



Dear All

My header is of dead trees in Lake Kariba. I will tell you a bit about the trip later.

Minimum Wage

During the week most of the conversation has been about the new minimum wages. I have heard from business people who have laid off staff, one company stating that they had laid off over 100 staff. Many companies have laid off around one-third of their staff to cope with the increase. The Association of Manufacturers has said that companies will have to increase the cost of their products; bread has already gone up.

Meanwhile the government is defending their decision to increase the minimum wage by 67%. Fackson Shamenda, Minister of Labour: *Those who cannot afford to pay the revised minimum wages should not employ domestic, shop or general workers so that they do the work themselves.* ??? Is this a government strategy for increasing employment??

Other people I have spoken to say that they will keep their domestic staff but will not increase the wages because they can't afford it. I ask them if they minded breaking the law and they said, yes, but they had no choice. They commented that they needed their domestic staff and their domestic staff needed their job and they would pay what they could.

I am assuming that the government has a plan but, at the moment, I can't understand it. Wages are a major component of the cost of any business and many businesses in Zambia are struggling to keep their heads above water. If the wages rise above the ability of the company to pay, then something has to give ...

The government earns its income from the taxes that companies pay. It is those taxes which pay government staff salaries. If the profit margin of companies is reduced it follows that the taxes government receives will be less.

It seems, though, that Fackson Shamenda is under the impression that most employers are earning high salaries: *We are aware that most of the people who are complaining get a salary of K20 million per month ...* (K20million is aroundUS\$4,000 per month ...) And, yes, many people do earn this kind of monthly salary and most of them live in Lusaka, many of them working for government, ...

From the Zambia Weekly on the new Minimum Wages

The new minimum wages stole the limelight this week, with Labour Minister Fackson Shamenda getting rather upset with the Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE).

First, however, ZFE had to clarify that the minimum wages had been introduced without any prior consultation:

“The Minister of Labour and Social Security in his media statements has indicated that government, employers and workers conclusively discussed and agreed on the prescribed rates. This is absolutely incorrect, as he, himself, in particular and the ministry in general, the labour movement and indeed ourselves know very well that the Tripartite Consultative Labour Council (TCLC) meeting that was held on 21st December 2011, to the contrary, agreed on formation of a Tripartite Technical Committee (...) with a view to the formulation of sector-based minimum wages and conditions of employment.”

The Technical Committee was however never constituted, as confirmed by the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions, whose Secretary General Roy Mwaba expressed surprise as to why Shamenda went against what was agreed at the TCLC meeting – although he did tell QFM Radio that the revision of the minimum wage was long over-due.

Well, explained Shamenda, the ZFE proposed an increase of 15%, which he deemed too low to even consider. He further rejected the sector-based approach: “We looked at industry by industry process, but it is complicated,” Shamenda told Times of Zambia.

ZFE told its members that it will appeal the new minimum wages, refusing to recognise the three underlying Statutory Instruments for domestic workers, shopkeepers and general workers in the meantime. By then ZFE President Alfred Masupha had already called the new minimum wages “arbitrary” and “absurd”, after which Shamenda called Masupha “selfish” and “rotten”, and asked the media to use all methods to get hold of Masupha’s payslip, arguing that he should not be complaining about having to pay higher wages to his domestic workers.

In fact Shamenda was rather focused on domestic workers, while ZFE was more interested in the wages of industrial workers. Shamenda kept on talking about having increased the minimum wage for domestic workers from K250,000 to K522,400, which in the public media was sold as a 100% increase, but this is in fact not true. Before the increase, domestic workers were entitled to a minimum wage of K250,000 PLUS a transport allowance of K102,400, as introduced by the MMD.

ZFE was backed by the Livingstone Tourism Association – and surprisingly, to some observers, the Council of Churches in Zambia: “It seems to us very unrealistic to backdate the effective date of this directive to 4 July 2012, when most employers are already implementing an [annual] budget agreed upon at the beginning of the year (...) employers may not be able to meet the sudden demand for such huge increases in their wage bill. In our view, this action, instead of helping the poor, for whom it is made, may (...) make them victims of the very good decision. It is also most likely that the cost of living for many Zambians will go up in an uncontrollable manner as employers panic to raise more money to increase wages. This will have an effect of increased inflation.

A time frame for implementation would have been more acceptable in order to give employers time to adjust,” CCZ President Reverend Moses Mwale stated according to the Post.

Supporters of the new minimum wages included the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction, Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection, Federation of Free Trade Unions in Zambia and United House and Domestic Workers Union of Zambia. The latter threatened employers with court action:

“Any employer who dismisses their employee on grounds that they can’t meet the minimum wage must be prepared to pay them their terminal benefits, reinstate them or face court action,” the union’s Secretary General Oscar Cheupe told the Daily Mail.

Government was split. Vice-President Guy Scott told parliament that “there will be no job losses” as a result of the upward adjustment in minimum wages. Government spokesman Kennedy Sakeni stated that “the PF government is extremely shocked at the negative reactions exhibited by some sections of society regarding the decision to revise the minimum wage upwards to mitigate sufferings of our people” – but continued:

“We have an open-door policy and we believe that threatening massive lay-offs or disregard of the law is not the solution. Nonetheless, we shall consider all concerns that will come to our attention whether about the content or implementation mechanism of the revised minimum wages,” Sakeni said.

Shamenda was less forgiving: “Any employer who wants to lay off workers should first appeal to the Labour Office. [But] we can only negotiate with companies which are seriously facing financial difficulties,” he told the Daily Mail, explaining that employers who fire employees without prior approval will face the wrath of the law.

Meanwhile prices began to creep up, initially for bread on the Copperbelt.

Letter to a newspaper

Dear Maid,

Following government’s decision to revise the minimum wage upwards (...) to ensure compliance with this development, I have decided to introduce cost-sharing measures with respect to the services we provide to you in this house, which will be deducted from your salary:

- 1) Breakfast – K50,000;
 - 2) lunch – K50,000;
 - 3) supper – K50,000;
 - 4) lodging – K100,000; and
 - 5) miscellaneous (bathing, use of household lotion, soap, charging phone, DStv, etc.) – K50,000.
- Total: K300,000.

Since you are currently paid a monthly net salary of K300,000, taking into account the above costs I incur through your live-in status, your actual salary is K600,000, though your take-home is K300,000. I, therefore, consider myself fully compliant with the government directive and this matter is now settled.

Yours sincerely,

Madam of the House (letter to the editor in Post 19)

What do we do? Well, the new SI is in place so there is no going back, as employers we have to accept the new rule. In the future as the government re-enacts UNIP policies (are they UNIP in disguise?) we are sure to have devaluation of the kwacha which will mean in a year or so’s time we will be able to re-employ our sacked staff who have been languishing under a tree since now...

ZIM-ZAM

UNWTO Preparations

Last week I wrote about Zambia having its fourth change of Minister of Tourism since September and its elections. This, of course, has rather dire consequences for the preparations for the UNWTO in August next year. Our new Minister, Sylvia Masebo, has the task of acquainting herself with the tourism industry in Zambia, especially in Livingstone, and trying, at this late stage to get the town ready.

Meanwhile in Zimbabwe, it would appear that things are going equally awry. From an article in allAfrica.com it is stated that although the Zimbabwe government was splashing its huge plans across the media, it has in fact done very little and there is doubt that these pledges will be met.

In February 2012 I reported in the Livingstone Weekly:

As part of the work to be done prior to the meeting Mr Mzembi mentioned a convention centre, hotels, villas and shopping mall in Victoria Falls Town; upgrading of Victoria Falls, Bulawayo and Harare airports. He also mentioned road rehabilitation, health care facilities, a theme park, a museum, exhibition parks and halls, broadband and information technology, and a clean and safe water supply in Victoria Falls Town.

We are now in July, one year away from the UNWTO and things are not going according to plan. Earlier this month Walter Mzembi, Minister of Tourism in Zimbabwe announced to parliament that that there was still no decision on where to build the planned business centre. A 1,200 hectare site had been identified for shopping malls, casinos, theme park and other projects, but that is as far as it has gone.

From allAfrica.com:

It got worse. Tourism secretary Sylvester Maunganidze delivered the clincher when he revealed Zimbabwe lied about the state of its infrastructure in order to win the bid to host tourism's biggest global event. "We made our bids using electronic presentations which we manipulated because we were competing," he confessed before parliament's Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism portfolio committee ... "If other players don't play ball, there will be an imaginary Victoria Falls which I have sold very well to the world, but which is not there."

This week too, Permanent Secretary for Tourism, Munesu Munodawafa stated that he felt that government should abandoned its ambitions to build the planned 4,000-seater convention centre as it was no longer possible to complete the project in time for the UNWTO. He felt that a semi-permanent structure should be erected instead.

UNWTO officials are on their way to us here in Victoria Falls Town and Livingstone in August. What will we tell them?

Email from a Weekly Reader in UK

Hope you enjoy (enjoyed) your time at Kariba.

We will be there in November, staying with our good friends ...

We will be staying there for 2 weeks and of course that will entail us having time on a boat. Really looking forward to it.

However, going back to your recent Livingstonian paper.....Livingstone is empty.

I wanted to pass through and stay in Luanshya and at Chanters lodge, but with this money lark they have just brought in, together with visa payments, and then needing Yellow fever documents.....to enter South Africa.....we have decided to go around Zambia and fly direct to Harare.

After that visit to Kariba we can then enter South Africa with no worries and continue with our holidays.

We are away from the UK for 10 weeks. Pity we could not make it to Zambia, but there are now too many barriers. ...

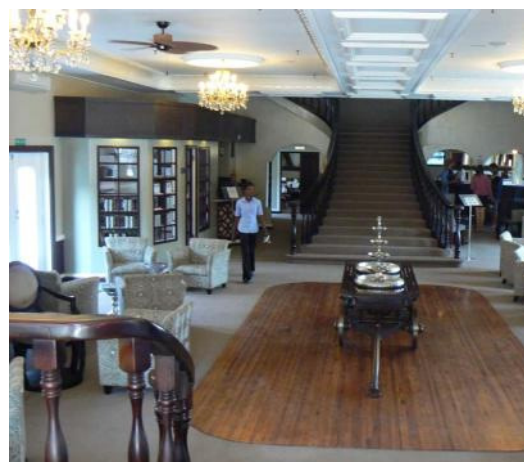
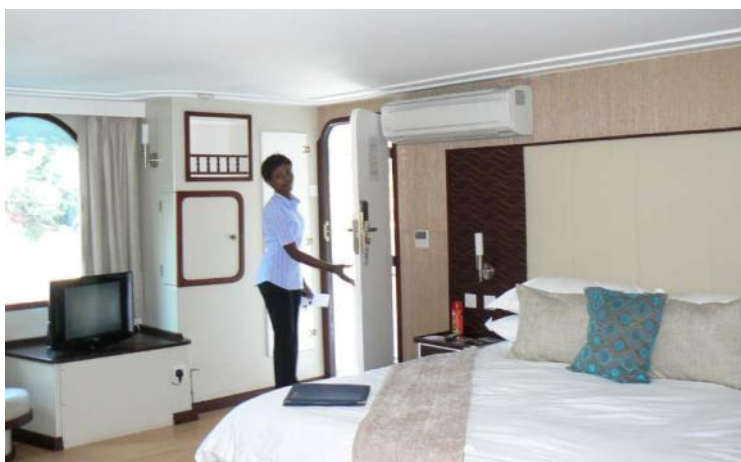
A Trip To Kariba

Josh, my travel partner, has his sister and family visiting so I went to join them on a houseboat on Lake Kariba. Because their journey from Harare was shorter than mine from Livingstone, I travelled up the day before. The journey was uneventful. The road was fine except for a few potholes north of Mazabuka. When I reached Siavonga I went to have a look at the Southern Belle. This is a large houseboat under the Protea banner and is used for lake cruises and accommodation. The boat goes out at weekends, but is moored during the week.



It is really beautiful and has to go on my list of things to do ... (it is becoming a long list) ... The boat has 21 rooms, conference room, pool and a dance floor!

If you feel like a treat contact them on reservations@phsouthernbelle.co.zm



I crossed over into Zimbabwe and headed toward Cutty Sark Hotel. The evening was spent on the Weekly and then early in the morning I got up and finished it off and got it sent. This was followed by breakfast. Cutty Sark tends to get most of its guests from conferences. It is a bit tired, but the staff are very

friendly and it is where I like to stay.

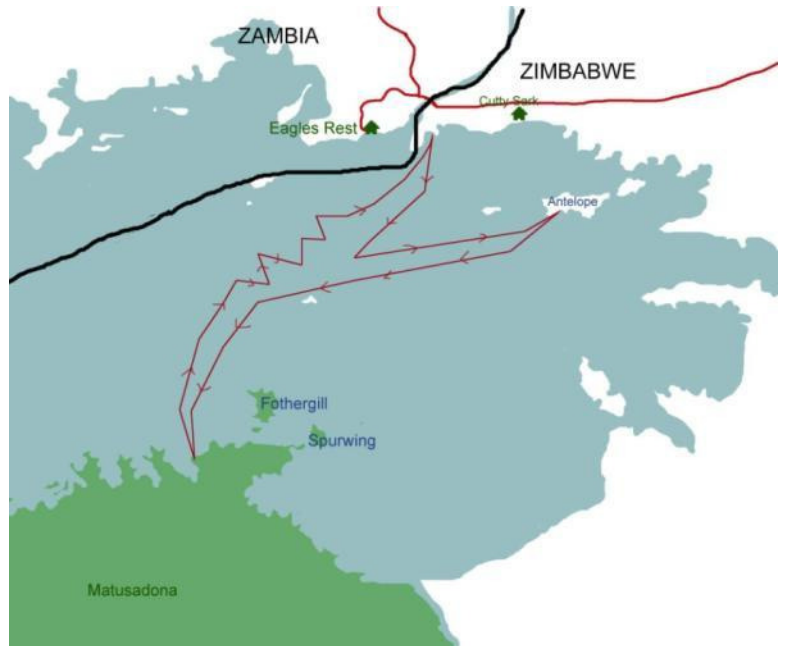


Josh and family arrived just after lunch after a slow journey from Harare and we drove to our houseboat, Muzinda. We met our captain Oliver, and our cook/waiter, Vivian. Both of them proved to be excellent.

We headed out onto the lake towards Matusadona ... but the wind was blowing and the waves rocked the boat from side to side. Oliver tried valiantly to beat the elements but finally had to admit defeat. We about-turned and headed towards Antelope Island.

During our attempt to cross the lake all of us were feeling a bit queasy ... Josh, a bit unsteady on his pins, had to be helped out of his chair while everyone tried to help, but laughed ... as did Josh ...

Having moored on Antelope Island we all relaxed and hoped that the lake would be calm the following day. Fortunately it was much better in the morning and, in 4 hours,



we had reached the shore of Matusadona National Park.

Oliver, forever attentive, quickly organised the speedboat and our guests from England went out for a spin around the lake shore. Later he took them fishing.

It is such fun taking people around who have never been to Africa before. Everything is so exciting for them and I just loved listening to their comments.



Josh and I were happy just to sit and look at the view as the elephant, hippo, impala grazed nearby.



I will have to continue this story next week as there are far too many photos ...

In the meantime, if you want a trip on Muzinda, contact Jane on krienkej@gmail.com

From the Zambia Weekly

Remember that you can get the Zambia Weekly, free, from Camilla Hebo Buus - Zambia Weekly [cabuus@zambia-weekly.com]

ZNS service mandatory – again

Government has announced it will re-introduce compulsory Zambia National Service (ZNS) training for Grade 12 school-leavers from 2013. Minister of Youth and Sport Chishimba Kambwili explained that the programme will not include military training but various entrepreneurial skills such as carpentry, welding and mechanics. The school-leavers will spend 18 months at ZNS: “It is important that they have survival skills as they go into university or college, and in the event that they fail to complete, at least they have these life skills to help them engage in their own businesses and earn a living,” Kambwili explained to parliament according to the Times of Zambia. ZNS camps will be renovated and instructors engaged accordingly. Several commentators wondered why skills training had to be mandatory rather than voluntary. Compulsory (military) ZNS training was a trademark of the UNIP era in the 1970s.

Zambia gets its first solar mini-grid

The Rural Electrification Authority (REA) has commenced the construction of Zambia’s first ever solar mini-grid for the Mpanta fishing community on the shores of Lake Bangweulu.

The 60 KW grid will power the households of about 6,000 people in a cluster of villages as well as their nursery and basic schools, health centre, market, harbour depots, churches and street lighting. The contractor, Power link Solutions, started work in June – and is expected to finish within 14 weeks. The K6.3 billion project is partly financed by a loan from the Development Bank of Zambia. Solar mini-grids along with mini-hydro power stations and biomass power stations are some of the means by which REA seeks to achieve rural electrification.

Export earnings to be banked in Zambia

Government is in the process of drafting a Statutory Instrument (SI) No. 34 to compel foreign companies and mining houses in particular to bank their export revenue locally.

Finance Deputy Minister Miles Sampa explained that exporters would have to acquire letters of credit from government before exporting their products in order to ascertain export revenue.

“The revenue realised will be banked locally and utilised to grow the economy before it is given back,” Sampa told Times of Zambia.

ZIMBABWE

Mana Pools

The debate about the proposed lodge, Vine Lodge, in Mana Pools and the heavy mineral sand mining continues to play out in the media with more and more newspapers picking it up and commenting. In the meantime, Zimbabwe has recorded a huge increase in the number of tourists visiting the Park. During the first half of this year the number of tourists increased from 728 to 2,213. Of this, 568 were international visitors, the rest being locals.

Kapenta Fishing on Lake Kariba

An Opinion from The Herald, Zimbabwe

Some blame it on climate change, others on the "use of juju" and others on Zambians who encroach into the Zimbabwean territory for fishing expeditions. Others claim that whites invented a type of fish that only eats, and has wiped out all the kapenta fish in the Zambezi River.

Well, whatever the reasons might be, the truth that does not need a rocket scientist to come to a conclusion that the catch of kapenta fish by fisherman in Binga per day, week, month and year is definitely dwindling.

Kapenta stocks in the Zambezi River are depreciating at unprecedented volumes amid revelations of overfishing especially by Zambians who have about 830 rigs against 364 run by Zimbabweans. Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority has also proposed an annual three to four months moratorium on kapenta fishing in the river towards a sustainable fishery.

BOTSWANA

Poachers shot in Chobe National Park

Two villagers from Namibia who crossed into Chobe National Park from their village on the floodplain were shot dead by Botswana Defence Forces. The two villagers had gone on a nocturnal hunting expedition. Two elephant tusks and two rifles were found in their possession.

Botswana has a strict attitude towards poachers – it doesn't like them. The Botswana Defence Force is used to patrol game parks. Game Park Rangers are generally used for the niceties in the parks like reception; the army protects. Some people say that Botswana cares more for its animals than it does for its people, but Botswana is merely protecting its second largest income, that of tourism – tourism comes second after diamonds in the country's economy.



WATER LEVELS KEEP ON RISING

From the Ngami Times

By Bright Kholi

While hydrologists have indicated that this year's flood coming into the Okavango River and downstream was lower than the previous years, it may not readily show the difference on the ground especially downstream of the Thamalakane, Kunyere, Nhabe and Boteti Rivers. Last year a flash flood damaged more property and flooded channels that had not received water in years while this year floodwater from the Angola highlands came in quietly - reaching Maun in mid - April.

All indications to date are that water levels continue to rise as the water is filling up all the channels it followed last year. This has been confirmed by Olebeng Balapi, of the Department of Water Affairs, who

said the water levels are currently rising downstream, causing the rivers to swell. Since there had been water already in the river from last year's floods, it becomes easy for water to flow into all the channels that flowed for the first time in recent years. Some channels that have already filled up include the Thaoge River in Tsau, Boronyane, Shashe channel, the channel that passes through the Maun Educational Park, and some flood plains in Disaneng. Balapi said they also expect the Sitatunga channel to flow as well.

"With this rise we will see these channels being filled again, with all the back flows as well, but we may see the levels and the volumes receding in a month or so," Balapi said.

He said their measurements obtained from their observation point at Maun Bridge, the water level in the Thamalakane on June 19 was 2.322 metres against a volume of 18.655cubic metres per second, while the readings on Monday this week showed a 2.568 metres level and 25.788cubic metres per second.

In the delta, Balapi said measurements at Xakuye have started showing a steady decline of the amount of water coming in and he also expects the water coming into the Thamalakane to also start declining in a month or so. The rise in Thamalakane has also meant a rise in the Boteti and Nhabe rivers, both of which still had water from last year's floods. There have been reports of the Boteti swelling because of the increase.

Balapi said it is important to note that this year's water was not pushing in very fast but was coming in gradually, and this calls for caution from all river users as the water may catch them unawares. No damage to property was anticipated this year.

In the Maun area of Disaneng, exits 3 and 4 from the main road there have been flooded making it difficult for residents. Exit 5 by Wednesday remained open to traffic.

NAMIBIA

'Noah's Ark' shipment of Namibian wild animals to Cuba disgusts welfare group

From the UK Guardian

Namibia has been condemned for planning to transport a "Noah's Ark" of nearly 150 wild African animals, including elephants, rhinos, leopards, lions, antelopes and vultures to Cuba. The national council of SPCAs (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) in South Africa expressed "disgust" at the neighbouring country's plan to capture the animals then fly them to the Caribbean island.

The project, dubbed "Noah's Ark II", fulfills a promise to the Cuban government in 2009 during a visit to Namibia by the country's president, Raul Castro. The plan is to relocate the animals to Cuba's national zoological park, on the outskirts of Havana, a place that already holds captive 850 animals over 342 hectares (1.3 sq miles).

"The Namibian and Cuban governments have agreed on the translocation of 146 wild animals, valued at N\$7.5m [£589,491], as a donation to Cuba," reported the newspaper Namibian. The first consignment of the 23 species, including the 'big five', will leave for Cuba early in October, while the last animals will be flown to Cuba next year."

The article added: "A group of Cuban scientists are currently in Namibia and will stay for the next two weeks to observe the capturing of the animals."

The Namibian reported that white rhinos and black rhinos would be flown out. The full list of animals to be translocated to Cuba mentions roan antelopes, common impalas, greater kudus, Cape elands, gemsbok, springbok, hartebeest, elephants, buffalos, spotted hyaenas, brown hyaenas, lions, porcupines, leopards, black-backed jackals, cheetahs, caracals, honey badgers, bat-eared foxes, ostriches, and white-backed vultures.

"It was decided, for veterinary reasons, that warthogs, waterbucks, wildebeest and zebras will not be exported to Cuba," the paper reported.

The paper quoted Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, the environment and tourism minister, as saying: "The Namibian taxpayers are footing the bill for the capturing and transportation of the animals to Cuba and we will only know the exact expenditure once the project has been completed."

The government had budgeted N\$25m (£2m) for the relocation of the animals in the 2011/2012 financial year, the paper added. Funds were also made available for the project for this year.

The animals will be taken from the Waterberg Plateau Park and kept in temporary enclosures before being flown out.

Nandi-Ndaitwah insisted: "This exercise is being done in accordance with the Cites requirements and we have to ensure that all animals are suitable to stay in Cuba."

The scheme is criticised by wildlife protection activists. The NSPCA in South Africa said: "[We] express disgust at the Namibian government's decision to capture animals from the wild for transportation to Cuba."

The organisation said it was concerned that the long flight would be stressful for the animals, and it questioned whether their new territory would be suitable.

The NSPCA said: "It is saddening to note that these animals will be taken out of their natural habitat and sent to a strange land where they will be deprived of freedom and be totally dependent on humans for their daily needs."

"Considering the inhumane culling of seals taking place [off] Namibia at the moment and the worldwide outcry, this latest action by the Namibian government and its ministry of environment and tourism raises serious concerns regarding this country's stance on animal welfare. Perhaps something for animal lovers to consider when considering Namibia as a holiday destination."

WOLFGANG'S COLUMN

CHINA READY TO FINANCE NEW MWAMBANI PORT INSIDE COELACANTH MARINE PARK

Emerging information that China has reportedly stepped up to finance the construction of a new port at Mwambani, instead of rehabilitating and enlarging the existing and grossly underutilized Tanga port, have shaken Tanzania's conservation fraternity afresh. This has happened only days after learning that UNESCO had cleared the way for the Tanzanian government to excise a 200 square kilometre area from the Selous Game Reserve to begin highly toxic Uranium mining. That revelation was followed by a double whammy for the Selous when the Rufiji Basin Development Authority then signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Brazil's Odebrecht to develop a hydro electric power plant and dam at the Stiegler's Gorge in the Selous' most intensely used tourism area, putting the future of the Selous in some serious doubt.

The financing commitment by China is also expected to subsequently pave the way for the financing of the planned railway from Mwambani to the Lake Victoria town of Musoma, running through what this correspondent has named 'The Corridor of Destruction' which could very well – in spite of verbal assurances to the contrary – run across the Lake Natron flats, East Africa's sole breeding ground for the flamingos and across the Serengeti, as the most direct route would suggest, if for nothing else but cost reasons.

With Tanzania's court system tainted by suggestions of easily yielding to political pressure, the remaining hope to stop this project is now vested in conservation NGO's from the region to file a case before the East African Court of Justice in Arusha, which is already dealing with the Serengeti Highway case. Cases by afflicted residents near Mwambani are said to be also pending before local courts but equally, as alleged intimidation against the plaintiffs persists, this too may find its way into the EACJ system.

According to several sources will the construction, once the finance packages are agreed between the two governments, start still within 2012 or latest by early next year and be undertaken by Chinese state construction companies. Those are notorious for not creating employment for local Tanzanians but import all their staff, even for the most menial jobs, from China to retain, as elsewhere, the fullest control over such projects. The same sources have also alleged that no EIA has been undertaken, or if one has been produced it has not been published and opened up to scrutiny by stakeholders or the conservation fraternity as existing law requires, raising legitimate questions why Tanzania's own regulations and legal requirements in such cases are habitually brushed aside if not trampled upon with impunity.

Said a regular source from Arusha, who is close to the court action at the EACJ over the Serengeti highway on condition of strictest anonymity: 'The information you now have is quite reliably because it comes from within by people who are not comfortable about the way things are done. We hope, if the project really goes ahead, to file for an injunction directly in Arusha at the East African Court of Justice based on what seems to be a systematical violation of existing rules and regulations over mandatory EIA's and other aspects. We are also monitoring the plight of the affected population around Mwambani and what government intends to do with them. There is a hidden tragedy unfolding for people who for ages lived their life there as fishermen and they cannot be displaced and told to be farmers overnight. It is a recipe for immense human suffering and even though the Tanzanian media have been silenced over such developments we shall get the news out'.

And yours' truly as always is happy to facilitate this and trigger that smallest of stones, like with the publication in early 2010 of the Tanzanian government's plans to build a highway across the Serengeti, which turns eventually in a mighty avalanche of opposition and eventually forces a review and modification of plans as well as opting for a different location for a new port. Watch this space where the environment has a voice and has its say.

RWANDA'S PARLIAMENT PASSES BIRD PROTECTION BILL

The often mentioned fact here that Rwanda indeed has conversation engrained in its political fabric was once again confirmed when it became known that late last week did parliament pass a special bill, authorizing government's ratifying the relevant global agreement to protect migratory bird species. In fact it was learned that the country's second chamber, the Senate, had added during the debate, such extra references as the Ramsar Convention and the International Convention on Biodiversity and Habitats to make the new law more comprehensive and not leave out crucial components of environmental protection.

The new law will cover at least 255 species of migratory birds depending on wetlands for their annual migration from Europe and deep into Asia to Africa and while many East African countries continue to aggressively drain wetlands for building of new estates and for farming, Rwanda in contrast has decided to protect them. As a result has bird watching tourism grown in leaps and bounds and is now not only taking advantage of finding birds in the national parks but also the specially created birding trails outside the parks or the shores of Lake Kivu along the Congo Nile Trail. Towards that end visit www.rwandatourism.com for details on bird watching options in Rwanda or www.rdb.rw where links exist to their tourism and conservation department.

I was not sure about Coelacanth, so I found this:

The One Minute Coelacanth: A Brief Overview

In the "Greatest Fish Story Ever Told", the first living coelacanth known to modern science was discovered in 1938 when a young museum curator named Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer was invited down to the docks to examine a strange fish brought in on the trawler, Nerine. She sent a sketch to fish expert JLB Smith, who soon identified the fish as a living coelacanth- a word meaning hollow spine in Greek. The coelacanth fishes were known



only from fossils, the most recent of which dated from the late Cretaceous 65 million years ago, so the discovery created a worldwide sensation and was called the "biological find of the century"- the same as finding a living dinosaur. The discovery was given the scientific name *Latimeria chalumnae* and attempts to taxonomically classify it ensued.

THE SMILE



Have a good week

Gill

Don't forget your subs ...