

# MAKANDAY

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## K4 Billion in Unpaid Taxes Expose Gaps in ZRA Enforcement

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Story on page 2

## Inside Zambia's Troubled Parliament



Story on page 2



*“We are seeing huge interest from European companies eager to explore opportunities in Zambia this forum will help build partnerships that promote sustainable investment, good governance, and shared prosperity.”*

Story on page 3

# Empty Benches, Broken Promises, & Suspensions

Inside Zambia's Troubled Parliament

By *McStan Ng'andu*,

From Katete to Shang'ombo, from Chavuma to Nakonde, citizens still wait for the promises their MPs once made. But inside parliament, empty benches and political theatre are drowning out the voices of the very people who sent them there.

When Agnes Mwale, a small-scale farmer from Mkaika Constituency in Katete, cast her vote in 2021, she did so with conviction. Her MP had promised to speak for rural communities like hers, to ensure timely farming inputs, better feeder roads, and staffed clinics. Four years later, she cannot remember the last time she saw her representative.

"We only see them when someone dies or during campaigns," she says quietly. "So, who is speaking for us in that house?"

Her frustration echoes across Zambia, where citizens are questioning whether Parliament still represents them, or merely serves the political parties that control it.

## The official explanation vs reality

Zambia's National Assembly has 167 members — 156 elected, eight appointed by the President, and three ex-officio (the Vice-President, Speaker, and one Deputy Speaker). MPs are expected to divide their time between the House and their constituencies, addressing community needs while shaping national policy.

Yet the House has increasingly become an empty shell. Responding to MakanDay's query on poor attendance, Stephen C. Kawimbe, in a written response on behalf of the Clerk of the National Assembly, said that the absences are often misunderstood. Standing Order 187(1), he explained, allows the house and its committees to sit concurrently, meaning some MPs may appear absent from the main Chamber while in fact attending committee meetings.

"Such instances are often misunderstood by the public as absenteeism, when in fact Members are discharging their parliamentary duties in another forum of the House," said Kawimbe.

He added that virtual participation under Standing Orders 25(3) and (4) is counted as attendance.

However, MakanDay's observations during sittings in July and August tell a different story. Parking bays outside Parliament were mostly empty, and on several days fewer than half the MPs were in the Chamber. Late arrivals and early departures were routine.

The Clerk of the National Assembly maintained that attendance records are not published "to avoid misinterpretation," but assured that internal monitoring systems are in place. However, without public access to these records, questions about accountability remain unanswered.

While the Clerk said attendance data is withheld "to avoid misinterpretation," he insisted it is monitored internally. Without public disclosure, though, accountability remains opaque.

Some lawmakers admit the issue runs deeper than registers and standing orders. Independent MP Emmanuel Banda of Muchinga Constituency said many MPs "reduce their role to following party instructions," becoming "delegates without responsibility".

"Some MPs do represent their people passionately," Banda said, "but others lose touch the moment they step into Lusaka."

PF MP Sunday Chanda of Kanchibiya agreed. "If MPs are absent during debates or remain silent when critical laws are passed, whose voice are we hearing? It certainly isn't the people's."

Both men argue that democracy suffers when parliament becomes an echo chamber of party directives instead of citizens' interests.

"Democracy suffers when MPs become mere extensions of party machinery," said Chanda. "Party positions matter, but they should never blind us to the constitutional duty we owe to the people."

## Indiscipline and political tensions

Absenteeism is only the surface of a wider malaise. Even when MPs show up, parliamentary sessions often descend into spectacle — walkouts, shouting matches, personal insults, and near-physical fights have become common.

The most recent case involves Nkana MP, Binwell Mpundu, who has been handed two concurrent suspensions, one for 14 days and another for 30 days, after referring to the national assembly as "useless" and calling his Mongu Central counterpart, Oliver Amutike, "mad".

Another controversy surrounded Jean Chisenga, PF MP for Mambilima, who was allegedly assaulted by ruling-party cadres on 12 September 2025, during President Hakainde Hichilema's address opening the fifth session. Chisenga, previously suspended twice for indiscipline, declined to respond to MakanDay's requests for comment.

Two other PF MPs, Francis Kapyanga (Mpika) and Mutotwe Kafwaya (Lunte), were also suspended in September — one for accusing the Speaker's office of bias, the other for disorderly conduct.

Such episodes, frequent and public, have damaged parliament's image as a place of reasoned national dialogue.

## Dignity in decline

Veteran politicians lament the erosion of parliamentary decorum. Wynter Kabimba, lawyer and former Justice Minister, recalls a time when debates were marked by discipline and mutual respect.

Kabimba described the modern legislature as combative and self-serving.

"Parliament is not a contest between individuals or groups. It is a platform where the opposition, ruling party, and other representatives should converge to resolve issues affecting citizens," he stressed.

Analysts outside parliament share this view. They see the turmoil not as isolated behaviour, but as a symptom of a deeper institutional sickness rooted in partisanship.

Political analyst Siphon Mwanza observed that Zambia's legislative dysfunction is rooted in partisanship.

"MPs are often torn between doing what their party wants and what the people need. That tension weakens genuine representation," he said. "Those who dare to break ranks often face political isolation, suspension, or backlash."

## Civil society alarm

Civil society organisations have also taken notice, warning that without reform, the very idea of representative democracy is at risk.

Groups such as the Alliance for Community Action (ACA) and the Governance, Elections, Advocacy and Research Services Initiative (GEARS Zambia) have long sounded the alarm over parliament's falling standards.

Jimmy Maliseni, ACA's programmes manager, said Zambia's most disciplined parliament was under the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD).

"Now things have reached a point where MPs are calling each other names using unpalatable language, so you can easily plot deteriorated etiquettes from 2011 to date we are not here by accident," he said.

"The current mechanisms, where misbehaving MPs are suspended for a few days only to return as though nothing happened, while still getting paid, are not sufficient or fair," he argued.

Patrick Kaumba, executive director of GEARS Zambia, agreed that little has changed despite transitions of power.

"Debates are still marred by disorderly conduct and walkouts," he said.

The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) and National Youth Constitutional Assembly (NYCA) have called for reforms, including stricter enforcement of standing orders and ethical training for MPs, but these proposals have rarely been acted upon.

## The people wait

For citizens like Mwale in Katete, the crisis in parliament is not abstract, it is lived. The road to her village is still washed out. The clinic still runs without enough nurses. The farming inputs she hoped her MP would fight for still arrive late.

"Maybe they forget us," she says. "Maybe once they reach Lusaka, they stop seeing the people who sent them there."

McStan is a talented journalist based in Choma with Byta FM radio. She recently completed a three-month paid internship at MakanDay after emerging third in the prestigious 2024 MakanDay Media Awards.

## Zambia's Lobito Corridor Set to Transform Regional Trade

By Linda Soko Tembo

Zambia is on the verge of an economic transformation as the European Union (EU) throws its full support behind the Lobito Corridor — a multimillion-dollar transport and trade route designed to connect Zambia, Angola, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to regional and global markets.

The initiative aims to turn Zambia into Southern Africa's next major trade and logistics hub, linking its mineral wealth and agricultural products to the Atlantic Ocean through Angola's port of Lobito.

Speaking ahead of the EU–Zambia Business Forum scheduled for November 12–14, 2025, EU Ambassador to Zambia and special representative to COMESA, Her Excellency Karolina Stasiak, described the Lobito Corridor as a “game-changing infrastructure initiative” that will accelerate trade, attract investment, and create thousands of local jobs.

Supported under the EU's Global Gateway initiative, the Lobito Corridor is envisioned as Africa's first open-access, transcontinental railway, promoting transparent, competitive, and sustainable trade. The corridor will enable faster and more efficient exports of Zambia's minerals, agricultural produce, and manufactured goods — cutting transport costs and boosting the country's competitiveness.

“The Lobito Corridor is not just a transport project it's an economic transformation opportunity that will bring cheaper logistics, improved access to markets, and increased economic activities along the route that can create jobs and opportunities, especially for young people,” said Ambassador Stasiak during Wednesday's breakfast meeting in Lusaka.

The corridor is a joint effort by the governments of Angola, Zambia, and the DRC, with support from the EU, the United States, the African Development Bank, and the Africa Finance Corporation. It forms part of the broader Lobito Economic Corridor, which will open new investment avenues in agri-food processing, energy, skills development, and eco-tourism, among others.

Strategically, the project links Zambia's Copperbelt and North-Western provinces to Angola's Lobito Port, providing the country's mining heartlands with a direct export route to the Atlantic. The EU believes this infrastructure will help Zambia transition from a landlocked to a “land-linked” nation, a vision aligned with the government's Eighth National Development Plan.

Preparatory works are already underway. Angola and Congo are rehabilitating existing rail lines, while Zambia is completing feasibility studies to connect to the network. The EU is also supporting capacity building for Zambian businesses to prepare them for the economic opportunities the corridor will bring.

The upcoming EU–Zambia Business Forum, celebrating 50 years of EU–Zambia partnership, will bring together more than 600 delegates — including President Hakainde Hichilema, EU Commissioner for International Partnerships Jozef Sikela, and EIB Vice President Karl Nehammer — to discuss trade, mining, agriculture, and energy with a focus on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) standards.

“We are seeing huge interest from European companies eager to explore opportunities in Zambia this forum will help build partnerships that promote sustainable investment, good governance, and shared prosperity,” she said.

As Zambia positions itself as a regional transport and trade hub, the Lobito Corridor emerges not merely as a physical link but as a symbol of economic renewal — connecting Zambia's local industries to global markets and laying the foundation for inclusive growth across Southern Africa.



## K4 Billion in Unpaid Taxes Expose Gaps in ZRA Enforcement

By Gibson Zulu

Over K4 billion in declared taxes remain unpaid, with liabilities from filed tax returns still unsettled — exposing serious lapses in revenue enforcement, possible corruption, and systemic weaknesses within Zambia's tax system.

According to the 2025 Auditor General's Report, tax returns amounting to K4.39 billion were filed with the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) but, as of 31 August 2025, the corresponding liabilities had not been cleared.

The uncollected taxes include rental income tax amounting to about K6.4 million, withholding VAT of roughly K628 million, reverse VAT of K452 million, and value-added tax (VAT) totalling around K3.17 billion.

In addition, excise duty stood at about K131 million, insurance premium tax at K8.8 million, and tourism levy at approximately K1.5 million, bringing the total uncollected amount to over K4.39 billion.

The Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) has not yet responded to MakanDay's request for comment. Efforts to obtain a statement from the Authority's Public Relations Officer, Oliver N'Zala, have so far been unsuccessful.

In an interview with MakanDay, policy analyst Zondwa Duma warned that the failure to collect over K4 billion in taxes has serious fiscal implications for how the government raises and manages public funds

He expressed hope that such loopholes in the tax system will be addressed to prevent future losses.

Gibson is an intern at MakanDay under the Free Press Initiative's Journalism Graduate Internship Programme, which aims to promote excellence in journalism.

TABLE: FILED RETURNS WITHOUT PAYMENTS (AS OF 31 AUGUST 2025)

TYPE OF TAX	AMOUNT (K)	APPROX. ROUNDED FIGURE	NUMBER OF TRANSACTIONS
Rental Income Tax	6,396,425.00	6.4 million	102
Withholding VAT	627,733,249.00	628 million	95
Reverse VAT	452,423,411.00	452 million	35
Value Added Tax (VAT)	3,170,750,448.00	3.17 billion	2,645
Excise Duty	130,933,661.00	131 million	57
Insurance Premium Tax	8,820,593.00	8.8 million	—
Tourism Levy	1,479,874.00	1.5 million	1,089
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,398,537,611.00</b>	<b>4.4 billion</b>	<b>—</b>

# Munali mine protest pays off

*By Clement Mudaala in Mazabuka*

Over 500 Munali Nickel Mine workers held a peaceful protest yesterday in Mazabuka district, demanding payment of their outstanding salaries and remittances of statutory contributions owed to NAPSA, NHIMA, and Saturnia Regna Pension Fund.

In July this year, the workers were sent on indefinite leave and were promised continued monthly payments.

But four months down the line, the workers are now up in arms for going three months without salaries, despite pay slips that indicate statutory deductions.

Gathering at the mine's main gate with police permission, the protesters expressed frustration over what they described as "neglect" by management and government authorities.

The workers allege that the current management has failed to engage them despite repeated requests for dialogue.

And in a dramatic turn of events, responding to yesterday's protest, area member of parliament Garry Nkombo undertook a lightning visit to the site after seeing the demonstration on television.

To his credit, Mr. Nkombo was able to calm the situation, announcing that a crisis meeting would be held this afternoon (11th November) at parliament buildings at Lusaka's Manda Hill, involving representatives from the ministry of mines, ministry of labour, ministry of housing, Albidon management, and workers' unions to address the matter.

At the time of going to press, the meeting was still underway, while details of the meetings' discussions or conclusions are as yet undisclosed.

"People have been chased out of their rented houses and are now keeping their belongings in bars. I'm from Kafue, but I feel the pain of those who came from the Copperbelt — I'm keeping properties for 16 people. We're here at our own mine gate, yet the management has locked us out in our own country," one worker lamented.

Another worker added: "For three months, we haven't been paid. Our pay slips show deductions for Saturnia, NHIMA, and NAPSA, but when we check, the funds have not been remitted. We are appealing to the president to intervene — we are suffering."

The mine was placed into voluntary liquidation in September 2025 with previous operators, Mabiza Resources, giving up operational control to current mine leaseholders, Albidon Mining Limited.

Mabiza Resources had operated the mine as a subsidiary of UK-based Consolidated Nickel Mines (CNM).

Union chairperson Misheck Matebele said the situation has become dire, with many workers evicted from their homes and struggling to survive.

"Workers were sent home and promised to be paid, but up to now, nothing has been received. NAPSA and Saturnia contributions were not remitted, and salaries remain unpaid. Over 500 workers are affected," Matebele stated.

He further revealed that government had released K20 million to the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) for the workers' benefit payments, but the funds have allegedly been withheld due to claims from creditors.

"We are appealing to government to direct ZRA to release the money. That money is ours — it's from our own sweat," Matebele declared.

According to a worker, police had earlier refused to accompany the protesting workers in their quest to meet management, unless they were provided with lunch allowances — an action condemned by both the workers and area MP Garry Nkombo.

*Produced by Mazabuka FM for MakaanDay. The article has been edited and fact-checked by MakaanDay.*



*Munali Nickel Mine billboard Photo-credit - John Mukela MakaanDay scaled*

This week in the Bulletin and Record

Story from page 1

## The changing allegiances of Zambia's football fans

*By Leonard Koloko*

What is the first question asked by football lovers? Answer: which club do you support? Today's generation of soccer fans might chant: Man U! Liverpool! Chelsea! or Arsenal. But 20 years ago the fans might have said: Stylish! Mighty! GBFC! Kalampa Devil, Devil! Power 90! Bravo Rangers, or any one of a number of other local teams.

A key difference between then and now lies in the simple fact that back then one's township of origin determined the team one supported. It did not matter in which division your favourite club played, the emotional bond thrived.

The common social arrangement was that most urban towns were divided into mine or municipal townships. Football clubs were organised in the same fashion — there was normally a team from the mine area and one from the municipality. Later, other sectors came to the sport and broadened the allegiances.

Mufulira: At one time Mufulira had three clubs campaigning in the then elite Division One. Mufulira Wanderers carried the banner as the mightiest club of the 1960s and 1970s, and had a countrywide fan base.



The glorious good old days: Mufulira Wanderers celebrate the 1964 league title

## The changing allegiances of Zambia's football fans Cont....

But there were still those who believed in Mufulira Blackpool, the municipal council side, based in Kamuchanga Township.

Wanderers and Blackpool share a common history, with the former being a splinter from the latter way back in the 1940s. The third club, "Giant Killers" Butondo Western Tigers, came from Butondo Mine Township.

For a long time these three clubs were arch rivals, competing for fans and players, resulting in Mufulira producing soccer legends like Samuel "Zoom" Ndhlovu, Alex Chola, Kalusha Bwalya, Charles Musonda, Johnson Bwalya and Efford Chabala. Regrettably, all three clubs are now campaigning in lower divisions.

**Luanshya:** The situation here was similar to that of Mufulira except that the council club, Luanshya United, and the mine team, "Stylish" Roan United, existed as separate entities from the beginning. Luanshya started as off as All Blacks (no, not the famous New Zealand rugby team) and played in the Copperbelt African Football Association league together with Roan Mine FC, the forerunners to Roan United.

All Blacks, who later changed their name to Luanshya Blue Devils, dropped to division two in 1965 and have since then struggled in the lower ranks, but encouragingly they still have a strong fan base in their home township, Mikomfwa. This is also the club from where stars like Kenny Mwape, Vincent Chileshe and Dudley Fichite originated. There was a third team from Mpatamato Mine Township, Buseko FC, groomers of great players such as the late Ghost Mulenga, Godfrey Munshya and Jack Chanda.

**Kitwe:** Club allegiance conflicts here date as far back as the 1940s when one of the pioneer African football clubs, Kitwe Lions, split into two following a breakaway by miners to form Nkana Mine FC, thus creating bitter rivalry between what later became Kitwe United and Rhokana United respectively in the 1960s.

Naturally, miners from Chamboli, Wusakile and Mindolo supported Rhokana whilst the rest settled for Kitwe, sponsored by the business community. In the early 1970s a city council team, City of Kitwe, emerged in Ndeke Township, further dividing the city. Kitwe United and City of Kitwe's fortunes were not bright. The two sides dropped from elite soccer ranks between 1977 and 1978. As these two were sinking, there was a surprise package from the northern mine township of Mindolo. Mindola United first made their mark as a second division giant killer in local cups and won promotion to the top league in 1977.

The rivalry between Rhokana and Mindola United was closely linked to the gangster life that prevailed among Wusakile, Chamboli and Mindolo youths. Despite these being mine townships, they were always at loggerheads with Wusakile and Chamboli, uniting against the northern rivals. Rhokana was renamed Nkana Red Devils in 1982.

As Mindola United went defunct, in came Power Dynamos, the Copperbelt power company-sponsored team, based in Ndeke Township. Now began a new bitter rivalry as Ndeke residents supported Power Dynamos.

Dynamos, nicknamed "Power 90" and Nkana as "Kalampa Devil, Devil" became the most successful soccer envoys the country has ever had in continental soccer, with Power lifting the 1991 Africa Cup Winners Cup and Nkana being runners up in the Africa Club Champions Cup in 1990.

**Chingola:** Although now a single team town, Chingola started off with Chingola Eleven Wisemen as the lone team in the 1940s. From the Wisemen was born a splinter, Nchanga Mine. The two remained rivals until 1962 when they re-merged to form Nchanga Rangers. Although "Brave" Rangers were accepted as the sole representative of the town, there were still those with other allegiances within the town and they rallied behind Chingola United, the council team playing in division two. There was also KB Davies campaigning in the second division. In a bid to strengthen the challenge on the mine-sponsored Rangers, the two merged and changed their name to Chingola Leopards. They are currently called Chiwempala Leopards and command a large following among the non-mine townships.

**Chililabombwe:** In the set up here Konkola Blades has been supreme, but there are those who have forever supported the council team, Lubengele FC, based in Lubengele Township and playing in the second division.

**Ndola:** The commercial city kicked off with two prominent sides before the inception of league soccer – Ndola Black Follies and Ndola Home Defenders. The Follies were predominantly for Africans and Defenders for Europeans. In 1962, these two dissolved to form Ndola United, which unified the city's soccer fans for more than 15 years. However, the city's status as the commerce and industry hub caused a rapid build-up on the soccer scene. By 1980, companies like Refined Oil Products and Furniture Company of Zambia had raised new teams Strike Rovers and Vitafoam United, splitting the Ndola United fan base in the city.

Ndola United, sponsored by the City council, is alive and kicking in the first division but the city has presently produced other new allegiances in Zesco United, Forest Rangers, Ndola Lime Hotspurs and Kalewa (Zambia Army). Both Rovers and Vitafoam have sunk into oblivion.

**Kabwe:** One may take it that Kabwe Warriors has always been the sole envoy of Kabwe town. In fact this was the case from 1962 to the mid-1960s, when mine-sponsored Kabwe United arrived on the scene. United attracted fans from the mine areas. The Kabwe allegiance divide was basically Zambia Railways versus Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines. The grounding to a halt of the zinc and lead mining activities in Kabwe also spelt the end of Kabwe United. The only other attempt to divide Kabwe in recent years has been from Prison Leopards based at Mukobeko.

**Lusaka:** The Great North Road was the earliest divide in the capital city. Townships to the east of Cairo Road rooted for City of Lusaka; those to the west rallied behind Lusaka Tigers. Many fans still reminisce about the good old days of "City Ya Moto" or "City Izajombolola"

at Woodlands Stadium and the "Beware of the disappearing ball" sign at Matero Stadium. Interestingly, both clubs have always been business community sponsored

Later, the emergence of service and government-sponsored teams Green Buffaloes FC (Army), Red Arrows (Air Force) and Nkhwazi (Police) saw the newcomers stealing some supporters from City of Lusaka and Lusaka Tigers.

Lusaka's duality as both province and city has further divided the football setting into over 50 clubs spread all over the townships, each claiming a share of supporters according to location and attachment.



*City of Lusaka players toast a cup victory in the 1960s*

The Zambian game has in the past decade suffered a heavy blow at club level with a drastic fall in spectator attendances at local township stadiums. Blame for this has mostly been piled on the recent craze for Anglo-Euro soccer promoted by satellite television. Also sharing a piece of the blame is the privatisation of the mines and economic slump of the 1990s.

Are Zambian soccer allegiances completely dead, judging by the current frenzy for the English "Big Four" and European giants like Barcelona and Real Madrid? Furthermore, is the current Anglo-Euro soccer fanaticism from the depth of the soccer fans' hearts, or is it just a social trend?

**The article first appeared in the November 2011 edition of Bulletin & Record magazine.**



# A Night of Excellence: The Fourth Edition of the MakaanDay Investigative Journalism Awards — In Pictures



1. Mazombwe Banda (in a black suit) receives the second prize.



2. Prof. Ackson Kanduzo, MakaanDay Board Chairperson



6. Invited guests attentively follow the proceedings.



3. Kazungu Emmanuel Ndeya (aka Ken Dumbo), Master of Ceremonies.



5. The Guest of Honour, Dr. W.K. Mutale Nalumango, was represented by Hon. Collins Nzovu, Minister of Water Development & Sanitation.



4. The three award winners pose for a photo with the Guest of Honour, Hon. Collins Nzovu, and MakaanDay staff.