

# News from Zambia

November 2019

No. 952

**ROYAL RECOGNITION:** The Duke of Cambridge, Prince William, will this month bestow the 2019 TUSK Wildlife Ranger Award on a Zambian law enforcement advisor at Conservation South Luangwa for risking his life when protecting wildlife. Mr Benson Kanyembo was named this year's prestigious TUSK Wildlife Ranger Award winner for working tirelessly to help the Ministry of Tourism and Arts' Department of National Parks and Wildlife and CSL to protect wildlife in South Luangwa National Park. (Zambia Daily Mail 4<sup>th</sup>)

**PREVENTING POLIO:** Health Minister Chitalu Chilufya has launched a polio vaccination exercise in Chiengi district with a target of reaching out to over 8,000 children who are five years and below. Dr. Chilufya kicked off the exercise in Piliyas village on the banks of Lake Mweru where a polio case was recorded recently. The minister said 954,000 doses have been received for the exercise targeting four districts in the province in the first phase. Dr. Chilufya thanked the World Health Organisation and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund for their quick intervention and support to government. The minister said Zambia last recorded polio in 1995 and the disease was curbed through effective measures by government. (ZNBC & Lusaka Times 6<sup>th</sup>)

**U-TURN ON NATIONAL PARK MINING:** There will be no mining in the Lower Zambezi National Park because the reports which Mwembeshi Resources Limited obtained from the Zambia Environmental Management Agency expired in 2017. Minister of Tourism and Arts Ronald Chitotela said for any mining activity to take place in a game park, a licence from the Ministry of Mines and Minerals Development has to be obtained together with a ZEMA report. (Zambia Daily Mail, Zambia Reports & Lusaka Times 7<sup>th</sup>)

[Note from Editor: See October's News from Zambia regarding the planned mine]

**SOLAR-POWERED PETROL:** In an apparent response to President Edgar Lungu's call on various stakeholders to explore alternative sources of energy, Total Zambia has opened the first-ever solar-powered filling station in the country built at over US\$80,000. The filling station will save about US\$40 million annually by covering an average of 23% of the service station's electricity needs. (Zambia Daily Mail 8<sup>th</sup>)

**DIPLOMATS OUTMANOEUVRE MPs:** Zambian Parliamentarians were taught a footballing lesson by diplomats accredited to Zambia during the 55th Independence tournament played at OYDC Zambia Sports Development Centre. The diplomats beat the hosts 4-2 to be crowned winners of the 2019 Independence tournament. Meanwhile Second Deputy Speaker Mwimba Malama said the event is a good initiative because it helps bring people together. Malama said the tournament gave both diplomats and MPs a platform to share positive ideas through interactions. (ZNBC 9<sup>th</sup>)

**JUMBO JET:** In echoes of the newly released Hollywood blockbuster movie 'Holiday in the Wild', which is set in Zambia, Proflight, Game Rangers International and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife have rescued an orphaned baby elephant. The elephant was airlifted to safety in Proflight's Dash 8 aircraft, flying from Mfuwe to Lusaka with 40 tourists on board and then onward by road to the GRI Lilayi Elephant Nursery that was featured in the movie starring Kristen Davis and Rob Lowe released on Netflix this month. The one-year-old elephant, which weighs around 200kg, was named Olimba Mtima – which means 'strong heart' – and given her own boarding pass by Proflight as she was loaded into the rear cargo hold of the plane. (The Mast 9<sup>th</sup>)

**LAKE KARIBA GETTING DRY:** Some residents of Maamba in Sinazongwe district have taken advantage of the dry portions of Lake Kariba to grow maize on the lakebed. One of the residents, John Hutchison, says the drying of Lake Kariba is a serious warning that calls for heightened efforts to mitigate climate change. Mr. Hutchison, who has lived in Maamba since 1982, has told ZNBC News that he has never seen the lake as dry as it is now, to a point where some people are growing maize on the lake bed. He fears that if the situation persists, power generation will be greatly affected. Another resident, Alex Mulala, says there is need for Zambians to care for their environment to avoid the devastating effects of global warming. (ZNBC 9<sup>th</sup>)

**REDUCED POWER GENERATION:** Zesco has announced a peak of up to 20 hours of loadshedding in some areas from the stipulated 15 hours due to reduced power generation at its main power stations. The statement confirmed weeks of complaints from many people that they experienced power black outs for about 20 hours a day while others said they sometimes went for two days without power. A spokesman said power generation at Zesco's main power stations, which were Kariba Dam, Kafue Gorge and Itezhi tezhi hydro power station, had significantly reduced with the current deficit sitting at 872 megawatts. (Times of Zambia 15<sup>th</sup>)

**SULPHUR DIOXIDE DISCHARGE:** Konkola Copper Mines in Chingola has shut down its acid plant after it discharged sulphur dioxide resulting in over 50 employees suffocating and requiring hospitalisation. Meanwhile, several pupils at Nchanga Trust School have been taken to Nchanga South Hospital after being affected by the bad sulphur dioxide discharge. The Zambia Environmental Management Agency has confirmed the discharge and is investigating. (Zambia Reports & Lusaka Times 15<sup>th</sup>)

**CASHEW NUTS GO WEST:** The Tanzanian government has donated 25 metric tonnes of cashew nut seeds to Zambia that will improve cashew production in Western Province. Speaking during the handover ceremony, Tanzanian High Commissioner to Zambia, Hassan Simba Yahya, says his country stands ready to create strong ties with Zambia in enhancing cashew production which would transform the economic status of Western Province. The Ambassador said cashew nuts were fetching high prices on the international market hence the need for mass production of the crop. (ZNBC 16<sup>th</sup>)

**IMF ADVICE:** The International Monetary Fund has urged Zambia to cut spending as a way of reducing the mounting debt. Zambia has been pursuing a US\$1.3 billion financial bail out from the IMF for over three years. But at the end of its latest staff visit to Zambia, the IMF stressed the need for a large, front-loaded and sustained fiscal adjustment that would help set debt on a downward path and reduce domestic arrears. In a statement, the IMF says Zambia's spending commitments should also be prioritized in order to meet key development priorities including supporting vulnerable populations. (Lusaka Times 22<sup>nd</sup>)

**SHUT DOWN COLLEGES:** The Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority has shut down twelve learning institutions on the Copperbelt for operating illegally, some of them offering mine safety programmes, which the authority fears may be contributing to a surge in mine accidents. A penalty of K18,000 has been slapped on the offending institutions, while investigations continue, with legal action to follow. (Times of Zambia 27<sup>th</sup>)

**NEW TOBACCO PLANT:** Finance Minister Bwalya Ng'andu has officially opened the \$25million British American Tobacco Zambia Cigarette Manufacturing Plant in the Lusaka South Multi-Facility Economic Zone with the call for more investment in the manufacturing sector. Dr. Ng'andu says the plant represents the kind of development government is determined to have that enhances the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment. (Lusaka Times 30<sup>th</sup>)

**AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION:** Parliament will table Bill 10 of 2019, which seeks to amend the Constitution following the Constitutional Court's dismissal of a petition to stop the process. The Law Association of Zambia and Chapter One Foundation Limited petitioned the Constitutional Court over Government's intention to amend the Constitution through Bill 10 but this was turned down. (Zambia Daily Mail 30<sup>th</sup>)

**Exchange Rates, 30<sup>th</sup> November, 2019: £1= K19.04 US\$1= K14.72**

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**Published by the Zambia Society Trust Registered UK Charity 1008155**

Printed and distributed by Spectrum Graphics, Unit 23, Horizon Business Centre, Alder Close, Erith, Kent DA18 4AJ.