Think Business

MONEY DAILY

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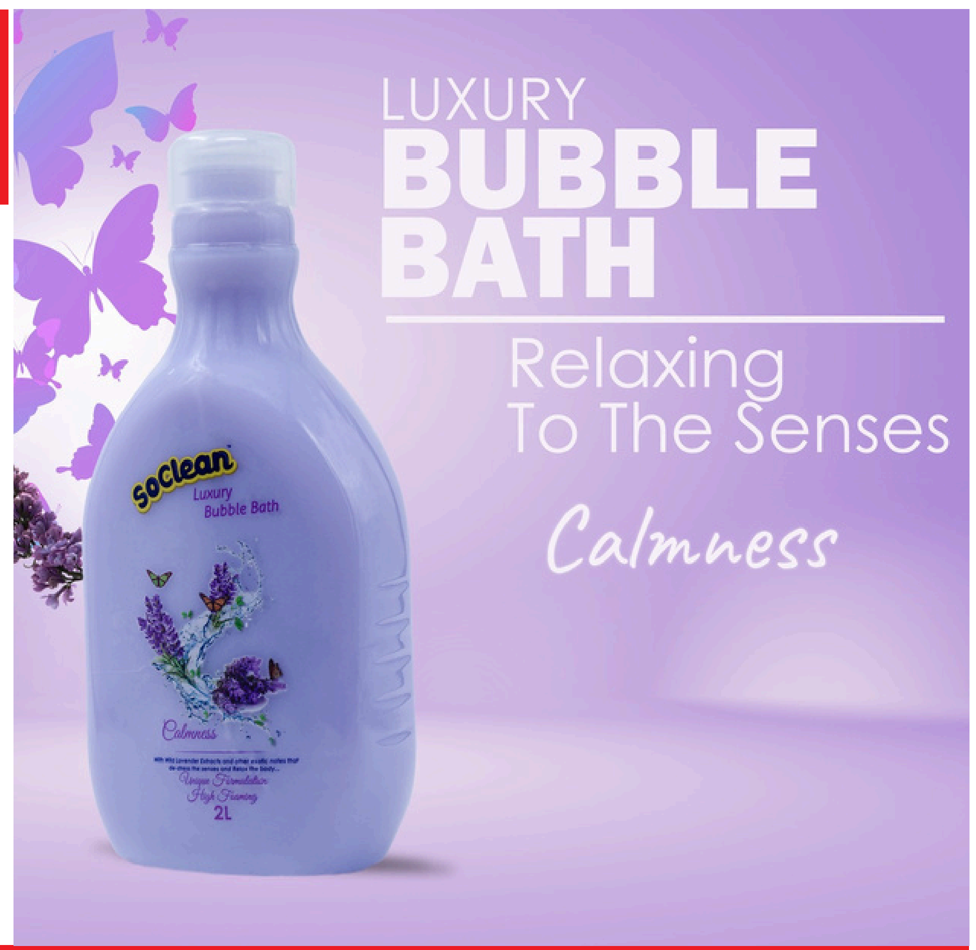



# KWACHA WEAKENS BY OVER 40% IN 2024

Page 3

## FQM RECORDS 13% INCREASE IN COPPER PRODUCTION FOR Q3

Page 5

## ZAMBIA TARGETS TO PRODUCE OVER 20 TONNES OF COTTON PER HECTARE

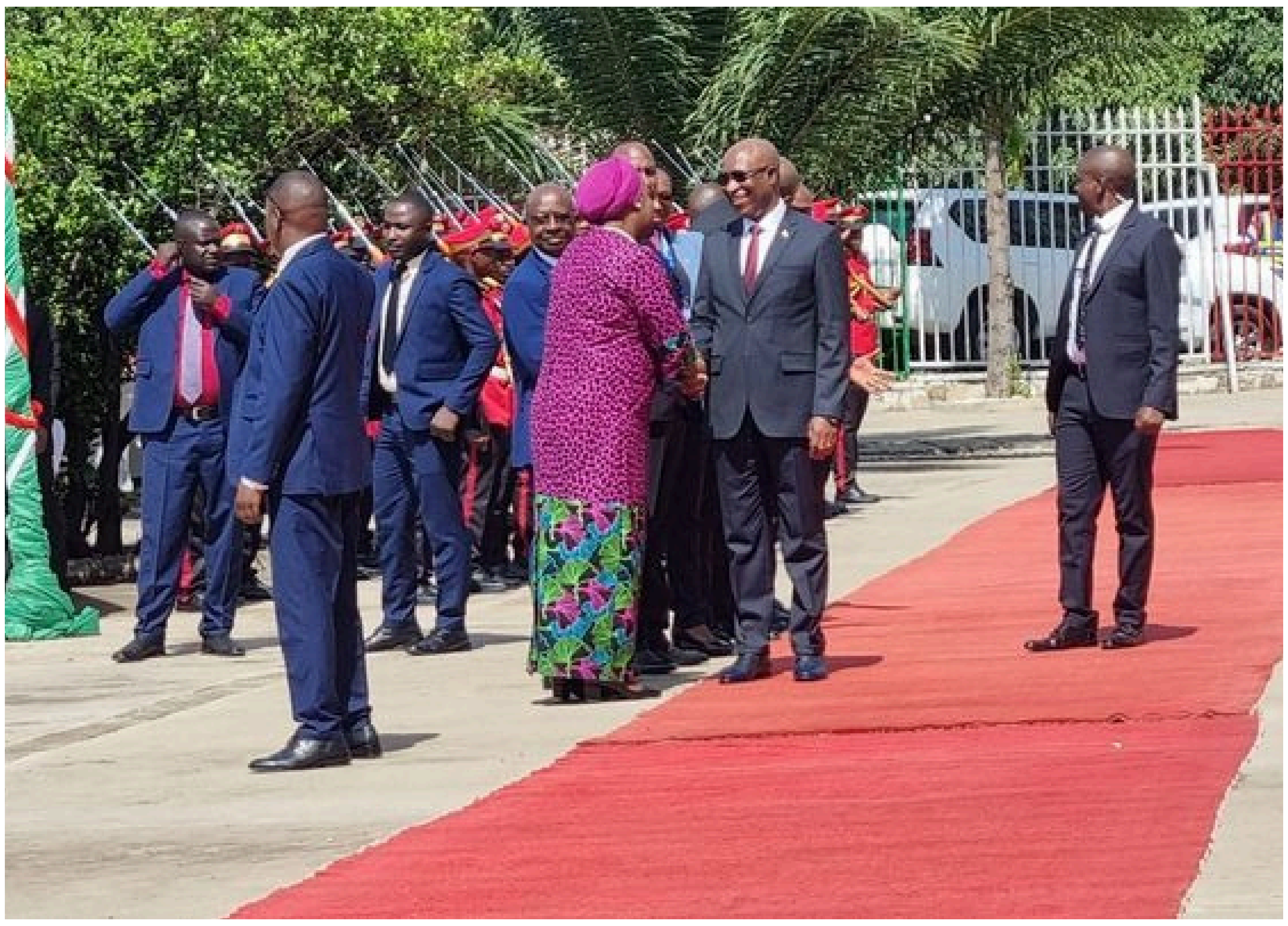
Page 3

## COMESA $14 BILLION INTRA-REGIONAL TRADE STABILITY

Page 2

# COMESA $14 BILLION INTRA-REGIONAL TRADE STABILITY

*By Cecilia Chiluba*



Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) has underscored its commitment to enhancing intra-regional trade, which has held steady at US$14 billion over the past two years, amid broader economic fluctuations across the globe.

COMESA Secretary General Chileshe Kapwepwe said while intra-COMESA trade currently stands at 6%, there is ample opportunity to increase this figure by reducing trade barriers and enhancing regional cooperation.

Ms. Kapwepwe also highlighted the vast potential for tourism and mineral resource sectors within COMESA, advocating for value addition to mineral exports to maximize earnings and drive economic growth.

"By consolidating our efforts, we can build more robust economies equipped to capitalize on regional and global market opportunities," Ms. Kapwepwe stated.

Ms. Kapwepwe said the Secretariat is working closely with COMESA Business Council (CBC) to promote the free movement of businesspersons in the COMESA region through gradual relaxation and eventual elimination of visa requirements within the COMESA region.

She applauded CBC's efforts in promoting Digital Financial Inclusion (DFI) across the region, emphasizing the need for low-cost, interoperable digital financial services that support Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Ms. Kapwepwe made the remarks during the 17th High-Level COMESA Business Forum held in Bujumbura, Burundi.

The 17th High-Level COMESA Business Forum was held under the theme: "Accelerating Regional Integration through the Development of Regional Value Chains in Climate-Resilient Agriculture, Mining, and Tourism."

And in addressing the Forum's climate resilience goals, Burundi's Prime Minister, Gervais Ndirakobuca emphasized the need for sustainable practices, citing climate change as a threat to regional economies and livelihoods.

He noted that the Business Forum provided an excellent platform to explore how to collectively develop COMESA's regional value chains in agriculture, mining, and tourism.

Meanwhile, COMESA Business Council's Board President, James Chimwanza said as an engine for economic growth in COMESA, the Private sector, undisputedly has a pivotal role to play in driving the sustainable development agenda in the region.

The Forum brings together leaders from government, industry, and business associations across the region and internationally to discuss strategies for a competitive business environment that benefits all COMESA Member States.

Organized by the COMESA Business Council (CBC) and the Government of Burundi, with support from the European Union, this two-day event is showcasing the diverse products, goods, and services produced within the region, strengthening trade ties and economic integration.

This is according to a statement issued by COMESA Business Council Chief Executive Officer, Teddy Soobramanien.



# OMCAZ PROJECTS K1 INCREASE IN PETROL PRICE

*By Cecilia Chiluba*

Oil Marketing Companies Association of Zambia (OMCAZ) has projected a K1 increase in the price of petrol for the month of November, 2024.

Speaking in an interview with Money FM News, Association President Dr. Kafula Mubanga, said the slight increase will apply on petrol due to road transportation of the commodity and also the transit tax introduced by Zimbabwe of between US$22, 000 and US$30, 000, for petroleum trucks passing through that country to prevent transit fraud.

Dr. Mubanga however noted that diesel price is likely to be maintained owing to the pipeline transportation of the commodity.

He added that there have been no major changes in oil prices on the international market, which may influence an increase in local prices.

"Looking at the trajectory on the international market, there are no major changes, but of course there are critical issues such as the matter arising from Zimbabwe, its becoming part of the key issues to either positively or negatively affect the fuel prices."

"With that in mind, there should be a slight increase in terms of fuel or about K1 or so, putting into account those fundamentals. Diesel can be maintained in terms of pricing because of the pipeline, but petrol because we are going to use road transport throughout, the price is likely to increase," Dr. Mubanga stated.

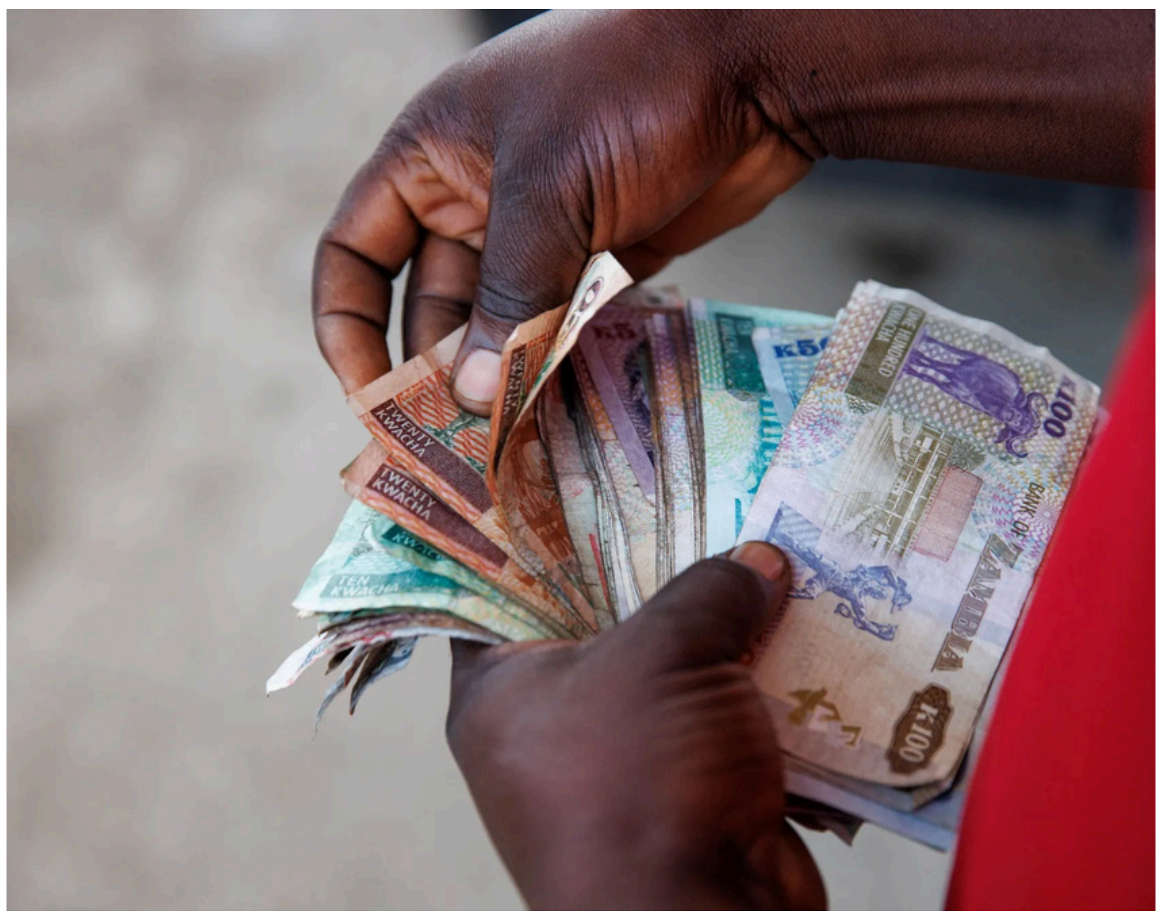
Energy Regulation Board (ERB) is expected to announce fuel pump prices for the month of November on Thursday this week.

In the month of October, the Board reduced fuel pump prices for Petrol, Diesel, Kerosene and Jet AI.

Petrol is currently selling at K32.70 per litre, down from K33.47 in September 2024, diesel at K28.90 from K30.05, kerosene at K26.95 from K27.52, and Jet A-1 at K29.57 from K30.53.

# KWACHA WEAKENS BY OVER 40% IN 2024

*By Cecilia Chiluba*



A Financial Analyst has observed that stabilizing macro-economic indicators such as the Kwacha and inflation using the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR) has not worked, as the local currency has depreciated by over 40 percent this year.

Speaking in an interview, Trevor Hambayi noted that in terms of the exchange rate, Bank of Zambia is using the monetary policy rate to reduce liquidity on the market so as to contain inflation and stabilize the Kwacha.

Mr. Hambayi however observed that policies that the Central Bank has put in place have not yielded the desired results.

"If you look at stabilizing the macro-economic indicators using the Monetary Policy Rate, for 2024 is that this has not worked."

"The economic fundamentals that we are looking at, firstly we will look at the exchange rate. In terms of the exchange rate, we are using the Monetary Policy Rate to reduce liquidity on the market to be able to contain the inflation rate, and liquidity on the market. When we reduce the liquidity then there will be little pressure on the exchange rate."

"But our exchange rate has depreciated by more than 40 percent this year. So, the policies that we have put in place have not yielded the desired results and we are speaking to obviously having to contain the inflation rate within the 6 to 8 percent target band," Mr. Hambayi noted.

He further observed that the increase in the Monetary Policy Rate has resulted in high interest rates, thereby reducing liquidity on the market and taking it towards government expenditure.

"The other economic fundamental that will be looking at is obviously interest rates. If you look at the last bond issuance by Bank of Zambia is that they have been oversubscribed because the interest rate which is the Monetary Policy Rate has become so attractive, it is more attractive to put money into the bonds than invest into the economy."

"This has contracted the economic growth, there is no investment into the economy and thus the growth has been very slow. That growth has also been impacted by a number of other factors such as the drought and load shedding which are taking our economic growth for 2024 to a position of a near recession, barely one percent and this is the performance of the year," he added.

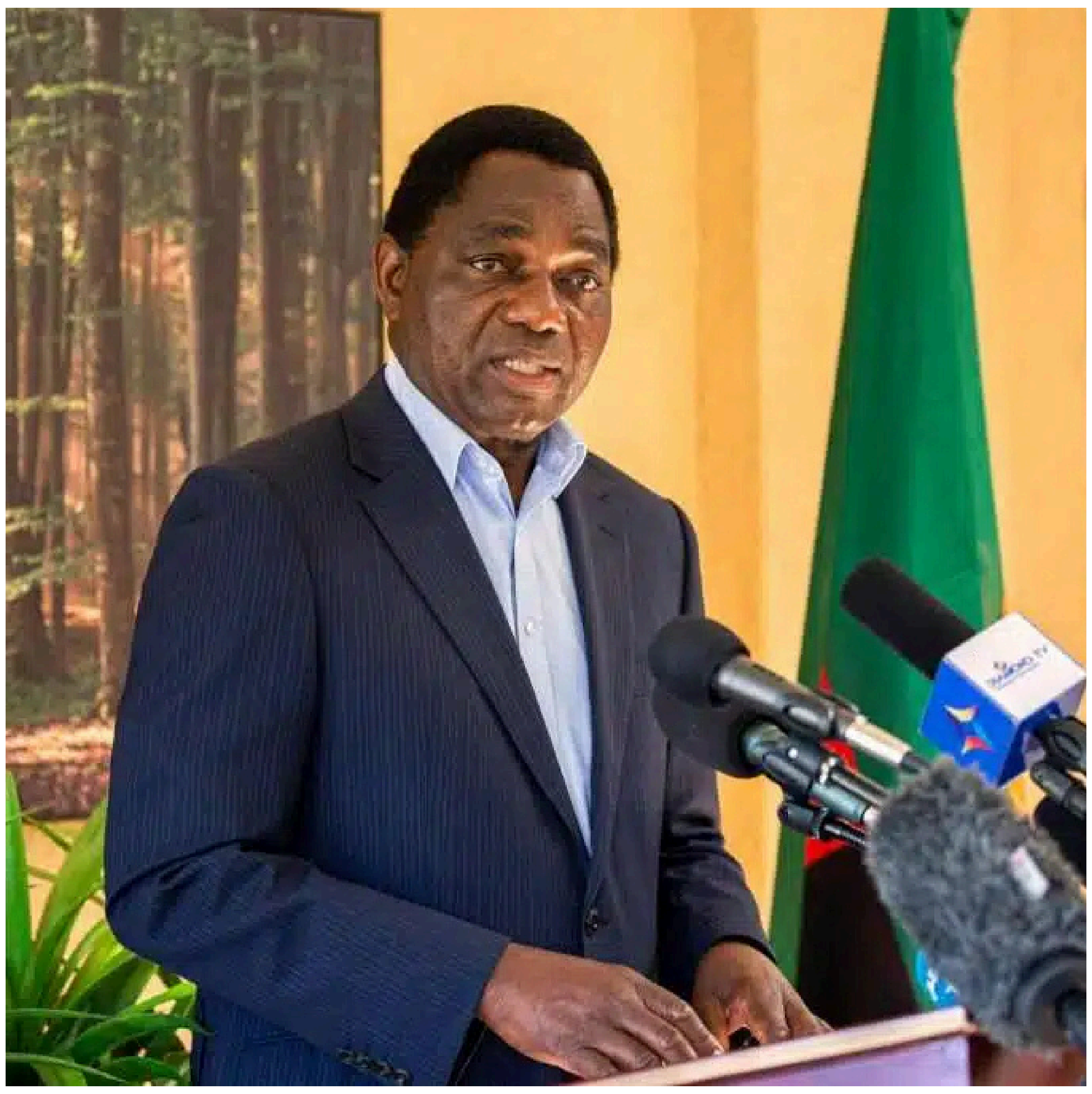
At its August 12-13, 2024 Meeting, the Monetary Policy Committee, decided to maintain the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR) at 13.5 percent. Notwithstanding actual and projected inflation remaining elevated relative to the 6-8 percent target band, the Committee judged that the current monetary policy stance was appropriate.

The MPR is the benchmark rate that Bank of Zambia lends commercial banks under its mandate as the lender of last resort.



# ZAMBIA TARGETS TO PRODUCE OVER 20 TONNES OF COTTON PER HECTARE

*By Cecilia Chiluba*



President Hakainde Hichilema says Zambia is targeting to learn from China's Technologically advanced Agriculture Research Institute to start producing more than 20 tonnes of cotton per hectare.

Officiating at the 60th Anniversary Celebration of the Establishment of the Zambia - China Diplomatic Ties at TAZARA Memorial Park in Chongwe, President Hichilema says the Agriculture Research Institute has allowed China to produce over 20 tonnes of cotton per hectare, while Zambia is only producing 2 tonnes per hectare.

The Head of State notes that the difference is huge and the country's economic growth prospects get affected by low productivity, hence Zambia wants to apply it locally.

"During our visit to China, we went to the Agriculture Research Institute where technological applications and research there, has allowed Chines to produce more than 20 tonnes of cotton per hectare. These numbers mean a lot."

"In the same hectare if you are producing more than 20 hectares and we here are producing 2 tonnes per hectare, the difference is huge and our growth prospects of the economy gets impaired low levels of productivity. That is why we visited that research institute and we want to apply it in our country," President Hichilema stated.

And President Hichilema revealed that new machinery is being installed at the Zambia-China Mulungushi Textiles in Kabwe to replace the old ones, following the revitalization of the factory.

He said this is as a result of his September 2023 visit to China, where several deals were signed including the Zambia-China Mulungushi Textiles.

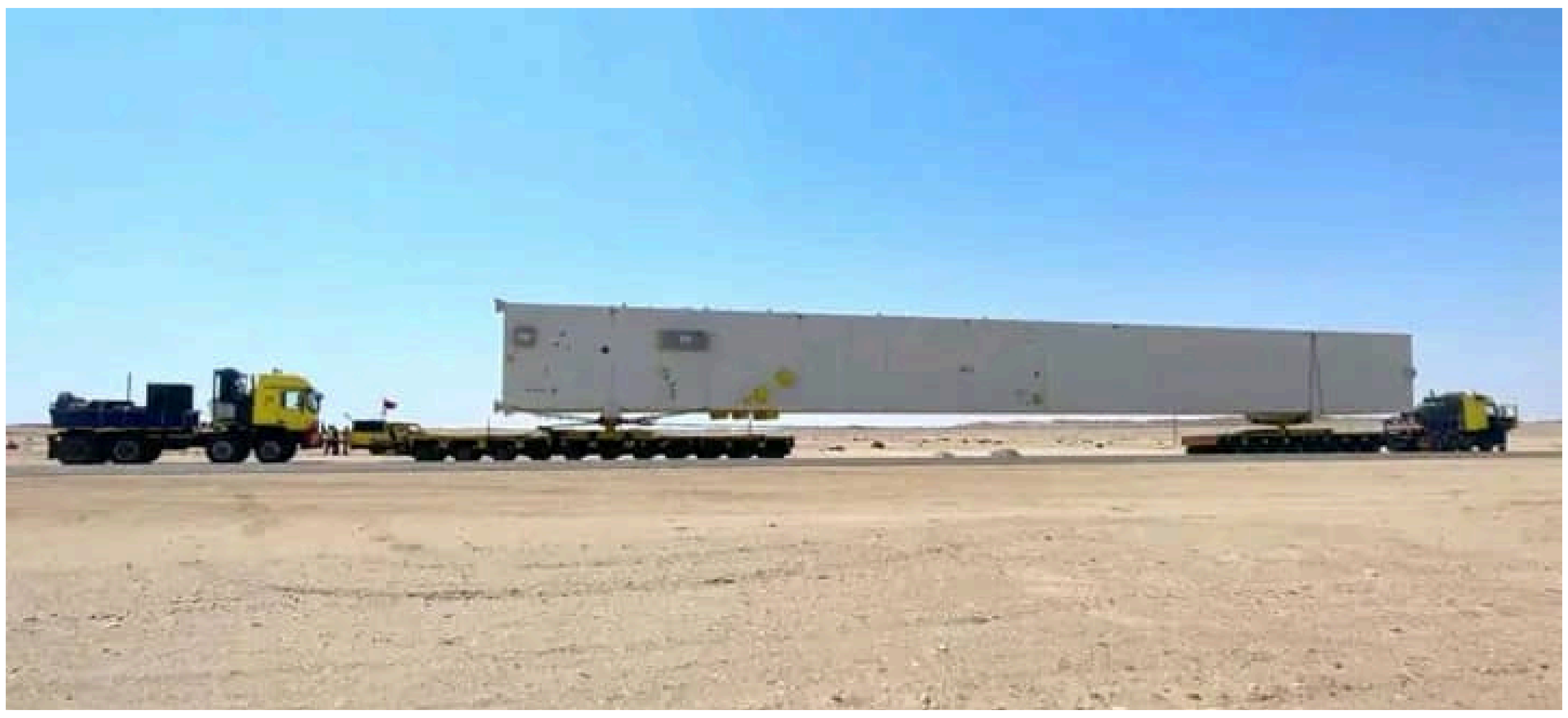
"Out of our September 2023 visit to China and we agreed to be done including the Mulungushi Textiles. Today new machinery anchored on new technology is being installed to replace the old machinery."

"This is great for the young people, job creation, contribution to the agriculture sector, cotton out growers in the Kabwe area and beyond and our target is to learn from that Research Institution in China where we can produce more than 20 tonnes of cotton per hectare," he said.

Meanwhile, President Hichilema paid tribute to Tanzania's President Samia Suluhu Hassan for giving Zambia 20 hectares of dry port land to improve port facilities as the Tanzania Zambia Railway Authority (TAZARA) is being revitalized and accommodate trade requirements in that country.

# ABNORMAL COLD BOX TO BE TRANSPORTED ON ZAMBIA'S ROAD NETWORK STARTING TODAY

*By Cecilia Chiluba*



Road Development Agency (RDA) says the much-anticipated 62 meters oversized cargo, known as Cold Box Unit, will be transported on Zambia's Core Road Network starting today, 29th October, 2024. Agency Chief Communications and Corporate Affairs Manager, Anthony Mulowa emphasized in a statement that the Cold Box, which is 64 meters in length, 5.7 meters in width and 7.2 meters in height, is critical to mining operations.

Mr. Mulowa stated that the abnormal load weighs 154 metric tonnes, along with the two truck horses and self-steering axles, resulting in a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM), of 224 metric tonnes.

He revealed that the route in Zambia will begin at Katima Mulilo Border, passing through Sesheke, Livingstone, Zimba, Kalomo, Choma, Monze, Mazabuka, Kafue, Lusaka Central Business District (CBD) bypass, Kabwe, Kapiri Mposhi, Ndola, Kitwe, Chingola and Solwezi.

"The Cold Box will arrive at its final destination at Solwezi's Kansanshi Mine. This route has been strategically selected to mitigate risks associated with road infrastructure, and ensuring the safest passage for this oversized cargo."

"The RDA advises all road users along this route to expect temporary traffic management measures, including possible road closures and controlled traffic flow, as the convoy moves through the planned route. The convoy will also adhere to scheduled times to avoid peak traffic hours and measures will be put in place to reduce negative impacts on daily traffic flow," Mr. Mulowa explained.

He assured road users that RDA is committed to facilitating safe and efficient transportation of this essential industrial equipment, through Zambia.

Meanwhile, Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) said the Cold Box was pre-cleared before its arrival into Zambia at Katima Mulilo Border.

"ZRA provides for the pre-clearance of goods at all its borders, meaning importers and exporters are allowed to register their goods on the Asycuda World system so that the clearance process can commence before the arrival of the goods at the border. This therefore, reduces the time spent at the border."

"Pre-clearance of this nature and for many other significant investments in the mining sector, paves way for the realization of government's desire to have the mining sector reach the target of three million tonnes for copper production," it said.



# ZPPA REINSTATES 1 YEAR SUSPENSION SLAPPED ON WONGANI INVESTMENTS

*By Elias Mwenda*

Zambia Public Procurement Authority (ZPPA) has reinstated the one-year suspension slapped on Wongani Investments Limited from participating in public procurement, effective 15th October, 2024.

On 4th March, 2024, ZPPA suspended Wongani Investments Limited from participating in public procurement for one year for submitting information that is not genuine in its bid in a tender for the supply and delivery of hospital linen, following a recommendation from Zambia Medicines and Medical Supplies Agency (ZAMMSA).

Authority Acting Principal Officer - Public Relations, Lucy Lumbe explained that on 8th August, 2024, ZAMMSA floated a tender on the electronic Government Procurement (e-GP) System for the supply of hospital linen, and it was observed that Wongani Investments Limited had submitted a Local Purchase Order and Goods Received Note as proof of evidence of having supplied hospital linen before as per requirement in the Solicitation Document.

"During the tender evaluation stage, the evaluation committee observed that the Local Purchase Order and Goods Received Note had issuing dates that were further apart which were indicated as 10th January, 2022 and 21st July, 2023 respectively."

"Further, the Authority established that the company that issued the two aforementioned documents was not in existence at the time the Local Purchase Order and Goods Received Note were issued. Furthermore, ZPPA established that the purported company had never dealt or placed any order with the bidder," Ms. Lumbe explained.

She said this prompted the Authority to suspend Wongani Investments Limited from participating in public procurement for a period of one year, but that the suspension was lifted on 27th March, 2024 pending the outcome of the Court proceedings.

"Following the dismissal of the Court proceedings on 9th October, 2024, ZPPA has reinstated the suspension of Wongani Investments Limited with effect from 15th October, 2024."

"The suspension period will be for a period of one year, minus the 23 days that were served from 4th March, 2024 to 27th March, 2024 before the suspension was lifted. The suspension includes any successor in interest including any entity which employs, or is associated with any partners, directors or other officers considered as successors in interest," she stated.

Ms. Lumbe however emphasized that the suspension does not in any way limit Wongani Investments Limited from performing outstanding contracts that were entered into before 15th October, 2024.

"ZPPA wishes to advise all procuring entities to enforce the suspension by ensuring that they do not award contracts, sell or issue solicitation documents or in any other way invite bids from Wongani Investments Limited, with effect from 15th October, 2024," Ms. Lumbe added.

She also advised all procuring entities not to enter into any other dealings with or communicate with the supplier except in respect of existing contracts placed prior to the suspension.

# PRESIDENT HH HAS TO BE CAUTIOUS WITH SOME OF THE LOYALISTS.

MONEY EDITORIAL

The high office of the presidency is a precarious balancing act between loyalty and pragmatism, especially when the stakes are as high as they are for President Hakainde Hichilema.

While it is commendable that President Hichilema values loyalty, those in his inner circle may not always share his aspirations or integrity. And, in politics, loyalty is too often fleeting.

President Hichilema's reluctance to remove certain appointees has become a contentious issue. Understandably, some of these individuals were there for him during difficult times when supporting the United Party for National Development (UPND) was a lonely road.

But the bond forged in opposition must not overshadow his responsibility as a leader. Public office is not an avenue for repaying old debts or preserving friendships; it is a mandate to serve the people.

The President's measured approach to dismissals — often allowing officials to "resign" rather than be fired — is a testament to his patience and empathy, yet there is a point where kindness could become his downfall.

President Hichilema does not have the luxury of infinite chances. His generosity toward questionable allies risks eroding public trust. The people's faith in his ability to "fix" the nation's issues is contingent upon decisive action, not patience with underperformers.

We see time slipping by, with unmet expectations piling up. Meanwhile, certain individuals close to him have enjoyed the spoils of proximity to power, thriving while Zambians wait for promised reforms.

The harsh truth is that many who occupy seats of power under the President are skilled political chameleons — people who can swiftly switch allegiances if the tides turn. Their commitment is not to him but to their survival and benefit.

Unlike President Hichilema, who might gladly retire from public life after his tenure, these seasoned operatives will simply regroup and realign, ready for the next political windfall.

Another challenge is his tendency to make lofty pronouncements, which has attracted scrutiny. From promises of "Champions League" caliber appointments to assurances of rapid transformation, Hichilema's rhetoric has heightened expectations.

The lamentations from paramount chief Mpezeni to some government officials who seemingly visited his palace to get a blessing to go to the various chiefdoms for some government projects, echoed the frustrations of many Zambians.

But as Zambians take stock, they see a system not wholly different from the political traditions of the past, where cronyism and favoritism persist. His grand declarations, though meant to inspire, now cast a spotlight on his administration's shortcomings.

One of the most unsettling realities within the UPND is the widening chasm between the leadership and the foot soldiers who propelled him to victory.

Many within the party's grassroots remain marginalized, forced to watch as the elites indulge in privileges beyond reach.

It's reminiscent of a parent who, despite having bread in the house, places it on a shelf so high that the children can never reach it.

These grassroots supporters, who sacrificed so much to see him rise to power, find themselves cut off from the benefits they fought to secure.
The urgency is clear. With three years already

passed, Hichilema realistically has only one more year to solidify his legacy.

The final year will inevitably be dominated by election season, with every decision viewed as a strategic ploy for re-election. This limited timeframe makes decisive leadership even more critical. If he does not shift course, his most ardent supporters will be left empty-handed, heading to the polls with their spirits dampened and their shoes worn thin.

At its core, the presidency is about making hard choices. While Hichilema's loyalty and kindness are admirable, they risk turning into liabilities if left unchecked.

Effective leadership requires not only compassion but an unflinching commitment to the greater good, even if that means letting go of those who once stood by him. If the President fails to act decisively now, he could find himself facing a harsher reckoning from the very people he promised to uplift.

President Hichilema must recognize that he doesn't have nine lives. The clock is ticking, and the choices he makes in the coming year will determine not only his legacy but the future trajectory of Zambia.

This is his chance to set aside sentimentality, confront the reality of those circling him, and make the difficult decisions that will fulfill his promise to the Zambian people.

# FQM RECORDS 13% INCREASE IN COPPER PRODUCTION FOR Q3

*By Cecilia Chiluba*

FIRST QUANTUM MINERALS

First Quantum Minerals (FQM) has reported a 13 percent rise in copper production for the third quarter of 2024, coupled with a doubling of income tax payments globally.

Production at the company's Kansanshi mine in Solwezi rose to 49,810 tonnes of copper, representing 20 percent increase or 8,303 tonnes compared with the previous quarter, while its Sentinel mine in Kalumbila produced 58,412 tonnes, up 9 percent or 4,817 tonnes compared with the second quarter of 2024.

FQM Chief Executive Officer, Tristan Pascall said despite the persistent power interruptions in Zambia, First Quantum's proactive actions have resulted in minimal production impacts, while the S3 Expansion continues to make good progress for production in the second half of 2025.

"Despite the ongoing energy crisis in Zambia, First Quantum's proactive sourcing of supplementary power mitigated disruptions, enabling normal operations for most of the quarter. The impact of higher costs associated with the imported power was partially offset by strong gold by-product credits.

"While it is pleasing to see continued strong operational performance from the Zambian operations during the third quarter, this was marred by a tragic accident in September resulting in the death of a colleague at Kansanshi. We continue to support the family, and we remain committed to ensure the safety of our colleagues across the business," Mr. Pascall stated.

He further revealed that FQM reported a gross profit of US$456million globally for the third quarter of 2024, compared with US$333 during the second quarter of the year. Mr. Pascall said the third quarter financial results were boosted by higher copper and gold sales volumes alongside stronger realized gold prices.

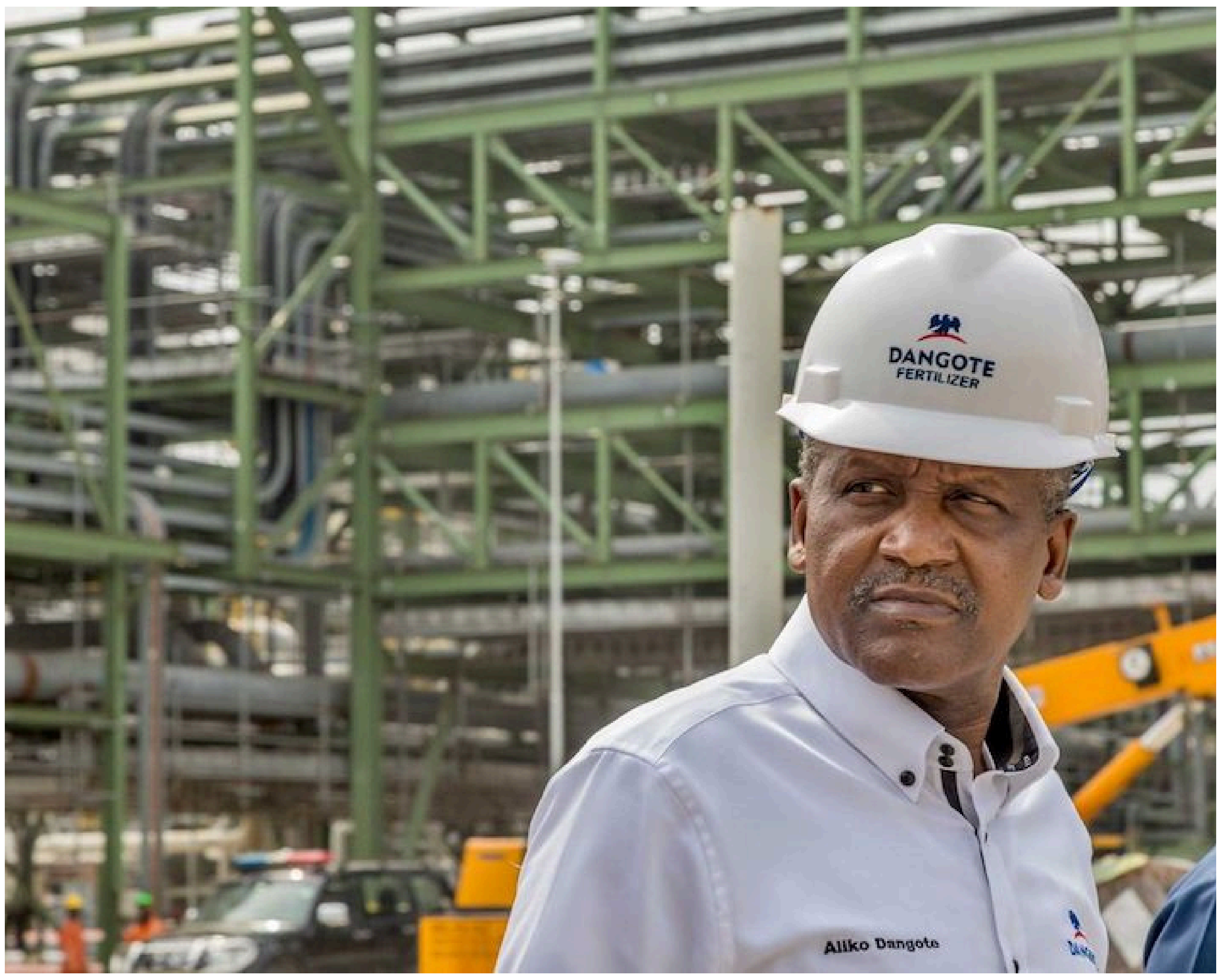
He disclosed that Kansanshi Mine reported its highest quarterly copper production since the fourth quarter of 2021, attributable to continued mining of higher feed grades.

Mr. Pascall noted that this was further supported by a successful swap of the sulphide and mixed mills to increase the throughput of mixed material containing higher grades.
"Gold production for the third quarter reached 31,659 ounces, the highest quarterly production since the first quarter of 2022."

"The company also revised upwards its copper production guidance for the full 2024 year for Kansanshi to 155,000 – 165,000 tonnes from 130,000 – 150,000 tonnes, while Sentinel production guidance remained is forecast at 220,000 – 230,000 tonnes for the year," he said.

Meanwhile, FQM's new Enterprise nickel mine at Kalumbila had its first full quarter of commercial production, producing 4,827 tonnes of nickel during the third quarter, a decrease from 6,147 tonnes in Q2 2024. The plant has been stable and achieved record throughput in August 2024.

# GHANA TURNS TO DANGOTE REFINERY FOR FUEL IMPORTS




Ghana may be looking at purchasing petroleum products from the Dangote Petroleum Refinery once it reaches full capacity.

This was announced by Mustapha Abdul-Hamid, Chairman of the Ghana National Petroleum Authority (NPA), at the OTL Africa Downstream Oil Conference in Lagos on Monday.

The Dangote refinery, owned by Africa's richest man, Aliko Dangote, began operations in January, producing diesel and aviation fuel, and officially announced the commencement of refining crude oil on 3rd September, 2024.

With a capacity of 650,000 barrels per day, the refinery is expected to operate at near full capacity by year-end.

According to Abdul-Hamid, importing from the Dangote refinery will help Ghana reduce its reliance on expensive European exports, which cost the country approximately $400 million monthly.

# HSBC PROFITS JUMP AS BANK SET FOR MAJOR SHAKEUP


Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (HSBC) has seen its quarterly profits jump by 10% as the UK-based banking giant embarks on one of the biggest shakeups in its 159-year history.

BBC reports that the firm said its pre-tax profits rose to $8.5 billion in the three months to the end of September, beating analysts' expectations.

It comes just days after HSBC's new boss announced a major overhaul of the company.

The firm will be divided geographically into eastern and western markets amid increasing geopolitical tensions and a need to cut costs.

HSBC's new chief executive, Georges Elhedery, said that implementation of the plans will "begin immediately" and promised to share more details alongside the bank's full-year results in February.

"We delivered another good quarter, which shows that our strategy is working," Mr Elhedery added.

The bank also said it will buy back another $3bn of its own shares.

HSBC shares were more than 4% higher in London morning trade after the announcement.

# EXCHANGE RATES

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## Indicative Foreign Exchange Rates

Rate Sheet no. 533

| | | International Cross Currency Rates | | | Kwacha Local Currency Rates | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Buying | Selling | | Buying (Cash) | Buying (TT/TCs/BN) | Selling (Cash) | Selling (TTs/TCs/BN) |
| United States Dollars | USD | 1.0000 | 1.0000 | USD | 26.5066 | 26.5066 | 26.9201 | 26.9201 |
| British Pounds Sterling | GBP* | 1.2697 | 1.3152 | GBP* | 34.3446 | 34.3446 | 34.8804 | 34.8804 |
| Euro | EUR* | 1.0578 | 1.0957 | EUR* | 28.6125 | 28.6125 | 29.0589 | 29.0589 |
| South African Rand | ZAR | 17.3272 | 17.9765 | ZAR | n/a | 1.4979 | n/a | 1.5213 |
| Swedish Kroner | SEK | 10.4102 | 10.7842 | SEK | n/a | 2.4950 | n/a | 2.5340 |
| Swiss Francs | CHF | 0.8511 | 0.8820 | CHF | n/a | 30.5112 | n/a | 30.9872 |
| Danish Kroner | DKK | 6.7736 | 7.0160 | DKK | n/a | 3.8348 | n/a | 3.8947 |
| Norwegian Kroner | NOK | 10.7735 | 11.1627 | NOK | n/a | 2.4107 | n/a | 2.4483 |
| Japanese Yen | JPY | 150.3320 | 155.7213 | JPY | n/a | 0.17278 | n/a | 0.1755 |
| Chinese Yuan Renminbi | CNY | 6.9866 | 7.2362 | CNY | n/a | 3.7180 | n/a | 3.7760 |
| Tanzanian shilling | TZS | 2660.7000 | 2776.0250 | TZS | 0.00973 | 0.00973 | 0.00986 | 0.00986 |
| Kenya Shilling | KES | 125.9300 | 131.4425 | KES | n/a | 0.2055 | n/a | 0.2087 |
| Botswana Pula | BWP* | 0.0729 | 0.0758 | BWP* | n/a | 1.9761 | n/a | 2.0069 |

*Base currencies

**Note: All transactions above USD10,000 or equivalent must be referred to the Global Markets Sales Desk. Please be advised that rates may change at short notice due to market conditions.**

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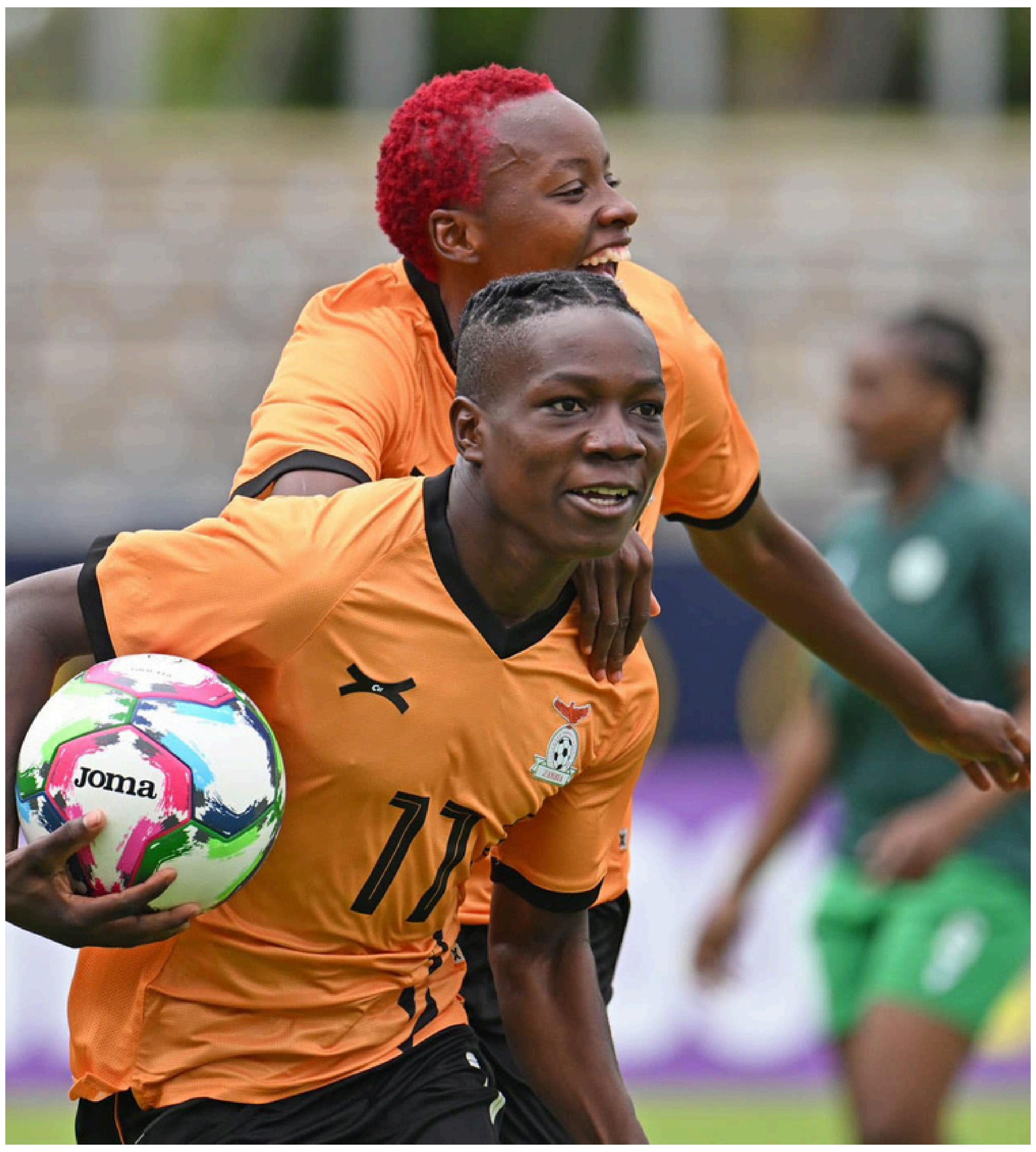



# COPPER QUEENS THRASH COMOROS 7-0!

*By Lucky Chama*

Zambia's women's national team has qualified to the semifinals of the ongoing 2024 COSAFA Women's Championship in South Africa.

The Copper Queens beat Comoros 7-0 to finish top of Group C and set up an interesting match against Malawi in the semifinals slated for Thursday.

The semifinal against Malawi will be a repeat of last year's final, in which the Scorers triumphed over the Copper Queens.

Both sides have won the tournament once and will be aiming to make it two times should they proceed beyond the semifinal stage.

In her reaction, coach Florence Mwila said they were not expecting easy matches as most of the players are featuring in an in an international tournament for the first time.

Mwila adds that she is expecting a tough match against Malawi.

"Going into the semifinals, it is going to be tougher; we are meeting Malawi again; it is like a repeat of last year; all the teams we are meeting are like a repeat of last year," she said.

"We have new players, different approaches, but our objective has been met. The pressure is there because we know how strong the team is, but then that doesn't let us put our guard down. We also have prepared for it; we know we are facing a tough team."

# ATLETICO LUSAKA WORRIED WITH LEAKY BACKLINE

*By Lucky Chama*

Atletico Lusaka Football Club assistant coach William Njobvu has expressed concern with the team's lack of compactness at the back following a 2-0 defeat to FC MUZA in a Week 9 MTN Super League encounter in Mazabuka.

The Bad Boys recorded their third loss of the season, with their defense breached for the twelfth time this season.

After recording a slender 1-0 win at home against Green Eagles, Atletico Lusaka were on the road in search of their second away win of the season but suffered a setback as they conceded two with one from the spot kick.

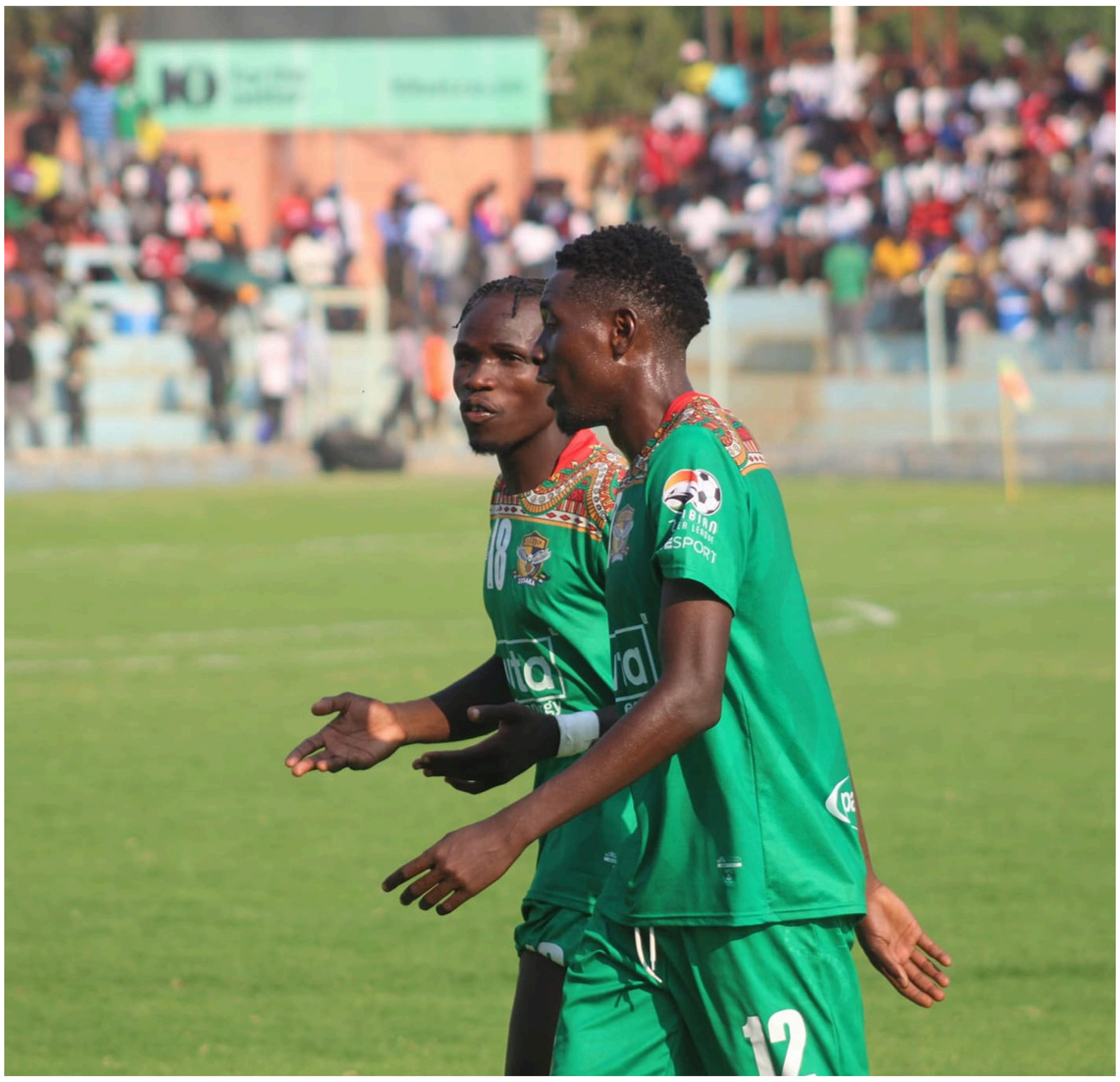
Njobvu revealed that the technical bench is tightened up at the back for the club to stop leaking goals, though it is still sticking to its trademark passing game.

He adds that the technical bench and the players are learning to close up at the back, expressing optimism about conceding fewer goals in the upcoming matches.

The former Chipolopolo international has dispelled fears of relegation, stating that the focus is getting better in each game that the team plays.

Atletico Lusaka has lost three of their five away fixtures, winning one against ZANACO Football Club and drawing one against Green Buffaloes.

They remain unbeaten in their four home matches with two wins and two draws so far.



# ARTHUR FILS SHINES IN PARIS MASTERS

***By ATP Media***

Arthur Fils further outlined his credentials as one of France's hottest prospects on Tuesday at the Rolex Paris Masters, where he became the youngest home star to record a main-draw win at the ATP Masters 1000 event since Richard Gasquet in 2006.

The 20-year-old Fils overcame Croatian Marin Cilic 7-6(5), 6-4 to reach the second round in Paris.

In a high-energy display inside Court Central, Fils rallied from a break down at 5-6 in the first set and then upped the aggression during a second set in which he notched 11 winners in the set to advance past Cilic.

He recorded victory in one hour and 35 minutes in the pair's first Lexus ATP Head2Head meeting.

Fils, who is first in the PIF ATP Live Race To Jeddah, has earned 36 tour-level wins this season. No Frenchman has recorded more victories in 2024, with Ugo Humbert second on 35.

Fils has won ATP 500 titles in Hamburg and Tokyo this year and will continue the quest for his first ATP Masters 1000 crown when he takes on Jan-Lennard Struff in the second round.

The big-serving German defeated Lorenzo Musetti 6-4, 6-2, ending the Italian's faint hopes of competing at the Nitto ATP Finals in November.

Struff fired nine aces and won 82 per cent (37/45) of his first-serve points in his 77-minute win.

Hubert Hurkacz's Turin hopes also came to an end on Tuesday morning in Paris.

Next Gen-ATP American Alex Michelsen dispatched the Pole 6-1, 6-3 to reach the second round on debut in the French capital.