



Young demands credible polls, gives K40bn aid

POA UNFAIR - US ENVOY

By Ulande Nkomesha
USA Chargé d'Affaires to Zambia David Young says the American government wants to see a credible election in 2021. And Young has praised News Diggers! newsPaper for its role in raising awareness on the need for citizens to register to vote. *Story page 5*

Ext debt is \$11.9bn, insists Govt

By Julia Malunga
FINANCE Minister Dr Bwalya Ng'andu has insisted Zambia's sovereign debt stands at US\$ 11.97 billion, saying the US\$ 27 billion reported by the World Bank was from the private sector. *Story page 10*

PF don't have numbers for Bill 10 - UPND

By Ulande Nkomesha
LEADER of the Opposition in Parliament Jack Mwiimbu says the PF is delaying to table Constitution Amendment Bill number 10 of 2019 for second reading because they are still looking for numbers. *Story page 10*

UPND abducted 2 cops in Mpika, claims IG

Story page 4

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Kambwili will be on the ballot paper – Akafumba

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

NDC vice president Joseph Akafumba says the ruling Patriotic Front (PF) has hit a snag because despite being incarcerated, Chishimba Kambwili is not barred from contesting elections next year.

And UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema says the only reason Kambwili is in prison is because Zambia is being ruled by an autocratic and brutal regime.

Speaking at a joint press briefing which was held at Kambwili's residence in Woodlands, Thursday, Akafumba said according to the provisions of the constitution which prescribe who is eligible to run for office, the NDC was still in the running.

"We will fight for CK. You are aware that there are some cases that are pending and we know the schemes that that PF are up to. But we want to tell them that this time, we are going to put more volume. If the idea is to silence us, then wailasha, waloba ilyauma (you have hit a snag). Our crusade is to liberate this country. We know that the PF have done this because they want to block President Kambwili from achieving his political aspirations. We saw yesterday where they were saying that 'president Kambwili is gone and dusted and that he cannot stand again.' Let me make this very clear that the exclusion clauses in the Constitution are only two; (i) when you are serving a prison sentence. It means you are in prison and you cannot go and campaign. The second one is when you have served a term of three years. So, to us, we have to make sure that CK comes out of jail... those don't apply to CK. So, again, if that's what they wanted to achieve, wailasha again," Akafumba said.

"They are unsettled with the alliance, that much we are aware and we have been informed. Even themselves, they have confessed and confirmed to us that 'we are not

going to allow this alliance of president HH and CK because tatulefwaya ukusha soup (because we don't want to leave the soup)'. But they will leave the soup in August 2021. And they have done this just to dent the image of CK and also to discourage him in the alliance. CK is a very strong man. He is my friend and my president and I know how strong and determined he is. You cannot break him with this fake imprisonment that you impose on him."

Akafumba said if Magistrate David Simusamba handled all the other cases with the same speed he used in Kambwili's case, prisons today wouldn't have been congested.

"Coming to the issue around the judgment of yesterday, we did conduct a search at court and we found that in the last 10 years [of] Simusamba having been a magistrate, this has been the

fastest judgment that he has delivered. Therefore, your guess is as good as mine. If at all he was working at this speed, I think it was going to decongest the number of remandees. The judgment was delivered but one thing which we noted which I want the nation to know is that in his judgment, he told us that the complaint by Tayali after he got information from his informers on the Copperbelt, Tayali went to inform Amos Chanda who was at the time, the Special Assistant to the President for Press and Public Relations who in turn told President Lungu. Simusamba said in his judgment that they could not arrest CK at the time because he was a serving minister," Akafumba said.

"So, President Lungu, after firing CK, he immediately arrested him. So, to us, this has been a political prosecution by President Lungu and the PF. That is what they wanted. So,



PF has all along, including all the cases that are before the court tried to get CK where they have put him in order to weaken his spirit. I can assure the nation that the man is not broken and is as strong as ever."

He said the law was being selectively applied.

"Yesterday, we quickly applied for bail pending appeal. The magistrate in his wisdom refused to entertain it and he has put the date of 20th October to hear and determine

the bail application. Ordinarily, things being equal, he should have determined the bail application. Remember, ladies and gentlemen, a bail is a right. But under these circumstances where we are where PF has broken all the institutions of governance, it's only the PF who are above the law. It is in public domain that three quarters of the ministers who have made a semblance of an appearance in the courts of law, all of them got acquitted, others

got nolles in very serious cases. That is not how it should be in a democratic society where all human beings are equal before the law," Akafumba said.

He urged the PF to start preparing to pack and go.

"The alliance is in fact now more stronger than it was before. While the Lord Jesus Christ was baptized by the Holy water, PF, you have now baptized us with fire. So, it's more volume and more fire. To all our members around the country, don't be discouraged. These are just political gymnastics which we expect. President HH spent 128 days in prison on trumped up charges. We also know that the gassing issue was meant for him but it failed. We also know that this nonsense which they are talking about, the privatization where over 200 companies were privatized, they only picked one. We know that it is about HH but mwachepa (you're too small). To me, just prepare, pack and go. But I want to urge all our structures nationwide that if you have been operating in gear 2, start operating in gear 3, faka speed mwana (add some speed)," said Akafumba.

And Hichilema said Kambwili was only in prison because Zambia was being led by an autocratic, brutal regime.

"CK doesn't belong where he spent a night in. He belongs to his home. He is there because we have an autocratic regime, we have a brutal regime. We have a regime taking away children's rights to education, a regime taking away employment opportunities. The very regime that promised more jobs is taking away even the little jobs that our people have, it is taking away the business opportunities in the markets that our mothers have," Hichilema said.

Hichilema urged Kambwili's family and the NDC to remain strong and united.

"My message to the family here is be strong. It is a passing phase. It's a process that we have to go through. Our hearts are out with CK. This is a time to be united. It is not a time to start polarizing yourselves over issues that have no consequence. This is a time to bond. And we expect you to be strong. Then, we the alliance, can add more glue to that bondage. Ifi fyonse fikapwa (all this shall come to pass). We must all remain strong and remove fear. It is the PF scheme to put CK in there in order to shake you and all of us. So, let's stay strong and united. I know CK will be out soon. He will be joining us," said Hichilema.

Only direct beneficiaries of artists fund will vote for PF – Kakoma

By Natasha Sakala

UPND spokesperson Charles Kakoma says only direct beneficiaries of the K30 million artists fund will vote for the Patriotic Front in 2021.

Reacting to remarks by Tourism and Arts minister Ronald Chitotela who, early this week in Parliament, said artists had assured him that they would vote for President Edgar Lungu in 2021 because of the K30 million incentive given to them, Kakoma stated that redeeming the arts sector was beyond the allocated money and urged the Pambashe PF member of parliament to stop misleading the nation.

He stated that the minister should have indicated that the direct beneficiaries of the fund were ready to vote for PF instead of issuing a blanket statement.

"Mr Chitotela should have informed parliament that the direct beneficiaries of the K30 million incentive were ready to vote for Edgar Lungu instead of making a blanket and misleading statement.

Does the Minister have quantifiable data to enable Government make informed decisions about the possibility of awakening Zambia's creative industry and growing the GDP therefrom? The Minister should realise that artists need a clearer knowledge-based mapping of the sector to enhance a definite policy direction. We are aware that the National Arts Council of Zambia (NAC), a body mandated to develop, regulate and promote all forms of arts in Zambia has nine (9) affiliated associations. And the Zambia Association of Musicians (ZAM) under which the beneficiaries of K30 million fall has its own challenges beyond Mr Chitotela's understanding," Kakoma stated.

He added that there were still artists who felt neglected in the country's creative industry.

"Additionally, we are aware that veteran artists, seasoned artists, including up and coming artists from across all art disciplines, feel the huge neglect of

the creative industry in Zambia and redeeming the sector is far beyond the K30 million incentive being boasted about," Kakoma added.

He further stated that the party would engage artists and ensure the industry got the attention it deserved.

"As the United Party for National Development (UPND), we appreciate that the creative industry has great potential to provide employment to millions of citizens and contribute immensely to Zambia's GDP. We shall engage artists and build on the exciting foundation until the creative industry gets the attention it well deserves," stated Kakoma.

"Mr Chitotela must understand that different forms of arts from different fields of art come into play to push for change of Government such as cartoons, music, political messaging, speech writing, graphic designing, advertising, textile and fashion (regalia) without politicizing the creative industry."

Debt situation becoming sour and acidic for govt, warns Magande

By Julia Malunga

FORMER Finance Minister Ng'andu Magande says the government should find solutions to the debt situation because they have not been listening to advice.

And Magande says time is ticking for Zambia and the debt situation is becoming sour and acidic as creditors are demanding payment of their money.

On Wednesday, President Edgar Lungu told United States interim Charge d'Affaires David Young that the debt situation was worrying and that Finance Minister Bwalya Ng'andu was doing everything to retain Zambia to sustainable debt levels.

In an interview, Magande said there was nothing Young could do even if he was told about Zambia's debt because he was merely a diplomat.

"Only one month ago, the Minister, when he was presenting the budget, he said everything is okay; less than two months later, he is saying everything is not okay. Now what do you do in such a case if you are telling somebody not

to do something and then they ignore? After that, the negative effects which you were warning them about happen, do you go to them again? What do you go to do to them? More especially if they admit that 'now we realize we went against the advice of other people so we are in this trouble'. The only thing is that they better find a solution. I think even talking to foreigners like the United States, telling them about the same thing, when in fact, people have been warning against that, they won't do much. Even the United States will not do much about the debt unless that issue is raised in the ambits of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) governors' meeting," Magande said.

"What was the reaction of the Charge d'Affaires? Did he make any comment? He can't! Because that is not a diplomatic thing, it is a technical thing which only the technical people in the treasury department are observing. The President could have ended his speech with the Charge d'Affaires when he said that 'since independence,

you have been our good friend' . That would have been a big headline in Washington but to talk about the debt, there is nothing a diplomat will do. The other day, I was being asked about the Chinese debt issues. The Chinese, the way they operate is that nobody outside Beijing is going to talk about debt issues. When the statement was issued by the Chinese Embassy to say that they have forgiven us for one year, it was a statement straight from Beijing, from the Minister of Finance, the Ambassador here cannot be engaged in such discussions. Even this issue of our President talking to the Charge d'Affaires, there is nothing he did. Mr Young is a diplomat, he doesn't deal with numbers please! Like they say in English, we want to lock the gate when the horses have bolted."

He said if the country had a good relationship with the IMF and the World Bank, they would have called for a creditors' meeting.

"I am very keen to hear what will happen on the 20th of October from

the creditors. It will be interesting. The complication is that the IMF and the World Bank... unless you have a proper disclosure of your debt, they cannot convene a creditors meeting. And for us, because our creditors, both the bilateral and multilateral, are very high, so you need a meeting where most of them will be in that meeting. Now, who can call for that meeting? If we were in good books with the IMF and World Bank, they would have helped to call for that meeting where we will be explaining our problems to the countries, banks and private people we owe money," said Magande.

"But because we are not in good books with the IMF, we have a problem. So the private people who are owed money are saying 'we want to know what you are going to tell the countries that you owe money' and the countries are saying 'we want to know what you are going to tell the private people' so in the end, time is going; interest is accumulating and the situation is becoming sour and acidic."

By Natasha Sakala

ALLIANCE for Democracy and Development (ADD) leader Charles Milupi says President Edgar Lungu has succeeded in reducing Zambia into a dictatorship, leading to the current economic woes the country is facing.

And Milupi, who is also opposition alliance chairperson, noted that the police should be ashamed for allowing themselves to be reduced into instruments of the ruling party to disable the operations of the opposition in the country.

In an interview, Milupi said what Zambia's economy was currently going through was a result of the effects of dictatorship.

"When you now bring dictatorship, it has the impact of reducing the contribution of others and in this particular case, it's the majority of people that are being [affected] and the result of that is what you see

Lungu has successfully reduced Zambia into a dictatorship – Milupi

in our economy now; it is what you see in the [depreciation of the] kwacha, it is what you see in the [rising] prices of goods, it's what you see in lack of employment opportunities, it's what you see in lack of medicines in hospitals, it's what you see with the corruption, it's what you see in the exorbitant prices of projects and so on, it's what you see in an over borrowed state like Zambia is in, to the fact that we can't even pay interest. That's interest we are failing to pay and we are now going to say 'please, just forgive us for six months, just to pay interest'. It's what you see in a budget where you can only raise K66 billion just to service your loan and to pay workers, you need K74 billion, that is Bwalya Ng'andu's budget. These are the signs of

a failed state, it's what you see now when the kwacha is about K20 per dollar because of the establishment of dictatorship that keeps the vast majority of the people from decision making," Milupi said.

"When I campaigned around the country, we were able to articulate our issues without the fear that there will be cadres from some other political parties to inflict violence on you. Now this is the level of degeneration that has occurred in this country and Mr Lungu really ought to examine himself. What has he done to Zambia and what did Zambia do wrong to him

for him to inflict this kind of state on it? And with it, you know when you establish a dictatorship, there are things that go wrong, democracy was established to bring certain benefits and among those is the ability to utilise the synergies or the talents of everybody to advance the country. Now, that is why you see America is greater, so you see Japan is greater, so you see the Western European countries, everybody is contributing in their own way because of that democratic principles."

He said the freedoms that political parties enjoyed before the PF came into power had

now been taken away.

"But then again, PF has shown themselves to be a dictatorial party, they are seeking and maybe, they have already succeeded in establishing a dictatorship in Zambia. Because, we have been in politics for a long time, the freedoms that we used to enjoy when we formed ADD in 2009 under MMD of Rupiah Banda are totally different from the freedoms we have. Now, you can't campaign even if the Vice-President says nobody is stopping anybody from mobilising, that is really laughing at Zambians because the atmosphere now is such



that you just can't," Milupi said.

And Milupi said it is sad that the party in power was using state institutions to fight its political battles.

"It's a very sad development where the state, through the influence of the party in power, whilst fighting their political battles with the opposition, they abuse institutions of the state and in this particular case, the judiciary, to inflict punishment on the members of the opposition, even when clearly, there is no case. This function that I am talking about is charging members of the opposition with offenses, which means they have to go through the court process, they have to go through the police, but more than that, the offences which are non-bailable so that the detention itself counts as punishment. Even when they know quite clearly they have no evidence, they will slap this on an individual and keep them inside and then they lean on the courts and the institutions of state to delay the matter. Whilst they are delaying the matter, those charged with non-bailable offenses are in remand prisons which, in most cases, are in very bad conditions," he said.

Milupi expressed concern that the police had degenerated into instruments of the PF to disable the operations of the opposition.

"We saw that in the case of [Obvious] Mwaliteta, for a period of a year, he was in prison and then later found out that there was no case. So if we remember exactly what happened in the Mucheleka [case], this was in the midst of a very competitive campaign and to knock them out, they took him out of that campaign and slapped him with a non-bailable offense, which means towards the end, he was no longer part of the campaign, so that caused harm to the campaign of the opposition," said Milupi. "So, that's purely political and the police, who are the ones who take these matters to court, ought to be very ashamed of themselves because the police institution is there to protect the state and citizens of the state, that must be understood. They are funded by public funds, everybody pays tax that goes towards funding police and so on."



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OPEN LETTER FROM CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT OVER CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT BILL NO. 10

To: All Members of Parliament, National Assembly of Zambia, Lusaka.
16th October 2020.

Dear Honourable Members of Parliament,

We the undersigned Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are writing to you over a matter of great importance to our country: the Constitutional Amendment Bill number 10 of 2019 (Bill 10). Bill 10 is scheduled to come up for Second Reading during the current session of Parliament. We write to you driven by the love we have for Zambia and our desire to see that the aspirations of citizens across this great country are honoured.

Honourable MPs, Bill 10 has been a matter of political discourse for over a year now. In that period, ordinary citizens, with whom we, the undersigned CSOs, have continually interacted, have raised very serious concerns around this Bill. Honourable Members will agree that since the unconstitutional 3rd term bid by 2nd Republican President, Fredrick Chiluba, no national constitutional matter has garnered as much vociferous citizen voice as Bill 10 has. You will also agree that the majority of citizens and citizen groups that have spoken up and made presentation to the Parliamentary Select Committee have rejected the provisions of Bill 10.

It therefore remains our position that Bill 10 must be withdrawn in its entirety as it is inimical to our democratic aspirations as a nation. Citizens have not asked for the changes the Bill makes and there is no urgency for the fundamental constitutional amendments it makes, months before a general election.

We, in appealing to you, Honourable Members, are well aware that you represent the last line of defence for citizens against what appears to be a desire to amend the Constitution in a manner that will fundamentally alter the political and governance landscape of our country, to the national detriment.

We would, in this regard, like to remind you that your foremost duty as our parliamentarians is to protect the Republican Constitution and abide by what is enshrined in it.

We further wish to remind you that the people of Zambia were widely consulted on what they wanted to see in their Constitution. This happened most recently through the Technical Committee Drafting the Zambian Constitution and earlier through the Mung'omba Constitutional Review Commission. The amendments made after those two processes form the bulk of the contents of the current 2016 amended Constitution. Through those consultations, the people of Zambia clearly expressed their desire to have a more transparent and accountable government that puts their interests above partisan and other interests. Our view is that the 2016 amendments to the Constitution largely gave the people most of what they wanted. Granted, it was not perfect, but the result was arguably the most progressive Constitution that Zambia has ever had.

We are deeply concerned as CSOs that Bill 10 will reverse all the gains that we have made as a country on the Constitution.

We are cognizant of the fact that there may be a lot of pressure from the proponents of Bill 10 to pass it. It is our hope and prayer that each one of you will individually reflect and be guided by the bigger picture: what sort of country you want to leave for your children and children's children? With this reflection, we are confident that you will protect the larger good of our motherland. In rejecting the harmful Bill 10, you will have secured your legacy as having been one of the legislators that stood up to defend the interests of Zambia, and posterity will judge you kindly.

Honourable Members, we write to you because we are confident that you will do the right thing for Zambia.

Signed on behalf of (Logos to be added):

1. Transparency International Zambia (TI-Z)
2. Alliance for Community Action (ACA)
3. Chapter One Foundation (COF)

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By Sipilisiwe Ncube

INSPECTOR General of Police Kakoma Kanganja claims two police officers from Mpika Police Station by abducted by UPND cadres who were in the company of their party leader Hakainde Hichilema.

But UPND secretary general Stephen Katuka says Kanganja should be the last person to make such an allegation against the victimised UPND supporters because he has failed to lead the police service.

In a statement, Kanganja claimed that UPND cadres who were in Hichilema's entourage abducted and attacked two police officers and assaulted other members of the public in Lavushimanda Township in Muchinga on Wednesday.

"I am greatly appalled by the conduct of thugs believed to be UPND cadres who are reported to have abducted two of our police officers of Mpika Police Station whom they assaulted together with

UPND abducted and assaulted 2 cops in Mpika, claims IG

other members of the public. The attack happened at Lavushimanda town Center in Muchinga Province today, 14th October, 2020 around 15:00 hours. The thugs are reported to have been in the entourage of the opposition UPND leader Mr Hakainde Hichilema. I am reminding politicians once again that anyone who would want to commit crimes under the veil of politics shall have themselves to blame as police shall not tolerate such kind of unreasonable behaviour. I am warning all those that took part in the commission of this crime that we shall not relent in our investigations, hence they should consider their days numbered.

He stated that police

would ensure that the suspects are brought to book, further urging those who are aggrieved with some police officers to always engage his office.

"We shall ensure that all those that will be found wanting are dealt with in accordance with the law. I have since directed the Provincial Police Commissioner for Muchinga to ensure that all those that have been spotted to be behind this heinous crime are apprehended and brought to book without any undue delay. Our role as the Zambia Police Service is to ensure that law and order prevails hence any individual irrespective of the political party they belong to, who would want to

harm Police Officers as they conduct their duties, shall not be spared. Further, I wish to invite all groupings that have issues with the police to engage us so that they can be heard as opposed to issuing inciting statements. We shall not entertain any statement from any grouping that has potential to bring disorder in the Country. Sustainance of peace of this country largely lies in our hands as Zambia Police and we shall do our job to preserve the peace," he stated.

But Katuka in an interview said Kanganja should be the last person to condemn the UPND because he never does when PF cadres are breaking the law.

"Kanganja should be the

last one to say that. He has brought indiscipline in this country. Kanganja is to blame for the indiscipline. He has failed to provide leadership in the police. You see, Kanganja should know that he is a policeman who is not a cadre of the PF. So, he is always the first one to condemn when they attack, let's say it's the other camp which has been attacked, when he knows very well who is violent in these parties. Why shouldn't we drive on these Zambian roads? Are we not Zambian? I should be afraid to drive on a road because there is PF. Does that make sense? We are all free to do our business in this country. We are all supposed to be free to move around freely, and protected by Kanganja and his boys. But Kanganja is the first one," Katuka said.

"Recently there was an attack on a water pump in Kamanga [compound of Lusaka]. When they attacked, Esther Katongo said they arrested UPND cadres when it was our infrastructure that was attacked. Similarly, we had been driving into Kasama for a court case. Going into Kasama, we can't drive on a road. If they mount road blocks everywhere to try and attack our entourage, for what? So, I believe he is the one who has failed us as a people. If I were him I would have resigned because he is more of a cadre than a professional policeman. This Kanganja who is talking, when Jay Jay went to beat the officers at the Central Police, he was quiet. And for them, if it's the PF, they are scared but if it's the other camp, they are very clever and they come out in full force to condemn and talk," he said.

Katuka denied having attacked the police and urged Kanganja to be fair when handling cases involving different political parties.

"We did not attack and we have never attacked police. I challenge anyone to show me where we attacked anybody. So, let him be professional. Let him serve the Zambian people. He is not there to serve Edgar Lungu. My appeal to the Zambians is to stand up. This is our country. We must defend what is ours. Zambians must wake up and stand up and defend what is theirs. We cannot be treated like second class human beings in our own land," Katuka added.

And in a statement issued earlier, Katuka distanced his party from the alleged police abduction which took place in Muchinga.

"We wish to distance ourselves from the purported attacks being advanced by Police Inspector General Kakoma Kanganja that the United Party for National Development (UPND) cadres attacked people in Muchinga. I.G Kanganja is contradicting himself. On one hand, he is directing the police to arrest UPND cadres whom he accuses of attacking people in Lavushimanda District in Muchinga Province. On the other hand, I.G Kanganja is directing his officers to investigate the attack. How do police arrest people before carrying out investigations? Kakoma Kanganja should have directed his mind to the law by reminding himself that directing his officers to pounce on UPND cadres before investigations is contradictory and a deliberate administrative blunder. We urge IG Kanganja to take responsibility for the violence taking place in the country and protect all citizens regardless of their political affiliation," stated Katuka.

HIVOS challenges politicians to discuss how they'll deal with food crisis

By Tenson Mkhala

HIVOS regional advocacy manager for sustainable foods William Chilufya has called on politicians to come up with clear plans on how they will handle the food crisis as the country gets into an election year.

Speaking during the launch of the Chongwe Food System Lab, Thursday, Chilufya said that political players needed to come on board and speak on issues of food.

"As we commemorate World Food Day for 2020, it's very important that we all invest our time and efforts in ensuring that we are promoting healthy foods and for the first time, we would like to see our political players come on board

to speak to issues to do with food, how we produce the food and how healthy the food is. In the coming elections, it is important that political parties clearly show that the citizens how they would like to deal with the food crisis that we have," Chilufya said.

He said with high levels of stunting in the country, issues of nutrition should be of great concern to political players.

"Today in Zambia, we have about 35 percent of our children under the age of five stunted and this is really worrisome in the sense that, it's about the future of these children which is about to be shattered. So for any political players to show concern to the progress of this country, they really need to come

out with a clear plan in terms of how they would like to deal with the food challenges," said Chilufya.

"As HIVOS, we have begun to implement a programme called Health Food Africa. In this programme, we are focusing on how we are producing the food and vis a vis we are looking at how are we applying our chemicals, how contaminated are our food, then apart from that we are also looking at how can we produce our food in a much more sustainable manner to ensure the health of this food. So we hope that political players in this case would come on board to make this countrywide and not only focus on a few places like Chongwe where we are implementing."

By Ulande Nkomesha

USA Chargé d'Affaires to Zambia David Young says the American government wants to see a credible election in 2021.

And Young has praised News Diggers! newspaper for its role in raising awareness on the need for citizens to register to vote.

Meanwhile, the US government has committed about K40 billion towards development aid to Zambia over a period of five years.

Speaking during a press conference, Wednesday, Young said the American government wanted to see a level playing field towards the 2021 elections, and expressed concern over the application of the Public Order Act.

"As we look ahead at next August Presidential's election, we know that is a very important thing. Elections are important, elections have consequences. I want to say that we the United States, like other donors, our fellow democracies, we support the will of the Zambian people and the democratic process. So we want a level playing field, we want all parties and all candidates to be able to campaign fairly and equally with a level playing field.

If you have listened to my statements before I talked about the number of concerns that we have particularly been about the issues of a level playing field. The use of the public order act is very concerning because it is applied unequally between parties, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of press, freedom of radio stations not to be harassed by party cadres. Cadres violence is a huge problem for intimidation of people in a democratic space. So we want to support a level playing field, equal treatment for different parties, freedom through the press. Certainly I would say we have some concerns.

Young said the Embassy was not watching the concerns with folded hands, but was making efforts to engage with stakeholder to discuss interventions.

"We raise those concerns when I meet with all parties. Yesterday I met with the President, I meet with senior government Ministers and political leaders and the PF, I meet with heads of the UPND, with the MMD. So I have frequent meetings, I meet with parties across the board. I just had a meeting with the ECZ yesterday with the British High Commissioner and the Irish Ambassador, we had a long discussion about issues that have to do with the run up to the elections next year. We met with civil society, churches, the private sector and others. Our engagement is focused on equal access and a level playing field. We don't take sides of one candidate or another. We say and I say it whether to President Edgar Lungu, HH or others, I say 'we are not taking sides, we just want a free, credible and peaceful election for the Zambian people to decide your leaders whom you want to elect'. That is why we support the process."

He assured that the American government would work with any party that formed government in 2021

We want credible polls in 2021, says US Envoy, as he salutes *Diggers* on voter education

through a free and fair credible election.

"No matter what happens in the USA election in three weeks we will keep working together as partners. We have been doing this since 1964 and we are going to do it till 2064 and beyond. No matter what happens in the elections next August, if it is a free and fair election we will keep dealing with the government in power that comes in power after a free and fair election. Our assistance is to the Zambian people transcendent of our politics of elections and your politics and elections. It is a long standing commitment that we make in our five year plan," Young said.

"The United States is very strongly committed to our partnership with

Zambia because we are fellow democracies and that heritage that we share of democracies is a very powerful bond between us. The multi party system which has been in existence since 1991 is a huge milestone, is a huge bedrock of our support together. The fact that Zambia has had a peaceful transfer of power between parties is a very important thing, that is something that Zambia and the United States have in common, that when people go to the polls it really matters and they vote and the votes are counted and they are evaluated by ECZ. We work on parallel voter tabulation with civil society and we are able to verify the results."

Young praised News Diggers! newspaper stance

taken in raising awareness on the need for citizens to register to vote.

"I want to give a shout out to news agencies, don't think I am playing favourites but I want to give a shout out to today's issue of News Diggers! I was very excited that News Diggers! puts a lot of coverage about what people need to do to register as voters here in Zambia. I just want to encourage other media both print and broadcast to push the word out there about what Zambians need to do to register, because it is critical as we know from this month with the pre registration online and through November that citizens register to vote so that next August you can vote. I really think the media have a very important role to play in

this and again trying to give attention to this I think is really really important," he said.

And Young said the launch of the K39 billion pledge to Zambia was one of the biggest stories of the year.

"This is one of the biggest stories of the year, this is a huge commitment of K39 billion, it is almost \$2 billion over our five years plan. This is just one of our five USA government agencies, so we are the largest donor bilateral and multilateral to Zambia. What we do is down at the community level saving lives with health, education improvements. Sometimes people don't see it because it is not a big flashy project but it is saving the lives of 1.2 million Zambians who receive our PEPFAR HIV AIDS assistance

or the work through Malaria, Tuberculosis program or the education of more than one million primary school kids in provinces around the country. So I think that is a real indication of what we do," said Young.

Meanwhile USAID Zambia mission director Sheryl Stumbras said the \$1.9 billion pledge would focus on five major areas that would look to develop Zambia.

"This is a five year strategy that pledges \$1.9 billion over our five year period about K40 billion. USAID is one of several USA agencies in Lusaka under the leadership of Charge Affairs and the Department of State. When we do a strategy with our stakeholders these are our government counterparts and Zambians at large, we try to fit our strategy in the countries development priority and come to agreement to what the US government's comparative advantage in those developmental priorities, when we set out a strategy. This five year strategy really looks at a couple of key objectives. First and foremost we are looking at improving the health, literacy and food security for the most vulnerable Zambians. This also includes working with HIV academic control which is a huge priority for the USA government through the PEPFAR initiative," said Strumbras.

Lusambo says he has no time to engage NAC over Mafikizolo concert: "I'd rather cancel it"

By Ulande Nkomesha

PF Copperbelt mobilisation committee chairperson Bowman Lusambo says he doesn't have time to engage the National Arts Council regularise the permits for the invited South African performers Mafikizolo and Master KG, saying the event is in his hands and he will simply cancel it if the foreign artistes are not allowed to come.

And Lusambo says he is not a music promoter but a politician conducting politics, and therefore, he will not be forced to hold the event with musicians whom he doesn't like.

Lusambo had organised a political rally scheduled for tomorrow (Saturday), under the guise of COVID-19 sensitisation, at which he had invited the two foreign music groups as well as renowned Zambian performers, including Chanda na Kay and Yo Maps.

However, in a statement, Wednesday, National Arts Council of Zambia (NAC) director Maanka Chipindi stated that the South African artists were not yet cleared to perform in the country.

"It has been brought to our attention that the Copperbelt mobilisation committee is intending to bring two international artists from South Africa to perform at the COVID-19 sensitisation rally scheduled for Saturday 17th October, 2020 at Musa Kasonka Stadium in Ndola. We wish to guide that under provisions of the National Arts Council Act Cap 170 of the laws of Zambia and statutory instrument 129 of 1995 section 5, no person or organisation is allowed to promote any artistic event without a promoters licence obtained from the National Arts Council of Zambia," stated Chipindi.

"Further foreign artists are supposed to be cleared, at least three months before the event

and are expected to pay 20 percent of performance fees as withholding tax to the Zambia Revenue Authority. In view of the above, we write to advise the committee to urgently normalise these matters if the foreign artists are to be cleared to perform in Zambia."

When contacted, Lusambo who is also Lusaka Province Minister said "Fyabupuba!"

Asked if he would engage NAC to normalise the issue, Lusambo said he had no time.

"Fyabupuba! There is no comment actually. We have no comment. The programme in Ndola is there, If they are not cleared I can't be forced to get artists whom I don't want. There is no one who can force me, there is one one who can force us. We can only do

with what we want. If they are not coming we are going to cancel the function. I am not a promoter, these are just politics there is nothing like being hard. That is my decision, it is me who decided to bring them and the committee to have that meeting. So canceling the meeting is within ourselves. I have no time [to talk to the NAC]," said Lusambo.

JCTR expresses concern that govt ignored signs of debt default

By Natasha Sakala

THE Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) has expressed concern that the government ignored indicators of debt default that characterised the debt discussion since 2013.

In a statement, JCTR executive director Father Alex Muyebe stated that the country had 30 days from 14th October 2020 to pay US\$42.5 million before it is deemed as a default.

"The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) wishes to remind the nation that Eurobond holders are due to meet on October 20 to vote on the proposal to suspend Zambia's debt service payments. Before then, about US\$42.5 million payment on \$1 billion of dollar bonds due in 2024 is scheduled for October 14 2020, which must be honoured within 30 days before it's deemed to be in default," Fr Muyebe stated.

"JCTR is concerned that Government chose to ignore the many indicators of debt default that have characterised Zambia's debt discourse since the issuance of Zambia's first Eurobond in 2013. Most recently, on 25th September 2020, FITCH Ratings downgraded Zambia's credit rating to 'C' from 'CC' warning of a high risk of a missed debt payment. Government, however, gave assurance that it will continue to make debt service payments on outstanding Eurobonds if an agreement is not reached. The admission to likely default is therefore a reversal from the Finance Minister's assurance last month that Government had budgeted for Eurobond coupon payments next year to avoid default in the event that holders rejected the Government's standstill request."

He further urged the government to walk the talk in addressing the country's debt challenge.

"JCTR urges Government to seriously reflect on the debt problems that Zambia faces and resolve to walk the talk in addressing Zambia's debt crisis. Under the Patriotic Front administration, Zambia's external debt ceiling increased by 700% from K20 billion in 2011 (as guided by Statutory instrument (SI) 53 of 1998) to K160 billion in 2016. This exponential increase was not backed by increased economic performance evidenced through growth in real Gross Domestic Product numbers. The raising of the external loan ceilings followed the issuance of Zambia's three sovereign bonds. As far back as 2016, the Minister of Finance could not explain how the money would be paid back. Many stakeholders questioned the capacity of Government to pay back the loans and warned of an impending debt crisis if Zambia continued on the same trajectory. This was on the basis of strong indications that the country was drifting into a debt distress," Fr Muyebe stated.

He further stated that the country currently had K80 billion above the prescribed debt threshold of K160 billion, according to the Loans and Guarantees (Maximum Amounts) Order No. 27 of 2019.

"By February 2020 at an exchange rate of K14.7 to the US dollar, external debt amounted to K164 billion, K4 billion above the threshold. Today, Zambia's total debt stock (external and domestic) is estimated at \$US18.5 billion as at end of June 2020. Of this, US\$11.97 billion is external. Thus, eight months later at an exchange rate of K20.13 this translates to K240 billion, K80 billion above the prescribed threshold of

K160 billion (the Loans and Guarantees (Maximum Amounts) Order No. 27 of 2019). JCTR reiterates that Government must be committed to reining in on debt contraction. Government must provide evidence that it has slowed down on debt contraction. In the 2021 resource envelope, 44.9% of the budget will be financed through borrowing compared to 32.2% proposed in 2020. JCTR implores Government to ensure that debt sustainability is operationalized," stated Fr Muyebe.

"Less than a month since the Minister of Finance, Dr Bwalya Ng'andu, presented to parliament the 2021 National Budget, Government has admitted that it will likely default on external debt service if a favourable agreement with creditors is not reached. On September 22nd 2020, Government applied to holders of its US\$3 billion in Eurobonds to defer debt service payments for six months while it works on a debt-restructuring strategy. This period covers the upcoming three coupon payments due on 14 October, 2020, 30 January, 2021 and 20 March, 2021, on the respective bonds. Zambia becomes the first African country to ask for debt suspension on its Eurobond. The Government has further gone ahead to ask all creditors for similar relief, after some non-commercial creditors agreed to a payment freeze under the G20 Debt Suspension Service Initiative (DSSI). China, in particular, has given a one-year grace period and suspension and rescheduling of three years of repayment amounting to US\$225million, US\$426.3million and US\$428 million for 2020, 2021 and 2022 respectively."



PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE FOR CHANGE

(PAC)
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Why we deserve your vote



ANIMAL FARM

By Andyford Mayele Banda

ANIMAL Farm is an allegorical novella by George Orwell, first published in England on 17 August 1945. The book tells the story of a group of farm animals who rebel against their human farmer, hoping to create a society where the animals can be equal, free and happy. Ultimately, however, the rebellion is betrayed, and the farm ends up in a state as bad as it was before, under the dictatorship of a pig named Napoleon. The Seven Commandments are abridged to just one phrase: "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." The maxim "Four legs good, two legs bad" is similarly changed to "Four legs good, two legs better." (Source: Wikipedia)

Zambia has become the modern-day animal farm. Prior to 2011 there was promise of more money in your pocket by the current PF government. There was a promise of developmental projects such as roads, hospitals and schools. There was a promise of prudent financial management. There was condemnation of the lack of respect of the rule of law by the then MMD government. Things would be done different. Boy we had not seen anything yet. What is happening currently is the complete opposite. The PF have created an animal farm. This country has gone to the dogs.

Some animals are more equal than others. Other animals are acquitted and other animals are being jailed. Other animals are holding rallies other animals are blocked. Now there is a bizarre proposal that other animals should ask police before going on radio while the more equal than animals can do it as they wish.

To say our democracy is under threat is an understatement. Our democracy is at the verge of collapse if we let the PF continue to do as they wish. We have to rise up, we can't continue to let the conviction of political opponents while acquitting or entering nolle prosequi for those that are PF or support PF. We can't have a situation where the PF are having rallies while the opposition is blocked. Where should we run to? Must we continue to watch the PF do as they wish? Just what we must we do? The answer is coming in a few weeks' time.

The idea of democracy is to give opportunities to any set of citizens that convinces the masses through an election to preside over the affairs of a country. This also gives opportunity to the people to choose who they want to preside over their affairs.

The set of citizens that is given an opportunity must not think they are indispensable. They need to know that that opportunity has an expiry date. Hence, the maneuvers by most rulers especially in Africa to start tweaking constitutions in order to prolong their stay in office is against the ideals of democracy and is of greed in nature.

Below is an extract from the article we wrote in 2018 about Political intimidation:

"Our political system seems to accept that opposition politicians can be summoned to police and arrested on fake charges and released and life goes on without due consideration of the facts that an individual's rights are being abused, public officers who have authority to command the police to go and arrest their political opponents are actually abusing their offices, and a fact which will never change is that there is always a tipping point where tables turn and the hunter becomes the hunted or should we say haunted.

Our political system seems to accept that it's okay for the ruling government to instruct police to stop opposition political parties from freely meeting with fellow citizens to discuss what plans they have for the country without due regard that they are stamping on the rights of the political parties and also on the rights of citizens who have a constitutional right to sample leadership in order to make an informed decision during an election.

During colonial and the apartheid times, freedom fighters were intimidated and sent to jail for fighting for the rights of the people. The only reason why white minority rulers sent freedom fighters to jail on trumped up charges was for them to advance their hold to power in order to continue abusing resources that belonged to the indigenous people. The minority enjoyed 90% of the country's resources and opposed plans for the resources to be shared equally among the people. For example, during apartheid, the white minority rulers even created laws that legalised the abuse of the black majority".

Most governments that focus more on intimidating opponents actually fail to deliver promises made to the people and in fact abuse various institutions from Police to Judiciary to state resources. Instead of focusing their energies on ensuring that a friendly business environment is created to spur job creation, they put their energies on fixing enemies as a strategy to hold on to power and a warning to other political opponents that this is the fate that awaits

them should they continue speaking against those in authority.

In Nelson Mandela's "Dare Not Linger" writer James Baldwin is quoted saying: "Force does not work the way its advocates seem to think it does. It does not, for example, reveal to the victim the strength of his adversary. On the contrary, it reveals the weakness, even the panic of his adversary, and this revelation invests the victim with patience. Furthermore, it is ultimately fatal to create too many victims."

Clearly what we are seeing from all these political intimidations is the panic and weaknesses of the perpetrators. The abuse of state institutions such as the police to intimidate political opponents just clearly shows the weaknesses of those who found comfort and security in machinery which is temporal and clearly not theirs. Since most perpetrators are blinded by power and money, they can't see that the more they create victims, the deeper they are digging their ditch.

As a country we must not accept this kind of politics, we must know that any government that perpetrates this governance style must be given a straight red card. Greediness is what drives such individuals to deal with political opponents in such a manner. Insecurity on what will befall them should they leave government is another reason why they don't want to give their opponents a chance because they know a number of illegalities that they have committed and what will befall them should there be change of government.

The biggest threat to any government's stay in power is not the opposition political party leaders but the lack of service delivery to the people. Any ruling political party that perpetrates intimidation instead focusing on the people are just pursuing unsustainable route and wasting their time. Our appeal to the PF is focus on the people not the opposition. There is always a tipping point through a social epidemic."

The extract is as relevant today as it was in November 2018 when we wrote it almost years ago. PF will never change and they will keep getting worse. Our fears of 2015 when forming PAC have been proven even today. We hope and pray that our prediction for next year will be as any other prediction we have done in the past.

Andyford Mayele Banda
Secretary General
People's Alliance for Change (PAC)

By Natasha Sakala
ECONOMIST Trevor Hambayi says Zambia's debt situation is very serious, saying the government should have been honest with the country's debt position as doing so is the only way restructuring can be successfully done.

In an interview, Hambayi said dishonesty about the country's debt stock eroded confidence in the government from both the local and international market players.

"So, the challenge really is issues that we have been raising before, which is speaking to the fact that government should have been truthful about the extent of debt this country has. Once we know the extent of the debt that we have, this is the only way we can actually restructure our debt to be able to determine what our capacity is to repay, but now we are still grappling with the issue of transparency, which government has not done very well," Hambayi, who is also senior partner at Development Finance Associates (DFA), said.

"The debt situation is now very serious as a country because, initially when we were speaking to our bondholders, the country seemed to have been saying, 'no, if the bond holders refuse this request that we have made, we will continue to service the debt', but now we have all realised that government is actually saying that they do not have the

Zambia's debt situation very serious – Hambayi

money to be able to service the debt and they have put it out again in a press release which says 'if the bondholders do not accept the request, we will default on the payment'. And very recently, we are also seeing that the IMF is starting to come up a lot more in terms of the actual debt that we owe that is now passing US\$27 billion dollars."

He said not enough had been done to support small and medium enterprises in an effort to resuscitate the economy.

"You must appreciate that in terms of having to resuscitate our economy for us to get back to economic growth, firstly, we have got potentially a minus 4.2 contraction which is a recession. For us to be able to resuscitate this economy, we need to be able to put a stimulus into the economy, which is some kind of investment that speaks to having to support the rebuilding of that economy and you see that from around the world, a lot of countries have been doing this immediately after COVID-19, they put in economic stimulus packages towards having to increase economic growth. So from our perspective as a country, we haven't done enough; there was a US\$500 million that was supposed to be coming through the medium term facility to support SMEs but this has not



gotten to the SMEs and this is seven months later and they still haven't gotten the funds."

And Hambayi noted that not enough had been done to the monetary policy rate as the recent reduction had been wiped out by inflation and the depreciation of the kwacha.

"So the third aspect where we could have created liquidity

within the market is around the monetary policy rate and that monetary policy rate is the one that should have been able to increase liquidity in the market but we haven't done enough to be able to do this. The last time they reduced the monetary policy rate was by two percent, but that reduction was wiped out by firstly inflation and

secondly, the devaluation of the kwacha against the US dollar, so it hasn't really changed any perspective. That is, the two percent is far less than the inflation and far less than the percentage drop in the value of the kwacha," Hambayi added.

"So there is nothing that we have done that is going to speak to having to increase liquidity in the market, either from the budget or from the policy issue."

He also said there was no sinking fund in place because there was no framework that could prevent the government from taking out money from the fund.

"There are two sides to the sinking fund; I think we raised

this issue at the time the sinking fund was mentioned. We don't know whether the sinking fund was there but the key aspect was that at the time we were talking about the sinking fund, there was no legal framework in this country that actually justified the sinking fund, it was just something that was mentioned, we didn't see an act of parliament, we didn't see an instrument that was speaking to the sinking fund," said Hambayi. "So, even if there was a sinking fund, there was no framework that was preventing government from having to go back and take the money out of the sinking fund. So, in essence, we never had the sinking fund, government was saying we put money aside but that was never put aside because there was no framework on which we could put that money aside."

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Today, October 16, is World Food Day. To many people, food means something you ingest when the body is in short supply of energy, nutrition and vitamins. But food means a whole lot of different things to our politicians on the African Continent. In Zambia, food also means a commodity that politicians use to win the hearts of the electorate. It is an incentive given to the poor and vulnerable citizens prior to elections, for the benefit of the givers.

This is why the government does not see the need to explicitly guarantee the right to food in the Republican Constitution; that is why there is no deliberate policy for actualizing this basic human right. But hunger is both a violation of human dignity and an obstacle to social, political and economic progress, and the primary responsibility for ensuring the right to adequate food and the fundamental right to freedom from hunger rests with the central government.

The right to food does not mean that the state has a duty to distribute food to all its citizens. It does, however, have an obligation to respect the right to food by not interfering with individuals' efforts to provide for themselves. It must also protect its people from infringement of their rights by others. The state's obligation to fulfil means that it should help those who do not already enjoy the right to food by creating opportunities for them to provide for themselves. If these three safeguards fail to secure adequate food for all, then the

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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Don't make hunger a tool for political gain

state should provide, especially to those who, because of age, disability, unemployment or other disadvantages, cannot fend for themselves.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) observes that the state's obligation to fulfil the right to food comprises two elements: the obligation to facilitate and the obligation to provide. The obligation to facilitate means that it should create and maintain an 'enabling environment' within which people are able to meet their food needs.

Agricultural development is not only the key to increasing food availability, but as a major employer in most developing countries, it helps to bring rural people out of poverty. But the right to food comprises more than just food production. Markets full of food are useless if people do not have access to them. Efficient national food supply systems

must be accompanied by appropriate marketing facilities, equitable rural development policies and adequate opportunities to produce food or earn enough money to buy it. Development of the transportation and communications infrastructure is also essential.

Facilitating enjoyment of the right to food does not necessarily mean direct state intervention in all aspects of the food system, but the state can and must take steps to ensure that markets are accessible and the players are not dictated by price controls, which may lead to unaffordable food prices.

There are a number of measures that the government can take to promote private food markets without resorting to inefficient and costly price controls and direct food assistance. By reducing barriers to obtaining trade licences, the government can make

it cheaper and easier for companies to enter the market. Government can also encourage trade and keep food prices affordable by reducing value-added taxes on food commodities and by enacting legislation prohibiting monopolies. Public access to price data, through radio broadcasts or other means, can also be an effective way to ensure that small traders have the information they need to enter the food business.

Government and the party in power must not take advantage of people who are in desperate need of food relief. Hunger must not be used as a tool for political gain. For people in extreme emergencies, the state's obligation is to distribute food. To meet the needs of the most vulnerable, the governments must issue food coupons or cash grants or even institute a little bit of food-for-work employment schemes, which have nothing to do with politics and elections.

When a middle-income least developed country like Zambia is unable to meet the needs of its people through its own resources, the State has an obligation to appeal for help from the international community. In fact, the state's failure to call for adequate and timely international assistance during an emergency may also be a violation of the obligation to fulfil the right to food. So, there is no harm in asking cooperating partners to help our people who cannot afford a decent meal a day. This is more dignified than subjecting the people to hunger and then dangling mealie meal coupons when elections are around the corner. This is a violation of human dignity.

Any form of discrimination in ensuring access to food, or to the means of acquiring it, on the grounds of political affiliation, language, tribe, religion and region is a violation of human rights

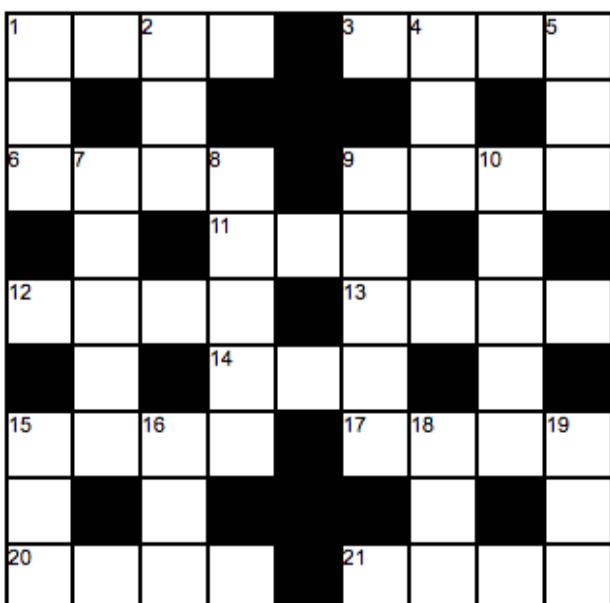
and human dignity. The Rome Declaration on World Food Security proclaims that food should not be used to exert political or economic pressure.

Sadly, this is what we see in Zambia. Regions where those in power do not have a significant political footing are neglected. This is wrong and it must be stopped. As we celebrate this year's World Food Day, we must de-weaponise food and embrace the access to it as a basic human right.

This is the more reason why we support the work that our civil society organisations have been doing in ensuring diversification and food security. The Consumer Unity Trust Society, through the Food Policy Council, have developed a document called the Food Security Initiative. This Food Security Initiative is intended to provide a general framework for the improvement of the food system in the city of Lusaka.

The initiative is based on the realisation that as the city of Lusaka grows, the needs of food by the inhabitants are also growing and even faster raising concerns of sustainability now and soon. The growing population also means that more diversity in food consumption is going to be expected and, therefore, the city needs to respond in a more systematic manner. CUTS has been working with the Lusaka City Council, with the support from Hivos, to ensure that this document has the authority it needs to change the face of the food systems in Lusaka. These organisations must be supported.

Crossword puzzle No 713



“Rivers know this: there is no hurry. We shall get there some day.”
- A.A. Milne

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Across</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Child's play 3. Dance movement 6. Cap and gown wearer 9. Alike 11. He's behind the catcher 12. Get rid of 13. Merit 14. Iota preceder 15. ____ of March 17. Patella's place 20. Light brown 21. Potato | <p>Down</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Silly Putty container 2. Large body of water 4. A hot drink 5. Round baked dessert 7. Circle shape 8. Tricks 9. Put into words 10. Combine 15. Make angry 16. Corn unit 18. Tot's rest 19. Final; finish |
|---|---|

Crossword puzzle No 712



Readers' Feedback



'Simusamba's judgement on Kambwili smirks of bias!'

Editor,

"As was expected. I hope CK appeals immediately and applies for bail. This judgement smirks of biasness!" - Cyrus Kalando

"That was expected. Chilufya Tayali is a heartless man. GOD will judge him one day". - Chanda Pochoko

"Temperal setback.... Sorrow may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning!!!" - Kenny Sefuka

"The Greatest justice is found only in the Lord 's court. We were all created by God and one day we will face one judgement and that will be from God. Pf will not rule forever and one day they will go the same way.CK 's case took almost two years just to suck his personal resources while accused of corruption government ministers took less than six months and ended in acquittal. Don't support injustice because even you, you are a Zambian and one day you will face the reality". - Itx Suzy

"You see that if he was in PF he would be free. A PF cadre Jay Jay was sent free yet his case was big. Welcome to Zambia where everyone in PF is innocent but if you are in opposition, you are sentenced to jail". - George Malupande

"Nothing sad. If he forged let him save.. These politicians should understand they will never be in power forever.. CK was one useless pompous greedy powerful minister.. he closed down The Post.. Today his friends have closed down his freedom.. I still remember very well when he told us to pee in our tanks or park our vehicles if we can't manage to buy fuel..". - Dillon Mayangwa

ND! OPINION: Inonge Wina's mockery of Public Order Act victims

Editor,

"Mama Inonge Wina has lost it. She's not the same person who fought for fundamental human rights when she was in civil society!" - Andrew Sakala

"Shame, especially when one lies in old age, what morals is she teaching young ones". - Isaac Sulwe

"Liers! So what ware the police up to against Harry Kalaba in Mpika? Shame on you!" - Musukwa Kanjere

"This woman is a disgrace. Problem with PF is the have divided the country on tribal lines therefore they can lie through their teeth without being ashamed of themselves. The old woman behaves like she has dementia". - Mutinta Mulonda

"We should have advocated long ago that the maximum age limit for leaders should be 65 to protect our children from costly decisions made by gerontocrats". - Mutinta Mulonda

Wynter's suggestion on parties that lose elections 5 times must be deregistered

Editor,

"Losing five times is better than not contesting for over five years in any election , not even local government election. Yet someone still has the audacity to be called party president!" - Skycastle Log

"Says a party with no single representation in parliament. This backward thinking gets on my nerves!!" - Naomi Tetamashimba Khumalo

"Let the parties which do not contest in by elections and have no Councillor or MP be the first to be deregistered because they are a nuisance to

our democratic dispensation!" - Mbandu Tommy Mbandu

"Just grow your party. Instead parties that are founded by people resigning from other parties should be de-registered. Or even those which are founded by people who were once in government should be de-registered". - Nzala Malambo

"What about parties that remain mute when things are going wrong in the governance of the country

and only come up to give a second voice to the governing party for his or her belly????? An opposition party must give alternatives to a failing government but when you seem to agree with 95% of the ideals of the party in power you just as well may join them and close shop. Your party sir must be deregistered" - Priscilla Muntanga

"All those political parties who's presidents' mental health is questionable should not be allowed to stand as presidential candidates!" - Neto Halwabala

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.

Shonga's accussation on News Diggers of attacking Judiciary

Editor,

"Counsel point of correction, there's no rule of law under PF regime... We want Judges and Lawyers to be answerable to the people since they human beings subject to make errors by mistake or intentional. People have the right to questionable judgements and conduct of some bias or corrupt officers." - Kenny Sefuka

"Judges are mere mortal humans like Shonga et. When their rulings lack depth and some of them refuse to recuse themselves in many cases with clear conflicts of interest, they can't hide behind wigs and must be treated like everyone else who is partisan". - Evans Kaimoyo

"The rule of law has been undermined by none other than lawyers and the judiciary itself. As it is, it's insane to even have a little bit of confidence in the judiciary". - Victor Chansa

"This notion that judges can not be criticised is just too colonial.... I personally think its high time judges were held accountable because some judgements leaves much to desire!" - Ian Malekhanie

By Julia Malunga

FINANCE Minister Dr Bwalya Ng'andu has insisted Zambia's sovereign debt stands at US\$ 11.97 billion, saying the US\$ 27 billion reported by the World Bank was from the private sector.

And Dr Ng'andu says there was a bond which was due on Wednesday but government was advised not to pay it because it was going to create a hostile environment for other creditors.

Meanwhile, Dr Ng'andu said there are prospects that bond holders will vote against government's request for suspension of debt service payment for a period of six months.

Rendering a ministerial statement to Parliament, Thursday, Dr Ng'andu said

Debt is still at \$11.97bn, insists Ng'andu

the amount stated in the World Bank report referred to the total national debt, which included private sector external debt of US\$15.57 billion.

"Our stock of external debt at the end of 2019 was as I reported in my 2020/2021 budget address which is US\$11.48 billion. As at the end of June 2020, this figure increased to US\$11.97 which when we add the guaranteed debt for State Owned Enterprises comes to US\$ 13.55 billion. I have noted regrettably that some sections of domestic and international society that may not have read the recently related 2020 international debt

statistics report by the World Bank are quoting government debt as being US\$27.34 billion as opposed to US\$ 11.48 billion at end of 2019. The amount stated in the World Bank report refers to the total national debt that includes private sector external debt of US\$15.57 billion. Private Sector external debt is foreign denominated debt owed by all government entities in Zambia. In all sectors including mining, manufacturing, transport, energy, wholesale and trade to mention some," Dr Ng'andu said.

"The US\$ 27 billion does not reflect the sovereign debt of this country. The sovereign

debt of this country is US\$ 11.9 billion and that is what we are working on. The balance of that debt has everything to do with the private sector which it has borrowed. The private sector has its own obligations and responsibility to deal with that debt. The US\$ 27 billion, Mr Speaker, is not my responsibility to deal with because it is not in my books,"

And when Kapombo member of parliament Ambrose Lufuma asked what would happen if the creditors refused to grant the country a moratorium, Dr Ng'andu said government would continue to engage them.

"The prospects that the

bondholders might vote against are there. And we have taken that into account. If the answer is now, we will obviously continue to discuss with all the other creditors. Remember that what we have here is not just the Bond holders alone but other creditors who so far have to come to the table. We will continue to engage them in a constructive way. I do believe all creditors would like us to come to a solution that is helpful to everybody because there is absolutely no benefit for a creditor who hangs out and makes it impossible for us to resolve the problem," he responded.

When asked by Msanzala member of parliament if the other bonds had been put on a moratorium, Dr Ng'andu said one was due on Wednesday but that government was advised against paying it.

"The notes that are payable during the period we have asked for are three coupon payments on the three outstanding bonds. The first one was due to be paid yesterday. It wasn't paid and the reason it wasn't paid is what I have explained on the very strong advice from our advisors. They were of the view that if we paid, we were going to create a very hostile environment within which to negotiate with other creditors because we would have departed from the principal of parri passu. So based on that, we did not make payment not because we did not have the money to pay but the issue of treating creditors equitably is a very important part of the process we are going through. There is payment that is due in January and the last payment is due in March next year. So those are the coupons that will be affected during the period of the six months standstill that we have asked for," he said.

Dr Ng'andu told the House that engagement with other creditors had not yielded the

expected results.

"Zambia is currently in the process of implementing a liability management exercise aimed at restoring debt sustainability. As part of this process, the government has been engaging its creditors to seek their approval on suspension of debt service payment for a period of six months. In accordance with terms of the G20 and the Paris Club debt suspension initiative referred to as DSSI. Mr Speaker, the request for six months standstill is part of our debt strategy development process. The standstill will give immediate relief on the budget and most importantly give government time to finalize its debt sustainability analysis that will provide details of the broad asset liability management measures that are required to be implemented to deliver debt sustainability over the medium term," said Dr Ng'andu.

"The debt sustainability analysis will provide the details that are required to provide for informed engagement with the different creditors including the Eurobond holders on the adjustment in order to attain sustainability over the medium to long term. This will be done with the full support of the IMF. Mr Speaker, although we have obtained some relief from under the DSSI window, particularly from official creditors, engagements with commercial creditors have not yet yielded expected results. This is because creditors were concerned that we were not treating all creditors equally. We seemed to be discriminatory in the treatment of our creditors as we are servicing certain categories of our debt while not servicing others. Specifically concern was raised that the Eurobond debt was not included in the DSSI request and that Zambia had continued to service all Eurobond payments when they failed you while allowing accumulation of arrears on other portfolios."

Material raises hope of energy revolution

SCIENTISTS have found the first material that displays a much sought-after property at room temperature.

It is superconducting, which means electrical current flows through it with perfect efficiency - with no energy wasted as heat.

At the moment, a lot of the energy we generate is lost because of electrical resistance, which is lost as heat.

So room temperature "superconducting" materials could revolutionise the electrical grid.

Until this point, achieving superconductivity has required cooling materials to very low temperatures. When the property was discovered in 1911, it was found only at close to the temperature known as absolute zero (-273.15C).

Since then, physicists have found materials that superconduct at higher - but still very cold - temperatures.

The team behind this latest discovery says it's a major advance in a search that has already gone on for a century.

"Because of the limits of low temperature, materials with such extraordinary properties have not quite transformed the world in the way that many might have imagined," said Dr Ranga Dias, from the University of Rochester, in New York State.

"However, our discovery will break down these barriers and open the door to many potential applications."

Dr Dias added that room temperature superconductors "can definitely change the world as we know it".

In the US, electrical grids lose more than 5% of their energy through the process of transmission. So tackling this loss could potentially save billions of dollars and have an effect on the climate.

The scientists observed the superconducting behaviour in a carbonaceous sulphur hydride compound at a temperature of 15C.

However, the property only appeared at extremely high pressures of 267 billion pascals - about a



million times higher than typical tyre pressure. This obviously limits its practical usefulness.

So Dr Dias says the next goal will be to find ways to create room temperature superconductors at lower pressures, so they will be economical to produce in greater volume.

These materials

could have many other applications. These include a new way to propel levitated trains - like the Maglev trains that "float" above the track in Japan and Shanghai, China. Magnetic levitation is a feature of some superconducting materials.

Another application would be faster, more efficient electronics.

"With this kind of technology, you can take society into a superconducting society where you'll never need things like batteries again," said co-author Ashkan Salamat of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

The results are published in the prestigious journal Nature.**BBC**

PF delaying Bill 10 because they don't have numbers – Mwiimbu

By Ulande Nkomeshu

LEADER of the Opposition in Parliament Jack Mwiimbu says the PF is delaying to table Constitution Amendment Bill number 10 of 2019 for second reading because they are still looking for numbers.

Meanwhile, Clerk of the National Assembly Cecilia Mbewe has guided members of parliament to be physically present when Bill 10 is tabled in order to facilitate voting.

On Wednesday, government postponed the date for second reading October 29 from October 16, 2020.

During business on Wednesday, Mwiimbu rose on a point of order questioning when Bill 10 would be tabled in Parliament after a circular was given to MPs informing them that bill would only be tabled on October 29.

"Madam Speaker, I rise on a very serious procedural point of order. And this particular procedural point of order is on Her Honour the Vice-President. Madam Speaker, you do recall that last Friday when she was presenting the schedule of work for this week, she did particularly inform us and the nation that Bill 10 will be coming on the order paper on Friday this week. A few minutes ago, Madam Speaker, we received a circular

rescinding the decision of Her Honour the Vice-President which was given on the floor of this House. The circular is telling us that Bill 10 is coming on the 29th of October," Mwiimbu said.

"Madam Speaker, I need clarity on this matter, so that we can lay the anxiety on the part of the members of this House and members of the public. Because it was announced that Bill 10 is coming on Friday and we have been waiting for it and we are ready. Now we have received a circular, Madam Speaker, that this particular bill is coming on the 29th of October. As you have guided, members of parliament are supposed to, if they want, to debate virtually in their constituency. So we want to know and seek your guidance as to whether it is coming on Friday so that those members in the constituency can remain in the constituency doing other national duties and attend to Parliamentary duties. We need your guidance on this matter. Is it coming this Friday, next week or the other week? So that there is clarity."

In her response, First Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Catherine Namugala said the Executive, who were the promoters of the bill, were in order to shift the date.

"My guidance is as follows, as you have indicated honourable leader

of the opposition, Her Honour did indeed last week give an indication that there would be a bill, the one you referred to, that would come during the course of business this week. This, as you will note honourable members, was an indication by Her Honour the Vice-President was a mere indication. This particular bill that you are referring to is being promoted by the Executive and the Executive, just like any other promoter, is at liberty to change their minds if they are not ready to present their bill as indicated. What Her Honour the Vice-President gave last week Friday was a mere indication and there is nothing out of order that the Executive has done. That is my guidance. When they are ready I am sure they will present that bill for second reading," said Namugala.

And in an interview, Mwiimbu said PF was still looking for numbers.

"The PF are looking for numbers. Definitely, they are looking for numbers as far as we are concerned and they don't have the numbers currently. They have been frantically trying to convince our traditional leaders, to influence our MPs to vote for Bill 10 if development is to take place in their constituencies. That has been going on for quite some time but we are proud that our honourable

members of parliament have resolved to stand on the side of the people and they would not be compromised in any way. I have no doubt in my mind that they will be vigorous on this bill. This is a vicious regime that will try to use all means to ensure that whatever their aspirations are, are achieved," said Mwiimbu.

Meanwhile, Mbewe advised members of parliament to be physically present when Bill 10 is presented to facilitate voting.

"The Clerk of the National Assembly wishes to inform all Members of Parliament, the media and members of the public that the House will consider the Second Reading stage of the Constitution of Zambia (Amendment) Bill, National Assembly Bill No. 10 of 2019 on Thursday, 29th October, 2020. While members of parliament are free to debate on the Bill from any suitable location with good internet connectivity, it will be advisable for members to be physically present at the main Parliament Buildings to facilitate voting. Members of the public are advised to follow the proceedings on Parliament television, radio or Facebook. Please treat this as official notification and should there be any changes, my office will advise accordingly," stated Mbewe.

Arsenal lacked a player of Partey's profile - Suarez

DENIS Suarez has tipped former team-mate Lucas Torreira to be a big hit with Atletico Madrid and says Thomas Partey will provide something Arsenal have been lacking under Mikel Arteta.

Suarez, who spent the second half of the 2018-19 season on loan with the Gunners from Barcelona, could come up against Torreira on Saturday when Celta Vigo host Atletico Madrid in La Liga.

Torreira completed his season-long loan switch to the Spanish capital on deadline day before immediately linking up with the Uruguay squad for their fixtures against Chile and Ecuador, but he has now returned to Madrid and could make his Atletico debut this weekend when Diego Simeone's side travel to the Estadio de Balaidos.

That will see him come up against Suarez, who joined Celta Vigo in a £14.5 million (\$19m) move shortly after returning to Barcelona following what turned out to be an injury-hit loan spell in north London.

The 26-year-old is now rebuilding his career on Spain's northwest coast, and speaking to Goal ahead of Saturday's meeting with Madrid he said Torreira has all the attributes needed to be a success in Spain.

"Lucas Torreira is a player with good technique," said Suarez. "He presses and plays strong, so he is an ideal player for Simeone."

Torreira will not be the only former team-mate Suarez will meet on Saturday when Celta host Madrid.

Luis Suarez, who has scored two goals in three games since joining Atletico from Barcelona, will also be in action having returned from international duty with Uruguay.

"It's going to be strange to play against Luis because he has been my colleague," said the Spain international. "He has started the season really well and has proved that he is a good player who scores a lot of goals, but on Saturday I hope he does not score and we win the match."

Suarez meanwhile continues to pay close attention to goings on at Arsenal following his short spell in north London.

A pelvic problem limited the attacking midfielder to just six appearances for the Gunners having arrived from Barcelona in January 2019 and it was one he believes stopped him ever showing his full potential in the Premier League.

However he still has some fond memories of his time with Arsenal and believes the deadline day addition of

midfielder Partey could be exactly what his former club need to take them to the next level.

"Arsenal lacked a player of that profile," said Suarez. "Thomas, because of his physique, will feel comfortable in England,"

With the injury he sustained while at Arsenal now behind him, Suarez is back making up for lost time at Celta Vigo, the club

he started his career at 10 years ago before moving to Manchester City as a teenager

He made 28 appearances in all competitions last season and has started four of Celta's five games in La Liga so far in the current campaign. After a period in his career which saw him struggling for game time, Suarez admits he is now feeling settled once again.

GOAL



Thomas Partey

Ronaldo 'may have broken Covid-19 rules' with Juve return

CRISTIANO Ronaldo may have broken coronavirus protocol by returning to Turin despite testing positive for Covid-19 says Italy's minister of sport, Vincenzo Spadafora.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner was forced into a period of self-isolation while away on international duty.

He had made two outings for his country, against France and Spain, but was ruled out of a third that saw Portugal overcome Sweden 3-0 in the ongoing defence of their Nations League crown.

Rather than figuring in that fixture, Ronaldo had headed back to Italy. The Juventus superstar arrived on Wednesday evening, with his Serie A employers claiming that a green light had been given for him to break quarantine in order to travel by private jet.

The Bianconeri said in a statement: "Cristiano Ronaldo returned to Italy with a medical flight authorized by the relevant health authorities at the request of the player and will continue his isolation at his home."

While Juve believe they

and their forward acted in an appropriate manner, Spadafora has suggested otherwise.

He claims to have been unaware of any agreement that allowed Ronaldo to travel while he was supposed to be self-isolating.

Quizzed by Rai Radio on whether rules had been breached, Spadafora said: "Without authorisation from the health authorities, I think he has violated the protocol."

Juventus believe they had that clearance and are now waiting on Ronaldo posting a negative test as

quickly as possible.

Ronaldo will not figure in their upcoming domestic outings against Crotone and Verona. He must also sit out a Champions League group stage opener against Dynamo Kiev, with the clock ticking on his involvement in a highly anticipated second outing of that competition.

Juve are due to face Barcelona on October 28, where Ronaldo could rekindle his long-running rivalry with Lionel Messi. For now, the 35-year-old faces a waiting game.

The same can be said for supporters in Italy, with

games continuing to be held behind closed doors.

Spadafora believes competitive action will remain on the calendar despite the problems caused by the coronavirus pandemic and has urged patience from fans that are desperate to get back onto the terraces.

Asked whether he expects the lockout to continue, he said: "For now, certainly yes. Some regions had proposed 25% of a possible audience but for now we cannot authorise it. At least until next month, we must see how it goes."

GOAL



Lucas Torreira

Olympics bound boxers prepare for camp

By Ngosa Chalwe

TOKYO Olympics bound boxer Patrick Chinyemba, Everisto Mulenga and Steven Zimba are next week expected to enter residential camp to shape up for the global sports event.

The Olympics, which were originally set to take place this year, were moved to July 2021 following the spread of the Coronavirus.

According to a statement by Zambia Boxing Federations (ZBF) secretary general Bright

Chomba, the boxers will entre camp on Tuesday under the guidance of national team coach Wisdom Mudenda.

"The Zambia National Boxing Team finally goes into camp on 20th October, 2020 at OYDC. This has been made possible with collaboration of the PPP, Ministry of Sport and National Sports Council of Zambia. They will be under the tutelage of our National team Coach Wisdom Mudenda to be assisted by

'Cut Man' John Chibuta from Lubengele boxing Club in Chililabombwe," said Chomba, adding that the team would only break camp in December.

The Team:

Patrick Chinyemba, (Exodus Boxing academy), Evaristo Mulenga (Zambia National Service), Steven Zimba (Zambia Army).

Emmanuel Katema, Obert Musonda and Andrew Chilata will join the team as sparring partners.

ZAMBIA - MALAWI

TRAVEL WITH US DAILY TO:
Lusaka - Chipata - Lilongwe
1st Bus 05:00hrs
2nd Bus 06:00hrs
4th Bus 10:00hrs
5th Bus 13:00hrs
Boarding Time: 30mins before departure time
Lilongwe - Chipata - Lusaka
1st Bus 05:00hrs
2nd Bus 06:00hrs
3rd Bus 08:00hrs
4th Bus 10:00hrs

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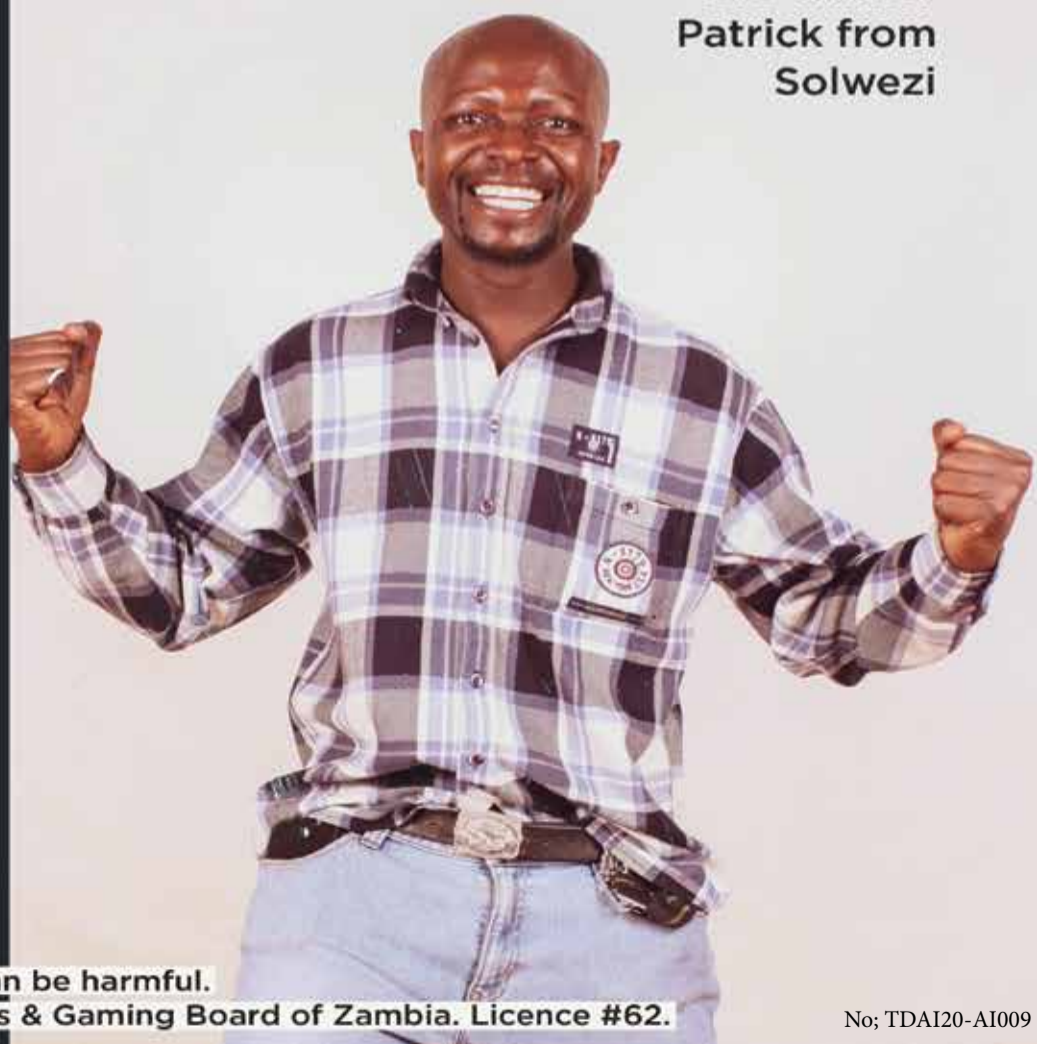
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