



WH AIMS HIGH


I'll fight corruption starting with selling Lungu's jet

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
They fear me because they know that once elected, I will end corruption, starting with selling President Edgar Lungu's luxury jet and allotting the resources to key sectors, says UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema. And Hichilema says the

opposition alliance that has been formed is not about UPND, but about fighting the threat of tyranny under the PF, adding that the alliance leaders should not be sawayed to start discussing who would be the 2021 candidate among them. *To page 7*



Dr Kenneth Kaunda blesses a Christmas marriage between Mpanganwa Silungwe and Patricia Ngosa, both teachers, who tied the knot at UCZ St Pauls Church in Lusaka yesterday - Picture by Jean Mandela.



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or
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Lungu should not allow abolishing of meal allowances - UNZALARU

By Mirriam Chabala
University of Zambia Lecturers and Researchers Union (UNZALARU) general secretary Dr Kelvin Mambwe has appealed to President Edgar Lungu not to allow Professor Nkandu Luo to abolish meal allowances for students. Meanwhile, UNZASU president Warran Hamusunga says the Higher Education Minister has assured them that payment of meal allowances shall continue. *To page 2*

6 Libala pupils fined K5,000 over exam leakage

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FQM explains job cuts

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By Geoffrey Zulu

The Engineering Institute of Zambia (EIZ) has learnt with serious concern the wash-away of the Chipata to Lundazi road M12 over the Msuzi River near Lundazi in Eastern Province.

In a press statement, EIZ president Eng Sydney Matamwandi stated that the river crossing was a corrugated metal culvert

Chipata-Lundazi road disaster saddens EIZ

structure built over 40 years ago, and that this event is a repeat of many wash-ways road infrastructure countrywide that takes place every rainy season.

"Other wash ways in recent years have included the Batoka to Maamba Road

in Southern Province and Kawambwa to Mbereshi Road in Luapula Province.

Such infrastructure is typically very old structures built many decades in the past," Eng Matamwandi explained.

He further stated that while

EIZ commended the efforts of all parties involved in mitigating the impact of such events, there is need for increased investment in physical infrastructure, as well as in the resourcing the maintenance and care of road infrastructure.

Matamwandi also added that EIZ sees increased investment in the upgrading of the hydraulic structure as the long-term solution to the current problem.

"This is critical if the impact of climate change is to be adequately managed.

We are pleased that Road Development Agency (RDA) has taken the lead in this process of reviewing design standards in response to climate change. This effort must be supplemented by the appropriate capital investment," stated Eng. Matamwandi

He also stated that the enhancing of national capability in the maintenance and care of such infrastructure is another area that is an integral part of the solution and that the area needed significant investment to assure sustainability in the maintenance of the infrastructure.

Msuzi Bridge, which connects Lundazi and Chipata, was washed away last Friday night after a heavy rain downpour.

ACC withdraws matter involving 2 cops

By Zondiwe Mbewe

The Anti-Corruption Commission has withdrawn the matter in which two Zambia Police officers were facing charges of corrupt practices involving unspecified amounts of money, to give the Director of Public Prosecution more time to study the case.

Dennis Kayombo Mano and Elias Mutondo were also facing a charge of corrupt practices involving K5,000 which they allegedly received as gratification from a Lusaka businessman, Hendricks Nyambe, to have his theft charge dropped.

It was alleged in count one, that Dennis Kayombo and Elias Mutondo on May 4, 2018, in Lusaka, being police officers in the Zambia police service, jointly and whilst acting together with other persons unknown corruptly solicited unspecified amounts of cash gratification from Hendricks Nyambe as an inducement to have the charge of theft against him dropped and released from police custody, a matter or transaction which concerned the Zambia

Police Service.

And in count two, it was alleged that accused number two, Mutondo on the same date, being a police officer in the Zambia Police service, jointly and whilst acting together with other persons unknown, corruptly received K5,000 cash gratification from Nyambe to have his charge

dropped and released from police custody.

Nyambe, the complainant in this matter, was alleged to have given the two police officers money in order to drop his theft charges where he allegedly swindled the ADD leader, Charles Milupi over 312,000 kilograms of Maize valued at K656,040.

And when the matter came up before magistrate Austin Mubita, Monday, the State, ACC, informed the court that instructions from the DPP to have the matter tried were not ready. The State therefore applied that the matter be withdrawn to allow the DPP to have more time to study the case.

The defence did not object to the application.

Magistrate Mubita later granted the application by the State to have the matter withdrawn.

But speaking after appearing in court, one of the accused persons, Mano said ACC had withdrawn the matter for lack of evidence.

Lungu shouldn't allow abolishing of meal allowances - UNZALARU

By Mirriam Chabala

University of Zambia Lecturers and Researchers Union (UNZALARU) general secretary Dr Kelvin Mambwe has appealed to President Edgar Lungu not to allow Professor Nkandu Luo to abolish meal allowances for students.

Meanwhile, UNZASU president Warran Hamusunga says the Higher Education Minister has assured them that payment of meal allowances shall continue.

Last week, a named student from CBU phoned Prof Luo to follow up on the delayed meal allowances

for university students and whilst she assured him that the allowances would be paid soon, she informed the student that government would abolish meal allowances in January so that students could fend for themselves.

But in an interview, Dr Mambwe wondered why Prof Luo wanted to abolish meal allowances when it was not something government was giving for free.

"We have received that news with a sense of shock because the meal allowance that students are getting is part of the loan that government gives them, meaning that

this is money that they will be able to pay back. So it's not like government is doing them a favour by giving them that money. So am wondering how and where the advice is coming from that the minister would even think of removing an allowance which helps a lot of our students. These students that we are talking about, three quarters of these students, the minister knows very well that they are coming from very rural areas and from very vulnerable backgrounds. We interact with these students almost every day and we know that most of our students cannot

afford, their parents cannot afford even a K200 per month to support their studies," Dr Mambwe said.

He explained that the meal allowances helped a lot of students in sustaining themselves while in school.

"It's not an allowance that is given for leisure, this is money that supports the day to day lives of these students. Government stopped a long time ago to support dining halls so I think sometime we should go back into history to find out how some of these allowances were introduced. Meal allowance was introduced when government was failing to run dining halls in these higher learning institutions, that's how they introduced an allowance which students could use to buy their own meals and buy their own small groceries in order to support their learning process. these are public institutions, public institutions are open to everyone and three quarters of these students are coming from humble backgrounds. So we are so disappointed as a union and we hope that government will rescind it's decision to remove this allowance," Dr Mambwe said.

Dr Mambwe called on President Lungu to prevent Prof Luo from succeeding in abolishing meal allowances. "It's unfortunate that our leaders sometimes forget where they are coming from and they also forget about the plight of their own constituency. If you look at the level of poverty in our country, it's very high that a normal leader cannot think about abolishing an allowance that is given to students in order to alleviate their challenges. So we are very disappointed, we only

hope that the powers that be, the Head of State can come in and stop this minister from going ahead and removing this allowance. I think we will need to engage the ministry itself and maybe the wider community in order to see how best this issue can be resolved," said Dr Mambwe.

"It's unfortunate that the minister thinks that meal allowances is a source of confusion in higher learning institutions, that's just not true. I think the cause of confusion is usually the delay in remitting these allowances to the students. So to give that reason as the basis for removing the allowances is something that we can't understand. So we are just appealing to the President and the entire cabinet that they should not allow the minister to even present this to cabinet."

Meanwhile, after holding a meeting with Prof Luo on Monday, Hamusunga stated that the minister had assured students that payment of meal allowances would continue.

"With reference to the allegations circulating on social media over abolishment of meal allowances at higher learning institutions. We The University of Zambia Students Union (UNZASU) thought it wise to seek immediate audience with the Higher Education Minister Prof Nkandu Luo for clarification. In this quest, we managed to have a successful dialogue with the Minister and we can confirm that student concerns have been heard for both UNZA and CBU. Moving forward we can also confirm that the allocation of meal allowances will continue as it has been in the past," stated Hamusunga.

6 Libala pupils fined K5,000 over leakage

By Zondiwe Mbewe

The Lusaka Magistrates' Court has fined six Libala Secondary School Grade 12 pupils K5,000 each for unauthorized possession of examination papers.

Magistrate Humphrey Chitalu ruled that if the fine is not paid by December 31, the offenders will serve 18 months' simple imprisonment.

In this matter, the six; five juveniles and 20 year-old, Joyce Sialwiindi of Libala Stage 4B, were facing one count of unauthorized possession of examination paper or information, contrary to Section 19 (1) and (2) of the Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ) Act chapter 137 of the laws of Zambia and had pleaded guilty.

It was alleged that on November 2, this year, the six jointly and whilst acting together without lawful excuse, had in their possession Grade 12 examination question papers.

The matter came up, Monday, for facts and sentencing.

Facts in this matter are that on the material day around 09:00 hours, a police officer attached to the ECZ received a report that there were some pupils from Libala Secondary School who were caught with pre-written answers for Grade 12 Mathematics Paper One.

Acting on the same information, the said officer went to the school in the company of the ECZ security officer and were ushered into the Head Teacher's office.

The two found six juvenile offenders in possession of Grade 12 Mathematics Paper One question paper with handwritten solutions.

The said pupils were later taken to Longacres Police Post.

Asked by the court whether the facts were correct, the six replied in the

affirmative.

In mitigation, the six offenders asked the court to exercise leniency on them so that they could complete their studies.

The six added that they were very apologetic to the court for what happened.

However, passing his sentence, Magistrate Chitalu noted that the offence of examination malpractice had become very common in Zambia.

He fined them K5,000 each to be paid by next Monday to send a message to would-be offenders.

"It is very sad. I understand that they are first offenders [but] it is important to send a message. So, this court has ordered a fine of K5,000 to be paid by December 31, 2018. In default, they will serve 18 months' simple imprisonment," ruled Magistrate Chitalu.

He further ordered that the six remain in custody until the amount was paid.

By Stuart Lisulo

President Edgar Lungu has directed all relevant government departments and Ministries to ensure mining companies are not allowed to unjustifiably lay-off workers, says Amos Chanda.

And Chanda, who is President Lungu's Special Assistant for Press and Public Relations, says the Head of State believes that mining companies' rejection of the mining fiscal changes lacks merit. Speaking to journalists shortly after President Lungu and other government officials

Mining companies won't be allowed to unjustifiably lay-off workers – Amos

attended Christmas Mass in Lusaka, Tuesday, Chanda revealed that the Head of State had directed all relevant government Ministries, such as Labour and Mines, to ensure that mining

companies are prevented from unjustifiably firing workers following repeated threats of mass lay-offs. The threats of downsizing follows significant changes to the mining fiscal regime,

which will see an increase in mineral royalty rates by 1.5 percentage points at all levels of the sliding scale as contained in the 2019 national budget. Mining companies have protested the imminent

tax changes, which include the controversial Sales Tax that is due to take effect April 1, 2019. "As of the unjustified threats in cuts of job numbers; the President has asked all officials:

Labour Commissioner; Minister of Labour; Minister of Mines...to be on top of things and ensure that they are no unjustified decisions made by mining companies," Chanda told journalists at Mary Magdalene Anglican Church.

And Chanda said that mining companies' rejection of the imminent mining fiscal changes lacks merit.

He argued that if mining companies could be able to comply with tax legislation in other jurisdictions, such as the United States, which operates a Sales Tax, there was no reason why the same entities could fail to comply with Zambia's laws.

"The government does not accept that a mining company that fully complies with Sales Tax in Australia, in the US, Canada would fail to comply with Sales Tax in Zambia? So, there is no merit in arguments like that," insisted Chanda.

"If some mining companies, which are listed in Toronto, which are listed in Australia, which are listed in the US, can comply with Sales Tax in the US, Australia and Canada, how is that not tenable in the jurisdiction? There is no merit as things stand! The President does not see merit in the opposition to Sales Tax as things stand."

FQM explains job cuts

By Stuart Lisulo

First Quantum Minerals (FQM) has announced that its subsidiary, Kansanshi Mining Plc, will downsize its operations, including implementing the planned job cuts arising from the 2019 mining fiscal regime, with full effect by April next year.

Last week, FQM announced that it will cut its workforce by 2,500 local and expatriate employees during the first quarter of 2019, in addition to an unspecified number of contractors, in response to the hiked mining fiscal regime.

According to a press release issued from PR agency, Langmead & Baker, FQM will lay off its workforce in a phased manner during the first quarter of the New Year, triggered by government's new mining fiscal regime.

The 2019 mining fiscal regime will see an increase in mineral royalty rates by 1.5 percentage points at all levels of the sliding scale.

Government will, among other key measures, roll out import duties of five per cent on copper and cobalt, while equally introduce an export duty on precious metals including gold, precious stones and gemstones at the rate of 15 per cent next year.

But FQM, the Canadian miner, which runs Kansanshi Mining Plc in Solwezi and the Sentinel in Kalumbila District, stated that the hiked tax rates have triggered a "difficult and sad decision" to make lay-offs.

"...Critically, mineral royalties will cease to be deductible from corporate income tax; a measure not seen in other copper mining jurisdictions.

FQM's lay-offs will affect 1,250 direct employees at the company's Kansanshi Mine in Solwezi and a further 1,250 at its Sentinel Mine at Kalumbila. Both local and expatriate staff across all departments will be impacted and employees will receive redundancy pay in line with statutory requirements," read the press release, Friday.

"FQM has said that it is with deep regret that the tax measures will lead to a reduction in employee headcount. However, FQM has also been clear that it will do its utmost to mitigate the impact the measures will have on its employees and on the broader communities around its mines."

And in a letter addressed to Kansanshi employees dated December 21, FQM director of operations Matt Pascal stated that the planned layoffs will fully be in place by April.

Pascal added that the job cuts also coincided with the introduction of the Sales Tax due to take effect from April 1, 2019.

"It is with deep regret that these changes will also lead to a stepped reduction in employee headcount. These reductions will take place over a period of some months and those affected will be notified in due course through their line managers. However, the imposition of general Sales Tax on 1st April, which is likely to further increase our costs by at least 20 per cent on procured items, will necessitate the full manpower reduction to be in place by that date," Pascal stated.

He explained that Kansanshi will no longer be economically viable with the new tax measures

in place.

"With the rapidly declining grade of ore at Kansanshi Mine (with plant ore feed-grade decreasing from above 1 per cent to low as 0.6 per cent in the current 5-year plan) and the historic low copper prices of 2015/16, the mine has done, and continues to do, everything possible to minimize its costs and consumption of reagents, consumables, maintenance spares and labour. Sadly, once the new tax measures take effect it will no longer be economically viable to continue to run Kansanshi's operations at the current

level," Pascal added.

He further bemoaned that government had not listened to the mining company's submissions on the dangers of imposing the draconian measures.

"We discussed in detail the various implications, including work force reductions, and even left them with written confirmation of our concerns. Unfortunately, despite all efforts to objectively and transparently inform government decision-makers on the inevitable consequences of the proposed measures (not

only by FQM, but also by the Zambian mining industry), our message seems not to have been heard, and the tax changes have been implemented," stated Pascal.

FQM, Zambia's largest taxpayer, has invested US \$5.7 billion in its Sentinel and Enterprise mines, and Kansanshi mine and smelter, and has paid more than US \$3 billion in taxes in the last 10 years, transforming what was once a rural-based economy in the North-Western Province and creating employment for more than 8,500 people.



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By Zondiwe Mbewe

The Human Rights Commission (HRC) has called on the Zambia Police Service to abide by the Constitution and other laws when administering the Public Order Act (POA).

And the Commission has welcomed the acquittal Laura Miti and five others who were arrested last year on a charge of disobeying lawful orders.

On Friday, the Lusaka Magistrates' Court acquitted Miti, PeP president Sean Tembo, musician Chama Fumba, commonly known as Pilato, ZCSD executive director Lewis Mwape, Bornwell Mwewa and Mika Mwambazi on a charge of disobeying lawful orders.

The six were nabbed outside Parliament building in Lusaka on September 29, 2017, as they were protesting the purchase of 42 fire trucks for US \$42 million.

And in a statement issued, Sunday, HRC Spokesperson Mweelwa Muleya stated that the acquittal of the six, buttressed previous court judgements and the widely-held public knowledge that police were abusing their authority in the administration of the POA.

He acknowledged efforts by the Judiciary in providing guidance on the need to respect and protect the right to freedom of assembly.

Mweelwa, however, regretted that the police had continued to disregard the guidance by the Judiciary.

"Regrettably, the guidance and counsel by the Judiciary to the Executive through at least

Fire tender protestors' acquittal proof police abuse POA - HRC

three landmark judgements on the police violation of the constitutionally-guaranteed right to freedom of assembly has continued to be disregarded since the Supreme Court ruling in the Christine Mulundika and seven others Vs. the People [SCZ Judgement No.25 of 1995] case of 1995," Mweelwa narrated.

"It is important to note that the police are agents of the State. As a result, the violation of the rights of individuals by the police constitutes the governance and human rights record of the country in general and, in particular, the legacy of those in authority. Therefore, the Executive is expected to be deeply concerned

at the police conduct that undermines respect for the rule of law, human rights and constitutionalism."

Mweelwa stated that there was need for the Judiciary to start condemning the State to damages for malicious prosecution in order to end impunity.

He added that the Executive should equally start playing its rightful role by providing executive and administrative guidance to the police, aimed at enhancing good governance and human rights record of the country.

And Mweelwa hoped that the judgement would inform the POA reform process as well as enhance the promotion

and protection of the right to freedom of assembly.

"The Commission is aware that during the commemoration of the International Human Rights Day on December 10, 2018, President Edgar Lungu, through the speech read on his behalf by the Vice Republican President, Ms. Inonge Wina, directed the Minister of Justice, Mr. Given Lubinda, to expedite the process of amending and enacting the revised POA," he stated.

"The case of the six human rights defenders and the subsequent judgement could not have come at a better time than now when the government is in the process of reviewing and amending

the POA. There is now further judicial evidence of unlawful and discriminatory application of the POA against individuals holding divergent or dissenting views. It is hoped that the judgement will inform the POA reform process and enhance the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of assembly and associated rights."

He stated that it was the desire of the Commission that the revised POA be tabled in Parliament for enactment during the first quarter of 2019.

Meanwhile, Mweelwa stated that it was high time practical steps were taken to promote and protect an

inclusive democratic system of governance.

"The government does not only have an opportunity but has the authority to ensure that the POA is appropriately amended and applied in a manner that is consistent with human rights and multi-party and pluralistic democratic principles. It was high time practical steps were taken to promote and protect an inclusive democratic system of governance as demanded and cherished by the majority of Zambians who overwhelmingly voted to end the oppressive one-party system of government in 1991," stated Mweelwa.

"The exercise of the right to freedom of assembly is a critical governance issue as it enables divergent views to contribute to better governance of a country and improved service delivery by fostering accountability and transparency in public affairs."

Zambian parastatals' financial performance unsatisfactory - PMRC

By Mirriam Chabala

The Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) has called on the Zambia Revenue Authority to put in place an effective routine mechanism that will ensure that all parastatals and statutory bodies remit their statutory contributions.

In the 2018 PMRC analysis

of parastatal bodies and other statutory institutions for the financial years ended 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, it was noted that financial performance of Parastatals in Zambia still remains unsatisfactory.

According to a research by PMRC's Leya Namonje and centre executive director

Bernadette Deka, the Auditor General's report for the four years under review, indicated that out of the 25 state-owned enterprises under the IDC portfolio, in which IDC holds 60.7 to 100 percent shareholding, only two declared dividends for the year 2016.

"Mulungushi Village Complex Limited declared K0.2 million and Indeni Petroleum Products Limited declared K7.4 million as dividends for the year 2016 in amounts totalling K7,600,000. In addition, out of the seven institutions in which IDC had shareholding between 14.27 to 50%, only two institutions, Indo Zambia Bank Limited - K12.06 Million and Nanga Farms Limited K4.7 Million, declared dividends in amounts totalling K16.76 million. The Report highlighted the following issues as clear indicators of internal control lapses: Non preparation of financial statements, Failure to remit statutory contributions, Weaknesses in procurement procedures, Irregular payments and poor financial performance among other," the document read.

But PMRC expressed worry, saying failure to provide financial statements defied the Public Finance Management Act and the Public Audit Act and that it also made it impossible for the office of the Auditor General to ascertain if the money used by each Statutory institution had been applied for its intended purpose.

"The non-production of audited financial statements is therefore, a contravention of the various enabling

legislations governing the institutions and is contrary to good corporate governance. Corporate governance, accounting and accountability in the public management of parastatals and statutory bodies can not be over emphasized, and this is all because service provision and budget consolidation cannot be realized effectively and efficiently without good governance and management. Ineffective corporate governance has led to the fall of many state owned and private owned enterprises around the world. It is for this reason that corporate governance principles should be embedded in the running of any institution be it public or private," the document read. "An effective routine mechanism should be put in place by ZRA and other regulating authorities to ensure that all parastatals and statutory bodies remit their statutory contributions. The principles of corporate governance such as maintaining a full board composition, ensuring accountability and transparency as well as the existence of a fully functioning audit committee must be embedded in the running of all parastatals and statutory bodies. To this effect, it would be important to have refresher corporate governance training offered to all parastatals and statutory institutions. Staff members of parastatals and statutory bodies that fail to produce financial statements, or record audit queries must in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act, be made to account for their failures."

The centre recommended that there be a thorough assessment that should be undertaken to assess the status and performance of parastatals at a specified time.

"All parastatals and statutory bodies should implement the internal control integrated framework which is expected to help organizations design and implement internal controls in light of many changes in business and operating environment. There should be a thorough assessment that should be undertaken to assess the status and performance of parastatals. This would further assist the Industrial Development Corporation with planning for the parastatals on how they can be efficient in areas of concern," read the document.

"There exists huge potential for the efficient administration of parastatals and Statutory Bodies in Zambia. The enactment of the Public Finance Management Act will tremendously improve transparency and accountability of public resources, which will lead to improved service delivery. Therefore, there is dire need for government to ensure that the Public Finance Management Act is effectively implemented and that there is total compliance by all officers managing public funds. It is envisaged that with the development of a code of corporate governance guidelines for the public sector, there will be effective monitoring of the performance of Boards of parastatals and statutory bodies, which will help lessen the queries incurred by various institutions."

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By Mirriam Chabala

Veteran politician Vernon Mwaanga has sent a message of goodwill to all Zambians as the country ushers in the New Year, praying that 2019 will be a better year with greater political and personal tolerance.

And Mwaanga has observed that there is need for collective, non-partisan and inclusive governance in Zambia, which will give all citizens a sense of belonging, regardless of where they come from or their political inclination.

Delivering his seasonal greetings in a statement, Mwaanga noted that political leaders were expected to have continuous dialogue to discuss issues affecting the country, explaining that political

VJ prays for political tolerance in 2019

power was never permanent anywhere in the world.

“The year 2018 has been a year of mixed blessings. It has been a year of hopes, disappointments and even failures. On the hopeful side, we saw the Church mother bodies arrange and oversee an important meeting between President Edgar Lungu and Mr Hakainde Hichilema, president of UPND, where the two leaders held an open discussion and called each other brothers - which is what it should be. They also agreed, among other issues, that inclusive political dialogue should start immediately, to

address the many national issues facing our great country. Surprisingly, this was the first meaningful meeting between the two leaders, who had previously been talking at each other through the media and other forums rather than talking to each other,” Mwaanga stated.

“We fought hard and sacrificed a lot to bring about a democratic dispensation in Zambia in 1990. Democracy demands many things from all political leaders, just like it also demands many things from ordinary citizens. In a democracy, political leaders are expected to have

continuous dialogue to discuss problems and issues affecting the country. History all over the world has shown that political power is never permanent, and that is why we have our sixth President since Independence in October, 1964. At the funeral of Mr Daniel Munkombwe in Choma, the two leaders shook hands, much to the delight of those who were present. This response from the citizenry clearly showed that this is what they wanted to see from their leaders. The Church mother bodies should not waste the momentum gained and should make sure

that this inclusive dialogue starts immediately before too much water goes under the bridge. Our political leaders should not treat each other as enemies, but mere opponents, who are involved in a legitimate and robust contest for political power, which is healthy and expected in any democratic society.”

Mwaanga also sympathised with Zambians and commended them for their patience in light of increasing tax burdens.

“It is clear that our economy is not doing well and GDP growth has been low compared to where it was

prior to 2011. Some of the reasons are external, but some have to do with the manner in which we have mismanaged the economy, accumulated debt and inability to reach agreements with the Bretton Woods Institutions on new economic packages intended to stimulate the economy. Part of the problem in reaching agreements with these institutions has largely been on account of mushrooming external debt and debt servicing capacity. We should not treat these issues as partisan, but national, which must concern all of us. They should be addressed in a non-partisan manner and I would like to see a more consultative and inclusive approach. I commend our citizens for their patience in the light of increasing tax burdens, which have resulted in ever-increasing costs of public and private transport costs, domestic energy, the high price of petroleum products and the ever-escalating cost of living, making survival for our people unbearable,” he stated. Mwaanga hoped and prayed that 2019 would be a better year for Zambians.

“I pray and hope that 2019 will be a better year where we shall see greater political and personal tolerance. There is need for a collective, non-partisan and inclusive governance, which will give all Zambians a sense of belonging for all, regardless of where they come from or what they believe in politically. This will rekindle the spirit and national motto of: ‘One Zambia, One Nation’, which the founding fathers put in place and which served our country well. I would also like to see the public media liberated from the yoke of whatever political party is in power and operate like the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) - a public broadcaster - which is independent and impartial. I would also like to see the Zambia Police Service operate in an impartial manner, where they will treat all political offenders equally,” stated Mwaanga.

“The Public Order Act, although amended in 1996 - is still being misapplied and has become an enemy of our democracy. It must be amended further to remove all powers of misinterpretation. Let us all develop a new spirit of loving one another as Zambians regardless of where we come from and recommit and rededicate ourselves to building a more peaceful, prosperous and caring country where corruption will be treated as a evil, so that prosperity can become the preserve of many and not just a few. We all have a duty to make our beloved country great again.”



DANGOTE

Dangote industries Zambia limited.

Registration no:70044

Tpin:1001878318

Ndola factory

P.oBox 71082

SENIOR CHIEF CHIWALA AREA

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Please be informed further that the company reserves the right to cease and dispose - off such hauled cargo and prosecute perpetrators of such illegal activities in accordance with the Zambian Law.



LAND POLICY BY THE UPND IN GOVERNMENT

**BY THE CHAIRMAN LANDS AMBASSADOR
ADRIAN BAULENI**

The UPND as a major political party and the Government in waiting is undoubtedly aware of the fundamental importance of the land regime anywhere in the world. It is the greatest natural asset to mankind. Therefore, without land, it inevitably constitutes the dead end for any nation and could easily lead to extinction of any human race. Therefore, it would be preferable to remain poorer rather than the land being taken away by the foreigners, the way it is currently obtaining in our country, Zambia.

In our local situation, we might not be feeling the impact of the seemingly Chinese slow pace of land alienation. But the real gravity of it would be felt by the future generations of our people in no distant future. The foreigners are slowly compromising our very existence as a people like the way the stalk borers behave on long term basis.

The following will therefore, be the immediate practical measures to tackle the land regime dispensation in our beloved mother land which has been disastrous to say the least:-

The Overall Rationalization of Land ownership Policy

This will be a priority to ensure that land ownership regime in our country becomes exclusively for the indigenous people without exception. Whatever is obtaining currently where the foreigners have had the upper hand in grabbing of the land all over the country will cease forthwith. The primary objective will be to guard our land and its natural resources against massive exploitation by the foreigners mainly of the Chinese origin.

A Special Land Commission will be established whose terms of reference will inter alia to review and recommend for expeditious actualization of the findings.

The Traditional Rulers

The overall land policy of the UPND is to support and consolidate the authority of the Traditional Rulers in the Management and Administration of the customary land. They are the custodians of our land and collaborator with the central Government even during the colonial days. Why should they be marginalized this time around and yet they were respected by the colonialists? The UPND Government therefore, pledges to stand by the Traditional Rulers as partners in the land governance in our country, Zambia. The current contentious Draft National land policy of the PF Government has suspicious intentions bordering on the obliteration of the Traditional Authority in our country. The UPND Government will however, endeavour to enhance the authority on the customary land of the Traditional Rulers by redefining and putting in place systems and procedures in the collaborative process in relation to the Central Government and other agencies that would be directly and indirectly linked to customary land administration. The mutual consultations would be the order of the day between the Central Government and the Traditional authority over the customary land.

Displacements and Evictions of Citizens

This has been ongoing under the PF Government to displace and evict the citizens from their ancestral land. Usually in preference to the foreigners. This is abominable and will not be tolerated any further by UPND especially in the circumstances of the abundance of land in the country. As UPND Government, we will endeavour to end the trend in order to keep the overall citizenry at peace and avert the story of recurrent displacement and evictions

of our citizens.

Equitable Distribution of Land

The UPND Government shall ensure equitable distribution of land among the Zambian people as much as possible particularly the women and the youth. The two categories of our people constitute the majority of those who are poverty stricken and thus, they need redemption through empowerment.

The UPND Government shall ensure that the two categories of our people are accorded the necessary priority attention because they are generally disadvantaged due to lack of land of their own on which to carry out the desired development for themselves.

Land Audit

It is a well acknowledged fact that our country, Zambia has had no Land Audit conducted since independence. In addition, there is absence of a National Land Policy which would be acceptable to the people of Zambia. In this regard therefore, the land now under free leasehold or other state controlled tenure is not known. The UPND Government in power will therefore, ensure that the exercise of Land Audit is carried out without further delay in order to know precisely how much land constitutes our country, Zambia.

The Presidential Powers Over Land

The UPND Government shall review the executive powers of the President over land in Zambia. The clause that stipulates that all land is vested in the President on behalf of the people of Zambia shall be reviewed critically. Unfortunately the clause has been abused by the sitting Presidents instead of engaging the Traditional Rulers and the affected citizens in certain parts of the country, the executive powers have been excessively used to secure land anywhere in the country. This is particularly common on the issues involving investors.

To this end, therefore, some citizens have been arbitrarily displaced in certain parts of the country in order to accommodate the Foreign Investors. This trend has been at variance with the expected role of the Head of State in such matters. There will also be need for imperative formulation of the National Land Policy. This has been long over due for the country like ours. It has been most unfortunate because land planning becomes untenable in a manner that it is expected. However, the process of formulating the National Land Policy shall involve extensive consultations with all the stakeholders exhaustively and should be devoid of imposition. The Traditional Rulers as the custodians of our customary land shall play a vital role to ensure that they are not pushed around as the case has been with the PF Draft National Land Policy which marginalized the Traditional Rulers.

Land Disputes

There are several land disputes among the Chiefdoms in Zambia which stand unresolved. It is the same with international boundaries. They are still hanging in the balance because under normal circumstances, they are supposed to be resolved conclusively as they occur.

However, with UPND in power, it shall endeavour to get to the root cause of the failure to resolve the boundary disputes among the Chiefdoms. This is extremely necessary for sustainable stability to prevail in those Chiefdoms. The same applies to international disputes which in some cases still remain unresolved. In the process however, the House of Chiefs would have to be strengthened over the land issues in terms of management and Administration and the ability to

resolve issues to do with the boundaries.

Control over the Mining of Assorted Minerals in Zambia

Our country Zambia is extremely porous to foreigners who have been coming to mine our precious stones uncontrollably. This has been going on indefinitely. One really begins to wonder what the Government attitude is because our wealth is being depleted heavily as if there was no Government existence to take care and control such activities in order to protect our wealth.

It reminds us of the days of Senegalese, Ivoirians and many others from West Africa. They had looted our emeralds and other minerals on the Copperbelt and also other parts of the country. The scourge still continues to be the case as if our Government machinery does not exist at all. This is pathetic. Therefore, with the UPND in power, such things will become intolerable for the protection of the country's wealth contrary to what has been going on.

The Exploitation of Water in Rivers and Lakes for Irrigation Purposes

The 40% of the water available in the SADC Region is in Zambia. It appears however, that very little if any has been done in the utilization of this abundant availability of the water resource for the purpose of irrigation and fish farming in our country.

The UPND Government will therefore, make it a priority for the maximized utilization of the abundant water resources availability in our country. We will embark on major irrigation schemes and fish farming on a large scale. The water from the big rivers that pass through our country must be diverted into the main land so that the farming activities remain posted through out the year and the growing of a variety of fruit.

Land Grabbing by Political Party Cadres

Land grabbing denotes lawlessness. The general Party membership shall be reminded of the consequence of taking the land into their own hands. As a Government, we shall ensure that a smooth way of land allocation is devised for the benefit of all the Zambians across the board. It shall not be for the rich people only. There will be a mechanism put in place through which the aggrieved people of the land grabbing by Cadres of the previous regime could be attended to in the final analysis.

The Strengthening of the Office of Land Commission and the Land Tribunal

There is imperative need to critically analyse the office of the Commission of Lands and to strengthen the operations of the Land Tribunal. The two offices should be seen to operate independent of the external forces within the Government circles. The issuance of the Title Deeds must be done free from corruption or under duress of the Party Cadres that dictate terms to the Commissioner of Lands.

In order therefore, to ensure smooth work culture by the two offices, there will be need to appoint a special committee for the purpose of studying what goes on in those offices. There is suspicion that there is corruption in the Ministry of Lands.

**Issued by: Chairman – Lands
Ambassador Adrian Bauleni**

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

They fear me because they know that once elected, I will end corruption, starting with selling President Edgar Lungu's luxury jet and allotting the resources to key sectors, says UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema.

And Hichilema says the opposition alliance that has been formed is not about UPND but about fighting the threat of tyranny under the PF, adding that should the alliance partners decide to back one candidate ahead of 2021; it will not automatically be him, but could be any other leader.

In an interview, Hichilema noted that unprecedented levels of corruption had characterised 2018.

"We can't have a government that is so reckless and I want to say, through this interview, that amongst the priorities that we will take swinging action is to sell that presidential Jet and put that money in education, in health and in agriculture, we will not withdraw [students'] allowances as they have done. These people are shameless, you withdraw the allowances and then you buy yourself a jet, why? You want to stretch your legs when you are on the plane when students are out of school?" Hichilema asked.

And Hichilema said the opposition alliance that has been formed is not about UPND or any other political party but about fighting the threat of tyranny which Zambia is presented with under the PF.

"This particular relationship is anchored on what we call areas of common interests, areas of national interest, not focusing on the interest of a particular individual [or] interests of a particular political party. That is what has brought [us] together and these issues of national interest include the need to restore the rule of law. I

When elected, I'll fight corruption starting with selling Lungu's Jet - HH

think we all agree that there is a breakdown in the rule of law. We all agree that there is abuse of human rights, liberties and freedoms and we need to restore human rights, liberties and freedoms. In the human rights sits freedoms of assembly, association, movement, conscious to demonstrate peacefully... We need a credible electoral commission; elections have become a source of teargas. Journalists are going in, this has never happened in our country," he said.

"So because of our focus is on things that unite us and not focusing on our differences and those small issues, that will bind us together, we believe. We also have been very clear, we are not dissolving our parties. Our parties [will] remain [the same]."

Hichilema said people should stop speculating about whether or not the alliance would still be standing in 2021 or if they would put forward a single candidate because power was not a motivating factor in its formation.

"And I don't know why people bring in the issue of a single candidate, it is not

mentioned anywhere in our constituting framework. You are jumping the bridge. Maybe we will cross the bridge when we get there. People are just looking for holes and trouble spots [but] we were never looking for trouble holes and I think if that issue arises, it will take its own process and of course it is in PF's interest to pour cold water on anything that is likely to bring this country together. Why shouldn't the country unite around human rights? Honestly this country has history of coming together when the whole nation is challenged. Now we have a threat on our democracy, we have a threat on the rule of law. We have a threat of tyranny," he said.

"I have noticed someone saying 'we will not be interested in the alliances that are focusing on removing the ruling party'. UPND is just an integral part and we want more people, more organisations to come on board. Not just political parties, we would like the civil societies to come on board, we would like the churches to come on board. When that situation [of a single candidate] arises,

there will be a new life, there will be a new conversation to take the decision along the lines you are talking about. That situation has not risen now [but] when it arises, it will be dealt with and whatever decision that will be taken, it's a non-issue to us. If they decide that Funga becomes our leader and we have decided, who is to blame us? Who is to point fingers at us? If they say no it's Chipimo [or] its Milupi or it's Sean Tembo, it's a no brainer for us but that has not arisen."

Hichilema said those trying to disband the alliance by asserting that it was all about the UPND were just scared of him because they knew he would end corruption once in office.

"So this perception that this thing is contrived for UPND is just mischief. U-turn that feeling around, what is it that they fear about UPND and HH? What is it? I think they fear the way we will deal with some of the issues. I think that's the source of fear because this hunky-punky you see will not be there. You cannot run a country the way these guys are running a country today, never! So it is

this fear that UPND and HH will stop corruption," he said. "You have watched the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament, you have watched how senior members of the executive, the permanent secretaries are failing to answer questions. What is happening? Where are the systems? Were there controls before PF came into power? Yes. Where have they gone? They have been broken...Citizens are over taxed yet they were promised lower taxes. Everything they promised, they have done the opposite. We will abolish borehole tax, withholding tax and so many other taxes so that we can lessen the burden of citizens and not over tax them."

He said a UPND government would make sure those cited for abusing public funds were punished unlike the current situation where most offenders were merely transferred to different departments.

"First of all, who would fire them [today]? Nobody. Because they are all colluding. If there was no collusion, the firing would take place. If there was no demonstration of theft 'do what you do I

do what I do, if I stop you from doing what you are doing, someone will also say what I'm doing is wrong.' Secondly, there is fear that if we remove this guy, they may spill the beans because they know what those are doing. They are actually used by those on top. So we need to stop this rot. That is why they are not removed, that is why they are just transferred and not removed because there is a relationship and sharing the loot. And these guys have reached a point where they are not afraid of the citizens, he said.

Hichilema highlighted ways in which he would ensure that head of key institutions like the Judiciary operated independently.

"Our principle is that we want independence of these institutions. Who do they work for? Currently they work for the one who appointed them isn't it? We will make it operate differently. We will get them to work for the people and to work for the people of Zambia, they need to have a direct link to Parliament which means Parliament via the constitution will appoint them. we will not have a situation where the president is the employer. The employer must be the people through the constitutional provisions and them Parliament deciding who becomes DPP," said Hichilema.

Tourism Minister weighs in on Lungu's 'Chimbuya' statement

By Mirriam Chabala

Tourism and Arts Minister Charles Banda says failure by Zambians to read and understand what is written will rob the country of the much-needed development.

In a statement issued by Tourism Ministry Public Relations Officer Sakabilo Kalembwe, the Minister, who was reacting to President Edgar Lungu's recent remarks that "out of

every group of 10 Bembas, six would be thieves" and that "Chinese nationals are like cockroaches, which could survive anywhere," Banda argued that people were deliberately twisting

facts to make the Head of State look bad.

Banda wondered whether there was anything wrong with the two statements when President Lungu was merely quoting what he had

read. "Dr Banda had read the article in question in the News Diggers! and he said it was very clear that in that story, the President was referring to what he had

also read where someone said, 'out of every group of 10 Bemba's that you meet, six are thieves'. The Minister said the President further referred to what he read that, 'Chinese people are likes cockroaches. They can survive even in most difficult places and conditions, like in stoves where it is hot or in fridges where it is extremely cold.' Dr Banda said in this case, the President asked why Zambians cannot be like the Chinese. The Minister wondered whether there was anything with the two statements, and if it was wrong to read and make references to what other people have written. He called on mindset change for all Zambians in the year 2019 as hatred and jealousy would not build the country," stated Kalembwe in the press release issued, Monday.

Insufficient funds hampering 7NDP implementation - NDCC

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

The National Development Coordinating Committee (NDCC) has noted that consistent lower disbursement of funds, than what is budgeted for, has continued hampering the implementation of the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP).

And Committee delegates at a two-day NDCC meeting in Lusaka also called for innovative ways of financing the 7NDP in order to achieve its objectives.

In a statement issued by Ministry of Development and National Planning Spokesperson Chibaula Silwamba, the NDCC observed that decentralisation of the 7NDP

was moving at a slow pace, hence constraining to accelerated implementation.

The summary of deliberations and recommendations of the meeting, as compiled by Dr Pamela Nankamba-Kabaso and Dr Dennis Chiwele, further noted that there were inconsistencies on revenue generation.

The Committee pin-pointed major challenges in the implementation of the 7NDP as delayed or insufficient funding due to limited fiscal space; too ambitious targets given the current fiscal balance, pending legislation, weak synergies on development initiatives, non-availability of disaggregated data,

and inadequate and untimely availability of finance.

"Ministry of Finance should facilitate a conversation on what can be realistically available to 7NDP activities - how much and when," NDCC recommended.

It further recommended that the Ministry of National Development Planning engage with cooperating partners to help the Ministry work in the integrated system, while meeting its accountability requirements at the same time.

"The Ministry of National Development Planning should conduct a data mapping exercise to determine: general data availability, how available data sets

could speak to each other," the summary of the meeting read in part.

And the Committee further recommended that there was need to adopt a maintenance policy and implement decentralised monitoring and evaluation systems of the Plan.

It recommended that the Central Statistical Office (CSO), a department in the Ministry of National Development Planning, should be given support to effectively carry out its mandate. Meanwhile, NDCC noted that though the 2020 Census would be expensive, it was a very important undertaking.

Professor Nkandu Luo was an awful choice for Minister of Higher Education. You just have to listen to her to appreciate that she has no energy to run such a demanding ministry of colleges and universities. Hers is a bitter tongue, laced with all kinds of political frustrations.

What has she done to deserve this condemnation? Well, let's recap a little on her tale of the tape. This minister supported the ban of over 8,000 University of Zambia students from writing their examination in July 2017, on grounds that they were owing the institution various amounts in school fees; even if some students complained that they were owing as little as K100.

Then she banned squatting among students at the Great East Road campus, when she knows that the institution has enrolled three times more than its planned capacity. This, she said, would curb the spread of cholera and other communicable diseases. We can, at least, commend her for conceding to public outcry and introducing bunk beds at the institution.

After the students took to social media to mobilise and challenge her wisdom, Professor Luo emotionally abolished students' unions countrywide, saying they were useless. According to her, the University of Zambia Students Union (UNZASU) and the Copperbelt University Students Union (COBUSU), were retrogressive bodies that had been bought by opposition political parties (the UPND in particular) to fight political battles. UNZASU is back now, but it is

Drop Luo, let Mabumba run Higher Education

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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definitely not the same. This new deal UNZASU was literally designed to conceal the minister's failures. This is why we are not shocked that they issue statements attempting to twist what was said by Luo's own mouth.

As if that was not enough demonstration by a minister to run institutions under her charge, Professor Luo went further to announce that her government would dismantle the University of Zambia and take all the faculties away from the Great East Road Campus, save for the School of Education. According to this minister, spreading these faculties to various locations would make it impossible for students to mobilise and riot. One wouldn't know whether to laugh or to be annoyed with such reasoning.

We thought we had heard it all from her. But no, while Oxford University in UK and other top ranking world universities were downgrading Zambia's universities over falling standards; Professor Luo says 'I am not done

destroying your education system.'

Prof LUO: "Starting January we will not be paying any pocket money allowances. We will only pay for your tuition; we will pay for project; we will pay for your accommodation. I think this meal allowance thing is going to drive us crazy. That way, we can even support more students. That's too much. I think we need to stop this allowance thing. Let your parents also take some responsibility for you people at that school, it is too much. So in the new year, I will announce so that you know that when you're coming to school, you come with your own pocket money. And also so that we can focus on other serious things in the nation."

The learned Professor in charge of Higher Education broke this devastating news to a Copperbelt University student who called her to ask when meal allowances would be paid. This was last Saturday, days after some students had rioted following government's continued delay to pay

meal allowances.

We repeat, this is a tongue of a very tired, hurting and probably grudge-bearing minister. The wisdom that is coming out of Prof Luo is not desirable at all. So, if supporting tertiary education is not among the "serious things" that Professor Luo's government would like to focus on; what is she doing in this ministry?

Professor Luo needs to know that it is not all the students who are as fortunate as her to have influential relatives like Mama Nkankasa who could push for her education in Russia. Some of these students at UNZA and CBU come from very vulnerable families. They totally depend on the meal allowance to make ends meet on Campus. In fact, some of them don't even use this money on fancy food, as professor Luo imagines, they use this allocation to buy the rest of the school basic needs that their poor parents can't afford.

What Professor Luo is saying essentially is that only rich parents should

send their children to university, while those who come from vulnerable, struggling families can hang! This is murder of the student's academic progress. How heartless can one person be?

No, fellow citizens! Professor Luo must not be allowed to stretch her tyranny in the education sector any further. This bully has to be stopped. UNZA, CBU don't belong to Professor Luo, she can't be managing student's affairs as if she is rearranging makeup bottles on her dressing table. And listen to her tone of voice when dictating terms for the students; full of arrogance, as if getting educated in Zambia is at her mercy.

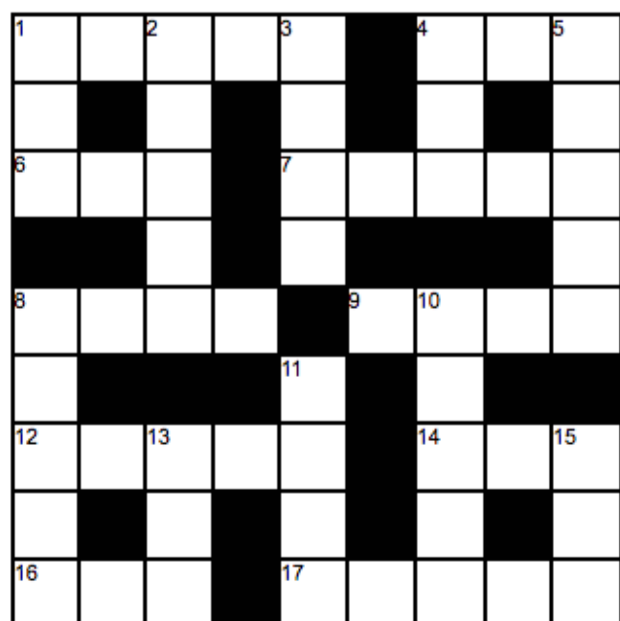
Dear President Edgar Lungu; for the sake of the future leaders of this country who are trying to shape their destinies in these institutions, please step in and intervene. Don't condemn the future of these students by letting a bitter minister drown them in her frustrations. We have said it before that Prof Luo has outlived her

usefulness in the public service. She has been in and out of government for the past 20 years and her ears are tired of hearing problems. Prof Luo has lost the zeal to overcome challenges.

If it is within our freedom of speech to suggest a reshuffle, allow us to recommend that you give Professor Luo her retirement benefits and let her go to rest, while you put David Mabumba in charge of Higher Education. Mabumba is not perfect, but he has commanded respect wherever he has worked. Not only is he clear of corruption scandals, but he is also level headed and able to engage with both the people he governs along with the media, which he respectfully recognizes as a fourth estate. We say no to Professor Nkandu Luo, please!!

But if, for whatever debt she is owed, you would like Professor Luo to remain in your Cabinet, it is better you take her to the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries. Kampamba Mulenga is even better than this Professor Luo. Yes, she may be a scatterbrain, but at least that very lack of capacity leaves room to the Permanent Secretaries and directors to run the ministry while she takes selfies. That's how the Ministry of Information endured her reign. Whatever it takes, please remove Nkandu Luo before she makes things worse for PF ahead of 2021. We don't mind the PF losing, but we can't afford to lose the education sector because of sheer negligence and arrogance.

Crossword puzzle 259



"Sometimes we're born into situations, he'd said. We have to decide if we're gonna be a part of it or if we're gonna put an end to it." - Suzanne Johnson

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>Across</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Witch's transport 4. Suffers from 6. Homer Simpson's expression 7. Discuss loudly 8. Take a risk 9. Don't aid and ____ a criminal 12. Pasta shape 14. Writing fluid 16. Male offspring 17. Dusk to dawn | <p>Down</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Four-poster, for one 2. Questionnaire choice 3. Lunch or dinner 4. Show of affection 5. Kindly 8. Woman's garment 10. Deliver 11. Graceful bird 13. Hot dog holder 15. Collection of equipment |
|--|---|

Solutions to puzzle 258



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.

NDC's pledge to abolish DC positions

Editor,

"Well, ba Musenge, in case your memory is short, I wish to remind you that PF, which you were part of, said the same thing and we still have those positions! Stop taking people for granted by just

talking anyhow." - Naomi Tetamashimba Khumalo

"Same lies you used to tell us while PF was in opposition!" - Chanda Emmanuel

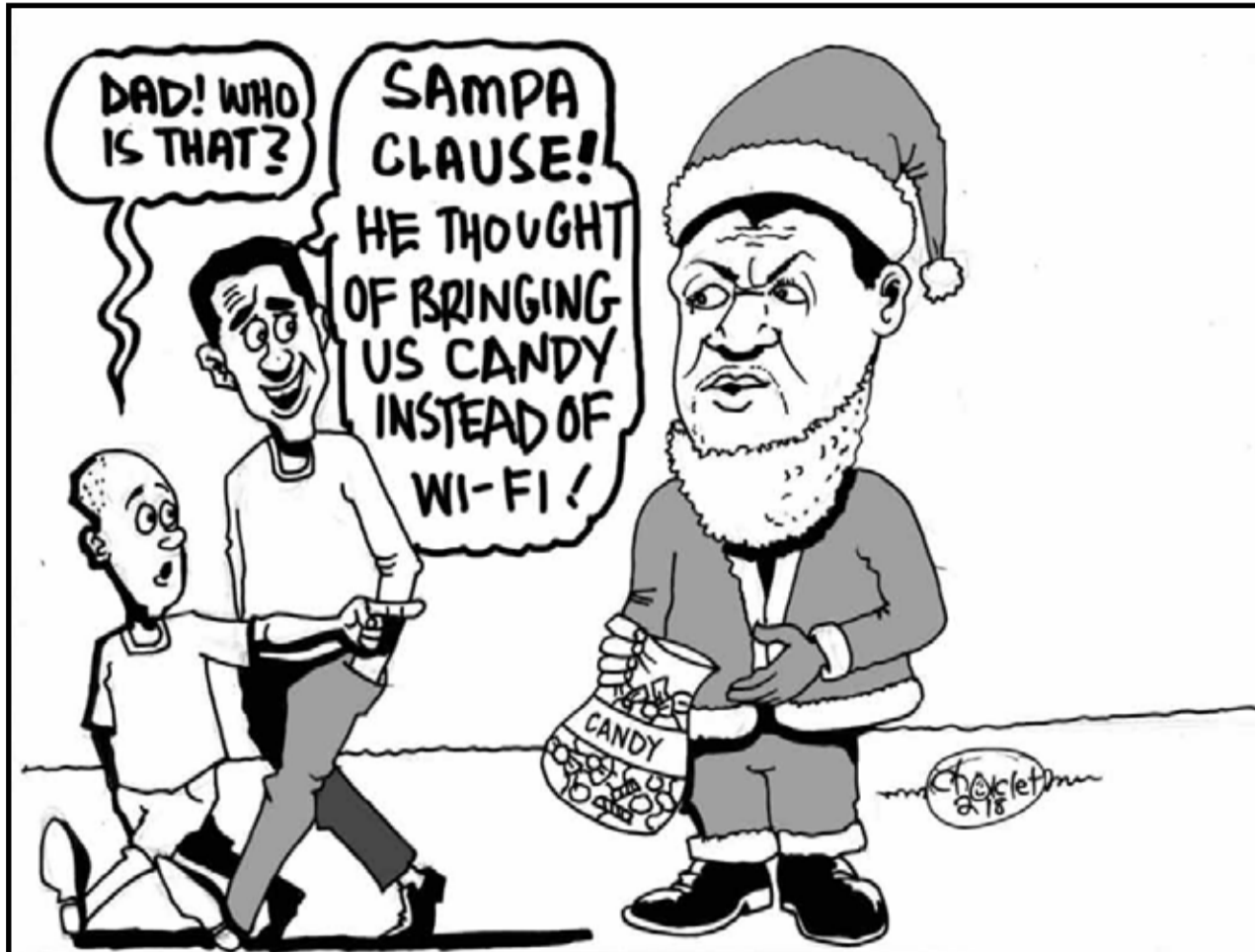
"I remember even Mr Michael Sata mentioned that in his campaigns." - Kembe Maimpa

"Ba Musenge, this is what you told us when you were in the opposition; tired of this nonsense!" - Conrad Chilam'z

"Yes, indeed, but politicians never implement what they say." - Chanda Pochoko

"The post of DC should long been gone. Chiluba brought them in to work as campaign managers and most of us who were there then rejected this move because it never made sense. We thought Levy would remove them, he didn't. Sata promised to abolish the post, he didn't. Honestly speaking, if you have worked for government at district level you will agree that the DC is very useless! One of the measures to reduce government expenditure is to abolish this post. It is of no use to government, but used as a campaign tool by the party in power. In case you haven't noticed ever since, the people appointed as DCs are political cadres." - Mazabuka Mwanakalando

"Political positions created by Chiluba. I support the abolition of these posts. They will go a long way in reducing on the cost of government. Another saving would be on abolition of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. What a saving that would be!" - Geoffrey Samusungwa



Intercontinental Hotel workers' accusation of racism from GM

Editor,
"Just stop stealing meat, imwe! We have serious issues like purchasing of 42 fire tenders for US \$42m that we want ECL to explain, not to interfere in cases of theft." - Scofield Manyoni

"Stop stealing, that's not racism!" - Ownani Msiska

"If you have stolen, then you should be disciplined! And you even have the nerve to write to ECL, there is no racism in there, it's just a reported theft case; stop wasting people's time!" - David Mandona

"What grounds are there tantamount to racism? I have only seen that he

accused them of stealing meat." - T'Clain Silva Chuma

"If he is accusing them of stealing meat, how is that racism? What is the President expected to do? Companies have crumbled due to theft that by workers." - Given Hamoonga

"Even hotel workers' issues it is the President to handle???? Speaks volumes about how people view leadership currently!!!" - Jombo Namushi

"Potters is very much correct; stop using Lungu's slogan of 'ubomba mwibala!!!" - Ibrahim Ishmael

Shamulenge on facing possible jail time over mismanaged funds

Editor,

"For the PS to come out so frightened and jittery, is a clear sign that he, too, benefited from the mismanagement of funds! I have never seen a controlling officer mentioning jail over stolen money when he's just the supervisor unless himself is directly involved..." - Holyfield Bashi-Tasheni Mumba

"So, you were sharing...?" - Boydrick Shamabanse

"There is no smoke without fire!" - Andrew Phiri

"These public servants don't fear the law because the Republican President encouraged them to steal through 'ubomba mwibala alya mwibala.' Those who belong to the PF, of course, argued in favour of Mr Lungu's 'joke'." - Christopher Kalima

"Failure to supervise!" - Muna Chikale

"Let him just get involved in fund management instead of issuing empty threats!" - Dennis Wei Mulenga

"Shamulenge is the hard working PS so Mrs Chewe is safe, but those stealing must stop!" - Kebby Chanda

A US judge on Monday ordered North Korea to pay \$501 million over the death of American Otto Warmbier, concluding that the university student likely suffered torture.

The penalties, which North Korea is highly unlikely to pay willingly, come in the midst of a diplomatic drive by President Donald Trump, who is eager to reach a potentially landmark deal with leader Kim Jong Un.

The parents of Warmbier sued North Korea in a US court after the 22-year-old was flown back to the United States last year in a coma, unrecognizable to his family and dying within days of his return.

Beryl Howell, the chief judge of the US District Court for Washington, DC, awarded \$501,134,683.80 to the family, most of it in punitive damages.

"An American family, the Warmbiers, experienced North Korea's brutality first-hand when North Korea seized their son to use as a pawn in that totalitarian state's global shenanigans and face-off with the United States," she wrote.

"North Korea is liable for the torture, hostage-taking, and extrajudicial killing of Otto Warmbier, and the injuries to his mother and father, Fred and Cindy Warmbier," she added.

- **Chances of paying slim** - Howell said North Korea did

US judge orders N/Korea to pay \$501 mn over dead American

not submit any response to the lawsuit, which the family filed under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, a US law that allows lawsuits against foreign governments over offenses not considered to be covered by diplomatic immunity.

As one of the world's most isolated countries, North Korea is believed to have few assets in the United States that could be seized to meet the judgment.

But North Korea is seeking to end economic sanctions imposed over its nuclear program. An accord with Trump raises the possibility of future US assistance, which could become entangled by the court-ordered damages.

Trump, who held a historic summit in June with North Korea, posted on Twitter that he had a briefing Monday on diplomatic efforts and is "looking forward to my next summit with Chairman Kim!"

Senator Robert Portman of Ohio, who had secretly met North Korean officials as he pushed for Warmbier's release, hailed the court



Otto Warmbier, pictured on February 29, 2016, was flown back to the United States last year in a coma, unrecognizable to his family and dying within days of his return - AFP

verdict.

"While nothing will bring back Otto Warmbier, who was such a promising young man, I'm glad that North Korea has been rightly held accountable for his death,"

he tweeted.

- **Unrecognizable after release** -

Warmbier, an Ohio native who studied at the University of Virginia, traveled to North Korea on a tour but did not

return home. He was pulled away at the Pyongyang airport and charged with crimes against the state for allegedly taking down a poster in support of Kim.

The ruling said the family was continually advised by the State Department to stay quiet, believing North Korea would make a demand in return for Warmbier's safe release.

When he finally returned home after 17 months, Warmbier -- a high school prom king who was studying business and economics -- was attached to a feeding tube and was howling incomprehensible noises, the ruling said.

The head-shaven Warmbier had gone blind and deaf, his once straight teeth misaligned and his eyes bulging out, it said.

The judge quoted his neurologist in Ohio, Daniel Kanter, as concluding that Warmbier probably suffered

brain damage of the sort caused by a loss of blood flow to the brain of five to 20 minutes.

Based on previously known cases in which North Korea extracted confessions, Warmbier's injuries could have been caused by waterboarding, electric shock, suffocation or pulling his teeth with pliers, Howell said.

North Korea has denied ill-treatment of Warmbier, saying he contracted botulism, a nerve disorder caused by toxin poisoning, while in detention.

But the judge quoted medical tests that found no evidence of botulism. And even if the diagnosis were true, the judge questioned why

North Korea did not earlier send him back for medical care, a delay which she said "compounds the deliberate nature of the totalitarian state's brutal treatment of Otto." *AFP*

Italy circumcision kills toddler

A two-year-old boy has died from blood loss following a failed circumcision at a migrant centre in Italy.

The boy's twin brother also underwent the procedure in Rome's north-western suburb of Monterondo and is recovering in hospital.

A 66-year-old man has been charged with murder, according to Italian media.

Some 5,000 circumcisions are performed in Italy each year but more than a third are carried out illegally, according to health charity Amsi.

Cultural non-profit group Arci said the procedures had taken place at a refugee centre it runs with the local council in Monterondo.

"It is a tragedy that leaves us speechless," Arci said in a statement on Facebook, adding that it would take civil action once those responsible for the child's death had been determined by police.

The two boys, who have not been named, were born in Italy in 2017 to a Nigerian mother who has five other children in Nigeria.

Local media say the mother had asked for the operations in respect for Nigeria's Islamic traditions, despite being Catholic herself.

The medical credentials of the

doctor are reportedly being questioned by police.

Ansa said the man arrested was an American citizen of Libyan origin.

"It is an absurd tragedy," said Antonino Lupi, mayor of Monterondo, in an interview with the *Corriere Della Sera*.

Circumcision is currently unavailable in public health institutions in Italy.

Having the procedure at a private clinic can cost between €2,000 (£1,798) and €4,000 (£3,596), according to Foad Aodi, president of Amsi.

As a result, those from poorer backgrounds can "end up in

the hands of unscrupulous and unskilled people, who for €50 or €20 practise circumcision," Mr Aodi said in a statement.

Is circumcision safe?

Although it is a relatively simple medical procedure, circumcision is not entirely risk free.

Doctors may recommend that a man or boy is circumcised if he has an unusually tight foreskin, known as phimosis, or suffers from recurrent infections of the foreskin and penis, known as balanitis.

There is also some evidence that men who are circumcised

have a lower risk of contracting HIV from HIV-positive female partners.

It is not clear if circumcision reduces the risk of other sexually transmitted infections too, but studies suggest it may lower the chance of catching genital warts caused by a family of viruses called HPV.

The main risks of the surgery are bleeding and infection.

In the UK, the chance of these occurring is between one in 10 and one in 50, according to the NHS website, although that is a figure for older boys and men, not newborns. *BBC*

Israel to hold early elections in April

Israel's government decided Monday to hold early elections in April with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu struggling to keep together a one-seat majority in parliament as he also faces potential corruption charges.

Despite Netanyahu's recent legal and political troubles, polls have indicated he would remain prime minister after new elections, putting him in line to become Israel's longest-serving premier.

Heads of parties in Netanyahu's

coalition agreed to hold the polls in early April "in the name of budgetary and national responsibility," a statement issued on their behalf said.

The government was preparing a bill to dissolve the Knesset, or parliament, and hold elections on April 9, Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked said.

Elections were not due until November, but there has been speculation the coalition would not last that long.

Netanyahu laid out what he sees

as his achievements and said he hoped for a similar coalition to the current one, seen as the most right-wing in Israel's history.

"We ask for a clear mandate from the voter to continue to lead the state of Israel in our own way," he said.

The decision comes with the coalition struggling to agree on a key bill related to ultra-Orthodox Jews serving in the military like their secular counterparts.

Ultra-Orthodox parties hold 13 seats out of the coalition's 61,

giving them significant influence.

- **'Hope is returning'** -

Netanyahu's coalition was left with a one-seat majority after defence minister Avigdor Lieberman stepped down in November over a controversial Gaza ceasefire deal.

His resignation cost the coalition five seats.

At the time, Netanyahu worked to rescue the coalition and managed to keep it on track for weeks as he faced criticism over the Gaza truce. *AFP*

Manchester United return to Old Trafford for the first time under Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's management against Huddersfield on Boxing Day with a new-found swagger after scoring five goals in the Premier League for the first time in five years.

The Norwegian's caretaker spell in charge until the end of the season got off to a dream start as United threw off the shackles, that led to turgid football and deteriorating results under Jose Mourinho, to thrash Cardiff 5-1.

United still face a huge challenge to make up an eight-point gap just to qualify for next season's Champions League via a top-four finish.

But for now the luxury of just being able to enjoy watching a side play with freedom and the attacking principles that have underpinned the club's history is enough to excite United fans again.

"I think the boys are looking forward to playing at Old Trafford and that's important. We should be looking forward to that, they are the best fans in the world," said Solskjaer when questioned whether some of the current United squad have been inhibited by the

Relish rather than fear Old Trafford, Solskjaer tells Utd



pressures of playing at home in the famous red shirt. Solskjaer is certainly a favourite of the United faithful having scored 126 goals in 11 seasons as a

player, including the one that famously won the Champions League final in 1999.

He was serenaded throughout by the visiting

fans in the Welsh capital at the weekend as United hit five for the first time since Alex Ferguson's final game in charge.

"I just hope in the next five

months I do a good enough job for them to keep singing my name when someone else comes in," added Solskjaer, whose positivity has immediately lifted a

squad downtrodden by Mourinho's mood swings.

"Just to be positive. Take risks," said Jesse Lingard, who scored twice in Cardiff, at what Solskjaer's message has been.

"If you lose the ball, win it back, and play the United way - attacking football, entertaining football. For us as players, we enjoyed it today."

Rarely has enjoyment ever been top of Mourinho's list of priorities, even in his most successful spells with Porto, Chelsea and Inter Milan.

- 'Work harder' -

However, the levels of commitment he demanded from those sides was not evident in the current United squad.

For the first time this season, United outran their opponents against Cardiff.

"A Man United team should never ever be outworked," said Solskjaer to highlight the minimum he expects.

"Doesn't matter which team you play. You should run more than them and then your skills will give you the chance to win the game."

A good work ethic should be the minimum required of a Manchester United team, but Mourinho's tactics also didn't help his side's running statistics.

Too often the Red Devils were set up to sit deep and try and counter-attack.

Solskjaer instead seems intent on implementing the United way he learned at the heel of Ferguson for so long.

"I said the same to these lads as I do back in Molde: work harder than them, enjoy yourselves, pass it forward, run forward, if you lose it, I don't mind as long as you work to win it back and they did.

"When you've got players like this with the quality you are always going to create chances."

The best Christmas present for many United fans may be the gift of being able to look forward to games with a sense of anticipation again.

ZBBF warns unruly gym members protesting against Mr Zambia crown

By Alex Chilumbwe

There was uproar from bodybuilding fanatics on Saturday when judges announced that reigning Mr Zambia Sylvester Mwila defended his title for the seventh consecutively time, as fans expected runner-up Clement Shamboko to win. And the Zambia Bodybuilding Federation (ZBBF) says it will discipline any protestor who will continue to exhibit unruly behaviour towards the judges that made the decision during the competition at Raddison Blu hotel where 24 competitors converged.

In an interview with Goal Diggers! ZBBF vice president Brown Ngambi appealed to angry fans that mainly comprise gym members from Matero Community gym to follow the right channel of communication and lodge a complaint instead of engaging into social media rants that can dent the integrity of the sport.

"I understand that there are angry fans especially that they kept cheering Shamboko at every pose. They expected him to win but they do not understand why the judges crowned Mwila. There are things

that they do not understand and if they follow the right channel of communication, they can understand," he said.

Ngambi also noted that fans tend to disregard the judging characteristics and oppose judges' decision when they are tired of one reigning champion and need change.

"They have seen one person win all these seven years and they are probably thirsty for change. They want to unseat Mwila but unseating a

reigning champion demands that he gets knocked out without single doubt. That was not the case on Saturday," said Ngambi.

The unsatisfied bodybuilding fans became violent when Mwila was crowned the winner and the federation sought for his and the judges' hideout for an hour as a way of protecting them.

Mwila in an interview said that he deserved the crown and the K10, 000 prize money.

"I deserve my title and as long as I keep working hard, I will keep defending it because already, I am certain that I will enter the competition next year so that I defend it," said Mwila.

Meanwhile, second-placed Clement Shamboko who is also an Arnold Classic competitor at international level posted on his social media account and accused the judges of favouring Mwila.

"Congratulations to Sylvester

Mwila for defending the title but I mean no disrespect when I say that this year I have been robbed of the crown. From the pictures shared and reposted, I clearly deserved to be crowned Mr Zambia. I will not stop working hard despite all this unfairness," posted Shamboko

Shamboko walked away with K5000 while third-placed Joseph Mwale who is the current Mr Kabwata bagged K3000.

FAZ recounts 2018 failures, targets improvements in 2019

By Alex Chilumbwe

FAZ general secretary Adrian Kashala says not qualifying for 2019 AfCON is the football fraternity's biggest 2018 fail, saying there is need to heighten the country's football status next year.

And Kashala also described 2018 as a year of struggle for the football fraternity at National level while clubs have made notable strides in the sport.

In an interview with Goal Diggers! Kashala said that the association had noted all the 2018 ups and downs in the football fraternity and would embark on ensuring that a clear road map of reducing inefficiencies is made in 2019.

"2018 has not exactly been attractive to soccer fans in the country even though there are some areas that received improvement at national level. The biggest fail was not qualifying for 2019 AfCON but

at club level, competition was made stiffer and clubs managed to supply competitive players. Even the super league itself was amazing and successful," he said.

Kashala further said that he was expectant and excited about the transitional national league that will take shape in January. He added that the newly-designed and adopted league will be more engaging and fruitful to footballers.

"The transitional league will be exciting and attractive especially to footballers because they won't have enough time to be off the pitch. They are bound to make the most out of their talent. I'm really looking forward to it," said Kashala.

FAZ adopted a two-tier national league structure that will unfold in January. The league will be merged in July for the top teams from the two groups for the title battle

FAZ RECOUNTS 2018 FAILURES

By Alex Chilumbwe
FAZ general secretary Adrian Kashala says not qualifying for 2019 AfCON is the football fraternity's biggest 2018 fail, saying there is need to heighten the country's football status next year. And Kashala also described 2018 as a year of struggle for the football fraternity at National level while clubs have made notable strides in the sport.

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Jermain Defoe receives League Cup medal 10 years after Spurs win

Former Tottenham striker Jermain Defoe was presented with a 2008 English League Cup winners' medal on Monday, more than 10 years after Spurs beat Chelsea in the final.

The 36-year-old left White Hart Lane for Portsmouth less than a month before the game at Wembley, and had scored in the fifth-round victory over Manchester City.

"I remember contributing to help the boys get to that stage and after that it was actually nice to sit back and watch the lads go on to lift the trophy," Defoe told the English Football League's website.

"It's obviously a nice feeling to have been a part of the history of that club, such a big club that had been used to winning competitions over the previous years. It's special."

Defoe, who now plays for Bournemouth, was given his medal at the Vitality Stadium and said that he was cheering on his former teammate as Spurs edged Chelsea 2-1 in extra time a decade ago.

"At the end of the day, they're all your friends and you still want them to win, to get your medal," he added.

"It was a great performance against a top Chelsea team, so to win it in the way they did was brilliant."

Defoe returned for a second spell at Tottenham later in 2008, and made 363 appearances for the club in total, scoring 143 goals. *AFP*



Clement Shamboko (left) and Sylvester Mwila compete for Mr Zambia title. Mwila was crowned winner

Five weightlifters banned after 2012 Olympic tests reanalysed

Five weightlifters, including two Olympic champions, have been provisionally suspended after reanalysis of urine samples provided during the 2012 London Olympics, the International Weightlifting Federation announced on Monday.

Ukrainian Oleksiy Torokhtiy, Olympic -105kg gold medallist six years ago, and Uzbek Ruslan Nurudinov, who won the same category in the 2016 Rio de Janeiro

Games, both tested positive for anabolic steroids.

Only Torokhtiy stands to lose his title, as the samples retested were given four years before Nurudinov's gold-medal winning performance in Brazil.

Valentin Hristov of Azerbaijan, currently serving an eight-year ban following two positive doping tests in 2013 and 2015, could lose his 2012 bronze medal from the -56kg category after also testing

positive for an anabolic agent.

The other two athletes to test positive -- Armenia's Meline Daluzyan and Belarusian Mikalai Novikau -- did not win medals in London.

Last month, the International Olympic Committee announced that new analysis of samples from the 2012 Games using "the most recent scientific methods" would be entrusted to the newly-formed International Testing Agency. *AFP*

