus reducing uncertainty), but it will permit greater oversight of the projects the government is promoting and will improve value for money,” Mwaipopo advised.

“CTPD remains deeply concerned about the growing negative publicity of Zambia, which has now penetrated the international media space, there is need to come together as a country and find common ground that can help to resolve the current situation.”

He also urged other African Heads of State attending the Forum to ensure that projects financed through the platform are integrated into and consistent with countries' national development plans.

“CTPD recognizes the fact that, FOCAC is the premier platform through which trade and investment is mediated between China and African countries. Therefore, CTPD recommends the following to all the African Heads of State attending the summit running under the theme ‘Win-win cooperation and joining hands to build a closer community with a shared future for China and Africa,’” he narrated.

“Project financing; it is important to ensure that projects financed through FOCAC are integrated into and consistent with countries national development plans. This will make FOCAC projects more coherent and focused. It should not be just because China has resources to lend out and countries jump on them without taking into consideration how some of the projects fit in with national priorities.”

And Mwaipopo added that ahead of the 2019 national budget, there is serious need to find lasting solutions as the current debt situation might get severe.

“As the 2019 budget debates draw closer, there is serious need to put heads together in finding lasting solutions as the current debt situation might get severe. It is our sincere hope that the departure of the IMF representative to Zambia (Dr Alfredo Baldini) will not affect prospects for accessing the desperately-needed support from the International Monetary Fund as the failure to access that support could have severe implications for the country,” stated Mwaipopo.

LCC closes 12 bars, arrests 10 underage patrons

By Abraham Kalito

A combined team comprised of the Lusaka City Council (LCC), public health inspectors, council and state police have apprehended 10 underage patrons and subsequently closed down 12 bars during an operation in Emmasdale's Devil's Street.

LCC acting public relations manager George Sichimba stated in a statement availed to News Diggers! that the operation was conducted to check compliance levels in bars.

“The combined team of Lusaka City Council (LCC) public health inspectors, council police and state police over the weekend

closed 12 bars and apprehended 10 suspected underage age patrons. This was done during an operation conducted in Emmasdale (Devil Street) and Garden Compounds. The operation meant to check on compliance with laws and regulations relating to liquor trade, started at 22:00 hours on Friday last week and ended at 02:30 hours on Saturday. The affected bars were found operating outside stipulated hours, contrary to the Liquor Licensing (Permitted Hours) Regulations of 2012. The law stipulates that bars and bottle stores (retail liquor) must open at 10:00 hours and close at 22:00 hours. Night clubs/

social clubs must open at 10:00 hours and close at 24:00 hours, while wholesale liquor must open at 08:00 hours and close at 18:00 hours,” stated Sichimba.

“The only exempted establishments are hotels, lodges, guest houses, restaurants, boarding houses, camps and camp sites, which can sell liquor at any time to clients who are lodging with them and people that are buying food with regards to restaurants. Sadly, most establishments trading in liquor are not operating within the law, hence the operations to check on compliance levels. Apart from operating outside stipulated

hours, three bars were also found admitting underage patrons, while two bars were found trading without liquor licenses, contrary to the Liquor Licensing Act No. 20 of 2011. And of the 10 apprehended suspected underage patrons, four were girls and six were boys. The young guzzlers were taken to Emmasdale Police Station and Garden Chilulu Police Post for screening and further action. LCC wishes to warn people operating liquor establishments to always abide by the law in their operations. The council will not relent in its quest to bring sanity in the city and prevent young people from alcohol abuse.”

By Mirriam Chabala

The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) has warned schools across the country to stop tying tuition fees to the purchase of school requirements directly from schools. CCPC public relations officer Namukolo Kasumpa said in a statement that the practice was disadvantaging the general public because it constituted unfair contract terms, and also distorted the competition landscape among players in the provision of school requirements. Kasumpa stated that the Commission demanded that pupils should be allowed to attend classes whether they procured school requirements from other places, as long as such items met the prescribed standards by a particular school. "The Commission is concerned with the growing tendency by schools to tie school fees for tuition to other activities that have no direct link to education. The Commission is aware that some schools have been forcing pupils to purchase school uniforms, exercise books and other school items from the schools or PTAs' shops, failure to which pupils are removed from class. The Commission is concerned that pupils are not being allowed in class if they purchase items such as school uniforms and exercise books from other sources even when these items are in conformity with the school's requirements. This conduct disadvantages the

general public and constitutes unfair contract terms. The conduct also distorts the competition landscape among the players in the provision of school requirements," Kasumpa stated. She warned of serious penalties against schools that would not adhere to CCPC's call. "The Commission recognises the need for schools to undertake projects and raise funds, but is against the practice of tying the school fees or places and attendance of class to the

CCPC warns schools to stop linking fees to uniforms

purchase of school uniforms, exercise books or other school requirements directly from the school. The Commission, therefore, reiterates the fact

that pupils should be allowed to attend class whether they procure school requirements from another place as long as such items meet the prescribed

standards by the relevant school. This, therefore, serves as a timely warning to all schools that are involved in this practice that the Commission will not hesitate

to impose appropriate penalties on any person who violates the Competition and Consumer Protection Act No.24 of 2010," stated Kasumpa.

Govt missed income tax collection target – ZIPAR

By Stuart Lisulo

Government missed its target of K10.6 billion in income tax collection for the 2018 half-year period by around K500 million, owing to lower than projected collections, says ZIPAR. According to a ZIPAR policy brief released last week, income tax collections were reduced to K10.1 billion for the half-year period ending June 30, 2018, from government's targeted amount of K10.6 billion. The policy brief, produced by ZIPAR research fellows Shebo Nalishebo and Florence Banda-

Muleya, revealed that the income tax underperformance was largely on account of lower than projected collections for both mining and non-mining company income tax, among others. "Against a target of K10.6 billion, income tax collections amounted to K10.1 billion. This was due to lower than projected collections for both mining and non-mining company income tax, Pay As You Earn, and withholding tax," ZIPAR stated. The policy think tank explained that the lower income tax earned pointed towards

sluggish economic growth. "Lower than projected performance of income taxes in the period is reminiscent of poor performance in 2017 and points to the sluggish economic growth experienced since 2015, and a multiplicity of tax rates and incentives," it stated. "Sluggish economic growth continues to prevail at present. GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth was recorded at 2.6 per cent in Q1 2018, the lowest growth since Q4 2015, and a far-cry from the strong growth experienced before 2015. The low growth

has resulted in declining taxable income. By not paying attention to, and sufficiently promoting private sector performance, the government is now missing out on taxable income." ZIPAR also stated that customs and excise duties also underperformed during the six-month period under review by almost K700 million. "Customs and excise duties underperformed – against a target of K3.7 billion for the first six months of 2018, only K3.0 billion was collected. Particularly, excise duties had a relatively poor

performance – against a target of K2.1 billion, collections from excise were K1.4 billion. This translates to an under-collection of K667 million during the first half of the year," ZIPAR revealed. "Considering that imports have been on the rise in the first half of the year, this seems to suggest a challenge on the domestic side of excise duties. Some measures introduced in the 2017 and 2018 [national] budget (such as increasing excise duty on air time from 15 per cent to 17.5 per cent; the aligning of excise duty to 125 per cent on methylated spirits) may either be having a dampening effect of reducing consumption and, therefore, the taxes, or have not been fully implemented." However, on the other hand, ZIPAR noted that VAT performance continued to outshine other taxes as government exceeded their half-year period target. "Against a target of K5.5 billion, VAT revenue amounted to K7.9 billion in the first six months of 2018. The measures introduced in 2017 and 2018, including withholding the tax at source by appointed agents, seems to be paying off," ZIPAR narrated. Meanwhile, the policy brief showed that government's half-year expenditure soared above the set targets. "During January to June, 2018, the government's expenditure was K40 billion or 55 per cent of the 2018 budget of K71.7 billion. This is higher than the projected expenditure of K34 billion. Interest payments have been the main drivers of this over-spending (owing to high debt accumulation) as well as capital expenditure (due to increased disbursements for foreign-financed capital projects," stated ZIPAR.

By Mukosha Funga

Chief Government Spokesperson Dora Siliya says there is no debt crisis in Zambia and the austerity measures being rolled out are simply a way to prepare for repayments which will fall due in the next few years. And Siliya says the Higher Education Loans and Scholarship Board's (HELSEB) move to ask for repayment from UNZA and CBU alumni is not sudden as it is the only way to ensure sustained provision of education to the vulnerable in society. Speaking on ZNBC's Sunday Interview, Siliya, who is also Minister of Information and Broadcasting, said the speculation on Zambia's debt was injuring the country's image. "On this issue of debt, in 1990, the debt was \$7 billion, the GDP was only one billion dollars so that means that the gearing was over 227 per cent so when you are talking about this debt that is about \$14.3 billion. The GDP of Zambia now is about \$27.4 billion. There has been progress but we are the first ones to accept as government that we can do more. There is no debt crisis. Yes, people are speculating about what will happen in the next three, four, five years, we also as government we are looking at these issues and preparing and saying how do we move forward and ensuring that the economy continues to thrive, that the Zambians are cushioned and that the Zambians who are vulnerable through social cash transfer and other programs are supported," Siliya said. "We should give the Minister of Finance room to operate. What we should not be doing is creating an atmosphere of

Austerity measures don't mean we have debt crisis, says Dora

doom, I do not think that's the interest of the people of Zambia. We as government don't see the IMF as enemies, we see them as partners whom we continue to dialogue with. When they ask for information, we have to do so and we, as stakeholders in the IMF, we also have an interest to ensure that the people of Zambia, we give the right information and the Minister of Finance has been working tirelessly I can tell you, way in the night, the President stays up way into the night to ensure that these issues should continue to be looked at with the importance they deserve." Asked why government was implementing austerity measures if there was no crisis, Siliya said those were just meant to save up for loan repayment. "No no no, I think what we are saying as government is that at some point in the future, we will have to make some huge payments and it is good to be cautious and try to prepare for the future. That is what we do even at home level and the Minister of Finance is saying 'this is what we have, I am anticipating that at some point, we will have to make payments, so let us start preparing for those payments and there is absolutely nothing wrong with that, nothing," she said. "In today's world with this convergence of technology, one statement can just go viral and injure the image of the country. It is why it is very important that we discuss these things

without emotion because this is about our country. Right now, there is no crisis, there is none there is no debt crisis and the economy continues to move." Siliya also dismissed media reports that government had asked the IMF to recall its representative Alfredo Baldini saying government was actually looking forward to working with the IMF's next representative to Zambia. She warned that continued speculation on Zambia's debt position would injure the country's image. "Give the Minister of Finance room to do her work on behalf of the people of Zambia. I think speculation will just continue to damage the country's image and it is what filters through to even the international financial markets, because we are all speculating. I think our core message as government is that give the Minister of Finance room to do her work and she will continue to update the nation on the issues vis a vis the IMF, on the issues to do with the discussions which will be going on in China or anywhere else," Siliya said. "It is strange to say that Zambians don't trust this government, I think they do and that's why they even voted this government in office and at this time, this is the only government that exists and we continue to work with citizens through programs like this so that we can communicate that this is the situation.

The Minister of Finance has been releasing the figures consistently the whole year so that citizens are aware and when the IMF has come and said 'what about this,' the Minister of Finance has gone back as she should to check so that we get the best position ever, going forward. Government has no reason to hide anything from the citizens or from anybody else for that matter." And Siliya said it was good that HELSEB had started collecting loans from UNZA and CBU alumni. "These discussions have been going on for a long time. Those that have gone to universities around the world, we know that university education is one of the most expensive. People in other countries pay university loans for over 20, 25 years of their working life and if we are going to have sustained provision of these loans in Zambia, so that we can have the scientist we need, so that we can have the engineers, the doctors, we have to find a way to fund higher education... in principle, loan facilities to students are the right thing so that when they graduate, they can pay back and other children also get a chance. Thousands of Zambians have gone to the University of Zambia and I am happy now that the university now wants to activate the alumni so that us who went there can be able to make a contribution as we do in other countries," said Siliya.

"It is not sudden. the Minister of Education has been making a lot of statements on this matter. If some people have not been following, I think her door remains open to discuss these matters. I believe that when the laws were being put in place, there was a lot of public consultation. These have been on-going issues particularly in the last two, three years... the principle is the right one. of course government is aware that some graduates do not have jobs yet and that is the reason why it is important that jobs are created outside government. It is important that the economy continues to be resilient, that we keep the inflation at single digit as it is now, that we continue to see growth beyond the 4 per cent then we will see that jobs are being created within the economy."

Court Notice

TAKE NOTE that ONIAS PHIRI will apply for money lenders certificate under the style and name of REON ENTERPRISES under Money Lenders Act Cap 398 and will have his application heard by the Honourable Magistrate M.N. SINVULA in Chambers on the 4th September, 2018 at 10:00 hours or soon thereafter as he can be heard

Lungu is lying, even PF has rejected 30 ngwee – UPND

By Mukosha Funga
UPND deputy spokesperson Patricia Mwashingwele has challenged President Edgar Lungu to name the people who he says have accepted the 30 Ngwee internet calling tariff because even his party members have rejected it. And UPND says it is time Zambians put their foot down and stopped the PF from robbing them in broad daylight. On Sunday, President Lungu directed the Ministry of Communications to finalise the statutory instrument to effect the 30 Ngwee internet calling tariff saying people have already accepted it. But in an interview, Monday, Mwashingwele wondered which people President Lungu was referring to. "Can you challenge Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu to tell us which people have accepted?" Mwashingwele asked. "Everyone has rejected including his own PF members. So when he says people, who are the people? Because we the Zambians, I am speaking on behalf of the UPND and we rejected it. His own permanent secretary told him that there was a hiccup with the way the tariff was announced. It means even the technocrats

are not comfortable with the way it was done so who are the people? Can you find out from Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, who are the people?" Mwashingwele observed that President Lungu was being dictatorial on the matter. "He cannot just say this decision is final just because 30 people in a Cabinet meeting decided then he says people have accepted? No! The people's representatives in Parliament must also be consulted. Does he want the SI to come and fail on the floor of the House? Is that how he does consultation? He must not be a dictator, Lungu must not dictate, he must consult. So when he comes out strongly to say the people have accepted the 30 Ngwee charge, we are saying no!" she exclaimed. "The decision is not final! We need broader consultation and he must know the consequences this 30 Ngwee is going to have on people. And the technocrats have said that, why is he not respecting the technocrats? As a president of a nation, he must not be dictatorial. We live in a democracy and so he must act on behalf of the people." Mwashingwele observed that the PF had extended its taxing to the unemployed. "Firstly, we don't have

jobs, look at how many youths are unemployed. Then the few Zambians who are employed are taxed left, right and centre. Now because they are not making money from those that are legally employed, they want to now go to the villager who has no employment. Because when you look at the borehole thing, it is taxing people who are drinking the water. If you look at the 30 ngwee, it is taxing the people who are on the ground, people who don't work. So where does he expect the people

to get the money? These are the things we are talking about. Every Zambian is feeling the pinch, whether employed or not employed. And the PF was saying 'low taxes, low taxes, what low taxes are these?' she asked. And Mwashingwele said it was time Zambians stopped the PF from robbing them in broad daylight. "Every Zambian is crying, every worker, non worker is crying because they are also being pulled into the issue of taxes. And this I am calling it daylight robbery, they are stealing

from the people. Instead of giving back to the people, they are taking everything. And now the president is even dictating 'the decision is final' what final? Has he consulted the poor people on the ground? No! We need to take on PF seriously. We have given them too much space to steal from the people, now, we need to put our foot down as a country," said Mwashingwele. "I think we are not going to take this issue lightly. He even goes further to say even installing these

highway cameras is also final. Why is he just dictating? Is it because he has a benefit from this? Is that what he is trying to tell the people? We want consultative decisions and if they don't know how to make money as PF, they must find a way of making money to pay back the loans, not to be charging Zambians every day. They were told from the onset that these Eurobonds are going to kill the people and now they want to charge us for everything. So we are saying no!"



UPND president Hakainde Hichilema with his entourage navigates across the planes in Nangili area of Mabili ward, Luena constituency in Western Zambia on Sunday.

By Abraham Kalito
A male juvenile identified as Sylvester Milimo, aged five, has died after the ox-cart he was in hit into a tree and overturned. Police public relations officer Esther Katongo confirmed the development in a statement availed to News Diggers! in Lusaka, Monday. "In Southern Province, a male juvenile identified as Sylvester Milimo, aged five years, died on the spot in an accident, which happened on 2nd September, 2018, around 15 hours at Mbeza Market in Namwala District. The accident happened when an ox-cart, on which the victim was in, hit into a tree and in the process overturned. The body is lying in Namwala District Hospital Mortuary," Katongo stated. And Katongo stated that another juvenile died after

Boy, 5, dies after ox-cart overturns

being hit by a motor vehicle in Kamanga compound, Sunday. "Meanwhile, in Lusaka Province a male juvenile, aged two years, of Kamanga Compound in Lusaka died on the spot in an accident, which happened on 2nd September, 2018, around 18:40 hours along Mutumbi Road area," she stated. "The accident happened when the pedestrian was crossing the road and in the process was hit by a motor vehicle Toyota Dyna registration number

BAB 1304 driven by Mwelwa Enoch, aged 34, of Kamanga Compound. The body is lying in Levy Mwanawasa General Hospital mortuary. Hit and run accident, which occurred on 2nd September, 2018, at 20:39 hours along Kafue Road opposite China Mall. Involved was an unknown motor vehicle and three unknown pedestrians, female adult aged 35 who died on the spot and juvenile, aged four months, while a male juvenile, aged between five and seven

years, sustained serious injuries and was rushed to U.T.H. All are from the same family." Meanwhile, police in Lusaka have picked up a body of Kunda Changwe in Kabanana Compound who was discovered dead by a member of public in the early hours of Sunday morning. "Police in Lusaka's Kabanana Compound picked a body of Kunda Changwe, aged 45, of the same area. The body was discovered by a member of the public few meters away

from his house on 2nd September, 2018, around 05:00 hours. The body was found with a deep cut at the back of the head and a sharp instrument is suspected to have been used in the act and it is lying in UTH mortuary awaiting post-mortem. In another development in Luapula Province, a pedestrian juvenile, Mwila Esther, aged four, died on the spot while three others, including the driver, sustained injuries in an accident, which occurred on 2nd September, 2018,

around 17:40 hours at Shindi Village, Chief Kambwali in Nchelenge District," narrated Katongo. "The accident happened when the victim came out of a taxi, which was parked off the road hence was hit by the oncoming motor vehicle Mercedes Benz registration number ALV 8770, the property of Zesco Company Ltd, which was being driven by Silvester Mwape, aged 54, of Kawambwa District. This resulted in the driver of motor vehicle to lose control hence went off the road and overturned. The driver sustained general body pains whilst the two other passengers sustained multiple injuries. All victims are admitted to St. Paul's Mission Hospital while the body of the deceased is lying in the same hospital mortuary awaiting post-mortem."

By Mukosha Funga

Africa Confidential says Zambia risks losing its sovereignty to China as that country will seize national assets once government defaults on loans.

And Africa Confidential has revealed that Britain's Department for International Development is investigating three ministries for fraud.

Meanwhile, Africa Confidential has noted that government continues to spend lavishly despite Zambia being in debt distress.

In a report titled 'Bonds, bills and ever bigger debts' published on September 3, Africa Confidential observed that ZNBC was already being run by the Chinese and disclosed that Zesco was also already in talks about a takeover by a Chinese company.

"A major worry of the IMF and US is that China's BRI strategy is first to encourage indebtedness, and then to take over

Zambia risks losing sovereignty to China – Africa Confidential

strategic national assets when debtors default on repayments. The state electricity company Zesco is already in talks about a takeover by a Chinese company, AC has learned. The state-owned TV and radio news channel ZNBC is already Chinese-owned. The long-term outcome could be effective Chinese ownership of the commanding heights of the economy and potentially the biggest loss of national sovereignty since independence," the report read.

Africa Confidential noted that Zambians would be alarmed to learn the real Chinese debt figures.

"Zambia is a good example of what the International Monetary

Fund and the United States Senate are calling a crisis of accelerating developing-country indebtedness to China. On 3 August, a bipartisan letter by prominent US Senators to US Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin urged the US not to allow the IMF to bail out countries which had got themselves into financial difficulties thanks to over-exposure to Chinese debt, especially for 'overpriced' infrastructure projects. The démarche builds on the concern expressed by IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde in a major speech in April and pundits in Lusaka say the description fits Zambia like a glove," the report read.

"The Senators' letter names 'predatory Chinese infrastructure financing' as part of 'debt-trap diplomacy' which is integral to the Belt Road Initiative (BRI). Twenty three of the 68 developing countries, the letter continues, are in debt distress or strong risk thereof because of the BRI. Although Zambia is classified as at high risk of debt distress it is not among the 23 named, but Africa Confidential's sources say this is only because much of its debt to China has not been fully accounted for, an exercise the Lusaka exchequer is not anxious to complete for fear of the alarm the figures would cause."

Africa Confidential noted

that although Finance Minister Margaret Mwanakatwe announced that all Chinese projects below 80 per cent completion would be halted, President Edgar Lungu told Chinese nationals that all projects would go ahead as planned. "The Zambian government is supposed to be contributing 15% of its own money to the Chinese-financed projects. Meeting this commitment is testing government finances to the limit and taking precedence over social expenditure. Even though Finance Minister Margaret Mwanakatwe pledged to halt all Chinese-backed projects that were less than 80% complete, on 11 July President Lungu publicly told Chinese officials in Lusaka that there would be 'no disruption in the ongoing projects' financed by China," read the report. "Since President Edgar Lungu came to power, Zambia has signed off on at least US\$8 billion in Chinese project finance. Over \$5 bn. of this has not been added to the total because Zambia insists the money has not been disbursed, and more large loans are in the pipeline. Yet the finance ministry does not have the capacity, insiders say, to police, let alone stem, all the spending. In some cases, the financial penalties for halting disbursement on projects would outweigh the savings. Donor governments have offered technical assistance to bring the project debt mountain under control but have been rebuffed."

Africa Confidential also reported that IMF representative Alfredo Baldini was asked to leave on accusations that he was "spreading negative talk."

"The government has all but expelled an IMF official, as the debt continues to spiral and the role of Chinese projects in it raises more concern. Having allocated US\$500 million to external debt service this year, the government's liquidity crisis drags on as relations with donors and international financial institutions plummet. Lusaka asked the International Monetary Fund to withdraw its resident representative Alfredo Baldini on the grounds that he was supposedly 'spreading

negative talk' among the donors, a source in Lusaka said. The rift is a blow to any chance – practically non-existent though it already was – of a deal," read the report.

And Africa Confidential revealed that Britain's Department for International Development was investigating three ministries for fraud.

"Financial management across the ministries is under scrutiny. Britain's Department for International Development is investigating fraud in three ministries, which could have serious implications for future funding, Africa Confidential has learned. And Zambian exposure to Chinese debt, especially project credit, is still causing concern," read the report.

Meanwhile, Africa Confidential noted that government had continued spending lavishly despite the country being in debt distress.

"In mid-July Lusaka announced a supplementary budget of 7.2 billion kwacha (\$721 mn.). Half of this is for debt service, which leaves only just enough only for public sector salaries, which it is struggling to pay. It missed most August salary payments, causing outcry among civil servants last week. Efforts to raise capital domestically are not going well. The auctions of Treasury Bills have been poorly subscribed on average although it has been using massive inducements to attract the banks. Government data shows that by the end of May it had spent \$489 mn. on external debt service and on 19 July it announced a further \$161.3 mn. was paid in June. It will need a further \$360 mn. over and above the sum originally budgeted to cover debt service," read the report.

"Ministry of Finance insiders say that domestic measures now in train to re-allocate spending are not realistic and that at least another \$300 mn. needs to come from fresh borrowing. Yet the government is spending as freely as ever, as in the lavish expenditure by the Patriotic Front on the election of Miles Sampa as mayor of Lusaka on 26 July, even though only 15% of voters turned out."

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By Tenson Mkhala

National Democratic Congress (NDC) leader Chishimba Kambwili says the only reason President Edgar Lungu is in China is corruption.

And Kambwili says President Edgar Lungu's pronouncement that Zambians have accepted the 30 ngwee tariff on Internet calls is arrogance of the worst kind.

Meanwhile, Kambwili says he will not stop asking Presidential Spokesperson Amos Chanda to desist from making policy statements no matter how many times he is insulted.

Addressing journalists shortly after attending a court session in Lusaka yesterday, Kambwili charged that President Lungu visited Huawei offices in China to seal corruption deals.

"And why should the President go and visit an office of a contractor in China? Because Huawei is not a government institution. It is not a donor.

It is only a contractor contracted by government to put communication towers. The President goes to China with a lot of people only to go and visit an office of Huawei. Corruption. Nabaya mukufola imwe mulechula (He went to get paid when you are suffering) and when elections come, you are busy voting? Lwenu mukatampa ukulya abana benu (It's up to you. You will start eating your own children)," Kambwili, the rebel Roan PF member of parliament, charged.

He accused President Lungu of being a danger to the Zambian people, saying he was in State House only to

Lungu is in China for corruption - Kambwili

make money.

"This man is a danger to this country! He has made so much money! Looking at the road construction? Wherever alekule (building) a house, he puts a road. Wherever Ba Chitotela is building a house, they take a road there and yet you in Matero, you in Chawama, you have got houses where there are no roads and then you are standing and say, 'Lungu, Lungu, Lungu.' It's up to you," he said.

And on President Lungu's remarks that Zambians had accepted the controversial 30 ngwee Internet tariff, Kambwili said the Head of State was being arrogant.

"How can a man who knows

that the entire country has rejected that 30 ngwee Internet charge go to China and announce that the people of Zambia have accepted and it is final? That is arrogance of the worst kind! Every reasonable leader in the world must listen to the cries of the people. The people of Zambia have said no to this [30 ngwee] charge on Internet [calls], and he goes to China and announces that the people of Zambia have accepted and it's non-negotiable and it is final?" Kambwili wondered.

"You know, that is why I say; Ba President benu, anyway naine wine niba President bandi. (Anyway, he is my President, too)

But ine nalibasula sana (I do not regard him highly anymore). Ba President besu bafilwa ukulanda muno mu Zambia ati (Our President failed to say here in Zambia that) the 30 ngwee Internet charge has been accepted. Baya mukulandila ku China (He goes to say it in China). When he is in Zambia, he doesn't even address a press conference. He doesn't communicate to the country and he goes to talk in China. Are the Chinese voters to Lungu? So, you can see that this 30 ngwee charge has everything to do with Huawei that is if you are reading in between the lines." Meanwhile, Kambwili added that he would not stop

insisting that Chanda should not issue policy statements regardless of how many times he was insulted.

He described as shocking Chanda's remarks where he said if the International Monetary Fund (IMF) took 50 years to come through with a balance of payment support programme, Finance Minister Margaret Mwanakatwe would not wait, but look elsewhere for help.

"Amos Chanda at it again. He is telling off the IMF. How can a presidential aid be the one to announce that IMF must go because China has given us good terms? This country is being taken for a ride. That is not

Amos Chanda's job! That is supposed to be announced by either the Minister of Finance herself or the Minister of Information and Broadcasting [Services]. We are not going to get country-policy issues from a presidential aid! A presidential aid is supposed to be confined with issues at State House. He is just to inform the nation when the President is going out? When the President is having a meeting? What the President discussed in the meeting. The presidential aid has got no mandate, whatsoever, to talk about national policy because policy [matters] are [made by] ministers and [the] President," said Kambwili.

"So, this young man again is overlapping his boundaries and I have said I am ready to be insulted. I am ready to be called names that I have killed people but, I will not stop talking about the wrong things that this government is perpetrating on the people of Zambia!"

KCM shouldn't leave until it pays its debt - mine suppliers

By Mirriam Chabala

Konkola Copper Mines (KCM) can no longer meet its statutory obligations because the firm has no money, says the Association of Mine Suppliers and Contractors (AMSC).

And the Association has suggested that KCM must

not be allowed to leave the country even if its business is not thriving, unless it settles all its debts to suppliers and contractors whom the mining firm has been owing for several years.

Association president Augustine Mubanga was reacting to Bahati PF member

of parliament Harry Kalaba, who recently suggested that government had no capability to deal with KCM over its failure to pay suppliers and contractors because most mine suppliers were top government officials.

"That statement the former minister made is out of context because business is business. So, if KCM is not paying its suppliers and contractors, it doesn't mean that the suppliers and contractors are government officials; I don't think that is correct. What is correct is that KCM has not paid, and that KCM has no money. So, also, you need to find out from KCM why they are not paying because from my point of view, the position is that KCM has not paid and the reason why they have not paid is best known to themselves, but they need to clarify because to us, it's KCM's responsibility to pay for all the services that they are receiving from any supplier or contractor irrespective of their location, whether local or foreign, because ultimately, they have provided a service," Mubanga told News Diggers! in an interview.

"However, three weeks ago, we met all the contractors and they submitted their submissions to the extent of them being inconvenienced, and what they've endured so far because of non-payment. After that, we had to meet with the Honourable Minister of Mines [Richard

Musukwa] who came and we gave him submissions that came from the members. So, that's the step we've taken, we've informed government because the agreement of investment is between government and KCM, so we come in as citizens of Zambia who want to do business with KCM in a way as a third party, meaning that we might not change what government has agreed with them. So, we have to go to government and say, 'look, this is the investor that you brought, now look at they are doing.' So, we have engaged government and the government engaged KCM. So, the engagement that took place between KCM and government, we were supposed to have been briefed on what they had agreed, but the Minister is not in the country, so we are waiting for him and once he comes back, we are going to sit down and hear the way forward."

But when asked what according to him was the reason why KCM had continued with business when it was not allegedly making profit, he said KCM must not be allowed to stop operating until it paid all its outstanding arrears to suppliers and contractors.

"Well, anyone that goes into a business, they go into business for a profit and you can't be in business for a long time when you are not making any profit. It defeats the purpose of you being in business. Now, if we told KCM to shut

down their operations and go, who is going to liquidate their liability as it stands now? And is government ready to liquidate the liabilities that KCM has created as a private company? So, the way forward is to make sure that KCM liquidates all the debt that it has accumulated. Because they have accumulated those debts on the production, which they've done in the past, and they've also sold the copper under which those liabilities were incurred and they have enjoyed the benefits," Mubanga explained. "So, why should we tell them to leave the mine now, go and then someone else who didn't enjoy the benefits of the liabilities that they created to come and foot that liability? It doesn't make sense, so KCM cannot be made to go now. If they have to go, they must clear up the mess, which they have created and leave the company without any liabilities. Because right now, even if someone wanted to take over KCM under these circumstances where contractors, suppliers and any other stakeholders surrounding their operations feel agitated and that the investment is not adding value, they may not buy that investment. So, it's not a good idea for us to advocate that KCM goes now; KCM should only go when everybody has received their payment, when everybody has been cleared of the debt, which they have with KCM."

Personal profile for Diana Faustina Chileshe

Diana Faustina Chileshe is a 57 years old citizen who lives in Kabwata Site and Service. She comes from Northern Province in a remote town which is now known as Shiwan'gandu District between Chinsali and Mpika.

Born from a family of workers Chileshe worked for 14 years. She first worked for Zambia railways limited for 4 years and then after she got a job at the University of Zambia, where she worked for 10 years. Due to financial constraints she couldn't make it to the university, rather college to further her education.

Chileshe believes that working life is from 15-28 years. When she had left employment, she encountered a lot of challenges and she decided to venture into entrepreneurship. Chileshe is one of the first persons believed to have started "secretarial bureau" business back then, which are now referred to as "business centers".

She started as a sole trader, but as Lusaka City grew, her business expanded to medium scale. Chileshe then opened a school called Garden College where she started offering secretarial training and added brick making business to her, for a period of 4 years.

Through her businesses, Chileshe started taking care of underprivileged children from communities like Kanyama and Chibolya. At that time, her business was booming and she could also afford to study Entrepreneur Management for 2 years, during which course she discovered who she was.

She is the founder of the community schools in Zambia and her institution was registered by the Ministry of Higher Education. Only government schools were being registered back then, therefore she was lucky to be among the listed among recognized primary schools in the country.



Talking Business with Chibamba Kanyama ...only in Diggers!

My Story

My name is Simon Chaza Sakala and I work and live in Japan. I founded and operate Oasis English Schools at two locations in a city called Sagami-hara, in Kanagawa Prefecture near Tokyo. We have close to two hundred English language students, ranging from preschoolers to professionals including engineers, medical professionals and entrepreneurs. I also run two other programs. One program is for training entrepreneurs and the other is for providing support to educational businesses such as private schools and for training and motivating teachers. My dream is to ultimately create a seamless education to develop the entrepreneur right from the cradle. Entrepreneurial education should start from the first day of school. I quit my job at Zulu Burrow Consulting Engineers and moved to Japan about twenty years ago to join my wife who had come to pursue her further studies. I had two things when I disembarked at Tokyo's Narita Airport, my suitcase and a dream. My dream was to go to graduate school and pursue further studies in structural engineering and return home to make a contribution. I also hoped to make a contribution to the local community in my host nation. I was excited and wanted to get started as soon as possible. My excitement did not last very long, however. I soon realized I had three major seemingly insurmountable obstacles to overcome. The three obstacles were language, cultural differences and lack of money. For about four months after my arrival, I applied to different universities for admission. I was turned down either because I could not learn in Japanese or the entrance requirements were too high for the universities

that had programs conducted in English. During that same period, I also applied for jobs at foreign companies operating in Japan where I could work in English. I did not get any positive response no matter how hard I tried. I got stuck, bored and frustrated. My wife was away at school most time of the day, so I spent time doing housework and learning French on the Japanese radio to kill boredom. I ended up learning more Japanese than French though. I spent the rest of my time taking walks or riding my bike aimlessly in the neighborhood. As I did not speak Japanese, I had very little to do and couldn't go far from home for fear of getting lost. After the fourth month of my being in Japan, a friend of a friend told me about jobs teaching English at the Y.M.C.A. To be honest, I did not want to teach English. I had a Bachelor of Engineering degree from the University of Zambia and experience working as an engineer both in Zambia and the United Kingdom. Teaching English, especially to children, was below my dignity. I neither wanted to teach English nor was I good at teaching. The truth of the matter though was that I was unemployed, bored and frustrated. Therefore, I thought it would not hurt to teach English, especially that I would make some money. The job to teach English was available, therefore I decided to try the job. In the meantime, I continued my search for what I really wanted to do. After teaching for a few weeks however, I discovered that my skills teaching children were terrible. I concluded I was just wasting the students' time.

Therefore, I decided I was going to quit. I approached the manager and told her my intention to quit. She was so kind as to encourage me to continue trying. She gave me an assistant to help me. Thankfully, I continued. After teaching for a while, something happened that made me go through a mindset change and a paradigm shift. One day, I attended a Christian conference where the speaker talked on the subject he titled "A miracle in your house". He used the story of Moses in the Bible. Moses had a mission to deliver the children of Israel from the land of Egypt. When God sent him to Egypt, Moses gave a myriad of excuses. Then God asked him what he had in his hands and Moses said he had a rod. God empowered the rod in Moses's hands to help him deliver the children of Israel. The rod in Moses's hands became the rod of God. After telling and explaining the story, the speaker turned to us and said, "There are people here who are looking for something to do and yet you already have something in your hands. Something that you can do today". As I listened I said to myself, "that's me!" My search was over. I realized that one reason I did not like teaching was that I was an incompetent teacher. The solution to this problem was education. I therefore decided I was going to transform myself into a good teacher through personal education. What followed was the creation of a four-step process that helped me transition teaching English through four stages, from work stage to job stage to career stage and finally to calling stage. **Next: The Four-Step Process to Get Out of Unemployment**

By Mirriam Chabala
Patriotic Front deputy media director Antonio Mwanza says University of Zambia (UNZA) and Copperbelt University (CBU) alumni who benefited from the students loan scheme must pay back without fail. Commenting on the decision by the Higher Education Loans and Scholarship Board to start demanding loan repayment from the UNZA and CBU alumni from as far back as 2004, Mwanza told News Diggers! in an interview that it was important that government got back the money from former students to assist the next student generation to acquire tertiary education. "The reason why we fought for a loan scheme was because it has to be an evolving fund to allow the next generation of students also to have access to education. This education we have gotten from government should be extended to other people; it can't just remain with us. That's the reason why we should pay. I know there are graduates who are saying, 'we don't have jobs so we can't

UNZA, CBU alumni must repay loans – Antonio

pay.' But the loan scheme clearly stipulates when you qualify to start paying back. But also, I want my fellow comrades to do away with this notion that they want government to give them jobs because in the first instance, we did not go to school to get jobs. We went to school to get education and we have to use that education to create jobs; we have to use that education to involve ourselves in entrepreneurship; we have to use that education, yes, to get government jobs. But there is no government in the world, which afford to employ everybody, it's not possible. There is no government in the world, you can go to America, you can go to England, you can go to the biggest economy in Europe, which is Germany, but no government can manage to

employ everybody," Mwanza explained. "So, the issue of 'give us jobs', yes, the government is there to create an enabling environment for each person to invest and, yes, the government does employ; this is the reason why government employs thousands of teachers, nurses, doctors and different personnel every year. But we should stop this notion of thinking that we go to school to get a job, and that job must be a white collar job! But we didn't go to school to get a job; we went there to get education and we need to use that education to think outside the box, not to sit and say, 'no me at school, I got a degree so Mr Lungu must come and give me a job!' It doesn't work like that, it defeats the whole

purpose of why we went to school. Why did we go school? Did we go to school to become beggars? We went to school to be innovative, to be creative, to be thinkers, to be philosophers, to think outside the box. And this is the reason, for instance, government is changing the education structure from this theoretical approach to education to vocational approach to education so that we can be filled with real life-surviving skills; so that we stop this thing of waiting for government to employ you with a degree." Mwanza said he was one of the people who fought for the introduction of loans. "Me, I am an old man, I don't get loans, I didn't go to the university to get a loan. What I got, a bursary, so we don't have to pay. Actually, we

were the ones who fought for the introduction of the loans, I fought for it whilst we were in school, but by the time it was finally introduced, we had already UNZA. I want to make it very clear that, we were the ones who fought for the introduction of student loans, and like I have stipulated, the reasons were very clear, number one; government loans by its very nature have been very limited and only a few students have benefited from bursaries because government doesn't have enough resources to pay for everybody. So, we wanted to increase access to bursaries. Number two; if you look at the bursaries committee structure, it is over-centralised, meaning that those that are coming from outside Lusaka, it would extremely difficult for

them to access the bursary," said Mwanza. "Because even myself, when I finished school in the 90s, in 1997, I was doing my first year at the University of Zambia; I was not even aware that there was a bursaries committee to which I was eligible to apply and get government sponsorship, because there are no offices in other provinces for the bursaries committee. The bursaries committee is not decentralised, it's only in Lusaka. So, we wanted it to be decentralized because we realised that it was difficult for people outside Lusaka to access government sponsorship. Number three; there was a lot of corruption, which was associated with bursaries to an extent that those who were coming from rich families were the ones who were collecting the bursaries while those who were coming from under-privileged families were not collecting the bursaries. Then also, the loans scheme clearly stipulates the modalities, how payments should be done, when payment should be done and who has to pay."

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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Temp 8, Alex Chola Road, Nyumba Yanga, Lusaka.

We have noted that other than the United Party for National Development (UPND), other political parties and influential figures are sprouting to offer themselves as alternative governments. These parties and individuals believe that there is a leadership crisis in the country, and they want to challenge President Edgar Lungu in 2021.

Unfortunately, our government seems to have problems with more political players coming on board. They don't want to see a formidable third force that would grow too strong ahead of the 2021 general elections.

One such person whom the Patriotic Front seems to be so scared of is former foreign affairs minister and Bahati PF member of parliament Harry Kalaba. Honourable Kalaba is the second splitter from within President Lungu's Cabinet, after Honourable Chishimba Kambwili, to come out and say "we have a leadership crisis in the country".

Both members of parliament for the ruling party have declared their desire to replace President Lungu because they believe that the man has failed to resuscitate the economy, ensure law and order and uphold the Constitution. But for whatever strange reasons, government seems to be determined to stop Honourable Kalaba's political move than any other. Why?

Our initial guess was that State House had not yet gotten over the humiliation from the former minister, questioning and denouncing corruption in the corridors of power. We thought that Honourable Kalaba's resignation was

Why is PF blocking Harry Kalaba from challenging Lungu

too epic and that it went too far in exposing the rot in government. But now we are wondering why the PF doesn't want to see Honourable Kalaba's face on the ballot paper in 2021.

In a desperate attempt to prevent this from happening, the government wings are exposing themselves through shocking decisions that we have observed in the recent past.

First, there was a party called *Zambian Democrats*, which was in the process of being registered. Upon realising that this party was preparing to unveil the former minister as its presidential candidate for 2021, the Register of Societies refused to register this party. As if that was not bad enough, there was no reasonable explanation tendered for the strange decision.

Then came Democratic

Party who offered to sponsor the former minister's presidential candidature for the 2021 elections. The Democratic Party, which had been in existence for the past 27 years, was deregistered with immediate effect. All this while, nobody bothered to go and inspect the operating premises for the party, but no sooner had they invited Kalaba to be presidential candidate did they face the deregistration. Again we ask, why?

Perhaps PF knows something about the Bahati member of parliament that we, the ordinary people, don't know. We are beginning to think that maybe there are certain capabilities that the PF leadership acknowledges in him and they can't afford to let the Zambian people hear his vision.

Even without a political

party platform to campaign from, we have observed with keen interest how this former minister has made headways in reaching out to the people. He arrives from Shibuyunji on Monday, proceeds to Rufunsa on Tuesday, visits Dr Guy Scott at his farm and NIPA students at their college on Wednesday and Thursday before having lunch with street vendors and heading out to mobilise youths in Kabwe on Friday and finally winding up the week in Chingola on Saturday after addressing families of the suffering KCM miners.

Honourable Kalaba's methods may be boring, but he is surely working. Whether his efforts will achieve any benefits for his political interests is not a matter for determining today, but he has escalated his bid and is working hard, probably even harder than

any other 2021 presidential aspirant at this stage.

We have taken interest to hear his campaign messages, and despite sounding as sombre as a priest-turned politician, the man has a positive message for Zambians who are looking for alternative leadership.

On his recent mobilisation tour, Honourable Kalaba observed that foreign entrepreneurs and investors in Zambia were being given preferential treatment over citizens. He also observed that land exploitation by foreign entities was on the rise, while the natives have been watching helplessly.

"You have seen that this country is no longer in our hands, this country has been auctioned to foreigners and then we, the owners of the country, are just admiring from afar. Stand up with me and other well-meaning Zambians so that we can

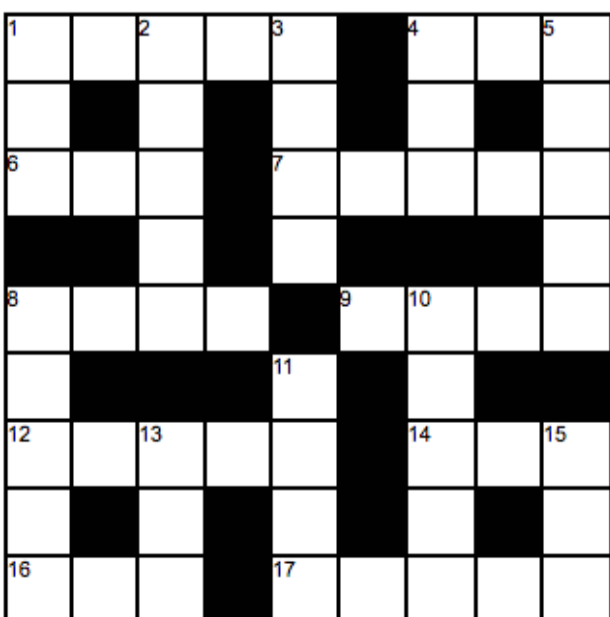
repossess the ownership of our country. The people doing our roads are Chinese, the people constructing our airports are Chinese, even schools are being constructed by the Chinese. So, what then will our own Zambian contractors make? We are just admiring where our own money is going. Unless the SIM card in your head is damaged, you cannot prioritise the needs of your friends' child when your own child is suffering," said Mr Kalaba.

"So, I am asking you, when that day [for elections] comes, go in your numbers to make the right decision. Don't be scared of these [PF] people, not even a little bit. If you get scared of them, then you will be neglecting your country. If you start fearing the PF, they will continue eating, while you will be suffering just like you are suffering now. The only things you will be benefiting are T-shirts and Vitenges (wrappers) because that's how they know you."

Indeed, unless the SIM card in your head is damaged, there is no leadership of a country that can prioritise the needs of foreigners over the people that voted it into power.

We would like to urge our readers to take interest in listening to Mr Kalaba's arguments. He may not be as entertaining as others whom the people are used to listening to, but he deserves a chance to be heard. There must be a good reason why the PF don't want him on the ballot in 2021.

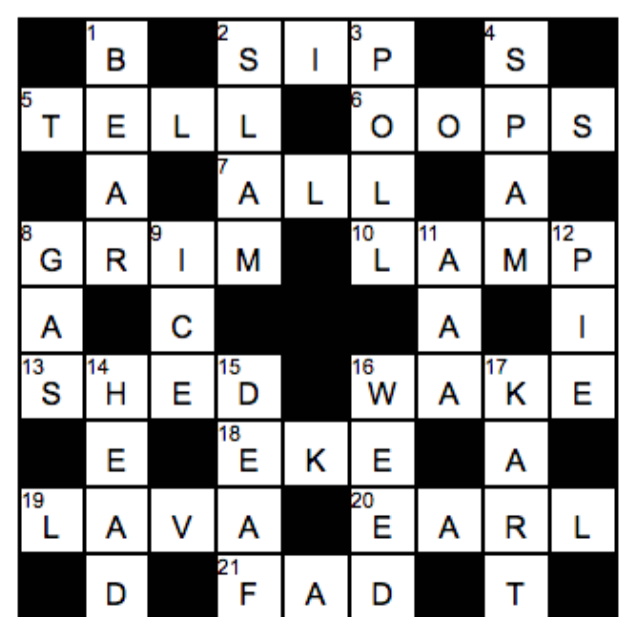
Crossword puzzle 179



*"There are only two things worse than an empty canvas: death and taxes."
- Ragnar Tornquist*

- | Across | Down |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Cheerful | 1. Blazing |
| 4. Cigar residue | 2. Printer need |
| 6. Uppermost | 3. Calendar unit |
| 7. Warn | 4. Orangutan, e.g. |
| 8. Additional | 5. Loathed |
| 9. Put into words | 8. Get hitched |
| 12. Fishing gear | 10. Unaccompanied |
| 14. Over the hill | 11. Pronto |
| 16. Talk on and on | 13. Deer relative |
| 17. Earnestly ask for | 15. Father |

Solutions to puzzle 178



Reader's feedback

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Go to our News Diggers Facebook page, select a story you like and jot down your comment. We will pick that as your feedback and get you published on this page. The shorter the comment the higher the chance of getting published.

Note that we block Facebook users who use abusive language.

Govt's recovery of loans from UNZA, CBU alumni starting this month

Editor,
"Dear GRZ,
Now that you have set a date for former CBU and UNZA students to start paying back the student loans, WHEN ARE YOU DOING THE SAME FOR ILLEGAL MINISTERS?"

Yours truly,
ChikMos
RT:Moses Chikwanda." - Simon Zulu

"Let the former ministers lead by example. If they pay back the money for illegally occupying their offices. Let the leaders be accountable, then rest will follow suit." - Harvey Banda

"Pay back with which jobs? This regime loves money so much; where money is involved, they stop at nothing until they milk it out. You are supposed to be reporting on how they are going to create employment for us to pay back or better off, how the government is going to make the Zambian economy friendly enough for people to be innovative and manage on their own...These are now desperate, weightless illogical measures..." - Chanda Senta

"Not all are in employment; how is it going to be possible? What type of reinvestment is the board going to venture in? And how are we going to be sure of the funds going towards the intended purpose looking at what the government of today is capable of when it comes to financial management. Is this not one way of raising funds for the unending by-elections? To buy beer and fuel for cadres to receive and send off our humble, ever-travelling and great leader to and from airports, respectively? This is Zambia." - Patrick Komc Chayinda

"The same simple minds that swept the hopeless PF leadership into power are finally going to get what's coming to them. Karma has no friend." - Monk Gyatso

"Starting from KK's era, the money was supposed to be a revolving fund. But because of poor planning you have made our education system to be horrible. Everything is 'wako ni wako,' opportunities are first given to your relatives who end up living in diaspora, or after education can't perform, blank, no plan at all causing pressure on the government to hire expatriates." - James Chongo



NDC's warning to PF to leave police out of political battles

Editor,
"The national dialogue is the only way out of this mess, and I feel pity for the police, as they are also tired of being forced to do what they can't wait to get out of." - Martin Nyanjagha

issue and other subjects are addressed. Zambia is being ruled by a dictator; no one should doubt it." - Chivunda Samusungwa

"We are very much willing to join you, please don't give up." - Wesley Harawa

"Chishimba Kambwili and Mwenya Musenge should know that dictator Edgar Lungu and his mentor Rupiah Banda don't like democratic rule; it's better for the NDC leaders to urge the Church mother bodies to quickly convene the dialogue so that the Public Order Act

"It's impossible for the PF to leave the Police out of their politics, they are the ruling party after all and the only way they can hold on to power is through intimidation of their rivals and election rigging. But there time will come and someone else will control the police." - John

Selfish management at ZNBS

Dear Editor

Senior management at Zambia National Building Society (ZNBS) have awarded themselves a K15,000 salary increment, while giving a K1,000 increment to the unionised employees.

They have refused to award any salary increment to the unrepresented middle management employees with reasons that there is no money. The senior management has even gone ahead to purchase the brand new Toyota Hilux vehicles for everyone in management at head office on hire-purchase whose repayments are cushioned by the K15,000 increment they awarded themselves. It is sad that employees are exploited by this management who have become selfish themselves contracts to supply materials and carrying out major works on the properties. Nepotism is at its best as we have seen employees dismissed for bringing out the wrong doing or theft of money by the directors' relatives. Employees now work in fear as management have planted spies everywhere to listen to employees' conversations. The situation at ZNBS is not conducive as the management running the government-owned financial institution have developed the "I don't care type of attitude". - Concerned

China's Xi Jinping says 'no strings attached' to Africa investments

President Xi Jinping told African counterparts and business leaders Monday that China's investments on the continent have "no political strings attached", even as Beijing is increasingly criticised over its debt-heavy projects abroad.

Xi spoke before the start of a two-day China-Africa summit that is expected to focus on his cherished Belt and Road initiative, a global trade infrastructure programme.

The massive scheme is aimed at improving Chinese access to foreign markets and resources, and boosting Beijing's influence abroad.

It has already seen China loan billions of dollars to countries in Asia and Africa for roads, railways, ports and other major infrastructure projects.

But critics warn that the Chinese leader's pet project is burying some countries under massive debt.

"China's investment in Africa comes with no political strings attached," Xi told a high-level dialogue with African leaders and business representatives hours before the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

"China does not interfere in Africa's internal affairs and does not impose its own will

on Africa," he said.

"China's cooperation with Africa is clearly targeted at the major bottlenecks to development. Resources for our cooperation are not to be spent on any vanity projects, but in places where they count the most."

But Xi admitted there was a need to look at the commercial viability of projects and make sure preparations are made to lower investment risks and make cooperation "more sustainable".

Belt and Road, Xi said, "is not a scheme to form an exclusive club or bloc against others. Rather it is about

greater openness, sharing and mutual benefit."

A study by the Center for Global Development, a US think-tank, found "serious concerns" about the sustainability of sovereign debt in eight Asian, European and African countries receiving Belt and Road funds.

Rwandan President Paul Kagame, currently the chair of the African Union, dismissed such concerns, saying talk of "debt traps" were attempts to discourage African-Chinese interactions.

"Another perspective... is that those criticising China on debt give too little," said

Kagame in an interview with the official Xinhua news agency.

At the last three-yearly gathering in Johannesburg in 2015, Xi announced \$60 billion of assistance and loans for Africa.

Nations across Africa are hoping that China's enthusiasm for infrastructure investment will help promote industrialisation on the continent.

Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari will oversee the signing of a telecommunication infrastructure deal backed by a \$328-million loan facility from China's Exim bank

during his visit, his office said.

Xi said Belt and Road complies with international norms, and China "welcomes the participation of other capable and willing countries for mutually beneficial third-party cooperation".

China would be happy to help Africa upgrade its customs and commodities inspection facilities and provide supplies and equipment to improve trade connectivity with the continent, the Chinese leader added.

He also voiced hope that Chinese and African companies could find new ways to cooperate in the field of technology.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, who spoke after Xi, said FOCAC should be strategic and "build links between dignity, work opportunity and economic security for all our people".

Ramaphosa warned that the benefits of globalisation have not been equally distributed between countries, resulting in a "fractured world where some powers are prone to unilateral and protectionist measures".

China has provided aid to Africa since the Cold War, but Beijing's presence in the region has grown exponentially with its emergence as a global trading power.

Chinese state-owned companies have aggressively pursued large investments in Africa, whose vast resources have helped fuel China's transformation into an economic powerhouse.

While relations between China and African nations are broadly positive, concerns have intensified about the impact of some of China's deals in the region.

Djibouti has become heavily dependent on Chinese financing after China opened its first overseas military base in the Horn of Africa country last year, a powerful signal of the continent's strategic importance to Beijing.

Locals in other countries have complained about the practice of using Chinese labour for building projects and what are perceived as sweetheart deals for Chinese companies.

The concerns are likely to grow as countries in other parts of the world -- especially Southeast Asia -- begin to question whether Chinese aid comes at too high a price.

On a visit to Beijing in August, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed announced he was shelving a series of Chinese-backed infrastructure projects worth \$22 billion in total. **AFP**

The world's biggest statue is rising in a remote corner of India to honour an independence hero but it could quickly be outdone by a monument to a Hindu warrior king in the sea off Mumbai.

In a burst of nationalist fervour, around one billion dollars is being spent on the two giant effigies, each more than twice as tall as the Statue of Liberty.

A 182-metre-high (600-foot-high) tribute to independence icon Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Gujarat state will be the first to dwarf the Spring Temple Buddha in China, currently the world's biggest statue at 128 metres (420 feet) in height.

Pick-axes are also swinging for a 212-metre-high likeness of 17th-century king Chhatrapati Shivaji, resplendent on a horse and brandishing a sword, which should dominate the Mumbai shoreline from 2021.

An army of 2,500 workers -- including several hundred Chinese labourers -- is toiling around the clock to put 5,000 squares of bronze cladding on the figure of Patel so it can be ready for inauguration on October 31 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The 29.9-billion-rupee (\$430-million) "Statue of Unity" overlooking the isolated Sardar Sarovar Dam is a pet project of Modi.

He has predicted it will attract "hordes" of tourists, as the

India's billion-dollar battle to build the world's biggest statue



The statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in India's Gujarat state will stand 182 metres high when completed

Statue of Liberty does in New York.

Visitors will be able to access a viewing gallery 153 metres up -- about chest height on the huge

standing figure.

But they will have to travel 250 kilometres (150 miles) from the state's main city of Allahabad to get there.

There is also a political motive to the mega project, with India heading into a campaign for a national election early next year.

Patel was deputy to India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru after independence in 1947 and Modi's nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party says his name has been unfairly overshadowed by the dominant Nehru dynasty.

Patel became known as the "Iron Man of India" by persuading -- through talks and a hint of force -- some 550 princely states to become part of India after independence from Britain in 1947. He died three years later. Many Hindu nationalists feel it was a slight when Patel was asked to step aside to let the secular Nehru become the country's first leader.

"Every Indian regrets Sardar Patel did not become the first prime minister," Modi said while campaigning in 2013. **AFP**

Back to school for French kids... without their phones

Texting under the table should be a thing of the past when French children return to class Monday following a nationwide ban on mobile phones in schools.

The ban, a campaign pledge of President Emmanuel Macron's, was brought in under a law passed in July which also banishes tablets and smart watches from French primary and junior

high schools.

High schools, taking students aged 15 to 18, will also be allowed to initiate partial or total bans as they reopen after the summer break, though they will not be obligatory. Proponents say the law, which has prompted vigorous debate,

will reduce distraction in the classroom, combat bullying and encourage children to be more active during recess. Nearly 90 percent of French adolescents aged between 12 and 17 have a mobile phone, and supporters hope the ban will help limit the spread of

violent and pornographic content among children.

Education Minister Jean-Michel Blanquer has hailed the legislation as "a law for the 21st century" that would improve discipline among France's 12 million schoolchildren. **AFP**

Mawere denies interfering in player/ coach selections

By Alex Chilumbwe

Speaking during a coaches' briefing in Lusaka yesterday, Sports Minister Moses Mawere denied having any influence in player or coach selection processes.

"I have been in this ministry for quite some time and I have never interfered with the selection of either players or coaches. There is never a day I warned the association president Andrew Kamanga on the selection, let alone influenced the association's decisions," Mawere said.

And Mawere said clubs should also not interfere in their coaches' selections, at the same warning the media not misquote him.

We also do not want clubs to interfere with their coaches and I hope I will not be misquoted that I have warned clubs against interfering with their coaches. Let us work together and work prudently, said Mawere.

The Minister warned media houses against changing his words to suit their groupings.

"I have been misquoted that I interfere with the selection of coaches. We are here to seek common grounds on how we can improve the number and quality of coaches in Zambia not wrongly quoting people. Coaches play a big role in the improvement of all sports in the country hence the need to train them more. We do not want to see or hear media houses that change the information given just to suit their groupings. Report what is given to you in its exact form or context," Mawere said.

And Mawere highlighted the need for local coaches to acquire better coaching qualifications.

"We need to ensure that our coaches are encouraged to acquire the highest qualifications and skills to



manage sports in the country. As government, it is our last resort to engage a foreign coach because we know our own can acquire the same skills and qualifications that we may seek in foreign ones," said Mawere.



Olympic sprinter Usain Bolt, playing for A-League football club Central Coast Mariners, fights for the ball during a pre-season practice football match in Gosford, New South Wales. AFP

Brazil great Ronaldo buys 51 percent of Real Valladolid

Former Brazil striker Ronaldo has taken control of Real Valladolid

after buying 51 percent of the La Liga club's shares, it was announced on

Monday. At a press conference held in the city's town

hall, Valladolid president Carlos Suarez said: "Today is a starting point.

Ronaldo personally acquires 51 percent of the shares of Real Valladolid."

"He is an idol that loves and spreads a dream."

Ronaldo played in Spain for Real Madrid and Barcelona, while also winning the World Cup twice with Brazil.

"This is a very important day for me," he said. "I've gone through a lot to prepare both within the game and outside it.

"You can count on us to consolidate Real Valladolid in the top division and to keep building our dream."

Valladolid earned promotion to the top tier last season and sit 16th, after two draws and a defeat from their opening three games.

La Liga also opened an investigation last month into the poor condition of the club's pitch at their Jose Zorrilla stadium, following a 1-0 loss to Barcelona.

Ronaldo will bring a sprinkling of stardust, with the former forward widely regarded as one of the game's greatest ever players.

He retired in 2011, having been named Fifa World Player of the Year in 1996, 1997 and 2002.

The 41-year-old has appealed to the Valladolid fans to help shape the club's future.

"I want everyone to be a part of this club and I invite the fans to participate in this project," he said.

"To give us ideas, opinions, criticisms and aspirations. I want you to be part of the present and future of Real Valladolid."

AFP



Mupopo accuses AIU of hindering African talent

By Alex Chilumbwe

Banned athlete Kabange Mupopo says Africans were facing hindrances each time they were flourishing on international level. Speaking to Goal Diggers! a disappointed Mupopo said she did not deserve the 4 year ban imposed on her by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) last Saturday. "I'm now among the more than 30 world athletes to be banned and it is very disappointing because this is the time I was taking over. If I was in a different continent, a lot of things surrounding my ban would have been evaluated and taken off my shoulders because I do not deserve the four year ban. But I'm from Africa and in Zambia so I cannot exactly be heard," Mupopo said.

The 400m runner accused the AIU of trying to take away her talents.

"Talent needs constant training and they are taking all that away from me so that I become irrelevant by 2021. I will stay focused and calm until something positive about my sport career is secured," Mupopo said.

Mupopo spoke of her plans before the ban is lifted on 11th August, 2021.

"I have football exploits too and I know you want to know if I will continue with it. I will put sports on hold for now until I arrive at a stage where I will not attract possible punishment to the four years I have already been given and that I do not deserve," Mupopo said.

The soft-spoken sprinter also

expressed disappointment at the treatment she has been given by some media houses.

"I have seen several media houses publish the story without even talking to me and they are making their own assumptions. They do not know mysteries around this sport and it is very tricky especially if one has no fair representation," Mupopo said.

"Before everyone can judge me on why am not exactly sweating about it, they should also remember I have pretty much suffered most of the things Caster Semenya has gone through like high levels of testosterone just to stop her reign," she added.

And she wondered whether anyone had actually investigated her case.

"Has anyone decided to find out how I failed the doping test?" she asked.

"I don't think so. If one person was on strong medication following an illness and the tests are done a few days before that, any presence of the medicine in excess would mean one has failed the test. That is also a valid possibility the media should help me publicise so that reasons around the ban can also be evaluated," said Mupopo.

Mupopo was alleged to have taken some external substances that saw her ban being effective on 12th August, 2017 to 11th August, 2021. She became one of the more than 30 world athletes that have been banned according to the latest sanctions on doping and non-doping violations.

Banned Mupopo accuses AIU of bias...

AFRICA TALENT UNDER THREAT

By Alex Chilumbwe

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Sports Minister denies interfering in player/ coach selections

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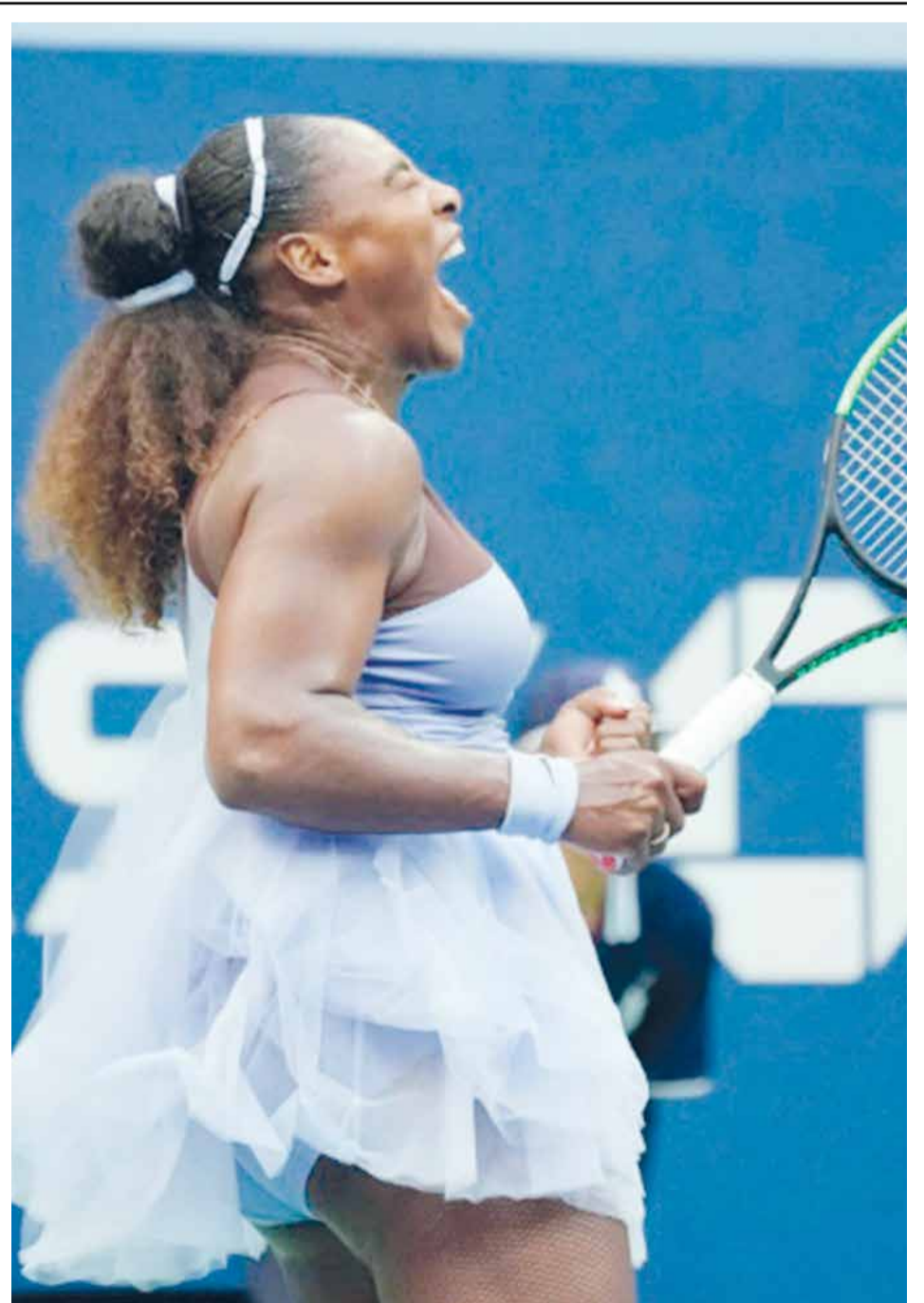
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Come on! Serena Williams on her way to victory over Kaia Kanepi in the fourth round of the US Open on Sunday. AFP

