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STATE HOUSE RUSHES TO CLEAR MESS

... Over secret reinstatement of PS they announced was dismissed 10 months ago

By Patson Chilemba
 State House yesterday rushed to refute that Wisdom Bwalya was not fired, 10 months after they announced his contract was terminated, this coming in light of information he has been secretly reinstated after intervention of intermediaries with connections to State House.

In April, 2023, a statement from President Hakainde Hichilema stated that former Local Government permanent secretary Bwalya's contract had been terminated, alongside then Inspector General of Police Lemmy Kajoba and three other permanent secretaries Perpetual Mphande Chuulu, Danny Mfuno and John Msimuko.

(To page 2)

We share in the blame on guns – IG

... we issued them without subjecting applicants to mental exams, upbringing

By Agness Changala
 Inspector General of Police Graphael Musamba says the indiscriminate use of guns by some citizens should partly be blamed on them as authorities for issuing them out without subjecting applicants to mental and psychological examination to see if they are fit to own firearms.

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ACC prepares bill on asset declaration for all public officers

By Daily Revelation Reporter

Transparency International Zambia (TIZ) says results of the 2023 Corruption Perception Report have portrayed an encouraging picture for Zambia, with the country improving its score for the first time in a decade.

(To page 2)

We never commissioned Solochi to import biologically dangerous products – Nawakwi
 Story on page 3



Socialist Party leader Dr Fred M'membe (in a black hat and wife shirt) after they welcomed a delegation from the European Union (EU) on elections (Story on page 4)



State House rushes to clear mess

(From front page)

But sources have told Daily Revelation that Bwalya was reinstated following the intervention of some intermediaries. The sources said procedure required that a permanent secretary who had been dismissed should be sworn in again if they were reinstated, something that has not happened in Bwalya's case.

"From the information gathered after the announcement that he was fired, he was even removed from the whatsapp group for permanent secretaries but a few days later he was reinstated. When you have been reinstated you have to take a fresh oath of office, but he has been working quietly after that position was announced to the public," sources said.

Daily Revelation contacted State House chief communications specialist over this information.

When asked on reports of secret reinstatement and that Bwalya was actually serving as one of the many permanent secretaries in charge of special duties without being sworn, following pleas from some people, Hamasaka said: "That's not true. In the first place he was not fired. He was never fired at all. Get it from me he was never fired at all. What could have happened that time I think I am aware of that situation, was just a

statement that went out with his name. Yah! I think it was basically like a mistake in that statement to have had his name included. He was never fired."

"That is the correct situation. He was never fired, it's just a statement. Even you people in the media there make mistakes, not so?" Hamasaka asked.

But asked why 10 months have since passed without the same being corrected, Hamasaka said: "I think it was corrected around that time. That was I think time of, is it ... thing was signed, was it Anthony Bwalya or something?"

But reminded that that announcement was made at a different time from the time Anthony was removed as spokesperson at State House and sent into the Foreign Service as deputy head of mission in Tanzania.

"Oho! Yah! Anyway that is the correct situation. And it must have been corrected if I am not mistaken," said Hamasaka, however, that position has never been corrected. "Okay, I am telling you now."

Bwalya was also contacted on the same information. Told that Zambians know that he was among the PSs that were announced to have been dismissed but there was no record of him being sworn in again despite serving in the same capacity, Bwalya

referred queries to the Secretary to Cabinet.

"You just call Secretary to Cabinet," he said, but

put to him that he was the subject of the matter and he too could speak to it on why he was fired and reinstated

without any public record of him being sworn in again, Bwalya said: "This is why I am saying I will not comment

over such matters. Just call the Secretary to Cabinet or the Deputy Secretary to Cabinet Dr Kalabo. Sure."



Defence minister Ambrose Lufuma with Zambia National Service (ZNS) Commander Maliti Solochi during a tour of the milling facilities yesterday

ACC prepares bill on asset declaration for all public officers

(From front page)

And the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has disclosed that the commission is developing a Bill on asset declaration for all public officers.

Speaking at the launch of Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2023 Report at Taj Pamodzi Hotel yesterday, Mwenye said

developing the Bill on asset and declaration for public office bearers, was aimed at enhancing transparency among public office bearers and strengthening law enforcement investigative operations.

He said this would facilitate and enhance the conduct of lifestyle audits.

Mwenye expressed pride and optimism with the revelation made that Zambia had not only increased its score on the corruption perception index but had also significantly improved its ranking.

He attributed the positive shift in Zambia's CPI score to judicial reforms that saw the establishment of the Economic and Financial Crimes Court as this had played a pivotal role in enhancing justice, ensuring that those engaged in corrupt practices were held accountable for their actions.

He said this also highlighted the government's commitment to strengthening the rule of law and ensuring that justice was seen to be done.

The ACC chairperson also said the commission was working with the judiciary and other stakeholders to ensure smooth operationalisation of the Criminal Procedural Code (Economic and Financial Crimes Court) Rules 2024, which among other issues provides for the completion of corruption and financial crimes cases within five months.

Mwenye observed that the efforts being

made to reduce the risk of bribery within the business environment by engaging the private sector to develop anti-corruption and bribery mechanisms was a significant milestone.

He said the engagement was meant to create a fair and just business landscape, promoting a level playing field for all and ensuring that economic activities were conducted with integrity.

Mwenye further said the commission's effort towards recovery of ill-gotten wealth was in itself a major deterrent in the fight against the scourge.

He noted that the increase in public awareness activities had also played a role in informing members of the public of the negative effects of corruption and ensuring that citizens were empowered with ways of reporting to law enforcement agencies.

He said the commission recognised the vital role of the efficient whistle blowing systems in uncovering corruption and financial crimes and was about to launch its first online anonymous whistleblowing system next month.

Mwenye said this would complement the existing platforms such as the toll free line, whatsapp and email reporting system systems.

He said a review of the public interest Disclosure Act of 2010 to strengthen the legal protection of

whistleblowers who play a crucial role in the fight against corruption was thus underway.

And TIZ president Priscilla Chikonde Chansa said the results of CPI Report also portrayed an encouraging picture for Zambia, with the country improving its CPI score for the first time in a decade.

Chansa said the 2023 CPI score for Zambia had improved from 33/100 in 2022 to 37/100 in 2023, and consequently improving the rank by 18 places, from 116/180 countries in 2022 to 98/180 countries in 2023.

She said Zambia's corruption situation was now comparable to the year 2017 when the CPI score was at 37/100.

"This means that the current administration's policy pronouncements and actions against corruption, in collaboration with all other stakeholders, while not perfect, have contributed to a reversal of the past 6 years when Zambia's score has been in decline," she said.

"It is however, important to note that this 4-point improvement in the CPI Score for Zambia, although unprecedented and therefore, worth commending, does not mean that the prevalence of corruption has reduced to zero. It certainly does not mean that the government and other stakeholders should relax when it comes to fighting corruption."

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



YOUR VOICE, YOUR POWER

Your Voice matters, your opinion is a change maker!!

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#myvoicemypower

ACC has made it simpler for you to declare assets

By Daily Revelation Editor

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) chairman Musa Mwenye has disclosed that the commission is developing a Bill on asset declaration for all public officers.

Speaking at the launch of Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) 2023 Report at Taj Pamodzi Hotel yesterday, Mwenye said developing the Bill on asset and declaration for public office bearers, was aimed

at enhancing transparency among public office bearers and strengthening law enforcement investigative operations.

He said this would facilitate and enhance the conduct of lifestyle audits.

Mwenye expressed pride and optimism with the revelation made that Zambia had not only increased its score on the corruption perception index but had also

significantly improved its ranking.

The move to come up with a bill for asset declaration for all public officers, including Republican Presidents is the right way to go. We wish to note that Musa has been unflinching on this score, and may have ruffled some feathers in the process. However, this should not just be Musa's baby to carry, it should actually become a rallying call for every patriotic Zambian regardless of their political, religious or other affiliations.

Enactment of laws such as the one Musa and his colleagues at the ACC are pushing should be welcomed in order for the country's corruption perception to continually improve as has been noted already in this 2023 Corruption Perception Index (CPI). The UPND

administration deserves credit for that too.

However, for the fight against corruption to be truly effective to ensure that all the people buy into the anti-corruption agenda, corruption, past, present and future will have to be fought not only in word where only the past graft is targeted but also the present and future. The fight should be an honest fight to rid the country of the vice and should never be used as a weapon to settle political scores.

Corruption should be fought as a pandemic that should be eliminated and should not be used as an instrument for portraying some as angels and the others as devils, because angels and indeed demons exist everywhere be it in the ruling party or opposition.

In this regard, we wish to appeal to the

UPND administration to wholeheartedly support this bill towards its speedy enactment. We urge the opposition also to ensure that they work together with the administration as this is a worthy bill that needs the support of all.

To instil confidence in the masses that our leaders, especially those in power are living above board, the conduct of those leaders should be made as transparent as possible. We do not want to live in a nation where our leaders become rich overnight or use their offices to abuse public resources and natural resources to enrich themselves through commissions or other pay for play schemes.

We wonder why it should be such a big issue for instance for the public to know the extent of the wealth

their leaders possess, and why they feel they should actually be compelled by law to simply state to the people they lead their correct asset value if indeed they are interested in transparency, and are interested in being held accountable as the servants of the people they always claim to be.

Well, since the country has debated extensively on this matter with some even indicating that there needs to be a law to compel certain officials like the President and permanent secretaries to regularly declare their assets, the ACC has just made that move and made it a little simpler for you to do that. You have no option but to jump on the board and support this progressive bill.

EDITORIAL

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We never commissioned Solochi to import biologically dangerous products – Nawakwi

By Daily Revelation Reporter

FDD leader Edith Nawakwi says Zambians did not commission Zambia National Service (ZNS) Commander Lieutenant General Maliti Solochi to be importing biologically dangerous products.

Speaking to Daily Revelation on Solochi's statement to educate Nawakwi not to politicise food, the opposition leader said Gen Solochi should decide whether to be a general of mealie-meal trading or a commander.

"I summarise and say what does my General want, does he want to be a general trader of mealie-meal or does he want to be my commandant? Given the difference between him and (Agriculture minister) Mutolo Phiri, I suggest that the General resigns because basically Mutolo is saying he doesn't know anything talk to Solochi and the people who gave him the license. That's what the minister saying," she said.

On Maliti's argument that the mealie meal in question was destined for Congo,

Nawakwi said, "but minister Mutolo who is senior than Solochi says he knows nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing about this scam."

"So when this General is talking about Edith Nawakwi should just keep quiet, I feel sorry for him what comes to my mind is, is he a General or does he want to be a General trader, he must choose one of the two. He can't be my Commanding officer and also be a trader. So is title General meaning that Solochi is trading as general mealie meal supplier?" she said.

She said the conflicting statements smacks of corruption where the minister said he doesn't know.

"So who else knows it? It must be Hakainde Hichilema because Solochi in his statement even says President says don't leave anyone. So Solochi reports to the minister of defence and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. So those are the people who know what the man is doing," Nawakwi said.

She said the Ministry of Agriculture together with Mount Makuru were just on the receiving end.

"Solochi should resign.

He should resign, we commissioned him as an officer to protect and defend our territory and the children and people of Zambia, we didn't commission him to be importing biologically dangerous products," Nawakwi said.

She said she has forgiven the Commander and she does not want to be involved in the polemics.

"Just inform him that madam Nawakwi doesn't want to be involved in the polemics of political naivety and economic ignorance. I don't want to get involved in that because I do understand the limitations that the General finds himself in, he has not been to school to learn how to load a ship, how you consign that ship in transit to another boarder. All he seems to imagine is that you can go in South Africa, get an import permit written this product is destined for Lusaka, Zambia and according to him, offload it and take to Congo," she said.

Nawakwi said when Gen Solochi said the mealie meal was safe and one could go to this milling company or that milling company, it was his

version.

She insisted that the mealie-meal he was importing was lading in Zambia and there was nothing in the document. "Let him give us a document called 'the bills of lading', tell Mutolo, tell Solochi, what he is talking about I don't want to educate about loading consignments and cargoes is done. Tell him I was minister of Energy, minister of Agriculture, and minister of Finance and I went to school to study the structure of international energy market," she said.

Nawakwi said there were no politics in what she was talking about, but talking about people who don't understand what they were doing.

She said when ZNS was created, it was not to trade, it was to help the country in terms of floods, in times of cholera and from time to time, given mealie-meal to "deliver in Nabwalya."

Nawakwi said Lt Gen Solochi was a member of the defence force, a commander, a general and he was supposed to be her protector.

"I actually detest the idea

that my protector should be talking back to me. This is junior than the minister. The Ministry of Agriculture has a minister, State House has Koswe and ...and it has an occupant called Hakainde Hichilema. I don't expect the people responsible for peace and security to join the arena having a public interaction with politicians,"

Nawakwi said. "It is never done. It is an anathema, its taboo because I am being threatened you see that, these are people responsible for the armory, they are responsible for my peace and security. I am talking about him being recruited to do a wrong so he should keep quiet and let those people who have recruited him answer me."

ACC prepares bill on asset declaration for all public officers

(From page 2)

Chansa said corruption continues to be endemic in Zambia as the country remained an under performer in the sub region.

She recommended that the government should accelerate the implementation of the Access to Information Act No. 24 of 2023, in order to make justice more transparent in out of-court settlements and enforcement, as well as to make legal procedures and

Administrative rules are more open to public scrutiny. She also said the 2023 Corruption Perception Index Report had revealed that a

global trend of weakening justice systems was reducing accountability for public officials, which had allowed corruption to thrive.

She said when justice could be bought or be politically interfered with, laws stopped applying equally to all, and serving private interests rather than the common good became the norm.

Chansa said this year's CPI also showed mixed results in Africa, with significant improvements in a few countries.

By Mubanga Mubanga
It is very difficult to conduct free and fair elections in 2026 under the current political atmosphere, says Socialist Party (SP) leader Dr Fred M'membe.

Speaking during the visit by the European Union on a follow up meeting at his office in Lusaka, Dr M'membe said if the current political situation continues it will be impossible to hold free and fair elections in 2026.

He said the violence and other malpractices and

EU calls for changes to POA

... as M'membe talks about difficulties of holding 2026 elections

malpractices have deepened from the 2021 general elections.

"And if we continue on this path it will be impossible to hold free and fair elections in this country in 2026. It is not possible even now to hold free and fair elections ... I have been a participant

in those by-elections, I have been campaigning in those by-elections directly myself. This is not the atmosphere under which you can hold free and fair elections," Dr M'membe said.

Dr M'membe expressed worry that the credibility of the Judiciary, police and

Electoral Commission of Zambia is gone.

"But what is also worrying are the institutions on which we depended, their credibility is going. The credibility of the Judiciary in so far as elections are concerned gone, the police is gone, the Electoral

Commission is gone," said Dr M'membe.

And leader of the delegation of European Parliament Maria Arena recommended a change of the Public Order Act, so that people are able to move freely

"And when it comes to the Public Order Act, it is

a very important piece of Legislation ahh ... so what you said ... you lose your space with this application of Public Order Act. For us it is important to say ... why we recommend to change the situation and to guarantee that people have a right to gather," said Arena

We share in the blame on guns – IG

(Front front page)

And Musamba says the police have withdrawn some firearms from some people who have been found wanting and would not hesitate to do so to anyone else.

Meanwhile, Musamba says going forwards, anyone who applies to own a gun, will be subjected to mental checkup as well as checking their upbringing, to see if they are psychologically ready to handle firearms.

Musamba said the police were already working on President Hakainde Hichilema's directive to review gun licensing

"The review is in the making and we are working on that. When it will be ready, Zambians will be informed," he said.

He said over time, many people had used guns to get rid of some friends and members of the family, a situation he said should not be tolerated.

Musamba said authorities were overlooking the fact that those who applied to own firearms should be subjected to mental background as well as checking their

upbringing.

"Maybe there is something we have been overlooking that people who apply to own firearms ... and I think if examination of their mental background as well as their upbringing to see how psychologically they have been ready to handle firearms. This part maybe, can be blamed on us authorities that we have been giving these firearms to people and this has happened," he said

Musamba said overtime, there was this thought that Zambians were moderate people who wouldn't go to extremes with certain things that they had done.

"We have always taken them to be mild characters and not extreme, not radical but of late, we are just learning that there is this element of radicalism in our citizens and now where is it coming from?" he asked.

"How do we miss that? Maybe we should be subjecting such applicants to psychologists to see how best they could help us or if we subject them to that, would that be giving too much responsibility on psychologists because

we need a psychological background of citizens so that we can assess them on their own to see if they have that mental strength to live with guns as it were."

Musamba said for now, the police had reservations and hence the suspension of dishing out firearm licenses and this was done purely in the interest of all citizens of Zambia.

He added that the suspension of issuance of firearm licenses was effected immediately the pronouncements were made in the media from the Head of State.

"We took serious steps and we had to freeze every process that was in the pipeline to dish out or to hand out firearms to people because there is a serious omission of I think eee ... psychologist reports on certain people, we need that very badly. If that's not too much to ask," he said.

Musamba further said those in possession of guns and were unstable, their behavior may actually lead the police to withdrawing those firearms.

He said the police had a right to terminate licensees



Inspector General of Police Gaphael Musamba

each time people seem to be irresponsible.

"Their thinking, their attitude, even the way they

keep firearms in a home. If it's not under lock and key, if it's not used in the manner it's supposed to be used,

my office does terminate licenses and withdraw. So we have actually withdrawn some firearms from some people who have been found wanting and we will not hesitate to do so to any other potential owner," Musamba said.

He said the suspension on the issuance of licenses for guns would only be lifted once the police saw the situation was getting stable enough.

"We will wait until that period when we see that things have stabilised. How is the outlook in society about firearms and also the outlook of applicants that is when we will do it? Otherwise, it is not necessary to rush this and give it a timeline which is not going to help us fulfill our objectives that we have just set out for sure," said Musamba.

Court fines Tanzanian K5000 for entering country with forged passport

By Isaac Zulu
A 34-year old Tanzanian national has been fined K5000 in default serve six months simple imprisonment for entering the country with a forged passport.

Before Kapiri Mposhi magistrate Brenda Chiganda was Amon Omar Songo, a Tanzanian national.

It was alleged that on January 24, 2024 Songo gained entry into Zambia using a forged passport

contrary to the Immigration Laws.

Brief facts before court were that on January, 24 Immigration officers were manning the Luansimba check point, monitoring immigration compliance levels and, in the process, came across a bus that was coming from Nakonde to Lusaka via Kapiri Mposhi district and when the said bus was intercepted and a search conducted on the occupants, it was revealed that Amon Omar Songo had

used a forged passport to gain entry into Zambia.

When the matter came up before court, Songo pleaded guilty to the charge.

He asked the court to exercise maximum leniency on him, saying he was a first offender and had a family to look after.

But public prosecutor Alex Cheelo pointed out that Songo had no lawful excuse to enter the country using a forged passport.

Passing judgment, magistrate Chiganda

observed that cases of foreign nationals entering Zambia, via Kapiri Mposhi district were becoming common; hence the need for the court to mete out a custodial sentence against the offender.

Magistrate Chiganda then fined Songo K5,000 in default serve six months simple imprisonment.

Before the same court, a 25-year-old man was appearing for concealing his personal identity and country of origin.

Gerald Ngowi, a Burundi national, concealed his identity and used a Tanzanian passport bearing the name of Stephano Kambali, which was contrary to the Immigration Laws.

When the matter came up, the accused readily admitted the charge.

But public prosecutor Cheelo pointed out that Kambali was a second offender, who was convicted in Kabwe for a similar offence.

The matter comes up on February 5, for presentation of the previous conviction record.

Successful implementation of AfCFTA to create jobs, improve livelihood - Mulenga

By Mubanga Mubanga
Commerce, Trade and Industry minister Chipoka Mulenga says the successful implementation of the The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) will lead to the creation of more decent jobs, improved welfare and better quality of life for all citizenry, and sustainable development.

Speaking on the margins of the meeting, Mulenga said the meeting marked another milestone in the government's quest to unlock Africa's trade potential through the AfCFTA.

He said the continent had also embarked on the gradual elimination of tariffs on goods and reduction of barriers to trade.

"To boost intra-African trade, the continent has embarked on the gradual elimination of tariffs on

90 percent of goods, and the reduction of barriers to trade in services aimed at increasing Africa's income by \$450 billion by 2035," Mulenga said.

He said Zambia was committed to participating in the Guided Trade Initiative (GTI) and the fully flagged Free Trade Area (FTA).

Mulenga also said Zambia was almost concluding the domestication process of the Agreement and would soon express interest to join State Parties piloting the GTI.

He said the relevant instruments for domestication had undergone national consultations and were now before the Ministry of Justice for clearance.

The minister also urged Council Members on the need to adopt progressive provisions on the proposed

rules of origin for certain products.

He supported the need to have a more flexible rule on textiles under Chapter 61 to allow for sourcing of limited or unavailable inputs from non-African countries.

The minister however said, he recommended that this exception should be time bound and that efforts should be made towards building this industry so that it was self-sustaining.

AfCFTA Secretariat has convened the Thirteenth (13th) Meeting of the AfCFTA Council of Ministers Responsible for Trade from 30th to 31st January 2024 in Durban, Republic of South Africa.

The Council was preceded by the 16th Meeting of the Committee of Senior Trade Officials held from 26th to 29th January, 2024.

Mulenga is leading the Zambian delegation and those in his delegation include Dr Simon Ng'ona, Director Foreign Trade and

officials from the Zambian

High Commission in

Pretoria.



Caption on picture: Commerce minister Chipoka Mulenga and Emily Mburu-Ndoria - Director Trade In Services, Invest Digital Trade AfCFTA Secretariat



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No light at end of Ukrainian tunnel – EU's Borrell

The top diplomat demands “full cooperation from our partners” on sanctions against Russia

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell has said that despite the West's best efforts to help Ukraine and “weaken” Russia, sanctions have largely failed to achieve their goals, and more cooperation is needed from Central Asian states to isolate Moscow.

The Ukrainian conflict has been “a stark reminder of the critical importance of jointly defending the core principles of the United Nations,” Borrell told the Global Gateway Investors Forum for the European Union-Central Asia Transport Connectivity in Brussels on Monday.

“You know that in order to defend these principles, the European Union has imposed substantial sanctions against Russia, which have significantly weakened its war machine. But still, they are there, and the war continues. And if I can say it, the intensity of the fighting increases and we do not see the light at the end of the tunnel,” the EU's top diplomat acknowledged.

“In order for these sanctions to be effective, we need full

cooperation from our partners. We are following closely the trade between us, between Central Asia countries, with them and Russia. We try to analyze which are the mechanisms that make sanctions being circumvented,” he said.

According to President Vladimir Putin, the Russian economy is in good shape, rapidly expanding, and has even benefitted from Western sanctions, which have forced it to focus more on manufacturing than energy exports.

The sanctions on Russian oil introduced by the G7 and EU late last year were conceived as a means to curtail Moscow's energy revenues. In reality, however, they have had a boomerang effect, according to a recent study.

Kiev also repeatedly expressed concerns that Moscow is not being isolated as promised by the West, as China and multiple Global South nations have refused to toe the line set by the West, instead maintaining a neutral position.

Amid such

“disappointments,” and following the country's failed summer counteroffensive,

Ukrainian authorities will step up efforts to explain to their citizens why they should go

to the front line, according to President Vladimir Zelensky's senior adviser, Mikhail Podoliak. While Kiev doesn't publish its casualty figures, Russia's Defense Ministry has estimated that Ukraine's forces have lost as many as 400,000 troops over the course of the conflict.

Ukraine is also “working hard” to secure Western funding for the country in 2024,

according to Prime Minister Denis Shmygal. The US has provided Kiev with around \$111 billion in economic and military support to date, but the flow of funds has subsided dramatically as the White House struggles to push through another \$60 billion in assistance. The EU has also so far failed to reach an agreement to funnel €50 billion (\$54 billion) from the bloc's budget to Ukraine. RT

Musk's brain chip implanted in first human

Elon Musk has said his biotech company Neuralink has successfully implanted one of its brain chips in a human for the first time,

claiming the recipient is in good condition following the surgery. The firm hopes to create an interface allowing people to control devices

using their brain alone.

Musk unveiled the development in a post to his social media site, X (formerly Twitter), on Monday evening, stating that the “first human received an implant from Neuralink

yesterday and is recovering well.”

Though he offered few other details, the tech mogul added that initial results had shown “promising neuron spike detection,” referring to brain cells which send chemical and electrical signals to the rest of the body.

Neuralink described its first human trial in a press release last year, dubbed PRIME, or “Precise Robotically Implanted Brain-Computer Interface.” Ultimately, it hopes to develop a “fully-implantable, wireless brain-computer interface” that could open up groundbreaking treatments for people suffering various disabilities, including paralysis.

The company said it would use its R1 Robot to surgically implant the chip in a region of the brain that controls motor function, noting that it is intended to “record and transmit brain signals wirelessly to an app that decodes movement intention.”

The trial was granted approval by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) last May, overcoming allegations that earlier tests resulted in “animal-welfare violations.” According to more than 20 current and former Neuralink employees, as well as dozens of internal company documents obtained by Reuters, Musk had pushed Neuralink researchers to “accelerate development,” in some cases resulting in “botched experiments.”

Musk has voiced hopes the brain implant could also allow the blind to regain their sight, among other medical miracles. While the results of the first in-human trial have yet to be seen, the billionaire has demonstrated the brain chip on more than one occasion, including an April 2021 presentation in which a macaque monkey purportedly played a video game using its mind alone.



Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan sentenced to 10 years in prison

Pakistan's former leader Imran Khan has been sentenced to 10 years in prison for leaking state secrets, his political party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said in a statement Tuesday.

The hearing took place Tuesday in a closed court established under the Official Secrets Act in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, where Khan and former Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi are already incarcerated on corruption convictions.

The pair “have been sentenced 10 years each in a sham case with no access to media or public in Cypher Case,” PTI said, adding their legal team “will challenge the decision in a higher court” as they hope to get the sentences suspended.

The sentencing is the latest in a string of legal battles faced by Khan and comes ahead of parliamentary

elections scheduled for February 8 – a vote the ousted former leader is unable to contest due to his previous conviction.

Tuesday's sentencing in what is popularly known as the “cypher case” comes after Khan was accused of leaking an encrypted diplomatic cable written by a Pakistani diplomat in March 2022, based on a meeting with a US State Department official.

Khan had claimed the document proved that his ouster in a parliamentary no confidence vote in 2022 was a conspiracy to remove him from power.

The former prime minister repeatedly alleged that Pakistani officials conspired with the country's powerful military and the US to remove him from office. All parties deny Khan's accusations.

In the weeks after his ouster, Khan drew tens of

thousands to nationwide rallies that became a fixture in the country's volatile political scene, with his supporters thronging the streets in his defense.

Since then, the cricket icon turned politician has faced a litany of legal issues — and has dozens of pending

cases against him.

Khan has been behind bars since August after he was found guilty of corruption and sentenced to three years in prison.

Despite being unable to stand in the upcoming vote, he remains a major political force owing to his

widespread popularity. Khan maintains the charges against him are politically motivated, an allegation authorities deny.

TV stations are banned from running Khan's speeches, and many of his PTI party colleagues have been arrested.



Pep isn't going to do a Klopp!

The Catalan is set to lose his greatest rival when the Liverpool boss steps down, but unlike the German, he is still full of energy

Pep Guardiola could have shied away from discussing Jurgen Klopp's departure from Liverpool immediately after Manchester City's FA Cup win over Tottenham. Ange Postecoglou was not interested and said it was not the time. But when the City boss was asked how he felt about the news that had shaken the football world earlier that day, he broke into a smile.

"I will sleep better," was his first reaction. "The days before playing against Liverpool were almost a nightmare. Of course he will be missed. I was shocked, like everyone, to the news. I felt a part of Man City would be lost. We cannot define our period



here together without him and Liverpool - it is impossible."

The admiration Guardiola has for Klopp was plain to see and

touching. Behind City's fierce rivalry with Liverpool there has been a deep level of mutual respect for how far the two teams have pushed each other. City may have edged Liverpool to two titles, but the Merseysiders have had the ride of their lives and boast more wins in the fixture. They also lifted a first Premier League title in 30 years and knocked their new-found foes out of the FA Cup semi-finals and Champions League quarter-finals.

The Premier League will not be the same without Klopp and nor will Guardiola, who has admitted that the German has spurred him on to be an even better coach. But don't expect the Catalan to be

following his old adversary out the door anytime soon.

While Guardiola had every sympathy for the draining impact the game has come to have on Klopp, he is not feeling the same way about his own position at City, where everything is in place for him and his team to continue dominating English and world football.

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The Barça coach explained his reasoning to them before Sunday's training session, where president Joan Laporta also spoke to the squad.

Barça's players will hope the team bonding lunch can bring the group together as they continue to fight on two fronts this season, starting with Osasuna's visit to the Olympic Stadium in the league on Wednesday.

Despite being off the pace in LaLiga, they are not mathematically out of the title race with 17 games to go, while they need to finish in the top four to secure a place in next season's Champions League and the top two to feature in the Spanish Supercopa.

In Europe, they have a two-legged tie upcoming against Napoli in the round of 16 of the Champions League.

"These are difficult days for everyone," midfielder Pedri posted on Instagram. "We have to leave the excuses to one side, be critical of ourselves and kick on for the coach, the team and, above all, for the club and the supporters."

Teammate Gavi, out for the season with an ACL tear, added: "Backing you until the very end, boss."

Laporta has called for "unity" between now and the summer, saying that he hopes Xavi's announcement can help the team turn

around a situation which has deteriorated in recent months.

Barça have conceded two or more goals in eight of their last 12 games in all competitions, including four or more on four occasions -- and in each of their last two matches.

The defeat to Villarreal was the first time they have leaked five goals at home in a league match since 1963, when they were beaten 5-1 by Madrid.

They have already conceded 46 goals in 32 games this season, which is the same amount as they conceded across 53 matches in the previous campaign,

when they won LaLiga and the Supercopa.

Meanwhile, Arsenal coach Mikel Arteta has ruled himself out of the running to replace Xavi after reports in the Spanish media claiming he had told the London club he was considering leaving.

"It's totally untrue and I'm really upset about [the rumour]," Arteta said in a news conference on Monday. "I'm immersed in a beautiful journey with this club and there is still a lot to do."

However, Barça Atléti

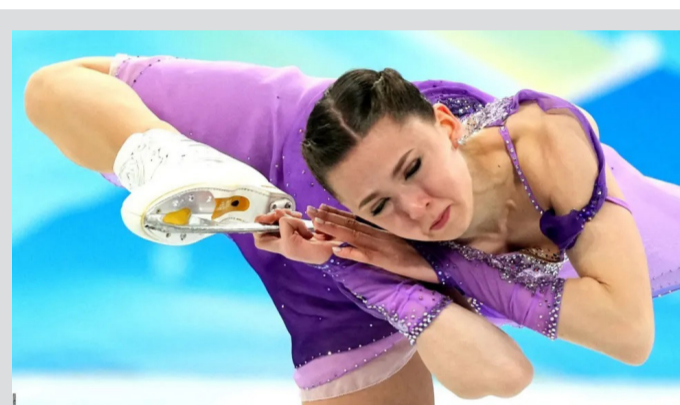
coach Rafael Márquez has said he would like to be considered for the role.

"If an opportunity like that comes up, you cannot say no," the former Mexico international said.

Arteta and Márquez are just two of the many names to have been linked with the vacancy since Xavi's revelation, with sources telling ESPN a replacement is unlikely to be picked immediately as Barça carry out a thorough recruitment process. **ESPN**



Barcelona Player Robert Lewandowski and Coach Xavi



Kamila Valieva: Olympic medals to be awarded two years after event

(From page 8)

"The IOC welcomes the fact that the Cas ruling provides clarity in this case, and the athletes from the team figure skating competition at the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 can finally get their medals, for which they have been waiting so long," an IOC spokesperson said on Tuesday.

"The IOC is now in a position to award the medals. We have great sympathy with the athletes who have had to wait for two years to get the final results of their competition."

The IOC said it will contact the relevant nations' Olympic Committees "in order to organise a dignified Olympic medal ceremony".

Of Valieva's case, the IOC added: "[It is] further proof of the need to address the part played by the athletes' entourage in doping cases. This is even more important if the athletes are minors, who are even more reliant on their entourage."

News of Valieva's failed test only emerged after she had helped Russia to team gold.

A Russian Anti-Doping Agency (Rusada) investigation later found the teenager bore "no fault or

negligence" for the failed test. Her team has always maintained "contaminated cutlery" led to her accidentally ingesting some of her grandfather's heart medication - trimetazidine, which is a banned substance for athletes.

The World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) and the ISU appealed against that finding and Cas upheld their appeal.

"We now anticipate the day when we can wholeheartedly celebrate these athletes, along with their peers from around the world," Sarah Hirshland, chief executive officer of the United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee, said following Monday's verdict.

The Kremlin has said it does not accept the Cas ruling, nor the decision to relegate Russia to bronze, and will defend the rights of Russian athletes.

"We are convinced that for us they will always remain Olympic champions, no matter what decisions are made in this regard, even unfair ones," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

The Russian Olympic Committee said it would appeal against the ISU decision.



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WE LACKED TOURNAMENT EXPERIENCE - KAMANGA

By Mubukwanu Kaingu

FOOTBALL Association of Zambia (FAZ) president Andrew Kamanga has given a preliminary indication of a confidence vote in Chipolopolo coach Avram Grant despite the teams' early exit from the 2023

leaders Morocco.

Kamanga said in his weekly column that a lack of big tournament experience was Chipolopolo biggest shortcoming at the 2023 AFCON.

"We will not delve into the technical review of the tournament just yet as the technical bench will duly present a report that will be reviewed," Kamanga said.

"Overall, there are a lot of positives to build on from the tournament that will see us return better at the next edition.

"We have every reason to believe that the crop of players we have picked up lessons from the AFCON that we will use in the future.

"The 2025 AFCON draw will be held next month, and we will have a clearer idea of the path we will take to returning to the next edition."

The first round of qualifiers for Morocco 2025 will be played this March.

Grant, who was appointed Zambia coach in December 2022, steered Chipolopolo back to the AFCON after missing three editions held over the past 8 years.

His Zambia record currently stands at five wins, four draws and three defeats from his 11 games in charge.

AFCON.

Chipolopolo made a group stage exit at the ongoing AFCON Ivory Coast is hosting from January 13 to February 11 after finishing third in Group F on 2 points after wrapping up their Group F campaign last Wednesday with a 1-0 loss to

Kamila Valieva: Olympic medals to be awarded two years after event

By Michael Short
BBC Sport

A"dignified medal ceremony" will take place for athletes who missed out when Russian figure skaters took team gold at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

Medals were not awarded after Russia's Kamila Valieva failed a doping test, but the United States will now receive gold, Japan silver and Russia bronze.

Valieva, 17 - and aged 15 at the time - received a four-year ban on Monday.

"We have great sympathy

with the athletes who have had to wait," the International Olympic Committee said.

A Court of Arbitration for Sport (Cas) ruling also expunged Valieva's results from 25 December 2021 - the date of her failed test and also the start of her backdated ban.

The sport's governing body the International Skating Union (ISU) on Tuesday relegated the Russian team to the bronze medal position after removing Valieva's scores.

The United States finished in the silver medal

position and will now be awarded gold, with Japan elevated to silver.

It had been anticipated that Canada would receive bronze following their fourth-place finish two years ago.

However they finished one point behind the Russian team once Valieva's points were removed.

On Monday the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) issued a statement congratulating "the affected Team Canada athletes for their incredible performances two years ago, and their enduring strength of character during this long process".

(To page 7)



FAZ President Andrew Kamanga

