



By Zondiwe Mbewe
News Diggers! is not a Yes Bwana (Yes Sir) newspaper, says British High Commissioner to Zambia Fergus Cochrane-Dyett. And Information Minister Dora Siliya has announced that government is reaching out to stakeholders to formulate a Bill which will establish the Media Association of Zambia, through which media practitioners shall regulate themselves.

BRITISH ENVOY EXTOLS DIGGERS

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“It’s not a ‘yes bwana’ newspaper”



Investigative Journalism participants from various media houses, pose with: (Seated L-r) News Diggers managing director Joseph Mwenda, British High Commissioner Fergus Cochrane-Dyett, UN Country Information Officer Mark Maseko, Ministry of Information Media Director Modern Muyembe, News Diggers Board Chairman Dr Sangwani Ng'ambi and US Embassy Director of public affairs Sean McIntosh, during the launch yesterday - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Chitotela, 3 others plead not guilty

By Zondiwe Mbewe
Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Development Ronald Chitotela and his co-accused have pleaded not guilty in the Lusaka Magistrates' Court to four counts of concealing and being in possession of properties suspected to be proceeds of crime. To page 4

Govt's debt repayment rises to K2.5bn

Govt's debt servicing payments have climbed to an unprecedented K2.5 billion in January, 2019. To page 2

Reinstate meal allowances or risk mammoth protests, CK warns govt

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili has appealed to President Edgar Lungu to reinstate the meal allowances for university students for the sake of the majority poor parents who cannot afford to pay for their children. In a walk-in interview with Prime TV, Monday,

Kambwili warned that if President Lungu allowed the removal of meal allowances, he would see protests which he had never seen before. "Professor Nkandu Luo, some of those students who come to the university come from villages, in fact, most of the highly-educated people are people who have had a very humble

background that their parents cannot even afford to buy them a toffee sweet [and] now, you are asking those parents to find money to feed their children whom you are going to pay tuition and accommodation and projects, to feed themselves? Surely, are we being honest with one another? If you want to see protests that

you have never seen in this country, go ahead and remove meal allowances!" said Kambwili. To page 5

Delete all police social media groups, orders IG
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By Stuart Lisulo

Government's debt servicing payments have climbed to an unprecedented K2.5 billion in January, 2019, the highest single disbursement for this specific obligation so far, according to Ministry of Finance data. And Minister of Finance Margaret Mwanakatwe has expressed hope that incidences of misuse and theft of public resources will ultimately be eliminated. In a 2019 budget brief issued from the Ministry of Finance, government paid an unprecedented amount of K2.5 billion last month in debt servicing commitments out of a total of K5.7 billion that was released by the Ministry of Finance to fund various

Government's debt repayments rise to K2.5bn

government operations. Government's debt servicing last month, which comprised both external and domestic commitments, was the highest in terms of the total amount in debt payments during a single one-month period so far. The second highest amount, from the Ministry's data so far, was K1.5 billion paid in debt servicing commitments in October, 2018, but from a much higher amount of K6.1 billion

that was released towards government operations. January's debt servicing payments again surpassed personal emoluments for public sector workers, which swallowed up K1.8 billion from the K5.7 billion. This means that from the 2019 budgeted amount, debt servicing and public sector wages both gobbled up around 76 per cent of government's budget, leaving just 24 per cent to fund

other critical functions. Commenting on the debt repayments, Mwanakatwe, however, insisted that government was committed towards ensuring there will be no debt defaults. "To facilitate effective debt management and ensure fiscal sustainability, the government released a sum of K2.5 billion towards the payment of both domestic and external debt. On this aspect, Mrs Mwanakatwe has

reiterated her assurance that the government will continue to honour its obligations and ensure that DEBT DEFAULT SCENARIOS DO NOT ARISE AT ALL," the statement, availed by Ministry spokesperson Chileshe Kandeta, read. "Further, the government spent a total of K1.8 billion on costs related to the public service wage bill. This helped to attain the timely payment of January,

2019, salaries for various public service workers, including teaching, medical and security personnel." And Mwanakatwe expressed hope that incidences of misuse and theft of public resources will ultimately be eliminated. "Concluding her reflection on January, 2019, budget releases, the Minister expressed confidence that with effective enforcement of the Public Finance Management Act No. 1 of 2018, transparency and accountability in public finance management in Zambia will significantly improve this year. She also expressed hope that incidences of misuse and theft of public resources will reduce and ultimately, be eliminated," read the statement.

By Zondiwe Mbewe

One of the police officers charged with manslaughter in connection with the death of ZAF flight sergeant Mark Choongwa, who died in Police custody last year, has told the Lusaka High Court that her decision to detain the late officer led to his demise. Recently, High Court judge Mwila Chitabo placed Shawa, Mike

My decision to detain Choongwa led to his death, Cop tells court

Kapale, Lyton Mwale and James Ngulube on their defence after establishing a prima facie case against them in connection with the death of sergeant

Choongwa who died in Police custody in 2017 after allegedly being beaten. And during cross examination, acting Woman Chief Inspector

Veronica Shawa told the court that her decision to detain Choongwa led to his death as a result of what happened in the cells. She said she detained

Choongwa because he refused to obey police orders. Shawa said Choongwa was also charged with an offence of assaulting a police officer. "Choongwa was initially brought to Woodlands police station for hitting into another person's vehicle in Lusaka's Nyumba Yanga area," she said. Shawa, however, denied causing his death saying she tried by all means to save his life by rushing him to UTH. She told the court that she panicked when she was informed that a suspect was unwell and needed help because it was her duty to save life. Shawa rejected the evidence that the

deceased was dragged and pushed into the cell and landed on his head. She said when Choongwa was left in the cell, he was standing. Shawa told the court that investigations into the death of Choongwa revealed that his fellow inmates beat him up. She said three weeks after the said death, she was summoned to Lilayi senior officers mess where a tribunal was set and she was interrogated about the happenings on the day Choongwa lost his life. Shawa said she was later warned by members of the tribunal about possible arrests over the matter as it was a very serious one.

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Govt won't entertain FQM's offer to buy shares in Kansanshi - Musukwa

By Mirriam Chabala
 Mines Minister Richard Musukwa says government will not entertain First Quantum Minerals' offer to buy off ZCCM-IH's minority shareholding in Kansanshi Mining Plc. Earlier this month, reports emerged that FQM had offered to buy off government's stake in Africa's biggest copper producer at US \$700 million. The Vancouver-based

mining giant already owns 80 per cent of Kansanshi, while ZCCM-IH Plc holds the remaining 20 per cent shareholding. But featuring on ZNBC's Government Forum, Monday evening, Musukwa, who clarified that government through ZCCM-IH only owned about 17 per cent in the Solwezi-based mine, explained that the State had no intention of selling off its shares because it wanted

to continue having a stake in the country's resources. Musukwa wondered why FQM had offered to buy off government's shares in the mines, emphasising that the offer would not be entertained. "A decision of a magnitude such as the sale of shares in ZCCM-IH would only be arrived at by Cabinet. I want to confirm to you that there is no such a decision by Cabinet and I am very confident that

government and Cabinet will be very reluctant to undertake such a route, and us as a Ministry who are the custodian, we would like to continue to have stake in various mining houses on behalf of Zambians. And you must know first of all that that was an unsolicited offer and we will not entertain it because we would like as government to continue to have a stake in various mining houses,

if not to increase so that we own this in trust of the people of Zambia. So, we certainly don't think that that is the trajectory to go," Musukwa said. "Then one would ask the question, why the offer? That's the question we are asking, why the offer? Really, we think that the offer may be there, but as a Ministry and government, we are certainly not going to entertain that! We are actually looking to have stake in other operations that are coming, that's why we would like to ensure that we transform ZCCM-IH, not just to be an entity that hosts interest on behalf of Zambians, but also a vehicle that hosts mining rights and operations on behalf of Zambians. Not just to wait for stakes, [but] also to participate as an operation so that we look forward to an opportunity where we can have an operation that is owned by ZCCM-IH and we are able to mirror the cost profile of mining houses in relationship to what an indigenous company is doing in Zambia. As government, I can tell you that certainly we don't want to undertake a process that in future posterity will begin to judge us harshly. We think that our interest in Kansanshi at 17 per cent is fair and that we need to

continue to participate." And Musukwa said he would ensure the Mineral Revenue Sharing Act was taken back for legislation to ensure that host communities for mines received their fair share of the mine resources. "The mineral revenue sharing mechanism is a platform that government and several stakeholders would like to see come back to the legislation. And at that time, the piece of legislation was shelved in order to ensure that it is fine-tuned. The resources that we own on behalf of Zambia, government has a duty to redistribute across the Republic, and we are also of the view like many stakeholders that, yes, indeed, host communities must be the key beneficiaries. The mismatch that exists in terms of the host communities and mining entities in terms of operations do not commensurate in terms of fighting poverty and also contribution in terms of changing the livelihood of our people. So, certainly, this is a piece of legislation that my Ministry and government is interested to see how it can be revitalized and put back into the legislation so that key resources must be able to go on host communities because this is a diminishing resource and the most affected people once the mining operations come to an end are the host communities for these resources. But as a government, we are also mindful that we have a duty to ensure that we distribute the resources across the country," Musukwa said. Meanwhile, Musukwa regretted that mining safety standards deteriorated significantly last year. "I must say upfront that any mining operation that doesn't anchor its operation on safety is an operation that the Ministry will not encourage because safety is our priority. But for 2018, I must say that it was not one of our best years in terms of safety. We lost quite a number of people across the industry, so what we have done this year is that this time around, it's to up the game and ask mining houses to put a higher premium in terms of safety and invest heavily in terms of safety equipment," said Musukwa.



Journalists covering the official launch of the OSISA/News Diggers! media training workshop at Palmwood Lodge in Lusaka yesterday - Photo by Tenson Mkhala

PF cadres threatened to rape me - Katuta

By Mirriam Chabala
 Chiengi FDD member of parliament Given Katuta says Patriotic Front cadres who went to protest at Parliament on Thursday threatened to rape her and accused her of being UPND. And Katuta has advised UPND and other opposition political parties not to participate in the Bahati by-elections, saying allowing the PF go unopposed will prevent occurrences of violence which the ruling party has planned for. Narrating the ordeal in an interview, Katuta said even the female cadres participated in insulting her. "When I arrived at the entrance to the National Assembly [on Thursday afternoon], I found PF cadres, a lot of them. The police were also that side and the National Assembly security of course were inside there. So when I got at that signage which says 'Do Not Park here' when you are about to get into the National Assembly premises... when I realized... because I was rushing and I just saw a lot of them, so I slowed down because they blocked the way, then I tried get to the right hand side so that I could go in. But they started insulting me, these feminine insults, big insults. They said nichi opposition ici Mayo, cha UPND (they accused me of belonging to UPND). Then they continued to insult me and they were very young men. They said

they could sleep with me right there and they could rape me, but using that vulgar language," Katuta said. "So when I realised they didn't want to give to me a way, I thought I could reason with them and so I brought down the passenger's window on my car and asked them politely if they could allow me to pass since I was late. Oh, that was an insult to them, they insulted me, they started hitting on the vehicle. Then they decided that they would not allow me but one of them who was wearing a stripped T-shirt advised me to close the window and move to the other side of the road. You can imagine, even women who were there started insulting me. Then I could see honourable Kakubo, MP for Kapiri behind me, then they wanted to allow him to by-pass me but then I said 'this is dangerous'. So those people started hitting on our vehicles both but I don't think they insulted him the way they insulted me. So after struggling with them for a while, I finally managed to get inside but I was so shaken actually." And Katuta called on opposition parties to boycott the Bahati by-election saying doing so would prevent violence. "We are talking about violence which took place in Sesheke. In Chiengi the PF did the same thing, they brought boys who even burnt one of our boys there and the government has never done anything

up to now. So now, who is the violent here? Are they sure it's UPND or it's them? How can we have the government honestly, sending cadres to attack opposition members of parliament just because they are in the opposition? They don't even know whether MMD, FDD, all they have been told is 'go and harass opposition members of parliament'. Even within UPND, it's not everyone who went to Sesheke, so they cannot generalize that," said Katuta. "Am even disappointed to read that the PF secretary general is talking about engaging the police to ask as to why the police beat up those boys in Sesheke, honestly, if he sent the cadres to harass all the opposition members of parliament at the entrance in the name of peaceful protests, but if it's peaceful protests then they are supposed to give way, they are not supposed to block way. And why come to the national assembly? To protest for who? What kind of nation is this where cadres go to Parliament to harass innocent people? And my advice to UPND over that Bahati election is that let them not even waste their energy to participate in Bahati. If I had a choice, I would encourage all the political parties in the opposition not to participate, so that there would be no violence, there would be no campaign, the guy [from PF] would just go unopposed because that's what the PF want."

British Envoy extols Diggers: "It's not a 'yes bwana newspaper'"

By Zondiwe Mbewe

News Diggers! is not a Yes Bwana (Yes Sir) newspaper, says British High Commissioner to Zambia Fergus Cochrane-Dyett. And Information Minister Dora Siliya has announced that government is reaching out to stakeholders to formulate a Bill which will establish the Media Association of Zambia, through which media practitioners shall regulate themselves. Meanwhile, News Diggers! Board Chairman Dr Sangwani Ng'ambi has appealed to the Information Minister to honour her commitment of tabling the Access to Information Bill during this current sitting of Parliament. The trio was speaking during the official launch of the News Diggers! one-week media training programme on Investigative Journalism and Fact Checking, Tuesday.

Other speakers were US Embassy public affairs officer Sean McIntosh and United Nations National Information Officer Mark Maseko. In his remarks, High Commissioner Cochrane-Dyett congratulated News Diggers! for increasing the openness and diversity of news provision in Zambia. "I read News Diggers! daily and wish to congratulate you for increasing the openness and diversity of news provision in Zambia. In June, in response to my comments about corruption, you ran an editorial about me entitled "Fergus is not a Yes Bwana diplomat". In my view this is a worthy epitaph, and I should like to return the favour by stating that "News Diggers is not a yes bwana newspaper!"

High Commissioner Cochrane-Dyett said. High Commissioner Cochrane-Dyett observed that media freedom was under threat globally, noting that 2018 was one of the deadliest years for journalists. "Indeed 2018 was one of the deadliest years for journalists: 80 journalists and media workers were killed for their work and 348 were detained. In Europe, journalists were assassinated in Malta and Bulgaria. In Africa, in Ghana, a journalist was shot dead in cold blood for his investigative work on a football fraud related case. 2018 was not a blip," he said. He observed that media institutions were increasingly left exposed to political and economic influences that limited their capacity to work independently, citing an example of Prime TV. "Regrettably this trend is evident in Zambia, for example Prime TV is currently under pressure over its coverage of the Sesheke by-election, while in 2016 EU Election Observers criticised Zambia's state controlled media for systematic bias during the national elections," High Commissioner Cochrane-Dyett said. He announced that this year,

UK would run a campaign with like-minded countries, which include Zambia, to promote and protect media freedoms. "But in 2019 the British Foreign Secretary wants the UK to run a campaign with an ambitious agenda and the objective: "to shine a spotlight on media freedom and to increase the costs to governments that impinge on those freedoms". The UK is not alone in this resolve and will work with likeminded countries, including Zambia, to promote and protect media freedoms. In particular the UK will host an international conference with Ministers and civil society from across the globe assembling in London, probably in early July," said High Commissioner Cochrane-Dyett. And in a speech read on her behalf by Ministry of Information acting director for press and media development Morden Mayembe, Information Minister Dora Siliya said her ministry was very pleased with initiatives such as media trainings. "The importance of training, in any field, cannot be over-emphasised. It is for this reason that government is particularly thankful to News Diggers and Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, OSISA, for organising this training. Government is also very thankful to other organisations, including cooperating partners, that have been, and continue being, involved in training media practitioners," she said. Siliya, however, said there was a mismatch between resources being expended in media trainings and the standard journalism in the country. She added that some practitioners had simply decided not to practice that which they had been taught during their trainings. "Our assessment, as a Ministry, is that media training cannot be faulted. The standard of training offered in both private and public institutions is actually above average. The problem seems to be with the practitioners. Some practitioners have simply decided not to practice that which they have been taught during their training," Siliya announced that government was reaching out to stakeholders to formulate a Media Association of Zambia through which media practitioners would regulate themselves. "Government has reached a conclusion that self-regulation is the answer to professional standards. It is for this reason that Government, through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services, is reaching out to stakeholders to formulate a Bill to establish a media association, through which media practitioners and media owners shall regulate themselves. The Government wants the media practitioners to regulate themselves in the same manner that the legal practitioners, medical

practitioners, engineers and many other professionals are regulating themselves," she said. Siliya said through this, sanctions would be imposed on those found "departing from their training". She said according to their timetable, the bill would be ready by end of next month. "The statutory media association will ensure that media practitioners do not abandon what they have been trained to do. The association will investigate and impose sanctions on all those that shall be found to be departing from their training. Government is demanding nothing more than adherence to what media practitioners are being taught through the various trainings. This is all premised on the fact that bad journalism is not press freedom. Measures aimed at combating bad journalism should never be seen as curtailing press freedom," said Siliya. "I also appeal to the cooperating partners to support media practitioners to formulate content for the Media Association of Zambia Bill. As a Ministry we want government to have very little to do with the provisions of the media Bill. We want the media practitioners themselves to provide content. Our working timetable is that the Media Association of Zambia Bill should be ready by March 31, 2019." Meanwhile, News Diggers! Board Chairman Dr Sangwani Ng'ambi said the objective of the training was to build a crop of highly skilled digital news reporters who would set the bar high for ethical investigative journalism practice in Zambia. He said News Diggers and OSISA were cognizant of the fact that fake news and lack of professionalism among media practitioners had posed a serious threat to the fight for press freedom. "We believe that this crop of journalists will be capable of

influence positive reporting trends in the media fraternity, as well as in the governance style. This is the level of journalism that will deserve government's appreciation through the enactment of the Access to Information Bill," Dr Ng'ambi said. He appealed to Siliya to honour her commitment of tabling the Access to Information Bill during the current sitting of Parliament. Dr Ng'ambi announced that in April this year, News Diggers and OSISA would be moving on its third advocacy programme, focusing on whistleblower protection. He said the organization was concerned that despite an

existing laws under the Public Interest Disclosure Act of 2010, which provided for the protection of Whistleblowers, many whistle blowers had suffered various forms of victimization, the famous one being 'retirement in national interest'. Meanwhile, United Nations Resident Coordinator Janet Rogan said the media needed to exercise high standards of truthfulness, accuracy and fairness in order for them to maintain their professional credibility. In a speech read on her behalf by a representative of the United Nations Mark Maseko, Rogan added that fake news and unprofessionalism had serious

consequences particularly when used to attack individuals. And US Embassy public affairs officer Sean McIntosh commended News Diggers! for recognizing its responsibility to shape more professional, accurate and credible reporting in Zambia. He said while the US Embassy was aware that members of the Zambian press faced challenges, they recognised the efforts that Zambian journalists undertook to achieve higher standards of journalism. McIntosh further welcomed News Diggers! and OSISA's role in contributing to the needed capacity building in investigative journalism.

Chitotela, 3 others plead not guilty

By Zondiwe Mbewe

Minister of Housing and Infrastructure Development Ronald Chitotela and his co-accused have pleaded not guilty in the Lusaka Magistrates' Court to four counts of concealing and being in possession of properties suspected to be proceeds of crime. In this matter, it is alleged in the first count that Chitotela, Gregory Chibanga and Brut Holdings Limited, between July 3, 2016 and October 30, last year in Lusaka, concealed lot number 148 of farm 50A situated in Makeni disguised in the names of Diris Mukange, property reasonably suspected of being proceeds of crime. In the second count, the trio between the same dates is accused of concealing part of subdivision A lot 22183/M situated in Ibex Hill, Lusaka, disguised in the name of

Diris Mukange, property reasonably suspected to be proceeds of crime. In the third count, Diris Mukange between the same dates jointly and whilst acting together with other unknown people possessed lot number 148 of farm 50A situated in Makena in Lusaka, property reasonably suspected to be proceeds of crime. In the fourth count, Mukange between the same dates possessed part of subdivision A of lot 22183/M situated in Ibex Hill. When the matter came up for plea before magistrate David Simusamba, Tuesday, Chitotela said he denied the charges 100 percent. His co-accused equally pleaded not guilty. The matter has since been adjourned to March 20 and 21, this year, as well as April 2, 3 and 4, for trial.



OSISA/News Diggers! Media training workshop facilitator Raymond Joseph with () journalist Prudence Siabana from radio Phoenix at the official launch of the training - Photo by Tenson Mkhala



Participants at the official launch of the OSISA/News Diggers! media training workshop at Palmwood Lodge in Lusaka yesterday - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Police ban social media groups

By Mirriam Chabala

The Zambia Police Command has directed administrators of all existing social media groupings to delete them, warning of severe action if the directive is not adhered to. In a notice circulated on Tuesday, the Police

Command directed all Police Commissioners in the country to start by closing down all social media groupings that are managed by their own officers. The Command advised that the decision to ban social media groupings had been necessitated by continued abuse of social media platforms by police. "The police command is dismayed with the continued abuse of social media by police officers who post articles and pictures intended to put the Zambia Police service in disrepute. To this effect, the Command has directed that all social media groupings managed by police officers of all ranks be closed with immediate effect," read the notice. "Further, administrators of the various social media groupings are directed to see to it that the groupings which they administer are closed with immediate effect, failure to which they will be held accountable including facing severe disciplinary actions. Inform all officers under your jurisdictions accordingly."

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili has appealed to President Edgar Lungu to reinstate the meal allowances for university students for the sake of the majority poor parents who cannot afford to pay for their children. In a walk-in interview with Prime TV, Monday, Kambwili warned that if President Lungu allowed the removal of meal allowances, he would see protests which he had never seen before. "Professor Nkandu Luo, some of those students who come to the university come from villages, in fact, most of the highly-educated people are people who have had a very humble background that their parents cannot even afford to buy them a toffee sweet [and] now, you are asking those parents to find money to feed their children whom you are going to pay tuition and accommodation and projects, to feed themselves? Surely, are we being honest with one another? If you want to see protests that you have never seen in this country, go ahead and remove meal allowances! Please, for the sake of poor people, reinstate meal allowances to the University of Zambia. You know it will now be very difficult for people to trust well-to-do people to be in (public office) positions [because] someone who has suffered will think about other people's sufferings, but you, President Lungu [and] Nkandu

Reinstate meal allowances or risk mammoth protests, Kambwili tells govt

Luo, are behaving as if you have never suffered. You have never tasted suffering before and that is why you are exhibiting this 'I don't care type of attitude,' Kambwili cautioned. He said the PF government should own up if it had failed to govern the country in a manner it ought to be governed. "How on earth would a reasonable person say: 'we are going to send you to school, we will pay for your tuition, we will pay for your accommodation, but we will not feed you?' Now, you want these children to go to school on an empty tummy and you call yourselves leaders? If you have failed [to govern this country], the best you can do is own up! I was telling you that these monies you are borrowing will end up affecting the social sector of our country, you have reduced the health sector; you have reduced the budget of the agriculture sector; you have reduced the budget to so many things! For instance, last year's budget for drugs was K1.2 billion, this year you have reduced it to K900 million all in the name of servicing the debt, which debt you have accumulated carelessly, which debt of 30 per cent of it has gone into

people's pockets, buying houses at K2.5 million and registering them in other people's names. And I want to warn you [that] stop borrowing!" he said. Kambwili, who is also Roan PF member of parliament, appealed to the Head of State together with Prof Luo to re-instate meal allowances. "How can a reasonable government budget for K23 billion for repayment of debt against a K12 million budget for the entire Ministry of Health? You can see that this is a government that doesn't care; this is a government full of people who do not understand that governance is about humanity to care about the people. Please, President Edgar Lungu, reinstate the meal

allowance for the students. You are exhibiting a very rare kind of attitude as if you are not President," he said. Meanwhile, Kambwili wondered why President Lungu was not holding press conferences to address serious national issues as opposed to letting his Special Assistant for Press and Public Relations Amos Chanda to speak on such matters. "No wonder in your two-three years as President, not even one press conference! It is sad! The country wants to hear from you. What's going on [but] we only hear Amos Chanda talking to the country! Is Amos the President? Did the people of Zambia vote for Amos? The people of Zambia voted for you, President Edgar Lungu,

and that's why I have decided to address you because the buck starts and stops at you. All these issues you can overrule them [because] you have done it before [where] your ministers put the price of maize at K60 and you have overruled and said: 'I have increased the price to K70' because you are the president, but why are you failing to overrule your ministers on all these issues affecting our students? All you have to say is that: 'I cannot fire Chitotela, I don't want to lose Chitotela the way I lost Chishimba Kambwili.' Don't use my name in vein," said Kambwili. And Kambwili said the decision of sending Zambians to the Middle East to go and work as drivers and maids was nonsense.

IG replaces fired Sesheke Cops

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

The Inspector General of Police Kakoma Kanganja has transferred and promoted new officers to replace those that were fired in Sesheke. This is according to a memo signed by police director administration, a CChambwa

on behalf of Kanganja. Kanganja announced that Lusaka Division acting assistant superintendent Wellington Mwansa had been transferred Western Division to replace fired superintendent Lengwe Borniface in the position

of officer in charge of Sesheke Police Station. The Inspector General promoted and transferred SPOM-Kanfinsa assistant superintendent Sichivu Sikaya to replace fired senior Superintendent Officer commanding Sesheke District Shaapa Wakunguma. "ORIG P/S 1/8/116 OF 17/02/2019 XX be informed that the Police Service Commission acting in the name and on behalf of His Excellency the President has with immediate effect directed the transfers and acting appointments of the following officers; No. 2463 Mr Robert Ngosa, Superintendent, deputy officer commanding Chipata District, Eastern Division is made to act in rank as senior superintendent with a view to promotion and transferred to Western Division and appointed officer in charge Sesheke police station; No.10742 Woman chief inspector Ruth Chibenga officer in charge Sinda, Eastern Division is made to act in rank as assistant superintendent with a view to promotion and transferred to Nyimba police station, Eastern Division and appointed officer in place of No. 2094 Mr Mushita Mulekwa, assistant superintendent officer in charge Nyimba police station, Eastern Division is made to

act in rank as superintendent with a view to promotion and transferred to Chipata District and appointed deputy officer commanding in place of No.2463 Mr Robert Ngosa xx," read the memo. "No. 2140 Mr Sichivu Sikaya assistant superintendent of SPOM-Kanfinsais made to act in rank as superintendent with a view to promotion and transferred to Western Division and appointed deputy officer commanding Sesheke District xx; No. 5514 Mr Wellington Mwansa acting assistant superintendent of Lusaka Division is transferred to Western Division and appointed officer in charge Sesheke police station; No.10742 Woman chief inspector Ruth Chibenga officer in charge Sinda, Eastern Division is made to act in rank as assistant superintendent with a view to promotion and transferred to Nyimba police station, Eastern Division and appointed officer in place of No. 2094 Mr Mushita Chilekwa xx."

UPND MPs walk out on Chitotela again

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

Speaker of the National Assembly Dr Patrick Matibini says he will render a measured ruling on the continued walk outs by opposition UPND members of parliament every time Housing and Infrastructure Development Minister Ronald Chitotela stands to address the House. Dr Matibini made the ruling after a PF member of parliament rose on a point of order to find out if opposition MPs where in order to walk out every time the minister stood to respond to questions when there were some UPND members who were also appearing in court for corrupt charges. On Friday, opposition UPND MPs walked out as Chitotela was responding to a question for Oral Answer and they did the same yesterday. "Sir, are all colleagues on the left, the UPND in particular in order to be walking out of this August house every time honorable

Chitotela, Minister of Infrastructure and Housing stands up to respond to an oral question. Sir, you may be aware [and it's already] in public domain that just a few days ago, one member from the other side was arrested and before that one another one was also arrested for being questioned in the areas of corruption. One is actually arrested. So are they in order? Knowing that they also have members of parliament within their family who are being questioned by the authorities over corruption practices and there is evidence to that matter. Are they in order to walk out of this house? Sir I need your serious ruling," a PF member of parliament asked. In his ruling, Dr Matibini said he would render a measured ruling in due course. Earlier yesterday, the same PF member of parliament had stood on another point of order seeking the Speaker's ruling on why the UPND on Friday walked out from them the minister's address.

"My point of order goes to the United Party for National Development. In the last sitting, every time our honorable Minister for Infrastructure Development Honorable Chitotela stood up to speak, our colleagues on the left all walked out alleging that he is being investigated on corruption matters but are they, Mr Speaker in order to conduct themselves in that manner when we are perfectly aware that [from] the same side, there are two Honorable that are being investigated also on matters of corruption? Are they in order sir," he said. Dr Matibini said the point of order was incompetent. "My ruling to the point of order... by referring to the last sitting which I presume he meant last week is not contemporaneous. A point of order needs to be raised contemporaneously. For that reason alone, the point of order is incompetent," said Dr Matibini.



Democratic Party

Let's believe again!

Why we deserve your vote



Housing & Empowerment

Every need and deficit mankind has been faced with has in turn created a platform for invention and solutions. In the popular fantasy Television show "Game of Thrones", Lord Petyr Baelish profoundly refers to Chaos as not being a pit (An end to it all) but Chaos as a ladder (An avenue for elevation).

Zambia's ladder - Housing Deficit & Opportunity

According to figures from the Centre for Affordable Housing Finance Africa (CAHF), out of Zambia's 2.5 million housing stock, 64 per cent is traditional housing, while 36 per cent (or about 800,000 units) is urban housing. CAHF indicates that about 28.5 per cent of the urban housing is detached housing (single units); while 20 per cent is traditional housing and 21.5 per cent is improved traditional huts, mostly in the rural setting. The centre further states that about 40 per cent of the urban housing is good quality, while 60 per cent is substandard housing. With this background, Zambia, with an over 16 million population and a 3.3 per cent population increase per annum as at February 2018, has, according to the 2016 World population review, a housing deficit standing at 2.2 million and highly likely that Zambia will by 2030 have a 3.4 million housing deficit if nothing is done to address the crisis. This is the opportunity the housing deficit presents to Zambia!

Housing is often viewed as a barometer for the state of the economy, and

this is certainly the case at the moment. Stronger links have emerged between housing and economic development at the local level and that is to be welcomed. During the construction of affordable housing — or any kind of housing, for that matter — the local economy benefits directly from the funds spent on materials, labour, and the like. If the builder is purchasing windows and doors from local suppliers like Handyman's Paradise or metal fabricators along Alick Nkhata Road, the supplier may have to spend money on materials and hire additional help to complete the order — examples of indirect effects. Finally, the construction workers, glass cutters, and landscapers are likely to spend a portion of their wages at the local grocery store or shopping mall, which illustrates induced effects. Taken together, the indirect and induced impacts of housing construction on the local economy are often called "ripple" or "multiplier" effects. These effects are maximized in localities where construction-related suppliers and other business establishments are prevalent. In localities with little industry, retail, or services, job creation still occurs but it is more dispersed because the indirect and induced spending "leaks" to other jurisdictions.

Regrettably for Zambia, our "leaks" go beyond our municipal boundaries and extend to international space/boundary. Engineering Institution of Zambia (EIZ) vice-president for finance and administration Abel Ng'andu, speaking on the sidelines of an EIZ business meeting in December of 2017 said:

"Right now, about 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the money government is putting in the construction sector just goes to foreign contractors. But we need to retain this money in our economy for us to achieve sustainable economic growth."

This is the missed opportunity for the Zambian contractor. An opportunity that translates into 'leaks' of between \$2.64 billion and \$2.97 billion going by the 2014 Zambia Development Agency figures on the construction industry as a whole.

The Democratic Party perspective

The Democratic Party is cognizant of the direct and indirect

positive economic results that will be drawn from addressing such a housing deficit and most importantly the factors that will accelerate sustainable infrastructure development in Zambia. We, therefore, place priority on:

1. Better project planning

Robust and diligent project planning is usually perceived by project sponsors as an expensive undertaking. However, the shortcuts sometimes taken by sponsors (Government & Private business) consistently result in very expensive project failures, as well as improperly structured or poorly executed capital projects. These have significant unfavorable implications for the sponsors, investors, and financiers of such projects, and the infrastructure sector track record in Zambia as a whole.

In developing projects and ensuring that the right results are achieved, it is necessary that the project sponsor is more deliberate about the business case development and project appraisal process. The sponsor should also ensure the necessary feasibility, traffic, environmental, legal/regulatory and other relevant studies are carried out to support the business case for investment. While ensuring that the objectives of infrastructure projects are clearly articulated and communicated among the key stakeholders, attention should be given to risk identification, allocation, and management. It is extremely important that relevant risks are allocated to the stakeholder that is best positioned to handle them, especially when dealing with Public Private Partnerships (PPPs). The importance of technical expertise cannot be overemphasized at this stage. Adequate project preparation helps in building credibility and demonstrates bankability for a project, and enables the project to attract the right "partners" and investors, many who continue to show interest in the Zambian market but are unable to find properly developed / structured plans, i.e. bankable, projects to invest in.

2. Stronger technical partnerships and commitment to knowledge transfer

Infrastructure projects typically require a broad mix of diverse skills and competencies for successful delivery. The level of competence required for successful and timely execution of these projects is usually built over several years of successful project design, development, and delivery. Unfortunately, Zambia is challenged on this front as there is a dearth of skilled manpower and only a limited number of infrastructure projects have been successfully delivered in the country over the last five decades. Zambia must therefore forge stronger relationships between local sponsors and foreign technical partners that have significant experience successfully delivering infrastructure projects in other countries. This is necessary for credible infrastructure development, and the subsequent management and maintenance of the infrastructure assets after delivery. Sponsors must ensure that the interests of their technical partners are aligned with theirs, and the arrangement must deliberately create opportunities for local capacity building by pairing local talent with international expertise right from the start of the project for necessary skills and knowledge transfer.

3. Mobilising the "right" equity for infrastructure projects

Many project sponsors sometimes underestimate the quantum of equity required for infrastructure projects and look for ways to seek short-term returns or save on project development costs. This usually ends up being detrimental to project viability, quality of delivered assets and project completion timeline. It is important for sponsors to understand the long-term nature of infrastructure

projects and also seek to work with other co-investors with similar interests as it relates to risk, investment horizon and expected returns.

Private equity and infrastructure funds play an important role in providing financing for projects at different stages, and are always looking to partner with credible and experienced local sponsors to develop projects. The technical expertise and track record of the sponsors are extremely important factors for these financial investors, in addition to the sponsors' deep understanding of the local environment. Other sources of equity that need to be tapped into include pension and insurance funds, subject to regulation by their respective regulatory bodies. It is the Democratic Party's policy to deliberately regulate participation and favor Zambian Companies in this regard.

4. Innovative funding arrangements

The Zambian economy is dominated by short-term financing of three to five years, traditionally provided by domestic commercial banks. However, a limited number of deals in the market have been funded with seven to ten year loan tenors usually with participation from international banks and development finance institutions, and in some cases with risk guarantees from multilateral organisations like the World Bank.

One of the major issues faced by foreign investors and financiers include the exchange rate risk for dollar-denominated transactions, where revenues of the project / investee companies are in kwacha, as well as the limited hedging options / instruments to mitigate this risk. With limited options for hedging against currency risks, investors tend to:

(1) focus on improving their expected return profile to make up for the potential loss should the Kwacha devalue, and

(2) become more cautious: only investing when there is some comfort around the stability of the Kwacha, or where there is an opportunity to transfer the currency risk to the users / customers.

Project sponsors should actively explore development grants, project development funds (either loans or convertible instruments) and equity participation by technical partners. There is also a need to explore alternative business models where opportunities exist to collaborate with other stakeholders in the value chain, such as equipment or feedstock suppliers, and other vendors in order to reduce the initial cash outlay for projects. These should be explored in addition to other financing sources such as Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWFs), Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) and International Development Agencies (IDAs).

By and large, The development of housing infrastructure's positive impact on industrialization, economic empowerment, balance of payments and strength of the kwacha cannot be over-emphasized. It will definitely require political willpower to ensure the environment is investor ready, new ways of partnering with government agencies, private sponsors, companies and countries are found, and also a realistic medium to long term view on the lasting benefits of infrastructure investments to all key stakeholders.

This is the opportunity that the Democratic Party will help Zambia realize when it forms Government in 2021.

Let's Believe Again!

Pastor gets 5 years for swindling widow

By Zondiwe Mbewe

Lusaka magistrate Felix Kaoma has sentenced a pastor of Interdenominational Jesus Ministries, John Simfukwe, to five years imprisonment with hard labour for swindling a widow of over K260,000. In this matter, Simfukwe of Chipata Overspill was charged with theft by agent. Particulars of the offence were that Simfukwe between August 16, 2016 and August 17, 2018 stole K260,000 cash which was entrusted to him by Mildred Chikato to buy a house on her behalf and to assist her with business. Chikato had previously told the court that the said the money was part of her late husband's benefits who was working for Zambia Army. She had narrated that in 2016, she had gone to visit her sister-in-law in Chipata Overspill when she joined her to go for prayers at Simfukwe's church. She said when they reached church, Pastor Simfukwe who was the preacher, prophesied to her that he could see a spirit of death.

"How I knew him (Simfukwe), I went to visit my sister in law on a Sunday, she was my husband's cousin. She was going to church and I said I would go with her. When we reached church, pastor John Simfukwe was the one preaching. He prophesied to me saying he was seen a spirit of death. He then stopped and told me that I should go for counseling," she said.

Chikato said when she went for counseling, the man of God continued with his prophesy saying he was seen her dying and joining her husband.

She said during counseling, Simfukwe asked her where her late husband was working before he died, his rank and whether she had already collected his benefits.

Chikato said after five months of congregating at the church, she got the benefits amounting to K339,000 and took tithe of K5,000 to the same church but Simfukwe

asked her how much she was paid in full.

She testified that the pastor then told her that the K5,000 she had taken was not 10 percent of what the Bible dictated adding that the following day she added another K28,900 to make the tithe K33,900.

In conclusion, Chikato said she gave Simfukwe K170,000 to help her purchase a house and another K90,000 to assist her with business, bringing the total amount to K260,000, which to-date had not been paid.

And passing his judgement, Friday, magistrate Kaoma said the State had proved the case against the accused.

He convicted Simfukwe of the charge saying he was persuaded beyond reasonable doubt that he was guilty of theft by agent.

Magistrate Kaoma added that it was fact that Simfukwe was given the money by the widow and he failed to

declare it back to the owner. He said it was clear that Pastor Simfukwe capitalized on the vulnerability of the woman.

Magistrate Kaoma observed that although Simfukwe was a first offender who deserved some leniency, he needed

to be punished because he had breached the trust of the victim. He therefore sentenced

Simfukwe to five years and ordered that the widow be compensated K260,000 using the convict's assets.



Makokwa Muyendekwa (l) and Edna Mupila participate at the OSISA/News Diggers! media training workshop at Palmwood Lodge in Lusaka yesterday - Photo by Tenson Mkhala

There'll be serious trouble in 2021 without dialogue, warns Fergus



By Thomas Mulenga

The international community has concluded that there is a prospect of serious trouble in 2021 if Zambia does not hold meaningful national dialogue before then, says British High Commissioner to Zambia Fergus Cochrane-Dyett.

And High Commissioner Cochrane-Dyett says a strong signal will be sent to the international community if top ranking government officials accused of corruption are successfully prosecuted or fired.

Speaking to journalists on the side-lines of the News Diggers/OSISA-organised fact-checking training for 25 Journalists in Lusaka, Tuesday, High Commissioner

Cochrane-Dyett said the violence witnessed in the Sesheke by-election was worrying.

"The international Community views the political violence that happened recently in Sesheke and previously in Chilanga with concern. Zambia should be proud of its peaceful history as a country in Africa, which stands firm when other countries are engulfed in turmoil; that's not something that Zambians should take for granted; that's not something any country should take for granted. And the conclusion that the international community is drawing from what happened in Sesheke is that there is need for a national

dialogue; Zambia must have a meaningful national dialogue because if it doesn't, then there is a prospect of serious trouble in 2021," High Commissioner Cochrane-Dyett said.

"So, we need to see a fully consultative dialogue, which looks at different issues: the electoral reforms, Public Order Act and other issues." And High Commissioner Cochrane-Dyett said a strong signal would be sent to the international community if high-ranking government officials were to be successfully prosecuted for corruption or fired.

"There have been charges against high profile individuals and I think we can take that as evidence that the President's words are being translated into that. There is no best way of showing commitment to fighting corruption than prosecuting high profile individuals, whether they are Ministers or high-ranking military officials. I, therefore, think that the events of last week were very significant. The action that has been taken by the Anti-Corruption Commission has sent a signal, which the international community is picking. There is no doubt that even a stronger signal will be sent if a Minister will be sacked; if a Minister will be successfully prosecuted, that would send the strongest possible signal. I think it would be wrong for me to comment on a specific case, but speaking generally, I think a very strong signal in the commitment to the fight against corruption," said High Commissioner Cochrane-Dyett.

UPND vows to continue mounting pressure on Lungu to fire Chitotela

By Thomas Mulenga

UPND parliamentary chief whip Situmbeko Musokotwane says his party will continue mounting pressure on President Edgar Lungu until he fires corruption-accused Housing and Infrastructure Development Minister Ronald Chitotela.

On Friday, opposition UPND members of parliament walked out of Parliament in protest after Chitotela rose to address the House during a question and answer session.

The MPs walked out as Chitotela rose to respond to a written question from Shang'ombo member of parliament Mubika Mubika

who wanted to find out when the construction of telecommunication towers in Shang'ombo district would commence, how many towers were earmarked for construction and which areas had been identified for the construction.

In an interview, Musokotwane said Chitotela was supposed to step aside in order for the case to go smoothly.

"The reason is very simple, I am sure you have heard the outcry from the Zambian people and the public expressing their disappointment and surprise at the fact that minister Chitotela who is before the court of law has been allowed to continue

in office. So members of the public are very disappointed with that and as members of parliament we share that disappointment and the walking out was an act of showing displeasure that if he shouldn't continue staying in office and also urge the president to reconsider his position over this matter because I think the precedence has already been established in so many cases whereby if somebody finds himself in a situation like that of honourable Chitotela in the past governments of the previous presidents and including under the presidency of president Lungu himself, people like that have

been asked to step aside to enable the investigations to proceed smoothly without any fear of interference on gathering of the evidence," Musokotwane said.

Musokotwane said his party would continue mounting pressure for Chitotela's removal using different tactics.

"So this is the reason why members of parliament decided to walk out. I don't want to reveal our tactics but I can tell you that the pressure will keep mounting. So we go by the precedence of leaders that have been arrested before and what has happened to them," said Musokotwane.

A majority of Zambians are crying foul over the devastating economic state of affairs. In the townships, citizens have come up with a saying that 'in order to eat three meals nowadays, one has to sin'. This is an indication that things are not going well for a majority of citizens because jobs are scarce, there is no money in the economy and businesses are closing down. In the midst of this, corruption is hitting unprecedented records.

However, while survival has become a nightmare for many families under these challenges, there are a few who are praying that things remain as they are, because the more the corruption, the richer they get. They are reaping maximum profits through the facilitation of money laundering activities among top government officials.

We have observed that there is a clique of lawyers that has specialized in this business of helping criminals to conduct fraudulent activities. They receive corruption money from Chinese companies and other government contractors, which they either stash in offshore accounts or

Lawyers facilitating money laundering

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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invest in real estate on behalf of the corrupt government officials.

Although the law requires them to report suspected illegal financial transactions, these learned counsels shield wrong doers and even advise them on how to steal without leaving a trace. Within the laws under which lawyers operate, there are such provisions as "client-lawyer confidentiality", which are being abused. This is very shameful and it must be condemned in the strongest terms.

Lawyers are supposed to be advocates of rule of law, good governance and accountability. It is heartbreaking to hear that these officers of law, sworn to uphold the Constitution of

Zambia, are breaching the same laws they should be protecting. It is expected that bad elements in government will always look for individuals who have clever hands to help them launder illicit money, but a good lawyer must stand firm and resist this temptation.

Lawyers who engage in such transactions with their so-called clients are facilitators of crimes.

Some of these learned colleagues who are extremely rich are not so acclaimed at legal representation in court. You don't see them winning court cases, but they are tycoons. They are richer than those lawyers who break their heads studying

cases in order to earn decent money.

Where do these lawyers get their money from? Graduating at ZIALE and becoming a qualified lawyer doesn't automatically pour millions into any law firm's bank account.

We know, they say good lawyers know the law, while successful lawyers know the judge, but some of these millionaire lawyers don't even remember where the courtrooms are. They haven't argued any court case for decades and they provide no known legal consultancy, yet they are filthy rich from abetting crimes.

This is how they get rich. They take illicit funds meant to

benefit ministers as kickbacks, and they help in cleaning it. They buy property in the name of third parties and eventually find ways of directing the proceeds to their fraudulent client.

The Anti Corruption Commission knows that facilitation of money laundering is a separate crime in Zambia. But we are surprised that they don't seem to have a deliberate interest in pursuing perpetrators of these crimes. How do you jump to the tail end of a corruption matrix and say, "we are arresting this minister for concealing property believed to be proceeds of crime", leaving the actual crimes written all over the scene?

In a serious country

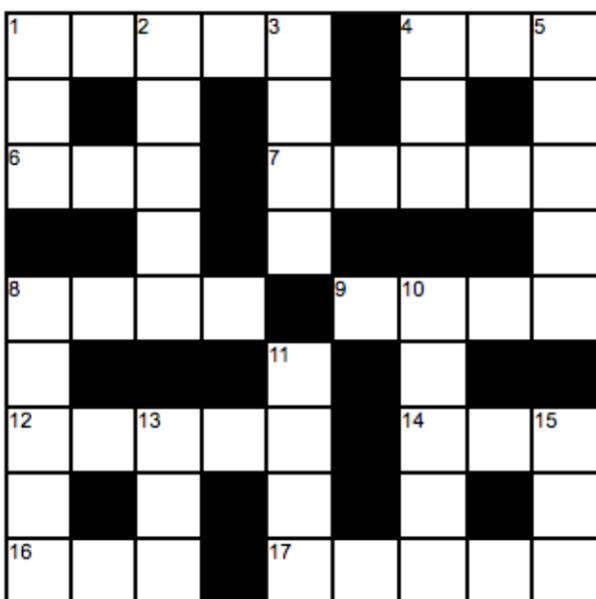
that is committed to fighting financial crimes, lawyers who facilitate money laundering activities would have been arrested and prosecuted. This is not a witch-hunt, as some people may wish to believe. Evidence of corruption in Zambia is not hard to find, it is actually hard to ignore.

We are reliably informed by those who genuinely detest corruption, and are committed to the fight, that the ACC has libraries of corruption evidence.

ACC knows the lawyers who are involved in this facilitation of financial crimes. They have bank accounts of government officials and the paper trail of financial transactions. They know who is dealing with who. But they are applying the law selectively.

Anyway, we can't blame the Anti Corruption Commission. Like we stated in the editorial comment we published before, people who are employed in charge of these institutions are not expected to do their jobs. When they try to do so, they get fired. Or as Patrick Sikana wrote: If you act in national interest first, you are retired in national interest fast.

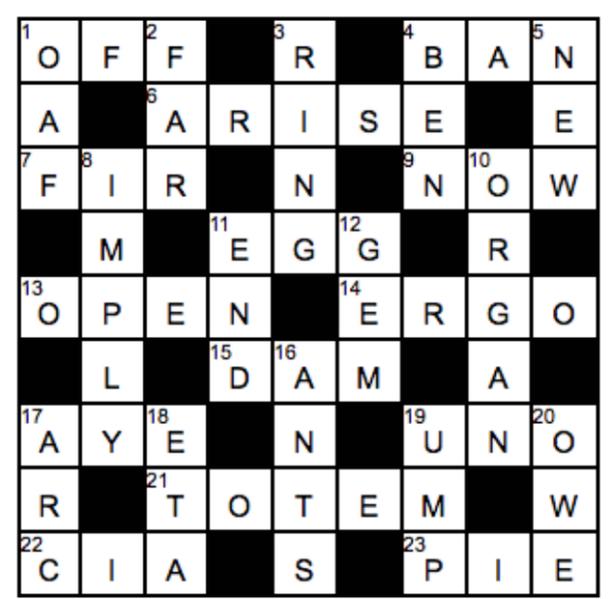
Crossword puzzle 297



*"If you want your life to have depth and meaning, be present, be mindful, and live with intention."
- Akiroq Brost*

- | Across | Down |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Wedding gown extension | 1. Haul |
| 4. Airport acronym | 2. Have same opinion |
| 6. Kid's card game | 3. Small lizard |
| 7. Mistaken | 4. Opinion of oneself |
| 8. High point | 5. Discuss heatedly |
| 9. Having ability | 8. Halo wearer |
| 12. Blue mixed with yellow | 10. Reveille instrument |
| 14. Slang for girl | 11. Tight fitting |
| 16. ___ nut (wheel fastener) | 13. Scrambled or poached food |
| 17. Money hunger | 15. A boy |

Solutions to puzzle 296



Reader's feedback

HH on Chitotela's arrest being Lungu's trick to fool donors

Editor, opposition." - Ali Malunga

"The fight against corruption died with the late Levy Mwanawasa, HH 2021; come with a stick there is so much dirt that needs to be swept clean. 'More money in our pockets' meant more money in their pockets!" - Noritah Mwanza

"Very true, this was a stage managed arrest..." - Moonga Moonga

"Every well-meaning Zambian is able to see the dirty games in this government!" - Paul Kalonga

"PF's downfall is very near and it will be very bad ending for them!" - Noah Chizinga

"HH, just concentrate on campaigning! Harry Kalaba will leave you in

"So, to you HH, donors are so foolish to be fooled with just a mere arrest of a Minister? How many statements are we going to listen to especially coming from your party? Someone said Chitotela is being sacrificed for harbouring presidential ambitions..." - Qiuontu Aefomu

Prime TV boss on IBA acting on political directives

Editor, Kalasa

"Mr Shawa, don't feel intimidated! Continue doing your good work in Prime TV." - Chana Emmanuel

"Heads up, Mr Shawa!" - Derricks K

"Big man, don't be intimidated by these PF hooligans! So far, your TV station is simply the best in this country. Do not compromise your resolve to offer credible news." - MP Frank

"Don't waste your time panicking over a person who doesn't seem to be normal; move on with your good work, Prime management." - Ramphal Chongo Nkatya

"You chase the journalist publicly, telling them to stop covering you, but crying that 'you don't cover us,' why? Can someone please tell President Edgar Lungu to act fast on this guy who lost to an independent in our stronghold!" - Masuzyo Nkhata Jr.

"The bigger picture is Prime TV is a private TV station. Private and profit-making entity. What makes it worth viewing is unbiased content. With better and wide coverage, it is easy to see why SG Mwila is crying foul!" - Ben Kauzeni

"ZP & IBA are both PF's lap dogs who do PF's bidding as though they are the ones who fund them! It's embarrassing. Stop it." - Haggai Gondwe

"I only watch Prime TV; I stopped watching ZNBC a long time ago." - Chali Chibuta



ND OPINION: Banning gays, while promoting incest and infidelity on TV

Editor,

"Animal farm Zambia is! What about 'Dorika' and Mazabuka Boys, they are left scot-free? Lusaka Hustle is a comedy TV show to make us laugh, nothing to take seriously." - Felix Konoso

"The PF are ABUSING the IBA Act, which seems to be far above their comprehension! This is a leadership that is very at home with a Minister of Traditional Affairs at the lead of pornography. What else do these PF leaders watch?" - Christopher Kalima

"Doesn't make sense at all! Why ban just one reality show when we watch a whole lot of such on DSTV? Most of the soap operas we watch on DSTV openly advocate homosexuality." - Enny Banda

"This government lacks morality!" - Cosam Nkhoma

"The IBA did a very good job by banning the programme! Two wrongs will never make a right. Just because 'nothing' was done to the Minister does not mean it's free for all to misbehave." - Masiliso Dylan Nakushowa

Zambian musicians' complaint of not benefitting from Ministry of Arts

Editor,

"Shame on PF. Failed government!" - Naku Justines

"That's why we are told to choose our careers carefully. No one forced these guys into music!" - Cephass Mukuka Jr.

"PF government promotes washed up musicians like JK and others who turn up to drum support for their campaigns!" - Mutinta Mulonda

"It's about where resources are needed the most. We have a situation where students have no desks in schools, children are dying of hunger. Just last week, a father gave up his child for adoption then artists need to be recognised?" - Titus Kapala

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.

Shark DNA could help cure cancer and age-related illnesses in humans

Great white sharks may hold the secrets to curing cancer and other age-related diseases, experts believe.

The first map of great whites sharks' DNA has revealed "mutations" that protect the animals against cancer and other illnesses.

Scientists hope more research could help apply the findings to treating age-related illnesses in humans.

Great whites also have the ability to repair their own DNA - something we can't do.

The research was carried out by a team of scientists at the Save Our Seas Foundation Shark Research Centre at Nova Southeastern University in Florida.

What are sharks packing in those genes?

Unstable genes in humans are what make us vulnerable to age-related diseases such as cancer.

Because sharks have been around



and at the top of their game for so long, they have evolved so their DNA can repair itself and is more tolerant to damage. "Genome instability is a very important issue in many serious human diseases," says study co-leader Dr Mahmood Shivji.

"Now we find that nature has developed clever strategies to maintain the stability of genomes in these large-bodied, long-lived sharks.

"There's still tonnes to be learned from these evolutionary marvels, including information that will

potentially be useful to fight cancer and age-related diseases, and improve wound-healing treatments in humans, as we uncover how these animals do it." Shark DNA is one-and-a-half times bigger than human DNA, meaning there are things coded

into the animals that, at the moment, humans can't do.

And scientists hope to unlock those secrets and use them to treat the problems that DNA is already solving in sharks.

They believe sharks could also help wound-healing and blood-clotting, because of their ability to recover quickly from serious injuries.

Sharks: More than just Jaws

This research could be a step towards a more positive reputation for one of the most feared animals in nature.

Photographer Kimberly Jeffries recently told Radio 1 Newsbeat she felt "no danger whatsoever" when she swam with one of the biggest great whites in the world,

who's named Deep Blue.

"It's an incredibly humbling experience," she said.

Although she wasn't recommending that anyone hop in the water with some sharks.

"These are apex predators so they are to be respected," Kimberly said.

And through hunting fish and other animals in the sea, they can also help their prey flourish by targeting slower and weaker creatures.

Studies also show that sharks are even important in the fight against global warming, as their hunting keeps the numbers of smaller creatures, who produce more carbon dioxide, in check.

BBC

A coalition of 16 US states led by California is suing President Donald Trump's administration over his decision to declare an emergency to raise funds for a Mexican border wall.

Mr Trump made the declaration on Friday to bypass Congress after it refused to approve \$5.7bn (£4.4bn) for the wall.

The states say they want to block his "misuse of presidential power".

The Democrats oppose funding Mr Trump's barrier, a key campaign pledge, and have vowed to contest his plan.

US states sue Trump over Mexico wall

The president's announcement came after he signed a spending bill to avoid another government shutdown that granted him only \$1.375bn for new border barriers.

Mr Trump said he had not needed to declare the emergency but had done so in the hope of obtaining the funds for the wall more quickly. Analysts say these comments could undermine his legal arguments.

The lawsuit filed on Monday

seeks to stop Mr Trump acting on his emergency declaration to build the wall, saying the president does not have the power to divert funds approved by Congress to pay for his project.

It says Mr Trump's decision is "unconstitutional and unlawful" and that "by the president's own admission" an emergency declaration is not necessary.

"We're suing President Trump to stop him from unilaterally

robbing taxpayer funds lawfully set aside by Congress for the people of our states.

For most of us, the office of the presidency is not a place for theatre," California Attorney General Xavier Becerra said.

Joining California in the lawsuit were Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Virginia and Michigan. BBC

Tiny South Africa beach restaurant wins top award

A small beachside restaurant in South Africa has won the top prize at the inaugural World Restaurant Awards in Paris.

The Wolfgat - whose six staff have no formal training - opened in 2016 in the small fishing village of Paternoster on the west coast of South Africa.

Head chef Kobus van der

Merwe forages daily for ingredients on the seashore.

The awards, set up by one of the 50 Best Restaurants list's founders, went to mostly affordable restaurants.

The restaurant, which serves a seven-course tasting menu priced at 850 rand (£46; \$60), can only feed 20 people at one sitting.

Mr van der Merwe - a former food blogger who trained as a chef later in life - told AFP news agency:

"I don't feel worthy. My staff who go out every day gathering herbs, succulents and dune spinach, should be here... It's their baby."

His philosophy was to "interfere as little as possible with the products, and to keep them pure, raw and untreated", he said.

"We serve a small, seasonal tasting menu, about seven courses, predominantly seafood, and then we enhance that with some indigenous pickings that we find seasonally around the village, wild herbs, succulent seaweeds."

Judges include René Redzepi of Denmark's Noma restaurant, cookery writer Yotam Ottolenghi and Northern Irish chef Clare Smyth, the first woman to win three Michelin stars in the UK.

The awards boast some unusual categories including tattoo-free chef, red-wine serving restaurant, original thinking and ethical thinking. The Wolfgat won a second award for best "off-map destination". BBC

Mandy Moore describes 'unhealthy marriage' to Ryan Adams after 'belittling' the actress and sexting

Mandy Moore is speaking out against her ex-husband Ryan Adams just days after a New York Times article detailed numerous sexual misconduct allegations against him.

The 34-year-old This Is Us star opened up about her seven-year marriage to Adams, between 2009 and 2016, during an appearance on Marc Maron's WTF podcast.

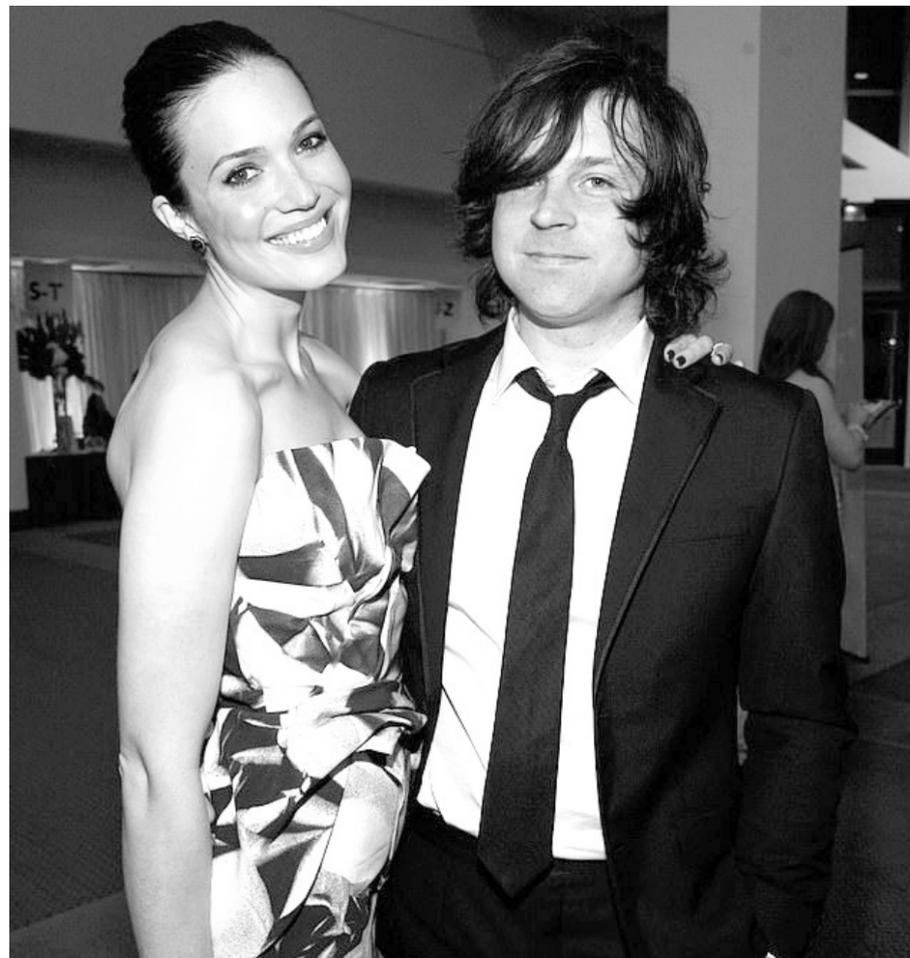
'I was living my life for him,' Moore said. 'It [was] an entirely unhealthy dynamic. I had no sense of self...I felt like I was drowning.'

'It was so untenable and unsustainable and it was so lonely. I was so sad. I was lonely with him,' Moore added on the podcast.

The actress also said that Adams was so 'dependent' on her that it got to the point where she couldn't work nearly as much as she'd like to.

'I would do little jobs - it's not like I completely stopped working,' Moore clarified. 'But it would become abundantly clear while I was working, things would completely fall apart at home.'

'I couldn't do my job because there was a constant stream of trying to pay attention to this person who needed me and



wouldn't let me do anything else,' Moore added.

Moore herself appeared on Maron's WTF podcast in 2017,

and when Moore mentioned she had listened to the podcast

before, she said she did, for a unique reason.

'I had to,' Moore said. 'I was curious what he was going to say.' The New York Times report featured interviews with multiple women sharing their stories about Adams, including Moore, Phoebe Bridgers and singer Courtney Jaye.

Moore said in her interview with The New York Times that Adams would tell her, 'You're not a real musician, because you don't play an instrument.'

Adams, through his lawyer, said Moore's statements were, 'completely inconsistent with his view of the relationship, and said he supported her, 'well-deserved professional success.'

'His controlling behavior essentially did block my ability to make new connections in the industry during a very pivotal and potentially lucrative time - my entire mid-to-late 20s,' Moore added.

Moore filed for divorce in January 2015, citing 'irreconcilable differences,' and later that year she started dating Dawes frontman Taylor Goldsmith.

They became engaged in September 2017 and they were married in November 2018. New York Times

The former Arsenal manager admitted being in a difficult spot when handing the playmaker a new deal but said it might be influencing his performance

Former Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger speculated giving Mesut Ozil a new contract may have left the playmaker in a comfort zone and not at his best.

Ozil contract extension may have left him in 'comfort zone' - Wenger

Ozil signed a new contract just over a year ago with just six months remaining on

his previous deal with the Gunners. Faced with the prospect of

losing Ozil for nothing, the club elected to give him a three-and-half year contract

through the end of the 2021 season.

While that happened with Wenger at the helm with the belief the German would be one of team's stars going forward, Ozil's place in the team has changed under new Arsenal manager Unai Emery. The 30-year-old Ozil has found himself relegated to the fringes of the XI, with speculation over his future growing ever louder. And Wenger, who was speaking after receiving a Lifetime Achievement honour at the Laureus World Sports Awards, conceded that the contract Ozil received was made with the hope, like all moves, that the club would receive the best from the player over the term of the deal.

However, the former Gunners boss said that does not always happen as a player can grow comfortable and not perform or practice at their best.

"I feel that the length of the contract has nothing to do normally with the selection of the team," Wenger was quoted as saying by the Guardian. "But

sometimes there are special cases.

"Most of the time now we think when we sign a player for five years we have a good player for five years.

"But that doesn't necessarily mean that they practice, they play their best. Because they might be in their comfort zone."

However, Wenger also noted the difficult situation the club was in, saying that they faced the choice of paying a large fee and contract for a replacement or simply re-signing a player already on their team.

"He has a contract but the problem is that if you want to buy a player like him you have to spend £100 million," Wenger added. "And to maintain the value of the player, beyond the Ozil case, it is more about the way football is structured.

"To buy players of top, top quality you need £100m. So the decision you have to make is whether you re-sign the player, who costs us nothing, or do we have the money to buy a new player?" *Goal.com*



Manchester United players Paul Pogba and Romeru Lukaku celebrate the former's goal, which was United's second as they beat Chelsea 2-0 at Stamford Bridge on Monday night

CAF rejects ZESCO's request to play Al Hilal on Saturday

By Abraham Kalito

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) has rejected ZESCO United's request to move the match against Al Hilal FC of Sudan to Saturday 23 February from Sunday 24 February.

In a statement posted on their official website, the club revealed that it had written CAF requesting that the match be moved to a preferred date [Saturday] instead of Sunday but that Africa's Football governing body refused to give the request a go ahead.

The statement did not indicate the reasons why the club intended to change the date of the match to Saturday.

"Efforts to try and persuade CAF to have the match moved to Saturday 23rd have failed, the match will be played on Sunday 24th February at 18:00hrs. Tickets will be sold from Wednesday 20th at ZUFC Secretariat, ZESCO offices in Town Ndola, Kitwe and Kansenshi and also at the stadium on match day. VIP K150, West K30, North, East and South K20," read the statement.

ZESCO will thus play Al Hilal of Sudan on Sunday 24 February in what will be the last match of the first legs in the Confederations cup. The club has so far won one match and lost one match.

However last week, a request by Asante Kotoko of Ghana to move the match against ZESCO from Saturday to Sunday was granted.



'I'm not worried': Under-fire Sarri doesn't fear the sack

aurizio Sarri insists he isn't worried about being sacked as Chelsea manager despite his troubled side's lacklustre FA Cup surrender against

Manchester United. Sarri faces a fight to save his job after FA Cup holders Chelsea crashed to a 2-0 fifth round defeat at Stamford

Bridge on Monday. Ander Herrera headed United into the lead from Paul Pogba's cross in the 31st minute.

France star Pogba doubled United's advantage on the stroke of half-time when he met Marcus Rashford's cross with a diving header.

Sarri endured chants of "you don't know what you're doing" and "you're getting sacked in the morning" as furious Chelsea fans showed their frustration at the club's fifth defeat in their last 10 games.

Chelsea's stars, publicly criticised by their manager on several occasions this term, hardly looked to be battling to keep the Italian as they failed to muster a shot on target after the 11th minute. *AFP*

Zimbabwe withdraws from hosting 2019 COSAFA Cup tournament

By Alex Chilumbwe

Zimbabwe has withdrawn from hosting this year's COSAFA Cup set to take place from 19 May to 1 June.

According to the BBC Sports, Zimbabwe's Minister of Youth, Sports, Art and Recreation, Hon. Kirsty Coventry announced on Monday that unpreparedness and wrong timing have worked against

the hosting of the tournament. "We will not be hosting the COSAFA games this year but we look forward to having adequate time to be able to host a world class event in the near future. We want to make sure that when we do host an event of this magnitude, that we are fully prepared, [and] we have good timing. We just do not feel that that was really given to us this

time around. Moving forward, we will continue to work closely with ZIFA in terms of what the next steps are and what the future holds in terms of hosting the event," said Coventry.

And Zimbabwe Football Association (ZIFA) president Felton Kamambo said that the Zimbabwean football team will still participate in the tournament

wherever it will be hosted. "As ZIFA, our team will be participating in the COSAFA tournament, wherever it's going to be held. We will try and bid for future hosting of COSAFA, that is maybe from 2021 going upwards, so that we have enough time, like the minister has said, to prepare to host this tournament," said Kamambo.

'Spygate' Leeds fined £200,000



Leeds United have escaped a points penalty in their quest to be promoted to the Premier League after it was announced Monday they had been fined £200,000 (\$259,000, 229,000 euros) and reprimanded for spying on their opponents.

Leeds faced an investigation by the English Football League after veteran manager Marcelo Bielsa admitted sending someone to spy on Derby at their training ground ahead of a match last month.

The club formally admitted a breach of Regulation 3.4 which states: "In all matters and transactions relating to the League, each Club shall behave towards each other Club and The League with the utmost good faith."

Many were uncertain, however, whether Bielsa had committed a specific

offence and the EFL now plan to clarify the situation by introducing a new rule that bans teams from viewing opposition training in the 72 hours immediately before a match, unless invited to do so. *AFP*



Chelsea's Pedro Rodriguez and Manchester United's Lindelof fight for an aerial ball during Chelsea's 2-0 FA Cup loss at the Stamford Bridge on Monday evening

ZIMBABWE WON'T HOST COSAFA

By Alex Chilumbwe

Zimbabwe has withdrawn from hosting this year's COSAFA Cup set to take place from 19 May to 1 June. According to BBC Sports, the withdrawer is as a result of a lack of adequate time to prepare for the event.

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Peace at last between 'Special One' and Wenger



Arsene Wenger received the Laureus Lifetime Achievement award on Monday but it was the glowing tribute from the unlikeliest of sources Jose Mourinho that caught the eye.

The 69-year-old Wenger won the award on the back of his revolutionising English football especially in the first part of his over two decades in charge of Arsenal.

The veteran former Gunners boss and Mourinho clashed often on and off the touchline.

However, Mourinho -- sacked by Manchester United in December, paid handsome tribute to Wenger via a video.

The volatile Portuguese, who had two spells at Chelsea and then the turbulent one at United, acknowledged there had been moments when they had been at odds with each other.

It boiled over when Wenger pushed Mourinho on the touchline during the latter's second period in charge of Chelsea and Mourinho made some barbed remarks about the studious Frenchman, commenting

he was a "voyeur" and a "specialist in failure". "There were some episodes along the road," said Mourinho.

"I can only speak by myself. I really enjoyed the competition. But the real respect is always there.

"He (Wenger) made lots of history in that football club.

"One of the best football managers in the history of football."

Wenger, who was virtually unknown but proved an inspirational choice by then Arsenal vice-chairman David Dein when he was hired in 1996, accrued among other trophies three Premier League titles and lifted the FA Cup seven times.

However, perhaps his greatest achievement was the title winning side of the 2003/04 campaign who went through the league season unbeaten.

"The nickname is there -- the Invincibles," said Mourinho.

"Amazing. A coaching philosophy, the almost perfect team." *AFP*

