

## Govt calls for patience over 2,000MW delayed Masdar solar deal

Energy Minister Makozo Chikote says the delay in the installation of a 2000MW solar plant by Masdar is due to the company, which is taking its time to study the conditions.

Last year, Zesco signed an agreement with Masdar to develop solar projects worth \$2 billion which once...

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## Japanese firm Konoike Construction awarded tax holiday

The Zambian government has approved Konoike Construction Company Limited for tax exemption through Statutory Instrument No. 36 of 2024, citing Section 15 of the Income Tax Act.

According to the SI obtained by the Zambian Business Times-ZBT, this exemption covers income earned, including...

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## BOZ revokes LendMePay license

The Bank of Zambia - BOZ has revoked the payment system business license of LendMePay Zambia Limited.

According to a government notice seen by the Zambian Business Times - ZBT, BOZ Deputy Governor, Dr. Francis Chipimo stated that the revocation of LendMePay licence is effective August 26, 2024...

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## Seed prices to go up - ZAAB

Zambia Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity - ZAAB says the proposed Licensing fees for crop variety is likely to have a negative impact on the sector which will cause the price of the seeds to go up...

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## FOREIGN OWNED FIRMS GRAB ALL BIG CONTRACTS AT MOPANI



Mine Suppliers and Contractors Association of Zambia (MSCAZ) has noted with concern the continued sidelining of local suppliers and contractors in the mining sector as foreign firms have continued getting the biggest share leaving local businesses with minimal involvement in high-value contracts.

This comes amid concerns of low local participation in high value contracts after the revamping of Mopani Copper mines - MCM...

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## Steep roller mealie-meal prices at Sioma blamed on escalated transport costs

Sioma District Commissioner has attributed the hike in price for a 25kg bag of Roller mealie meal to high transportation cost in the district.

According to the latest ZAMSTATS report for September it showed that Roller mealie meal in Sioma was selling at K360 as compared to other districts like Mongu where it is selling at K190 per 25Kg bag...

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## BDO hosts high level 2025 budget analysis

In its quest to continue providing a formidable platform for public discourse, BDO Zambia held a high level 2025 National Budget Analysis where key economic players among them businesses, institutions and government officials came together to analyze the K217 billion budget.

Speaking at the event attended by the Zambian Business Times (ZBT), BDO Zambia Director of Tax Advisory services Katrina Mabika...

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## CEDORA purchases 140k tons of Soya

The Crushers and Edible Oil Refiners Association - CEDORA has disclosed that they have purchased about 140,000 tons from the total 168,000 tons of soya beans.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Zambian business Times - ZBT, the crushers and Edible Oil Refiners Association Director Aubrey Chibumba said, from the last season crop they had purchased about 130,000- 140,000 tons of Soya beans out of the total crop of about 168,000 metric tons...

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## Remittance tax increase to negatively affect SMEs

Economist Esther Banda has charged that the increase in remittance taxes by the Government as announced in the 2025 Budget will affect most small and medium enterprises (SMES) who are grappling with the economic after shocks of the drought...

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## Govt suspends surtax on wire rod coils imports

The Zambian government has waived surtax (suspended custom and exercise) on wire rod coils imports for a period of 6 months effective June 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024.

According to the Statutory Instrument No. 48 of 2024, signed by Finance Minister Dr Situmbeko Musokotwane and seen by the Zambian Business Times-ZBT, the surtax payable on the goods set out in the Schedule is suspended to free.

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## Internet penetration of 70% needed to have a smart Zambia

Internet Society Zambia Chapter President Levy Syanseke says the Country must upscale its internet penetration to 70 percent, further highlighting that there is need for the Government to fund infrastructure and policy realization.

According to the ZICTA 2024 Mid year report, the internet penetration now stands at 63.1 percent per 100 households from 58.1 percent in 2023. ...

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# Govt calls for patience over 2,000MW delayed Masdar solar deal

Energy Minister Makozombe Chikote says the delay in the installation of a 2000MW solar plant by Masdar is due to the company which is taking its time to study the conditions.

Last year, Zesco signed an agreement with Masdar to develop solar projects worth \$2 billion which once completed, it is expected to contribute an additional 2,000 megawatts of electricity to the national grid.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Zambian Business Times - ZBT*, Chikote emphasized that Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) involve a thorough process and may depend on private sector capabilities to meet the country’s requirements.

Chikote explained that while the government has submitted its requirements to Masdar, the company is taking their time by saying they are evaluating the terms and conditions before proceeding with the investment.

The minister stressed that the government remains committed to working with Masdar and other potential investors, despite the delays.

He emphasized that the goal is to continue pushing forward and ensure that the energy sector moves in the right direction, rather than seeking

alternative partners when faced with delays.

“You know these Memorandum of Understandings is an agreement that is made between parties and besides that there are processes that need to take shape and also sometimes depends on the private sectors such as you have mentioned masdar to see whether they are able to meet our requirements because of course they must be some terms and conditions for any MoU or investor to come and invest in the energy sector.”

“The masdar component, these people we did our part as a country and we submitted to them what is that is required from them but of course they are taking their time by saying they are trying to look at the terms and conditions we are putting.”

“Most investors face other conditions in the country, such as tariffs, which, in my opinion, make it less viable.

Additionally, some investors are looking for sovereign guarantees, which are not part of our conditions and terms for striking deals with developers. It’s important to note that the government doesn’t desire to engage other investors when one delays.

Rather, the government wants to continue making efforts to push in the right direction.” He said.

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# CCBA Group CEO visits Zambian market for insightful familiarization tour

Coca – Cola Beverages Zambia – CCBZ recently welcomed its Group Chief Executive Officer - CEO, Sunil Gupta, along with other key executives to the Zambian market for a two-day familiarization tour. from 2nd to 3rd October 2024, provided an opportunity for the CEO and other executives to engage with various stakeholders and gain valuable insights into the Zambian market dynamics.

Accompanied by the Chief Operating Officer, Gavin

The visit, which took place

Hudson, and the Chief Supply Chain Officer, Alok Sharma, Gupta led the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) in visiting key accounts, general trade partners, “Matebe-to” outlets, distributors, and wholesale customers. The ELT was joined by CMT

members, led by the General Manager, Josphat Mwangi, as they sought to interact with customers and gain a deeper understanding of the market landscape. The second day of the visit kicked off with a “meet and greet” session with GMT

members, during which valuable feedback was shared on only allowed the Company to strengthen its connections with local partners but also tour concluded with a plant visit to the Lusaka West plant, providing them with a first-hand understanding of the insights into the company’s Zambian market. local operations and production processes.








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## ZICA student jailed for forgery

The Zambia Institute of Chartered Accountants (ZICA) in B.S & Associates, who has been found to be operating line with its mandate under without proper registration Section 18 of the Accountants with the Institute. Act No. 13 of 2008 has intensified its efforts to prosecute individuals falsely presenting themselves as accountants or practitioners without proper registration with the Institute. Sakala has been charged with the offence of Holding Out, to which he pleaded not guilty. The case is currently before the Subordinate Court of Zambia.

According to a statement made available to the Zambian Business Times-ZBT, Ronald Nkandu Kaoma, a student registered with the Institute has been charged with the offence of forgery of statement of results, contrary to Section 344 (a) of the Penal Code Cap 87 of the Laws of Zambia. Additionally, ZICA launched an investigation into Kenny Mwale, who is suspected of falsely representing himself as a practitioner and preparing financial statements for a known firm without being registered with the Institute. Mwale has also been charged with the offence of Holding Out and has pleaded not guilty. His case is currently being heard before the Subordinate Court of Zambia.

He pleaded guilty to the offence and was convicted and sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment on 24th September 2024.

In a related matter, ZICA is prosecuting Benjamin Sakala, the alleged proprietor of



## Airtel restates commitment to Excellence in Customer Experience

Airtel, a leading telecommunications provider, is celebrating Customer Service Week with a renewed commitment to delivering exceptional customer experience. The weeklong annual celebration highlights Airtel's dedication to recognizing and appreciating its customers, who are at the heart of the company's operations.

reaffirmed the company's commitment to providing superior experience and enhancing the customer journey across all touch-points.

"At Airtel, our customers are at the heart of everything we do; they are the reason we exist. Our commitment to delivering excellence in customer experience is unwavering, and we continue to invest in innovative solutions and dedicated teams to meet and exceed customer expectations," said Mr. Tal-

dar. During the Week, all employees across the functions are encouraged to go out in the field to engage with our customers to understand their expectations and engage with the customer-facing teams to know how best to support them to serve the customers.

Key Initiatives for Customer Service Excellence:

- Enhanced Digital Platforms: Airtel continues to upgrade its digital platforms, making it easier for customers to access services, resolve issues, and provide feedback.
- 24/7 Customer Support: The company has strengthened its customer service team, providing round-the-clock support through multiple channels, including phone, chat, and social media.
- Personalized Customer Engagement: Airtel is leveraging data and analytics to offer personalized solutions, ensuring each customer's needs are met promptly and effectively.
- Customer Feedback Integration: The company actively listens to customer feedback and incorporates suggestions into service improvements, reinforcing its customer-first approach. "Our goal is to be the most customer-centric telecommunications company, where every interaction leaves our customers delighted and valued. This Customer Service Week is not just about celebrating our customers but also about recommitting ourselves to the highest standards of service excellence," the CEO added.

As Airtel continues to drive innovation and expand its offerings, the company remains focused on building lasting relationships with its over 160m customers in its 14 markets in Africa, ensuring they remain at the core of its strategic decisions.





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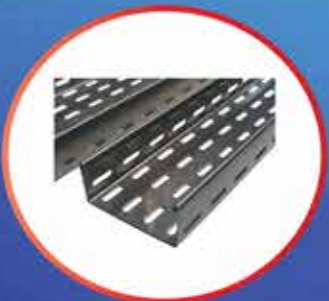
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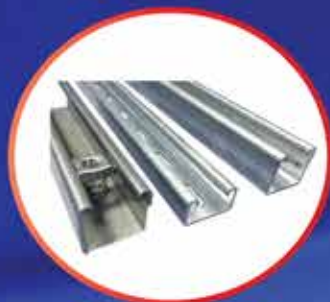
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## Zambia faces 3-year wait for hydro power recovery – Energy Minister confirms

Zambia’s Energy Minister, Makozo Chikote, has confirmed that the country’s hydro power generation will take at least three years to regain viability, despite predictions of favorable rainfall.

This admission comes as Zambia grapples with a severe power crisis, with a current electricity deficit of 1400MW against a peak demand of 2400 megawatts.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Zambian Business Times - ZBT*, Energy Minister, Makozo Chikote, said their rainfall experts have indicated the need for prolonged favorable rainfall patterns to restore hydro power generation to its full potential.

This is after some Experts had earlier exclusively revealed to ZBT that the hydro power generation will only retain viability after 2 to 3 years.

Chikote has since emphasized the government’s efforts to explore alternative power

sources, including rooftop solar panels and net metering, to address the ongoing power challenges.

The minister attributed the prolonged recovery period to the need for consistent rainfall patterns. “Our rainfall experts indicate that with normal to above-normal rainfall, it may take three years for hydro power generation to return to full potential,” Chikote explained.

Chikote said to mitigate the situation, the government is exploring alternative energy sources, including rooftop solar panels and net metering. “This shift in focus aims to reduce reliance on hydro power and ensure a more sustainable energy mix.”

“That is the information that we are being given by our rainfall experts that as much as we have been told that we are likely to receive favorable rainfall from normal to above normal but these does not mean that we will bounce back to our real position of the hydro generat-

ing power. It may take us some 3 years with good rainfall patterning for the hydro power generation to return to its full potential and this is the more reason we are trying to package other alternative source to make sure that even going forward the situation stabilizes.”

Despite the power deficit, Zambia continues to export electricity to neighboring countries. Chikote cited contractual obligations tied to debt as the reason for this exports. However, he assured that efforts are underway to renegotiate these contracts and reduce exports.

Responding to a question on the impact of load shedding on SMEs, Chikote said the government acknowledges the struggles of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) due to the power crisis and is working to address the situation. “We are alive to the fact that SMEs are grappling with this situation, and we are doing everything possible to mitigate it,” Chikote emphasized.

He said the current electricity deficit in Zambia stands at approximately 1400MW against a peak capacity of 2400 megawatts, with the country only generating 1000MW.

Asked about how much is being exported Chikote said “I wouldn’t want to give a wrong figure but I can assure you that exports from ZESCO side have drastically dropped and we are trying to see how we can also negotiate with the private sector to reduce on their exports.”

Acknowledging the impact of the electricity deficit on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), Chikote assured that the government is actively working to mitigate the situation for the betterment of the economy.

He said despite facing contractual obligations tied to power exports, efforts are underway to negotiate and address the country’s current challenges.



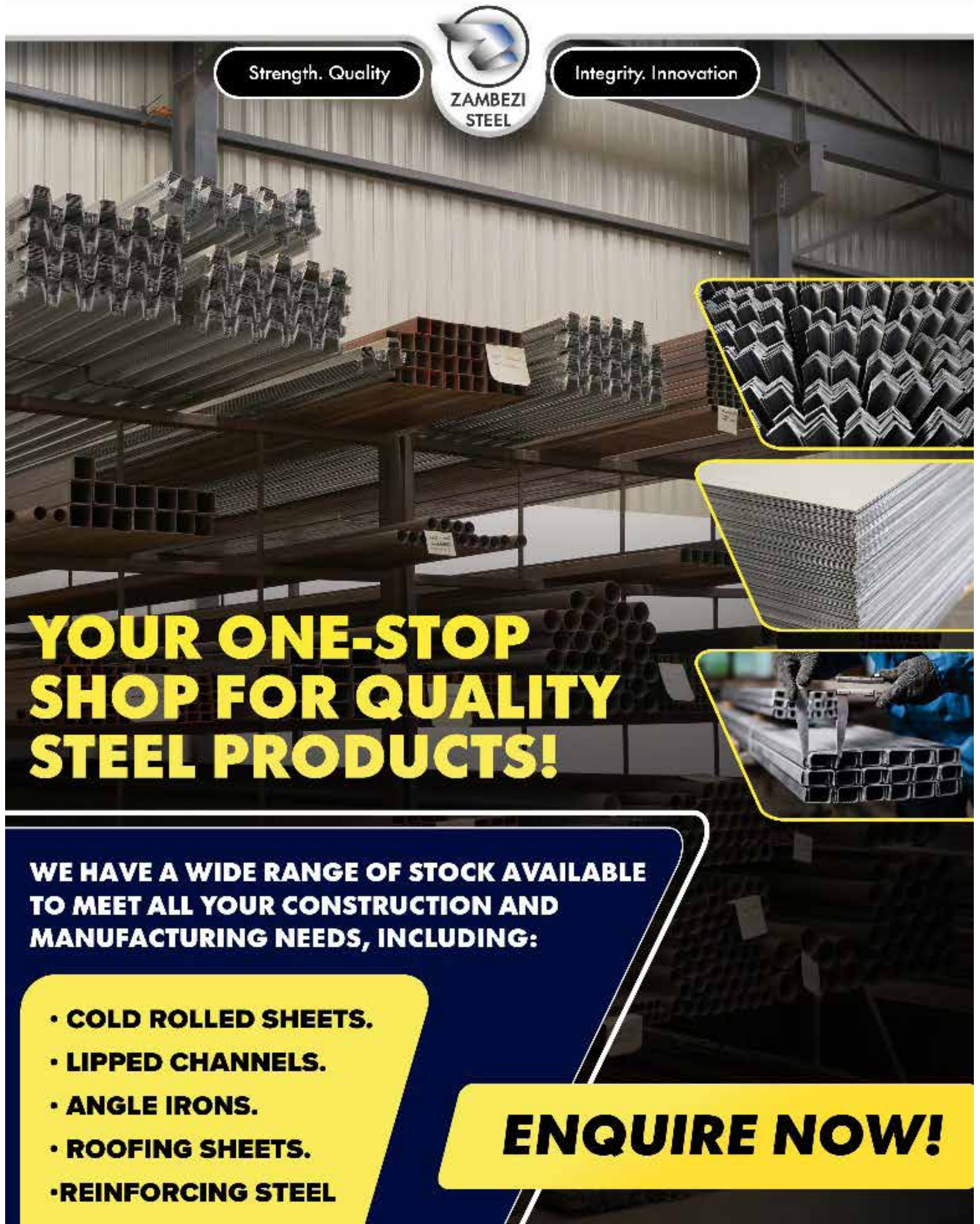
## Japanese firm Konoike Construction awarded tax holiday

The *Zambian government* est, fees, and commission, has approved Konoike from specified agree-Construction Company ments.


Limited for tax exemp- Konoike Construction tion through Statutory In- Company Limited strument No. 36 of 2024, will enjoy tax exemption on income earned.

According to the SI ob- have come into operation tained by the *Zambian* on 14th July, 2023, and Business Times-ZBT, this shall stand revoked on exemption covers income 31st December, 2025. earned, including inter-





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Remittance tax increase to negatively affect SMEs

Economist Esther Banda has charged that the increase in remittance taxes by the Government as announced in the 2025 Budget will affect most small and medium enterprises (SMES) who are grappling with the economic after shocks of the drought. Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Zambian Business Times* (ZBT) Banda said that the transaction costs are likely to increase which will hike the cost of doing business. “It will be difficult to thrive under these circumstances of energy deficit, and the SMEs spending on other alternative energy, and when we look at the remittance taxes, anybody sending \$2000 and above 15 percent of the remittance funds are going to attract a charge, we look at the fact that even transaction costs are likely to increase, 15 percent on every \$2000 US dollars is quite a lot of money,” she said. Banda further added that the increase of cooperative income tax from 14 percent to 20 percent will inflict the strides of growth on the SMEs “It would have been better for the Government to consider how they can cushion the impact of the drought by introducing subsidies and short-term measures, the budget does speak to the SMEs but not to a certain amount, we hope 2025 is not as rough as this year.” Meanwhile commenting on the projected reduction of inflation within

the 6-8 band, Banda remarked that the target is unattainable due to the Country’s dependence on imported fuel which is subject to price fluctuations on the international market. “As long we do not have control over the International fuel pump price, and we don’t have control on the Kwacha and fuel prices keep going up, it means that inflation is still likely to keep going up, its not a matter of putting down the targeted figures but I would have loved to see a strategic way of how that can be attained, but now its not possible to bring inflation to a single digit, the best way to do this is to apply subsidies in the energy sector,” she said.

Cost reflective tariffs to boost investor confidence – Expert

Energy Expert Boniface Zulu has recommended Finance Minister Dr. Situmbeko Musokotwane for backing the proposed introduction of cost reflective tariffs in his budget speech, citing that the statement is a greenlight to potential investors. Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Zambian Business Times* (ZBT) Zulu stated that the introduction of reflective tariffs is long over due and there is need for the Government to follow through and actualize the measure. “The Minister mentioned that energy experts have been talking about the introduction of cost reflective tariffs and Government now has heard our cry and put that into consideration, knowing that introducing cost reflective tariffs will actually help diversify the energy sector by attracting foreign investments and local investment as well, which was a great pointer during his speech because it gave a green light to potential investors showing that the Government is willing to open the energy sector,” he said. Zulu added that the allocation of funds from the 2025 budget, towards the expansion of transmission lines from Mozambique and Tanzania which is meant to increase the number of imports of energy, is a viable measure in meeting the electrical needs of the Country.





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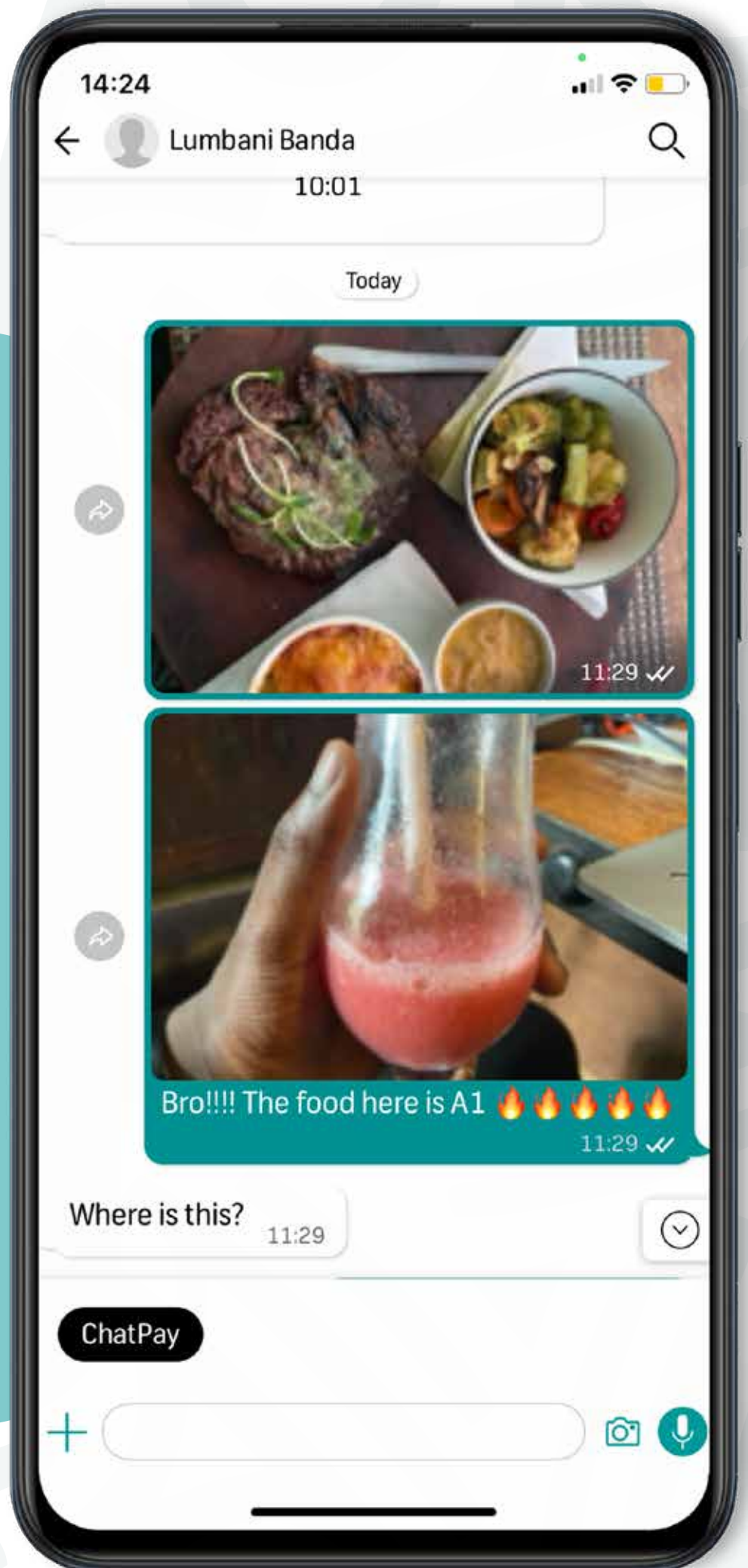
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## BDO hosts high level 2025 budget analysis

In its quest to continue providing a formidable platform for public discourse, BDO Zambia held a high level 2025 National Budget Analysis where key economic players among them businesses, institutions and government officials came together to analyze the K217 billion budget.

Speaking at the event attended by the *Zambian Business Times* (ZBT), BDO Zambia Director of Tax Advisory services Katrina Mabika said the event was in cognizant of exploring the financial strategies and economic policies that were mentioned in the budget by the Minister of Finance Dr. Situmbeko Musokotwane.

“We extend a special welcome to our colleagues from the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) and the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, your presence emphasizes the importance of collaboration between the public and private sector, and we appreciate your commitment to fostering transparency and dialogue. The 2025 budget is designed to promote economic recovery and inclusive growth, overall the tax measures are meant to support sustainable businesses, while businesses may face higher taxes, there are opportunities in renewable energy and simplified trade, as we discuss the budget let us focus on how we can leverage information to support our businesses and communities,” she said.

And giving a budget overview at the event, BDO Associate Director Kafumu Mbewe echoed that the budget is expected to increase compliance levels, and essential stability in the tax sphere in the Country.

“From the income tax side the changes remain the same, and continues up to next year, and there is a proposed change of advance income tax at a rate of 15 percent this is on remittances made outside Zambia and exports that are above USD2000, this is one of the major changes has been proposed

, we have noted a proposed revision of the cooperate income tax rate on profits that are realized from exports of non traditional and value addition to copper cathodes, the Company that comes in mind is ZAMEFA their cooperate income tax has been 15 percent up to this year and by next year it will be 20 percent,” he said.

Mbewe also noted the proposed 20 percent presumptive tax increase on operators of public service vehicles, stating that the rate has been constant but the change is meant to equalize the tax with the conditions of the market “Another positive change is the provision for the ZRA Commissioner General to waive penalties that are charged on underestimation, under VAT the major change speaks to smart invoicing, in which the Government is looking at compliance, making it more transparent, and the changes are that any claim that is not issued from the smart invoicing system will not be deductible, unless there is an exemption facilitated by ZRA, this is allowing for stability and predictability in the tax policy.”

And offering an Economic overview at the event, Ceasor Cheelo a representative from the Public Private Dialogue Forum (PPDF) said the budget is giving optimism and confidence to



businesses and households amidst the after shock of the drought.

“There are sectors that will take a bit of time for them to integrate into the smart invoice system, and one vital thing about taxation is that it should not be a cost to the business, or take a burden that will affect the businesses drastically, so we did put in exemption’s to allow everyone to come on board, and as we know we always have to expect bottlenecks, and if we make it mandatory we are allowing it to be punitive regime focused on penalties,” he said.

In his closing remarks, BDO Zambia Managing Partner Douglas Ironside observed that the budget is missing the major aspect of foreign direct investment, which is crucial to amassing substantial growth in the economy “On the smart invoicing initiative, hope ZRA does not focus on a small number of compliant clients, but there is a much larger non compliant entities, and it is good that the smart invoicing will make it difficult for the non compliant to operate.”

During the panel discussion ZRA Director for domestic Tax Shadreck Kachusa highlighted that the Authority had organized several engagements over the smart invoice initiative and several stakeholders such as the financial sector called on ZRA to allow them more time to get into the system.

“The budget is focused on public debt management and fiscal prudence, the reopening of the mines is giving new hope to the Copperbelt, new discoveries are in the wings and other mines are expected to be initiated, we have heard about cobalt, and in the budget there is an allocation towards geo mapping, so that the backbone of data is owned by the Government and can be used to negotiate licenses as well as mining licenses, social support elements such as the increase in CDF allocation, give us a birds eye view of what the Government is thinking,” he said.



## Chipata Industrial yard remodelled after lack of funding from World Bank

Eastern Province Deputy Permanent Secretary Dr. Lewis Mwape has disclosed that the Chipata Industrial Yard is being remodelled to accommodate manufacturers and artisanal miners after several SMEs that where supposed to occupy it could not receive adequate funding from the World Bank and CEEC.

The 2025 National Budget announced by Minister of Finance and National Planning Dr. Situmbeko Musokotwane had highlighted the expansion of the Industrial Yard initiative tailored towards meeting the needs of the entrepreneur’s, the initiative is spearheaded by the Citizens Economic Empowerment scheme (CEECE), Chipata is among the 8 districts scattered Countrywide that has received the initiative.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Zambian Business Times* (ZBT) Dr. Mwape stated that currently four SMEs have occupied the 10-hectare facility and there are conceived efforts aimed at introducing viable manufacturers and producers of goods and services.

“We are remodelling the industrial yard, at first it was only those funded by CEEC and World Bank that where suppose to occupy the building, now we are allowing all manufactures who have a business that can be supported, we are trying to make it activate so that we promote value addition, the agenda is to invest in the agriculture sector as a form of having more raw materials, and these raw materials must be processed, adding value and as province we are focusing on agriculture and mining, we are doing alot to actualize the processing of minerals,” he said.

Dr. Mwape added that there are measures that are scheduled to be introduced in marketing the products of the minerals that will be processed at the industrial Yard.

“Those that applied where funded and what occurred is that the equipment was bought, but the money for clearing the equipment was not given to some entrepreneurs and this affected them from starting the business, but those are bottle necks that we are looking at and focusing on businesses that are not on trial, people that have been operating but maybe there are facing challenges where they are working from, because that one in terms of electricity we have, and a commercial line has been provided if we are to relate to loadshedding, this facility will assist the artisans and manufactures to reduce the cost of production,” he said.

He commended Dr. Situmbeko Musokotwane for contributing to the stimulation of industrial yards in various Provinces, stating that the project is a game changer in incentivizing the SMEs who face numerous challenges in actualizing their businesses.



Eastern Province Deputy Permanent Secretary Dr. Lewis Mwape





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EIZ calls for efficient procurement processes for sustainable infrastructure development



The Engineering Institution contracting Policy, thereby of Zambia - EIZ, has emphasized the importance of efficient procurement processes, thorough budgeting, and adherence to project cash flow requirements for sustainable infrastructure development.

Speaking at the 2025 Budget Symposium in Lusaka, EIZ Vice President for Policy, Eng. Kennedy Musonda, said comprehensive budgeting and adequate funding are crucial for delivering quality projects within schedule and budget.

Public Relations and National Development Eng. Kennedy Musonda, said comprehensive budgeting and adequate funding are crucial for delivering quality projects within schedule and budget.

“Many public infrastructure projects have faced delays or abandonment due to lack of funding, which negatively impacts project delivery and increases costs,” he said. Eng. Musonda said the Institution conducted a comprehensive analysis of the project implementation landscape in 2021 specifically on public infrastructure and some of the findings presented are as follows:

- Inadequate design and supervision arrangements on most public infrastructure projects.
- Inadequate display of locals on subcontracted works under the 20% Local Sub-

quality. not fully utilized, which impacts project quality and local capacity building.

- Widespread perceptions about diminished ethics and integrity among various players in public infrastructure development.

- Public infrastructure maintenance is not being prioritized.

To address these issues, the EIZ recommends stricter enforcement of the Public Finance Management Act No. 1 of 2018, prioritizing infrastructure maintenance in national budgets, and improving collaboration among key sectors such as telecommunications, water, and roads.

“By promoting competition in procurement and enforcing higher standards of accountability, we can ensure that Zambia’s infrastructure projects are not only built to last but also contribute to inclusive growth and economic resilience,” Eng. Musonda added.

EIZ has called on all stakeholders to prioritize quality, sustainability, and ethical practices in public infrastructure projects to secure long-term benefits for the Zambian economy.

BOZ revokes LendMePay license

The Bank of Zambia - BOZ has revoked the payment system business license of LendMePay Zambia Limited.

According to a government notice seen by the Zambian Business Times - ZBT, BOZ Deputy Governor, Dr. Francis Chipimo stated that the revocation of LendMePay licence is effective August 26, 2024.

The notice brings an end to LendMePay’s operation as a payment system business under the National Payment Systems Act, 2007. The business effectively ceases to legally operate.

However, the timing of the revocation has sparked accusations of wrong considering LendMePay’s recent legal dispute with its former board members who claimed that the firm had accumulated and neglected to pay notable board fees to its ex-directors.

In an exclusive interview with ZBT, LendMePay Zambia Managing Director Muzala Shinka stated that the revocation of the payment system license does not signal the end of the company, but that there is a shift in the business model.

“We have changed our business model and will no longer operate as a payment system business,” Shinka told ZBT.

“The license we had was to operate as a payment system business, but we have not been operating in that space for two years. Our goal is now to enter the micro-lending market, and we are in the process of obtaining a micro-finance license,” stated Shinka.

When asked by ZBT on whether the recent legal dispute involving former board members renowned lawyer Linda Kasonde of Chapter One Foundation and Janice Matwi who had sued the company for failure to settle outstanding board fees could have influenced the revocation?

In September 2024, the Lusaka High Court had ordered Lendmepay Zambia Limited pay US\$14,000 to pay lawyer Linda Kasonde and US\$22,500 to Janice Matwi for unpaid director fees.

Shinka however refuted the allegations stating “that issue is not related to the directors resigning [and the legal dispute] demanding for payment of the long outstanding of board fees . That matter was resolved over a month ago, but unfortunately, it has gained traction”.

Our focus now is on transitioning the business and securing the microfinance license,” Shinka told ZBT. He told ZBT that while they have moved away from the payment business for now, it remains part of their long-term strategy.



# MINING

## Govt suspends surtax on wire rod coils imports



The Zambian government has waived surtax (suspended custom and exercise) on wire rod coils imports for a period of 6 months effective June 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024.

According to the Statutory Instrument No. 48 of 2024, signed by Finance Minister Dr Situmbeko Musokotwane, the suspension applies to hot-rolled iron or steel bars and rods with a diameter of less than 14mm among others.

Business Times-ZBT, the

surtax payable on the goods set out in the Schedule is suspended to free.

According to the regulation, signed by Finance Minister Dr. Situmbeko Musokotwane, the suspension applies to hot-rolled iron or steel bars and rods with a diameter of less than 14mm among others.

These Regulations are deemed to have come into operation on 1st June 2014 and shall stand revoked on 31st December 2024.

According to SI No. 48 of 2024, the surtax payable on the goods set out in the Schedule is suspended to free.



## Copper export earnings drops 5%

The Zambian copper industry experienced a 4.6% decrease in export earnings from refined copper, dropping from K17.2 billion in July 2024 to K16.4 billion in August 2024. Refined Copper export volumes decreased by 6.4 percent from 68.7 thousand mt in July 2024 to 64.3 thousand mt in August 2024.” Confirmed Goodson Sinyenga, Zamstats Statistician General. Furthermore, copper prices on the LME market also saw a 4.6% decrease, from US\$9,393.6 per mt in July 2024 to US\$8,963.7 per mt in August 2024. Meanwhile, the cumulative volume of refined copper exported from January to August 2023 stood at 531.6 thousand mt, while the corresponding period in 2024 saw a decrease to 511.5 thousand mt, representing a 3.6% decline.

## Foreign owned firms grab all big contracts at Mopani

Mine Suppliers and Contractors Association of Zambia (MSCAZ) has noted with concern the continued sidelining of local suppliers and contractor in the mining sector as foreign firms have continued getting the biggest share leaving local businesses with minimal involvement in high-value contracts.

This comes amid concerns of low local participation in high value contracts after the revamping of Mopani Copper mines – MCM.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Zambian Business Times – ZBT, Mine Suppliers and Contractors Association of Zambia (MSCAZ) president Costa Mwaba said the lack of a law compelling mining companies to prioritize local participation has led to a situation where foreign firms are reaping the majority of the benefits.

Mwaba argued that while some contracts at Mopani are awarded to Zambian companies, these businesses are often foreign-owned in composition, resulting in the majority of the money flowing out of the country.

“Obviously the percentage of local participation is minimal, if you look at the whole supply chain talk about equipment Obviously there are local companies registered but they are foreign composition.”

“So these are the things we are talking about where by money goes to those foreign institution as they are the ones who getting a lot of money and that challenge will continue not until we find a permanent solution.”

“What is confusing is that when they give contracts they are local companies they operate in Zambia and they will tell you we spending 80% of the Jobs to Zambians they are Zambian companies but they are foreign composition whenever they are given those orders they escape the flight the money goes out.”

Local suppliers and contractors have since advocated for legislation to promote their increased participation in the country’s mining sector. The call for legislation to address this imbalance stems from the desire to empower local suppliers and contractors, ultimately leading to sustainable development and economic growth within Zambia.

Mwaba has also stressed the importance of long-term investment and capacity building to ensure that local businesses can compete on an equal footing with multinational firms.

He emphasized the need for deliberate action to support the empowerment of Zambian suppliers and contractors, citing examples from other countries where similar measures have led to significant progress in local content and ownership within the mining sector.

government and mining companies have also been challenged to prioritize the development and implementation of laws that support local participation, emphasizing that while foreign investment is valuable, it should complement, rather than overshadow, the growth and empowerment of Zambian businesses.

“Because they will tell you we are giving businesses to the Zambian Companies and it’s true they are giving business to Zambian companies but they are foreign in composition. We do get jobs but not at a rate we would want to get jobs we don’t want just jobs for drainages or things that are not highly technical, how will we get up in the ladder for us to participate in serious issue.”

Mwaba said the long term effect has been that the country has been talking about Zambians not having capacity to carry out bigger projects because they are coming from a place where Zambians have been sidelined from participating in major projects adding that it will take courage to reverse this situation.

“Congo which was far behind us in every area of local content in terms of production and so many they have surpassed us in every area because in Congo 51% shareholding is for a Congolese they have moved to those levels because they have courage to do those things.”

“That is what we need to do if we want long term effects on the Zambian citizens is to ensure that as we are engaging these investors we must be deliberate to ensure that Zambian suppliers and contractors are empowered to that extent by passing a law that supports employment it’s not just by talking but by supporting a law that empowers citizens.”

“There are issues of capacity that have always been talked about, capacity is always built today If I want to develop someone will take that person to school and ensure that you meet the standards that are needed then will train you on the job to capacitate you to their levels now you can only do that if your investment is long terms and we know that these mining firms there have been here for over 20 years now most of them so it’s been long terms and those are some of the things that we need to address to say where would you want to see us if you are talking about 3 million tons per annum by 2031 where do you want to see the local companies in that period do you see them being shareholders? He questioned.

“Zambia belong to all of us and if we want to see Zambia develop it can only be developed by Zambians. whilst investment is good, we need to attract investment that allows the supporting of local suppliers and contractors.” He remarked.



## Agriculture allocation in 2025 Budget falling short of Malabo declaration

The National Union for Small scale farmers of Zambia - NUSFAZ, has raised concerns over the allocation of funds to the agricultural sector in the 2025 National Budget.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Zambian Business Times - ZBT, NUSFAZ, Executive Director Ebony Lolozhi has noted that out of the total budget of approximately 217 billion, only 15.4 billion has been allocated to agriculture, which accounts for a mere 7% of the total budget.

He said this allocation falls short of the 10% commitment made in the Malabo declaration, which aimed to allocate at least 10% of the national budget to agriculture.

The Malabo Summit reaffirmed that agriculture should remain high on the development agenda of the continent, and is a critical policy initiative for African economic growth and poverty reduction.

Lolozhi highlighted that the majority of resources in the agricultural budget continue to be allocated to two programs, namely the farmer input support program and the strategic food reserves. He emphasized that the trend

of allocating a significant portion of the budget to these programs leaves out other equally important sectors in agriculture, such as fisheries and livestock.

Expressing disappointment, Lolozhi stressed the importance of equitable distribution of resources across the agricultural sector, emphasizing the potential for other sectors to accelerate agricultural development in the country.

Furthermore, he raised concerns about the allocation of resources to the constituency development fund (CDF), noting that while these resources could potentially improve rural infrastructure, there is a need for deliberate allocation to ensure that they benefit small-scale farmers, livestock development, and rural connectivity.

Despite the government's proposal to construct and rehabilitate dams in the 2025 budget, Lolozhi reiterated the union's disappointment in the failure to meet the 10% threshold set out in the Malabo declaration.

He emphasized the importance of honoring commitments and called for a more balanced allocation of resources across the agricultural sector.

“Yes one would argue that perhaps these resources might help improve rural infrastructure such as feeder roads , dams , storage structures and so on, but we need to be very deliberate when it comes to the allocation of such resources because if we just leave it as a blanket, to say 36 million is going to go to CDF ,how are we going to ensure that at least these resources can be used maybe in terms of improving access to irrigation by small scale farmers , access to improved livestock genetic resources maybe for beef or for goats and sheep or that some of the funds are going to feeder roads to improve rural connectivity.” He explained.

“As a union we still remain largely disappointed with the fact that we still continue lagging behind in terms of reaching the 10% threshold as per Malabo declaration of which is coming to an end this year and next year we are going in the Kampala Declaration and we still haven't met that threshold as it is very important to make sure that we honor our commitment and then also the issue of most resources still going to FISP and the food reserves ,I think to us it does not settle well with our aspirations.” He stated.



Zambia Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity - ZAAB says the proposed Licensing fees for crop variety is likely to have a negative impact on the sector which will cause the price of the seeds to go up.

In the 2025 National Budget Finance and National Planning Minister Dr Situmbeko Musokotwane has proposed introduction of licensing fees for crop variety, basic and certified seed sales, and parental lines sales.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Zambian Business Times – ZBT, Zambia Alliance for Agroecology and Biodiversity National

Coordinator Mutinta Nketani said, the proposed introduction of licensing fees for crop varieties will most likely affect production due to increased prices of seeds. “With the increase that we already know with Fertilizer, and other chemicals because of the war in Ukraine and Russia we have seen that there has been a sustained increase in the prices of fertilizer and other agro chemicals and now with this, the cost of the price of seed is likely to increase.” She stated

Nketani added that the proposed introduction of licensing fees will also have an impact on the cost of Agricultural production which will

also increase. “Now what this means for the small holder farmer is that having their own seed, like what we talk about farmer managed seed systems would actually come in handy for resilience building.” She said. She further told ZBT, that there is need for the Government to promote Farmer managed seed systems where farmers are able to save and share their own seed.

Nketani further added that there is need to create community seed banks that will buffer this increase that is expected in seed prices.

## CEDORA purchases 140K tons of soya

The Crushers and Edible Oil Refiners Association – CEDORA has disclosed that they have purchased about 140,000 tons from the total 168,000 tons of soya beans. Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Zambian business Times – ZBT, the crushers and Edible Oil Refiners Association Director Aubrey Chibumba said, from the last season crop they had purchased about 130,000-140,000 tons of Soya beans out of the total crop of about 168,000 metric tons.

104,000 tons which was sitting in FRA stocks from the year, so we had some of that carry over stock with us. We didn't really have a target because we didn't know how much soya beans were going to be on the market so we just bought whatever was there.” He said Chibumba added that out of the purchased 140,000 tons of soya beans they are going to process about 28, 000 tons of cooking oil.

“When we look at the country's demand, just for the do-

mestic market we'll probably need about between 120,000 – 150,000 tons per year.” He said. He added that looking at it soya beans only contains about 18% oil on average, adding that for the country to be self-sufficient in oil production there is need to produce about 800,000 metric tons of soya beans so that if they crush it, it would be enough for the domestic market.





AIZ elated with 2025 Budget allocation to the agriculture sector

Agriculture Institute of Zambia Registrar says the 2025 National Budget is poised to have a transformative impact on the agriculture sector by addressing key challenges and setting the stage for long-term growth and resilience. Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Zambian Business Times-ZBT*, Agriculture Institute of Zambia Registrar Mattawes Ngosa said government’s allocation to the Farmer Input Support Program (FISP) and the Sustainable Agricultural Financing Facility (SAFF) will directly benefit small-scale farmers by providing inputs such as seeds and fertilizers at subsidized rates.

“This is critical in improving crop yields and enabling farmers to recover from recent climate shocks of the last season’s huge losses as a result of the worst drought ever experienced last farming season. The budget allocations will help stabilize input costs and enable more farmers to have the resources to expand production, which will positively impact food security and rural livelihoods.” He said

Ngosa added that Investments in irrigation systems and energy infrastructure, as highlighted in the budget, are crucial in making the agricultural sector more resilient to climate change. “With unpredictable weather patterns becoming more frequent, these measures will re-

duce dependency on rain-fed agriculture and ensure more stable production cycles.” He said. He further stated that encouraging private sector participation is expected to spur innovation and investment in agricultural technology, processing, and marketing, adding that this will not only create jobs but also increase the value addition within the sector by enhancing its contribution to GDP.

“Smallholder farmers may benefit from improved access to markets and better prices for their produce. With regards to Fisheries and Livestock the 2025 budget’s focus on fisheries and livestock will promote sustainability, disease control, and value addition, positioning these sectors as key drivers of agricultural diversification and rural development.” He said.

He further stated that the government has focused on boosting fish production through investments in aquaculture.

“This includes financing initiatives aimed at improving fish farming practices and increasing fish stocks, which will enhance both food security and livelihoods in fishing communities. Aquaculture is being positioned as a key area for reducing overfishing in natural water bodies and providing an alternative and sustainable source of fish.”

He said. He added that significant funding has also been directed towards livestock development to improve animal health services and enhance disease control.

“The budget has allocated resources for vaccination campaigns against diseases like foot-and-mouth disease and other zoonotic illnesses, which have historically impacted livestock productivity. Improved veterinary services and restocking are also intended to help smallholder farmers increase the quality and quantity of their livestock production.” He said.

Ngosa added that the increased Constituency Development Fund (CDF) allocation will likely support rural infrastructure projects like road networks and storage facilities, making it easier for farmers to transport their produce to market as it will help lower costs and reduce post-harvest losses, directly impacting farmer incomes.

“Like crop agriculture, investments in rural infrastructure will benefit livestock farmers by improving access to markets and reducing transportation costs. There is also a push to enhance value addition in the livestock sector, such as through meat processing facilities, which will create jobs and boost the sector’s contribution to the economy.” He said.



Steep roller mealie-meal prices at Sioma blamed on escalated transport costs

Sioma District Commissioner has attributed the hike in price for a 25kg bag of Roller mealie meal to high transportation cost in the district.

According to the latest ZAMSTATS report for September it showed that Roller mealie meal in Sioma was selling at K360 as compared to other districts like Mongu where it is selling at K190 per 25Kg bag.

Speaking in an exclusive in-

terview with the *Zambian Business Times-ZBT*, Sioma District Commissioner Mike Kamutumwa said, transportation cost has contributed majorly to the hike in Mealie meal prices in the district as businessmen buy and transport the mealie meal from Mongu and Senanga and then take it to Sioma.

“I am sure the hike is because of where they are buying the mealie meal, as they are buying it from maybe Senanga,

Mongu taking to Sioma. So that Transportation aspect can make the mealie meal price to go up because in Sioma we don’t have a milling plant, in Senanga we do not have a milling plant we only have a Milling plant in Mongu so that can be the contributing factor.” He said.

Kamutumwa further stated that ZNS brand is currently selling K230 breakfast Mealie meal and K190 for 25Kg Roller meal respectfully.



FRA purchases about 590K maize

Food Reserve Agency – FRA has disclosed that as at 1st October, 2024, the agency (FRA) purchased about 590,000 Metric tons of non-genetically modified Grade A white maize.

This acquisition, equivalent to 11,744,518 fifty-kilogram bags of maize, underscores the crucial role played by Zambian farmers in contributing to national food security.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Zambian Business Times – ZBT*, FRA Public Relations Coordinator expressed gratitude to the farmers for their decision to sell their maize to the govern-

ment through FRA. Chipandwe said this strategic move not only supports efforts to replenish National Strategic Food Reserves but also makes a meaningful impact in providing sustenance to households across the country.

He said as of the aforementioned date, FRA has procured a total of 587,225.94 metric tons nationwide, with significant purchases recorded in various provinces. Notably, the agency has acquired 190,896.75 metric tons in Northern province, 124,513.00 metric tons in Muchinga, 92,756.73 metric tons in Luapula, and some quantities in other regions.

Chipandwe has further urged farmers in provinces that were not affected by drought to patriotically sell their excess produce to the government through the agency. He said this collaborative effort will facilitate the transportation of surplus maize from the Northern region to drought-affected provinces, thereby addressing food shortages and ensuring equitable distribution across the country.

With the Northern part of Zambia emerging as a vital food basket, FRA emphasizes the necessity of procuring excess maize to support residents in drought-affected provinces.



## Capacitate DEBS office to increase monitoring and compliance levels

Zambia National Education Coalition (ZANEC) has called on the Government to fund the DEBS office in ensuring that the monitoring and compliance levels in schools are heightened.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Zambian Business Times* (ZBT) ZANEC Executive Director George Hamusunga remarked that over the recent past the Government has focused more on funding schools, leaving the DEBS without resources to carry out thorough monitoring of schools.

“We have noticed that the Government is focused on school grants, which is a good thing but they are forgetting the DEBS office capacity to be able to monitor and ensure that quality exists in all the

schools, and also be able to penalize some of the schools that may be deemed to be illegal, so Government needs to send enough money to the Province and the districts also to enable them monitor the quality of education, and ensure that those schools which

do not meet quality are closed and those that are not registered are closed as well, that is part of ensuring quality,” he said.

Meanwhile Hamusunga observed that the scrapping off of allowances for workers is retrogressive “We have seen this ambivalent, surrounding allowances, that workers should not be paid allowances and trying to cut some of the allowances, for instance even for standards officers that are suppose to monitor schools, the cutting of allowances for

any one who needs to get the job done including teachers when they are marking examinations, they don’t want them to be motivated and paid allowances like lunch allowance which they definitely need.”

He echoed that the allowances are applicable in strengthening internal controls, “They think that giving an allowance to an accountant for them to monitor prudent utilization of resources is a share waste of money, allowances are for a purpose if someone has to travel and they miss their lunch or have to lodge, they need to be given money, and we cannot run a Country where people are not being allowances, that is something that must be resolved amicably.”



*ZANEC Executive Director George Hamusunga*



## PROTUZ bemoan lack of salary scale upgrade for teachers

Professional Teachers Union of Zambia (PROTUZ) has called for the upgrade of salary scales for teachers who are already in the system, revealing that a lot of them are languishing with the lack of upgrade.

In the recently announced 2025 budget the education sector has been allocated K31.5 billion, which accounts for an increase from K27.3 billion from the 2024 budget. Speaking in an exclusive interview with *Zambian Business Times* (ZBT) Musenge echoed that the Government must take advantage of the upcoming recruitment to upscale the positions of the teachers. “We suggest that as the Government employs the teachers, they should upgrade those who are already existing, because the teachers are so demoralized that new teachers are getting new salary scales, then the old teachers who have upgraded themselves are still in the lower salary scale, but otherwise we know there are replacements or net recruitment that goes on and on every time,” he said. Meanwhile Musenge called

on the Government to consider renovating the classrooms and build new houses for both existing and incoming teachers.

“We want to see a deliberate policy that is tuned to the completion of schools, we have a number of Schools which have not been completed and we have also seen a number of teachers houses which are yet to be completed, and teachers are grappling with the shortage of accommodation in most rural schools” he said.

## Uranium project in Zambia on track – GoviEx

GoviEx Uranium Company says its Muntanga Uranium Project in Zambia is progressing as planned and the Company will as expected publish the feasibility study before the end of 2024.

With an anticipated annual production capacity of 2.5 million pounds of U3O8, the project is expected to be a significant contributor to the global uranium market.

GoviEx’s CEO, Daniel Major, said Progress at Muntanga, where the Feasibility

Study is on track for publication later this year, has reinforced the belief in the potential of the underexplored, yet highly prospective areas in the country.

He said following the publication of the FS, GoviEx anticipates advancing project financing efforts to be in a position to make a production decision, that could see the Muntanga Project potentially commencing production two years after construction commences.

GoviEx Uranium, the company with mining rights had earlier exclusively confirmed to ZBT that the company is expected to secure the project financing and start construction at Muntanga Uranium Mine once the bankable feasibility study is completed with the first uranium production targeted for 2027/2028.

Uranium production can add to resolving the energy deficit Zambia continues to grapple with whenever water levels drop on the back of hydro-power over-dependence.





## TEVETA targets SMEs in renewable energy training

As the Country comes to terms with the renewable energy agenda due to the shock of the drought, the demand for skills is increasing everyday. However TEVETA Cooperate Affairs Manager Clive Siachiyako has disclosed that the Authority is bound to partner with the Ministry of Green Economy to offer training to SMEs who are already established but lack expertize in renewable energy.

He said the Green tech has been established and TEVETA is working alongside Ministry of Green Economy, Ministry of Technology and Science, Ministry of Commerce and Trade, and Ministry of SME to implement the project.

Speaking in an exclusive

interview with the Zambian Business Times (ZBT) Siachiyako echoed that the program is being funded by the European Union and is dubbed green tech, and part of the project is meant to finance the SMEs.

“The program is called Green Tech, we are getting in a partnership with the Ministries that signed the MOU, because part of what they are doing is to develop and finance SMEs who are into solar energy business, our economy Indicates that mainly the people that come to install Solar are SMEs and not companies, and our focus is to build relevant capacity for SMEs and we are starting a training program towards SMEs,” he said.

Siachiyako revealed that the

project is likely to be initiated in Multi Facility Economic Zone (MFEZ) and the SMEs will be equipped in installation and maintenance.

“The financing will be done for them to form cooperatives, and initiative the project in an MFEZ so that when we walk in there, we are going to find the right skills and the type of services that needed, we are also working with the Solar Industry Association of Zambia, and this institution will profile the SMEs that are equipped in solar maintenance and other skills, they will work just like the Engineering Association of Zambia (EIZ), they will accredit and license the installers” he said.



## Internet penetration of 70% needed to have a smart Zambia

Internet Society Zambia

Chapter President Levy Syanseke says the Country must upscale its internet penetration to 70 percent, further highlighting that there is need for the Government to fund infrastructure and policy realization.

According to the ZICTA 2024 Mid year report, the internet penetration now stands at 63.1 percent per 100 households from 58.1 percent in 2023.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Zambian Business Times (ZBT) Syansenke noted that there has been a lot of pronouncements regarding upscaling the technological landscape of the Country, but there is a lack of deliberate course of action towards achieving the policies in a timed frame.

“We need an internet penetration of not less than 70 percent, but there is a problem with the budgeting, we notice that things like Social Welfare are not taken of as well as public service delivery but public spending on mostly along bills and debts are highly budgeted, it’s not an issue of implementation, it’s about the budgeting which does not align with the MOUs, and some of the things that we are aspiring to become as a nation Technologically,” he said.

“Most of the pronouncements remain as policies and documents because we are good at planning as a nation, but I think it’s another thing that we need to be deliberate about the measures to put in place actions for us to see the desired actualization of these MOUs, where there is a rich coverage of these services even in rural areas,” he said.

And Syanseke echoed that the cost of access in terms of competitiveness compared to other Countries is quite high, and does not reflect the needs of the economy “our data prices is too high, it is something that we need to look into where the pricing is relatively affordable, compared to the cost of living but also in light of the population.”



## Six districts in Luapula Province receive Starlink

Internet accessibility in rural areas is still prevalent in most parts of Zambia, however over the recent past Government has rolled out the Smart Zambia Project whose aim is to increase the provision of E Government services to several parts of the Country.

There are deplorable effects attached to the lack of internet accessibility

as services such as Social Cash Transfer and FISP E Voucher services are mostly or partially unattainable.

Luapula Province whose population is about 1.5 million people has largely been underdeveloped Technologically, however Province Permanent Secretary Might Mumba revealed that through the Smart Zambia Project

there are 6 districts that have been equipped with the technology in the essential access of Government services on the internet.

“We have six districts that have gained digital transformation centers through their post offices namely: Samfya, Mansa, Mwense, Kawambwa, Kazembe, and Nchelenge, these are the

centers that we are using where people can access free internet facilities, our people are now able to gain access even in remote areas,” he said.

Mumba further added that the project is expected to be rolled out in the remaining six districts although he could not specify the expected time frame work.





# Power Promises on the Line: Will ZESCO Deliver?



As Zambia rolls into October, citizens are once again weighing promises from the nation’s energy sector against their daily experiences. Managing Director of ZESCO, Eng. Victor Mapani, made bold commitments that Maamba Collieries would return to the grid by October 1st, adding 150MW of power to the nation’s supply. Additionally, 30% of uninterrupted power reserved for the mining industry was set to be redirected to homes and small businesses. Despite these pledges, questions loom: Is ZESCO on track to deliver, or are we witnessing yet another cycle of overpromising and under-delivering?

## The Press Briefing

At a press conference held yesterday, Zambia’s Minister of Energy, Makozi Chikote, gave a detailed update on the energy situation. He proudly announced the completion of all works at Maamba Collieries and declared that electricity imports from Namibia were back on track. “Power will now be supplied steadily and unobstructed to retailers throughout the nation for three hours,” said the Minister, asking the audience to applaud his achievement.

But with only three hours of supply allocated to retailers, skepticism arises. Maamba Collieries was supposed to bring an additional 150MW to the grid, complemented by imports from Namibia, yet the improvement appears minimal. Does this math add up? Are ZESCO’s actions

aligned with its promises, or is there more to this story? Minister Chikote went further to shift part of the responsibility for solving Zambia’s energy problems to the people. “It’s not only BOMAIYANGANEPOL!” he exclaimed, stressing that citizens must also take action by adopting alternative energy solutions like solar power. He repeatedly called on businesses and households to install solar panels to reduce reliance on the national grid and suggested they use financial institutions if cost was a barrier.

The Minister further implored private solar traders to make solar solutions affordable, citing the government’s tax incentives. “If you don’t take this seriously, we will regulate the prices,” said Chikote, referring to the incentives designed to make alternative energy more accessible.

## ZESCO’s Previous Promises: A Pattern of Inconsistency?

While the government continues to encourage solar energy as a backup, ZESCO’s promises haven’t always been followed by consistent action. Last month, Eng. Victor Mapani committed to redirecting 30% of power

reserved for mining to homes and small businesses. Yet, when asked about actual implementation during yesterday’s press briefing, Mapani confirmed that retailers would receive just three hours of steady electricity—a far cry from the bold statements about stabilizing power

across Zambia. During a press conference earlier this year, Mapani had also spoken of long-term projects like the Kalungwishi dam and feasibility studies on hydropower potential at the Luapula River, in collaboration with Congo. At the time, he reassured Zambians that these projects would eventually ease the burden of loadshedding. But as we approach the end of the year, the burden remains, leaving many wondering whether ZESCO’s leadership can be trusted to meet its ambitious goals.

## Public Reaction and Realistic Expectations

The reactions to the current energy situation range from cautious optimism to outright frustration. Zambia has long been plagued by power outages that disrupt small-scale businesses and affect households. Despite reassurances, many Zambians remain doubtful that the nation’s power utility will effectively tackle the shortfall anytime soon. “Loadshedding is not a problem created by anyone, it’s a natural thing, God’s work,” Minister Chikote said, urging citizens to stop politicizing the issue.

However, the numbers tell a different story. According to Energy Regulation Board (ERB) Chairperson James Banda, ZESCO has once again submitted a petition for an emergency tariff increase. While this may help mitigate some of the company’s financial pressures, it does little to

alleviate the immediate concerns of Zambians who have been promised power—only to receive three hours a day. Furthermore, Banda criticized the private sector’s slow response to government incentives for solar energy, warning that the government might intervene to regulate solar panel and LPG prices if traders continue exploiting the current crisis.

## Conclusion: Is ZESCO Ready for the Challenge?

With ZESCO at the center of Zambia’s energy challenges, the stakes couldn’t be higher. The 150MW from Maamba Collieries, coupled with imports from Namibia, should have created some relief. However, the allocation of just three hours to retailers suggests either mismanagement or an underestimation of the country’s consumption needs.

As Zambia moves deeper into October, the true test lies ahead: will ZESCO and the government follow through on their promises, or will Zambians continue to experience the kind of energy shortages that make these commitments feel hollow? Only time will tell.

For now, citizens are left with an unsatisfactory three-hour power supply and rising doubts about whether the energy utility can meet its commitments.

## Projected increase in production of vaccines to have a positive impact on the livestock sector

Veterinary Association of Zambia says the projected over disease outbreak as the over 10 million Newcastle vaccine has been very effective so far in places where it has been used.” He said . vaccines that the Central Veterinary Research Institute Chiyoba added that as an association they can’t wait to see that solution provided to the farmers.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Zambia Business Times - ZBT , sector is having and CVRI Veterinary Association of Zambia President Malcolm Chiyoba said, the projected 100% enough, but sufficient support will be able to do a lot of stuff to encourage increased production to the sector.” He stated “With the projected production of over 10 million Newcastle disease Vaccines, we

## Poor road network in Chiengwe affects mealie meal prices – Council Chairperson

Chiengwe Council Chairperson says the hike in breakfast mealie meal in the district could be attributed to the poor road network as most of the transporters tend to overcharge. He said.

According to the ZAMSTATS report for September it showed that 25kg breakfast Mealie Meal in Chiengwe District was selling at K400 which was the maximum price compared to other districts. Mwanto further told ZBT that currently in Chiengwe they only have one commercial Milling plant called Nantembe Milling Plant which is currently not producing but is only milling for people on an individual basis.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Zambia Business Times- ZBT , Chiengwe Council Chairperson Francis Mwanto attributed the hike to poor road network in the district, stating that most transporters tend to take advantage and overcharge the businessmen.

“There are so many Hammer mills dotted across the district with this CDF program which has come a lot of cooperatives have acquired hammer mills.” He said. He further stated that they are hoping to see the roads worked on as soon as possible especially the ones from Kashikishi ,Muchinga road UpTo Kaputa, stating that when this is done things will be ok as they are currently being exploited in terms of transport cost. have the mealie meal pre-



# Govt challenged to focus on content monetization in music industry

The Zambia Association for Musicians – ZAM has emphasized the urgent need for government to focus on the issue of monetization within the music industry.

Speaking exclusively to the *Zambian Business Times* ZBT, ZAM President Davison Munsanda highlighted the importance of monetizing digital platforms for Zambian artists, enabling them to generate revenue through music streams and online sales.

Emphasizing the need for Zambia to be on par with international standards in terms of monetization, Musanda stressed the potential for significant financial gains for artists and the industry as a whole.

Meanwhile, ZAM has expressed gratification with the government’s attention to their concerns regarding foreign artist fees and promoter license fees.

Furthermore, the President underscored the significance of fair and equitable treatment for Zambian artists, particularly in relation to foreign artists performing in the country. He called for a review of the fees associated with international artists’ per-

formances and urged the government to ensure that such fees benefit the local music industry.

In addition to addressing financial concerns, the President emphasized the need for government investment in the arts, including support for music promotion, cultural exchange, and event organization.

He urged the government to implement policies and provide financial support to promoters, creating a conducive environment for the growth and sustainability of the music industry.

Musanda emphasized the importance of educating the public about the value of live music shows and the need to adjust ticket prices to reflect the quality and value of the performances.

He called for a comprehensive approach that aligns fee revisions with broader support structures to enhance infrastructure and promote the development of the arts sector.

“The biggest side from our sector they should focus on is monetization, we want to monetize all digital plat-

forms we want our Artists to be able to generate revenue via streams ,we want Zambia to be on the same Grid like any other country in terms of monetization online, because then, with that we would be making a lot of money and generating a lot of money via sales of music and then as we do events , you see artists do not need to do events every day they need to do properly managed events in given spaces that means we’ll have events of value.” He explained

Musanda further explained to ZBT that Zambians need to know the value of shows they go to, needs to be elevated. “If they were paying K50 for a show they need to understand why an artist now deserves to be watched by fellow Zambians by paying 300 to K2000 as this is the level that artists have reached but we are not moving at the same time.” He said

Munsanda further stated that they hope that the revising of the fees should speak to many other support structures that will be able to bring out implementation in terms of infrastructure and structures in the places of art.

# Concerns emerge as Social Sector allocation drops in 2025 National Budget



**ZANEC Executive Director George Hamusunga**

The Zambia Council for Social Development (ZCSD) has expressed worry over the reduction in allocations to the social sector in the 2025 National Budget.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with the *Zambian Business Times* - ZBT, ZCSD Executive Director Leah Mitaba stressed that the percentage-wise decrease in social sector allocations has raised concerns.

Mitaba however acknowledged a positive increase in social protection allocations from about 5 to 7.4%, which is particularly crucial given the current national disaster and the heightened need for social protection among households.

However, she also noted the heavy reliance on those in formal employment and expressed disappointment that the budget did not address the rising cost of living.

“One specific concern raised to CDF where some councils are reporting to say that the stagnant pay as you earn threshold at 5.1%. Mitaba emphasized the need for a higher tax-free threshold to provide relief to the workforce, especially in the face of economic challenges, increased living costs, and the energy crisis.”

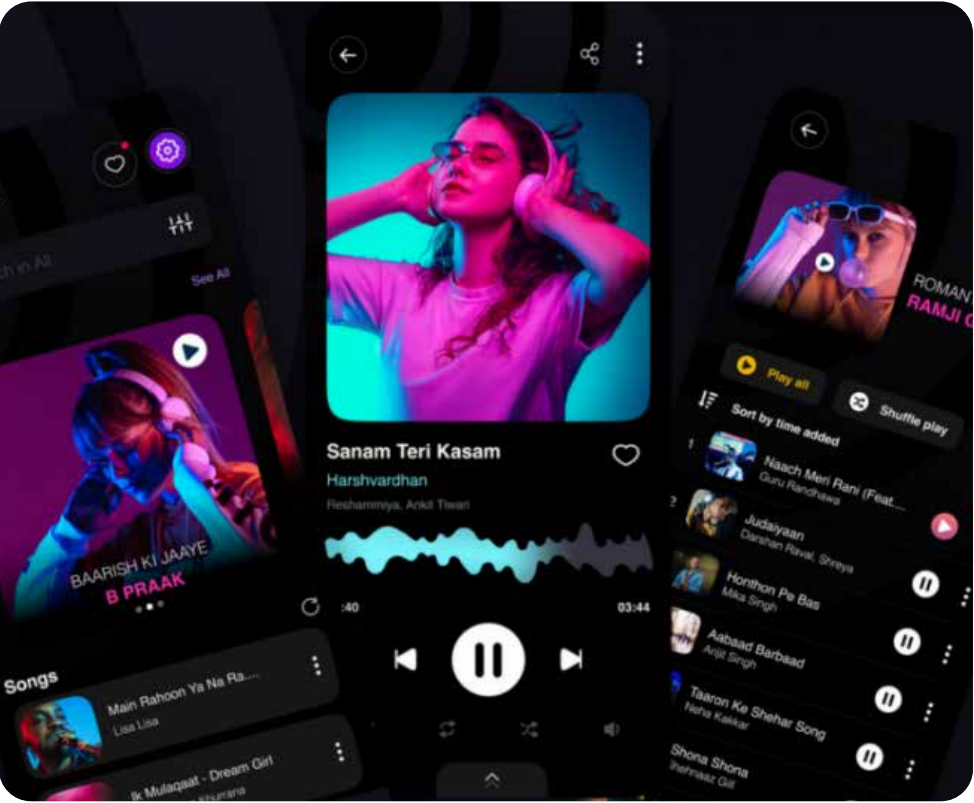
Mitaba has also cautioned against the centralized decision-making process related to CDF which has been increased, stressing that the intended purpose of the fund is to enable communities to determine their own development priorities.

She emphasized the importance of empowering local communities to prioritize their needs and called for a decentralized approach to decision-making regarding CDF.

“We have also followed with concern the centralized way of making decisions related

cils are reporting to say that from the money received can you reserve maybe a 2 million for an ambulance or can you reserve so much to build a palace which actually is not the whole purpose of CDF, because CDF us supposed to enable the ordinary person the community person in that constituency to actually determine the development priorities in that area so if given the direction of the eighth national development plan a given community has got many needs, it could be WASH issues, it could be education, health, feeder roads so the community themselves must prioritize.” She explained.

Mitaba urged the central government to refrain from making decisions on behalf of communities and emphasized the need to strengthen the capacity of subnational levels to make decisions regarding CDF.







## Some households are surviving on wild fruits - NNO

Ndola Nutrition Organization (NNO) which is one of the leading humanitarian organizations keen to fighting poverty, food insecurity, clean water deficiency and social injustice in Zambia, has expressed grave concerns about the adverse effects of climate change on food security and water availability in the region.

Furthermore, Munachonga warned of potential conflicts between humans and animals over scarce water resources, particularly in areas near game parks. He stressed the need for a mindset shift and preparation to adapt and cope with the impact of climate change, advocating for investments in mixed cropping, drought-resistant crops, and water harvesting techniques.

Munachonga has also urged the community to prepare for the worst and emphasized the importance of investing in locally available indigenous seeds and regenerative agricultural practices to mitigate the effects of climate change and ensure food security in the region.

He pointed out that inadequate water has negatively impacted crop, fruit, and vegetable production, as well as the poultry and animal farm-

## Fuel price cuts vs. Public transport tax hike: a real relief for zambians or a short-lived reprieve?

Zambians may have initially celebrated the Energy Regulation Board’s (ERB) announcement of a minor fuel price reduction this October, but with a looming 20% hike in public transport presumptive taxes, is this relief real—or just a mirage? As the cost of living continues to rise, many are left wondering if this slight dip in fuel prices will have any meaningful impact.

The ERB announced a decrease in fuel pump prices driven by a drop in international oil prices. Petrol is now selling at K32.70 per litre, down from K33.47, while diesel prices have dropped from K30.05 to K28.90 per litre. While this sounds like good news, especially to those who rely heavily on fuel, the context tells a different story. A conversation with key industry experts reveals a deeper controversy brewing under the surface.

### Negligible Fuel Price Reductions

The reduction in fuel prices, though welcome, is too small to offset the broader economic challenges. Amis Daudia, spokesperson for the Bus and Taxi Owners Association of Zambia (BTOAZ), expressed skepticism about the real impact of the reduction. “The reduction in fuel prices—e.g., for petrol at K0.77 ngwee—is very negligible. If we were to pass on this reduction to passengers, they would only get a discount of K0.19 ngwee per trip, which would create problems with giving change,” he said.

### The Contradiction: Fuel Relief vs. Transport Tax Hike

At the same time, the national budget has proposed a significant increase in presumptive taxes for operators of public service vehicles. For instance, operators of 64-seater buses and above will see their tax jump from K12,960 to K15,552, while smaller vehicles like 12–17 seaters will face a rise from K2,160 to K2,592. These increases are bound to have a ripple effect, pushing up the cost of public transport fares.

Yusuf Dodia, Chairperson of the Private Sector Development Association, shared his concerns on the contradictory nature of the two policies in an interview. He said, “The presumptive tax on public transport is basically a tax

which will make the cost of transport go up. On one side, bus drivers or owners will be celebrating the 2% fuel reduction, but on the other, the 20% tax hike is much bigger and will force them to increase prices for passengers.”

His assessment captures the reality that any fuel cost savings will likely be negated by higher operational costs for public transport operators.

He added, “This thing was not seriously considered. Bus fares will have to continue going up because of this proposal, and many people will feel the pinch.”

Dodia believes that the fuel price cuts and tax hikes reflect a misalignment of priorities, with the budget overburdened by unrealistic revenue targets. “With rising fuel prices, electricity tariffs, continued load-shedding, a weakening kwacha, and rising inflation, it’s hard to see how these policies will generate the revenue the government is expecting,” he stated.

In his view, the entire budget should have been more modest, aiming below K200 billion to reflect the country’s actual economic situation.

Daudia echoed this sentiment, highlighting the burden placed on small and medium-sized transport operators. “It’s unfortunate that most bus and taxi owners in Zambia fall under the small and medium enterprise category, yet their taxes are increasing. Meanwhile, large, affluent businesses are given concessions. This is not encouraging for local entrepreneurs—it’s a misplaced prioritization of things,” he said.

**Where Does This Leave Ordinary Zambians?**

For the average Zambian who relies on public transportation, a 20% hike in presumptive taxes will likely lead to fare increases. Whatever savings they might have expected from the fuel price cut could evaporate quickly, leaving them to bear the brunt of higher costs. “What-ever affects us as transport owners affects you,” Daudia said, underscoring the interconnectedness between fuel, transport, and broader economic well-being.

As public transport is a lifeline for many Zambians, any increase in fares directly impacts low-income earners and small business owners. The combined effect of marginal fuel price cuts and substantial tax hikes places a heavy burden on those already struggling with inflation, rising food prices, and economic instability.

**Conclusion: A Call for Comprehensive Solutions**

While the ERB’s move to cut fuel prices is commendable, experts agree that it’s not enough to provide meaningful relief in the current economic climate. The proposed increase in public transport presumptive taxes only adds to the financial burden facing citizens, creating a scenario where short-term gains are quickly outweighed by long-term costs.

Yusuf Dodia suggests a more modest budget would have been more appropriate, taking into account the social and economic realities on the ground. Similarly, Amis Daudia calls for a more balanced approach to taxation, one that supports local SMEs and ensures that economic relief is felt across all sectors of society.

In the end, the tough question remains: Will these conflicting policies work together to provide lasting relief, or are they simply widening the gap between short-term political optics and the real economic strain faced by Zambians?



Sunzu still valuable to Chipolopolo’s success – Analyst



Despite some skepticism surrounding veteran defender Stophilla Sunzu’s performance in the AFCON qualifiers, the 2012 AFCON winning defender has been included in the 26-member squad poised to face Chad in back-to-back games.

To some, the inclusion might not come as a surprise because the player has proven to be valuable despite the whole teams dismal performances in previous outings.

Soccer Analyst Puncherelo Chama agrees “Defense is a problem you need experience, if you notice in the

past players like Maldini and Pepe, they played for a very long time, that’s why if you notice there are very few 21 or 23 year old world class center back, its because it’s not about anything else but experience, you have to have played in such situations for a long time.”

Chama added that most of the center backs in the Country are either young or lacking preferable experience.

“Without Sunzu it leaves us in a very vulnerable situation, because we could see a situation where we don’t have Frank Musonda or Kabaso

Choongo and that becomes a bit of a problem because we do not have an experienced center back, he needs to be there just to help the team and guide the team, he might not have the pace, he might not be as sharp but his presence in the team makes a big difference,” he said.

Meanwhile Chama tipped the Chipolopolo to have an easy triumph over Chad in the two legged AFCON qualifier encounters slotted for 11th October and 15th October 2025, home and away respectively.

ZESCO United Appoint Liwewe as CEO

In a bid to continue load-shedding their opponents and perhaps cement a record tenth title, ZESCO United has appointed veteran sports administrator Ponga Liwewe as Chief Executive Officer (CEO). In a statement issued by Club Chairman Maxwell Saya and seen by the Zambian Business Times (ZBT), Saya stated “It is our ambition to return ZESCO United to the summit of the domestic game and reestablish the Country’s

formidable position at the Continental level.” Saya revealed that the decision is backed by the rich experience Liwewe has accumulated over the years in both Football and the cooperative sectors.

Liwewe is a high respected man in football circles, having served as General Secretary of FAZ, once served as CEO for Napsa Stars.

ZESCO currently sit at the top of the MTN Super League with four points, slightly above Kabwe Warriors who are in second place.

It is expected that the appointment of Liwewe will improve the chances of them triumphing at the continental level, previously they incurred an embarrassing exit from the 2024/2025 CAF confederations tournament.



U20 Chipolopolo crash in COSAFA final

Despite qualifying to the 2025 Africa Cup of Nations, the young Chipolopolo suffered a 2-0 defeat to South Africa in the Final of the tournament thereby terminating their ambitions of claiming a thirteenth Cosafa title.

The U20 boys where hyped to get the ultimate victory but the Amajita where solid in their style of play rendering the efforts of the Chipolopolo unfruitful for most of the game, not even the prowess of Emmanuel Mwanza, Perkins Mwale and David Simukonda surfaced.

bell 5, and Lee Ashene 45, proved decisive for the Amajita who emerged as Southern Africa Champions securing a ninth title, scoring 16 goals as tournament total.

Zambia lost two out of four games, and despite not claiming the ultimate prize, the team had a chance to step on the winner’s podium as they grabbed the Fair Play award.

The Boyd Mulwanda coached side will shift their attention from a painful defeat in Mozambique, to prepping for the big one – 2025 COSAFA.



Goals from Shandre Camp-