

# MAKANDAY

## weekly

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## A Killing in Plain Sight

Inside the Collapse of Order at Kisasa Market

A community left to decide justice for itself.

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# No Number Plates, No Justice

## Inside Solwezi's Motorbike Crisis

By Sanjimba Kanganja | Solwezi

### A system failing in plain sight as illegal motorbikes flood Solwezi's roads

At Solwezi General Hospital, Patson Kayamba lies in a bed battling with his left leg. Three weeks ago, he left home for a short ride to a nearby shop. He never came back the same.

The motorbike had no number plate, and he had no licence. Moments later, he was hit by a patrol vehicle for the North Western Province Motorbike Association, driven an association member. Today, he cannot walk and is still in pain.

"I was in front of the association patrol vehicle, which was chasing motorcycles as they always do," Kayamba says softly. "In an attempt to block me, I was hit."

His story is no longer unusual.

Across Solwezi, a growing number of residents are finding themselves victims of a rapidly expanding and largely unregulated motorbike sector, one that is increasingly linked to serious accidents, weak enforcement, and troubling allegations of corruption.

### A boom turning dangerous

Motorcycles have become a common mode of transport in Solwezi, offering cheap and quick mobility in a rapidly growing mining town. But behind that convenience lies a dangerous reality.

Many of the motorbikes operating on public roads are unregistered. Many riders have no licences. Under Zambian law, both are illegal.

Yet on the streets of Solwezi, enforcement appears inconsistent.

"If you don't pay, they stop you," one rider says. "If you pay, you pass—even without papers."

As the number of unregulated bikes grows, so too do accidents—many of them severe, leaving victims with life-long injuries or worse.

### Allegations of a parallel system

Interviews with riders, traders, and sources within the sector point to a deeper concern. Several allege that some Traffic Police officers are working in collaboration with the North-Western Motorbike Association—a group formed by riders, reportedly to organise the sector.

According to multiple sources, association members allegedly collect money from riders operating without proper documentation.

A confidential source within the association claims that part of these funds is shared with some law enforcement officers.

"Payment is always a must when you are stopped," the source says. "The amount you pay depends on the traffic officer you meet. Others would charge K100, others K200, K400, even more than that."

These allegations could not be independently verified. But they raise serious questions about whether enforcement systems are being undermined from within.

### Intimidation on the streets

The concerns go beyond alleged payments. Some riders claim that association members use intimidation tactics to enforce compliance.

Sources claim some individuals carry tasers—equipment typically reserved for law enforcement.

If true, this suggests not only a breakdown in regulation, but also the emergence of an informal enforcement structure operating outside the law.

### Authorities under pressure to respond

To verify these claims, press queries were sent to the North-Western Motorbike Association, seeking clarification on how funds are collected, managed, and under what authority.

Graham Kahang'u, the association president, said the organisation is not illegal, stating that it is registered under the



Registrar of Societies and affiliated with the Road Transport and Safety Agency. He added that they work closely with police officers.

"Our job is to ensure there is safety and order among motorbike riders," he says.

A separate query was submitted to the North-Western Province Police Command, requesting clarification on allegations that Traffic Police officers may be working with civilians and allowing non-law enforcement personnel to operate with restricted equipment.

In its response, the police acknowledged a rise in motorcycle-related accidents, attributing it to illegal use of motorbikes as public transport, unlicensed and under-age riders, and lack of protective equipment.

The police denied any collaboration with the association in collecting money, stating that all fines are legally collected by the Traffic Section of the police and receipted through government systems. However, they confirmed receiving intelligence that the North-Western Motorbike Association had been collecting money from riders without issuing official receipts.

The police said the association had since been summoned and warned to stop such activities, and clarified that while civilians may effect a citizen's arrest, they have no authority to collect fines or enforce the law.

### Hospitals bearing the cost

While questions of accountability remain unresolved, the consequences are already visible.

"From 2024, we recorded a total of 684 motorcycle accidents, of which four were BIDs," Dr. Chisanga said. "These victims either died at the accident scene or on the way to the hospital. An additional three later died in hospital."

He added that in 2025, the number rose to 951 cases, with four recorded as BIDs and three deaths occurring in hospital due to severe injuries. As of January 2026, 59 accidents had already been recorded, including three BIDs.

Last year, RTSA donated ten wheelchairs to the hospital. But health workers say such interventions are only a temporary response to a much deeper problem.

### Clear laws, weak enforcement

Zambia's legal framework is not ambiguous. Under the Road Traffic Act and Statutory Instrument No. 89 of 2016, operating an unregistered motorbike or riding without a valid licence is an offence.

Enforcement responsibilities are clearly assigned to the police and regulatory authorities. Yet in Solwezi, those laws appear to be routinely ignored.

**No Number Plates, No Justice cont.....**

**A breakdown in accountability**

A confidential source within government attributes the situation to political interference—allegedly creating space for illegal practices to flourish while weakening professional oversight.

These claims could not be independently verified.

But experts warn that where enforcement is inconsistent and accountability is unclear, informal systems often emerge to fill the gap—sometimes with dangerous consequences.

**This story was produced by Radio Kabangabanga and fact-checked by the MakanDay Centre for Investigative Journalism.**

**The cost of inaction**

If the current trend continues, the impact will extend far beyond individual accidents. Public hospitals will face increasing pressure. Families will bear the long-term cost of injuries. And public roads will become increasingly unsafe.

At the same time, an unregulated system may continue to generate income for a few—while exposing many to risk.

For families like Kayamba’s, the cost is already devastating. His future has changed in an instant.

disappear. The claim, rooted in longstanding myths that have periodically surfaced in parts of Zambia, spread rapidly through the market.

“This is where everything started,” said a security guard stationed at a nearby communication tower.

Within minutes, he said, a crowd formed. What began as suspicion turned into confrontation, and quickly escalated into violence.

**A breakdown of protection**

Kamutumbe was taken to a nearby community police unit (CPU), a neighbourhood watch structure meant to provide immediate security. But the system did not hold.

Witnesses say officers tried to hide both Kamutumbe and Ntambo inside the small, chain-secured building as a crowd gathered outside. The mob quickly overwhelmed it and broke in. As violence escalated, the officers fled, leaving Kamutumbe behind.

An eyewitness then attempted to move her to the palace of Senior Chief Museli Musokantanda, about 100 metres away. But the Chief was not present.

By then, she was already severely injured. Witnesses said cultural beliefs also delayed intervention, with some insisting it was a bad omen to take a bleeding person to the Chief.

In a final attempt to escape, Kamutumbe asked to be taken to a house near Kisasa Secondary School, about 400 metres away. However, the mob followed. They broke in, dragged her outside, and continued beating and stoning her.

“They looted everything,” said the homeowner, Peter Ndumba, deputy headteacher at Kisasa Primary School.

He reported losing K10,000 in cash, two smartphones valued at K6,500, clothes, food, and a Samsung smart TV. The money had been set aside for his daughter’s school fees.

“My family has been left in a very difficult situation,” he said.

Kamutumbe was later killed near Pentecost Holiness Church.

**Police outnumbered**

Police response came, but it was not enough. Five officers from Kisasa Police Post and Kalumbila Police Station attempted to intervene at Kisasa Secondary School but were confronted by a large crowd. Stones were thrown, their vehicle was damaged, and the officers were forced to withdraw.

**A community primed for violence**

MakanDay has established that the killing did not happen in isolation. A pattern is emerging.

Residents told MakanDay that a 17-year-old boy was found dead at the same market on January 1, 2026, followed by another killing on January 17. Kamutumbe’s death on March 20 marks at least the third major incident in under three months in this informal roadside settlement, largely populated by unemployed residents.

“This one was the most brutal,” said Phillison Ackson Mukanzu, a relative of Chief Museli. “It has shaken the entire chiefdom.”

Two days before Kamutumbe’s killing, rumours had circulated widely on social media about alleged cases of genital disappearance in Chingola. By the time she arrived in Kisasa, fear had already taken hold.

“When the accusation was made, people were ready to believe it,” said one trader.

**A market shut down**

Following the killing, Chief Museli ordered the closure of Kisasa Market for two months. According to market officials, the market previously generated between K300,000 and K500,000 daily, supporting thousands of traders and informal workers. That activity has now stopped.

Many residents have fled, fearing arrest following President Hakainde Hichilema’s directive targeting those involved in the violence.

“People are not running because they are guilty,” said one resident. “They are afraid.”

**Schools emptying out**

The impact has extended to the area’s two schools, Kisasa Primary and Kisasa Secondary. During a check on March 25, 2026, only seven pupils were present out of more than 2,000 at the primary school, while attendance at the secondary school dropped to 193 out of 1,456.

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**A Killing in Plain Sight | Inside the Collapse of Order at Kisasa Market**

- Police outnumbered, systems overwhelmed, and a community left to decide justice for itself.

*By Linda Soko Tembo, Brenda Zulu & Stanley Fwataki*

When MakanDay journalists arrived in Kisasa, along the Mutanda–Mwinilunga Road, about 120 kilometres south-west of Solwezi, the provincial capital of North-Western Province, Kisasa Market had fallen silent.

Where traders once shouted prices over loudspeakers and customers bargained across crowded stalls, there was only wind. Torn plastic sheets flapped against empty frames. Stones and sticks lay scattered across the ground, remnants of a mob attack that turned a place of trade into a crime scene.

Residents moved cautiously through the market, speaking in low voices. Many had fled. Others were afraid to stay.

At the centre of that silence is the killing of a woman.

**What we have gathered about the woman who never returned home**

What MakanDay has established is that the victim, Eneless Hellen Kamutumbe, 46, was a businesswoman, gold trader, and mother of six.

Originally from Ingwe Village under Chief Ingwe in Kasempa district, she lived in Chingola on the Copperbelt, where she supported her family through small-scale trading. According to her relatives, she travelled to Kisasa to follow up on a failed gold transaction.

She had given money to a man to buy gold on her behalf. When she contacted him, he said he was in Kisasa. But when she arrived, his phone was switched off.

Stranded without money to return to Chingola, Kamutumbe made a decision that would place her at the centre of a deadly chain of events. She tried to sell her phone.

**The accusation**

At a mobile services booth, she encountered 25-year-old Prince Ntambo, a SIM card replacement agent. Moments later, he accused her of making his genitals

## A Killing in Plain Sight | Inside the Collapse of Order at Kisasa Market cont...

According to school authorities, 13 pupils are among those arrested during police operations that followed the killing.

“These learners are mentally affected,” said Kenneth Lingunja, headteacher at the secondary school.

Police say investigations are ongoing. Police Public Relations Officer Godfrey Chilabi confirmed that as of March 31, 2026, 12 suspects had been charged with murder, while 22 others face charges of riotous conduct. A total of 257 people, including Ntambo, a SIM card replacement agent, are currently in custody in connection with the violence that led to Kamutumbe’s killing.

“The number of arrests may increase as investigations continue,” Chilabi said.

School authorities have appealed for the screening process to be expedited so that affected learners can return in time for their end-of-term examinations.



KISASA MARKET

### Weak systems, predictable outcomes

Kisasa Police Post, established three years ago, serves a population of nearly 40,000 people. Residents say this has led to heavy reliance on informal security structures such as neighbourhood watch groups and traditional authority systems.

In this case, both systems failed. The community police unit could not contain the crowd. Traditional authority was inaccessible at a critical moment. Police were outnumbered. The result was fatal.

### Unanswered questions

The circumstances that brought Kamutumbe to Kisasa remain unresolved. Her family believes the mystery man involved in the gold transaction may hold key information. His identity, and whether he played any role beyond the failed transaction, has not been established.

“If he had met her earlier, she would not have come here,” a relative said.

The deadly accusations of “genital theft” are not new. They first surfaced in Kasumbalesa on the Zambia–DRC border, before spreading to Chingola and later to Kisasa in Kalumbila, where Kamutumbe was killed by a mob. Similar incidents have also been reported in other parts of Zambia and across the border in Tunduma.

Nearby, however, trained youths say they are not being considered for these opportunities.

Travel Chizu, one of the Mbala youths who was trained at Lukashya Trades Training Institute in Kasama, describe completing his training, receiving certificates, and returning home only to find no pathway into employment. For him, the promise of skills development has not translated into income.

“Some employers in the construction sector refuse to employ us,” he says. “They say we lack experience, they also say some youths report late for work or they miss work without informing the employer.”

Figures obtained from the Mbala Municipal Council show that between 2022 and 2025, 883 youths were sponsored through the CDF skills bursary programme, with close to K5 million in public funds allocated. Yet council records indicate that only about five percent—approximately 45 of those trained—are currently in formal employment.

This gap is not unique to Mbala. It reflects a wider national concern.

At the national level, [the Eighth National Development Plan](#) identifies “high youth unemployment” as a persistent socio-economic challenge, placing it alongside poverty and inequality. While the Plan promises job creation through skills development, the situation in Mbala suggests a disconnect. Young people are being trained, but not absorbed into the workforce.

While the plan promises job creation through skills development, evidence on the ground suggests a disconnect between training and employment.

National audits reinforce this concern. The Office of the Auditor General of Zambia, in its [2022 report](#) on local authorities, found that councils “did not maintain adequate records for beneficiaries of bursaries and lacked monitoring mechanisms to track their progress and outcomes,” raising questions about whether public spending on skills training is translating into jobs.

At the same time, employers offer a different perspective.

Some argue that hiring decisions are driven by experience, productivity, and reliability.

Others suggest that newly trained youths often lack the hands-on exposure required to perform efficiently on active sites, where time and cost pressures are high.

The issue becomes more complex when some youths allege that jobs are going to workers from outside the district, and in certain cases, from outside the country.

Although an immigration official stated that work permits have not been issued for individuals in construction and technical trades, an investigation by Luswepo Radio found that foreign nationals, mostly from neighbouring Tanzania, are working in the sector. This raises questions, given immigration guidelines requiring employers to demonstrate that the necessary expertise is not readily available locally before such permits are granted.

Immigration Spokesperson Namati Nshinka confirmed that only four companies in the district currently employ foreign nationals, mainly in the agricultural sector.

“These are Patito farms, with three South African nationals on residence permit, then we have Mount Sunzu Coffee Limited, with two Swiss nationals on investor’s permits and one Tanzanian national on an employment permit,” he said. “We have Tangafuti Farming Enterprises Limited, (with) two South African nationals on investments permit and we have got Size Farm, with one South African national on residence permit.”

Labour officials, say the challenge goes beyond hiring practices alone. They point to gaps in practical experience, questions around certification standards, and the need for stronger enforcement of labour compliance. The issue, they suggest, lies within the broader system linking training, industry demands, and employment structures.

“One of the major challenges is that many young people lack industrial experience, even though they have acquired technical skills,” said Michael Chishimba, Acting Labour Inspector for Mbala District.

At the policy level, another question emerges. Once youths are trained using public funds, is there a mechanism to connect them directly with employers? Efforts to establish

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# Trained but Jobless

## Mbala Youth Locked Out of Zambia’s Growth

By Doris Chifunda | Mbala

Zambia is investing heavily in training its young people, but in Mbala, just like across other districts, that investment is not translating into jobs.

In Mbala, a district in Zambia’s Northern Province, signs of development are hard to miss. At construction sites across the town, bricks are stacked into rising walls. Engines roar back to life in workshops. New structures are steadily reshaping the landscape, signalling growth and investment.

But just a few metres from this activity, a different story unfolds. Young men and women,

many of them trained in the very skills now in demand, say they are being left behind.

Hundreds of youths in Mbala have benefited from skills bursaries under the Constituency Development Fund (CDF), receiving training in trades such as bricklaying, carpentry, mechanics, and welding. Yet despite this investment, many remain without jobs.

At one active construction site, workers move quickly, mixing cement and laying bricks under tight deadlines. The work is steady. The demand is visible.

**Trained but Jobless cont...**

whether such post-training job placement support exists remain unclear.

Officials acknowledge the importance of monitoring outcomes but also point to structural challenges in ensuring that trained individuals transition into the workforce.

For community leaders like Lightwell Chongo, the consequences are already visible, as youth unemployment, is not just an economic concern. It carries social implications. Without income, he said, many trained youths remain dependent on their families, building frustration, and the deepening the sense of exclusion.

“Some of us are suffering from high BPs, because we can’t sleep all nights, we’re thinking about our children,” he said. “There is no good parent who will see sleep, then these individuals themselves, socially, they become a problem. They resort to substance abuse and alcohol, or both.”

Meanwhile, public investment in skills development continues. The Auditor General’s reports do not present a clear, consolidated breakdown of how much was spent on skills development bursaries across Zambia’s constituencies. Instead, the figures are scattered across technical appendices, making it difficult to track how funds were actually allocated and utilised at constituency level.

But across Mbala and many towns of Zambia, the evidence of opportunity is visible in concrete and steel. Yet for many young people equipped with certificates but lacking jobs, that opportunity remains just out of reach.

“What we are asking for, is a chance to prove ourselves,” said Chizu. “If we are given an opportunity, we can also deliver the job and produce quality work, which is required.”

**This story was produced by Radio Luswepo in Mbala, and fact-checked by the MakaanDay Centre for Investigative Journalism.**



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**Zambian Villagers Pay the Price of the Global Quest for Metals**

More than a year after a copper mining disaster poisoned the land and water of a Zambian community, key measures to protect residents’ health, recommended in a government-commissioned report, have not been carried out, a co-author of that report told The Examination.

The village of Kalusale, home to hundreds of people, remains heavily contaminated with heavy metals following a February 2025 dam collapse. A December report called for “immediate discontinuation” of shallow well water for drinking and bathing and for the “immediate relocation of its residents to safer areas.”

The mining company, Sino-Metals Leach Zambia, launched cleanup efforts only last month.

“We still have a concern because relocation of the most affected communities has not yet taken place,” said Titus Haakonde, an environmental toxicologist and co-author of the report, which was produced for the Zambian government by the Zambian consulting firm Applied Science and Technology Associates.

Haakonde told The Examination that the situation was “concerning and worrying.”

The people of Kalusale have become casualties of a sweeping geopolitical battle over the metals and minerals needed for AI data centers, electric cars and renewable energy. The Zambian copper mine is owned by the Chinese government, part of a vast mining empire that has been accused of human rights and environmental abuses. The Zambian government, dependent on copper revenues and in debt to China, has downplayed health threats from the spill and recently allowed the company to resume operations.

The Zambia Environmental Management Agency said the cleanup effort would include removing contaminated dirt and monitoring water quality. The agency and the company did not respond to The Examination’s questions.

Last year, a firm hired by the mining company assessed the damage and said residents were at serious risk of developing birth defects, cancer, liver and lung disease, heart conditions and other chronic illnesses.

The mining company disputed those findings and fired the company. But after Haakonde found widespread contamination, the company said that it takes his firm’s recommendations seriously and that “proactive measures have been taken to help safeguard the normal livelihoods of affected residents.”

The Examination partnered with MakaanDay, a Zambian news outlet, and helped fund a reporting trip to Kalusale last year. One resident told MakaanDay, “The coughing, the stomach pains, the burning eyes, these are daily struggles we’ve simply learned to live with.”

The people of Kalusale have no alternative to drinking the contaminated water, said Martin Bwalya Kampamba, director of Future-Preneurs Zambia, a nonprofit that has delivered food to affected residents. The recommendation against using the water, he said, presents an impossible choice: “either to die or to continue consuming the poison.”

**This report has been published in the latest edition of the The Examination newsletter.**



## OPINION

# Trump, War & Peace

By John Mukela

Two events this week might appear unrelated, but that is an illusion. The first was the chill-inducing promise by Donald Trump, President of the United States.

"A whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again," Trump said in a post on his Truth Social. "I don't want that to happen, but it probably will," he added.

Did the President really mean it?

Or perhaps being the supreme negotiator that he is, this was merely a tactical bargaining chip, to force Iran to a deal?

Because by any measure, it's a gargantuan task, eliminating a whole civilization in one night.

What would be the quickest way to achieve that, one might ask, in such a large country as Iran – 1.65 million square km – larger than Spain, Germany, France and the UK combined?

And exactly what did Trump mean by ending an "entire civilization?"

Did he mean ending an entire civilization by destroying its infrastructure – power stations, railways and bridges? Or not just destroying those, but also its entire population?

But maybe that is a moot point. Because whatever was meant, people would most certainly die too.

Of course, the quickest and most efficient way, in one night, for that size of country, would be by maybe dispatching not one, but several atomic bombs?

That could definitely get the job done. But at what cost?

Was Trump really willing to do that? Annihilate an entire civilization for the Strait of Hormuz?

Because no sooner had the words left his mouth, we woke up the following day to hear that a mini deal had been struck.

The two-week ceasefire gives Trump room to maneuver and Iran space to breathe again, after weeks aerial bombardment, destruction and massive casualties.

Both sides will relish the break in hostilities,

and the end goal is a retreat back to the negotiating table for a longer-term cessation.

It is normally not heard, but we heard it this week too.

Pope Leo XIV, without singling out President Trump by name, condemned Trump's statement characterizing the threat as "truly unacceptable," and called on "all people" to "reject war, especially a war which many people have said is an unjust war."

The Pope has long spoken about injustice in broad moral terms.

However, this week, Trump's threats to end "civilization" in Iran prompted him to cross into explicitly political territory – a move Vatican historians have called extraordinarily rare.

The second related event this week, far removed from the turmoil of the Iran conflict, was the Artemis II mission and its images of the dark side of the moon and of earth – a blue marble floating in the dark void of space.

While 50 years ago the Apollo missions were framed around male, Cold War-era heroism, Artemis was designed to send the first woman and first black person to the moon.

Its multinational crew reflects greater inclusion and diversity of who represents humanity in space.

While Apollo symbolized geopolitical rivalry, the Artemis space programme increasingly shows international partnership, with NASA working with other space agencies – Canadian, European, Chinese.

It reflects a shift from "space race" competition to a shared global model.

**Isn't it therefore rather ironic that Trump's threat to annihilate an entire civilization, should coincide this week with his symbolic leadership of a peaceful U.S.-led space initiative that essentially rekindles our sense of self as humanity, our reimagined understanding of our common destiny, and our definition of civilization itself?**



Earth rising from the moon image by Artemis II crew

This week in the Bulletin & Record

## Getting on with the assignment

Daniel Kaoma talks to Costa Mwansa, the host of Muvi TV's popular programme The Assignment

There is boldness about Costa Mwansa that is visible in his face. Of small frame and not much height, the 30-year-old television presenter has risen rapidly to prominence as a television interviewer on Muvi TV's The Assignment, winning over a loyal following of viewers.

In the run-up to the 2011 elections, The Assignment was one of the most watched programmes on local television thanks to the efficient manner in which Mr Mwansa handled his guests, who included President Michael Sata (then leader of the opposition), presidential hopeful Hakainde Hichilema and new political entrant Elias Chipimo Jr.

Mr Mwansa's colleague at Muvi TV, Angel Phiri, perhaps sums up best the character traits that have helped the Muvi TV managing editor to get where he is in such a short space of time.

"Costa is one of the most aggressive, creative, intelligent journalists I have ever worked with at Muvi TV. The man drinks, eats and sleeps professionalism. His contribution is incomparable. What is more, he researches very well and the outcome is excellence," he said.

Mr Mwansa's big break came when he got a part time job at Muvi TV while he was studying at Evelyn Hone College in Lusaka.

After almost a year learning about human resources management, Mr Mwansa, who was born in the small mining town of Kalulushi, decided to switch to journalism -much to his parents' dismay. To fund this change in direction he was forced to get a job. "It wasn't easy combining college stuff and at the same time doing a part time job with Muvi TV," he said.

It was during this period that Mr Mwansa became an integral part of Muvi TV. It was also when he met Mr Phiri, who provided mentoring to the aspiring television executive. "I'm permanently indebted to him and words can hardly describe how I hold the man in high esteem," Mr Mwansa said.

Despite failing communication English, a component of the journalism course, first time around, Mr Mwansa finished his course at Evelyn Hone and joined Muvi TV full time. During these early years with the television station, Mr Mwansa, together with the likes of Lulu Hangala, Henry Joe Sakala and Chomba Mulenga, helped popularise the Zed Kids television programme.

But his ambition soon led him to look beyond children's television to more serious content. In 2009, Costa attended a short course in Germany where he met renowned

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**Getting on with the assignment cont...**

CNN anchorman Richard Quest, who he says has had a major influence on him as an interviewer. Indeed, Mr Quest, who has his own show, Quest Means Business, had such a huge impact on the young Mr Mwanza that he subsequently hatched the idea of the The Assignment programme.

Today, Mr Mwanza, who completed senior high school at Kitwe's Mukuba High School in 2000, regards highly interviewers like Kenneth Maduma and Frank Mutubila, from whom he says he has learnt a lot.

This story was first published in the April 2012 edition of the Bulletin and Record magazine.

