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SUPPORT SMES TO REACH GLOBAL MARKETS

By Alexis Chilumbwe

Higher education lecturer Dr. Steven Mwewa has called for deliberate measures to help Zambian Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) become more competitive in international markets, saying their growth is critical to the country's economic development.***(Continues on P2)***

By Mubanga Mubanga

His life story is one of resilience, sacrifice and determination. Born into poverty and raised in difficult circumstances, ***Mark Davies Simulengula*** refused to allow his background to determine his future. Through hard work and perseverance, he financed his own university education and went on to establish the Mark Charity Foundation, an organisation dedicated to supporting vulnerable members of society. ***(Full interview on P4)***

Against All Odds: From Cleaning Public Toilets to Changing Lives

"Iven Mulubwa supports his family of four through his banana business, which has enabled him to fund his children's education and construct a home."Picture by Mubanga Chileshe

Copper Price Climbs to US$13,326 Per Tonne as Kwacha Holds Strong

By Mubanga Mubanga

The price of copper has continued its upward..."

(To P2)

Copper Price Climbs to US$13,326 Per Tonne as Kwacha Holds Strong

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The price of copper has continued its upward trend, rising from US$13,270 per tonne last week to US$13,326 per tonne this week, according to the latest Zambia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (ZEITI) Minerals Commodity Dashboard released on July 3, 2026.

ZEITI said the latest price represents a 0.42 percent increase from the previous week and a 7.27 percent rise compared to US$12,423 per tonne recorded on January 2, 2026.

"This week, copper prices closed trading at US$13,326 per tonne, up from US$13,270 per tonne recorded last week. This represents a price increase of 0.42 percent from last week," ZEITI said.

"Further, the current copper price represents an increase of 7.27 percent from the US$12,423 per tonne recorded on January 2, 2026."

Meanwhile, ZEITI reported that the price of cobalt remained unchanged during the first week of July, closing at US$56,290 per tonne, the same level recorded the previous week.

Despite the stable weekly performance, the current cobalt price is 5.50 percent higher than the US$53,355 per tonne recorded at the beginning of the year.

"This week, the price of cobalt closed trading at US$56,290 per tonne, unchanged from last week. This represents no price movement compared to the previous week," ZEITI stated.

"Further, the current cobalt price represents a 5.50 percent increase from the US$53,355 per tonne recorded on January 2, 2026."

On the foreign exchange market, the Zambian Kwacha closed trading at K18.57 per US dollar, compared to K18.18 per US dollar recorded the previous week, representing a 2.15 percent depreciation against the US dollar.

However, ZEITI noted that the Kwacha remains significantly stronger than it was at the beginning of the year. Compared to the K22.35 per US dollar exchange rate recorded on January 2, 2026, the local currency has appreciated by 16.91 percent.

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"Further, the current exchange rate represents an appreciation of 16.91 percent from the K22.35 per US dollar recorded in January 2026."

FILE: The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is the global standard for transparency and accountability in the oil, gas and mining sectors, and supports national stakeholders in implementing extractive sector reforms

Support SMEs to Reach Global Markets

(From P1)

Speaking in an interview with Peza News, Dr. Mwewa said local businesses must embrace strategies that promote innovation, knowledge sharing and global competitiveness if they are to successfully expand beyond Zambia's borders.

He said fostering a cross-cultural business environment would encourage collaboration with international partners, attract skilled personnel from different countries and improve the exchange of knowledge needed for business expansion.

"Our SMEs face several challenges that limit their ability to compete internationally. These include inadequate access to finance, bureaucratic red tape, regulatory barriers and infrastructure constraints. There is a need to address these challenges comprehensively if we are to enhance SME internationalisation," Dr. Mwewa said.

He added that greater awareness was needed on strategies that promote business sustainability, employment creation and wealth generation.

According to Dr. Mwewa, SMEs remain a key driver of Zambia's economy through increased production, job creation and their contribution to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

"We must support stakeholders in developing policies, systems and strategies that reduce SME failures associated with globalisation, knowledge management and access to finance. Strengthening SMEs will ultimately strengthen Zambia's economy," he said.

Meanwhile, Kapiri Mposhi Agriculture Extension Officer Hignal Munsanje has advised small-scale farmers against selling their surplus produce to opportunistic middlemen, warning that doing so often results in significant financial losses.

Munsanje said many so-called "briefcase" traders take advantage of farmers by purchasing produce at uncompetitive prices, leaving farmers disadvantaged when market prices improve later.

"Many farmers are tempted by quick cash and end up selling their produce at giveaway prices. A few months later, they realise they could have earned much more had they waited for better market prices. We need to protect our farmers from exploitative buyers and safeguard our country's food security," he said.

He encouraged farmers with surplus production to explore export opportunities and organised markets where they can obtain fair and competitive prices.

"Every farmer who produces beyond household consumption should aspire to access international markets. However, this requires discipline, patience and making informed business decisions. Farmers must carefully choose who they do business with if they are to benefit from larger market opportunities," Munsanje said.

GDP Rebasing to Provide More Accurate Picture of Zambia's Economy

By Alexis Chilumbwe

NDOLA — The Zambia Statistics Agency (ZamStats) has announced that the ongoing Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rebasing exercise will provide a more precise reflection of the country's economy, strengthen evidence-based policymaking, and enhance investor confidence.

Delivering the keynote address at a forum held on the sidelines of the 60th Zambia International Trade Fair, Statistician General Sheila Mudenda emphasized that GDP remains the primary measure of economic performance. She noted its critical role in national budgeting, fiscal and monetary policy formulation, debt sustainability analysis, and monitoring progress toward global development goals.

Mrs. Mudenda explained that Zambia's current GDP estimates are anchored to 2010 as the base year.

"While this benchmark accurately reflected the structure of the economy at the time, the country's economic landscape has since undergone substantial transformation," she said.

She cited significant growth in mining, construction, financial services, information and communication technology, and the digital economy as key developments that have reshaped the nation over the last 15 years.

To address these changes, ZamStats has selected 2023 as the new base year. Mrs. Mudenda noted that this period represents a relatively normal economic cycle, captures the current economic structure, and aligns with the availability of comprehensive benchmark data.

A central pillar of this transition is the 2025 Economic Establishment Census, a nationwide enumeration conducted between May and October 2025. Covering both formal and informal enterprises across all provinces, the census mapped a wide array of sectors, including manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, and transport.

Preliminary findings have already offered significant insights, most notably a surge in recorded economic establishments. The number of business units rose from approximately 66,000 in the 2010 benchmark period to about 485,000 in 2025.

"While this reflects a significant expansion in the number of business units, establishment growth should not automatically be interpreted as economic growth, but rather as evidence of a more comprehensive understanding of the structure and breadth of economic activity in the country," Mrs. Mudenda clarified.

The Statistician General highlighted that the rebasing programme has already achieved several milestones, including the implementation of the 2024 Household Budget Survey, updates to the Statistical Business Register, and the integration of administrative data from key public institutions.

Looking ahead, the remaining stages include data validation, reconciliation of sector estimates, quality assurance reviews, and final publication of the revised GDP series.

Mrs. Mudenda cautioned the public against misinterpreting the final results.

"GDP rebasing does not create new economic activity or national wealth," she explained. "It improves the measurement of economic activity by incorporating better data sources and updated methodologies. Any changes in GDP resulting from this exercise should be interpreted as improvements in statistical measurement rather than an overnight increase or decrease in economic activity."

Mrs. Sheila S. Mudenda, the Statistician General of the Zambia Statistics Agency (ZamStats).

PEZA NEWS EDITORIAL

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Protecting Zambia's Future from the Scourge of Drugs

Zambia is a country on a promising trajectory of growth and development. Across the nation, new opportunities are emerging in agriculture, mining, manufacturing, tourism, technology, and renewable energy. If these sectors are fully harnessed, they have the potential to transform the country's economy, create thousands of jobs, and improve the quality of life for millions of citizens. However, achieving this vision depends largely on the nation's greatest resource—its young people.

The increasing number of youths abusing alcohol and illicit substances, commonly referred to as "junkies," poses a serious threat to Zambia's future. Substance abuse robs young people of their health, education, productivity, and hope, while exposing communities to crime, violence, and unemployment. If left unchecked, it will undermine the country's development agenda and weaken the workforce needed to drive economic growth.

Addressing this challenge requires a coordinated national response. Government ministries, schools, churches, traditional leaders, community organisations, parents, and the private sector must work together to prevent substance abuse before it takes hold. Greater investment is needed in youth recreation centres, vocational skills training, sports programmes, arts initiatives, and entrepreneurship schemes that provide meaningful alternatives to drug use. At the same time, counselling and rehabilitation services should be expanded and made more accessible to help those already struggling with addiction rebuild their lives.

Law enforcement agencies must also intensify efforts to dismantle drug trafficking networks while ensuring that young users receive rehabilitation rather than stigma alone. Public awareness campaigns, especially through social media, radio, television, and community outreach, should educate young people about the long-term dangers of substance abuse.

Zambia's future will be determined by the choices made today. By investing in its youth, strengthening families and communities, and creating opportunities for meaningful employment and personal growth, the nation can reverse the rise in substance abuse and build a healthier, more productive generation capable of driving Zambia toward lasting prosperity.

Against All Odds: From Cleaning Public Toilets to Changing Lives

By Mubanga Mubanga

His life story is one of resilience, sacrifice and determination. Born into poverty and raised in difficult circumstances, Mark Davies Simulengula refused to allow his background to determine his future. Through hard work and perseverance, he financed his own university education and went on to establish the Mark Charity Foundation, an organisation dedicated to supporting vulnerable members of society.

Today, on Peza News Community Impact Profile, we feature the inspiring journey of Mark Charity Foundation Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Mark Davies Simulengula.

Before becoming a recognised charity leader, Simulengula once earned a living cleaning public toilets at a shopping mall. His remarkable journey demonstrates that determination, discipline and faith can transform even the most difficult circumstances into opportunities to make a lasting difference.

Mark Davies Simulengula

Below is the interview.

Q: Can you tell us about your early life and where you grew up?

A: I was born in Sinazongwe District in Southern Province, where I spent my early childhood with both my parents. I grew up in a rural village, and that environment shaped the person I am today.

Q: What kind of family environment did you come from?

A: My parents often tell me that I was a very sickly child. There was a time when I became critically ill during the rainy season, and many people believed I would not survive.

The nearest hospital was about 15 to 20 kilometres away, but the bridge leading there had been washed away by heavy rains. Some relatives advised my parents not to attempt the journey because they feared all of us could die trying to cross the flooded stream.

My parents refused to give up on me. As their first-born son, they were determined to save my life. They carried me on foot until they reached the flooded stream. The water was almost up to their necks. My father placed me on his shoulders while my mother carried our clothes on her head, and together they carefully crossed the water.

After a long and exhausting journey, we finally reached the hospital. My father searched for the doctor, who was still in his office, and pleaded with him to attend to me immediately. His determination moved the medical staff into action, and I received emergency treatment. Thankfully, I recovered.

Q: What happened after that?

A: Although I recovered, I continued experiencing health problems. Some people in the community believed my illness was caused by witchcraft. Because of these circumstances, my father decided to relocate our family from Sinazongwe to Siavonga.

I was still very young at the time, around three years old. We settled in another rural area because my father is a farmer and preferred places where he could continue farming and provide for the family.

Q: Tell us about your early education.

A: I started Grade One in 2006. School was about eight kilometres from our home, and there was no transport. Every morning, my mother woke me up around 4:00 a.m. so that I could prepare for school.

We would leave home around 5:00 a.m. and often ran most of the distance because arriving late meant being punished. Those long walks and early mornings taught me discipline and perseverance from a very young age.

When I reached Grade Five, my father acquired farmland in what is now Rufunsa District, and in 2010 our family relocated there. That marked another chapter in my education and my life.

Q: How did your education continue after relocating to Rufunsa?

A: When we moved to Rufunsa, I continued my education at a community school because there was no nearby government school. The learning environment was challenging, but I remained committed to my studies.

The school was not an examination centre, so when it was time to sit for my Grade Seven examinations, I had to travel about 12 kilometres to a government school. I usually rode a bicycle, but whenever it broke down, I had no choice but to walk the entire distance.

Despite the challenges, I emerged as the best-performing pupil at my school.

Q: You later lost your mother while still in school. How did that affect you?

A: Losing my mother was one of the most painful moments of my life. It happened just a few months before my mock examinations.

As a child, everything I did was motivated by the desire to make my mother proud. Suddenly, the person I had worked so hard to impress was no longer there. It felt as though life had lost its meaning.

It was an incredibly difficult period, but I knew I had to remain strong and continue pursuing my education because that is what she would have wanted for me.

Q: Which subjects did you enjoy most at school?

A: My favourite subjects were History and Technical Drawing, which was then known as Geometrical and

Mechanical Drawing (GMD). I enjoyed subjects that challenged me to think creatively and solve problems.

Q: How would you describe yourself?

A: I would describe myself as hardworking, goal-oriented and determined. Once I set my mind on achieving something, I do not easily give up.

Q: What values did your parents instil in you?

A: My parents taught me the importance of hard work, respect and kindness. Those values have remained with me throughout my life and continue to guide my decisions today.

Q: Who has had the greatest influence on your life?

A: Without a doubt, my father has had the greatest influence on me.

Growing up, there was always work to be done. After school, instead of playing, I would often herd cattle or goats before returning home. That upbringing taught me discipline and responsibility.

My father always reminded me that nothing in life comes easily. If you want something, you must be willing to work for it. That lesson has stayed with me throughout my life.

Q: What principles guide your decisions today?

A: I strongly believe that every human being is created in the image of God and has a purpose in life.

When someone is struggling, it does not mean they are weak. Sometimes people simply find themselves in difficult circumstances and need someone to help them get back on their feet.

I also believe that communities become stronger when people support one another. Whatever I have become today is largely because of the people who invested in me, encouraged me and believed in my potential. That is why I have dedicated my life to serving others.

Q: When did your passion for helping people begin?

A: My passion for helping others started when I was still in primary school.

Although my family was poor, I always believed there was someone whose situation was even worse than mine. Whenever I carried food to school, I often shared it with classmates who had nothing to eat.

Later, while I was in Grade Nine, I started a small business selling pamphlets at school. The little income I earned enabled me to sponsor a young girl who had dropped out of school in Grade Four because her family could not even afford exercise books.

I supported her education for some time, but eventually I could no longer manage because I also needed money for my own schooling. Sadly, she later dropped out and got married.

That experience deeply affected me. It made me realise that many vulnerable people needed support, but one individual could only do so much. I began dreaming of establishing an organisation that would bring together people willing to help those in need. That dream eventually became the Mark Charity Foundation.

Q: How did the Mark Charity Foundation come about?

A: The journey began while I was at university in 2022. Together with a group of friends, I co-founded an organisation called Hearts of Hope, where I served as Vice Chairperson for about a year. Although we carried out a number of community activities, the organisation was not registered and had certain limitations.

For a long time, I had envisioned creating an organisation with a broader mandate—one that could respond to different social challenges rather than focusing on just one area. I wanted to build something that would make a lasting impact on communities across Zambia.

That vision became a reality in 2023 when the Mark Charity Foundation was officially established and registered.

Q: What challenges did you face in establishing the foundation?

A: One of the biggest challenges was convincing people to believe in my vision. It is never easy for people to invest in a dream they cannot yet see.

Fortunately, some people already knew me through my voluntary work with World Vision, where I served as a facilitator and trainer. They understood my passion for community service, which helped build confidence in the foundation.

Whenever I announced an outreach programme

on social media, people would donate money, clothes and other necessities. Their support made many of our activities possible.

However, financial resources remained a major challenge. Running a charity organisation is expensive, and every day there are people reaching out for help. At the time, I was still a university student, and there were moments when I sacrificed my own upkeep money to assist families that had nothing to eat.

Most of our team members were also young volunteers with limited resources. They shared the passion to serve, but they were not in a position to contribute financially on a regular basis.

Q: You studied Business Administration at Cavendish University. How did that journey begin?

A: I came across an advertisement for Cavendish University on Facebook and immediately contacted the admissions office to ask whether there were any scholarship opportunities.

Although I had missed the scholarship application deadline, I was encouraged to register first and apply later.

The tuition fees were beyond what I could comfortably afford, and I even asked whether the university offered accommodation because my financial situation was difficult. They explained that there were only boarding houses nearby.

Despite the uncertainty, I decided to take a chance.

When the admissions office asked to speak to my sponsor, I smiled and told them, “I am sponsoring myself.”

I later informed my father about my decision. Initially, he was surprised because he had not budgeted for university expenses. He was already supporting several dependants in secondary school and managing household responsibilities.

Nevertheless, he encouraged me to pursue my dream. I chose to study Business Administration because I had developed a passion for entrepreneurship. Although I had once wanted to become a civil or mechanical engineer because I loved Technical Drawing, I realised that business would give me the opportunity to create jobs rather than simply look for one.

Q: What happened after you enrolled?

A: After completing my registration, I returned to Rufunsa to continue running my small business while studying.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, classes were conducted online, which turned out to be a blessing. It allowed me to combine my studies with business.

Whenever I had an online lecture, I would temporarily close my shop and climb a nearby hill where there was a stronger mobile network. After attending classes, I would return to the shop and continue working.

Once physical classes resumed, my younger brother helped manage the business while I attended lectures.

Even then, meeting my expenses remained difficult. To supplement my income, I worked as a marketing agent for a solar company, travelling to rural communities to sell solar products on commission. Every sale brought me one step closer to paying my tuition fees and keeping my dream alive.

Q: Let us go back a little. What did you do after completing Grade 12?

A: After completing Grade 12 in 2017, I knew my parents could not afford to send me to university immediately. I had to find work so I could save enough money to further my education.

In 2018, I moved to Lusaka and stayed with my aunt. My first job involved distributing promotional flyers for a company that was opening a new outlet at Matero Mall. I earned about K20 a day, and although the pay was modest, I appreciated the opportunity because every kwacha counted.

Later, I got a job as a toilet attendant at the mall.

Q: Many people would be surprised to learn that you once worked as a toilet attendant.

A: (Laughs) Yes, many people find it hard to believe.

I worked as a toilet attendant for about six months. My responsibilities included cleaning the public toilets and collecting user fees. My monthly salary was only K500, but I was determined to save as much as possible.

I lived a very simple life, spending only what was necessary and saving the rest. Sometimes customers would leave me with small amounts of change, and I would add those coins to my savings.

Eventually, I managed to buy a small plot of land that already had a shop structure on it. I also started a small farming venture. Looking back, I realised that no honest job is too small when you are working towards a bigger dream.

Q: What happened after you left that job?

A: After six months, I resigned because the work was very demanding. There were no weekends or public holidays, and I spent most of my time cleaning the facilities.

In 2019, I found another job with a company under the Trade Kings Group. While working there, I continued developing my shop.

Initially, business was very slow. There were days, and sometimes even weeks, when we made no sales at all. Yet I still had to pay the person helping me run the shop.

Eventually, I decided to leave my employment and manage the business myself. I introduced products that were different from those sold by other traders in the area. By 2020, the business had started generating a modest income.

Although the business was growing, I knew it was only a stepping stone. My dream was still to attend university. While some of my friends received scholarships, my own applications were unsuccessful. Instead of waiting for another opportunity, I resolved to finance my education myself.

Q: How did you manage to pay your university fees?

A: It was not easy at all.

Apart from running my business, I worked as a marketing agent selling solar products in rural communities. The job was commission-based, meaning the more products I sold, the more money I earned.

I used that income to pay my tuition fees, cover my living expenses and keep the business running.

Later, I secured employment as an administrator at Chacycan Enterprise in Rhodes Park. At one point, I was balancing three responsibilities at the same time—running my business, working as an employee and managing the Mark Charity Foundation.

There were days when I hardly slept because I was constantly moving between work, studies and community activities. It was exhausting, but I never lost sight of my dream.

As I approached my fourth year at university, I decided to resign from my job to concentrate on my research and the growing demands of the foundation.

That decision proved worthwhile. In 2024, I travelled to South Africa after being recognised as the Founder of the Year (Under 20) for my contribution to community development.

The recognition opened new doors internationally and encouraged me to continue investing in leadership development. I successfully completed my Bachelor's degree in Business Administration in 2024 and immediately enrolled for a Master's degree in Project Management, where I am now completing my final semester with a focus on Monitoring and Evaluation.

Q: What do you consider to be your greatest achievement so far?

A: Without hesitation, I would say the greatest achievement is the number of lives we have been able to impact through the Mark Charity Foundation.

Recently, we conducted an internal review and established that more than 5,000 people have directly benefited from our programmes. These include orphans we have supported with food, children we have helped leave the streets, and young people we have equipped with entrepreneurial and leadership skills.

Some of those young people are now running successful businesses instead of waiting for formal employment. We have also supported people battling depression and suicidal thoughts through counselling and mentorship. Hearing someone say, "If it wasn't for your organisation, I would not be alive today," reminds us why we do this work.

Those are the moments that give meaning to everything we have sacrificed. Despite the challenges we continue to face, seeing lives transformed motivates us to keep going.

Q: What are some of your personal achievements?

A: This year, our organisation received recognition at the Cadav Philanthropic Awards held in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. During the event, I had the privilege of addressing delegates on behalf of African youth and contributing to discussions on youth development and policy.

Another milestone was being selected by an institution in the United States to receive an Honorary Doctorate in recognition of my contribution to community development and social impact. Receiving that honour was both humbling and encouraging.

My first international recognition came in 2024, when I travelled to Johannesburg, South Africa, after being named Founder of the Year (Under 20) for the impact our organisation had made in communities. That award marked the beginning of my journey onto the international stage and inspired me to continue serving others with even greater commitment.

Q: What has been the biggest obstacle in your journey?

A: One of my biggest challenges has been balancing community service with the need for stable employment.

Many people depend on the foundation for support, yet I also need an income to sustain both myself and the organisation. My greatest concern has always been that if I take on a demanding full-time job, I may not have enough time to manage the foundation effectively.

The organisation is largely driven by volunteers who also have personal responsibilities. If I step away completely, I worry that the vision could lose momentum. That is why I continue to seek ways of balancing my professional life with my commitment to community service.

Q: What do you enjoy doing outside your professional work?

A: Honestly, I rarely have much free time.

Between my studies, leadership responsibilities, meetings and managing the foundation, my schedule is always full. I also serve in a regional leadership role in Southern Africa, which requires me to engage with people from different countries and contribute to programmes across the region.

Although it is demanding, I enjoy every opportunity to learn, serve and make a positive difference.

Q: Where do you see yourself in the next five to ten years?

A: One of my biggest goals is to grow my business into a successful company that can employ at least 50 people. Creating employment opportunities is one way I hope to contribute to Zambia's economic development.

Personally, I also look forward to building a stable family and continuing to grow both professionally and spiritually. Above all, I want to expand the work of the Mark Charity Foundation so that it reaches even more vulnerable communities across the country.

Q: What legacy would you like to leave behind?

A: I want to be remembered as someone who lived a life of purpose.

For me, legacy is not about wealth or titles. It is about the lives you touch and the hope you give to others.

If I can leave behind people who say, "I am where I am today because Mark Davies encouraged me, supported me or believed in me when everyone else had given up," then I will know I lived a meaningful life.

I believe that if we truly live, we should help others to live as well. That, to me, is the greatest legacy anyone can leave behind.

Government Mobilises US$14.2 Billion in Private Investment Through PPP Programme

By Alexis Chilumbwe

The Government says it is increasingly leveraging private sector investment to accelerate infrastructure development, with its Public-Private Partnership (PPP) programme now overseeing a portfolio of about 70 projects valued at more than US$14.2 billion.

Speaking during an information exchange session at the Zambia International Trade Fair in Ndola, PPP Office Principal Business Development and Promotions Officer Stephen Chanda said Government had signed 19 PPP concession agreements worth approximately US$9.1 billion since 2022, with the majority of the projects already under implementation.

Among the flagship projects are the Ndola-Lusaka Dual Carriageway, which is nearing 80 percent completion, the Kasumbalesa Border Infrastructure Project, the Sakanya Border Infrastructure Project, and the now operational Chingola-Chililabombwe Road.

Chanda said additional infrastructure projects are progressing at Nakonde, Katima Mulilo and other strategic border posts to improve regional trade, transport logistics and cross-border connectivity.

He revealed that Government's PPP pipeline currently consists of 51 projects valued at approximately US$5.1 billion.

"Combined with the signed projects, the PPP Office is managing a portfolio worth more than US$14.2 billion. Of the total portfolio, 19 projects, representing 36 percent, are under implementation, while 51 projects, representing 64 percent, remain in the pipeline," Chanda said.

He noted that the programme has experienced remarkable growth, with signed PPP investments increasing from approximately US$35 million in 2022 to a cumulative US$9.1 billion by 2026. This year alone, projects worth more than US$780 million have already been signed.

Chanda said the PPP programme is delivering tangible economic benefits through improved infrastructure, skills development and employment creation.

"More than 15,000 direct jobs and over 30,000 indirect jobs have been created across sectors including roads, border infrastructure, housing, tourism, logistics and real estate development," he said.

He added that Government is promoting greater local participation by introducing mandatory subcontracting requirements of at least 10 percent for local businesses, while reserving Small and Medium PPP Projects valued at US$10 million and below exclusively for Zambian investors.

Chanda explained that the PPP model enables Government to expand critical infrastructure without placing excessive pressure on public finances, as private investors finance, construct and operate projects before transferring them to the State at the end of the concession period.

He added that Government also earns revenue throughout the lifespan of concession agreements through revenue-sharing arrangements ranging from five to 25 percent, depending on the structure of each project.

The PPP programme is also making significant strides in higher education infrastructure.

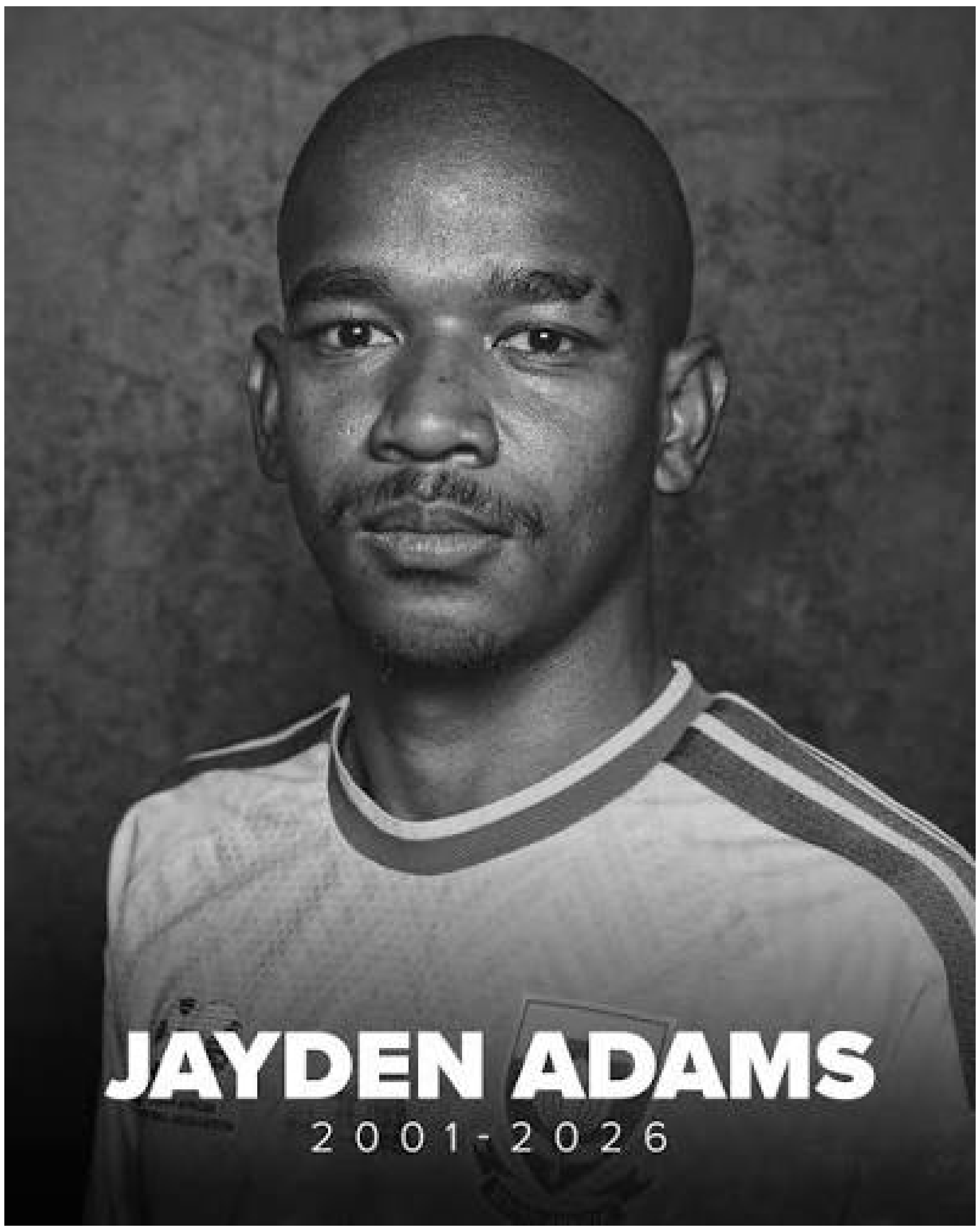
Chanda disclosed that Mulungushi University has signed a US$249 million concession agreement to construct more than 19,000 student bed spaces and supporting facilities, making it the largest higher education PPP investment in Zambia.

He said the University of Zambia is developing an additional 6,480 student bed spaces under a PPP arrangement, while concession agreements for similar projects at the Copperbelt University are nearing completion. Related initiatives are also progressing at Mukuba University and other public institutions.

Chanda said these investments form part of Government's broader strategy to modernise tertiary education infrastructure, improve student welfare, expand access to higher education, create employment opportunities and reduce pressure on public resources.

He said the progress being recorded across infrastructure, education and private investment demonstrates the growing importance of PPPs in driving economic transformation, strengthening national competitiveness, creating jobs and building a more productive and connected economy.

"As Zambia continues implementing reforms across key sectors, private capital mobilisation is providing an increasingly important foundation for sustained economic growth and long-term national development," Chanda said.



South Africa World Cup midfielder Jayden Adams dies aged 25

South Africa and Mamelodi Sundowns midfielder Jayden Adams has died. He was 25.

Adams played for South Africa at the World Cup. His death was confirmed by South Africa's minister of sport, arts and culture Gayton McKenzie.

“It is with profound shock and a heavy heart that I have learnt of the passing of Jayden Adams, midfielder for Mamelodi Sundowns and Bafana Bafana, at the age of 25,” McKenzie posted in a statement on X. “South African football has lost one of its brightest young talents, and our nation mourns alongside his family, his team-mates and the millions of supporters.”

Further details of Adams' death were not given.

“The cause of Jayden's passing has not yet been confirmed,” McKenzie said. “I wish to appeal to members of the media and the public to exercise restraint and compassion, and to refrain from speculation, while his family and Mamelodi Sundowns are given the space and privacy they need at this incredibly difficult time.”

Adams started South Africa's first Group A game against the Czech Republic and was substituted at halftime. McKenzie said Adams played that game only hours after learning that his grandmother had died.

Adams played several seasons for Stellenbosch before joining the Sundowns last year. He helped the club win the CAF Champions League this year.

“Death has cruelly stolen one of our own. It has robbed our nation of a remarkable footballer, but it will never take away the legacy Jayden Adams leaves behind. We will forever remember his humility, his extraordinary talent and the pride with which he represented South Africa.

Rest in eternal peace, Jayden. You will never be forgotten

Africanews

Wales comfortably beaten by Argentina in Nations Championship

Wales failed to build on a strong start as Argentina ran out comfortable 35-21 winners in their Nations Championship encounter in San Juan on Saturday.

An early try from Dewi Lake gave Steve Tandy's side an early lead but the Pumas quickly responded with the first two of their five tries.

Rhys Carre pulled the Welsh back level but three more tries in a 13-minute spell either side of half-time gave the hosts a commanding lead before Ben Warren's consolation.

Sam Costelow converted all three of Wales' tries but Argentina, for whom Joaquin Oviedo starred with two touchdowns, deserved their victory as they bounced back impressively from defeat to Scotland.

They controlled the game for long periods with further scores for Justo Piccardo, Marcos Kremer and Santiago Carreras while 10 points came via the boot of Tomas Albornoz.

ESPN

Joe Rogan Unsure Why Conor McGregor Tried ‘Crazy Move’

UFC commentator Joe Rogan said that he was unsure why Conor McGregor attempted to throw a jumping roundhouse kick at UFC 329.

McGregor lost just 69 seconds into his UFC 329 main event rematch against Holloway, a fight that was 13 years in the making. Considering that McGregor had worked so hard to return from a five-year injury layoff from a broken leg suffered in his fight against Dustin Poirier at UFC 264 in July 2021, it was devastating to see him lose by injury once again in his return to the Octagon.

But he certainly did not do himself any favors with the kick-heavy game plan that he brought forward.

Joe Rogan Reacts to UFC 329 Main Event

Speaking on the UFC 329 post-fight broadcast, Rogan suggested that the crazy kick that McGregor threw to kick off the fight against Holloway may have very well led to him getting injured in the fight and seeing him lose by TKO.

He just tried a crazy move. He tried a crazy move. He tried a jumping roundhouse kick, and when you âre in that position, when you throw that jumping roundhouse kick, if you don't land in a good way with the supporting leg, you put so much pressure on that knee. The way he landed, he threw the kick, he jumped up, he threw it, and he landed with his knee in the worst position,Rogan said. ***Yahoosports***

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FORMER COPPER QUEENS COACH BRUCE MWAPE DIES AT 67 YRS

A Final Farewell: Honoring the Legacy of Bruce Mwape

Today, Sunday, July 12, 2026, the Zambian football family gathered to lay to rest a true titan of the game, Bruce Mwape. As we bid farewell to the former Copper Queens head coach, we reflect not just on his passing, but on the indelible mark he left on the nation.

A Life Dedicated to the Beautiful Game

Bruce Mwape, who passed away on July 9 at the age of 67, leaves behind a career defined by

breakthrough moments and historic achievements. From his early work with the men's Under-17 side in 2015 to his transformative eight-year tenure leading the Copper Queens, his passion for the sport was unmatched.

An Unmatched Legacy

History will forever remember the heights to which he elevated Zambian women's football:

- A Pioneer on the Global Stage: He guided the Copper Queens to their historic maiden FIFA Women's World Cup appearance in 2023.
- The Olympic Architect: His tactical vision delivered consecutive Olympic Games qualifications for Tokyo and Paris.
- Continental Milestone: He led the team to their best-ever WAFCON performance, securing a bronze medal in 2022.

A Lasting Inspiration

As FAZ President Keith Mweemba poignantly stated, while Coach Mwape's death is a profound shock to the football fraternity, the legacy he built is monumental. He did more than just coach a team; he inspired a generation of female footballers to believe they could compete with the best in the world.

Though he has been laid to rest, the path he blazed for the Copper Queens will continue to be traveled by those who follow in his footsteps. His influence remains woven into the very fabric of Zambian football, ensuring that his spirit will always be present on the pitch.

Rest in peace, Coach. Your contribution to our game will never be forgotten.