



CORRUPTION TRAIL

Chitotela probe implicates Chinese firms, lawyers, fellow MP, Minister, friends, others

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By Thomas Mulenga and
Sipilisiwe Ncube

Felix Mutati's MMD faction die hard youths yesterday stormed United Voice Christian Radio in an attempt to interrupt a programme on which Nevers Mumba was being featured. The youths, who were led by their coordinator Gerald Chiluba and Prince Ndoyi, said they wanted Mumba to stop featuring on radio programmes because he was "a masquerader". The cadres stormed the radio station around 10:30 hours but United Voice Radio officials told them that he had already left the station. United Voice Radio management

Mutati's youths storm Christian radio to fish out rival, Nevers

locked Mumba in the studio upon noticing the presence of the youths, oblivious to him as he was busy responding to callers. Police arrived and dispersed the youths a few minutes later and they parked at a nearby filling station shouting, 'walamona ngawafuma' (you will see when you come out). And in an interview, Chiluba

said Mumba was masquerading as MMD president. "Pastor Mumba is not MMD president. The MMD president is honourable Felix Mutati. This country is governed by laws and the laws which govern political parties are very clear in terms of how political parties are supposed to conduct themselves. It is mandatory

that each and every political party is supposed to hold intra-party elections and MMD as a mother of democracy we have been adhering to that democratic tenet [and] that is why every five years, we usually hold our conventions. And this time around the convention as held in 2016 where honourable Mutati was elected by the membership of MMD as the MMD president. Now we have always been at pain every time when Dr Mumba goes on the media masquerading to be MMD president," said Chiluba. And speaking to journalists after the programme, Mumba said those were not youths, but thugs. "I am not aware that any MMD person came here. There is no MMD youth who would come to disrupt his president. So those who came obviously are not MMD, we would call them thugs and that is why the police came and I understand the police dealt with them. And that is how you deal with thugs, the police has to move in and deal with them. But if they did come, then it's very unfortunate that such undisciplined people would come to a church and try to create a crisis at church and anybody who calls himself a leader would know that it's wrong for him to bring his...secondly if these colleagues believe [that]

they stand any chance in court, they would have stayed where they are and wait for the courts to determine whether that convention which they had in Kabwe has any legitimacy. These are what call the last kicks of a dying horse. They know that they have lost the case, they know that they will soon be shown the door," said Mumba. Meanwhile, speaking on radio earlier, Mumba insisted that former republican vice-presidents deserved retirement packages. "First of all, let me clarify something, I didn't make that statement relating to the death of the late Honourable Lupando Mwape, I raised a cardinal point because I knew Honourable Lupando Mwape and I was also familiar with the difficulties that he himself as an individual was facing. I also knew that he went through a very difficult time, but shortly after he died we had a state funeral, for which we are grateful that once we die as former leaders the state can recognise us with such an honour. But I decided to throw a moral debate to the Zambian people that how moral is it that once a former vice president leaves office, he has no package to help him when in retirement but when he dies, the whole nation stands still with a 19 gun salute. I thought that was

an immoral position. I think that like all other constitutional office holders, the vice president should also be considered. The President has a retirement package, we are not asking that the vice President has a similar one but just like in death, the President has 21 gun salute, the vice President has 19 gun salute, the president has a seven day mourning period, the vice president has a three day mourning period. In the same way, if they are trying to value their contributions to the country, my proposal was that they are also considered for the benefits so that they can leave an honourable life," said Mumba. "I think I am a little bit disappointed that some of the media people would limit that concern to my personal situation. I never complained at any point that I was desperate for that. In fact, I went further to state that don't backdate it to my time as vice president, start with Inonge Wina. It has nothing to do with an individual, it's a principle. I think if the President has a package, Chief Justice has a package, Speaker of National Assembly has a package, service chiefs have packages, I think that the same reason they have packages, even the vice-presidents should have a package. Now there is a feeling, somebody advanced in the Diggers Newspaper when they spoke against me that vice-presidents are satisfied with the gratuity that they receive, he is forgetting that even Presidents receive gratuity but still have a package."



By Zondiwe Mbewe

University of Zambia (UNZA) professional unions say perpetual delay to pay lecturers' salaries at the institution is a deliberate ploy by management and the Ministry of Higher Education to cause mental anguish and torture to its members. The University of Zambia Lecturers and Researchers' Union (UNZALARU), University of Zambia Professional Staff Union (UNZAPROSU), and University of Zambia Allied Workers' Union (UNZAAWU) collectively wondered why their members were always receiving salaries late, after other mainstream civil service and defence forces, when funding came from one basket. In a joint statement, which was signed by UNZALARU General Secretary Dr Kelvin Mambwe and his UNZAPROSU counterpart Nalucha Mayamba, also accused UNZA management and the government of being champions of lawlessness, saying they do not even obey court rulings. "We would like to inform the general public of the current unpleasant state of affairs at the institution of higher learning. It appears maladministration and incompetence has become part of the 'DNA' of how the institution is being managed by both management and the government under the Ministry of Higher Education. The following are among the many issues that we want the public to be aware of before our next course of action: 1. Perpetual delay in releasing the monthly grant by the Ministry of Finance through the Ministry of Higher Education to contribute towards payroll cost; it has become like a 'Constitutional Compliance Act' by the Ministry of Finance through the Ministry of Higher Education to delay releasing the monthly grant, which contributes only 30 per cent of the payroll cost. As of today, 5th February, 2019,

UNZA unions threaten anarchy if management fails to pay salaries

the January salaries have not been paid yet due to non-remittance of the grant by the government and UNZA management do not know when the salaries will be paid. Surely, should payment of salaries be a myth like the second coming of Jesus?" the unions wondered. "We feel that this perpetual delay is a calculated deliberate act meant to cause mental anguish and torture to our members because always the mainstream civil service and defence forces get paid before us and yet funding comes from one basket. We would like to remind and warn UNZA management and the Ministry that failing to pay salaries on the appropriate date as provided for in the Employment Act and domesticated in the collective agreements is a breach of employment contractual terms and conditions. We are aware that UNZA and the government are champions of lawlessness as sometimes they do not even obey court rulings and in this respect, we wish to warn that we also capable of becoming lawless and unreasonable as no one should have monopoly of causing anarchy and inconveniencing others." The unions also complained that the new financing strategy for public universities had no financial resources to realise its objectives. "Government developed a new finance strategy for public universities through a cab memo and was approved on 14th August, 2017. This finance strategy has many objectives, which among them are: to help liquidate public universities' debt; help avoid possible insolvency of public

universities because of the new Republican Constitution, which provides that retired employees be retained on the payroll as long as their dues are not paid; improve quality of education; harmonise conditions of service in three public universities using the concept of the 2012 public pay policy and other tools such as joint negotiations. In order to attain the objectives of the financing strategy, financial resources are required, and to this effect, in 2018, the Ministry of Higher Education through the Ministry of Finance, budgeted about K101 million towards dismantling of debt, but shockingly, only K23 million was released later December, 2018. The University owes retirees, deceased and serving employees a total of about K655.9 million, which, according to the financing strategy, should be settled within a period of three years starting 2018. We are now in 2019 and only K23 million has been released against their own commitments!" the unions disclosed. The unions further observed that the Ministry of Higher Education was using a "dictatorial management style" whereby they imposed decisions and policy changes without consulting major stakeholders. "The proposed transition of UNZA from a unitary system into college system is purely the Ministry's creation and this was normalized by asking UNZA management to prepare a smoke free screen' position paper so that it appears as if the request came from UNZA when in fact not. We, as employees of this

institution, were not consulted or explained to about this transition and its financial implications. This creation is not different from the failed health boards systems under health reforms at Ministry of Health. We are also aware that this new system has a huge budget due to money high ranking positions to be created in the organizational structure. The creation of new high ranking positions in the university is a ploy meant to provide employment corruptly to friends and relatives within the system. If the institution is currently struggling financially, why create more problems by expanding the staff establishment? Besides, no budget allocation has been given to UNZA to implement this unnecessary structural

change," the unions stated. And the unions also condemned the Ministry of Higher Education's direct involvement in some operational matters of the institution, saying they were contrary to good corporate governance practices. "As the public may wish to know, the University Act of 2013 prescribes how universities are supposed to be managed and, among other things, it provides for the appointment of University Councils, which is a policy-naming body. The Council in turn appoints management, and the Ministry of Higher Education appoints Council. The relationship of the Ministry and UNZA is similar to a shareholder and a company. What is currently

happening is that the Ministry is micromanaging public universities by directly issuing instructions and policy changes to management as opposed to channel the same through University Council. It should be noted that we, the trade unions at the University of Zambia, have for the past three years desisted to engage ourselves in activities, which could have resulted in major industrial unrest, but with the issues highlighted above, we are unable to guarantee any industrial harmony at this institution. It appears government and management only understand the language of anarchy and lawlessness, which we are willing and capable of speaking," warned the unions.

Court adjourns juvenile defilement case to Feb 12

By Zondiwe Mbewe

Lusaka Magistrate Nsunge Chanda has adjourned a case involving an 18-year-old grade nine pupil of Bayuni Primary School in Makeni area who is facing one count of defilement to February 12 for possible trial. The juvenile had pleaded guilty to the charge, saying he thought she was 17 and that the two were in a relationship. The juvenile, who resides in Lusaka's John Laing Compound, told the Court that the girl allowed him to have carnal knowledge of her, but it only happened once. The said juvenile is facing one count of defilement of a child. It is alleged that in July, 2018, he had unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl under the age of 16. But after his plea, Magistrate Chanda ordered that the girl be brought to court for age determination

and it was discovered that the girl was indeed 17 years-old and that she was six months pregnant. And when the matter came up, Tuesday, for facts and sentencing, Magistrate Chanda said she could not proceed with the facts as there was a defence in the matter. "Facts won't proceed because there's a defence. We want to go into trial because the girl said she's 17 years. This will be an equivocal," Magistrate Chanda said. She further said the State had to prove that the girl was under the age of 16, which would then lead the matter into trial. She adjourned the matter to February 12, 2019, for possible trial. Magistrate Chanda further returned the juvenile's police bond, which was revoked when he pleaded guilty.

Luo officially announces government's termination of students meal allowances

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
Government has officially abolished meal allowances for University of Zambia and Copperbelt University students. Higher Education Minister Professor Nkandu Luo announced this at a media briefing, Wednesday, saying government had instead added more public universities to the loan scheme. In December 2018, Prof Luo told a CBU representative who had called her to enquire on delayed allowances that government would no longer pay meal allowances UNZA and CBU students because delayed payments were the main source of unrest at institutions of higher learning. But after News Diggers! published the story, UNZASU met with Prof Luo and issued a statement saying 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 UNZASU president Warren Hamusunga. Prof Luo, however, told journalists that students who are beginning their first year

in 2019 would be the first to get loans without meal allowances whilst those who were already on the loan scheme would not be affected. "Now, we do follow an Act, that is the Higher Education Loans and Scholarship Board Act number 31 of 2016 and these are the ones who determine how these scholarships and loans will be disbursed to the other institutions. Given the fact that, we have extended support to the other institutions, what will happen is that we will ask the students to sign for the amounts of money that will be decided and we are going to strictly restrict our support to tuition fees, accommodation and these will be paid directly to the institutions where the students are going to be studying so that we don't have a situation

where people are not able to pay for their tuition and their accommodation," Prof Luo said. "Then the money to do with their books and projects is what will be paid directly to the students. So the new support that is going to start this year will not include pocket money popularly known as BC. This way, we will have a shared responsibility between us and the parents of these children. And the students who will benefit from these loans will actually come and sign for this process. This will not affect the students that are already on scholarships. The way we disbursed the previous scholarships will continue and it will phase out as the students graduate so that we introduce the new system. And it must be noted that any amounts granted

as loans shall be recovered accordingly. So the students will not pay any more. That's what they would have signed for at the beginning of the loan schemes. And I want to emphasize that what I have announced will not affect the previous system of disbursement that we have had in the past." She said the bursaries' support had been extended to five other public universities. "And as you very well know that in the past, scholarships and loans were only restricted to two institutions namely the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University. We as a government through the Ministry of Higher Education feel that it's unfair to only provide support to students at two institutions while the others are struggling to educate themselves. So the

ministry through the Higher Education Scholarships and Loans Board decided that we expand the support to other institutions. So to start with today I want to announce that support will be given to all Public Universities for the students that are studying now in the first year because it will be easier for us to start with students that are starting now namely, apart from the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University, now Kwame Nkrumah University, Chalimbana University, Mukuba University, Kapasa Makasa University, Mulungushi University and Palabana University students will be eligible to financial support for their education. And I think that is a fair distribution so that all students in public universities are able to be supported by government," Prof Luo said.

Meanwhile Prof Luo said 30 per cent of the loans would be reserved for rural areas, 30 percent for girls, 10 percent to those with disabilities while the rest of the students would compete for the remaining 30 per cent. "UNZA and CBU are obviously getting the chunk because their numbers are higher in terms of admissions, so between them they have been allocated 1,900 scholarships each and the additional universities are going to share 1,000 because some of them don't have so much students because some of them like Kapasa Makasa we have 201 students. So we are allocating them according to their admissions that they have taken this year. And they will increase with time and we also recover more money," said Prof Luo.

Musukwa, Mwanakatwe clash over 2019 mining fiscal regime


By Mirriam Chabala
Mines Minister Richard Musukwa has hinted that government may make temporary rebates to some mining companies over the disputed 2019 fiscal regime if they show justifiable cause. But his Finance counterpart Margaret Mwanakatwe has contradicted Musukwa by insisting that 2019 mining fiscal regime is now law and that mining companies have no choice but to comply. The 2019 mining fiscal regime, which took effect January 1, 2019, has seen an increase in mineral royalty rates by 1.5 percentage points

at all levels of the sliding scale. According to Bloomberg, the two Cabinet Ministers, who are attending the 25th Mining Indaba in Cape Town, South Africa, issued the contradictory positions in remarks captured in separate interviews reported by the network giant. "We are ready to engage and listen to them, analyze their technical submissions, and if we are given compelling reasons, and if we see beyond reasonable doubts, we will make temporary rebates," Musukwa told Bloomberg on the side-lines of the ongoing mining indaba. According to Bloomberg, Musukwa noted that while government was holding firm on the controversial new tax law, there were positive discussions with companies including Glencore Plc's Mopani Copper Mines and First Quantum Minerals Ltd. "We can't bring tax measures that are going to kill the golden goose that lays the eggs," Bloomberg quoted the Minister as saying. However, Mwanakatwe in a separate interview,

insisted the 2019 mining fiscal policy was here to stay. "There is no renegotiation taking place because a law has been passed in Parliament to change the tax regime. We don't want to keep changing regimes frequently. We want a regime that is stable, that can ensure that government gets a fair share of revenue to support its development agenda. I can't see the royalty tax changing," Mwanakatwe said, Tuesday in Cape Town. Meanwhile, in a separate development at the ongoing 25th African Mining Indaba, held at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, Musukwa disclosed that there are still huge tracts of land in Zambia awaiting to be exploited for mining investment once economic discoveries had been made. He revealed this when he gave a presentation on Zambia's mining investment opportunities. Musukwa, who assured the audience that their investments would be safe in Zambia because of the conducive investment environment available, also


emphasised that the Zambian government was committed to ensuring that the country's mining resource benefited local communities in terms of development. "Investment opportunities in Zambia, especially in the mining industry, are broad and partnership is required for us to continue to map our country. Already, our country is mapped in excess of about 60 per cent with the cooperation of our cooperating partners such as the Japanese government, the Chinese government and other stakeholders so we still have huge tracts of land, which hosts various minerals, and these minerals can be exploited once we have economic discoveries. But we need to ensure that these minerals are mapped and identified so that we are able to provide packages in terms of the exploitation programmes. So, we continue to do exploration of industrial and precious metals and much needs to be done in this area," Musukwa, monitored via Smart Eagles, said. "In conclusion, I would like

to state that Zambia is stable jurisdiction offering vast investment opportunities ranging from exploration to value addition. Zambia is centrally located, making it easy to interface with various countries." When asked what government had done to ensure that local people also had a share in the mineral resource available to their communities, Musukwa said it was policy for every investor to partner with locals in their investment. "What the trend now is to ensure that our investors must ensure that they provide partnership with our local people in order for the local people not only to be involved in the mining operations as workers, but as shareholders who also have a stake in the mining operations in order to ensure that mining operations change the economic landscape of our country in terms of development, especially to fight poverty and create and also create sustainable employment," said Musukwa



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By Joseph Mwenda

A News Diggers! investigation into the details of the abuse of office involving Infrastructure Development Minister Ronald Chitotela, has revealed that the Pambashe PF member of parliament is linked to millions of suspicious financial transactions, which have been left out on the charge sheet slapped on him.

The Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) arrested Chitotela, Tuesday, on two counts of concealing property believed to be proceeds of crime. It is alleged that Chitotela, 47, a former police officer, concealed a house and residential plot in Lusaka's Makeni and Ibx Hill areas respectively – both concealed under a third party named Diris Mukange. But ACC officers close to the investigation have told News Diggers! that the charges slapped on the minister were only a tip of the iceberg, adding that the investigation also covered government tenders awarded to his companies, as well as Chinese firms which remitted kickbacks to him through a third party.

According to the records obtained, the ACC found out that the property in Ibx Hill was acquired from former labour minister in the MMD government Austin Liato, a corruption convict turned PF official, who was sentenced to two years imprisonment for burying cash (proceeds of crime) underground at his farm amounting to K2.1 billion (K2.1

Chitotela probe implicates Chinese, lawyers, fellow MP, minister and others



President Edgar Lungu talks to Chitotela at State House

million rebased currency). Chitotela's concealed property in Makeni,

also under the name Diris Mukange, was previously owned

by Mary Kateya Lubinga, a government employee under the Ministry of Local Government, while the supposed buyer, Mukange is a Kitwe resident who has links with

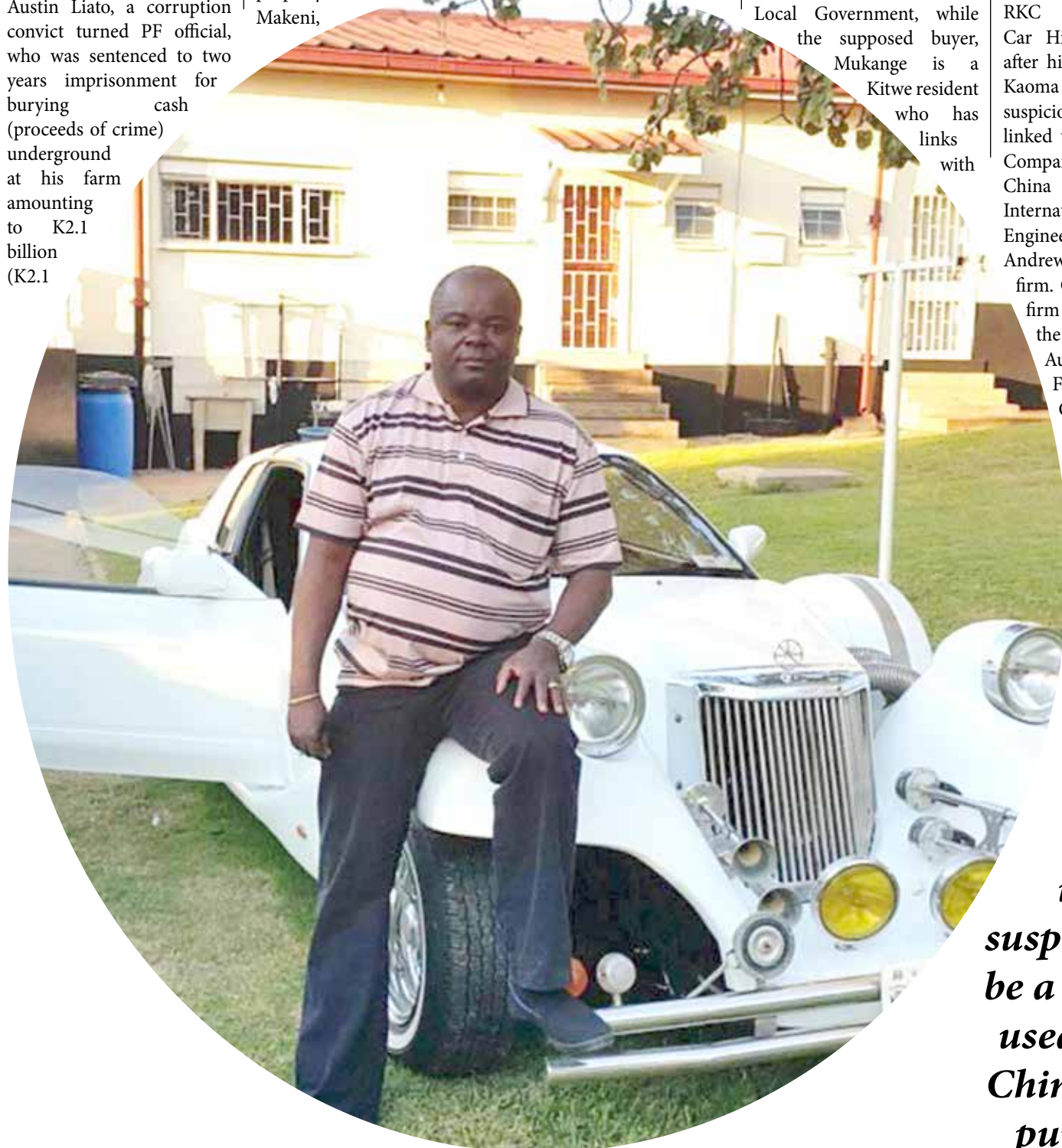
the minister's wife Lillian. Among other companies, the arrested minister owns RKC Tours and Guide Car Hire Limited, named after his full names Ronald Kaoma Chitotela. His suspicious dealings are linked to Veil Construction Company, China Henan, China Harbour, AVIC International, Brut Engineering as well as Andrew and Partners law firm. Others include a UK firm called Eastgate and the National Housing Authority (NHC).

Findings show that Chitotela received

multiple cash deposits in his accounts from various business associates, amounting to millions of kwacha accumulatively, while other payments were made to third parties who bought properties on his behalf, using proxies.

Among the transactions under probe, Veil Construction paid the Minister's company, RKC Tours and Guide Car Hire, an unexplained half a million kwacha. ACC investigators say they suspect Veil Construction to be a shell company that was used to get kickbacks from Chinese companies through purported subcontracts. It was discovered that the operating address for Veil Construction was pointing to the same office premises as the minister's company, RKC, while in other correspondence, it was purporting to be sharing office space with China Harbour.

Records at PACRA obtained by News Diggers! showed that the company, Veil Construction, which was making payments to the minister's RKC was incorporated around March 2017, and one of its shareholders, a Chinese national called Peng Claude Peng was also a shareholder of another Chinese company called China Harbour, which was traced back to Chitotela. The only known company employee for Veil construction was named Gregory Mubanga, while the purported shareholders, other than Peng Peng, were some Kawambwa based teachers going by the names Kennedy Mwape and Bestone Musonda. However, the company was reported to receive in excess of US\$2 million from Chinese companies. **To page 5**



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From page 4

ACC sources say, in 2017, Veil Construction received numerous amounts of unexplained payments from AVIC International, another Chinese company that has been sweeping government contracts from RDA in the past decade. Records show that while government breached procedure in awarding road construction tenders to China Harbour, both Chinese companies remitted proceeds to the minister's shell company, with some payments going straight into the minister's account - deposited by individuals. In 2016, The Road Development Agency, which falls

Diggers! investigations into Chitotela's arrest

of suspected kickbacks into the minister's shell company, which would later be withdrawn by various individuals. Investigators say Veil Construction, having no substantial number of employees, paid no salaries or statutory taxes to ZRA and NAPSA.

RCK Tours and Guide Car Hire also got payments from Veil Construction, which were then withdrawn from RKC by Chitotela himself."

under Chitotela, single sourced China Harbour to upgrade the 122 kilometre Kawambwa-Mporokoso Road in Luapula and Northern Provinces, at a cost of about US\$148 million. With Peng Peng being a shareholder of both China Harbour and Veil Construction companies, the tender-awarded firm would then facilitate the transfer

The investigation further revealed that Peng was also linked to a lawyer called Andrew Kombe Kampamba, among other politicians and State House officials. China Harbour is reported to have, on occasions, transferred over US\$300,000 to Kampamba's law firm, Andrew and Partners; which then purchased the two properties in Makeni and Ibex Hill for the minister - believed to

be further gratification for the contract awarded to the Chinese company. The two properties, though not in the minister's name, are what led to the minister's arrest on Tuesday. In another transaction, AVIC paid about K1 million to Andrew and Partners, which when queried, the law firm said they were holding on behalf of Veil Construction to buy construction vehicles from a UK company called Eastgate. Records showed that money was sent from the law firm to UK, but the construction vehicles were not received, as Veil Construction still does not have any registered vehicles. In a related transactions, Andrew and Partners bought four houses from the National Housing Authority SOS area in Lusaka, in the name of Bestone Musonda, the Kawambwa based teacher who is a purported shareholder in Veil Construction. Meanwhile, among the beneficiaries of the money deposited into Veil Construction Accounts is Chitotela's friend and PF member of parliament for Chimbamilonga Hastings Mwansa, who is reported to have collected about K450,000 in total, while another individual called

Suman Phiri was a regular agent



Lodge, three Hino Rangers registration numbers BAD 6731, BAD 3125, BAD 5451, Nissan Navara ADC 2059, Toyota Rav 4 ALT 8355, Mitsubishi Rosa, ABX 3507, Mitsubishi Fighter BAF 1695, Toyota Granvia BAC 8931, Toyota Camry ALV 6752 and Toyota Noah BAC 4816 among others.

One of the vehicles which Chitotela allegedly forced RDA to buy for him.

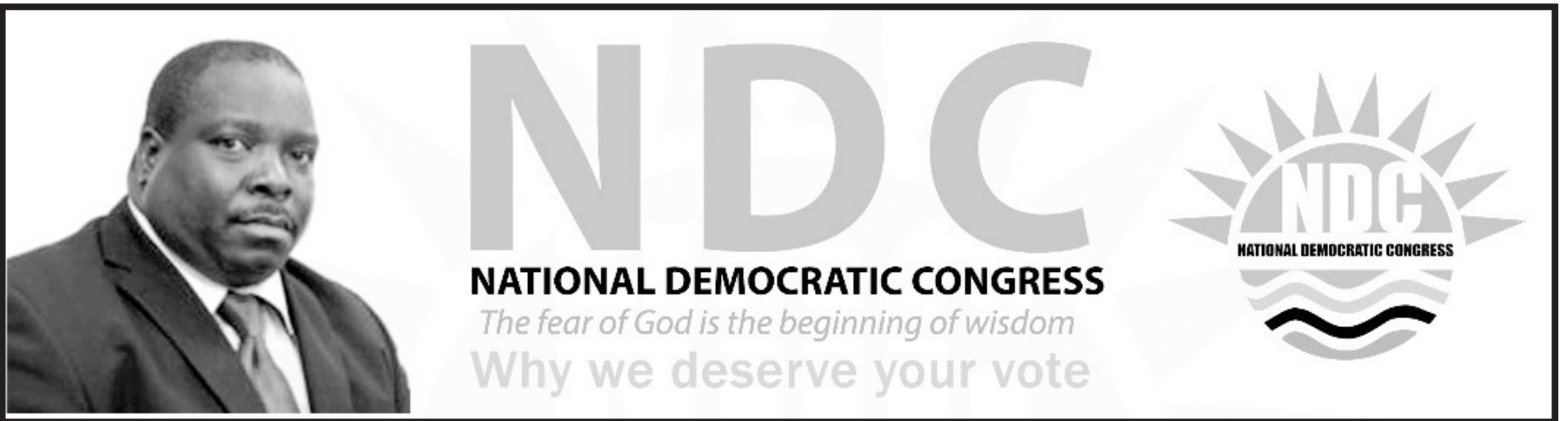
for cash transactions on the company's accounts - withdrawing over K8 million within the year. RCK Tours and Guide Car Hire also got payments from Veil Construction, which were then withdrawn from RKC by Chitotela himself. Another company linked to Chitotela called Brut Engineering, which was registered in 2008, is said to

have started recording massive profits after the arrested minister bounced back in government around 2015, with major cash deposits coming from government ministries where Chitotela could be traced. Meanwhile, with Chitotela at the helm as Minister of Infrastructure Development, the ministry paid his RKC company amounts close to K200,000, for services purported to have been rendered with no existing contracts. The minister's car hire company is reported to have cars in excess of 30, owned directly and indirectly. Records at RTSA show that before 2012, the minister did not have vehicles registered under his name, but as at 2018, he had in excess of 10 luxurious cars valued at over K2 million, with several others not registered in his name. Investigators say there were no records showing Chitotela's bank transactions regarding the purchase of the minister's numerous cars. Some of the cars under investigation include a Lexus BAF 1696, a Toyota Land Cruiser BAD 2812 which ACC suspects was given to him by the owner of Ndozo

In another scandal, Chitotela allegedly signed a contract for the sale of maize to Agriculture Minister Michael Katambo valued at over K4.5 million, which quantity of maize the investigators discovered that the minister had no capacity to produce. Chitotela sold the maize to his Agriculture counterpart through a company called Manyumbi Farm Enterprise, which money the arrested minister used to buy some property from a cement manufacturing company. In December 2013, late president Michael Sata fired Chitotela from his position as deputy minister of labour, on grounds that he was suspected to be involved in corruption and the ACC was investigating him. After President Edgar Lungu succeeded Sata in 2015, he re-appointed Chitotela as deputy minister for sports and youth development before elevating him to a full Cabinet position of Works and Supply Minister. He was later moved to the newly created Ministry of Infrastructure Development, where the corruption scandals around him escalated before the ACC finally arrested him.



PF Secretary General Davies Mwila(r) joins Chitotela at the minister's matebeto in August 2018



ENERGY SECTOR

PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

Zambia has the uppermost cost of fuel and other petroleum products in the mainland Southern African Development Community (SADC) regional bloc which result from inadequacy and costly financing arrangement. The taxation system in Zambia also happens to remain the highest within the mainland SADC member states. Moreover, government levies, duties, and other taxes have been higher in Zambia in comparison with other countries. Zambia is also faced with a number of difficulties which include; poor feedstock cargo formulation, lack of adequate national reserves, inefficient feedstock processing and underdeveloped infrastructure meant importation of finished products.

Research shows that crude oil prices make up 71 per cent of the price of fuel and as such it makes it a major influencer of fuel prices since the remaining 29 percent comes from distribution, refining, and taxes, which happen to be more stable.

The NDC when elected will do the following to tackle the aforementioned problems as follows;

- Put in place a transparent procurement system for crude oil and comingled petroleum which is going to reduce the supply chain costs by cutting off middle men.

- Rationalize the tax regime for both crude and finished products by lowering them

- Build suitable national reserves that can last

for 8 months by constructing fuel depots in all the districts of Zambia and ensure that every part of the country has adequate fuel reserves. This will be done so that our country is safeguarded from being affected by price changes of crude oil on the international market and fluctuations in the currency market and make them uniform.

INDENI refinery has been riddled with inefficient feedstock processing capacity as such. As such we will recapitalize it with new technology to ensure that 80% of petroleum products consumed in the country are made by Indeni. This will retain jobs and value addition within the country.

We also build another refinery plant in Mongu, western province, importation of crude oil from Oil Producing such as Angola, West African Countries and South America.

Implement dynamic hedging strategies to mitigate risk in price movements of crude oil and changes on the currency market such as future buying.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

As the NDC, we will intensify the support and supply of renewable energy which would allow the country to replace carbon-intensive energy sources and significantly reduce global warming emissions from the citizens. In accordance with the Paris treaty;

NDC's aim is to ensure that rural areas have electricity from renewable sources as first line source

of energy which should account for about 70% percent. These include; solar, wind, biomass, hydrogen and fuel cell, and geothermal.

Renewable energy industry is more labour intensive. For example; solar panels need humans to install them and wind farms need technicians for maintenance; as NDC we will ensure employment creation through the use of renewable energy.

NDC will formulate a renewable energy policy that will among other things waver off company tax and bureaucracy for companies that generate and distribute renewable sources of energy in Zambia. A number of research shows that renewable energy would create more than three times as many jobs as producing an equivalent amount of electricity from fossil fuels. This is so because energy already supports thousands of jobs in many countries including manufacturing, project development, construction, installation, operations and maintenance, transportation and logistics, and financial, legal, and consulting services and sales.

As NDC, we will further stimulate growth in clean energy to create a positive economic "ripple" effects which will benefit industries in the renewable energy supply chain and isolated local businesses will also benefit from improved household and business incomes.

As NDC we will ensure that public tertiary institutions develop programs and curriculums to offer courses in the study of renewable energy at undergraduate and post graduate.

Govt investigating Scott for publishing Sata's death certificate in his book

By Thomas Mulenga

Chief Government Spokesperson Dora Siliya says government, through Cabinet Office, is investigating how former Vice President Dr Guy Scott accessed Micheal Sata's death certificate which he has since published in his book. And Siliya says the arrest of Minister of Infrastructure Development Ronald Chitotela is proof that President Edgar Lungu's commitment towards the fight against corruption is not merely political. At a press briefing, Wednesday, Siliya said government wanted to establish whether Dr Scott used his authority as acting president to obtain the death certificate. Siliya said former top government officials were bound by the oath of secrecy. "It has come to our attention as government that in a book published by former Vice Republican President Dr Guy Scott, there is publication of a copy of the death certificate of the late President of Zambia Mr Micheal Chilufya Sata. Clearly, this is a very sensitive issue, we have seen that

the late President's son Mr Mulenga Sata has reacted I think negatively towards this matter and I think as government, through Cabinet office, we are quite interested to establish what actually happened. Did Dr Scott come into possession of this document by virtue of him having acted as President and once that came to an end, that he took this copy without the authority, or is it that somebody in the family actually availed it to him when he was publishing this book? Because clearly one of the sons, Mr Mulenga Sata has been incensed with this. We also know that as government officials, once we leave office, our oath of secrecy does not end immediately, I think there is over 25 years bound by that secrecy," Siliya said. "And a death certificate is a family matter and is not something that anybody would want to be published out there unless truly, there was consent by the person involved or the family. So we want to find out what really happened. You will recall what happened that there was a book that was published about former South

African President Nelson Mandela, and it was withdrawn because the public in South Africa felt that it was insensitive to the last few days to the last few days of the late President in terms of cultural issues, family issues. So we don't know if this is the case also in this matter, but as government, through cabinet office, I think that they are making an investigation so we can establish whether the former Vice-President took this unlawfully, having served as President at that time, whether someone else in the family did give him without consulting the rest of the family, were they the right person or that it was done behind the family's back and the back of the government and the Zambian people." And Siliya said Chitotela's arrest was proof of President Lungu's commitment to the fight against corruption. "I think President Lungu has reiterated this fact many times, it's just that doom sayers will always be there. The people of Zambia have been saying let's have institutions that speak to these issues such as

corruption and I think the Anti-Corruption Commission is one of them. The ACC continues to do its work but sometimes when they don't find anything, the media does not report that they did not find anything. The ACC works every day! They visit ministries and various government parastatals every day to inquire, and it's not always that they would find something related to corruption. And even when there is an arrest, the due process takes its course that one is innocent until proven guilty," Siliya said. "But I think this should give us confidence in our institutions. I was speaking to SABC in South Africa last week that we as Africans are the champions in bad mouthing ourselves and not having confidence in our own institutions. They do work and maybe this is one of the cases to demonstrate that they have been working and they are working. So to me I think this speaks to the point that President Lungu has been making for a long time that the fight against real corruption is real, not imaginary, and not political but real."

Meanwhile, Siliya said she had not yet read the Human Rights Commission's report on the Vespers Shimunzila's death. Siliya also said government was not considering taking up the \$700million offer by First Quantum Minerals to buy off its 20% shares in Kansanshi mining Plc through ZCCM-IH, as the mining firm had not officially approached government on the issue. "Our position is very clear that as far as I am concerned as government spokesperson, I have not seen this matter anywhere in cabinet. If FQM on their own are making these offers to government through the Newspaper or through whichever other format, government has not considered this matter at all because it has not come to cabinet and I just read it in the Paper as well. And as government spokesperson I would really say until it reaches government through cabinet, I cannot communicate to you about it. I don't believe that government is at the moment considering this offer," said Siliya.

By Zondiwe Mbewe

Chita Lodge Limited has dragged the Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) to court for allegedly seizing its property in Lusaka's Ibez Hill on the premise that it is owned by former Zambia Air Force Commander Lt General Eric Chimese.

Chita Lodge Limited, the applicant in this matter, has also sued the Attorney General as the first respondent, saying the seizure itself is irregular, illegal, unfair and unreasonable as the said premises have never belonged to Chimese.

In an affidavit in support of ex-parte summons for leave to apply for judicial review filed in the Lusaka High Court, Tuesday, Chita

Chita Lodge sues DEC for mistaking its Ibez Hill property for Chimese's

Lodge managing director James Chungu stated that on Monday around 11:30 hours, he received a phone call from one of his employees at Subdivision Q of Farm no. 2303 in Ibez Hill, informing him that officers from DEC had presented themselves at the said property and had gained entry.

"That the said search was conducted in my absence or that of authorised officers

of Chita Lodge," read the affidavit.

Chungu stated that he was taken by surprise by the foregoing as he had been phoned by his lawyer an hour earlier, informing him that he was required at DEC Headquarters for an interview, as a consequence of which an appointment was made for February 5 at 11:00 hours.

He stated that the said interview was understood

by him to be a follow-up of a previous one, which was conducted on February 1 at DEC Headquarters where he had made a statement relating to the on-going investigations in the case involving Chimese with regards to ownership of the said property.

"At the said interview, I had furnished DEC investigators with a true copy of the Certificate of Title to the said property which clearly

indicated Chita Lodge Limited as the registered proprietor," read the affidavit further.

Chungu stated that following the said entry to the property, he called the lodge's lawyer and instructed him to proceed to the premises to establish the bonafides of the persons conducting the search.

He added that a short while later, he received a call from the lawyer informing him that the persons conducting a search

on the premises had a notice of seizure dated September 5, 2018, which was endorsed by Chimese as acknowledgement of service of the said notice of seizure.

Chungu disclosed that the said notice of seizure had never been served on the lodge from the time it was issued in September last year, and that the said premises had never belonged to Chimese.

"It is true and honest belief that the issuance of the notice of seizure by the respondent and the seizure itself are irregular, illegal, procedurally inappropriate, unfair and unreasonable under the circumstances. It is my true belief that this is a matter in which leave to apply for judicial review ought to be granted against the Attorney General so that that the said decision be set aside and quashed," read the affidavit.

Fire Chitotela, demands TIZ

By Mukosha Funga

Transparency International Zambia has asked President Edgar Lungu to immediately relieve Housing and Infrastructure Development Minister Ronald Chitotela of his duties so that he can deal with the corruption allegations preferred against him.

And Lusaka lawyer Zaza McQueen has observed that the two cases of concealing property suspected to be proceeds of crime which Chitotela has been charged with are too weak.

In a statement, Tuesday, TIZ president Rueben Lifuka welcomed Chitotela's arrest saying he believed the ACC had sufficient grounds.

"Transparency International Zambia welcomes the arrest of Hon Chitotela by the Anti Corruption Commission. We want to believe that the ACC has done its homework and have sufficient grounds to effect the arrest. We wish to use this occasion to encourage the ACC and all other law enforcement agencies to do their work without any fear or favour. They have an important role in ridding our country of the rot of corruption and all other wrong doings. In the meantime, we call upon President Lungu to immediately relieve Hon Chitotela of his ministerial duties to allow him attend to this matter," Lifuka stated.

"Further, it is desirable that the work of the ACC is not fettered by having to deal with a serving Cabinet Minister."

He asked the ACC to also turn its attention to other scandals such as the purchase of the 42 fire trucks.

"Additionally, we wish to remind the ACC of the many allegations made against government officials, now is the time to respond comprehensively to all allegations including the famous 42 fire tenders- was there any minister or government official involved in this transaction? What about the Top Star saga, the social cash transfer, among others? ACC should ensure that it address all these allegations and only then will the public have confidence in what they are doing," stated Lifuka.

"It is important that the ACC is above board and not simply

used to launder the political image of the PF in the fight against corruption. We want to see action on all these cases and scandals where a lot of questions are still being asked by the public. This is also an opportune time to reiterate our call for President Lungu and all Cabinet Ministers to be subjected to Lifestyle Audits."

And McQueen has observed that the two cases of concealing property suspected to be proceeds of crime which Chitotela has been charged with are too weak.

"Fighting corruption requires an honest and true attitude in the cause. In this recent arrest of honorable chitotela, ACC is not honest in the fight against corruption. To start with the two offenses he has been charged with are very weak. Hon Chitotela only needs to establish that the property in question does not belong to him. An acquittal is sure," MaQueen stated in a statement shared on his Facebook page, Wednesday.

"The investigation has taken a period of three (3) years, why? Can one say he has been concealing the property from 2015 to today? Why today? If indeed he was

been investigated for alleged corruption, why didn't ACC recommend for his suspension as minister to pave way for a thorough investigation? This is not the first time ACC instituted investigations against Hon Chitotela, why

did ACC stop the investigation after the death of Michael Sata? Are these the only offenses he has committed? Honesty in fighting corruption is very cardinal if we are to win the fight. Anyway, half bread is better than nothing. The above

notwithstanding, the arrest of Chitotela by ACC is good as more will come out and that will give leads to arresting others. Every fight results in new development. I wait to see the new developments and implications."



Foreign Affairs Minister Joseph Malanji and his Ethiopian counterpart Dr Workneh Gebeyehu shortly after holding a bilateral meeting

UPND panicking, they don't stand a chance in Sesheke - Mumbi

By Mirriam Chabala

PF deputy secretary general Mumbi Phiri says Mazabuka UPND member of parliament Gary Nkombo's allegations that a returning officer in the Sesheke by-elections had a meeting with State House officials are false.

At a media briefing yesterday, Phiri said Nkombo's allegations were part of UPND's usual tricks to tarnish the ruling party's image after realising that the opposition was losing an election.

"I am sure as the media you have heard that the Patriotic Front has been accused of meeting some electoral officers by the people from State House. But we would like to refute those reports because as usual, our colleagues in the UPND, they have a way of tarnishing people's images when they realise that they are losing, especially in an election. The UPND

has been on record, claiming to have won the 2016 elections even before we went for elections. We heard the threats which were coming from them that if they didn't win the elections, there was going to be havoc in this country. And we saw things happening in their strongholds after the 2016 elections, where those with names from Northern and Eastern Provinces were displaced, their businesses were destroyed and some of them their houses were burnt. Even civil servants were affected by that," Phiri said.

"We all have history of how our colleagues from the UPND behave when they realise that they are losing an election. If we go back to the Mufumbwe by-elections, by then the ruling party was MMD and the UPND candidate at that time was Ambassador Mulwondwe Muzungu. When the

UPND realised that they were loosing that election, there was a big fight and if you remember that was the time when the UPND spokesperson honourable Charles Kakoma was literary undressed, he came out naked...We saw the worst part of it were three children who were not even in the voting age were hit by the candidate's son's vehicle and they were killed. That was the birth of also the Mapatizya formular...So in these [upcoming] by-elections they (UPND) were expecting that will win but have realised that they are losing. So what Mr Garry Nkombo is saying is not true because by law, in this country, every politician is entitled to go to the Electoral Commission and buy voter registers so that you know how many people you have, be it in a ward or in a constituency who are eligible to vote, it's allowed. So that is just a way of

tarnishing the image of the PF. Phiri said it was unfortunate that educated men like Nkombo had resorted to telling lies just for political gain.

"It's so shameful to have men, because we know that lying is associated to women, but now we are seeing educated men lying.

Asked about the party's position over Minister of Infrastructure Ronald Chitotela's, Phiri said the minister was innocent until proven guilty.

"What has happened to honourable Chitotela is not new. These things happen and by our laws of Zambia, everybody is innocent until proven guilty. Honourable Chitotela is going to appear in the courts of law. So let's wait and see what the courts determine but as far as we are concerned, he's innocent until proven guilty," said Phiri.

Immediately after the Patriotic Front expelled him from the ruling party, Mr Harry Kalaba graciously lifted his bags, which were already packed, and left. This man had been wanting to leave the PF for some time because he fell out of love with the party a long time ago. He now regards it as the evil that Zambians must fight to eliminate, if their livelihoods have to improve.

We are not putting words in Mr Kalaba's mouth; this is what he said when he resigned from his position as Foreign Affairs Minister a year ago. He repeated his sentiments about his disgust for the corruption in PF when he made the move to relinquish his parliamentary position, even before the Speaker declares the Bahati constituency seat vacant.

It is clear that the PF has chased someone who was actually desperate to go. In Bemba we would say, *ba PF batana uwikwite* (meaning they are denying food to a person who is already satisfied, if not constipated). It appears Mr Kalaba was long gone, but he just didn't want to resign much earlier to avoid being blamed for causing a costly by-election.

So, unlike Honourable Kambwili, who is still holding on and fighting his

Kalaba trying to play clean football with a brutal rugby side



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

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expulsion from the party, Mr Kalaba has completely terminated his links with the PF so that he can engage in a clean fight for the Presidency without any complications. He feels associating himself with a party that he regards as corrupt and responsible for people's sufferings, doesn't make a good argument point for him.

Many people have applauded this stance, saying he has demonstrated maturity and political courage. Indeed, we, too, think that Mr Kalaba has good intentions for the politics of this country. But what we must not forget is that,

in Zambia, especially under the Patriotic Front, good intentions are welcome, but they are not rewarded.

Mr Kalaba is throwing good intentions at evil people. He is trying to play a clean, good game of football with an aggressive rugby side; he is a boxer in a wrestling ring where his opponent is also the referee and defending champion. It may not end well. They will leave him bruised! We can only hope that he is prepared for the brutal game ahead and he is strong enough to withstand the frustration.

With his PF membership

relinquished and his parliamentary seat gone, Mr Kalaba has technically put his face in front of a rocket launcher called the Public Order Act. He is in direct firing range, and they will not allow him to mobilise the party in his former constituency. He has no basis for campaigning in Bahati, or anywhere in the country because he is not an MP, and his Democratic Party is under clamp down, it can't file candidates in by-elections yet until it's deregistration case is disposed from court. That is a consequence of being good to evil people. There is nothing you can do to please

them; the more you bend to show good intentions, the more they abuse you.

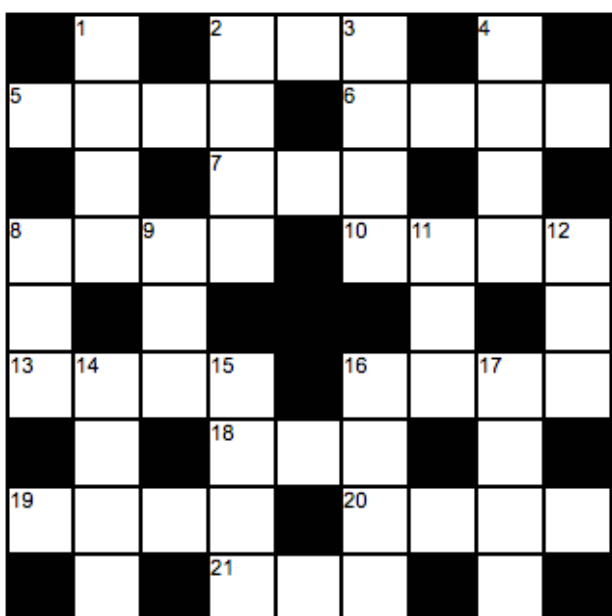
These people in PF dared Mr Kalaba to resign from PF and prove his popularity by challenging President Edgar Lungu without clinging to the ruling party. The challenger has done just that, but they are now blocking the train that he has boarded into 2021. To the PF, Kambwili, who refused to let go of his parliamentary seat is a coward because he is afraid of standing alone. But Kalaba is also a bad man for deciding to stand alone and challenge President Lungu. What is it that

the PF wants? Why are they blocking the Democratic Party from conducting its activities if, indeed, Mr Kalaba is a nonentity?

In our view, the PF is scared of Honourable Kambwili's lethal mouth, but they don't think he has the capacity to split the ruling party by 2021, and they don't fear him much in that context. But it appears the PF leadership has discovered that Mr Kalaba's presidential bid is being supported by several PF members of parliament, and even a couple of Cabinet ministers. The suspension of PF Luangeni member of parliament Charles Zulu has not come from without, and it is a fact that some PF shots are reaching out to the Democratic Party presidential candidate.

We can't say that Mr Kalaba will win the 2021 presidential election because we don't know what the Zambian people think about him and his leadership, but we can speak with confidence that he will certainly be a factor at the next general elections. We do not think that this man should be written off. Those who think we are hallucinating should wait and see how the politics inside the PF will turn out in the next 24 months.

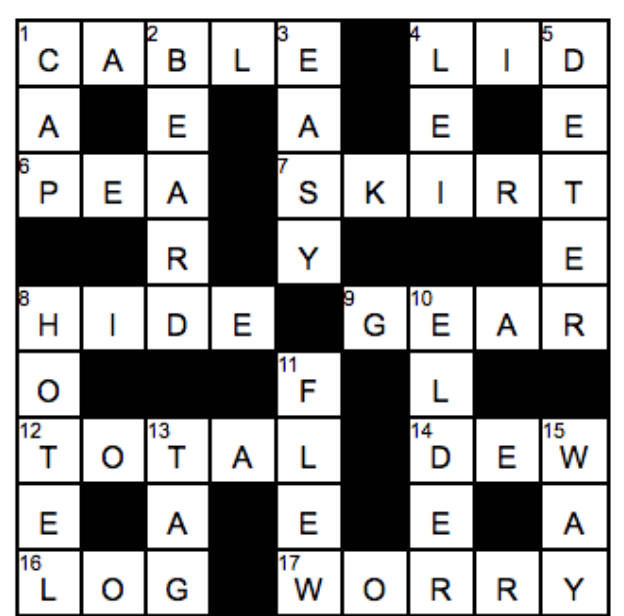
Crossword puzzle 288



"In leadership, life and all things it's far wiser to judge people by their deeds than their speech - their track record rather than their talk"
- Rasheed Ogunlaru

- | Across | Down |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2. Respectful title | 1. Gymnastic feat |
| 5. Put your hands together | 2. Whirl |
| 6. Desertlike | 3. Gather up grass clippings |
| 7. Writing fluid | 4. A rotary device |
| 8. Expanse | 8. Had seen |
| 10. Snakelike fish | 9. Help |
| 13. Walk in water | 11. Unit of corn |
| 16. Nursery furniture | 12. Cry uncontrollably |
| 18. Tire filler | 14. Friend in war |
| 19. Speak unclearly | 15. Make money from work |
| 20. Tiny particle | 16. Jam |
| 21. "___ de plume" | 17. Object of worship |

Solutions to puzzle 287



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.

ACC's arrest of Chitotela 'linked to Luapula United

Dear Editor,

"I am sure he has presidential ambitions otherwise this is one of those sugar-coated arrests." - Samuel Chibale

"ECL does not want anyone to challenge him, this about presidential ambitions and not corruption. Anyway, they say there is no honour among thieves." - Chikwanda Mwansa

"This is Luapula United. ACC has been unleashed on him because he wants to stand as PF president in 2021. Don't jump and praise ACC. It is because Chitotela is positioning himself to challenge Lungu!" - Boyd Moonga

"I think he has plans on 2021 to challenge the President." - Ronald Katungu

"A lot more shall be sacrificed as 2021 approaches." - Freddie Sichone

"Commendable, next, investigate a certain PF leader who only holds press conferences at the airport." - Lameck Nyirenda

"Perhaps he was thinking of challenging the big seat in 2021 at the convention, hence the move..." - Matt Stone

"This is when you are opening your eyes, ba ACC? These thieves have stolen a lot of funds and we are heading towards 2021 elections. Toothless ACC!" - Liywalii Matakala

"The general public has long known that Chitotela is a very corrupt Minister. That it has taken the ACC this long to interrogate him is more than baffling, but I hope it means the Commission has been gathering up all the evidence they can on the man so that once he steps in court it is a one way trip for him. Otherwise if Chitotela sees the light of day again then ACC should be disbanded!" - KK



Govt's repeated attempts to ban Kalaba's DP activities

Editor,

"It only shows that someone somewhere is dead scared that Kalaba will destroy a lot of pf strongholds. Just allow him & his DP to operate freely, don't use State machinery to intimidate others. The ballot is the only way to beat a political party." - Steve Lenx

"Cowards!! They have always feared to compete." - Sarah Musongole

"Okay, why are they scared of Kalaba if he is not a factor?" - Kebby Chanda

"Why afraid of Kalaba??? You were boasting that he is not a factor, but after he resigned from your party,

you are busy following him? Leave the man alone! Let him try his luck. It seems you are just fearing the man too much!" - Ba Mukangwa Peter

"I remember watching Mr Kalaba emotionally charged issuing threats against then Acting President Dr Scott. I wish he knew what he was defending!!" - Enerst Ngosa

"That's why is good to stand for the truth and the truth will set you free because some decisions we make in life sometimes come to our disadvantage." - Wisdom Shilamba Sr.

"I watched Kalaba's prime TV interview on Monday. The man has huge potential to upset PF." - John Mbewe

GBM on letting someone else be running mate

Editor,

"Leadership at its maturity level, I am impressed with GBM's reasoning!" - Sydney Chibozu

"Wisdom from VEEP GBM." - Joseph Maimbolwa Namasiku

"That's what I want to hear, saying anybody can be running mate as long as it will remove PF out of power, and I am glad you trying to reach out to Harry Kalaba, great move!" - Mutinta Mulonda

"I would love to see Kalaba as running mate to HH, then you have Commerce Minister Sean Tembo, Justice Chipimo..." - Mcstone Mcfarland Simweene

"UPND has finally swallowed pride that it can't win elections on its own." - Jacob Kaumba

"I am attracted to the statement saying an invitation to Kalaba will be extended to join the pact." - Charles Fickson Lungu

"While you talking alliance, CK is branding his campaign fleet for 2021 presidency. Alliances don't work, are time wasting as all opposition leaders wear ambitious shoes for the Presidency. Wake-up and smell the coffee!" - Innocent Daka

"A very mature stance from GBM. I don't think he is the best of politicians but it is very refreshing to see someone come out unselfishly like that. In Zambia every politician wants to be head of state, no one wants to work this other people for the good of the nation. Congratulations GBM for saying that and I hope you meant it." - Mirriam Chama

Fasting Can protect against age-related diseases

Fasting may not be just a religious or political practice. It may actually protect you against age-related diseases and improve your overall health, researchers say.

The study, led by a team from the University of California-Irvine (UCI), found that fasting affects circadian clocks in the liver and skeletal muscle, causing them to rewire their metabolism, which can ultimately lead to improved health and protection against age-related diseases.

The circadian clock operates within the body and its organs as intrinsic time-keeping machinery to preserve homeostasis in response to the changing environment.

And, while food is known to influence clocks in peripheral tissues, it was unclear until now how the lack of food influences clock function and ultimately affects the body.

"We discovered fasting influences the circadian clock and fasting-driven cellular responses, which together work to achieve fasting-specific temporal gene regulation," said lead author Paolo Sassone-Corsi, Professor of Biological Chemistry at UCI.

"Skeletal muscle, for example, appears to be twice as responsive to fasting as the liver," Sassone-Corsi added.

The research, detailed in the *Cell Reports* journal, was conducted using mice, which were subjected to 24-hour periods of fasting.

While fasting, the mice exhibited a reduction in oxygen consumption (VO₂), respiratory exchange ratio (RER), and energy expenditure, all of which were completely abolished by refeeding, which parallels results observed in humans.

"The reorganisation of gene regulation by fasting could prime the genome to a more permissive state to anticipate upcoming food intake and thereby drive a new rhythmic cycle of gene expression. In other words, fasting is able to essentially reprogram a variety of cellular responses," Sassone-Corsi said.

"Therefore, optimal fasting in a timed manner would be strategic to positively affect cellular functions and ultimately benefiting health and protecting against age-associated diseases."

This study opens new avenues of investigation that could ultimately lead to the development of nutritional strategies to improve health in humans. *News18Lifestyle*

Oscar-winning actress Jennifer Lawrence is engaged to boyfriend Cooke Maroney, her representative has told US media.

The 28-year-old Hunger Games star sparked engagement rumours after she was seen wearing a ring on a night out with Mr Maroney, a 34-year-old art dealer, in New York last weekend.

Lawrence, one of the world's highest-paid actresses, won the best actress Oscar for starring in 2012's *Silver Linings Playbook* film.

No wedding date has yet been announced.

The couple reportedly met when they were introduced last year by Lawrence's long-time friend Laura Simpson, who accompanied her to the Oscars film awards in 2014, US media report.

Lawrence, who starred in 2018's Russian-themed spy thriller *Red Sparrow*, told Entertainment Tonight ahead of the film's release that she planned to take time off from acting to focus on political activism.

Jennifer Lawrence engaged to art gallery director Cooke Maroney



She said the move was aimed at getting more "young people engaged politically".

Lawrence, one of the first major actresses to discuss

the Hollywood pay gap back in 2015, also joined forces with female celebrities Cameron Diaz and Adele at the 2018 Women's March in Los Angeles, which called

for women's rights and equality.

Maroney is a director at the Gladstone Gallery in New York, USA Today report. *Sky News*

Egypt to vote on extending presidential term limits

An Egyptian parliamentary committee has given initial approval to a proposal to amend the constitution in a way that would extend President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi's time in office, state media say.

Mr Sisi is due to stand down in 2022, when his second four-year term ends.

But a proposal from the majority bloc in parliament would lengthen future presidential terms to six years and let Mr Sisi

stand for another two terms.

If approved by two-thirds of MPs, the changes would be put to a referendum.

In 2013, Mr Sisi led the military's overthrow of Egypt's first democratically elected president, Mohammed Morsi, following protests against his rule.

Since then, he has overseen what human rights groups say is an unprecedented crackdown on dissent that has led to the detention of tens of thousands of

people.

Mr Sisi was re-elected last April after winning 97% of the vote. He faced no serious competition because several potential rivals dropped out or were arrested.

Article 140 of Egypt's constitution, which was approved in a referendum in 2014, currently states that the president serves four-year terms and may only be re-elected once.

As well as lengthening terms to six years, the amendment submitted on Sunday by the pro-government Support Egypt Coalition would allow Mr Sisi to serve an additional two terms after his current one ends, according to a copy posted on Facebook by one MP.

That would potentially allow the 64-year-old to stay in power until 2034.

Abdul Hadi al-Qudbi of the Support Egypt Coalition said it had acted "with a view of maintaining stability and continuing [Egypt's] developmental strategy".

On Tuesday, state-run Nile News TV quoted parliamentary Speaker Ali Abdul Aal as saying that the amendment had been approved by the General Committee after "fulfilling the required constitutional conditions".

The committee also approved other amendments that would create the post of vice-president, reintroduce a second chamber of parliament, and strengthen the representation of women, Coptic Christians and disabled people.

The 596-seat parliament is overwhelmingly supportive of Mr Sisi, but a small group of leftist MPs denounced the proposals, saying they would cancel out the principal gain of the 2011 popular uprising that ousted longtime President Hosni Mubarak.

"Project to amend #Egypt constitution unfolding & in full throttle," tweeted the Nobel Prize winner Mohamed ElBaradei on

Monday. "Arab Spring in reverse!"

The CBS television network says it has rejected a request by Egypt's envoy to the US not to broadcast an interview with President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi.

The 60 Minutes programme cited Mr Sisi as confirming the Egyptian military was working with Israel to combat jihadist militants in the Sinai peninsula.

He also denied Egypt was detaining any political prisoners and defended a deadly crackdown on protesters in 2013.

There was no immediate response to the report from the Egyptian government.

More than 900 people - most of them supporters of Morsi's now-banned Islamist movement, the Muslim Brotherhood - were killed as security forces cleared Rabaa al-Adawiya Square and Nahda Square in Cairo on 14 August 2013. Another 120 people died at Ramses Square two days later.

Mr Sisi, who was serving defence minister at the time, was asked by CBS if he had given the order to fire on the protesters in Rabaa al-Adawiya Square. He replied:

"There were thousands of armed people in the sit-in for more than 40 days. We tried every peaceful means to disperse them."

Human Rights Watch has said few people were armed, and that the systematic nature of the killings suggested they were part of a policy to use lethal force, making them probably crimes against humanity.

The president was also asked about reports by human rights activists that as many as 60,000 political opponents have probably been detained since 2013.

"I don't know where they got that figure. I said there are no political prisoners in Egypt. Whenever there is a minority trying to impose their extremist ideology we have to intervene regardless of their numbers," Mr Sisi said. *BBC*

Pope says priests kept nuns as sex slaves

Pope Francis has admitted that clerics have sexually abused nuns, and in one case they were kept as sex slaves.

He said in that case his predecessor, Pope Benedict, was forced to shut down an entire congregation of nuns who were being abused by priests.

It is thought to be the first time that Pope Francis has acknowledged the sexual abuse of nuns by the clergy.

He said the Church was attempting to address the problem but said it was "still going on".

Pope Francis made the comments on Tuesday to reporters while on a historic tour of the Middle East.

He admitted that priests and bishops had abused nuns, but said the Church was aware of the issue and "working on it". "It's a path that we've been on," he said.

"Pope Benedict had the courage to dissolve a female



congregation which was at a certain level, because this slavery of women had entered it - slavery, even to the point of sexual slavery - on the part of clerics or the founder."

Alessandro Gisotti of the Vatican press office later told CBS News that the order in question had been based in France.

Pope Francis said sexual abuse of nuns was an ongoing problem but happened largely in "certain congregations, predominantly new ones".

Last November, the Catholic Church's global organisation for nuns denounced the "culture of silence and secrecy" that prevented them from speaking out.

Just days ago the Vatican's women's magazine, *Women Church World*, condemned the abuse, saying in some cases nuns were forced to abort priests' children - something Catholicism forbids.

The magazine said the #MeToo movement meant more women were now coming forward with their stories. *BBC*

Eden Hazard remains hopeful that Real Madrid will be able to complete a big-money move to sign him in the summer, as his Chelsea contract prepares to enter its final year, Goal understands.

Madrid have been interested in signing Hazard since late 2016 and it is expected that Los Blancos will have to pay over £100 million (\$130m) to complete a deal.

Isco has become dispensable for the Santiago Bernabeu club, meaning the potential sale of the Spain international would go some way towards putting a dent in the figures necessary to sign Belgium international Hazard.

In addition, Madrid have shown restraint in the two previous summer transfer windows, leading to a budget capable of securing a deal for a superstar attacker.

Hazard hopeful over £100m Madrid move



The Spanish capital club do have one factor on their side, however, with Hazard's contract set to enter its final

year this summer. Still, that leverage would only go so far given the quality of the player in question.

However, it remains uncertain whether Madrid will make an offer for the 28-year-old, who has

previously indicated that he will be happy to remain at Stamford Bridge if a move doesn't materialise. **Goal**

Nkana beats NAPSA

By Abraham Kalito

Nkana FC yesterday came from behind to register their first win of the campaign in a match against Napsa Stars.

Nkana beat Napsa by three goals to one thanks to Fred Tshimenga who scored in the 19 minute, Kelvin Mubanga in the 72 and Simon Bwalya in the 90th.

Napsa Stars' lead lasted only 9 minutes after Eric Yema scored for the side in the 10th minute. The game is Nkana's first win in the super division having drawn the first match 2 all against Lumwana Radiants.

Meanwhile ZESCO united has maintained their perfect start in the super division with a 2-0 win over Nakambala Leopards to top the log in stream A of the transitional league.

The two super league giants met over the weekend in Confederations cup, a game which ZESCO won by two goals to nil.

Pacers thump Lakers in James's most lopsided loss

The Indiana Pacers humbled the Los Angeles Lakers 136-94 on Tuesday, handing Lakers superstar LeBron James the biggest margin of defeat of his NBA career.

Bojan Bogdanovic scored 24 points for the Pacers, who tied a franchise record with 19 three-pointers.

Myles Turner added 22 points and Thaddeus Young chipped in 12 points, 11 rebounds and eight assists for an Indian team that notched a third straight victory.

James, playing his second game since suffering a groin injury in a Christmas Day win over Golden State, led the Lakers with 18 points, nine rebounds and seven assists.

JaVale McGee added 16 points for the Lakers and was singled out by Lakers coach Luke Walton as a bright spot on an otherwise dismal night.

The other thing Walton was pleased to see was a driving dunk from James in the second quarter.

"It was good to see LeBron take off and go dunk one and kind of trust his body," Walton said, but otherwise there was little positive to find in a game that saw 19 Lakers turnovers lead to 33 Pacers points.

"Bottom line, we have to be better," said Walton, who said he didn't know if some of the Lakers players had been adversely affected by trade talk swirling around the team.

Reports this week indicated the Lakers had offered as many as six players in a bid to land New Orleans Pelicans star Anthony Davis.

"It affects everyone differently," Walton said of the speculation.

Fans in Indianapolis rubbed in the rumors, yelling "LeBron's going to trade you" at Lakers guard Brandon Ingram as he went to the free throw line.

"That's just fans being fans," James said. "If you let that bother you, you're in the wrong sport."

James had returned from

injury to play 40 minutes in an overtime victory over the Los Angeles Clippers last Thursday.

The heavy minutes left him sore enough that the Lakers rested him for Saturday's loss at Golden State.

James said he felt "all right" on Tuesday, although still not 100 percent.

"I'm on my way to being myself again," said James, who connected on seven of 12 shots from the field and became the fifth player in

NBA history to pass 32,000 points for his career.

That milestone notwithstanding, James endured the most lopsided defeat of his career, having previously twice lost by 36 points. **AFP**



Hassan Whiteside #21 of the Miami Heat dunks the ball against the Portland Trail Blazers on February 5, 2019 at the Moda Center Arena in Portland, Oregon

Emiliano Sala and pilot David Ibbotson's families know they're dead, says oceanographer Mearns

David Mearns, the director of Bluewater Recoveries and the man who was at the head of the renewed efforts to locate the plane carrying Emiliano Sala and David Ibbotson, says the families of both the player and the pilot know they are dead.

Mearns led the operation to find the aircraft, which disappeared off the radar near the Channel Islands on its voyage from Nantes, after a crowdfunding page raised well over the target to restart the search after initial investigations

by authorities had been called off. The plane was found just hours after the search had recommenced, with video footage revealing one body on board the wreckage.

With authorities having stated last week that chances of survival for either of the individuals were 'extremely remote', Mearns has now confirmed the priority is trying to recover the bodies.

"What these families know at the moment is that both [Sala and Ibbotson] are dead and what they want is to recover their bodies,"

Mearns said in an interview with Clarin.

"The most important thing is the bodies. Recovering the bodies is the most important thing for both families. The plane is a different matter, that's related only to determining the cause of the accident."

Mearns stated that he was no longer involved in the operation, with British authorities having taken over following the discovery of the wreckage, but did offer some insight into how the bodies would

be recovered.

"I'm not involved anymore. Once we found it, everything was in the hands of the Air Accidents Investigations Branch. They will investigate what caused the crash," he said.

"What I know is that they only have one body, that's everything I know. They [AAIB] tried to recover the body during the night and I know they had some trouble. "If they are doing it now, they're doing it with a robotic vehicle, operated remotely by a pilot and

connected to the ship with a cable. It has cameras and microphones and has robotic arms.

"The issue is where the body is; that is to say if it is free or if it's stuck in the seats. They can recover the body in different ways: they could possibly use a hook or a rope. You could also potentially use a basket. "There are many ways of doing it. As far as I know, there are no divers.

"The family will be very grateful for their efforts. Now, we're praying for them to succeed." **Goal.com**

CAF TO ASSESS NKANA STADIUM

By Abraham Kalito
Confederations of African Football (CAF) says it will send inspectors to assess Nkana Stadium ahead of Confederations Cup Group C match against Al Hilal of Sudan.
In a statement, Football Association of Zambia

General Secretary Adrian Kashala stated that the inspectors would work hand-in-hand with the association in assessing the pitch.
Nkana's stadium is one of the stadia on the continent that will be subjected to the Club Licensing criterion as

a prerequisite to hosting CAF inter-club games.
"The Confederations of African Football (CAF) will this week send inspectors to inspect Nkana football club stadium in readiness for the Confederations Cup Group C match game against Al Hilal of Sudan.

The CAF inspectors will work side by side with a representative from the Football Association of

Zambia (FAZ). Nkana stadium is among the stadia on the continent that will be subjected to the

Club Licensing criterion as a prerequisite to hosting CAF inter-club games," read the statement.

Osaka out of Qatar Open with back injury



World Number one and two-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka has pulled out of next week's Qatar Open because of a back injury, tournament organisers said on Tuesday.
No more details were given about the injury but Osaka, 21, also withdrew from the Hong Kong Open last October because of problems with her back.
"I am sorry to have withdraw from Doha this year as I was looking forward to playing and seeing my fans there," said Osaka, who won the Australian Open last month, in the statement.
"I wish everyone a great week and hope to see

everyone next year."
Her withdrawal will come as a blow to organisers in Doha, who also announced on Tuesday that her place as top seed in the Qatar Open will be taken by the woman she recently replaced as world number one, Romania's Simona Halep.
Japanese Osaka is currently the US Open and Australian Open champion.
She beat Czech star Petra Kvitova -- last year's Qatar Open winner -- in three sets in Melbourne to claim her second Grand Slam after upsetting Serena Williams at Flushing Meadows for her first one. **AFP**



Gabe York #32 of the Lakeland Magic moves the ball against R.J. Hunter #9 and Jeff Roberson #11 of the Maine Red Claws during the game on February 5, 2019 at RP Funding Center in Lakeland, Florida

Emiliano Sala and pilot's families know they're dead

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