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STORIES THAT MATTER. PEOPLE THAT COUNT.

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Mining Boom Raises Questions Over Councils' Property Rates

Solwezi and Kalumbila councils have not carried out supplementary valuations covering two major mining expansions worth US\$3.25 billion, raising questions about potential local revenue. In Solwezi, the findings add to concerns over Kansanshi's roads-for-rates arrangement.

From page 1

By Sanjimba Kanganja in Solwezi

Two councils in North-Western Province have confirmed that they have not carried out supplementary valuations covering major mining expansions worth a combined US\$3.25 billion, raising questions about whether their property-rate assessments reflect developments at the mines.

Solwezi Municipal Council said it has not reassessed First Quantum Minerals' (FQM) US\$1.25-billion Kansanshi S3 expansion, while Kalumbila Town Council confirmed that Barrick's US\$2-billion Lumwana Super Pit expansion has not undergone a similar exercise.

A supplementary valuation allows a council to reassess a property following significant changes, such as new buildings or permanent infrastructure, to determine whether its property rates should be adjusted.

The findings raise questions about whether qualifying improvements at the mines have been captured in existing valuation rolls and whether councils could be missing out on additional revenue.

What the law provides

The Rating Act No. 21 of 2018 provides for supplementary valuations where qualifying improvements have been erected, completed, altered or demolished, or where a property's rateable value has changed.

However, a mining expansion does not automatically require an immediate reassessment. Whether additional rates are payable depends on the nature and completion dates of improvements, existing valuation records and applicable legal provisions.

The Government Valuation Department also has an oversight role in monitoring valuation rolls and advising councils.

Solwezi: Kansanshi S3 not reassessed

Solwezi Municipal Council confirmed that it has not conducted a supplementary valuation specifically covering the Kansanshi S3 expansion, commissioned on August 19, 2025.

The project has expanded the mine's processing capacity, raising questions about whether new permanent infrastructure has been included in its property assessment.

The council did not disclose Kansanshi's current rateable value, the amount it assesses and collects from the mine, or when it intends to conduct a supplementary valuation.

According to information previously supplied by Kansanshi to MakaanDay, the mine's property-rates liability for 2025 was approximately K125.16 million.

Of that amount, K95.3 million was settled in cash, while K29.86 million was accounted for through road construction.

The figures demonstrate the scale of Kansanshi's existing obligations but do not establish whether the S3 expansion should have increased its property-rate assessment.

Roads-for-rates arrangement raises further questions

The absence of an S3-specific valuation comes amid questions about how Solwezi Municipal Council accounts for property rates already assessed against Kansanshi.

A MakaanDay investigation published on September 28, 2026, revealed that Kansanshi's property-rates bill totalled K417.74 million between 2021 and 2025.

Of that amount, K74.36 million, representing 17.8%, was settled through roadworks instead of cash payments.

The value of road construction credited against rates increased from K8.5 million in 2021 to K29.86 million in 2025. The 2025 projects included Chisomo, Magrade and Golf roads.



Kansanshi told MakaanDay that the council identifies the roads, while the company prepares bills of quantities, estimates costs and carries out construction without adding a profit margin.

It said the council supervises the works, while completed roads are inspected by the Road Development Agency.

However, MakaanDay could not independently verify key aspects of the arrangement because the agreements governing the projects were not provided.

Kansanshi referred us to the council, which had not supplied the documents when the investigation was published.

Solwezi's newly elected mayor, Evans Lubelenga, said at the time that he needed to familiarise himself with council systems and projects before responding.

Although road construction can provide valuable infrastructure, the arrangement raises questions about cost verification, approval procedures and how the works are recorded in council accounts.

It also means that part of the council's assessed property-rate revenue is settled through infrastructure rather than cash available for other services.

Kalumbila: Sentinel reassessed, Lumwana still awaiting valuation

Kalumbila Town Council reported that a supplementary valuation carried out in 2024 at the Sentinel mining operation increased its land-rate

assessment from approximately K54.4 million to K90.4 million.

The increase of about K36 million, or 66%, illustrates the financial significance of updating property assessments.

However, the council confirmed that it has not conducted a supplementary valuation specifically covering Barrick's Lumwana Super Pit expansion, officially launched on October 2, 2024.

Kalumbila said Lumwana's land-rate assessment increased from approximately K64.4 million to K76.1 million because of other improvements, including plant and machinery, rather than the Super Pit expansion.

The council has yet to clarify which Super Pit improvements have been completed, whether they are captured in existing assessments and when further valuation might be necessary.

How much revenue could be at stake?

Experts consulted during the investigation suggested that comprehensive valuations across relevant properties could potentially increase annual collections to more than K300 million for Solwezi Municipal Council and K500 million for Kalumbila Town Council.

However, the estimates have not been independently verified against valuation rolls, applicable rates and property records. It is also unclear whether they represent total projected collections or additional revenue.

Mining Boom Raises Questions Over Councils' Property Rates cont....

They therefore cannot be treated as amounts the councils have already lost.

Adrian Kapumba, a former Solwezi Municipal Council accountant who worked in the Finance Department for more than five years, questioned the delays in conducting supplementary valuations.

Kapumba argued that property rates are an important source of local revenue and that assessments should reflect significant changes to qualifying properties.

Growing mining towns, increasing service demands

The valuation questions arise as mining towns face growing pressure on public infrastructure.

Solwezi's urban population increased from 96,725 in 2010 to 305,027 in 2022, according to census figures cited in MakaanDay's September investigation.

Previous MakaanDay reporting has highlighted difficulties accessing piped water in Kimakolwe and inadequate water and drainage facilities at Kyawama Market, where a planned K53.5-million modernisation project has faced delays.

These challenges do not establish that the mines have underpaid rates, but illustrate why accurate revenue assessments and transparent financial management matter.

Mining companies also pay corporate taxes and mineral royalties, but these are distinct from property rates collected by councils to support local services.

The unanswered questions

More than a year after Kansanshi's S3 expansion was commissioned and roughly two years after Lumwana's Super Pit project was launched, neither has undergone a supplementary valuation specifically covering the development.

This does not establish that either council has broken the law or lost revenue.

However, both authorities have yet to explain whether qualifying

improvements are captured in their existing valuation rolls and when further assessments will take place.

Solwezi Municipal Council also faces questions about the agreements governing Kansanshi's roads-for-rates arrangement, including how construction costs are verified and recorded against property-rate obligations.

The Government Valuation Department's role remains unclear, as the investigation has not established whether it has reviewed either expansion or advised the councils to prepare supplementary rolls.

For residents of North-Western Province's growing mining towns, the issue is not simply how much mining companies invest, but whether councils accurately assess the revenue they are legally entitled to collect and account for it transparently.

Zambia is targeting annual copper production of three million tonnes by 2030, with major mining expansions in North-Western Province expected to contribute to that ambition.

Among the investments are FQM's US\$1.25-billion Kansanshi S3 expansion and Barrick's US\$2-billion Lumwana Super Pit project.

While these developments are expected to boost copper production, they also raise questions about whether local councils are keeping pace with the expansion of mining infrastructure when assessing property rates.



Aggravated Robbery Trial Adjourned as Prosecutors Consider Lesser Charge

By Gibson Zulu

The High Court has adjourned the trial of two men accused of aggravated robbery to 15 October 2026 as the National Prosecution Authority (NPA) considers a proposal to reduce the charge to a lesser offence.

Solomon Mbewe, 26, and Felix Chipili, 22, are accused of robbing Michael Kalebwe of K9,000 after allegedly breaking into the house where he was sleeping in Mulobela Village, Ten Miles, in the early hours of 3 February 2026. When the matter came before High Court Judge Mutinta Kaumbi Ndulo-Mundia, an NPA representative requested an adjournment to allow further consultations over the proposed reduction of the charge.

The representative told the court that prosecutors had written to their superiors following an earlier adjournment, seeking approval to reduce the charge. The court heard that the prosecution team had received a response on Friday afternoon but had not yet communicated the information to witnesses.

The prosecution subsequently requested that the matter be adjourned to 15 October 2026.

Mbewe and Chipili pleaded not guilty to aggravated robbery when they appeared before the High Court on 5 October 2026.

According to the allegations, the robbery occurred at approximately 02:00 hours on 3 February 2026 in Mulobela Village, Ten Miles.

The two men were arrested on the same day and initially detained at Mwanjune Police Post before being transferred to Ngwerere Police Station.

They were subsequently remanded at Lusaka Central Prison and later transferred to Mwembeshi Correctional Facility. They are currently being held at Lusaka Central Prison.

The latest adjournment follows an earlier adjournment to allow the NPA and Legal Aid to discuss whether the aggravated robbery charge should be maintained or reduced.



Expert Warns UPND Majority Could Weaken Parliamentary Oversight

By Gibson Zulu

Political and international relations specialist Mumbi Namwawa has warned that the United Party for National Development’s (UPND) commanding majority in Zambia’s national assembly could weaken parliamentary oversight if MPs place party loyalty above their responsibility to hold the Executive accountable.

Speaking to MakaanDay in a telephone interview from Sweden, where she is studying, Namwawa said effective parliamentary scrutiny depends not only on constitutional safeguards but also on MPs’ willingness to question government decisions, including those made by their own party.

Her warning follows Zambia’s August 2026 general election, in which the United Party for National Development (UPND) reportedly secured 137 of the 226 constituency-based seats and 32 of the 40 proportional representation seats reserved for women, youths and persons with disabilities. The remaining eight proportional representation seats went to NRPUP.

UPND’s combined 169 elected seats represent approximately 63.5% of the 266 constituency-based and proportional representation seats established under the 2025 constitutional amendments.

The amendments expanded the number of elected parliamentary seats from 156 to 266, an increase of approximately 70.5%. The Constitution also provides for up to 11 presidentially nominated MPs, who would increase the ruling party’s representation if appointed from its ranks. Ms Namwawa said the ruling party’s numerical advantage could make it easier for the Executive to advance legislation while reducing opposition MPs’ influence over parliamentary decisions.

However, she acknowledged that a parliamentary majority did not automatically prevent effective oversight, stressing that Parliament’s responsibilities extended beyond lawmaking to representing citizens’ interests and holding the government accountable.

She cited the passage of the Cyber Security Bill in March 2025 as an example of the limitations of parliamentary scrutiny. A parliamentary committee had earlier

recommended deferring the Bill for further consultations and scrutiny, arguing that it did not meet the required threshold for enactment.

Although the government subsequently reported holding additional consultations, Parliament passed the legislation on 28 March 2025.

Ms Namwawa also questioned Parliament’s decision to retain MPs in local councils during the constitutional reform process, despite stakeholder concerns about potential conflicts between their legislative and council oversight responsibilities. She argued that such decisions highlighted the limitations of parliamentary committee recommendations, which are not binding on the National Assembly, and raised questions about how effectively stakeholder concerns influenced final legislation.

Party loyalty versus accountability

Ms Namwawa warned that ruling-party MPs could hesitate to scrutinise government decisions if doing so was perceived as disloyalty to their party.

However, she acknowledged that parliamentary committees, including the Public Accounts Committee, had demonstrated professionalism in examining government expenditure.

She argued that effective oversight depended on safeguards that enabled MPs to exercise independent judgment and ensured meaningful consideration of stakeholder concerns.

Warning signs to watch

Ms Namwawa urged citizens, civil society organisations and the media to monitor parliamentary proceedings for signs of weakening oversight.

She identified the swift endorsement of controversial proposals,

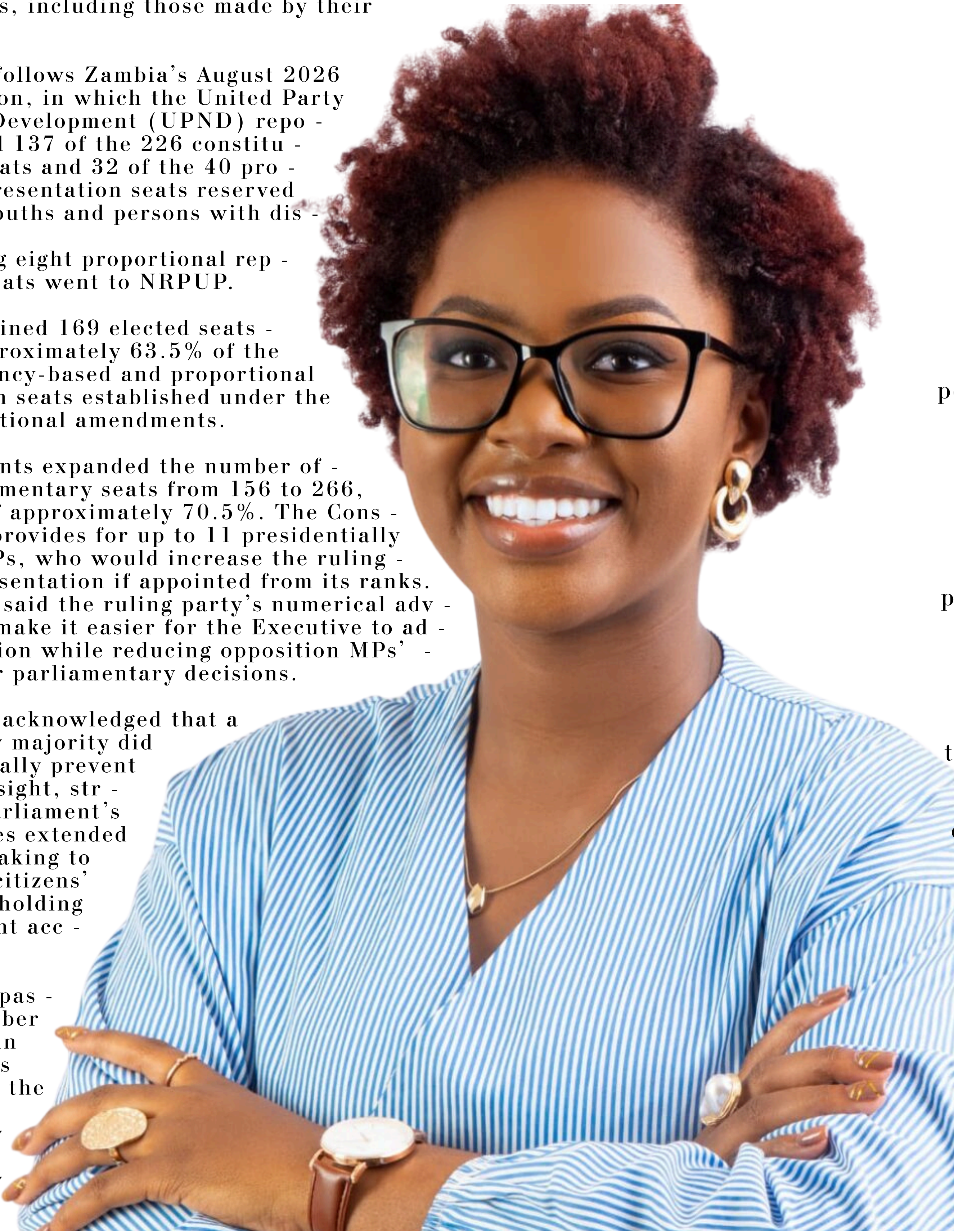
She cautioned that limited opposition influence could allow government proposals to dominate parliamentary proceedings without sufficient consideration of alternative views.

Although parliamentary committees provide opportunities for MPs from different parties to scrutinise government policies and hear stakeholder submissions, Ms Namwawa stressed that their effectiveness ultimately depended on political will and institutional independence.

“We have to see a lot of political will. We have to see a lot of independence of Parliament from the Executive,” she said.

She urged MPs to prioritise their constituents’ interests, even when these conflicted with party positions, and called on political parties to develop policies reflecting citizens’ needs.

Ms Namwawa has previously worked with ActionAid Zambia, the Governance Action Hub, People’s Action for Accountable and Good Governance (PAAGZ), and the Centre for Trade Policy and Development (CTPD). She has also served as a political and human rights resource person for the Youth 4 Parliament and Girls Gone Political movements.



Deputy PS’ Dismissal Revives Questions Over Controversial FRA Maize-Buying Point Exposed by MakanDay

By Esther Nkhoma in Chipata

Eastern Province Deputy Permanent Secretary Dr Lewis Mwape has been dismissed from his position, weeks after a MakanDay investigation linked him to a controversial maize-buying point in Chipata District where farmers alleged they were charged fees to sell their maize.

Eastern Province Permanent Secretary Paul Thole confirmed the termination of Dr Mwape’s contract, describing the decision as “regrettable”, but did not disclose the reasons. It remains unclear whether the dismissal is connected to the maize-buying controversy at Liondo Village, where Dr Mwape previously acknowledged helping to facilitate an arrangement involving the Food Reserve Agency (FRA).

MakanDay attempted to reach Dr Mwape for comment through his known telephone numbers, but his phones were switched off.

In an earlier investigation, MakanDay revealed that maize was being purchased from farmers at Liondo Village, in the Luangeni area of Chipata District, despite the location not appearing on the official list of FRA buying depots examined by the newsroom.

The operation involved the use of FRA-marked bags, official receipts and a weighing scale reportedly moved from the established Feni Depot.

During the investigation, Dr Mwape acknowledged helping to facilitate the buying arrangement alongside FRA officials and a United Party for National Development (UPND) official.

He explained that the initiative was intended to make it easier for farmers in the area to sell their maize, while confirming that Liondo was not registered as an official FRA depot.

However, questions arose over who had authorised the operation, under what arrangement it was operating and whether the movement of FRA equipment to the site had been approved.

The investigation also documented allegations that farmers were being charged to sell their maize at Liondo.

One farmer who delivered 200 bags told MakanDay that he paid K1,500 to officials at the site.

MakanDay could not independently establish who received the money, what the payment was intended for or whether FRA had authorised the collection.

The alleged charges raised concerns because farmers are ordinarily not required to pay fees to sell their maize to FRA. Members of the Feni depot committee also questioned the movement of a weighing scale to Liondo, saying they were unaware of the location operating as an officially recognised sub-depot.

A buyer alleged to have been coordinating maize purchases at Liondo told MakanDay that he was acting on instructions he attributed to FRA Eastern Province Marketing Coordinator Clyde Muunza. Muunza initially said he was unaware of the buying point. At the time of the investigation, FRA headquarters in Lusaka had not provided a comprehensive explanation of the arrangement. Dr Mwape’s dismissal now comes while several questions raised by the investigation remain unanswered.

These include who authorised the Liondo operation, who approved the movement of FRA equipment from Feni Depot, whether farmers were charged without authorisation and who received the money allegedly collected.

Although the timing of Dr Mwape’s dismissal brings renewed attention to the controversy, MakanDay has not established any connection between the termination of his contract and the Liondo operation.

The government has not publicly disclosed the grounds for his dismissal, while FRA has yet to fully account for the maize-buying arrangement and the allegations of payments by farmers.

Entries Open for the MakaanDay Investigative Reporting Award

Now in its fifth year, the Eminent Prize for Investigative Journalism celebrates Zambian journalists whose reporting goes beyond the headlines to expose corruption, abuse of power and injustice.

Entries close: 31 October 2026

An independent panel of judges will review the submissions and select up to two winners.

What’s at stake?

Overall Winner: A brand-new laptop
Runner-up: A fully paid internship at MakaanDay
Honourable Mentions: Up to two outstanding entries may receive special recognition, with the journalists invited to MakaanDay’s awards ceremony.

Winning and finalist investigations will also be showcased on the MakaanDay website and across our social media platforms, giving exceptional investigative journalism greater visibility.

Who can enter?

The award is open to journalists based in Zambia, including MakaanDay contributors. However, journalists employed by MakaanDay are not eligible to enter.

Entries should demonstrate strong investigative reporting by uncovering information of significant public interest, particularly reporting that exposes corruption, abuse of power, wrongdoing or injustice.

Journalists may submit their own work or nominate another journalist’s work with their permission.

Submission Guidelines

Eligible work must have been published or broadcast between 1 December 2025 and 31 October 2026.

Entries published or broadcast in languages other than English must be accompanied by an English translation.

For print or written entries, submit a scanned or digital copy. Where the text is difficult to read, include a transcript in Word or PDF format.

For radio, television or online video entries, provide a working link or attach the relevant audio or video file.

Every submission must include a short biography and photograph of the entrant or entrants.

Ready to enter?

Send your submission to editor@makanday.org by 31 October 2026.

Visit the MakaanDay website for more information.

Great investigations deserve to be recognised. If your journalism uncovered what others wanted hidden, we want to see it.



Mandevu Youth Demand Answers Ahead of November By-Election

“Let’s be our brothers’ keepers; we are family after elections,” says FDD member Clinton Kaseya.

By Gibson Zulu

Nearly two months after an attack disrupted the counting of parliamentary election results in Mandevu Constituency, voters are preparing to return to the polls. But concerns remain over whether their votes will be secure this time.

Ahead of the November 5, 2026 by-election, young voters and civic leaders are demanding stronger security, transparent vote counting and timely announcement of results to prevent a repeat of August’s events.

Speaking at a youth conference organised by the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) at St. Paul’s UCZ Church in Kabwata, Lusaka, on 10 October, Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD) member Clinton Kaseya called for political tolerance, urging participants not to allow political differences to divide their communities.

The conference brought together young people, older community members, representatives of political parties, civil society and faith-based organisations, as well as officers from the Zambia Police Service.

An election disrupted

Mandevu’s August 13 parliamentary election ended without a declared winner after unknown individuals attacked the results-totalling centre, destroyed transmission kits and fled with election documents.

In an August 28 statement, ECZ Chief Electoral Officer Brown Kasaro said the incident prevented the returning officer from declaring results, forcing the Commission to order a fresh election.

The approaching vote has renewed questions about security and the handling of election materials.

Fears over security and transparency

Hamanzi Shamitaba, a former polling agent at Lusaka City Council’s Housing Department, called for increased police deployment, warning that inadequate security could leave polling stations vulnerable to violence.

“Each polling station should have at least 20 or 30 police officers. Two officers cannot contain 20 or more cadres,” he said.

He also urged ECZ to provide sufficient Gen 20 results forms and ensure results are announced without unnecessary delays.

Ivy Nabeya, communications lead at Girls Gone Political, encouraged women to turn out in large numbers, while Dzuka Cholinga Youth Zambia executive director Clinton Mfula called for adequate protection of election observers.

A test of public confidence

Opening the conference, Assistant District Electoral Officer Victor Kagoli confirmed that voting would take place on November 5, with campaigns ending at 18:00 hours on November 4.

He urged young people to reject violence, intimidation and hate speech, warning against being used by political parties to disrupt elections.

But beyond appeals for peace, questions remain about what ECZ and the Zambia Police Service have done to prevent another disruption.

Have security arrangements been strengthened? Will election materials be adequately protected? And can voters expect results without unnecessary delays?

For Mandevu residents, November 5 will be more than another election. It will test whether the institutions entrusted with protecting their votes can restore public confidence.

And as Kaseya reminded fellow voters, political differences should not divide neighbours who must continue living together long after the campaigns end.



EDITORIAL

Violence at the Supreme Court is An Attack on The Rule of Law

There are certain things that cannot be justified, no matter how strongly one supports the political party in power.

The attack on Davies Mwila, former Secretary General of the Patriotic Front (PF), by suspected ruling party supporters within the grounds of the Supreme Court on Tuesday is one such incident.

Whatever Mwila may have said to anger those involved, nothing justifies resorting to violence. Political differences, however deep, must never become an excuse for physical attacks.

What makes this incident particularly disturbing is where it happened, within the grounds of the Supreme Court.

Courts are not ordinary public spaces. They are institutions where citizens seek justice, disputes are resolved and the rule of law is upheld. They should never become places where new conflicts are created, as happened on Tuesday.

They must remain places where everyone, regardless of political affiliation or social standing, can appear without fear of intimidation or violence.

An attack within court premises is therefore more than an assault on an individual. It raises serious questions about the security of our courts, respect for judicial institutions and the ability of the state to protect those who seek justice.

If a former senior official of a political party can be attacked within the grounds of the Supreme Court, what assurance does an ordinary citizen have that they can approach the courts without fear?

We have been following developments since the incident, particularly whether the police have arrested anyone in connection with the attack. So far, we have not been able to establish that any arrests have been made.

The police have a responsibility to

investigate such incidents promptly and impartially. Their duty is to enforce the law, not to determine who deserves protection based on political affiliation.

This is not the first time Zambia has witnessed political violence of this nature.

In December 2012, Major Richard Kachingwe, then national secretary of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), was attacked by party youths at the party secretariat in Lusaka following an internal leadership dispute.

Among those implicated was Bowman Lusambo, who had publicly threatened to remove Kachingwe from the secretariat. Kachingwe later testified in court that Lusambo was among those directing the attack. Lusambo and three others faced assault charges.

Yet Lusambo subsequently rose through the political ranks, eventually becoming a cabinet minister under the PF government.

The circumstances of that attack were different from what happened to Mwila on Tuesday. But both incidents raise a troubling question about Zambia's political culture. Have we allowed political violence to become an acceptable means of settling political differences and a culture that is part and parcel of politics in Zambia?

When individuals associated with political violence subsequently rise to positions of influence, what message does that send to young political supporters?

It risks creating the impression that violence is not necessarily a barrier to political advancement and that political loyalty can sometimes provide protection from accountability.

This is a dangerous culture that Zambia must confront, regardless of which political party is in power.

Chief Justice Mumba Malila was

therefore right to condemn Tuesday's incident, describing it as an act of flagrant lawlessness and a direct assault on the administration of justice and the sanctity of the Judiciary.

His statement emphasizes the seriousness of what happened. Violence within court premises does not merely threaten those directly involved. It undermines public confidence in the institutions entrusted with protecting citizens' rights and administering justice.

The Chief Justice has also announced tighter security at Judiciary facilities, while law enforcement agencies investigate the incident. These are welcome steps, but they must be followed by concrete action.

The courts are among the last lines of defence against abuse of power. If political intimidation and violence are allowed to take root within their premises, we risk weakening the very

institutions that citizens depend upon when their rights are threatened.

What happened on Tuesday must therefore not be reduced to another political quarrel between the ruling party and the opposition.

The more fundamental issue is whether our institutions can protect citizens and uphold the law without fear or favour.

Those responsible must be identified through a credible investigation and, where the evidence warrants it, prosecuted. Political affiliation should neither shield anyone from accountability nor become a basis for presuming guilt.

The Chief Justice has spoken firmly. The police must now demonstrate that the law applies equally to everyone.

A country cannot claim to uphold the rule of law while allowing political violence to go unpunished, especially at the very institutions entrusted with administering justice.

MakanDay

INVESTIGATE.
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YOUR SAY

Your opinion. Your argument. Your space.

A space for our readers to share their views, challenge ideas and contribute to conversations about the issues shaping Zambia and our communities.
Opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of MakanDay.

Opinion | You Can Fire the Officials, But Can You Fire the System?

- Like you have pointed out, why is it that literally no one is being held responsible, even for any part of the mess at ZAMMSA? For example, has anyone been held accountable for the container of medicines found at a private premises?
- I think even the President’s messages on fighting corruption are just rhetoric and targeted at certain individuals. He ignores corruption involving other ‘special’ people - [Baldeagle Peacock](#).
- Yes, why are the investigations not concluded and people should be prosecuted - [Kebby Sianjame](#)

Weeks After Our Investigation, A Deputy PS Has Been Fired.

- They thought that their operation was well hidden in that remote area, little did they know that MakanDay has got an ear to the ground – [Pride Malembeka](#).

Government Is Going Electric

- For urban based vehicles possible. For rural the lack of charging stations will be a problem. And overall it'll be interesting to see how long the vehicles last and if BYD will take it seriously to provide actual repair services - [Mark Hesmworth](#)

7



Your MP Is Speaking in Parliament. But How Much Time Do They Have?

As MPs debate President Hakainde Hichilema’s address and deliver their maiden speeches, MukanDay explains when Parliament sits, how debates are conducted and what happens when time runs out.

By MukanDay Editor

Imagine your MP standing in parliament to raise concerns about a broken borehole, an unfinished road or a clinic without medicines.

You expect answers. But how much time does your MP have to speak, and what happens if parliament adjourns before the issue is fully debated?

These questions are particularly relevant as MPs debate President Hakainde Hichilema’s address to the 14th National Assembly, with some delivering their maiden speeches.

Last week, HOUSE BUSINESS explained parliamentary titles and procedures. This week, we examine maiden speeches and the National Assembly Standing Orders, which governs parliamentary sittings.

What is a maiden speech?

A maiden speech traditionally refers to an MP’s first formal speech in parliament. It offers an opportunity to introduce themselves, highlight constituency challenges and outline their priorities.

The term is sometimes also used for a returning MP’s first speech in a new parliamentary term.

For example, Shiwang’andu MP Steven Kampyongo used his maiden speech for this term to call for national reconciliation while promising that the

opposition would firmly scrutinise government decisions.

Why it matters: A maiden speech offers voters an early indication of their MP’s priorities. But the real test is whether those promises translate into parliamentary questions, debates and action.

When does Parliament sit?

Under Standing Order 24, the National Assembly ordinarily sits from Tuesday to Friday. Proceedings begin at 14:30 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and at 09:00 on Friday.

The house ordinarily does not sit on weekends or public holidays. Does this mean MPs work only four days a week? No. Their responsibilities also include committee work, preparing for debates and attending to constituency matters.

What happens when time runs out?

Parliament ordinarily adjourns at 19:00 on Tuesday and Thursday, 18:30 on Wednesday and 13:00 on Friday. Under Standing Orders 27 and 28, business is interrupted five minutes before adjournment, although a vote already underway must be completed.

Interrupted business can resume where it stopped when placed back on the order paper. An MP whose speech was interrupted

retains the remaining speaking time.

However, if the member responsible does not appoint another day for the business, it lapses.

Why is Wednesday important?

Wednesday provides an opportunity for MPs to raise matters during debate on a motion to adjourn the house.

Under Standing Orders 29 and 30, an MP wishing to introduce a subject must submit notice to the Clerk before 11:00 on Tuesday.

The MP introducing the subject may speak for up to 10 minutes, while others have five minutes each. Debate ends by 19:00.

Can Parliament sit beyond normal hours?

Yes. Standing Order 34 allows ordinary adjournment rules to be suspended to complete business on the Order Paper.

However, the House cannot sit beyond 23:00 under this arrangement. Outstanding business continues the following day, even on a weekend or public holiday.

Why should citizens care?

For someone waiting for medicines at a clinic or repairs to a damaged road, parliamentary speeches matter only if they help bring attention and accountability to those problems.

As MPs make their opening contributions, citizens should listen for more than political promises. Is your MP raising the concerns of your constituency? Are ministers providing answers? And, most importantly, what happens after the speeches end?

Those are the questions HOUSE BUSINESS will continue asking.



From the Bulletin & Record Archives

Tilyenji Kaunda: From Businessman To Politician After His Brother’s Assassination

More than a decade ago, Tilyenji Kaunda warned that growing tribal divisions threatened Zambia's national unity. Twelve years later, his concerns remain relevant in a country where tribal identity and political allegiance continue to generate division and debate.

ByNgelima Chisanga MM

“The nation has been slipping and sliding into greater tribal divisions. This is not a good trend and it needs to be halted. Other countries have slid into tribal conflict and Zambia could slide into it as well.”

These were the words of Tilyenji Kaunda, son of Zambia's founding president, Kenneth Kaunda, in a 2014 interview with The Bulletin & Record.

At the time, Kaunda was president of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), which had governed Zambia for the first 27 years after independence before losing power when the country returned to multiparty democracy in 1991.

His warning about tribalism was particularly significant given his father's political legacy, which placed national unity above ethnic identity under the philosophy of One Zambia, One Nation.

Kaunda argued that Zambia's political transition had been accompanied by growing ethnic divisions, accusing successive governments of favouring their own ethnic constituencies. He contrasted this with UNIP's approach to national integration, although his defence of the former ruling party's record reflected his own political perspective.

Twelve years later, questions about tribalism, regional political loyalties and ethnic representation remain part of Zambia's political discourse. His observations invite reflection on whether successive political administrations have done enough to protect the national unity that Zambia's founding leaders sought to build.

But tribalism was only one of the issues Kaunda raised.

In the wide-ranging interview conducted by Johan Rahm, he also discussed the growing influence

of money in politics, corruption, inequality and the failure of economic growth to translate into improved living conditions for ordinary Zambians.

He questioned whether Zambia's democratic system was delivering meaningful economic opportunities beyond the right to vote.

“Yes growth is there, but growth for whom?” he asked.

Kaunda also reflected on his unexpected entry into politics. A businessman before joining UNIP's leadership, he explained how the assassination of his brother in 1999 prompted party members to encourage him to take up a political role.

By 2014, UNIP had lost much of its political influence. Once the dominant force in Zambian politics, the party was struggling to regain relevance in a political landscape transformed by multiparty democracy.

As part of our From the Bulletin & Record Archive series, MakaanDay republishes this interview not simply as a record of Zambia's political past, but as an opportunity to revisit questions about tribalism, national unity, democracy and economic justice that continue to confront the country.

This interview was originally published in 2014. The views expressed reflect the political circumstances and perspectives of that period.

Original interview by Johan Rahm | The Bulletin & Record, 2014.

The offices of the United National Independence Party are located far from where you might expect them to be. Across the road is a big factory and most of the neighbours are light industries on the outskirts of Lusaka. On a white wall, the characteristic party symbol of a hand holding a torch is painted.

Next to it is a Zambian flag, with a handwritten addition saying UNIP, indicting the location of the offices of the party that ruled Zambia for its first 27 years of independence. Today the party is a long way from its glory days.

The man who aims to change that is the son of the founding father and former strongman of UNIP, Kenneth Kaunda. With a father who was first president of the newly-born nation and who ruled the country for its first 27 years, Tilyenji Kaunda has a name that might obligate him to follow in his father’s footsteps. However, it was far from certain that he would live his life as a politician.

“I used to be a businessman, but in 1999 my brother was assassinated. He was the UNIP youth chairman for the Lusaka region. Then some of his colleagues came to me and said `well your brother has been killed, won’t you take his place`? That’s how I got into politics. I was elected into congress and I was Secretary General. That was my entry point, so I was very green when I came into politics.”

Johan: So you did not enter politics by choice, but rather felt compelled to stand for your brother?

Kaunda: “Yes, they came and said you better come.”

Johan: How do you think your father has influenced you as a politician?

Kaunda: “I grew up in a political family, so we knew nothing but politics. We knew what he was doing, we knew what he was into and we knew what he wanted. We had discussions over the years obviously, not necessarily in agreement, so we were attuned to political life. But our actual participation in politics was not a given.”

Johan: How do you view the political system since multi-party democracy was introduced in 1991? (UNIP

was the only political party from 1973 to 1991.)

Kaunda: “The nation has been slipping and sliding into greater tribal divisions. This is not a good trend and it needs to be halted. Other countries have slid into tribal conflict and Zambia could slide into it as well. In 1973 we had the Choma Declaration, where political parties got together and formed a government of national unity, although they called it the one party participatory democracy. It actually wasn’t a one party system, rather several parties which came together and said we can’t handle the western kind of democracy.... So we have to take a few steps back, let’s come together, let’s share power. That helped the tribes come together and there was a deliberate policy to parachute people across the country. For instance, if you were a Ngoni, don’t lock yourself in your tribal areas, we can send you to the Lozis. All the presidents after the UNIP Government have tended to award their own tribe. We think that this is a trend that needs to be stopped.”

Mr Kaunda leans back in his chair and continues. “I know we are not angels and we made our mistakes. But our mistakes were not a result of human greed. Our mistakes were genuine mistakes, and where we could correct them we would correct them.”

Johan: Do you think that it was too soon to introduce multi-party democracy in 1991?

Kaunda: “I don’t think it was too soon, it’s never too soon. I think the problem was the mentality of the people who came in. Chiluba wasn’t very highly educated, and I think his vision was a bit limited. I think you can say something went wrong at that point. It wasn’t the fault of the democratic processes, but rather of the individuals who took power.”

Johan: What would you say is the largest

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problem the democratic system is facing in Zambia today?

Kaunda: “It is not necessarily the best suited people who get elected into office. The people who get there are those who have got money already. So you’re not getting the best crop of leaders into government all the time. When it comes to many posts, you say I’ve got no money so I can’t stand, but I’m actually a better candidate. So you’ve got a moneyed class that is controlling things and unless something happens, this will continue in perpetuity, and may get worse. The western countries encouraged us to take the democratic route, but once they had done that they didn’t take the next step, which is how you make sure it is working. They just set it in motion and then they left. It was hands free after that; good system, no maintenance. We need a strong opposition, because that helps you be a good government. I would say to western governments, you brought this wind of change, come and help us trim the sails.”

The Vice President of UNIP, Mr. Njekwa Anamela, steps in to the office to greet us. “You should talk to him instead”, Mr Kaunda suggests. “He has been in government and has a lot of experience “.

Johan: You were to wake up the day after the upcoming presidential elections as republican president, what would be your priorities?

Kaunda: “Let me twist the question slightly, because we grew up in UNIP, living with certain principles. I would say `what should a UNIP president do in 2016`, and it could be anybody.” Johan: You don’t think it would be you? It’s only two years away.

Kaunda: I’ll be there hopefully, but I’m a Christian. We know that everything is in God’s hands, nothing happens that he doesn’t allow. I think it is secondary who it is, the important issue is what would be UNIP’s focus. We are interested in education; we think that this is the most liberating factor in a country’s life. We must educate

our children at whatever cost. We will be a well-developed country if we do that.”

Johan: Another issue that any president has to deal with is the health system. Quality health care is not available for everyone in Zambia today. How would you like to address this issue?

Kaunda: “We would get our experts together. I think for us the focus will be on preventive health care, that’s very important, because it’s possible here in Zambia. We have a good climate and we can have a healthy environment. Our foods are also wholesome, so I think that we can have healthy families that can be strong enough so that we don’t congest our hospitals. But then again we’ve got experts who are going to come in and set up a good policy which will be robust, not too expensive but affordable, and I think that can be done.”

Johan: You can get excellent education in Zambia or excellent health service if you’ve got the money. What do you think about this uneven distribution?

Kaunda: “Absolutely, you’ve said it, if you’ve got the money, you can get it. We want to make it accessible to everybody across the board, and I think that it is possible. If you’ve got the heart for it you can achieve those goals. We fought for independence because of this kind of discrimination. Today the discrimination is not black versus white, its money versus no money.”

The sun is standing high, shining through the window to the spacious office of the party president. We open the window to allow the breeze in before we continue talking about corruption in Zambia.

“Corruption is a big issue, but not a single person can say that I have come to cut corruption down. It’s a job for all of us, it’s a collective effort, and it has to be a national effort. All political stakeholders and all citizens have to participate in this effort. Not a single political party can come and say we have come to wipe out corruption, it is not possible.



Not a single president can come and say ‘I have come to kick out corruption’, it is not possible. We must say as a nation that we must have zero tolerance for corruption.”

Johan: The government has to take some kind of role as a facilitator, how would you approach that, were you the president of the country?

Kaunda: “We would call all the stakeholders, and have one national goal; to minimise corruption. That means all political parties, civic leaders and also chiefs have to get together and agree that this is what we are going to do. Corruption is like putting holes at the bottom of a bottle, so whatever money you pour in just goes out.”

Johan: So fighting corruption is a priority to you?

Kaunda: “It is an absolute top priority, because when it is there none of the beautiful things we’ve been talking about can happen.”

Johan: At the moment a lot of foreign investors are operating in Zambia. Some argue that this brings employment and development to the country others say it robs the country of its resources. What do you think?

Kaunda: “Foreign investment is welcome but it depends on the partnerships that are arranged, I think that there has to be equality in the arrangement between the owner of the resources and the people who bring the capital, and I think there has to be an equitable sharing of the profits.”

Johan: Do you think the challenge is to

change the way these companies operate in Zambia?

Kaunda: “I think that the partnership must be understood. If you say a company is coming to invest in this area then we agree to say don’t touch the environment in this way or that way. We also need to agree that social responsibility should be to the maximum level and that the profits will be shared in a decided manner. If any party oversteps the agreement, we would have to call in arbitration. You must welcome investors and tell them the rules and in turn they tell you what they can do or cannot do. From there, there is no confusion, no chaos.”

Johan: Zambia has had great economic growth over the last 10-15 years, but still the poverty levels haven’t improved much, how can poverty be addressed?

Kuanda: “I think we need to look at how our society is structured. So far it’s been mostly rural. To share the national cake we have to concentrate on the rural activities of the people and uplift them. Right now we’ve got the top of the pyramid that is living all right, they’ve got good houses, good cars, good servants and can afford almost everything. But 80% of the people are not feeling the effects of the growth of the economy. If you don’t address then, the social bubble can burst and anything can happen. We have to deliberately address this, this can’t continue. That’s why I say we must concentrate on education, on health care, on agriculture and on job creation.”

Johan: Do you want more of a

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distribution of wealth?

Kaunda: “I wouldn’t call it distribution of wealth, its distribution of opportunity. Democracy has to deliver what democracy is supposed to offer, which is economic empowerment for everybody. That’s why it’s called a democracy. It’s important that this happens, otherwise all our efforts to put up this nice structure of voting and public service just fizzles out. Yes growth is there, but growth for whom?”

Mr Kaunda leans forward, putting his elbows on his desk. On the desk a small Zambian flag stand stands next to a new year’s greeting card from the office of the First President.

