

MONTHLY BUSINESS NEWS MAGAZINE

SOLWEZI

T O D A Y

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Local Mine Suppliers, Contractors In Financing Boost

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KANSANSHI MINING PLC

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EDUCATION

**GROWING ZAMBIA
TOGETHER**

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PG 40 – Work Rehabilitation Centre opens at Kansanshi mine

Kansanshi Mining Plc has opened its \$100,000 Work Rehabilitation Centre to provide employees with effective 'return-to-work' solutions after injury or illness.



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RB: STATESMAN PAR EXCELLENCE

While Rupiah Bwezani Banda was in that rare class of **Zambian diplomats that includes Vernon ‘VJ’ Mwaanga, Gwendoline Konie and Dr Inonge Mbikusita-Lewanika, his best-remembered work of statesmanship has to be the successful steering of a presidential transition in August last year.**

With the help of visiting former heads of state who were part of election observer missions, namely Ernest Bai Koroma who was President of Sierra Leone (September 2007 to April 4, 2018) and Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete who was President of Tanzania (December 21, 2005 to November 5, 2015), RB brought together then President Edgar Chagwa Lungu and President-Elect Hakainde Hichilema at the close of the ballot counting.

Notably, Lungu and Hichilema were guided by statesmen who were all fourth presidents in their respective countries, who all saw a need to forestall a looming national upheaval, given the atmospherics of what had become bitter politicking.

While RB’s diplomatic and political profile is vast, the August 2021 feat marked his most significant act in light of the lengths to which the Patriotic Front administration had gone to ensure its continuation in office—even regardless of the end result of the voting.

The largesse of the RB persona, built over more than six decades of service to the country he so loved, presents many lessons for the present and upcoming political leaders in Zambia. We shall still be learning from him for many years to come.



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Lower telecom equipment taxes – Airtel

BY JOHN CHOLA

Airtel Zambia has called for the lowering or removal of telecommunication equipment taxes as a direct means of reducing the current high cost of doing business in Zambia.



While the telecommunication and mobile phone company has opened 16 retail outlets, it has bemoaned the high cost of doing business which continues to directly impact on its operational and financing costs.

Most Airtel Zambia investments are USD denominated, a significant factor in light of the depreciation of Kwacha.

Company Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) Hussam Baday says one of the main challenges his company has faced is the general business disruption caused by the outbreak of Covid-19 starting early 2020, alongside the high cost of doing business.

Baday believes the lowering or removal of telecommunication equipment taxes would catalyze Airtel Zambia's push towards investing in network and stores to give more customers more wireless choices. The company hopes this would make the process of shopping for wireless solutions simpler and straight-forward.

"This move will help expand telecommunication covering for the uncovered Zambians and to align income tax to other industries from the current 40 per cent. Telecom services are also sub-

jected to 17.5 per cent excise duty and 16 per cent VAT. Reduction of taxes will enable reduction of prices for customers and more investment for the sector," says Baday.

The move to roll out a string of more new stores across Zambia will however see the global telecommunication and mobile money company create hundreds of new jobs in the next 12 months and beyond.

Baday said the opening of new stores across Zambia has been prioritized as many customers have shown a strong desire to visit Airtel Zambia outlets when they need to sign up for service, upgrade their phones, or just get some tech advice.

In the last few weeks, Airtel Zambia opened six new shops in Chama of Eastern Province, Serenje in Central Prov-

Airtel Zambia's record-setting retail growth parallels its 4G LTE network expansion, which reaches millions of Zambians.

ince and at the Cosmopolitan Mall in Lusaka Province.

Mobile phones are flying off shelves so fast that Airtel Zambia has also added new stores to Siavonga, Kaputa and Mporokoso which brings the total of Airtel Company owned and operated shops to 46.

Airtel Zambia's record-setting retail growth parallels its 4G LTE network expansion, which reaches millions of Zambians.

"Whilst this has been a multi-million Kwacha investment, Airtel considers this investment significantly worthwhile in that not only does it avail more of our esteemed customers decentralized customer service, but it also avails our customers access to the numerous services offered in our Shops including Airtel Money," Baday explains.

He adds that despite now having more than 45 service centres countrywide, Airtel is actively continuing on its growth trajectory with a couple of more shops targeted to open before June 2022.

Baday states that Airtel's journey of retail shop expansion, which also stimulates significant growth in financial inclusion through Airtel Money, will continue to demand further investment.

During the just-ended financial year, Airtel Zambia recorded tremendous growth in both subscriber base by over 18 per cent and revenue by over 37 per cent after expansion of the network infrastructure and rolling out 4G for all the sites during late 2019.

This growth is an indication that the appetite for Zambia's leading telecommunication and mobile money company's range of branded services remains high.

Inflation declines amidst fuel price hikes

BY SOLWEZI TODAY REPORTER

THE annual rate of inflation has continued to decline while fuel prices climb, reaching 13.1 per cent in March, 2022 from 14.2 per cent recorded in February.



Announcing Zambia's annual rate of inflation for the month of March, Zambia Statistics Agency (ZamStats) Interim Statistician-General Mulenga Musepa disclosed that inflation for the final month of the first quarter significantly dropped for a seventh successive month to on account of lower food inflation.

"The annual inflation rate for March, 2022 decreased to 13.1 per cent from 14.2 per cent recorded in February, 2022. This means that on average, prices of goods and services increased by 13.1 per cent between March, 2021 and March, 2022," Musepa told journalists via Zoom Meetings in Lusaka recently.

The annual food inflation rate dropped

to 15.3 per cent compared to 16.0 per cent recorded in February, 2022, a drop of 0.7 percentage points driven by de-

ZamStats data shows that Zambia's annual rate of inflation of 13.1 per cent recorded in the final month of the first quarter is the country's lowest since January, 2020 when inflation was at 12.5 per cent.

clining prices of food items such as frozen fish, eggs and fresh milk.

Zambia's non-food inflation on the other hand significantly reduced to 10.3 per cent in March, down from 11.8 per cent recorded in February, 2022, and further down from 17 per cent in March, 2021, mainly attributed to price movements of non-food items such as cement and charcoal.

ZamStats data shows that Zambia's annual rate of inflation of 13.1 per cent recorded in the final month of the first quarter is the country's lowest since January, 2020 when inflation was at 12.5 per cent.

Inflation has been progressively rising since then to peak at 24.6 per cent in July 2021, but the country's inflation has continued dropping despite rising fuel prices.

Market experts largely attribute this development to the "base effects" which have continued to outweigh the recent upward adjustments in the fuel pump prices as well as upward pressure from heightened inflation through the import channel.

The base effect can be defined as the contribution to the change in the year-on-year inflation rate in a particular month stemming from a deviation of the month-on-month rate of change in the base month (the same month one year earlier) from the usual seasonal pattern.

The distortion in a monthly inflation figure that results from abnormally high or low levels of inflation in the year-ago month is an example of the "base effect."

ERB hikes fuel prices to record high

BY STUART LISULO

THE Energy Regulation Board (ERB) has hiked fuel pump prices, with petrol now costing K26.50, the highest-ever recorded in Zambia's history.

In a statement released by ERB Board Chairperson Reynolds Bowa, the regulator announced increased fuel prices that now places petrol prices at a staggering K26.50 per litre, effective April 1, 2022, from K21.96 per litre, representing a hike of K4.54.

Low-sulphur diesel and kerosene have also seen a jump in their prices, with the former having skyrocketed to K26.22 per litre and the latter K19.32 per litre, registering a K4.68 and K3.93 upward adjustment respectively.

According to Bowa, the increase in pump prices was attributed to the continued strain in global oil supply, mainly due to the geopolitical conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

"The increase in pump prices is due to the continued strain in global oil supply, mainly due to the geopolitical conflict between Russia and Ukraine that has exerted additional pressure on the already escalating oil prices on the international market. These developments have heightened the demand for petroleum products and have increased the cost of importation.

"Notably, prices of finished products on the international markets have gone up steeply and continue to trade above US \$130 per barrel. On the domestic market, the impact would have been more adverse had it not been for the resilience and marginal appreciation of the kwacha against the United States dollar during the review period."

Since the change in the fuel pricing review to monthly assessments, fuel prices have continued increasing, with the adjustment in March, 2022, being the highest ever, exacerbated by the Rus-

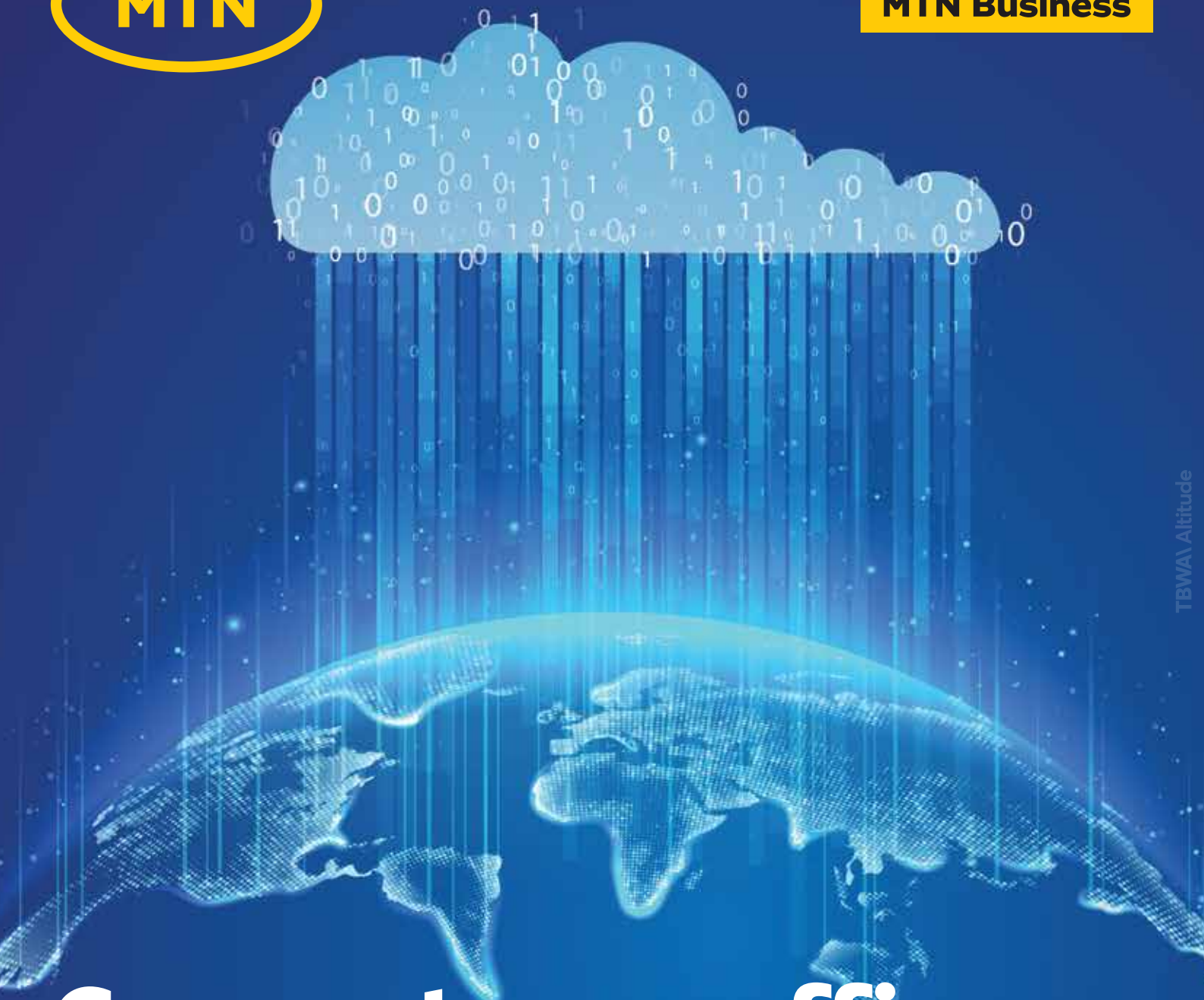
Low-sulphur diesel and kerosene have also seen a jump in their prices, with the former having skyrocketed to K26.22 per litre and the latter K19.32 per litre, registering a K4.68 and K3.93 upward adjustment respectively.

sia-Ukraine conflict that has immediately impacted the global oil supply chain of oil.

Russia's economy has been devastated by global sanctions, as the West seeks to apply pressure on the Kremlin to stop its advance on Ukrainian territory.

And while the kwacha has remained bullish against the US dollar, ending the first quarter of 2022 at around K18 per dollar, oil prices on the international market have skyrocketed.



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Local Mine Suppliers, Contractors In Financing Boost



Inde Credit Zambia Managing Director Nicolas Megelas delivering his remarks at the signing ceremony of the MoU.

BY JOHN CHOLA

Inde Credit Company Limited (Inde Credit) and Mopani Copper Mines (MCM) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate the financing of local mining suppliers and contractors at affordable rates with flexible conditions. This new partnership is poised to bolster real growth of the country's economy through access to finance for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

This MoU will see Inde Credit support new and existing clients and has already generated great enthusiasm from the Association of Mine Suppliers and Contractors (AMSC).

Speaking at the signing ceremony held in Kitwe, where Inde Credit is headquartered, Inde Credit Executive Director Mr. Peter Bwalya applauded Mopani Copper Mines (MCM) on taking the lead among mining companies in unlocking access to desperately needed financing for the SMEs supplying them. "This partnership will support the mining supply chain and allow Zambian SMEs to thrive and provide quality products and services to MCM while becoming more competitive on the global market".

Speaking at the signing ceremony held in Kitwe, where Inde Credit is headquartered, Inde Credit Executive Director Mr. Peter Bwalya applauded Mopani Copper Mines (MCM) on taking the lead among mining companies in unlocking access to desperately needed financing for the SMEs supplying them.

Since inception in 2016, Inde Credit has supported over 400 Zambian SMEs by disbursing ZMW785 million to address their short-term capital needs, allowing them to fulfil orders and pay their staff on time.

"Inde Credit strongly believes SMEs are the foundation of the Zambian economy. Such initiatives will create employment and help grow the economy in general" said Mr. Bwalya. He went on to thank Government for recognizing the importance of SMEs as the driving force of the Zambian economy and establishing the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises Development.

AFFORDABLE FINANCING

Speaking for Inde Credit, Mr. Nicolas Megelas said the agreement with MCM will see his company provide financing to SMEs at affordable rates and in 24h to 48h. "When SMEs come to us for financing, they cannot afford to wait. For us to be of real assistance to them, we must be flexible, understand their needs and act quickly if we want to be a driver of real growth and profitability".

Mr. Megelas went on to explain that unfortunately, too many SMEs continue to revert to shylocks and black-market lenders for financing needs as they do not know there are easy and affordable



Inde Credit Zambia Executive Director Peter Bwalya, right, and Mopani Copper Mines Corporate Affairs Manager Lauren Tembo shake hands and exchange the signed MoU documents.

alternatives available. “Inde Credit fills a very important gap in the market and allows SMEs room to breathe”.

Mr. Megelas said partnerships between companies are very important as they help businesses grow and reach their goals. “When we say we make Zambian business work, we mean it. We carefully listen to the needs of SMEs. We don’t say ‘here is a long list of impossible things we need for us to give you money’. We assist them to access the financing they need. We do not give them loans that eat away all their margin because this would not help them grow to their full potential. We come up with flexible solutions and products that fit their needs and make their business work. This understanding of SMEs is what sets us apart”.

GROWTH AND FORMAL ACCESS TO CAPITAL

The Minister of Small and Medium Enterprises Development, Mr. Elias Mubanga, said at the signing ceremony that he was proud of the initiative from Inde Credit and MCM: “this partnership will uplift SMEs, build capacity and expertise, and help drive real growth”. This comment was further echoed by MCM Corporate Affairs Manager Mrs. Lorraine Tembo, who said the MoU would help scale the growth of SMEs and help develop the Zambian economy.

The President of the Association of Mine Contractors and Suppliers, Mr. Costa Mwaba, then added the Association was indebted to Inde Credit and MCM for formalizing a long-sought- after initiative. “We are constantly facing supply and quality challenges in the mines. Initiatives such as this one create a support system for SMEs and helps us promote Zambian products and services. This translates to competitive pricing and improved quality at every step of the min-

ing supply and value chain. In the shortest possible time SMEs get money from Inde Credit and deliver their products in good time,” Mwaba explained.

CONTACT US FOR MONEY

Inde Credit is proud to offer financing to SMEs at flexible conditions and affordable rates. Contact our Senior Relationship Manager, Mr. Delax Chilumbu at dc@indecredit.com to discuss options!



Minister of SMEs Development - speaking at the signing of the Inde Credit , MCM MoU. Picture by John Chola.



Inde Credit Zambia Executive Director Peter Bwalya addressing the audience who included Mine Supplies and Contractors Association members during the signing of the MoU at Kitwe’s ECL Convention Center.



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Graduates of the MIMBULA MINERALS LIMITED'S VILLAGE BANKING COMMUNITY PROJECT pose for a photo with Mr. Davis Mwanamoyo.

Chingola communities go village banking

BY BWALE MUTANUKA

Mimbula Minerals Limited (MML) has partnered with the Business Development Centre Zambia (BDCZ) to set up and manage a Village Banking Community Project in Chingola.

The Centre, which is part of the mining firm's Corporate Social Responsibility Programme, is a local SME development facility established to provide training and support to entrepreneurs that need to start or grow successful businesses.

Head of government relationships for Mimbula Minerals Davis Mwanamoya said the company is elated with the village banking project and how it has impacted the communities in Chingola.

The initiative is designed to increase household income by developing in the community a self-reliant mindset, and enhancing community empowerment through sustainable SME ecosystems and improved financial literacy.

The project also aims to establish profitable individual and group businesses by the end of the project period. The project comprises of four components.

INCREASE EMPOWERMENT

The development objective of the village banking community project is to

increase social and economic empowerment of vulnerable women in selected communities.

The first component is participant mobilization and registration of co-operatives where necessary while the second component is training.

The third component is access to finance which will empower both individuals and village banking groups to develop



Mimbula minerals plant

as sustainable financial institutions at the community level.

The fourth component supports project coordination, monitoring and evaluation (M & E). As a pilot project, BDCZ conducted training for 100 entrepreneurs in Chingola and set up 10 village banking cooperatives.

The project participants were selected from communities in 10 Wards; namely Chabanyama, Chikola, Chitimukulu, Chiwempala, Gibson Chimfwembe, Kabungo, Kasompe, Lulamba, Maiteneke and Mimbula wards in Chingola Constituency, Chingola District.

The beneficiary demographic consists of youth as young as 19 years of age, women and the adult population below 50 years of age. The programme groups are diverse but have relatively more women than men (80 per cent – 20 per cent ratio).

TRAINING

The training schedule is comprised of the following modules: Introduction to Entrepreneurship, Marketing – Strategy and Tactics, Finance and Operations. Participants were trained in entrepreneurship and co-operative management, with advice given in village banking operations, managing a small business and any other related subject.

The training utilizes a 'Just-in-time' approach as this promotes need related training to the entrepreneurs.

The training also offers participants an understanding of the nature and purpose of business, the activities and traits of an entrepreneur, and the process by which entrepreneurs identify and develop business ideas.

A Certificate of Attendance from the BDCZ, in partnership with Regent Centre for Entrepreneurship (RCE) of Regent University (Virginia Beach, USA) is awarded to certify the completion of the Entrepreneurship and Village Banking course.

SEED CAPITAL

After successful completion of training, Mimbula Mineral provide seed capital for each co-operative group through their respective bank accounts.

For each co-operative funding, two thirds of the funds were distributed equally amongst the members and used to capitalize individual businesses, whilst the remainder of the funds was used to set up a group business.

The BDCZ, after training, manages and monitors the trained members and their co-operatives until successful completion and/ or fulfillment of the pilot project.

The project duration is 12 months, comprising of 4 x 3 month cycles. During this period, project participants have access to management and advisory services for their co-operative groups and respective businesses.

This is done via monthly meetings to monitor the performance of each group



Mimbula Minerals Chief Executive Officer Alan Davis



The British Ambassador Nicholas Wooley with Mimbula Mines staffer Mirriam

and receive feedback on how to improve and adjust the project for scalability and sustainability purposes.

Tangible outcomes of the VBCP under Mimbula Mineral's CSR Programme have fostered a mindset of self-reliance, reduced poverty, improved financial literacy on saving and increased number of income streams.

The VBCP has illustrated to the project beneficiaries that business can be profitable if run correctly and has proved that it is possible to empower communities by increasing outreach to very poor micro entrepreneurs at the "low end" of the microfinance market and encourage business networking

ABOUT MIMBULA MINERALS

Mimbula Minerals is a mine situated in Chingola District. The Mine has 400 employees and is likely to have 800 employees all together as the company expands.

The Mimbula Minerals firm is a partnership between the British and the Zambians.

Mimbula Minerals Chief Executive Officer Alan Davis has told Solwezi Today Magazine that the mining firm in Chingola has come to stay.

Davis says the Mine will benefit both the investors and the local people in the district. Employees will be given good incentives for their wellbeing while on the whole Davis says workers' conditions

are also good.

Davis says the mining firm has embarked on several projects under the Corporate Social Responsibility.

Some of the projects the Mine has undertaken are the building a 1x2 classroom block at Lulamba Combined School in Chingola Constituency, the creation of a revolving fund called village banking where innovative community members have started up their businesses, the maintenance of the Magazine road, the HIV campaigns which have been sponsored for four years now, the roll out of Covid-19 preventions in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, while the relocation of farmers with due compensation has been carried out.

Davis says the mine, whose estimated lifespan is 20 years, abides by the set laws and regulations set by the Zambian Government and trains its staff from time to time.



Head of government relationships for Mimbula Minerals Davis Mwanamoya



Izwe loans profits jump to K111.2m

BY SOLWEZI TODAY REPORTER

IZWE Loans Zambia Plc has posted increased profits after tax of K111.2 million during its period ending December 31, 2021, mainly driven by an increase in loans disbursements.

According to Izwe's audited results for the period ended December 31 revealed a rise in its profitability to K111.2 million last year.

This is up from just K48.8 million in profit after tax in 2020, representing an astounding 128 per cent increase.

The company's loans and advances soared to a cumulative amount of K712 million last year, up from around K612 million in 2020, representing a 16 per cent rise.

"Izwe's performance in the year was a significant improvement on the prior year, driven by an increase in loans disbursed, a reduction in the weighted average cost of funding and a focus on

strong management of operating costs.

"As a result, Izwe achieved a 128 per cent increase in year-on-year profit after tax, from K48.8 million in 2020 to K111.2 million in 2021. Gross revenue incurred a marginal reduction of 4 per cent when compared with 2020 at K342.1 million. This was due to the pass-on effects on product pricing following the access to concessional funding," Izwe's Chief Executive Officer Kulusu Chisola said in a statement issued recently.

He added that the company also experienced fewer losses on loans, helping to contribute to its overall strong financial performance.

"Operating expenses for the year reduced by 19 per cent from prior year

expenditure of K123.4 million to K100.2 million in 2021 as the business had begun to realize the benefits of its operating strategic changes that were introduced in the prior year.

"There was an improvement in the impairment loss on loans from an expense of K8.4 million in 2020 to a credit of K15.7 million in 2021. This improvement was largely driven by the improved collections from customers through Government remittances and an improvement in the underlying credit quality of our loan book," said Chisola.

"The overall good performance for the year resulted in a year-on-year increase in Earnings Per Share (EPS) from K0.47 recorded in 2020 to K1.07 in 2021."

ZCCM-IH CEO steps down

BY STUART LISULO

ZCCM Investments Holdings Plc (ZCCM-IH) Chief Executive Officer Mabvuto Chipata has left the company with immediate effect.

According to a notice published through the Stock Exchange News Service (SENS), Chipata stepped down as the ZCCM-IH CEO on March 30, 2022, by “mutual consent” with Tisa Chama taking over in an acting capacity.

“In compliance with the Securities Act No. 41 of 2016 and the Listings Rules of the Lusaka Securities Exchange (LuSE), the Board of ZCCM-IH hereby announces the separation from employment of

Mr. Mabvuto T Chipata as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company effective 30 March 2022. The separation is by mutual consent,” read the notice.

“The Board would like to thank Mr. Chipata for the dedicated service and valuable contribution made to ZCCM-IH during the time he served as CEO and in other capacities prior to the aforementioned position.

“The Board wishes Mr. Chipata success

in his future endeavours. The Board also announces that Mr. Tisa R Chama, Chief Technical Officer, has been appointed to act for administrative convenience in the intervening period up to the time a substantial CEO is appointed. The Board is confident that Mr. Chama will make a valuable contribution to the success of the Company during his period of acting.”

Chipata was ZCCM-IH CEO since early, 2019.

Rautenbach is new Absa CEO

BY STUART LISULO

ABSA Group has announced the appointment of Arrie Rautenbach as Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of the Group and Bank, effective immediately.

Arrie Rautenbach

In a statement, the Group announced that Rautenbach has taken over from Jason Quinn, who previously assumed the position in an interim capacity.

"In accordance with paragraphs 3.59 of the Listings Requirements and 6.39 of the Debt Listings Requirements of the JSE Limited, shareholders are informed that the Absa Group and Absa Bank Boards ("the Boards") have appointed Arrie Rautenbach as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Executive Director of Absa Group and Absa Bank, effective immediately.

Arrie is currently Absa's Chief Executive: Retail and Business Banking (RBB). He joined Absa in 1997 and has held several senior roles over the years, including Chief Risk Officer, Chief Executive: Retail Banking South

Africa, Managing Executive: Absa Card and Managing Executive: Branch Network, Absa Bank. Arrie has a Bachelors and a Master's in Business Administration (both from the University of North-West: Potchefstroom) and completed an Advanced Management Program at INSEAD," read a statement issued via the Group's head office in Johannesburg recently.

"Shareholders are also informed that Jason Quinn, currently Interim Group CEO, will resume his role as Financial Director of Absa Group and Absa Bank, effective immediately, and remain an Executive Director on the Boards. Jason held this position from August, 2016, to April, 2021."

And commenting on his appointment, Rautenbach said he was humbled for the mammoth task that lay ahead.

"I am humbled and honoured to lead Absa during challenging conditions locally and internationally. I am excited at the prospect of working with a talented and diverse team, leading an outstanding business that is positioned to seize the many opportunities that lie ahead. I look forward to working with the Board and the Executive in consolidating our strategy and performance, driving organisational and cultural transformation, and delivering financial and social value for all our stakeholders, and sustainable future growth and returns for Absa and its shareholders," said Rautenbach in the statement.

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Absa invests \$12m in Zambezi blueberry farming

ABSA Bank Zambia Plc has partnered with Zambezi Berry Company Ltd to finance the growth and exportation of blueberries in an investment that has so far consumed US \$12 million.

And the Zambezi Ranching and Cropping Ltd projects that this year's blueberry production could hit around 100 tonnes, with the majority of the output earmarked for the export market.

In the meantime, the company has appealed to Government for tax incentives to allow for the business to be more sustainable and continue employing locals.

Addressing the media in Chisamba Dis-

trict, Central Province, recently, Absa Bank Zambia Plc Agri Specialist Remmy Kantumora told journalists that the bank's investment since Zambezi Berry commenced operations in 2018 had reached around US \$12 million so far.

Absa partnered with Zambezi Berry Company Ltd (ZBC) to finance a 50-hectare expansion of a blueberry field to 100 hectares in the bank's quest to support growth of the agriculture sector through diversification of crops.

"We have been in partnership with Zambezi Berry since 2018, we've supported them on the 50Ha expansion where we pumped in some significant amount of dollars to be able to enable them continue their farming. We are happy with the investment that we've done. We've pumped in over US \$7 million. Initially, to do one hectare, it costs US \$100,000; so to do the whole 100 hectares, what has gone in is US \$12 million," Kantumora told journalists following a media tour



Zambezi Ranching & Cropping Limited Managing Director, Graham Rae, speaks to journalists during an inspection of the blueberry field in Chisamba. The cash crop is a major foreign exchange earner. (Photo: Absa Bank Zambia Plc)



of the Zambezi's state-of-the-art facilities.

"We are the first and only bank within the sector to support such an investment. For us, we've taken a position to support what we are calling 'trending crops' and that those crops that are able to grow and be exported across borders to be able to bring in the foreign exchange, hence our interest in this venture."

Asked if the bank's investment would likely continue, Kantumora answered in the affirmative.

EXPANSION

"That's likely to grow because, as a bank, we are on an expansion journey, we want to support more farmers; we want to grow our agricultural book as a bank so we are well positioned. For the blueberries, this is an exportable crop; it is bringing in foreign exchange to the country and is employing a lot of Zambians to continue adding to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country.

"So, as Absa, we are happy with the partnership that we have with Zambezi Berry, and we are on this journey together. A hundred hectares is not where the business will end, there is more planned from a hundred hectares, they will invest into another fifty hectares, and another fifty hectares until they are at three hundred hectares," he said.

Zambezi Ranching and Cropping Ltd Managing Director, Graham Rae, said that the company was targeting to drastically increase output this year to hit around 100 tonnes, which would be a company record.

He was responding to a question on what the company's production target was for this year.

"I think it's competitively priced in the market. It's listed as a 'wonder food' and it's good for all sorts of things; the one that interests me most is cancer, and I have had a few people that have come to me and their oncologists have told them, 'they must eat 125 grammes of blueberries a day.' That's not from me, that's an oncologist," he said.

INCENTIVES

Rae, who once served as Zambia National Farmers' Union (ZNFU) Second Vice-President, appealed to Government to assist farmers with tax incentives to lower production costs.

Rae explained that much of company's packaging was imported into Zambia owing to a lack of reliable suppliers, a situation which significantly increased costs.

"If we are going to expand this project anymore, we are going to need to look at it practically and say, 'yes, we can see why you want this VAT removed because you're sending it back out.' So, it's almost like a 'bonded warehouse' for want of a better word. And everything that we don't export out, then we happily pay VAT on; if we use it locally, then we will pay VAT. It's very simple, it's all on import documents so we can reconcile that very easily with the Ministry of Finance," said Rae in response to a question on their appeal to Government ahead of the 2023 national budget cycle.

ZBC was incorporated in 2017, specialized in the growing of blueberries planted late that same year.

The farm business is undertaken in Chisamba on a 100Ha piece of land leased from a related entity Zambezi Ranching and Cropping Ltd.

It employs around 200 during the farming season and 800 during the harvest period, according to ZBC Estate Manager, Bruce Donaldson.

Demand for blueberries has drastically increased in Europe, China, Singapore and Hong Kong due to changing eating habits and increasing levels of affluence in these regions.

The UK School Meals Programme is another source of demand as blueberries constitute an important part of the menu as a healthy fruit.

The fruits have vitally important health benefits and are popular in muffins, smoothies and other recipes.



Zambezi Ranching & Cropping Limited Managing Director, Graham Rae, speaks to journalists during a tour of the company's multimillion dollar packing shed facility in Chisamba District recently. The company's sophisticated and elaborate facility exports blueberries regionally and globally.



FQM Trident Graduate Programme Yields Fruit

BY SOLWEZI TODAY REPORTER

The FQM Trident Graduate Programme has welcomed 12 Zambian graduates fresh from national and international universities.

This is part of the organization's strategy to ensure the availability of critical skills within the business.

The programme offers graduates an opportunity to work for one of the fastest-growing mines in Zambia and position themselves for future careers in the mining industry.

The students, who have acquired qualifications in various engineering fields including, mechatronics, mechanical, and electrical, will undergo a talent and leadership development programme.

The Graduate Programme is in tandem with the Government's agenda to equip fresh graduates with jobs within industries such as mining, and also goes a long way in realizing the skills development plan for localization of critical jobs.

During the welcoming brunch for the graduates, FQM Trident Limited's Human Resource Manager Brighton Mwiinga said the objective of the local graduate programme is to provide a succession and leadership pipeline.

"The programme is also meant to build capacity for the organization to achieve the competitive advantage required especially in an industry that is highly competitive both at local and international levels. The challenge is that we have people that are sought after the world over because our workforce is refined and comes from a world class mine."

Joel Kanenga Simukoko, a mechanical engineer, shared his excitement at being selected for the Graduate Programme.

"Clearly this is a company that thrives on excellence to attain the best results

and personal growth. This is a place where I will grow my technical and management skills and comprehend the whole company as a concept that works together."

And one of the only two ladies on the programme, Nkatya Pepala says that being selected is one of her biggest career highlights.

"I feel honoured and truly blessed to be part of one of the largest copper producers in Africa. As I was taking the mine tour, I was truly impressed with the machinery and I'm very proud to be working for a company with some of the largest mining equipment in the world."

FQM Trident Training Manager Bruce Chibenda said that the mine had given the graduates an opportunity to make a difference and increase copper productivity.

'Careers Guidance Can Provide Skills for Industry'

BY SOLWEZI TODAY REPORTER

Career guidance in schools plays a critical role in combating youth unemployment and driving sustainable development in the economy.



FQM Trident Public Relations Specialist Mirriam Harmon and her team speaking to students during the International School of Lusaka's first ever annual careers fair.

Speaking during the International School of Lusaka's first-ever annual careers fair, FQM Trident Public Relations Specialist Mirriam Harmon said the company remained committed to providing information and scholarships to developing fully-fledged careers in mining and beyond.

Harmon bemoaned the lack of careers guidance which is negatively affecting the job market, making it difficult for industries like mining to the right knowledge and skills to drive long-term sus-

tainable employment in the sector.

"Our participation in this job fair at the International School of Lusaka has come at the right time when Zambians feel that the mines are not employing enough Zambians. Many children only think of becoming doctors or accountants because they think of mining as a dirty old man's trade.

"But we are now talking about a modern industry, where the mines are using modern and state-of-the-art equipment. We are looking for young people who

are ambitious and can make a difference in the mining industry, not only in Zambia but globally including our operations in Australia, Peru, Turkey, Mauritania. These opportunities are waiting for them."

Harmon added that First Quantum Minerals is working in tandem with Government's desire to see more Zambian graduates get employed by industries like mining.

Speaking at the same event, Eleveight Wellness Solution Managing Consultant



FQM Trident team pose for a photo

and event organiser, Suwilo Namfuwe, explained that the ISL annual careers fair was meant to provide students with opportunities to interact with different organizations from within the community and across Zambia so they could have an idea of careers and job opportunities in different industries and organisations.

Arnav Khanna, a year 12 student at the International School of Lusaka, said the Careers Fair provided an opportunity for students to see what types of careers were available for them.

“I believe it has opened my eyes in a way that I didn’t realize. Because when you typically think of mining, you don’t really think of it in terms of the many professions it has. I’m debating between going into the engineering side or the medical field.

“As far as engineering is concerned, I walked up to FQM’s desk and asked how that could fit in, and I learnt a lot about the different aspects of a career in mining, how an engineer fits in it all, also how you progress in your career. It was a really interesting conversation.”



FQM Trident Public Relations Specialist Mirriam Harmon and her team speaking to students during the International School of Lusaka’s first ever annual careers fair.

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- Boardroom available for up to 15 delegates

Kansanshi Mining PLC General Manager, Anthony Mukutuma (center), poses for a photograph with the six graduates of the leadership programme he is spearheading at Kansanshi Mine. Picture by JOHN MUBAMBE



Leadership Graduates Ready For New Tasks

BY SOLWEZI TODAY REPORTER

Six graduates from the Kansanshi Mine leadership development programme are at the heart of the management's drive to tap into new leadership around First Quantum Minerals' circles.

The specialist employees recently graduated from the General Manager's one-year leadership programme at a colourful ceremony held at the Kansanshi Golf Club in Solwezi, with an object to drive management change based on Bolder, Smarter, Driven, Together company values.

The graduates are Gerald Zambika, Wakunoli Munalula Nsofwa, Edmond Mokola, Masida Gondwe, Ethel Chasha Cruz, and Samson Mutema.

Kansanshi Mining Plc General Manager Anthony Mukutuma, has been mentoring each of the six employees from the out-

set to the end of the programme.

Mukutuma said the graduates who successfully completed the programme will increase the bench strength of the FQML leadership team, given the practical skills they gained from the training and coaching over the last 12 months.

"The programme is an initiative aimed at building a better future for the current graduates and those yet to undertake the same leadership training under his action plan."

PREPARE

The leadership development programme attempts to prepare some of the employees on higher level mentorship by aligning tertiary learning experience with professional situations likely to be encountered in the workplace.

The leadership development pro-



Graduates for the General Manager's Programme shortly after their graduation at Kansanshi Golf Club in Solwezi recently. Picture by JOHN MUBAMBE.

gramme demonstrates the commitment of Kansanshi Mining Plc to people development and the focus on developing high performing teams.

Gerald Zambia is a qualified electrical/electronics engineer working in Kansanshi Mine's Engineering Department as Technical Specialist at the High Pressure Leach Plant (HPL). Gerald's project during the past 12 months was on Inventory Reduction/Working Capital optimization.

Zambia joined Kansanshi Mining PLC in 2008 and has held various positions through the last 14 years that he has been around the company.

Wakunoli Munalula Nsofwa is a Floatation Superintendent in the Process Plant, with 10 years' experience in technical and operational roles.

"My leadership style has evolved to be more inclusive of others as I plan and prioritize my work, drive team work to learn, unlearn and relearn," she said.

Wakunoli's project focused on Automation and AI for Productivity and Efficiencies.

Edmond Mokola is a Chemical Engineer

who has worked for the giant copper mine since June 2008. He is currently working as a Senior Metallurgist at the Secondary Smelting Technical at the Smelter, and his performance at work is backed by his experience in operational and technical roles which he gained over a period of 15 years. Edmond's project was on Optimizing High Pressure Leach Plant (HPL) to maximize value to First Quantum Minerals.

An ICT Development and Integration specialist, Masida Gondwe, is a steady graduate of the Local Graduate Programme (LGP). She has been working on Development and Integration Specialization in the ICT section under Finance. She counts on four years of working at Kansanshi Mine. Her project focused on Business Application, Rationalization and Consolidation.

TALENT

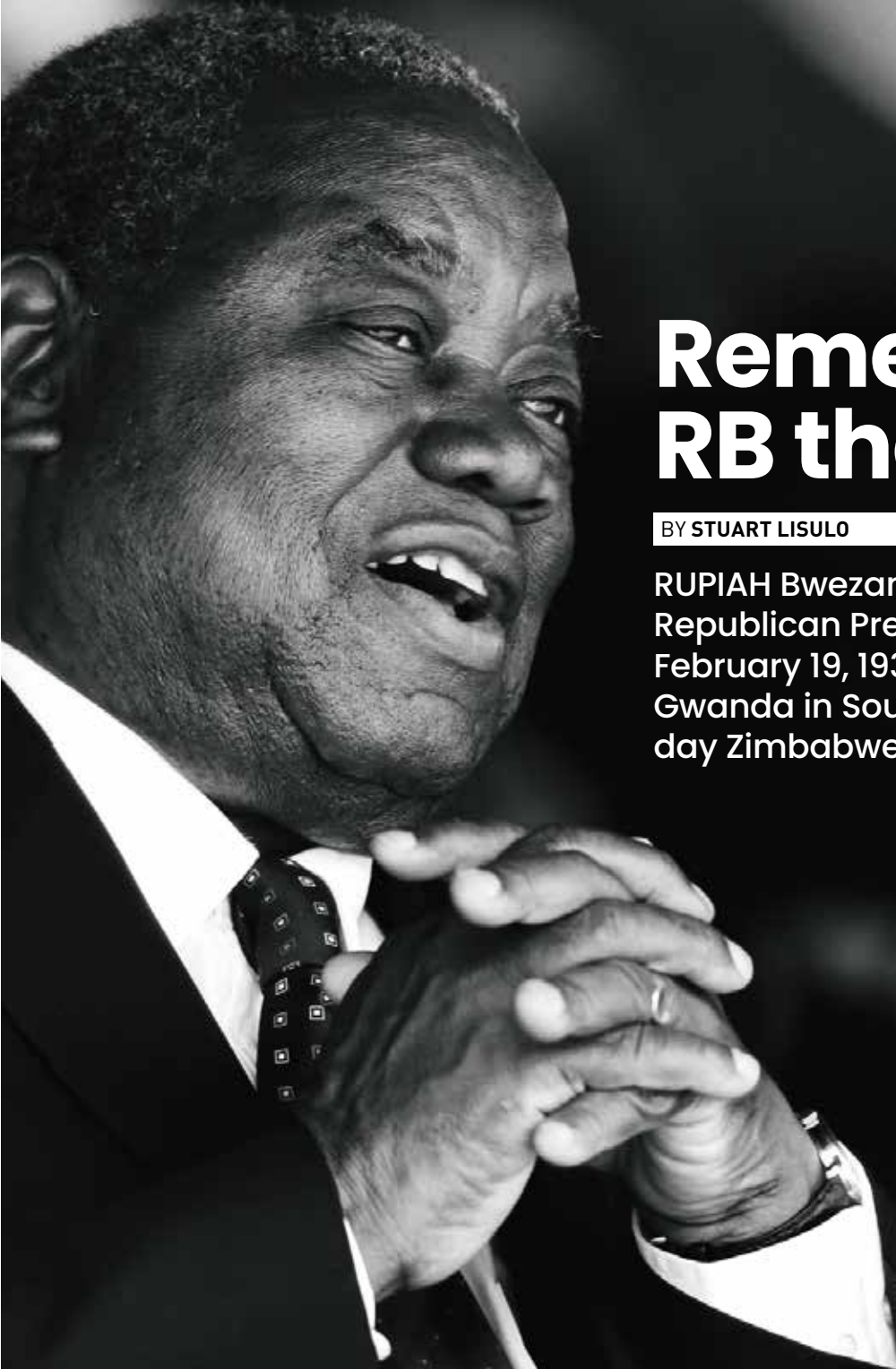
Ethel Chasha Cruz is a Human Resources professional who specializes in talent acquisition, talent retention and development of internal staff in their areas of expertise for higher productivity of the company. As talent coordinator under Kansanshi Mining PLC, she joined the company four years ago at

the level of a Graduate-Industrial Relations Officer, and has since risen up through the ranks.

She enjoys meeting new people and finding ways to help them have an uplifting experience. She also enjoys reading and gaining knowledge and perspective to strengthen her abilities. Her project entitled Streamlining HR Processes for an Effective HR Function, demonstrated various ways that HR can add to the bottom-line.

Samson Mutema is a Senior Mining Engineer for Blasting and Technical Services (Projects); After graduating from the university in 2013, he went through the Local Graduate Programme (LGP) at Kansanshi Mine where he rose through ranks to reach his current position within a period of nine years. At the end of the leadership development programme, he worked on a project entitled Dilution and Ore loss measurements at Kansanshi Mine.

Mutema is certainly sure of his future as he says: "The future is very bright, this is the first programme that I have come out having to understand that the journey has just begun and there is a lot to work on."



Remembering RB the unifier

BY STUART LISULO

RUPIAH Bwezani Banda, Zambia's fourth Republican President, was born on February 19, 1937, in the town of Miko, Gwanda in Southern Rhodesia, present-day Zimbabwe.

RB, as he was fondly known, was the son of a migrant Northern Rhodesian couple that had emigrated to colonial Southern Rhodesia in search of employment. He attended school in Northern Rhodesia, while his parents remained in Gwanda where his father was working.

Growing up at a time when Northern Rhodesia was fighting for independence, the young Banda started his political career at the age of 23 when he joined the UNIP youth wing.

In the early 1960s, while studying in Sweden, Banda served as UNIP representative in Northern Europe.

A year after the country's Independence, he became Zambia's first Ambassador to Egypt at the age of 27 under KK's government. RB then went on to serve as Zambia's Ambassador to the United States and moved to Washington DC in 1967 at the tender age of 30.

DIPLOMAT PAR EXCELLENCE

His exemplary diplomatic career under First President Dr Kenneth Kaunda was testament to one who was destined for a career in public service. A year after the country's Independence, he became Zambia's first Ambassador to Egypt at the age of 27 under KK's government. RB then went on to serve as Zambia's Ambassador to the United States and moved to Washington DC in 1967 at the tender age of 30.

In 1970, he was appointed General Manager of the National Agricultural Marketing Board (NAMBOARD), the State crop marketing company. He subsequently



Former President Rupiah Banda during the inauguration ceremony of President Edgar Chagwa Lungu on Tuesday, September 13, 2016 at Heroes Stadium in Lusaka, Zambia. PICTURE BY SALIM HENRY/STATE HOUSE ©2016



became head of the Rural Development Corporation (RDC), the State agricultural holding company, one of the largest State conglomerates of its time.

In 1974, Banda became the Permanent Representative of Zambia to the UN. He served as Foreign Affairs Minister from 1975, a critical period in the history of southern Africa, where the region was engulfed in internecine warfare, blighted by colonialism and the brutal apartheid system.

At that time, Zambian diplomacy centred on efforts to liberate southern Africa, and Zambia's role was pivotal in the events and initiatives leading up to the resolution of conflicts in the region.

Our country's interest in the liberation of the region meant that the Foreign Affairs Minister, occupied by RB at that time, was among the key figures in the

diplomatic and political events that eventually led to the emancipation of

During his three-year reign, Zambia's economy expanded mainly on the back of rising copper prices and a surge in Chinese investment. He pursued the infrastructure expansion agenda started under Mwanawasa, building much-needed roads, hospitals and schools.

the region. As such, President Banda will always be respected and remembered for the role he played as he interacted extensively with many of the leaders of the region, some of whom are heads of state and government today.

ROAD TO PRESIDENCY

After the 2006 general election, RB was tapped for the post of Vice-President in Dr Levy Mwanawasa's government, and served for a period of two years as the latter's deputy.

He took over President Mwanawasa's presidential responsibilities after Mwanawasa suffered a stroke in Egypt during June, 2008. Following Mwanawasa's demise in August, 2008, he became Acting President.

As the candidate of the governing Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), he won the October, 2008 presidential election on his renowned platform, "the president for all Zambians."

During his three-year reign, Zambia's economy expanded mainly on the back of rising copper prices and a surge in Chinese investment. He pursued the infrastructure expansion agenda started under Mwanawasa, building much-needed roads, hospitals and schools.

And it was during his tenure that Zambia recorded a 7.6 per cent increase in growth for 2011, up from 6.4 per cent the previous year, for which President Banda took credit.

But seeking re-election in September, 2011, he was defeated by opposition leader Michael Chilufya Sata who became the fifth President of the Republic of Zambia.

And the common complaint in the run-up to the 2011 election was that corruption had swelled under the MMD regime; while it was felt in some circles that at twenty years in power, the MMD had stayed too long—which reminded many of the 27 years of UNIP rule.

Some of the corruption complaints were taken forward by President Sata's administration, and in 2013, Parliament stripped RB of immunity against prosecution, clearing the way to arrest him for corruption-related offences. However, he was later cleared in court.



President Hakainde Hichilema (left) talks to Former President Edgar Chagwa Lungu (right) during the State Funeral for the Fourth Republican President Rupiah Bwezani Banda at Lusaka's Showgrounds on Thursday, March 17, 2022. PICTURE BY SALIM HENRY/SHENPA ©2022



President Edgar Chagwa Lungu (left) listens to Fourth Republican President Rupiah Bwezani Banda in Lusaka's Makeni area on Thursday, November 22, 2018 during the handover of the Retirement House for the Former Head of State. PICTURE BY SALIM HENRY/STATE HOUSE ©2018



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Former First Lady Esther Lungu, Former President Edgar Chagwa Lungu, Former Mozambican President Joachim Chissano, President Hakainde Hichilema and First Lady Mutinta Hichilema during the Church Service for the Fourth Republican President Rupiah Bwezani Banda at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Lusaka on Friday, March 18, 2022. PICTURE BY SALIM HENRY/SHENPA ©2022

NEGOTIATING A TRANSITION

Citizens shall fondly recall the critical role he played as a neutral arbiter in ensuring a smooth transition of power with other negotiators for the Patriotic Front's exit from the corridors of power following the August 12, 2021, general election.

At a time when the nation needed him most, President Banda rose to the occasion as a seasoned statesman to reconcile the main presidential contenders Edgar Chagwa Lungu and Hakainde Hichilema. RB's influence and active involvement in brokering talks between the two former foes showed that Zambia was bigger than any one single individual, regardless of stature. Notably, former Sierra Leone President Ernest Bai Koroma and Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania were present, initially as election observers.

Thus, the peace that has characterized Zambia since 1964 was maintained post-August, 2021, albeit after a few anxious days after Polling Day on August 12.

CHARISMA

Away from politics, RB's influence transcended several spheres from sports, especially football and boxing, to business and politics. A larger-than-life figure, RB was selfless because he wanted the best for others.



Church Service for the Fourth Republican President Rupiah Bwezani Banda at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Lusaka on Friday, March 18, 2022. PICTURE BY SALIM HENRY/SHENPA ©2022



Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa (left) shares a light moment with Fourth President of Zambia Rupiah Bwezani Banda (right) at the Freedom Statue in Lusaka after the Wreath Laying ceremony on the Occasion of the 54th Independence Celebrations on Wednesday, October 24, 2018. PICTURE BY SALIM HENRY/STATE HOUSE ©2018

In sports circles, he became Football Association of Zambia vice-chairman in the 1980s.

Using his connections, RB facilitated the attachment of several boxers such as Lottie Mwale, Chisanda Mutti and Charm 'Shuffle' Chiteule to European stables. While serving as FAZ vice-chairman, he was very instrumental in making sure future soccer legends Kalusha Bwalya, Johnson Bwalya and Charles Musonda secured professional contracts in Belgium.

RB passed away on March 11, 2022, and was laid to rest on March 18, 2022.

He is survived by his wife, Thandiwe Banda, children and grandchildren.

President Banda will always be respected and remembered for his unmatched ability to unite the nation, especially at the most critical moments.



Flight Schedule

Effective 3rd February 2022

LUSAKA

	Depart	Arrive
Monday	LUN 10:00	JNB 12:00
Tuesday	LUN 10:00	JNB 12:00
Thursday	LUN 10:00	JNB 12:00
Friday	LUN 10:00	JNB 12:00

JOHANNESBURG

	Depart	Arrive
Monday	JNB 13:30	LUN 15:30
Tuesday	JNB 13:30	LUN 15:30
Thursday	JNB 13:30	LUN 15:30
Friday	JNB 13:30	LUN 15:30



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ILO, SIDA back up renewable energy drive

BY DERRICK SILIMINA

At first glance, Zambia's generation of hydropower, clean energy, seems normal as the country benefits from the water flows of the mighty Zambezi and Kafue Rivers.



UNESCO Chair in Renewable Energy and Environment Professor Prem Jain (R) Seated in the front row with SACREEE Lead Renewable Energy Expert Readlay Makaliki (4th from L -R) Standing in the back row pose for a photo with some journalists, media trainers and senior officials from ILO during a media training dubbed 'Reporting on Energy' held at KGRTC from 30 March - 1 April 2022 in Namalundu area of Chikankata district.

However, droughts in recent years have caused electricity shortages estimated at nearly one-third of Zambia's total installed hydroelectric capacity of 2,380 megawatts.

In 2019, water levels in the Kariba Dam plummeted to their lowest level since 1996, falling to 10 per cent of usable storage. Some observers described this as the worst drought that has ever hit the southern African country since independence in 1964.

For this reason, the International Labour Organization (ILO), with funding by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), and in close col-

laboration with Kafue Gorge Regional Training Center (KGRTC), has embarked on upskilling more Zambians with competencies to tap into technologies in renewable energy, energy efficiency and renewable energy integration.

UNESCO Chair in Renewable Energy and Environment Professor Prem Jain says climate change is a genuine man-made problem.

"Climate change has significant adverse impacts on all sectors of the economy and African nations are likely to suffer more from impacts of climate change. We need to urgently respond to the threat of climate change," Professor Jain said.

He was speaking during the Skills for Energy in Southern Africa (SESA) media training programme dubbed Reporting on Energy held at KGRTC from March 30 to April 1 in Namalundu area of Chikankata District.

DIVERSIFYING

In this context, energy experts believe that diversifying and expanding the country's energy mix enables the creation of jobs and the development of small and medium enterprises both locally and in the region.

Professor Jain, a renowned lecturer at the University of Zambia Physics Department, noted that fossil fuels such as



During the familiarization tour of the solar milling plant, a Rural Electrification Authority (REA) pilot project in Chongwe district.

coal, petrol, diesel and gas are drivers of modern industrialization but are culprits of climate change.

According to energy statistics, chronic under-investment in hydro projects has also caused problems such that even when enough rain falls, power supply cannot keep up with demand from the mining, manufacturing and agriculture industries.

In line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal Seven, which aims to ensure “access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all,” the Southern African Development Community (SADC) key priority is to ensure energy access and security for all population and businesses in the region.

Despite being one of the suppliers of hydroelectricity in the SADC region, Zambia’s population is still grappling with access to efficient and affordable energy supply.

Only 37 per cent of people in urban areas have access to energy while four per cent of people in the rural areas are connected to the national grid, according to the Ministry of Energy statistics.

ENERGY SOURCES

“We need to harness all the energy sources that we have, especially renewable energy sources because energy is the driver of economic activity in the

“We need as Zambia to embark on harnessing the other energy resources that we have such as solar, wind, and biomass because we have also seen that in the past, the concentration has been on hydropower generation,” he stated.

country, whether industrial or agriculture among others,” Ministry of Energy Principle Energy Officer Brian Mainza told journalists during the training.

Sustainable energy was essential, especially looking at the SDG7 goal where by 2030 everyone should have universal access to clean and affordable energy.

“We need as Zambia to embark on harnessing the other energy resources that we have such as solar, wind, and biomass because we have also seen that in the past, the concentration has been on hydropower generation,” he stated.

According to the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the country draws 85 per cent of its power from hydro projects.

Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre Consultant for Research and Training Martin Hamanyanga disclosed that the institution has received funds from the Swedish Government for the development of a 10 megawatt mini hydropower project on the Kafue River.

Recently, the Government initiated a 200 MW wind-power project in Katete, Eastern Province. This is the first phase of the larger Unika 1 wind project, which is to be financed by private investors.

SOLAR PROJECTS

Zambia also signed an agreement with the World Bank’s International Finance Corporation (IFC) to develop two large-scale solar projects. A competitive auction through the IFC’s Scaling Solar programme attracted bids from competing solar developers.

In terms of energy efficiency rating, the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) is thrilled that Zambia is one of the few countries in the region that has significantly achieved energy efficiency through the introduction of energy-saving lighting measures.

“Zambia has cut down on energy waste resulting in savings for both individuals at household level and the heavy power consumers such as mines and industries,” SACREEE Lead Renewable Energy Expert Readlay Makaliki said on the sidelines of the workshop.



Sweden commits to gender equality

BY JOHN CHOLA

Sweden stands with the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ) National Legal Aid Clinic and will continue to pursue a feminist foreign policy as long as gender inequality persists.

As Zambia joined the rest of the world in commemorating the International Women's Day under the theme Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow, Swedish Ambassador to Zambia, Anna Maj Hultgard, bemoaned persistent gender inequalities.

She said as long as gender inequality persisted alongside the stifling of women's and girls' rights, the Scandinavian state would continue to pursue a femi-

nist foreign policy.

Hultgard said this on March 3, 2022 ahead of the commemoration on March 8, when she toured the Law Association of Zambia's National Legal Aid Clinic for Women (NLACW) Lusaka offices.

Ambassador Hultgard said gender inequality continued to impact women and girls every day through lack of access to justice, legal structural obstacles and discriminatory gender norms.

She however expressed happiness that her country had been partners with LAZ's NLACW since the 1990s and that the current support to the Clinic runs from 2019 to 2023.

With the development cooperation amounting to approximately US\$5 million annually, Sweden is the second largest bilateral donor in Zambia with much of the funding going towards human rights, democracy and gender equality, access to health and sexual reproductive rights, environment among others.

Ambassador Hultgard further noted that the NLACW's overall focus on equal and fairness access to justice was clearly contributing to improved capacity and increased democratic space to promote and strengthen human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

This was ultimately reducing poverty among women and children by protecting their property rights and economic wellbeing, all in line with Sweden's goal to end gender inequality.

"Gender equality is an end goal, but it is

also absolutely essential for achieving any other development objective, such as peace, security and democracy.

“With the Clinic’s central focus on access to justice for women and girls, as well as the focus on increasing awareness of the law and human rights for women and children, tackling harmful customary practices, and advocating for changes to law and policies related to women, children and GBV, the programme is very relevant for gender equality,” the ambassador said.

She commended the hard work of the Clinic which involved LAZ lawyers taking up pro-bono work. Each of the 2500-plus LAZ members offered free legal representation to the vulnerable in society especially women and children.

During the visit to the facility, the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ) leadership and NLACW Board informed Ambassador Hultgard that through Sweden’s support to the Clinic, the organization had made great strides in recent years.

NLACW Board member Kondwa Chibiya said her organization had seen an increase in the number of cases reported to the clinic in 2021, totalling 2,941 compared to 2,330 recorded in the previous year.

Chibiya noted that most of the cases reported were marital disputes resulting from economic and physical abuse.

“A total of 782 cases were filed into court in 2021 compared to 715 in 2020. The success rate of judgments secured on behalf of clients remains good at over 95 per cent, thus building confidence in members of the public. NLACW continues to enjoy good relations with both state and non-state partners and this can be seen from the high number of cases referred throughout its offices.”

Chibiya said NLACW remained committed to its vision of a Zambian society where under-privileged women and children enjoy their human rights through the provision of appropriate and timely legal services, legal literacy and advocacy for policy and law reform.

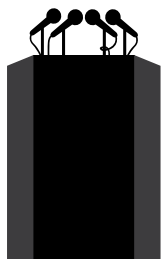
Such attainments would ensure that the country’s legal framework protected the rights of women on an equal basis with men.



Swedish Ambassador to Zambia Ms. Anna Maj Hultgard samples a zambian cultural song joined by NLCW staff and board members.



Swedish Ambassador to Zambia Ms. Anna Maj Hultgard speaking during her visit to the NLACW Lusaka offices. Pictures by John Chola



HICKS SIKAZWE ON THE PLATFORM



Threats To Tourism: Time To Think Outside The Box

In Zambia, when one mentions the term 'tourism', the sites that come immediately to mind are the Victoria Falls, Luangwa or the Kafue National Park.

Yet this country has more tourist resorts than the eye would see. For example, very little has been written or talked about concerning the Lumangwe Falls in Northern Province, or its wandering wildlife around the area.

The Chishimba Falls in Kasama, specifically on the Kasama-Mporokoso Road, remains a marvel to look at—but has



been sold very little or none at all. In Luapula Province the Ntumbachushi waterfall is a natural wonder that in a developed country would have already seen a hotel set up there.

Other than the waterfalls there are historic sites like the Ing'ombe ilede in Southern province, the Moto Moto museum in Mbala, Northern Province or even the flood plains in Western Province especially when the Zambezi bursts.

On the Copperbelt the complex structures erected to support mining activities should have been sold effectively enough to attract tourists and earn the country the much-needed foreign exchange.

The problem in all this arises from the fact that except for the lip service on making tourism a grand income earner, there has been very little investment in the sector.

First, there is too much reliance on foreign tourists and the local market has been forgotten. It is not even thought about that Zambians can be tourists as well.

Infrastructure such as roads, hotels and lodges need to be constructed in most parts of the country where potential tourism spots are. Except for Livingstone, even some of the areas mentioned above are technically villages with nothing to show that they can qualify as tourists' rendezvous.

CORONAVIRUS

At the height of the global corona virus outbreak, one of the sectors that got severely hit below the waist was tourism and related industries.

The aviation industry, a key contributor to the survival of tourism worldwide, was crippled as airlines throughout the globe grounded planes. Countries did not only curb travelling but they completely locked down, bolting gates at the borders to prevent the spread of the killer virus.

Hotels, lodges, and guest houses began closing down and sending off workers to the world of the unknown. In Zambia, some hotels closed shop and attempted to convert buildings into boarding houses for college and university students who were also learning at home virtually. The weeping continued.

Uganda, Kenya, Uganda, Egypt and Rwanda, some of Africa's frontrunner beneficiaries from game viewing, watching big rivers water falls or lakes suffered the brunt of the outbreak.

Workers in the aviation and hospitality industries cried most as thousands upon thousands of them were laid off because the cash cow—tourism industry—was no longer producing the milk.

DROUGHT

In East Africa, as if the damage caused by Covid 19 was not tragic enough, an unprecedented drought struck the region.

Television screens were awash with images of collapsing animals, domestic livestock and wild species that could not find water or grass for grazing, because there had been no rain to fill up rivers, streams, lakes and other sources of wa-



ter. Vast lands were agape with dry vegetation.

There was no rain to get grass, bushes and trees to blossom for game to survive on. Foreign exchange flows dried up, causing further suffering and anguish on economies that largely depended on tourism.

The ripple effects of the outbreak on tourism were a wake up call and countries need sustainable post-Covid 19 strategies to avoid similar crisis. At the time of writing (March 2022) the pandemic was still ravaging the globe despite massive vaccinations.

It is clear then that the killer virus will remain with humanity for sometime to come. Other than that, a different pandemic can emerge that could rip asunder global economies and social settings. Countries particularly in Africa must seek long-lasting survival strategies.

For example, after realizing that the country needed to continue reaping rewards from tourism, Kenyan authorities went outside the box, introducing rates to attract local tourists; that is, Kenyans themselves.

For many years tourism in Africa, has been target foreigners visiting a country to sight a nation's attractions, so the rates have always been pegged in foreign currency especially the United States dollar.

That is why it is common to find that even here in Zambia there are nationals that have never been to the Victoria Falls, Luangwa national park, Kafue or Lochinvar tourist outposts simply because the charges are beyond the reach of citizens.

If Zambia is to turn the leaf, the coun-

try should follow the Nairobi example. Work out rates to attract local tourists. It has to be a whole package.

That means from airfares to lodging fees in Hotels, Lodges and other tourist attractions have to be realigned for local populations to afford. Such a move would give the industry a loaf of bread, rather than none.

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FQM Trident tells Employees to Get Vaccinated



FQM Trident General Manager Sean Egner addressing the FQM Trident employees.

BY SOLWEZI TODAY REPORTER

FQM Trident Ltd has been suffering production losses due to the increased number of workers in Covid isolation, a situation that is adding more pressure on other workers to try and meet expected production figures.

The mine has introduced protocols aimed at encouraging all employees and contractors to be vaccinated, a move similar to the Covid-passes mandated by governments in many parts of the world including Zambia.

FQM Trident General Manager Sean Egner has engaged with employees on the importance of observing Covid protocols

The mine has embarked on sharing factual information on Covid19 in its effort to achieve at least 80 per cent vaccination coverage of the workforce.

and benefits of vaccination for the mine to remain operational and profitable.

With the onset of the fourth wave globally and discovery of new strains, management has increased sensitization on the negative effects of the pandemic on production and the general livelihood of employees. The mine has embarked on sharing factual information on Covid19 in its effort to achieve at least 80 per cent



vaccination coverage of the workforce.

Speaking when he received his booster shot, Egner dispelled false information surrounding Covid vaccines and urged employees to avoid being misled by myths that are hampering the attainment of desired numbers of vaccinated employees.

“I call on you to pick a trusted and proven source of information. Our government, through the Ministry of Health together with the World Health Organi-



FQM Trident General Manager Sean Egner poses for a photo with COVID-19 poster, encouraging vaccination.

zation (WHO) have taken a lot of effort to provide facts and information for us to make informed decisions.”

Egner said that the pandemic is not a short-term issue and will be around for the foreseeable future as scientists are already forecasting the next wave and variants. He encouraged employees to get vaccinated because the only intention is to protect the human population.

“Science has shown that a vaccinated population suffers less severe impacts than an unvaccinated one, as can be seen in data shared on hospitalization and death rates in countries around the world. Covid is a reality for us and the world, it has far reaching effects and consequences and only once the world gets it under control will things start to return to normal.”

Colin Du Plessis, Mining Operations Manager at Kansanshi Mining PLC, cutting the ribbon at the official opening of the work rehabilitation centre. Picture by JOHN MUBAMBE



Work Rehabilitation Centre opens at Kansanshi mine

BY JOHN MUBAMBE

Kansanshi Mining Plc has opened its \$100,000 Work Rehabilitation Centre to provide employees with effective 'return-to-work' solutions after injury or illness.

The Kansanshi Work Rehabilitation Centre was officially opened on Wednesday, March 16 under the auspices of the First Quantum Health and Wellness Services at the Kansanshi Mine access gate in Solwezi.

The project is an integral component of the company's sustainable development strategies tailored towards the improvement of employees' health, safety, and competence development.

Kansanshi Mining Plc General Manager Anthony Mukutuma disclosed that the Centre would be ideal for workplace practices and for sustainable employees' return-to-work activities.

"Our commitment is to get our employees more active, bearing in mind that an active employee means a healthy employee with a brain working much better," he observed.

Mukutuma said group workout classes

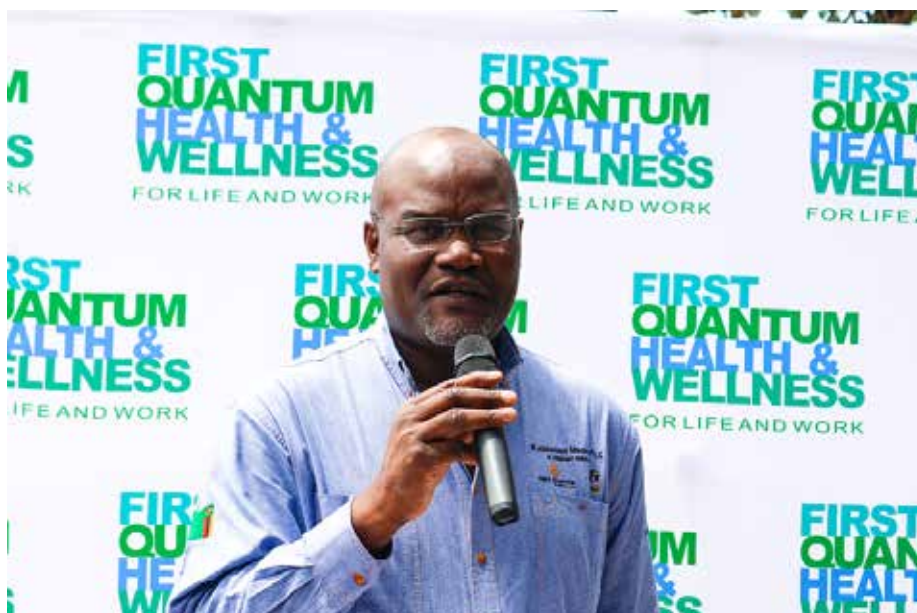
at the Centre would make it easy and convenient for Kansanshi Mine employees to improve their fitness under the guidance of skilled physical exercise instructors.

The Centre would provide employees at Kansanshi Mine with optimum capacity to return to work after suffering an injury or illness.

"There is a programme to be followed and the idea is to get employees back



The FQM Health and wellness Team that spearheaded the building of the work rehabilitation centre. Picture by JOHN MUBAMBE.



Anthony Mukutuma, Kansanshi Mining PLC General Manager explains the importance of the work rehabilitation centre during the official opening of the facility. Picture by JOHN MUBAMBE

into work as quickly as possible with the discipline of being able to get back onto their job and hit the ground running,” said Mukutuma.

Mukutuma urged employees to make use of the newly-built facility for exercises that will improve their fitness at work.

He thanked the FQM Health and Wellness team, Mary Begg Hospital, Kansanshi Mining Plc and First Quantum Mining and Operations (FQMO) Roads and Construction and Maintenance departments for their commitment towards the construction of the Centre.

And FQM Health and Wellness Site Ser-

vices Superintendent Leonie Kloppers described the facility as the first of its kind in the country.

Kloppers was happy that the Centre, which focuses on work-conditioning and work-hardening programmes, was staffed by specialist multidisciplinary health staff.

She explained that work-hardening is a goal-oriented, daily rehabilitation programme which focuses on physical conditioning and strengthening, ergonomics training, and simulated work tasks to help prepare workers for a safe transition into the workforce while reducing likelihood of re-injury.

“This programme will empower individuals to recover from injury or illness in a supported manner and allow them to remain contributing members to their families, workplace and Zambia’s economy by them returning to work.”

She said the Centre will benefit employees who have a delay in recovery from an injury or illness, have apprehension with return to work, and are not yet safe to return or have physically demanding jobs.

Mobile money rains on Solwezi

BY DERRICK SILIMINA

According to the Bank of Zambia, the number of mobile money users on the country's network platforms grew from 4.85 million in 2019 to 8.6 million plus in 2020. That represents a year-on-year increase of 77 per cent.



Agness Kaumba At Her Mobile Money Booth

At the same time, and not coincidentally, more and more people in Solwezi District of North-Western Province are gaining access to financial services in general, whether provided by a mobile money booth, online platform or a physical bank.

In Solwezi's Kandemba area, Agness Kaumba owns a mobile money booth which provides financial services that include the receiving and sending of money, buying electricity units, paying bills like GOTV, DSTV and selling talk time.

After realizing the need to sharpen her business acumen, Kaumba started attending the Kansanshi Mining Plc-sponsored business development training in October, 2021.

"I started my business in December 2021 after I invested a minimal amount of K1000 where sending and withdrawing services were being provided via MTN only," Kaumba said.

She described the business as 'very good' because it is not labour intensive but requires good interaction customers.

Kaumba stated that her business is now worth K5000, all in a period of five months.

After realizing the need to sharpen her business acumen, Kaumba started attending the Kansanshi Mining Plc-sponsored business development training in October, 2021.

"The training helped me to identify the business opportunity and a busy location where to target a lot of customers. Financial discipline is another virtue I learned and utilized in my business, hence my being able to grow my capital from K1000 to K5000 within a short period of five months."

With average sales of K100 per day, Kaumba is optimistic as the mobile money business is lucrative, especially during the first and second week of every month.

Kaumba now intends to open three or four outlets, with one outlet planned for the town centre and another at Kimiteto area starting January 2023.

She also looks forward to diversifying into buying and selling of timber as research indicates that the business is quite lucrative as well.

"From my mobile money business, I have developed my plot in the Kimiteto area and bought another plot in Mulemba Villa Park worth K4,500," she said.

The visiting mentorship team from Fortune World Investment Limited urged Kaumba to improve her record-keeping habit if she is to track her income and expenditure done per day with ease.

Solwezi cellphone repair business takes off

BY DERRICK SILIMINA

Francisco Mwansa, 35, is one of the upcoming mobile phone repair names in North-Western Province.



Francisco Mwansa displaying a repaired phone

Situated in the Kandundu car park area of Solwezi District, Mwansa's phone repairing business caters for all brands.

"I started my mobile phone repair business in 2016 with K1000 after being motivated by experience I acquired after working for three years at COMESA in Solwezi. The business was doing well then, despite increasing competition," Mwansa said.

Despite not having been to any formal school of electronics, Mwansa explained that he learned the art from other phone experts from the community.

Given an opportunity, he intends to study computer software engineering to expand his market in the IT industry.

"My business is now worth over K5000. Some accessories bring in business worth about K1000. I intend to expand my business and employing other youths once I open a phone accessories shop and branches in Kalumbila and Manyama areas," Mwansa hinted.

With burning zeal to nurture his talent in the cell phone repairing business, Mwansa started attending the Kansanshi Mining Plc-sponsored business development training from 2018 to 2022.

He testified that the training had

helped him in good customer care and record-keeping.

"I now understand how to use a records book to indicate sales, daily expenditure and profits. My weekly profits are about K700 every week and I am currently in the process of registering a cooperative with 10 other members," Mwansa said.

He expressed glowing tribute to the KMP for the business training which has enabled the less privileged to acquire skills.

The visiting mentorship team from Fortune World Investment, facilitators of the business training programme, encouraged Mwansa to save for further investment.

An obviously creative entrepreneur rises in Kapepa

BY DERRICK SILIMINA

At 38, Obvious Makozi is a versatile entrepreneur running tailoring, hair salon and barbershop, typing and printing businesses in Kapepa area of Solwezi District.

Some of the products from tailoring include dresses, shirts, leather hand bags, school uniforms, jerseys and many more.

“Our products are sold to schools and the general public. Some clothes are exchanged for maize and beans around April, and around December, we sell them at a 75 per cent profit. My immediate plans are to register the business, and open a tailoring school that shall produce various items.

In 2019, armed with six blowers, five hair clippers and seven dryers, Makozi and his wife opened the barbershop. At the time, he had no sewing machine.

“Some of the benefits from the training include a change of mindset as I was able to identify business opportunities and started purchasing tailoring machines towards the end of 2019 and 2020. The

first machine I bought was a manual sewing machine out of proceeds from the barbershop and salon,” he said.

He bought the hair clipper at K2,500 and nine months later, his business was able to purchase a pattern-making electric sewing machine at K4000. This was followed by an overlocking machine which he bought at K3,800 five months later.

“Today, I am a proud owner of nine machines altogether valued at approximately K25,000. With my printer and laptop the total value of assets is K35,000,” Makozi said.

He is appreciative of sound business management practices he has learned, which have enabled him to diversify his business.

With an initial monthly turnover of about K1,500, Makozi’s salon and bar-

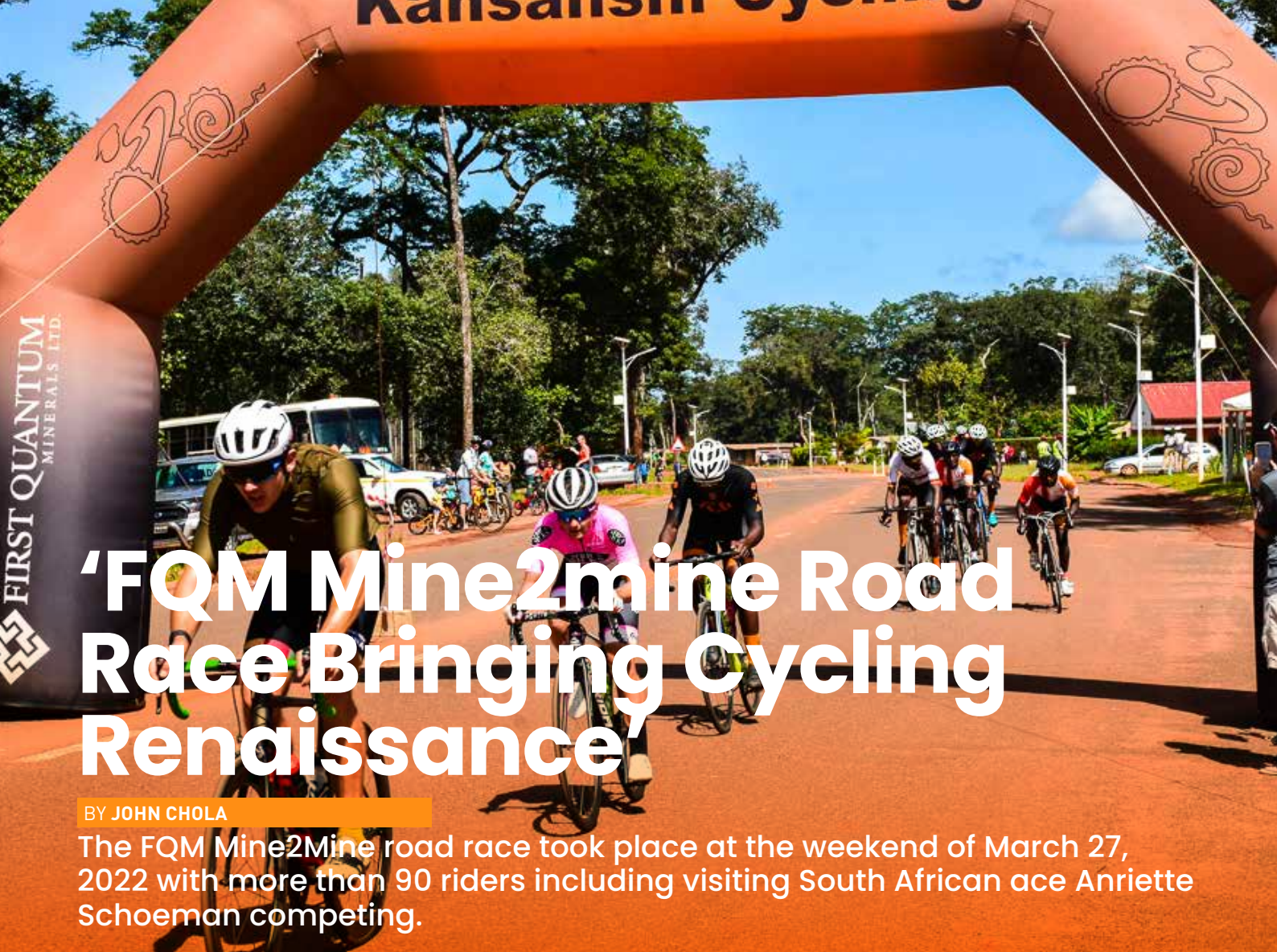
ber business is now able to make profit of over K6000 with a gross of about K7000.

He proudly stated that currently, the business employs himself and his wife as partners.

Makozi has continued following the training sessions on radio as it is beneficial to follow training on radio because of time saved while continuing to do his work.

He has urged Kansanshi Mining Plc to continue with the good work to benefit more people.

“My message to KMP is a word of thanks for imparting knowledge through the training which has greatly empowered me with knowledge from the training which has greatly impacted my business.”



'FQM Mine2mine Road Race Bringing Cycling Renaissance'

BY JOHN CHOLA

The FQM Mine2Mine road race took place at the weekend of March 27, 2022 with more than 90 riders including visiting South African ace Anriette Schoeman competing.

The race was divided into the 23 km, 75 km and 140 km categories.

Rosemary Mumba received the overall mixed prize in the 23km category followed by Paul Kabali in second position and Mary Kalibuku in third spot.

In the 75 km category, female Radel Johnstone triumphed followed by Magret Ngoma and Luwi Chikamba.

Lewis Matende bagged the 75 km male overall prize followed by Gift Kasito in second place and Christopher Muke in third position.

Visiting South African supremo Anriette Schoeman pulled off an outstanding performance cycling neck-to-neck with male riders from start to finish, a display that clearly positioned her top overall female rider of the tournament in the 140 km tussle.

She shared the podium with Kirsten McDonald who was second overall in the category while Fiona McDonald and

Lizelle Hudson grabbed the third prize overall.

Sean Egner, Justine Banda and Peter Zulu dominated the km veterans' 36-49 male category to take third, second and first slots respectively. The female category first prize went to Anriette Schoeman whose second was Lizelle Hudson.

Fiona McDonald proved unmatched in the 140 km Masters 50 And Over female category with only the tenacious Sharonne Watt coming close in second spot to walk away with memorable medals and handsome prizes.

Charles Mujayi fronted fierce and promising Gift Puteho in the 140 km junior



FQM Trident Limited General Manager Sean Egner left with Justine Banda right and Peter Zulu middle as winners of the 140 km veterans 36 - 49 male. Pictures by Felix Katyetse.



Riders caught in action in the recently held 140 km Mine2Mine FQM road race.

males while Kirstin McDonald sailed comfortably to the top position in the 140 km junior females, adding to her long list of medals and prizes.

This year's 140 km Masters 50 years And Over male was conquered by determined Gift Mweemba who edged marvellous and not-easy-to-overshadow Johan Conradie into second position and swift David Kalange in third place.

CYCLING RENAISSANCE

Cycling Association of Zambia (CAZ) President Andrew Chibuye, who graced this year's event and also emerged among the top riders in the veterans 36 to 49 years males, described the Mine2Mine FQM Race as "an epitome of cycling renaissance in Zambia."

Spectators young and old, men and women lined up sections of the largely rural 140 kilometres starting from Solwezi to Kalumbila.

Race Organizer, Ryan Ellis hailed Chibuye's commitment to the game noting that the PwC Country Senior Partner shared credit for the ongoing transformation of cycling in Zambia that has been witnessed in the last over two years.

Ellis said Chibuye's national cycling management team had brought in support for cycling from corporate sponsors, government agencies and the general

public that was necessary part of making the sport a big industry that Zambians would love to see become.

POPULAR SPORT

Chibuye extolled FQM for being one of the few corporate entities that had over the years helped to promote cycling and turn it into a regular and popular sport in the country, culminating into the national champion tournament held in 2021.

"Now we have a calendar which spells out all the cycling events in a year and we are already getting partners interested in these activities. We are now affiliated to the global, continental and national sports councils and bodies with fully paid up memberships," Chibuye said.

Annette described the Mine2Mine road race as a well-organized and excellent tournament with the potential to help propel riders to highly competitive events even at international level.

"I feel it's a brilliant job. I enjoyed the race, the distance makes it hot. Even if you are not 100 per cent fit you can actually enjoy this race. The challenge in the race is not how long it is but the guys here are used to things like riding long distances, it's got a lot of elevation but it's completely doable for anyone, it was a really enjoyable race."

Ellis paid tributes to FQMO Roads De-



Leaders in the 140 km category Masters 50 and over female top Fiona McDonald and Sharonne Watt receiving their prizes. Picture by Felix Katyetye

partment for sponsoring prizes, logistics and flights for guests

He also thanked Prudential Insurance for partnering with FQM supporting the game with prize money for riders.

Other sponsors of the tournament include Epiroc and Trident Kalumbila Foundation

Ellis said part of the money raised from various sponsors of the 2022 race would go towards cyclists visiting the communities surrounding the FQM mines to fix their bicycles. This was intended for people in villages who lacked access to spare parts and knowledge of bicycle repair.



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