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From the Editor's Desk



Our esteemed readers

I am delighted to introduce the third publication of Blantyre City Update which expresses the vibrancy of our beloved city through the creativity of articles and events embodied within.

But first things first. The editorial team would like to express sincere apologies to valued readers and indeed the residents for an unplanned break in publication of this magazine. This was due to other unforeseen logistical challenges which emerged along the way.

The editorial team would like to reaffirm its commitment and assure our valued readers that from now on this magazine will be published quarterly while maintaining the expected output both in quality and content.

Considering the high standard set by the previous publications, coming up with a publication of this nature is often a mammoth task and can only be a product of group effort. On behalf of the Council and the entire editorial team, I would like to thank all those who contributed to the introduction of this magazine in the first place.

We can never forget to offer our most sincere thanks to our ever-gracious corporate residents and readers for supporting the magazine and for all the positive and constructive feedback.

It is your feedback that informs our policy direction and brings about necessary re-alignments and changes just to make sure that we remain responsive to your needs in various aspects of service delivery. No wonder, the Council received a number of awards in 2016. In September, during

the commemoration of 'Right to Know Day', Blantyre City Council was a recipient of '2016 MISA Malawi Most Open Institution Award' for its outstanding performance when it comes to timely and earnest release of institutional information into the public domain. This is no mean achievement considering that prior to 2016 the Council was a two time awardee of the 'Most Secretive Public Institution' for which it received a symbolic Padlock to take home.

This notable shift has seen the Council become a main feature on the ladder of institutional excellence when it comes to service delivery. To date Blantyre City Council continues to receive the 'Service Excellence Award' in recognition of excellence in the category of Local Authorities Sector. In 2017, the Council was a recipient of this award for the third consecutive year.

We have all the reasons to pat ourselves on the back for excelling in our service delivery to city residents and other stakeholders. This will also encourage us to do more and make the life of our residents better.

In this edition of the Blantyre City Update, the Council would like to show in depth, the life of our residents and celebrate the unity that has been fostered between the Council and its residents.

Specifically, this edition will detail the municipal services that the Council delivers through its Directorate of Town Planning and Estates Services. This is one of the core departments in the Council as it deals with planning of our city when it comes to infrastructure.

In the time that has elapsed between this publication and the last, there has been tremendous change and achievements

acquired by all of us. The heart of this publication is to inform our esteemed residents of these achievements and our plans for a fulfilling and productive future.

Our pledge is to keep striving and innovating to develop the commercial capital of Malawi into the City capable of utilizing all the potential it has. We, therefore, implore you our residents to join us along the yellow brick road and play your part in not only sharing information with us, but taking care of our City property.

Let me take this opportunity to remind our residents and the general public to always utilize various platforms of disseminating information that the Council has created. We have a Facebook page (Blantyre City Council), Twitter handle (@btccitycouncil), website (www.bccmw.com) and of course, this magazine.

These communication channels offer us an opportunity to hear the contributions of our residents and fulfill our obligation as servants of the public. Our main purpose remains, to serve our residents and move the city into the future.

As a Council, we believe in taking the city back to the people. Our hope is that this magazine helps us achieve this as we strive to be an institution that communicates and brings change to its people.

I invite our readers to take the journey with us as we explore our city through the pages of this magazine.

Enjoy!

Anthony Kasunda
Public Relations Manager



Mayor's Word

Strength in Unity!

We are thrilled to bring you our informative publication, Blantyre City Update. It is a great honor to share our triumphs of the years that we have been in office and our aspirations for the years ahead with our residents.

You are very much aware that I stepped into the Mayoral Office after two and half successful years of Councillor Noel Chalamanda's leadership which guided the Council and the City as a whole to the direction which we have not abandoned. We are talking about Blantyre City being on a progressive path.

We implore residents to continue supporting the Council with zeal and love for your city. The good thing is that Councillor Chalamanda remains a member of the Council and is always available as such we continue to benefit from his wisdom. We wish the former Mayor all the best.

The years passed have showered us with many accomplishments and lessons from which we have learnt a great deal. Our greatest trophy has been the support and cooperation we get from the residents of Blantyre City.

We have seen major progress and developments in our beloved City. Our hope is that we grow together as a City and create a future full of optimism and conquests, a future where every endeavor will be successful and ineffectiveness will be a thing of the past. Forging ahead requires vision, innovation and unity. These are important elements in any thriving society.

As a Council, we campaign for unity and innovation in our attempt to make our City a better place. Working cohesively with our residents is our greatest priority. The accomplishments of the past years are evidence of the solid relationship that exists between the Council and its residents.

Together, we have worked to transform and better our City, through various projects such as the 'Keep Blantyre City Clean and Green Initiative' which aims at transforming the face of our beloved City while maintaining a clean and safe environment for habitation. It has been a rather rocky but fruitful endeavor. In this initiative, the Council has partnered with the private sector as a way of involving the general public in nurturing our city. "In a space of three years, we all have seen great improvement in the appearance of our city. The ambience has changed. We continue to

advocate for a cleaner and better city."

However, the Council alone is not responsible for keeping Blantyre clean and green, rather it is the dual responsibility of the residents and the Council to ensure a cleaner, greener and safer City. As earlier stated, there is strength in unity!

One of the Council's objectives is to promote the livelihood of the people in the City and to contribute to the shaping of the future of young people. The Council is of the opinion that the future lies in the hands of our young people who constitute a large percentage of our population.

As a way of promoting a lifestyle of sport among young people across the City, the Council has since 2016 re-introduced the Mayor's Trophy which had been brought to a stop in the year 2004.

The trophy, which targets primary school pupils under the age of 14, was re-introduced to rejuvenate passion of sport in young ones and to keep pupils out of unscrupulous behaviors. As was evident from the feedback we received from the residents and those who participated, the inaugural trophy in 2016 was a success.

As we reflect on the year that has passed, I would like to bring to light the success of the Council in the process of finalizing its Service Charter which was halted in 2012 due to the absence of ward councillors. The Charter was launched in July 2017. This is a blueprint as far as development and delivery of municipal services is concerned.

We also look forward to your cooperation especially that of developers in the implementation of the Urban Renewal Project under which the Red Star Campaign falls. I want to assure you that this initiative cannot be abandoned. No matter how frustrating some elements would want to be, the Council is determined to take the City forward. Blantyre City is a Millennium City and cannot afford to look the way it is. We should all aspire for a modern City with modern structures befitting a 21st Century metropolis.

My hope is that the successes and lessons learnt from the past four years will propel us into a triumphant future as we strive together to create the Blantyre City we hope for. As a Council, we pledge our commitment to delivery of efficient and effective municipal services.

Councillor Wild Ndipo
MAYOR

Sustaining the environment:

Waste management



Deputy Mayor Joseph Makwinja (white top) plants a tree

By Joy Shana JENDA

One of the many problems that leads to impropriety in waste handling is perhaps lack of an efficient waste disposal system and this has somewhat been affected by an unavailability of funds.

However, there is a number of ways through which waste can be managed without exhausting financial resources. For example, the general population can be educated on the importance of reducing, reusing and recycling.

The three Rs, as popularly known, have had such a tremendous amount of success in many countries around the world. Needless to say, many governments incorporate these values in the primary and secondary school curriculum.

In many of these countries, individuals will grow up appreciating their respective environments and have a sense of ownership towards where they live, work or spend their leisure time. It is embedded in them from a young age.

The Blantyre City Council has incorporated several initiatives in ensuring that residents are aware of the benefits of keeping their various surroundings clean.

Such initiatives include the "Keep Blantyre Clean and Green Initiative" and the "Clean premises" campaign. Improvement can be seen in many areas however, there is much that needs to be done.

It takes a while to change people's mindset. However, it is something that can be accomplished over time. What has been done in the past is mostly emphasis of proper disposal and a reduction of usage of environmentally hazardous material.

A different approach is now on recycling. Recycling is not frequently advocated in our communities; given there are some homes and businesses that implement this. However it is barely emphasized and acted upon. Many households are quick in disposing off waste than reusing or recycling objects.

Now, in recent years a considerable amount of companies have come forward to advocate for and lead in recycling which is a step in the right direction. However, it will take more than just a few companies to cry foul before true change materializes. It will take the entire nation.

One big blow on the environment is improper waste management. As the population continues to grow, there is need for a long term plan on waste management that will sustain generations to come.

A contributing factor is the rise in quality of life and resources consumption patterns which have had a unintended and negative impact on the urban environment generation of waste far beyond the handling capacities of urban government and agencies. It could be agreed that improper waste management is far worse in urban areas than in rural areas.

As much as the City Council and various entities across the nation keep on the fight to sustain the environment, residents need to rise up in awareness, taking responsibility of their immediate environment. A sense of ownership that remind them that Malawi is theirs to take care of, their responsibility to keep it clean and waste free.

The 3Rs simply advocate reducing, reusing and recycling. Action has been made on the first two but recycling remains a notion that only a few Malawians have grasped. In other countries, it is not uncommon to find waste recycling plants or objects in homes that have been recycled and are serving a different purpose than that which they were originally manufactured for.

Recycling and reusing have almost become an innate part of the cultural system of the people. It all started with advocacy, a transformation of the system but most importantly a change in the mindset of the people.

Whether we want to increase recycling or reduce littering, public participation is required for better waste management. There

is a need for inclusive change advocacy. There must be a total shift in the people's mindset and behaviour towards littering.

If we as a people desire to win the fight in sustaining the environment with regards to waste management, we need to be the first in ensuring we dispose our waste appropriately, we reduce the use of environmentally degrading materials, we re-use objects that are better off utilized than disposed and most importantly we learn to recycle.

As individuals, we need to take up that patriotic mantle. Parents ought to teach their children the value of keeping the surroundings clean. Teachers need to hammer the benefits into their students, everywhere we are of influence we need to encourage others to take up that responsibility and lead in showing others the importance of valuing our environment.

With the rise of the use of social media and information outlets, there hasn't been a better time in history than now to sensitize the public on the importance of taking care of the environment. And there's a catch, social media can help spread the word about the cause in a much more cost-effective way than traditional means.

It will take time but it is definitely worth the effort. Gone are the days where the authorities were the ones expected to take full responsibility for our environment. Now, that's not suggesting that they do not have a role to play, no residents have the right to a clean environment and the authorities need to provide that. However, we all have a role to play in ensuring a cleaner City and nation.

We need to visualize the City we hope to see, the nation we hope to attain in years to come and change our habits for the better. Changing our habits and attitudes towards sanitation is extremely critical for this to be effective.

Let us join hands in keeping Blantyre Clean and Green!



COUNCIL RE INTRODUCES CLEAN PREMISES COMPETITION

After a considerable long period of absence, the Clean Premises Competition traditionally organized by the Blantyre City Council, resurfaced in 2017. Formerly, it was called Clean Homes Competition.

The competition was in effect an extension of the city's Health Week which was launched in July 2017. The final awards ceremony was held on December 21, 2017 and was graciously presided over by the country's First Lady Professor Gertrude Mutharika.

The competition was a great success and was well received by various stakeholders with total participation and feedback from all the twenty three wards of the city; this also takes into account the enthusiastic feedback received from the corporate citizens in the city. At the beginning of the competition, many categories were proposed as part of the awardee categories. These included companies, schools, hospitals, shops, bars, hotels, lodges and residential properties.

However, this being the first edition after so many years, the steering committee in consultation with the judges resolved to trim the categories for ease of management and to tally with available resources.

Categories

i. COMPANIES:

- a. Food industries
- b. Non-food industries

ii. SCHOOLS:

- a. Government secondary schools
- b. Government primary schools
- c. Private secondary schools
- d. Private primary schools

iii. HOUSES:

- a. Low density housing
- b. High density housing
- c. Traditional housing

It should be clarified here that for purposes of this competition and in order to avail parity between residents, all locations in all wards were equally allocated the three categories of 'low', 'high' and 'traditional' without exception.

Effectively, this meant that in each ward, premises that were fenced and located in planned sections of that particular area were deemed to be in 'low' category and so on and so forth.

iv. SHOPS

In terms of criteria, two main areas of interest were considered in all the categories highlighted above. These were:

i. Surrounding environment and structure:

- a. Flowers and lawn care
- b. Flower arrangement
- c. Availability of fruit trees
- d. Pruning
- e. Wall and floor care
- f. Painting.

ii. Sanitation and hygiene:

- a. Availability of adequate toilets
- b. Cleanliness of the toilets
- c. Availability of drop-hole cover for pit-latrines
- d. Availability of soap for hand-washing
- e. Proper solid waste management (bins, rubbish pits)
- f. Clean drainage
- g. Availability and cleanliness of bathrooms
- h. General cleanliness and aesthetic beauty of the surrounding.



Proud winner shares his story

Of the two hundred people who were recognized in the clean premises competition, one man particularly stands out from the pack. **Chikakuda Gilson Phiri** defied the odds by receiving an award for the cleanest household in the 'High Density Area' category.

Phiri shares his story with **Charity NG'OMAIKALIRA** on how he got first place in the high density area category of the Clean Premise Competition.

Please tell us about yourself?

I come from Chigoneka Village, T/A Njerwa in Salima District. I was born on 7th May 1966; I got married in 1987 and I am a father of four.

You have quite a lovely home with well-tendered surroundings, What is your secret?

My story begins from the time I was quite young. I always dreamt of having a beautiful home. It is said that life is what you make. I am a hardworking person, I earn money through piece works. Through this I was able to save up some money to build this house. Each morning, I make sure that my premises are always tidy, flowers are well trimmed and the toilet is well cleaned.

What has motivated you over all these years to keep your premises well looked after?

I feel that keeping a clean home is key to healthy living. My livelihood in this aspect is in tandem with a popular idiom that says cleanliness is next to godliness. It is about creating good habits. To make your home clean and tidy doesn't mean that every little thing has to be tidy. I always try to follow 80/20 rule meaning that I am happy with the 80 percent being done. I call myself a proud resident of my City of Blantyre.

What do you do to make it this beautiful?

Essentially, if we want to protect our natural resources we must fall in love with nature. In my case as a proud resident of Blantyre I make sure the environment surrounding my home is always stunning. I make compost manure which I use to feed my garden and I also make sure that water is available all the time.

To achieve my lofty goal, building of sanitary latrines was seen as a priority. I believe that it's never a complete home until you are fully organized. Each step of the way has been extremely exciting.

What is your goal in making your premise clean?

My goal is to make my home the cleanest in Malawi. Many people only focus on public premises mostly business places disregarding their homes when it is clearly said that charity begins at home.

How did you feel when you were told that you had won the prize and your home is among the best 10 cleanest homes in the city?

I wasn't very surprised with the news but being the first time to be recognized as owner of the cleanest home in the city, I felt very overwhelmed. I realized that in any competition credit often goes to a team of like-minded, spirited people who are determined to make it happen.

Did you start taking care of your premises because of the competition?

There is an old Chichewa adage that says: "Sapuputa Mfuti nkhondo itafika kale" which translates as "one does not polish a gun when the war has already started." Cleanliness is an intrinsic part of me, it is a nature of mine that has stuck with me since I was a child. Growing up, I was taught that a clean home is refreshing for visitors and is rarely a hub for diseases. The competition added the muscle in my work and I also see it as a motivation. It has really helped me that I have come this far. Blantyre City Council provided the standards of cleanliness for winning the competition and I already met those standards because competition or no competition my home is ever clean.

What would be your advice to people who would like to go down the same path of cleanliness as you have?

My word to my fellow residents is that; it is important to recognize that creating wealth and protecting the environment coexist in the quest to sustain healthy living. It is also critical to controlling pollution and maintaining a clean and healthy environment. It is extremely important and necessary for an individual to be committed to health issues.

Our surrounding educates. Science and technology are products of observing, studying and using the physical and chemical world around us. This in my case is evident by the number of students who come to my house oftentimes to have a chance to observe these things. Sometimes they come to spend quality time and to relax.



Chikakuda Gilson Phiri: 2017 clean premises winner

Modern buildings, an elegant Blantyre City



By Chipso CHIMWAZA

Any city is first defined by its topography which is mostly the arrangement of features such as buildings (personal, residential and commercial), roads, parks and other varying facilities. For this reason technocrats are at the heart making sure that a city has these necessary infrastructure in the right places so as to aid conducive habitation, mobility and human activity. Blantyre City too has a Town Planning and Estates Management Services department solely for this purpose.

Town Planning and Estates Management Services is one of the eight departments of Blantyre City Council.

The department is headed by Costly Chanza and is deputized by Matthews Mwadzangati. The Department's major objective is 'to provide a well-planned and coordinated urban built environment for the City. One of the key tasks, therefore, is to ensure systematic planning and design of infrastructure in the City.

Town Planning department among others is also responsible for the planning of the road network. It is the desire of the City Council to reduce traffic in the City in all its roads by constantly engaging all and sundry to achieve this dream. Currently the City is embarking on design of bypasses as one way of ensuring a hassle free trafficability. Of mention is the One Way Traffic System which will very soon be launched in Blantyre CBD.

The department is also mandated to guide development in the City. Building plans submitted by various developers are scrutinized and deliberated by a Technical Committee comprising of Technical officers from various utility companies as well as government institutions and later discussed at a Town Planning Committee meeting comprised of nominated Councillors, independent members as well as ex-official (Government departments) as well as the secretariat.

Development projects that have been approved are guided throughout the entire construction period up to the issuance of Occupation certificate.

However, illegal developments are identified through spot checks. Once identified, the owners are advised, and where necessary enforcement is carried out to deter other would be offenders.

Under the department of Town Planning is the newly created section of Geographical Information System (GIS) which ensures that land management systems are up to date.

The coming of GIS has greatly assisted the departments of Finance and Commerce to improve the revenue collection through the Revenue Enhancement Programme.

The GIS has become a very useful tool in the identification of idle land for creation of serviced plots for its residents.

Urbanization of the City of Blantyre has been on a steady rise and with it has come the sprouting and extension of squatter settlements. These are massive unofficial occupation of land that one does not have ownership of. The Department of Town land with Planning therefore undertakes the improvement of these slum/squatter settlements.

"The upgrading of slum settlement involves provision of road infrastructure, water, sanitation services, plot demarcation and relocation of displaced settlements," says Chanza.

The department through its Estate section also provides serviced plots in various parts of the City. These plots are located in High, Medium and Low Density Areas.

The department is currently carrying out the Red Star Campaign whose aim is to redevelop the urban "decay" areas of the City through rehabilitation and demolition of buildings that do not meet the minimum standards of the City and poses danger to the users and are an eye sore to the public.

About 380 buildings were assessed and of these 161 buildings were earmarked for demolition. Other remaining buildings will be maintained and others merely requiring a new coat of paint.

"Other business owners in Blantyre CBD and Limbe CBD have complied with the Council's request and some have started painting, maintaining and demolishing their buildings," says Deputy Director of Town Planning and estate services Matthews Mwadzangati.

The Campaign will also aim at improving the sewerage system, car parking and refuse bankers as a way of making sure the proposed projects are well supported. He further added that "if all property owners would comply with the Campaign we will have modern buildings and Blantyre will be an elegant City."

Let us all make Blantyre a City of choice by constructing modern buildings.



Director of Town Planning and Estates Services Costly Chanza

Council hails Story Workshop project



Pearson Banda: Monitoring and Evaluation Officer



Members of the club

By: Given CHICHITKE

Blantyre City Council (BCC) has hailed Story Workshop Educational Trust (SWET) for enlightening the citizens in the city on public expenditure tracking through its deepening democracy III project funded by Tilitonse Fund.

The Council's Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Pearson Banda said through the Tilitonse project, development committees are now able to demand transparency and accountability in the implementation of projects.

Banda was commenting on the achievements of the project which had two clubs in Blantyre City's townships of Chilomoni and Ndirande.

He said the trainings the two clubs received during the boot camp on the onset of the project helped them realise their roles in tracking funds allocated for different projects in the city.

"The Tilitonse project by Story Workshop has strengthened the relationship between the citizens in the city and the city council," said Banda.

"Development committees are now able to write us so that we clarify to them on how some funds such as LDF and CDF work and they have also been empowered to request for funds from other companies to construct bridges and other developments in their townships which before the project it was not happening," he said.

Chairperson for Mzinda Uwale Club in Chilomoni, Maxwell Chagoma, said though it has been challenging to track funds allocated to different projects in the township, the club has been given a new

impetus in tracking public expenditures. He said through the television and radio programmes which SWET produces, the club has been empowered to engage stakeholders to track the utilization of funds during implementation of projects.

"Soon after the boot camp, we engaged our chief, the councillor and the MP for the lessons we learnt at the boot camp. We told them we have learnt Public Expenditure Tracking, political science, city infrastructure and sanitation. In addition, we learnt proposal writing, so it has been an eye opener to us," said Chagoma.

Chilomoni Ward Councillor Phillip Kameta said although some duty bearers were not happy with the club's activities, the project has helped in holding leaders answerable to the people they serve.

He said the club is not only tracking the funds used in the implementation of projects but is also taking a leading role in helping the citizens to own the projects.

"The project has reminded us that we have to be answerable to the people who appointed us.

So budgeting together and the involvement of the clubs in different stages of the implementation of projects has strengthened our relationship and it has also built trust on our side", said Kameta.

SWET's project officer Chifundo Zulu said SWET employed community mobilization and mass media approaches where it engaged in the town hall meetings, community dialogues, debates, sensitization campaigns, trainings, public expenditure tracking surveys, 52 radio and television advocacy programmes in empowering the



One of the sensitisation meetings

urban citizens to make their duty bearers accountable.

"The project trained community level governance structures which include community development committees that serve as anchors of implementation of government projects," said Zulu.

The committees had remained untrained since their institutionalization in 2014 and lacked information and knowledge on governance systems, policies, and rules of engagement, he said.

"The debates, dialogues and sensitization meetings on the other hand were both initiated by Story Workshop and demanded by citizens to create spaces for transparency and accountability to ensure information parity, easy tracking of resources and accommodation of decisions at all levels," said Zulu.

Deepening Democracy III was being implemented in Chilomoni and Ndirande townships in Blantyre and Masasa and Zolozolo townships in Mzuzu with funding from Tilitonse Fund.

“Pay City rates and demand better services” says Mayor Wild Ndipo

On 9th January 2017, Blantyre City conducted Mayoral elections where **Cllr. Wild Ndipo** won as the Mayor of Blantyre City while **Cllr. Joseph Nyson Makwinja** was elected as the Deputy Mayor. **Chipo CHIMWAZA** talked to **His Worship Cllr. Wild Ndipo**.

1. First of all, in brief, who is Cllr. Wild Ndipo?

I am the first born in the family of four. I passed my Malawi School Certificate of Education at Lunzu Secondary School in 1991. I did Mechanic Engineering at Polytechnic Board of Governors in 1992 to 1994 and meanwhile I am studying Diploma in Information Technology. I worked for picture post international from 1992 to 1995. I was elected Councillor for Chigumula Ward in 2014 and I was also elected Deputy Mayor in the same year. On 9th January 2017 I was elected as Mayor of Blantyre City.

2. How do you involve fellow Councillors in the running of the City?

I have always made sure that my fellow councillors are taken on board in all Council activities and that they fully participate in those activities, be policy or developmental in nature. I also listen to their contributions which I believe come from Blantyre City residents.

3. What is your vision for Blantyre City?

I want to make a promise to the residents of Blantyre City that I will improve the outlook of our City beyond recognition, in terms of development. We launched the Service Charter in order to foster efficiency, accountability and effectiveness. At the moment, we are concluding the process of reviewing the bylaws.

It is also my intention that there is improvement in the Locally Generated Revenue by putting all properties into our system in order to ease service delivery. I want us to engage in projects aimed at converting waste into energy in form of electricity and biogas. My office is also making sure that the congestion we all experience is reduced by improving the road network.

There is also need to facilitate installation of street lights and flood lights, rehabilitation of our sewer lines and plant waste water treatment.



Mayor Wild Ndipo

4. If you were to list, what do you think are the most pressing issues facing Blantyre City at the moment?

Waste Management, sewer system, the condition of Mudi, Naperi and Limbe rivers, traffic management, road network, lack of recreation centers and street lighting.

5. You have been Mayor for slightly over a year and there is almost same period remaining; what do you hope to accomplish for the city at the end of your term?

I will make sure that the City is clean and green. Blantyre City should also have good road network and that there is no congestion on our roads.

6. Definitely, Blantyre City Council cannot achieve its aspirations without the involvement of residents: can you elaborate on how ordinary citizens can help you realise your dream of a city?

Blantyre City residents are always welcome to say out their issues that concern the City. They can come through our offices or through our internet pages like Facebook. I will engage the residents of Blantyre City through participatory budgets sessions. During these sessions, the residents are welcome to voice out their ideas concerning the development budget of the City. As the motto of Blantyre City Council says "Taking the City to the People", Blantyre residents should own the City. Let us love our City. We should not vandalize.

7. How do you balance personal, family life with your new responsibility of looking after the whole Blantyre?

Remember in 2014, I was elected Deputy Mayor of Blantyre City. I have balanced my personal, family and my responsibility as Deputy Mayor for two and half years. It has not been difficult for me this time around to balance.

Do you have any special message to Blantyre City residents?

My fellow Blantyre City residents; let us all own the City by keeping our surroundings clean and green. Pay City rates and demand better services from the Council.



STATEMENT BY THE MAYOR DURING MAYOR'S CORPORATE DINNER

Good evening my fellow residents!

I am delighted and feel profoundly honoured to host you to this dinner distinguished business captains and senior officers in our City. Let me say thank you to each one of you for gracing this dinner. If you did not honour our invitation, our effort could have been in vain. This, my fellow residents, is a symbol of oneness and togetherness which bears fruits of success. We do not take this for granted because it accords us a rare opportunity as a Council to interact with you, the people we serve.

Ladies and Gentlemen, tonight opens another chapter of our City, Blantyre, as we move on in an effort to realize our dream. We have an opportunity to determine our destiny together. It is not about what the Council has achieved or intends to achieve, it is about what we, together, have achieved or what we can achieve.

We all aspire to live in a City that offers the best. We all have a dream city. This platform accords us a chance to share those dreams. Rome was not built in a day. We are all familiar with this saying. Let us start from somewhere. A journey of a thousand miles starts with a step. Tonight, we are not taking the first step because this journey started in 2014 when you voted us into office. Together we are shaping the future of Blantyre City. This is in line with our motto "Taking the City Back to the People" and you are the people referred to.

Deputy Mayor and Fellow residents, unity has brought us this far. We have seen the fruits of working together. We have seen Blantyre City transforming. We need to push on. We cannot abandon the ship midway lest we all sink. We have the next generation to answer to. At this point, let me utilize this opportunity to graciously thank the former Mayor Councillor Noel



Chalamanda for leading the Council in strengthening its relationship with the corporate residents. Tonight, we would like to reaffirm our commitment to this

relationship. As a Council, we cherish the support from the corporate world and we would like to engage the private sector more and move the city in the desired direction. We have embarked on a progressive journey and my leadership has no intention to disturb anything which was started by my predecessor but rather to reinforce and do more together with you our partners. The aim of this dinner basically is to introduce ourselves to you and outline the plans the council has and highlight areas of cooperation with the private sector. There are many ways you can come in to work with us. Ladies and

gentlemen, we all can appreciate that efforts are being made to improve cleanliness, beauty and general outlook of the city. We are doing our best to provide municipal services to your satisfaction. But definitely, we cannot achieve the ultimate goal if the corporate world leaves everything to the Council. You have a very big role to play and we need a very strong collaboration. The Council needs your cooperation and support in various ways. Most of you have already demonstrated your commitment to the City by partnering the Council in a number of areas of service delivery such as waste management, natural resources management through tree planting, beautification through adoption of sites including roundabouts among others. Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me now to give you a picture of the direction the Council is taking in anticipation that you, the corporates, will partner with us.

1. REVIEW OF BY LAWS

Fellow residents, the Council's Bylaws were formulated and passed in 2002. Over the years, there have been challenges that the Bylaws have failed to address. Some challenges include

- a. the emergency of spirit sachets in the City,
- b. touting,
- c. unprecedented high levels of pollution from industrial waste,
- d. emergence of agricultural activities in the City such as pig farming and poultry.
- e. emergence of new businesses such as car washing, cellphone and computer repairing just to mention a few.
- f. increase in road traffic.
- g. increase in fire incidents.
- h. collapse of some buildings in the City

The Council has, therefore, embarked on an exercise to review its Bylaws. During the review exercise, the existing bylaws will be improved and new bylaws will be introduced to deal with emerging matters not hitherto regulated under the present bylaws. Ladies and Gentlemen, to ensure that the bylaws really address problems faced by the City residents and all stakeholders who do their businesses in Blantyre, the Council is encouraging residents in the City to contribute ideas towards the by-law review process by sending their views to the the secretariat.

Some of the new bylaws that the Council intends to adopt are

- I. Building Bylaws
- II. Urban Agriculture Bylaws
- III. Domestic and Industrial Effluent Discharge Bylaws (Alternatively Environment Management Bylaws)
- IV. City Rates and Other Revenue Collection Bylaws
- V. Non- Governmental Organisation Bylaws

2. GENERAL CLEANLINESS, SANITATION, WASTE MANAGEMENT

Distinguished business captains, the Keep Blantyre Clean and Green campaign has taken us together to this far and results are promising in the current economic scenario.

Let me take this opportunity to convey our special thanks to all individuals and corporate partners that came forward to support this initiative. It is my sincere trust that we will continue to hold hands for the betterment of our City.

Blantyre City is experiencing a high rate of urbanization, which is significantly contributed by rural to urban migration. Consequently, generation of wastes has also increased proportionally with the increased rate of urbanization. Rapid urbanization, if well managed can be a good development especially for businesses and industrial growth. To the contrary, urbanization in our setting has been synonymous with informal settlements and proliferation of informal businesses.

The informal settlements and businesses are presenting challenges for the City Council to provide social services including sanitation and waste management which are the basic necessities for residents. that while the corporate world realise possible benefits from the high urbanization, you will not turn a blind eye to such social needs of the poor majority and consider investing in their social wellbeing including sanitation and waste management.

In this view, we find it appropriate for the private sector to partner with the Council as we instill a sense of habit and responsibility to our residents for the proper garbage as well as human excreta disposal in designated places.

We have to provide street litter bins visible for the use by the public. It is estimated that a total of two hundred street litter bins are required for placement in both Blantyre and Limbe CBDs as well as in transit/exit routes. Furthermore, larger communal bins (skip bins) are in short supply to cater for the informal settlements to dispose their litter, and for this we have plans to provide communal waste transfer stations and skip bins in unplanned settlements.

Disposal of garbage doesn't end in the community, there is need to transport the garbage to the dumpsite. And you may wish to know that the Council is facing challenges in collection of garbage which is mainly due to inadequate number of refuse collection vehicles resulting in late or irregular collection. Hence, we are appealing to the corporate world to come forward by supporting the City Council with refuse collection trucks for our timely emptying of the full litter bins.

Ladies and gentlemen, all litter collected from the City has to be dumped at Mzedi dumpsite and this place has become a challenge to manage as it has become full and that the Council has limitations to acquire a new area of land to turn into a dumpsite due to land scarcity.

For this reason, the City Council is encouraging the concept of waste recycling to save the limited land resources for productive developments. We have good examples in island Cities such as Singapore that recycle the majority of their wastes.

Yes we can do it if the private sector can work in collaboration with the Council. We are aware of companies that have turned recycling industry as their line of production but we must nurture the growth of this culture in all our people by promoting separation of wastes at source for safe recycling. In this way we will divert waste from the dumpsite. A clean City cannot be achieved with the rest of the residents being spectators; we need to sensitize them through our leadership role in taking affirmative action to adopt these practices.

Distinguished business captains, we wish to invite you to consider sponsoring community clean up campaigns as some have done with tree planting. We will be more than ready to partner with you say on monthly schedules with different institutions.

On public conveniences, you might have heard about a project the Council is implementing with the aim of establishing Service Level Agreements with private sector on operation of public conveniences and other sanitation investments, this is a deliberate effort by the Council to allow the private sector at all levels to provide sanitation services in partnership with the Council. In this project, the private sector is being encouraged to invest in public conveniences and be able to collect user fees while adhering to quality services as provided by the Council; this may include Build Operate and Transfer. We invite the private sector to participate in this project by supporting small scale entrepreneurs.

Let me take this opportunity to sensitize this gathering that Blantyre City Council also provides services such as fumigation and pest control at a small fee; if institutions patronize these services, it will go a long way in sustaining the operations of the Council. Feel free to make inquiries whenever you may require such services.

3. POLLUTION IN THE CITY (MUDI AND OTHER RIVERS)

Fellow residents, Blantyre City is served by five Waste Water Treatment Plants (WWTP) namely Soche, Blantyre, Limbe, Chirimba and Maone. However, only two waste water treatment plants, Soche and Blantyre, are currently partially working. You may also wish to know that the sewer lines that collect wastewater to these treatment plants are associated with one or two rivers

associated with one or two rivers.

A very good example is the Mudi trunk sewer that runs along both Nasolo and Mudi Rivers. Unfortunately, sewage is flowing in Mudi River because people vandalized the pipes. Apart from vandalizing, the sewage system is very old. Some sections of the network were constructed in the early sixties. Most of the pipes are worn out causing sewage to leak out and allowing entry of soil into the system. With time the soil accumulates rendering the pipe dis-functional.

As a long term solution, the Council requires about **MK 7 Billion out of which MK2 Billion** is for the Mudi Trunk Sewer and Blantyre Wastewater Treatment Plant. You can appreciate that the figures are quite huge. We seek your intervention. If we can work together, we can deal with this challenge.

As a short term solutions of restoring the environmentally degraded Mudi River, the Council assessed both Nasolo and Mudi Rivers and identified critical sewage spillage point sources, solid waste dumping sites and general environmentally degraded sections that require financial assistance for river cleaning.

From the assessment, the council intends to rehabilitate the vandalized pipe bridge sewer lines, construct solid waste transfer stations and develop stream/water parks along the Rivers which will require **Four Hundred and Fifty-Nine Million, Two Hundred Thirty Eight Thousand, Six Hundred and Twenty Kwacha, Ninety-one Tambala (MK459,238,620.91)**, out of which **Forty Six Million Eight Hundred Seventy One Thousand Seventy Five Kwacha Zero Tambala (MK46,871,075.00)** is for rehabilitation of pipe bridge sewer lines crossing Mudi and Nasolo rivers and **Three Hundred Thirteen Million, Three Hundred Sixteen Thousand Kwacha, Seventy-Eight Kwacha, Sixty-five Tambala (MK 313,316,078.65)** is for the River Cleaning Activities.

Therefore the Council requests your assistance either financially or by adopting a mile along the sections of the river in question.

4. BEAUTIFICATION AND RECREATION CENTERS AND PARKS;

Ladies and Gentlemen, Blantyre City Council is determined to create beautiful and safe landscapes by upholding to best principles of leisure and hospitality management, creative cultural heritage and ardent environmental management in the city.

To achieve this, we are developing and managing the City's landscape environment, protecting the city's biodiversity, conserving and managing forest cover, soil water and air resources, promoting recreation, culture and youth development and developing and managing the City's Parks and significant open spaces.

Our focus is to develop and manage parks in all open spaces and restoration of dilapidated parks. Currently city of Blantyre boasts of many open spaces such as Njamba, Rangeley (Mudi), Stella Maris, Jubilee (C.I.) and streams such Mudi, Limbe and Naperi streams and Chimwankhunda and Chiwembe dams. All these assets can be converted into beautiful parks for amusement and recreation purposes.

We are in the process of identifying willing and capable corporate institutions to partner with us in managing public gardens, open spaces and parks. Some of you may have heard or are already on board. It is our appeal to you this evening to come forward and work with us.

We started a door to door campaign on all business and residential premises to remind our residents on the need to keep their premises clean and green. We plead with you to take this excise with all the seriousness it deserves so that we can improve the face of our city so that it can reclaim its position as one of the cleanest cities in Africa.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have plans to upgrade the Mandala nursery into a garden centre where we shall undertake a retail operation that sells plants and related products for the domestic garden as its primary business. This garden will be developed from the concept of the retail plant nursery but with a wider range of outdoor products.

5. TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY

Ladies and gentlemen

In 2013, the City Council made a request to the Government to extend the City boundaries to cover areas of Lunzu, Chileka and parts of Lirangwe. The proposal was approved in principle pending approval of the Land Bill. Now that the Land Bill has been approved, plans are underway to map the extent of the City boundary. Once complete, the City shall be in a position to acquire new land for new urban development. Informal settlements will be a history especially in the urban fringes. The City Council has lined up urban development projects some of which will be carried out under the Public Private Sector Partnership (PPP) arrangement.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have all been concerned about the parking space in our City; well here is the good news. Blantyre City will have new Car Parkade which shall be developed at an existing car park located at the junction of Livingstone Avenue and Chilembwe Road in downtown Blantyre, 0.3Ha in size.

The proposed parkade shall have four floors with the ground floor accommodating commercial activities. Once completed the building shall accommodate approximately 300 vehicles, greatly reducing parking congestion on the main streets within the CBD.

The project is estimated to cost MKK1.46 Billion (USD2 Million). This is not small money. That is why we are appealing to potential investors both local and foreign to come forward to discuss with us on how best this project can be implemented in partnership.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As a fast growing City, Blantyre needs proper transport infrastructure that can ease movement of people in and out of the City. This can only be achieved if the City Council fully controls operations of the bus terminals.

You can agree with me that we have a lot of bus operators that operating illegally at Wenela Bus Terminal.

Constructing a new bus terminal will ensure continuous use of the bus terminal by all bus operators, increase safety and security whilst reducing parking congestion in the City. The total land size is 32Ha. The terminal will be constructed at an existing land within Wenela area and it will also cost MKK1.46 Billion (USD2 Million).

Other lined projects by the Council are Mzedi Waste Management, Physical Addressing and Postcode, one way traffic system in Blantyre CBD and review of the Blantyre Urban Structure. This can be of success if we all work hand in hand to make Blantyre a City of choice.

6. IMPROVED ROAD NETWORK

Fellow residents, Blantyre City deserves high-quality public infrastructure with modern road transport network to create bedrock of the City's long term socio-economic development.

In order to ensure quality road infrastructure and functional traffic management system, Blantyre City needs to have its road infrastructure network rehabilitated. This is in line with the current Malawi Government's efforts to transform the country's urban centres with sound public infrastructure development for new all weather (macadamized) roads and by passes.

The Deputy Mayor, Ladies and gentlemen, you may wish to recall that in the just ended financial year 2015/2016, the Council constructed new six asphalt roads in Blantyre City.

In the current fiscal year 2016/2017, the following roads have been budgeted for asphalt surfacing rehabilitation as follows;

- a. Mbayani Market to TAMDAM (2.7 Km).
- b. Bangwe-Mvula Primary School to St Patricks Secondary School (3Km).
- c. Nanjiriri to Mapanga (2.5 Km)
- d. Safarao Road in Ndirande (1.3 Km)
- e. Namiyango Ring Road (2.2 Km)
- f. Chigumula to Nteje Parish (3Km)

Fellow residents, the importance of street lights cannot be overemphasized. We cannot successfully curb theft and vandalism in our City if it is in the dark.

Improved street lighting is widely, thought to be an effective means of preventing crime. Indeed, residents in crime-ridden neighborhoods often demand that the lighting be improved and the general expectation is that improved lighting does indeed reduce crime. The current financial year street lighting projects include:

- a) Masauko Chipembere Highway and Livingstone Avenue in Limbe
- b) Dalton Road (Kanjedza R/A to Dalton Traffic Lights Via Limbe Bus Depot).
- c) Ndirande Ring Road (Blantyre Girls to Ndirande Flats joining Makata Road).
- d) Makata Road (Chichiri R/A to HHI T- Junction via SOBO).
- e) Victoria Avenue (Mount Soche to MBTS-CI Church).
- f) Njamba Road (Njamba Secondary School to TVM along the park

Ladies and gentlemen, the Council does not only care about the motorist, but pedestrians are also in our minds. We will therefore need to improve our existing traffic light signals and introduce new ones at points where we experience congestions or interference with pedestrians.

All these projects cannot be done by the Council alone, we will need your hand somewhere somehow. When we come at your doors asking for assistance in a certain project, please do not shut us down, help us with the little things you have. Let us all join hands and create a Blantyre that we all desire.

7. REVENUE GENERATION (CITY RATES AND OTHERS).

Fellow residents, you may wish to know that the Council has to generate almost 95 percent of its revenue budget to finance its operations. Currently, these funds are generated from the following sources:

- Property rates
- License Fees
- Market Fees
- Parking fees
- Advertising fees
- Other fees and charges

Property rates make up almost 60 percent of the revenue for the Council. This is tax that is paid by all property owners in the city. Despite it being the council's main source of revenue,

from most residents to pay, this is mainly due to the resident's tendency to attach payment of rates to service. Further, there is general unwillingness to pay taxes. The Council is currently being owed over MK1 billion in property rates. Several strategies have been undertaken in an effort to recover this sum. The council has resorted to taking legal action on property owners who have become too difficult to pay through other means.

We know that we have property owners here tonight, both at corporate and individual level. The payment of property rates starts with you. If all of us could pay our property rates on time, it would have a great impact on the performance of the Council in delivering the essential services to the city residents.

Payment plans are negotiated if you are unable to pay the whole amount at once. Why attract unnecessary embarrassment to yourself by allowing sheriffs to impound your property when you can pay in an amicable way. License fee is the fee that is paid by business owners for operating their business in the City. Please take note that our license is not regulatory but rather attached to your operating of a business within the City boundaries. This is paid annually at the beginning of the Council's financial year in July.

Parking fees is the fee charged per hour for parking a vehicle in the city's parking spaces. Some vehicle owners default payment of parking fees which is not in line with the resident's responsibility towards running the City. Blantyre would be a city from another planet if we all join hands and carry out our responsibilities. This evening, is another opportunity for us to renew our commitment towards our own city. Pay the City rates to transform Blantyre.

Fellow residents, most of you are aware that we re-launched the Mayor's Trophy last year. This is a trophy which started in 1968 with the purpose of developing sports in the City. It involves primary school pupils, thereby unearthing raw talent among the youths at tender age.

I would like to make a very humble plea this evening. Make a contribution towards the Mayor's Trophy.

Ladies and Gentlemen, by either donating towards the successful implementation of the competition or indeed adopting the Mayor's Trophy, you are helping someone somewhere to unearth his or her talent and that one day he or she becomes a big star.

Anything that you are going to contribute towards this trophy will change a life of someone. If you adopt the Mayor's Trophy, it shall be called by your company's name. The budget for this year's edition of the Mayor's Trophy competition is already formulated and it is only K20 million.

Let us work hand in hand to help the pupils to do what they love doing and become what they want to become in life. In conclusion, I would like to tell you this, what we have outlined are our ambitious plans. Without your support, nothing tangible will materialize.

Let us join hands to make Blantyre City a better place to live for everyone.

I thank you for your attention.
End//:

STANDING SERVICE COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL



Mayor Wild Ndipo Town Planning Committee

Town Planning Committee

Its core function is to among other things consider matters concerning town planning, traffic planning and control, naming of physical addressing and approval of building plans.



Cllr Leonard Chibade Plot Allocation Committee

Plot Allocation Committee

Its core function is to among other things consider matters concerning land acquisition and allocation.



Cllr Raphael Mzimu Works Committee

Works Committee

Its core function is to among other things consider matters concerning road infrastructure, sewer system, street lighting, pollution and other major construction developments.



Cllr Stanley Kamphambale Banda Health and Environment Committee

Health and Environment Committee

Its core function is to among other things consider matters concerning waste management including the refuse collection and disposal, public health and social welfare services, meat testing, food outlets inspection, parks and grass cutting.



Cllr George Chipwete Education Committee

Education Committee

Its core function is to among other things consider matters concerning primary school education.



Cllr Songwe Kabaghe Finance Committee

Finance Committee

Its core function is to among other things consider matters concerning overall Finance Policy affecting the City, staff benefits and budgeting and budget implementation monitoring.



Cllr Joyce Malunga, Human Resources Committee

Human Resources Committee

Its core function is to among other things consider matters concerning Council employees' welfare, conduct of ceremonial and civic functions and appointments, dismissals and conditions of service of Council employees among others.

Prince

Barbershop-PLUS Cutting for an excellent look

By Chipu CHIMWAZA

Who said Blantyre is a desolate city where nothing good can be found? Can anything good ever flourish in Blantyre? Perhaps these have been the questions of many plus tourists that ever visited Blantyre City before.

Well, it seems there is an answer because this is now a city rebranded; a city developing every second, with great enthusiasm drawing western images in terms of beautiful infrastructure, roads, restaurants supermarkets and hair dressing salons. The life in Blantyre is extremely evolving. Mindsets are transforming and residents are realizing that the City is powered by themselves. The same is true for Prince Butani, a young and upcoming entrepreneur, who founded Prince Executive Barbers otherwise known as Prince Barbershop - PLUS.

The barbershop is reputed to be one of the most prestigious barbershops in town and is situated in Claim Building within the Blantyre Central Business District; where they offer quality men's grooming services. Prince Barbershop-PLUS is well known for its great ambience and outlook, an array of entertainment that keeps the customer engaged, and a team of highly motivated and trained staff that attends to you professionally. Over the years, they have managed to build the momentum of becoming one of Blantyre's most acclaimed barbershops through its power vision backed by great passion, skills and innovation. Prince Barbershop-PLUS successfully introduced shower services making it convenient for clients to wash before running errands after work or even refresh during work hours. The shop has also additional service called 'House

call services' where they offer haircut services in offices, home or hotel rooms at client's convenience. "We believe this barbershop is powered by the people," says Butani. "We are passionate about the people and we aim at promoting the vision of job creation and better services."

Having started with one employee in February 2013, Prince Barbershop-PLUS now has eight members of staff and the number is likely to grow to 15 by December 2018. The ambitious Butani fancies the idea of entrepreneurship with proper and well outlined vision to achieve great results and not to simply beat others.

Prince Barbershop-PLUS has plans of extending to Lilongwe later this

year. The 30 year-old Butani, born in a family of 5 children, was raised in Machinjiri and Ndirande townships and graduated from Malawi Institute of Journalism (MIJ) in 2008. Butani is motivated by his own courage and endurance. He encourages the youth, both in and out of school, to think big, stay positive and be self-reliant in order to transcend in life. He believes the youth need to come to the point where they can start providing solutions for the public and the nation at large. When asked why he pursued a career in hair cutting, Butani says there was gap that existed amongst most men in Blantyre especially high class. "Blantyre lacked a great meeting spot in line with hair-care treatment. The place men can meet up for a drink and share their ideas whilst getting their hair cut. Prince Barbershop-PLUS decided to solve the problem," he says.



PRINCE Barbershop-PLUS

THE MAN WHO TELLS STORIES THROUGH THE LENS

By Tanangachi MWALWIMBA

The story of Peter Mazunda, veteran videographer and former Board Chairperson of Special Olympics Malawi, will never cease to inspire multitudes within and outside Malawi that have had a chance to hear it.

Though he failed to attain a place in the University of Malawi after passing his Malawi School Certificate of Education-MSCE, Mazunda has lived a life that is an inspiration especially in videography and art industries in the country.

Born on 20 June 1975, Mazunda hails from Embembeni Village T/A Mtwalo in Mzimba District. He was raised in a deeply Christian family because his father Reverend Overtoun Mazunda is a reputable man of collar in Livingstonia Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian (CCAP) and once served as Secretary General of the Synod.

Despite being born in a family of an influential clergyman, Mazunda at a young age had made a decision to pursue a career different from his father's path, but never did he realize that he will rise to become a videographer of special mention.

"I wanted to take a route different from my father and I never thought of being a camera person, but with time it became what I love doing and surely it exposed me to the world," says Mazunda in his soft and slow paced voice.

Having failed to get selected into any of the public universities, after attaining his MSCE at the famous Phwezi Secondary School in 1993, he enrolled for a Diploma in Computer Science with Association of Computer Professionals of the United Kingdom.

But never was Mazunda destined to live his life working on computers, because in 1996 he was part of the lucky breed that was employed by government-owned Television Malawi which at the time was in its formative stages.

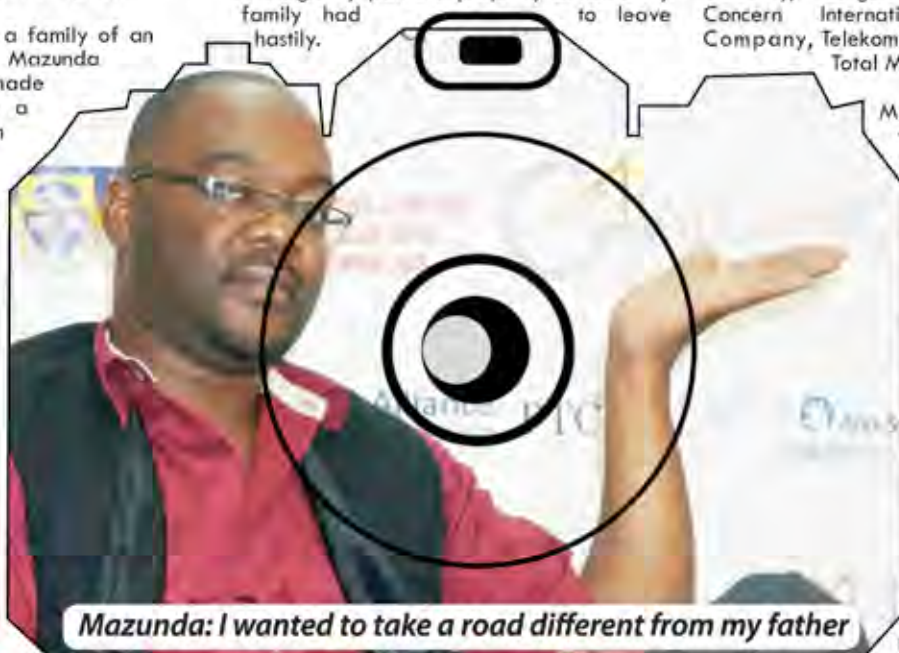
"The news of Malawi having a TV station was quite a phenomenal one, there was excitement all over the nation and being part of the team that was chosen to pioneer television in Malawi made it more interesting," Mazunda says. The birth of television took him to Deutsche Welle Television Training Center Berlin in

Germany where he was trained in Television Engineering in 1997, Television Production at Namibian Broadcasting Corporation in Windhoek/Namibia and Television Journalism with Thompson Foundation just to mention a few.

Working for television was a wonderful experience for young Mazunda, because life had offered him an opportunity to travel throughout the country and meet big personalities he only knew through radio while growing up.

In June 2000, at a time Television Malawi-TVM now Malawi Broadcasting Corporation TV was gaining ground, Mazunda decided to pull a shocker by resigning from the station to manage his family's property, as his father had been appointed by government to work as a diplomat in France.

"I was in a dilemma whether to continue with my job or go back home in Mzimba to manage my parents' property because my family had to leave hastily."



Mazunda: I wanted to take a road different from my father

"The best decision was to leave TVM and people wondered at my decision because working for TV was the dream of many young people at that time," says Mazunda, a father of a 14-year old daughter named Nonhlanhla.

Once a soldier always one, having left the camera for two months, Mazunda itched for the camera once more so he picked up his lens to capture unfolding events in Malawi in partnership with fellow television journalists, Maneno Blinn Ntawali and Jolly Ntuba.

It was a joint venture that led to the formation of Kings Multi-Media Production-KMP, a company that became synonymous with excellent and creative music videos that made television music programmes such as Music Splash and African Star a darling to watch by the viewers.

Some of the notable music videos he offered his technical expertise on include Lucius Banda's Kennedy Wakwatira, Billy Kaunda's Zachabechabe, San B's Pelemende, Sally Nyunda's Ras Amadya Nzimbe, Black Missionaries' Mwana wa Munthu and Joseph Tembo's Samalira.

The partnership of owning KMP only lasted for 7 years. In 2007 things fell apart between the owners of the company, and Mazunda decided to call it quit and pursue his passion by forming Xtra Solutions Communications Group.

"I formed Xtra Solutions and it has continued to offer development and business communication solutions for the past 11 years while also employing fellow Malawians," says Mazunda husband to Catherine, a marketing professional working at IT Centre.

He further reveals that his company has influential clientele such as, Population Services International, Malawi Revenue Authority, Colgate Palmolive, People's Concern International, Illovo Sugar Company, Telekom Networks Malawi and Total Malawi.

Mazunda also mentions that the climax of his career was last year (2017), when he was appointed to be Assistant Director to Hollywood Actor and Director Chiwetel Ejiofor during the production of a movie that aims to showcase the story of Kasungu-born scientist William Kamkwamba.

Mazunda also boasts of having trained and helped shape careers of a lot of renowned videographers in the country such as Vic Pota, Ben Sam, Ben Khanyizira and Edwin Mushani. Most of the

people he has mentored now either own their own companies or work with renowned television stations.

While his story might seem like an easy road, Mazunda who currently employs over eight media qualified and trained personnel is quick to say that life of an entrepreneur is hard and videography being an art which is still blossoming in the country, rarely pays well.

He however mentions that determination, passion, courage and endurance are key for young people who want to walk in his path. Indeed, a child that washes his hands clean dines with elders. Despite failing to make it to university Peter Mazunda has been able to walk in the high corridors of life, all because of his extraordinary expertise of telling the story through the lens.

A BOLD STEP TOWARDS 'BUY MALAWI'

By: Blessings MAERE

President Arthur Peter Mutharika on March 18, 2016 launched the Buy Malawi Strategy which encourages people to prioritize local products over imported ones and be proud of the country's heritage by supporting local industries.

Malawi Government is promoting the culture of patronising local things including dressing under the banner "Buy Malawi."

In his address, the President said: "We have dedicated this day to make a sincere promise to our dearest country by launching Buy Malawi Strategy. This is an oath of patriotism, pledged to our country. And we have no other country to be proud of except Malawi."

"The Buy Malawi initiative is at my heart and the heart of my government. We pledge to buy Malawian products because we are proud that Malawi can produce fine products and services worth our pride and money. Malawi is set to take her place in the world. And we will succeed," he added.

The Buy Malawi Strategy comes in the wake of the increase in imports even for items which are locally manufactured and in excellent quality comparable to most of what is procured from overseas. In the past, increased product import was heavily fueled by the feel-good mentality that accompanied procuring products from overseas. Not anymore. With a change in the times, various local industries have stepped up their game and started towards high standard production.

One industry that has taken a stride in production of amazing quality products that fits the local market and competes fairly is the textile and design sector.

In Blantyre, like many other districts and cities, there is an influx of tailors that mainly do offer alteration and patch-up services to their customers.

However, one would often be tempted to ask why many people today still prefer to procure products overseas while risking payment of heavy taxes. For fashion lovers, trends change too fast in modern days and expecting to buy things off foreign shelves leaves a lot to be desired.

Blessings Maere, Managing Partner and Head of Design and Tailoring at Wow Designs, says the clothes bought on the foreign market are usually one size fits all type.

"When the clothes come here, they are often not a perfect fit and the wearer feels nothing special other than wearing something executively or fashionably nice and above anything else something

international which is simply a perception issue," says Maere.

Maere adds "The beauty of an outfit designed and made locally is that measurements are taken exact and the whole concept of the outfit becomes fully customised to this customer.

It feels much more special wearing something designed and tailored



Daniel Ngwira

specifically for you and that is exactly why at Wow Designs we believe we shine because we put magic into every piece once the job is trusted unto us"

Wow Designs Africa, a local fashion and design enterprise was established in 2014 through the partnership of Maere and Daniel Ngwira who is both managing partner and brand ambassador.

In most countries today, governments also promote buying items from their local markets.

Maere noted that one of the key challenges facing the textile industry and other local businesses is procurement measures in some companies which are prohibitive and limiting for small and medium enterprises.

He, however, acknowledged business support from Malawians that have recently appreciated some of their work through social media forums.

"Since we started in 2014, we have done men's suits, African print and embroidery outfits for both men and women, dresses, shorts, school uniforms and this year, we were privileged to also design and tailor for some church association uniforms and we hope to do more," says Maere.

Through Wow Designs and similar other entrepreneurs, Malawi is today able to offer quality products and services to the indigenous market and help reduce forex lost due to imports and at the same time empower the local economy.

This direction creates employment for a lot of Malawian youth and empowers families to generate revenue to live sustainable lives.



Maere: Promoting Buy Malawi



PICTORIAL



Blantyre and Quelimane signed a cooperation agreement



Mayor Thomas Hermann of Hannover City and Deputy Mayor Joseph Makwinja visits Fire Brigade



Mayor Ndipo poses with Hannover Council members, Staff and members of his delegation during his official visit to Hannover City



Janika Millan and Frauke Glaeser of Hannover City Council taking Mayor Ndipo on the tour of the Hannover City



Visiting Hannover City delegation poses with Blantyre City Council members and staff



Mayor Wild Ndipo taken on a tour of Hannover City New Town Hall

FOCUS



Part of the patrons during the Mayor's Corporate dinner at Ryalls Hotel



Mayor Thomas Hermann attends a church service at St Paul's Cathedral of Anglican Church



Quelimane Mayor being briefed on the public toilets project



Mayor Wild Ndipo and Lord Mayor Stephen Schostok renewed twinning agreement at a ceremony in Hannover City in June 2018 during the 50 years anniversary celebrations



BCC management poses with Indian High Commissioner during his official visit



Mayor Wild Ndipo poses with visitors from Norfolk City in Nebraska, United States of America during their visit to Blantyre City

TURNING WASTE INTO WEALTH



Sakwiya and Kawalika : Doing what they know best

By Tanangachi MWALWIMBA

At a time when the world's economy is facing a lot of challenges in provision of sustainable approaches to economic growth, two girls from the Polytechnic are proving that one can dig gold by turning waste into wealth. Lizzie Sakwiya and Cecilia Kawalika, Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and Technology students (at the time of the interview), are the brains behind a small medium enterprise, 3R's Glamorous Creations.

3R's Glamorous Creations makes bangles from waste plastic bottles, plastic papers and cloth. 3R's Glamorous Creations was established in November 2015 under an umbrella philosophy of protecting the environment through three most effective ways: Reduce, Re-use and Recycle.

The 3R's Glamorous Creations' bangles are a hit at the Polytechnic campus, a Constituent college of the University of Malawi, and in Chilomoni Township where the girls reside.

The 22-year-old girls say the idea to come up with an environmental friendly business venture was born out of a desire to contribute towards keeping surroundings clean. Says Sakwiya; "We are very concerned with how dirty and polluted our streets and surroundings are and we felt the need to do something about it."

On her part, Kawalika says as environmental science students, classroom knowledge helped them come up with a business idea of producing bangles from waste.

"We saw it fit to start an initiative that will keep the streets and surroundings clean through recycling of waste. Now we are turning waste into wealth, no matter how small the money might be," says she.

Chikondi Phambala, one of 3R's Glamorous Creations customers, says the bangles are of good quality and commended the two girls for coming up with the idea which is conserving the environment at the same time helping them financially.

"They are classy bangles and it's good that they are made from waste materials. In a way, this will help our City of Blantyre to

be clean," says Phambala.

Sakwiya and Kawalika confess that it was not easy to start this business saying it was a daunting task to mix academic demands with the business endeavours. Now they say they are coping, and that proper time management and strict adherence to schedules is helping them alternate between school and business.

Kawalika, however, points at lack of adequate labour and finances as some of the notable setbacks.

She says: "We lack enough hands on the job since we are only two and devote much of our time to studies, as a result we do not make as much bangles as we would like to."

Sakwiya and Kawalika continue to dream big. They plan to expand the business venture by introducing new products including necklaces from the same waste materials.

The two are encouraging the youth to take risks in order to be successful.

"The youth must be courageous and exploit ideas to help the community in one way or the other," says Kawalika.

Sakwiya adds that with the unemployment problem in the country, the youth must venture into entrepreneurship and not always looking forward to white collar jobs upon graduation.

"The business brings us some money which helps to supplement the upkeep that our guardians provide to us as we are self-sponsored students," says Sakwiya.



Sakwiya and Kawalika displaying their products



ANOTHER STEP IN I.T

By: Bryan M'BUKA

With the world moving to a more technology-focused and convenience-driven lifestyle, investment in Information Technology that integrates with your day to day businesses processes is imperative.

The rapidly changing world of technology has seen the birth of M-technologies Ltd, a provider of IT solutions which has been operating for 8 years on the market. During this period the company has successfully participated in major IT projects nationwide.

The company was co-founded in 2010 by a young innovative entrepreneur Mayamiko Mtonda who is the residing Managing Director. "In its early years, M-technologies focused on Software Development but over the years with the demands of the market and foreseen opportunities we decided to venture into a number of services and product offerings", says Mayamiko.

Today, M-technologies provides a variety of IT solutions with Power Backup Solutions and Software Development as its core businesses with a list of impressive clients [including FDH Bank, NedBank Malawi, Ministry of Finance, Auction Holdings Limited, Norwegian Church Aid, Blantyre City Council, Unilever Malawi, High Court of Malawi].

Our young team of dedicated highly skilled professional developers & technicians build and implement off-the-shelf solutions with the focus on quality,

and integrity and brings today innovative solutions to the demanding industry.

"We believe that technology should meet the changing needs of businesses and that is what drives us to design tailor-made solutions for our clients", says Mayamiko.

Here are the services and products we offer to our clients:

SERVICES

1. Power Backup Solutions

Power is one of the key infrastructures for growth of Industry and economy. With the frequent power cuts the nation is facing due to inadequate power generation from the utility power company, it is imperative that businesses have to invest in reliable power backup solutions to keep up with their processes and for growth. At M-technologies Ltd we specialize in designing, installing and maintaining power backup solutions for corporates.

a. Solar Power

Solar power is a quiet, reliable and cost-effective alternative. As long as there is daylight – your solar panels will charge your battery, providing you power during the day and night.

Sizing solar is a balance between your estimated power consumption and the right number of solar panels and batteries. With our experienced technical expertise we design solutions based on customer requirements. Some of our solutions include:

- Off-grid ATM Solar Solution

- Hybrid ATM Solar Solution
- Data Center Solar Solution
- Residential Solar Backup Solution

b. UPS / Inverter Power

We cover the process for identifying the need for a UPS / Inverter system, selecting, installing, and maintaining the system. Aside from supply and after-sales service, we cover the design and selection of UPS/Inverter, system rating and sizing selection, and acceptance testing.

Maintaining your UPS/Inverter is crucial to it working efficiently when it is needed the most. The reason you purchase a power protection equipment is to ensure there is no downtime or loss of data.

If your UPS/Inverter or other power protection equipment is not maintained, it can lead to problems. Also by not maintaining your power protection equipment, it can not only stop it being as effective, but also shorten its lifespan.

2. Software Development

M-technologies develops unique, tailor-made software solutions for all types of clients or businesses. With our highly skilled expertise, we aim at developing cutting-edge software solutions to meet specific requirements of our clients or businesses.

We design, develop and maintain applications that are effective, user-friendly, scalable and easy to maintain. Our focus when it comes to software development is to deliver applications



M-technologies team working



Mayamiko Mtonda, Managing Director, M-Technologies

that are custom built for a business need or a service requirement. All our web applications are responsive to support cell phones and tablets natively. Our testing team evaluates usability on physical mobile devices to ensure our systems can be effectively used in any environment. Below are some of the software applications we have developed and those that are being used by clients:

- SmartSMS
- Bulk SMS Communication Platform
- SmartSchools – Online Student Management System
- Pharmacy Point Of Sale (POS) System – with Multi- Store functionality
- Hospital Management System (to be introduced in 2018)
- Gas Cylinder Tracking System – with POS
- FTP Remote File Transfer Software
- Raffle Draw Application
- Job Card System

3. Website Design & Development

We craft beautiful, engaging websites and deliver successful search engine optimization (SEO) campaigns and also specialize in responsive website design, custom web development for desktop and mobile.

We understand your website is central to your brand identity, reputation and how customers perceive you. And therefore we take the time to understand your business and create a strategy to fulfil your commercial objective.

It's this partnership model that not only results in the growth of your business online, but is the key reason why so many of our clients have kept coming back to us over the past 6 years. From SMEs to the most recognizable corporations, we've played a crucial role in the growth of our clients' online presence.

4. Computer Networking

Failures to your networking and communications infrastructure can soon leave parts of your organization unable to work effectively. At M-technologies we design, install, and support your organization's network infrastructure.

In almost every industry today communication is an integral part of our work and networks play a major role in providing this communication. Consider the healthcare industry, telecommunications industry etc. M-technologies provides a diverse array of small and medium-sized businesses with all their structured cabling and wiring services. From project inspection through completion, M-technologies is a single source for total system and network design, engineering, installation, and support.

Our technicians are trained, certified, and experienced in:

- Design & Installation of network systems
- Structured cabling (Cat 5,e, 6)
- Wireless: WLAN, point-to-point

PRODUCTS

1. Hardware Sales & Supplies

We are authorized resellers for the world's top PC brands HP and DELL. Our product range includes Desktop PCs, Laptops, Printers, Servers, Scanners etc. We also supply a wide range of office products and accessories including Microsoft Office, Antiviruses, networking cables & equipment, printer accessories, hard drives etc.

At M-technologies we do not believe in box-dropping and thus apart from providing warranty on our products from manufactures, we take an extra step to providing after-sales service for our clients on contractual basis.

2. SmartSMS – Bulk SMS Communication Platform

With our bulk SMS platform, our goal is to give you the right tools to allow you to deliver that highly relevant communication to your clients, employees, etc. via SMS.

Our user-friendly web interface makes it easy for you to operate. The application can be accessed anywhere in using an internet-enabled gadget. At the click of a button, you are able to send out messages to your database of contacts at a go.

For more information visit: www.smartsolutions265.com.

3. SmartSchools – Online Student Management System

One of the most exciting and important innovations M-technologies has ever come up with is SmartSchools. SmartSchools is an integrated student management platform which focuses on excellence and evolution in the field of education. It is an automated school lessons delivery that uses innovative technology to optimize the learning environment using quality management and quality improvement methodologies. To achieve this, it is flexible and innovates the new trends in student management.

The fact that SmartSchools has user accounts for Administrators, Teachers, Finance, and Students improves the accessibility of student information, as well as significantly increases space for communication between students, parents, teachers, and school administrators.

Benefits of SmartSchools:

- School administration becomes much easier and less time consuming
- Increases parental awareness of schools on-going processes as the parents are able to track all school activities surrounding their child including continuous assessments, disciplinary issues and class attendance.
- It is accessible from anywhere in the world on any internet-enabled gadget [Laptop, Smart Phone, Tablet]
- A rich source of educational content for the students
- Easy generation of Student report cards & transcripts...at the click of a button

For more information visit: www.smartschools.mw

With its range of innovative future proof solutions and exemplary service provisions, M-technologies is indeed on its way to becoming the market leader in offering state-of-the-art and the best IT solutions in Africa.

The world of IT is advancing every second and if you wish to advance with it, M-technologies is your IT solutions partner.

We are located in Blantyre and Lilongwe. For more information visit our website www.m-technologiesmw.com or email us on info@m-technologiesmw.com or call us on 0212 256 709 / 0991 245 401.



M-technologies team



By Benson Chirwa

If we are to have a sound financial wellbeing we must also always spend our income by considering three dimensions of our lives namely the past, present and future. In this article income is referred to as cash that gets to us after all other deductions. This is money that one receives either through salary, business profits, allowances, cash gifts among others.

THE FUTURE

The future of money is what the current income can do to help us have more in future. When we earn some money we must take care of the present but never neglect the future. This entails that we also put aside something that can support our goals e.g. to pay for school fees, start a business or other investments, build or buy houses, pay for unexpected expenses etc. It is recommended that at least 20% of our income be set aside to cater for such things as savings and investments. It is also recommended to have a standing order for savings or investment account so that funds can be automatically transferred to this account.

THE PAST

The past refers to debts. Every time we get some income, we should always pay debts as a top priority, debt if not well managed can cripple our financial goals due to excessive compound interest as well as debt stress. We should be paying debts with 30 percent to 40 percent of the monthly income. There are some special cases however where one is heavily indebted that the debt obligations per month are more than 36 percent of their income. In this scenario it is advisable to even devote a higher percentage towards paying off the debt.

THE PRESENT

The present refers to our daily expense like food, clothing, and rent (not more than 30 percent of income recommended for rental expenses). This should also include other areas like tithes, offerings, charity, donations among others.

This is usually what takes a big chunk of the money since we live in the present. There is no problem for us to spend on our daily needs, the only problem is that most people usually spend all their money on the present, in so doing, they neglect their past and future. In order to avoid neglecting the past and future it is recommended that we spend not more than 60 percent of our income.

In conclusion, as humans we naturally would want to spend every penny that we make, in this article we recommend people to consider the future by investing and saving, the past by paying off debts, and finally the present which taking care of today's expenses.

THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF MONEY

THREE LEVELS OF INVESTMENTS EVERYONE MUST HAVE

Benson CHIRWA- MBA, BBA, CII (Cert.) FP (Cert.)

The term investment is defined in Investopedia as "The act of committing money or capital to an endeavour with the expectation of obtaining an additional income or profit. We look at the three levels of investments namely, short term, medium and long-term investment.

Short-term Investment

A short-term investment is the one that brings a constant and immediate return which can either be daily, weekly or monthly but not more than a year. Usually proceeds from this help meet your basic needs. This type of investment could either be from a job or a small business. At this level it's mostly from hand

to mouth for most people. In case of small business owners it means no sale for that day, no food. Sadly most people in Malawi are at this level and remain on this level for so long. As such any slight change in life circumstances e.g. a new child in the home, loss of job, business loss, delays in salaries for example, brings in lots of financial stress. Eventually we must all graduate from this level and move to the next level.



Medium term level of investment

This is a stable kind of investment that brings returns within a year, two years or more but not more than five years. Examples of this can be investments such as in farming and other businesses, shares, unit trusts, treasury bills, fixed deposits etc. This level of investments normally has bigger amounts as compared to the 1st level. This level is normally attained through savings from the 1st level, a thing which is not easy taking into account the rising cost of living but it's possible with some financial discipline. The income earned in the 1st level should not only be used to meet our daily needs, but we must also strive to have a surplus so that we invest some in the medium term investments for growth.

Long term level of Investment

This one gives you a return after a considerable amount of time; usually pay back period is 5 years or more. Examples of these are such as property development like residential and office buildings, long term savings and investment policies, highly capital intensive businesses with payback period of more than 5 years.

The advantage of having all levels of investments cannot be overemphasised. It ensures that one is financially sound at all times. In the short term, in the medium term as well as in the long term.

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How To:

Mastering the art of public speaking



Public speaking is deemed one of the most frightening things. Many struggle with this and will often not enjoy standing in front of people. There's a lot of pressure that accompanies standing to address people. However, here are a few tips I have learnt over the years on how to address a large group of people without goofing or putting them to sleep.

1. Prepare well in advance

A good public speaker prepares for days prior to D-day. Read and re-read your notes/speech. Get used to what you will present to avoid getting stuck or confused while you do the presentation. Practise posture, vocal range and the little tid bits that contribute to public speaking.

2. Be on time

This gives you ample time for last minute preparations and calms your nerves. It also provides you with an opportunity to familiarize with the environment. Helps you get comfortable. One needs to be calm before an address, nervousness can easily be detected by the crowd and you can have a reverse effect on the people than what you intended.

3. Start strong

Have the intention of getting your audience's attention and keep it. Many people will be fully attentive for probably the first 10 minutes but will often lose attention if the speech gets long and boring.

Start your talk with something interesting, like a personal story in relation to the topic at hand or a joke.

Have the intent to get their attention from the get go and to keep it.

4. Know your audience

This will help you determine how to structure your talk or speech and most importantly how to deliver it. Knowing your audience will also help you relate well with them and keep them engaged.

5. Do not read. Speak

Nothing kills a good speech more than reading and making it obvious. Many people will switch off completely soon as they notice that you are reading each point off of your notes.

People would rather you speak rather than read to them. So prior to making your way to the podium for your presentation, familiarize yourself with your notes. Work from structured outline but don't read.

6. Do not fidget

Unnecessarily moving around or making it obvious that you are nervous can be quite distracting to the audience. You will find that the audience will focus more on your body language than what you are saying.

So as much as you will be using hand gestures or occasionally pacing on the podium, do it to a minimum but with confidence.

7. Use visual aids where necessary

The human mind is programmed in a way that ensures that visuals are remembered much more than words. To get the message home, try using visual aids to portray your message. You can do this in many ways; charts, videos or presentations. Whatever the case, you can never go wrong with visual aids where appropriate.

A good public speaker prepares for days prior to D-day. Read and re-read your notes/speech. Get used to what you will present to avoid getting stuck or confused while you do the presentation. Practise posture, vocal range and the little tid bits that contribute to public speaking.

Woman on a Mission



Sitabene Malange-Majamanda (Center)

By Joy Shana JENDA

This day and age, one does not have to look far for inspiration. Innovators and trend setters have sprout and bloomed with great amplitude and grace. Blantyre City alone boasts of great and inspiring people, one such person is Sitabene Malange-Majamanda.

Majamanda is a Corporate Banker, who having worked for about 15 years in the banking sector, currently heads Corporate Banking for New Finance Bank.

However, she describes herself as a passionate social worker aside her aggressive corporate acumen. She recalls being involved in children's rights and youth development programmes from as early as the age of 14.

Her drive for social impact work arose from the official visit to the USA in 2005 on a State Department Scholarship under the International Visitors Leadership Program. She describes it as an interesting program that enlightens one to how the Big Economy of America operates without a national budget for most of the things and how social impact entities "United Way", "Soup Kitchens", "Halfway Houses" arose into big giant entities just by pulling social capital and individuals to manage the gap in social issues within American communities.

Two years ago Majamanda established a Social Enterprise organization called The Mentorship and Philanthropic Centre (TMPC) with an aim of transitioning young people in post-high school and tertiary education and grooming them for employment and how to face life realities. She says the centre was set up to be a halfway house or a transitioning academy that horns skills of the youth to ensure that they are trained in finding oneself, character building, etiquette, life skills, projection, articulation and confidence.

Malawi once did boast of having high caliber people and it was not automatic, it was through a thorough home coaching, education system and work industry

grooming that occurred behind the curtains.

Majamanda observes that the private sector continues to have problems with the quality of human capital received from colleges and other tertiary education systems.

"There's a gap," says Majamanda. "You find that graduates are coming out of college but they can't write professional documents...they can't articulate themselves in meetings."

She adds: "We cannot blame it all on the system and process of education. What about the self-image, branding and ambitions of the young person of today."

"The confidence levels of articulating the work industry, business development and models and operating structure of a basic industry should look like is a tall order for the graduates today," she says.

The Centre was also established in order to train graduates into becoming social entrepreneurs that set up businesses with a social obligation while making economic gains. Currently TMPC uses The Polytechnic Unicef Hub for all these interventions. Social Capital has been such a critical essence to run TMPC endeavors.

The programme aims at assisting youths in discovering themselves, aligning them with their passion and capabilities while challenging them to think critically, cognitively and systemically plan for what they can achieve in life.

"In a nutshell, I refuse to see people go to waste just because we are going through a tough terrain [as a country] and there is poverty in some families. I just feel that my little help can be able to make a difference. Right now, it is no longer only the youth who come to our workshops but even grownups attend."

She continues by introducing three volunteering interns in her office that are working full time pushing the vision of organisation.

"They have been spending their money. We have agreed that every quarter when I make a little bit of money, I can give them

a quarterly start-up for their capital so that when I don't pay them their wages, the businesses they are running at home can be sustaining them while they come here to assist me. It's not been easy. I feel like God positioned me to help people," she says.

As for social capital, she notes with appreciation the contribution from the American Embassy which offered venue at Polytechnic American Corner before it was closed and Unicef for offering its hub at the same institution.

A single Cohort takes about four to five months and so far one cohort graduated while the second cohort of 40 people is in session, graduating shortly.

Majamanda says the centre has received international attention with the coming of an intern from Zimbabwe and a volunteer from Germany will soon join on a three months attachment to help in fundraising, conducting a database survey and securing private sector partnerships.

Her vision is to construct the Transit Boarding Academy for graduating students in transition to search for work. The facility would also assist to host students from needy and rural areas, in search of jobs in the city, hence called a Transit Home.

The Academy's boarding facility also called The School of Life, a project expected to cost about US\$700,000.

"So by the time they leave the academy after about five months, we should have a programme to place them for internship or link them to start-up capital if they don't want to work," she says.

Sitabene is a graduate from Stellenbosch University with a Development Finance qualification and also completed a 1 year Executive Development Program at the same University Business School.

Outside of work, Majamanda is a mother to an eight year old daughter, and so she spends much time with family.

She loves sports and is a qualified basketball coach from University of Semmelweis, Budapest, Hungary. She was sponsored by International Olympic Committee in year 2003 to pursue her studies on the same.



Sitabene Malange-Majamanda



Various Blantyre City Private Schools donated shoes. In the picture, St Andrews takes its turn

A SHOE THAT CHANGED LIFE...

By **Tanangachi MWALWIMBA**

Those who have walked barefooted in the scorching sun and freezing weather will understand what it means to have a pair of shoes.

Having the feet covered in these extreme weather conditions is not a luxury, but it is considered a thing to boast of in other countries.

But here in Malawi, those who own a pair or two are regarded as privileged especially among primary school pupils. It is common to see a lot of children walking to school barefooted and with torn clothes.

This has been the case with so many children in Blantyre City until when former Blantyre City Mayor Noel Chalamanda in conjunction with eventsPlus Limited introduced the Mayor's Shoesday Tuesday Initiative.

Through the initiative, pupils from privileged schools donated shoes, clothes, soap and exercise books which have been distributed to less privileged children in public primary schools in the City.

A lot of children have benefited from the initiative and one of them is Rafik Saidi, a standard 7 pupil at Namalimwe Primary School.

The 13 year old Rafik lives with his aunt in Makata, Ndirande. The last time Rafik wore a pair of shoes was in 2012 when he was in standard 3.

Rafik Saidi will now walk to school a very happy person because he now has a pair of shoes protecting his feet from the scorching heat and cold weather.

The standard 7 boy says the donation means a lot to him. He adds that it will help him do well in his studies.

"This will inspire me to work hard in my studies so that I can go to secondary school and even to the university," says Rafik.

Chimwenwe Saidi, Rafik's aunt thanked the Mayor for the kind gesture he has shown to the less privileged students.

"You cannot understand what this means to my child," says

Saidi. "He came home smiling yesterday after his class teacher told him that he is going to receive a pair of shoes."

The happy aunt adds that her child could at times complain of heat when coming back from school. She believes that the items Rafik received from school will indeed act as motivation in his studies.

Another beneficiary of this initiative, 14-year-old Margret Graciano is all smiles after being afforded a chance to put on a shoe.

The standard 8 pupil's father, Bornwell Graciano, thanked the Mayor and the school administration for considering his child as one of the under privileged kids.

"This will help Margret not only in sheltering her from the heat and freezing cold, but also inspire her to work hard in class," says Graciano.

Namalimwe Primary School Parents Teachers Association (PTA) chairperson Adamson Jalani thanked the Mayor for the kind gesture.

He says that such a gesture means a lot to the recipients and teaches them a spirit of sharing.

"I express my gratitude to the Mayor for considering the plight of the under privileged kids, this will change their lives," Jalani says.

Namalimwe Primary School Head Teacher Cecilia Nyasulu Limamwe, commends the Mayor for soliciting items for the under privileged.

"The Mayor showed that he cares for his subjects," says Limamwe. "This initiative is a huge proof that he has the affairs of Blantyre City residents at heart."

She adds that the materials that the children received will go a long way in inspiring them to work hard not only in their academics but in life.

"The recipients will be motivated and the gesture should not be underestimated. It has changed the lives of the young boys and girls which only bode well for the future of Malawi," she says.

Students from Nyasa Junior Academy, Hill View Primary School, St Andrews Primary School, St Andrews International School, Kalibu Academy, South End Schools, Blantyre Baptist Academy, Phoenix School, Mount view and Central High School are among those that donated shoes, exercise books, clothes and washing soap.

The Mayor's Shoesday Tuesday Initiative was introduced in October 2015 in conjunction with eventsPlus Limited, a private company that organizes event.



Audience at Miss BT



Blantyre City Mayor and Deputy Mayor in attendance



2016-17 Miss BT and princesses



Taonga Gondwe (Center)

UNLOCKING GIRLS POTENTIAL

**Taonga Gondwe,
2017-18 Miss Blantyre**

The 2017 Miss Blantyre beauty pageant held on the night of October 13 brought much excitement and grandeur to patrons at Sunbird Mount Soche Hotel in Blantyre.

At the end of the night, it was without reasonable doubt that the crowned queen, Taonga Gondwe, had faced stiff competition from her counterparts.

She went head on against many equally talented and beautiful young women from within the City of Blantyre.

Two of whom joined her in celebrating victory by scooping first and second princesses. These two were Grace Banda and Tryness Sikoti, the latter having being accorded the title, "Queen of Digital" for her online prowess above other contestants.

Another young lady that stood out on the night was Hilda Biliati, a first year student at the Malawi Polytechnic, who won the Miss Personality award.

Since its inception the pageant has now established itself as a solid calendar event unique to Blantyre City. The Miss Blantyre pageant story took a complete shift in 2015 when the organising committee struck a strategic partnership with Blantyre City Council.

Through this partnership, the winner of the beauty pageant, therefore, becomes the Keep Blantyre City Clean and Green Initiative ambassador.

The event's Guest of Honour, His Worship Wild Ndipo, Mayor of Blantyre City commended the youthful team behind the success of the beauty contest.

Ndipo advised the contestants to look after themselves and become role models to other youths in the city and the nation at large.

He was accompanied by the Deputy Mayor Joseph Makwinja and a few other councillors. Other notable patrons were businessman Mr Mtonga of Mtonga B Supermarket in Chilobwe who was accompanied by his wife, and the Chief Executive Officer for eKwacha Malawi Douglas Musumbu.

Exciting add-ons included the Hot Mums and Ex-Queens comical categories in which former beauty queens showed the audience how they used to rock and dazzle the runway in their time.

These included former Miss Malawi (1997) Samantha Crozier, Former Malawi News Model of the year Gladys Kumbatira and another ex-Malawi News Model of the year Tina Kendricks.

Chairperson for Miss Blantyre Daniel Ngwira described the event as another milestone for Blantyre City.

"Today we are a respectable brand and command great expectations from our Mayor, the CEO of Blantyre City Council, residents and the nation at large," said Ngwira.

He added: "We make impact beyond the boundaries of Blantyre and do actively lead and participate in the socioeconomic activities that enhance cultivation of best practices. We can do more but this is what we have to show for now. The future remains bright."

Ngwira revealed that the 2017 episode themed 'Unlocking girls' potential' was his last as chairperson for Miss Blantyre pageant as he was stepping down to

pave way for new leadership.

Although he did not give a hint on who would be taking up his mantle, Regina Nzima Kachingwe who has in the past two years been working closely with Ngwira in organizing the event looks set to be among the likely successors.

Nzima-Kachingwe, who is Miss Blantyre Trainings and Administration Manager, describes the Miss Blantyre as the jewel of Blantyre City.

She urged the private sector to borrow a leaf from Blantyre City Council by actively supporting the beauty pageant with an aim of harnessing the youth impact.

"So far, Miss Blantyre is going to take a new approach to this year's way of operations and recruitment of contestants in order to increase more participation and create value for partners and sponsors," said Nzima-Kachingwe.

The emerging winner, Taonga Gondwe, walked home with a brand new laptop, K100 000 from the Mayor of Blantyre City and few other material rewards.

First Princess Grace Banda received a Samsung Smartphone and K75, 000 from the Mayor while Second Princess Tryness Sikoti received a Samsung smartphone and K50, 000 from the Mayor.

The event was spiced up by performances from urban artists Nesnes, Piksy and Lulu. Companies that supported the pageant in the previous run include Sunbird Tourism Limited, eKwacha, Xtra Solutions, Nzika and UMP, Bizmalawi, Glam and Glory, Insight Media, Sparkling Photography and Samantha Milanzie's beauty consultancy Coco Glamour and Kwanza PR.

Beauty tips



with Ulemu-Hannah KANYONGOLO

THE PERFECT BROW

There's a lot of work that lies behind the perfect look as far as make-up is concerned. One of the most indispensable elements of achieving "the perfect look" is eyebrows. Many consider eyebrows as a stand out feature of the human face that can either make or break a look.

There are diverse ways across cultures in which eyebrows are drawn, preferences differ with each individual. Some prefer to fill in their brows before applying the rest of the make-up while others do it after applying foundation.

How one desires to do it is entirely subjective, as long as they attain a flawless finish.

If you've been looking to learn how to do your eyebrows, or already know but need a few tips on how to perfect them, look no further. Here is a step-by-step guide on how to achieve the perfect brow;

1. SHAPE

It is an absolute nightmare attempting to fill in eyebrows which have not been shaped, and the final product leaves a lot to be desired. Therefore, the first step is to get rid of stray hairs and shape your eyebrows by either threading them, tweezing them or using whatever method you prefer.

2. BRUSH

The smoother the better. To have a nice finish, you have to have a good start. Brush your eyebrows into place, by using an upward and sideways movement. To do this, use a spoolie brush, an old toothbrush, or whatever can do the job perfectly. Makeup is about innovation,

whatever tool can help you achieve your beauty goals is approved!

3. OUTLINE AND FILL

This is what some find to be the tricky part. Let's make it easy for you;

Following the shape of your eyebrows, outline the bottom of the brow, and the top using whatever shade of eyeliner is suitable to your skin tone. Picking the right shade of eyeliner is critical, lest we go out looking like we did our makeup in the dark.

Having outlined your eyebrows, fill them in, starting from the tail end of the eyebrow or the middle. The further to the front of the eyebrow, the less product is used, to ensure a more natural look.

4. HIGHLIGHT

While outlining and filling your eyebrows is important, just as important is the process of highlighting. Using an appropriate shade of concealer (preferably a few shades lighter than your foundation), apply concealer to the bottom and top of the eyebrow and blend it out.

This cleans up any messes you have made and perfects the shape of the eyebrow. Remember to BLEND! Do not leave any harsh spots of concealer. This is where doing your eyebrows before as opposed to after your foundation comes in handy, as the foundation further cleans up any further mess made by the concealer.

If some of your eyeliner has accidentally vanished as a result of your highlighting, feel free to lightly outline once again.

Voilà! There you have it. The perfect brow.



SOME OF THE MONUMENTS IN MALAWI



Blantyre Old Boma

Blantyre

Built by John Buchanan from 1887. And completed in 1892. The building was the original town hall. In 1891 Sir Harry Johnston turned it into an office hence it became the first British colonial administration centre in Malawi. It entails the history of establishment of colonial rule in Malawi.



Queen Victoria Memorial Hall

Blantyre

It was built in 1903 as an entertainment centre for the white population. It was named Queen Victoria Hall in memory of the Queen whose long reign had then just ended. Served as a Library, Cinema, and a Free Masons temple. In 1933 it became the Town Hall housing the first Blantyre Civic Offices until July 1986, when they were moved to a new building.



St Michael's & All Angels C.C.A.P Church

Blantyre

The monument was incepted by Henry Henderson in 1876. It was designed by Rev. David Clement Scot, an armature architect with no formal training in construction. Its brick composition has remained structurally sound for over a century. Historically, the monument marked the beginning of Blantyre city. It is the first site of secondary and Technical education. It is important in the history of spreading christianity in Southern Malawi and in the memory of early missionaries especially Dr. David Livingstone who apart from bringing christianity, also brought civilization and legitimate trade to this part of Africa.



Resident of first President

Blantyre

First house to be used by Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda (first President of Malawi) in 1958. It was used as his office in the fight against Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (present Malawi).The house was named after a State of Emergency which occurred on 3 March 1959 where Dr Banda was arrested. During the State of Emergency, Malawians stood up against their colonial masters to resist the federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland; and to oppose arrest of Dr. Banda and other native leaders. Over 60 people were shot dead but the events led to the country getting its Independence in 1966.



Mandala Manager's House and Compound

Blantyre

It was built in 1882 as residence of Mandala Limited's manager. The company was founded in 1878 by John and Fred Moir (brothers). John Moir was nick named Mandala (eye glasses) because he used to wear spectacles and Fredrick was nicknamed Kandodo(Walking Stick) because he used to walk with a walking stick. The Manager's house was used as a trading centre from which porters used to carry goods for distribution to various Mandala stores. It was also used as a resting place, settlement for settlers and the first bank. It is highly respected for its economical value.



Independence Arch

Blantyre

It was constructed to commemorate and symbolize the bitter struggle that Malawians underwent in fight against Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. It represents the sheer determination. It was opened on 3rd July 1964 by H. E. Dr. Hastings Kamuzu, the founder of the Nation.



Chencherere Rock Shelters with Paintings Dedza

These are found at six rock shelters on the Chentcherere hill North of Dedza district. Located within the core zone of Chongoni Rock Art World Heritage site, the shelters contain two types of paintings; red and white. Red paintings are older than the white since the red are beneath the red ones. The red paintings are believed to have been made by the Batwa from as early as the 16th century while the white one are believed to have been by the Bantu speaking people.



Mwala wa Mphini (tattooed geological structure) Mangochi (Cape maclear)

The name Mwala wa Mphini in literal translation means "Rock marked with traditional scars". Its geomorphic formation presents a picture of scars that amaze locals and visitors. It dates back to the iron age. Many myths are told about the rock's origin and healing powers. Many believe it to be a sacred rock; local medicine men make healing and protective concoctions from aggregates of the rock.



Ekwendeni C.C.A.P. Church Mzimba

It was built in 1889 by Dr. Walter Elmslie as an out station but later, a bigger church was built in 1894. It was located within Ngoni tribal heart land. The Ngonis were notorious for fighting and conquering other tribes, therefore, the coming in of the missionary's facilitated end of conflict between Ngonis and Tumbuka tribes of the area. Life standards also changed for the better as schools, health services and general welfare of the people improved. Civilization came in the area and wars among tribes minimized.



Livingstonia C.C.A.P. Church, Old Post Office, "Stone House", Industrial Block and House No.1 Rumphi

Built in 1894 by Dr Robert Laws. It became the headquarters of the mission. It was named in honour of Dr .David Livingstone, one of early explorers and anti slavery activists. The site was also an early centre of Secondary and Technical education that also relates to promotion of health. It provides visual historical evidence on the history of education and the spreading of Christianity. Schools belonging to this mission produced some of great minds of Africa i.e., Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda and Dr. Kenneth Kaunda the first presidents of Malawi and Zambia respectively.



Mwalawolemba Rock Paintings on Mikolongwe Hill) Thyolo

The site consists of red and white paintings which were mostly done by finger. The paintings have animal figures in white; and footprints, circles and sun-rays in red. The red paintings are much older than the white ones, dating to as early as the Iron age. The meanings of what was written vary from female initiation rites to a calendar pattern depicting change of seasons.



Old Livingstonia Missionary Site, Missionary Graves & Otter Point. Mangochi (Cape Maclear)

The monuments are within Lake Malawi UNESCO World Heritage site. The graves are of the five missionaries who pioneered Christianity in Malawi. They came to bring in good governance through the introduction of Christianity, Commerce and Civilization. The five died of malaria related complications in a space of three years; 1875- 1881. The five missionaries buried at this site are :
• Dr. William Black died of black water fever on 7th May, 1877,
• Shadrack Ngunana, an African missionary from South Africa who came to help with education died of malaria and was buried alongside Dr. Black,
• George Benzie, • John Mackay • John Gunn.
The Otter point's clear waters are a unique feature that provides panoramic view. It is also the breeding point for Mbuna rock fish (type of Cichlid) which is endemic to lake Malawi.



RISE AND RISE OF VILIPANGANGA POETRY MOVEMENT

BY Chipo CHIMWAZA

It's a Wednesday evening in Blantyre! Between 5PM and 6 PM, the streets are a beehive of activity; from the onslaught of the vulgar language from the minibus call boys to the cacophony of blaring car horns. The city silently and with dilated eyes watches the din either through the white beam of electric lights or under the devilish blackness of the kid night (and this happens often). As it sees this, the city often is so nauseated that it begins to vomit all that it ate as early as 4 AM in the morning leaving only the countable few tooth picks that pick on poetry on such a day like Wednesday.

At KwaHaraba.

It is at KwaHaraba Art Gallery & Café that perpetual and sworn poetry consumers and poets converge as if in a fierce battle against the City, a battle of rebellion against the forceful ejection from the central business district.

Poets would dish out their poems in both friendly and crazy weather.

They perform their poetry before both local and international audience. The city has now come and smile at this disobedience. Poets perform poetry up until 7pm or at times 8pm before they break up to dream new verses for the next Wednesday.

This disobedience has been orchestrated by ViliPanganga Poetry Movement (VPM). This is a spoken word poetry organisation behind the weekly (every Wednesday evening) Open Mic Spoken Word Poetry Sessions at KwaHaraba Art Gallery & Café in the City of Blantyre. Co-founded by Yankho Seunda and Paul Sezzie to promote the creation and performance of poetry that engages communities and provides a platform for voices to be heard beyond social, cultural, political, and economic barriers, the movement had its first poetry session on 6 August 2016. "Our vision is a world where all persons have the ability to express themselves creatively through poetry using the power of voice," says Seunda who chairs the movement.

And true to this word, VPM has never looked back since its inception. A lot more poets continue to perform at the space that is KwaHaraba Art Gallery & Café. "Apart from the emerging poets, we have had renowned poets from Malawi showcasing their poetry at KwaHaraba. At KwaHaraba Art Gallery a contingent of big names like Q Malewezi, Alfred Msadala, Norman Nyirenda, Robert Chiwamba, Madalitso Nyambo and Tawonga Taddja Nkhonjera have rubbed shoulders with emerging poets under the VPM banner and those from colleges and universities like the Polytechnic and Catholic University," says Paul Sezzie.

He adds: "The movement has also attracted international acts in the name of the legendary Obediah Michael Smith from The Bahamas who has actually spent close to six months performing at the space. We also had Nxolisa from South Africa and Toli from Germany performing at the forum. In short, the movement has had over 100

poets from Malawi, South Africa, Germany, England and Bahamas performing at its space. An average of eight poets perform every Wednesday in a one-hour evening open mic poetry session." "And because we do realise the interdependability of the arts we have crafted a very good working relationship with most acoustic and gospel musicians who have themselves found a ready audience for them. Some of these acts are Waliko Makhala, Malala, Sam Phiri, Pamuhanya, Jonah, and Princess Chitsulo. We feel the movement is moving towards the right direction," says Sezzie. Does the movement simply hold weekly poetry recitals?

Seunda says: "No. We also do organise periodic poetry events. Our first major poetry event was the Rise of Spoken Word Poetry Show on 11 December 2016. We followed it up with the Be My Valentine Poetry Show on 14 February 2017. On December 13, 2017, we had the Dawning the Age of Words Poetry Show.

All these events have taken place at KwaHaraba." "In addition to that, VPM has also partnered with local schools, for example, St. Andrews High School where we trained over 300 students from Years 7 to 11 in poetry creation and performance in 2017.

The movement also partnered with Advance Girls Education (AGE) Africa to motivate and train over 75 secondary school girls in poetry creation and performance. And it must be noted that most members of VPM have performed at Blantyre Arts, Mwezi Wawala, Land of Poets and Tumaini Festivals either under the banner of VPM or indeed in their personal capacity. A big plus for us is that we have tried to bring out female poets who needed the space so the world would know them. When put to him to explain the Vilipanganga and KwaHaraba connection, Seunda giggles and says, "As a poetry movement we are highly indebted to Thoko Liwimbi, proprietor of KwaHaraba Art Gallery & Café. People should understand that Vilipanganga Poetry Movement does not own the gallery. We use the space at the goodwill of the proprietor who runs her own business. This is the place where one finds probably the best coffee and snacks in town. The poetry audience loves the place because they can have a drink that goes down with the poetry.

Just like any other organisation VPM has its plans too.

"We would like to partner with more organisations with a like mind. We would like to hold more Poetry Creation and Performance Training for emerging poets because poetry has witnessed an unprecedented number of new excited 'poets' who have had no professional training in poetry. There is a danger that if the art allows the untrained to join and do as they please with what has become a popular arts genre, poetry may lose the attraction the earlier poets have worked very hard to actualize. Many organisations have now started hiring poets to perform in various events owing to the popularity of the art as mentioned earlier.

This hiring of poets is very good news to the poets as it ensures economic gains. However, there is need to give out quality work whenever one is hired. The trainings will thus fill the gap up," explains Seunda.



NDIRANDE ANGLICAN VOICES;

Archiving greatness

BY Chipo CHIMWAZA

The name Ndirande will often be related to violence. Many people consider the location a hub of ferocity and malicious acts. However, there is more in Ndirande that goes beyond perception and negative reputation.

Surprisingly, it is a place bursting with life and energy; a frenzy of excitement and creativity. It is a township that boasts of having birthed great companies, churches, athletes, politicians and musicians just to mention a few.

Ndirande is like a miniature city within Blantyre. Quite a substantial number of political parties are believed to have started in the township. The nationally acclaimed football club, Nyasa Big Bullets also find their roots in from same.

Well-known personalities such as the late John Nyanga, the late Saleta Phiri, famous footballer Robert Ng'ambi, Limbani Simenti and groups like Neligo Women also hail from Ndirande.

Granted, Ndirande has many versatile talents, however, there is only one Ndirande Anglican Voices.

Popularly known by their hit song Ndasayina, Ndirande Anglican Voices originated from Ndirande Township right at the heart of Blantyre City. The group

formerly known as Ndirande Anglican Choir in the late 70's started with a membership of 25 people.

Despite the group facing many challenges, through prayer and sacrifice by members, it has managed to produce six albums namely; Ndasayina, Tiyeni Tonse, Mulungu Amatikondera, Ndasamba Mmanja, Zimandikwanila

"We also won the best gospel group for consecutive years that followed after 2002 which were all organized by Malawi Broadcasting Corporation," says Kalimbe.

As one way of strengthening the group and expanding its reach, Ndirande Anglican Voices traveled to United Kingdom via France and Netherlands where they performed at St Paul's Cathedral in London, Manchester, Birmingham Cathedral and Liverpool.

Ndirande Anglican Voices has received a number of awards. In 2002 the group was voted 'Entertainer of Entertainers' during Entertainers of the Year awards which were organized by Malawi Broadcasting Cooperation (MBC).

Upon arrival from United Kingdom after a two-month tour in 2010, Ndasamba Mmanja was voted best gospel song while the group was also crowned gospel group of the year.

As an album, Ndasamba Mmanja, became the best seller with 300,000 copies of tapes and over 10, 000 CD's sold.

"These awards motivated us to come up with new and interesting songs and in 2013 our group released another masterpiece called Ndikumva Kukoma which touched so many souls," said Kalimbe.

During a gala dinner organized by Copyright Society of Malawi (COSOMA) marking 25 years of its existence, Ndirande Anglican Voices was crowned the best gospel choral for the past 16 years.

In their words, the secret behind the success has been the continual race for God, unity, love of God and spiritualization of their music.



Ndirande Anglican Voices

and Namondwe Tonthola.

Ndasayina was the group's debut song that put them in the limelight.

Currently the group is recording another gospel album to hit the market this year according to the group's leader, Dennis Kalimbe.

Kalimbe says the album will mainly focus on thanking God and all people who have supported the group financially, materially and spiritually.

There is a young lady in Blantyre City who has achieved tremendously in untraditional sporting discipline called Shot put. **Tamandani Tammi Banda** opened up to **Joy Shana JENDA**.

The mid-morning sun burnt with utmost vigour as we neared our destination. I had never been in this particular neighborhood before and my phone GPS was far from being my saving grace. All we had for directions were a couple of sentences on my phone summarising our short briskly drive. Luckily for both of us, the driver accompanying me knew a thing or two about following directions so we made it just in time. I grabbed the camera and quickly bid my companion farewell before I entered the premises. I was greeted by a pleasantly overzealous pack of Rottweilers. A shy voice called out from the front of the house, gently inviting me into the sun kissed hallway. At first glance, Tamandani Banda barely looks the part. Nothing about her gives her away that she is the first girl from Malawi to represent the nation in Shot put at international games.

In the family house, much of the walls were covered in sports artifacts. Different teams from across the borders. I took mental notes. One question was already answered. She had grown up in sporting family.

Tamandani Banda or Tammi as those close to her often call her was born on the on December 14, 2000 in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Much of her early life is marked by travel and sport.

Her father played professional rugby in South Africa during his university years and was a huge inspiration in her involvement in sport. Her mother did a bit of sport during her high school days and has remained an avid supporter of sport in the family. Her family lived briefly in Zimbabwe and Botswana before finally moving back to Malawi in 2006.

"Growing up, my parents never pushed us to do anything that they weren't sure we liked or not. So sport kind of just happened," says Tamandani.

Her sports journey started in primary school where she played in the netball team. In the sixth grade, she went on to serve as team captain until she went to High School. In High School, her father introduced her to hockey but she stopped after sustaining an injury. After her injury, she left hockey for netball, this time she had the opportunity to train with the Blantyre-based netball giants, Tigresses.

Her time with Tigresses challenged her as an athlete but she found it hard to balance the trainings and the club's schedule so she left. Shortly after, her father introduced her to Shot Put and suggested that she begins training.

"I started to train for it [Shot put] at the College of Medicine with my dad and a few other people including a fitness coach. It was a lot of work. I used to train on Friday afternoons after school, Saturday and Sunday too. My first competition was in February 2015 and it was the first regional competition," she

18
years old

Tamandani Tammi Banda



Tamandani displaying her trophies

Tamandani in the thick of things



Tamandani during one of her games

says.

She slightly smiled as she recalled scooping position one that day. She defined that day as being the day that Shot put became a priority game in her life.

"I used to be very competitive and emotional when I didn't get something right," she recalls. The most intriguing thing was perhaps how she managed to balance playing professional sport and her education. She did admit it took time and effort to ensure that neither her studies nor sport suffered.

Tamandani had a dream and a vision and that was to compete at the World Junior Olympics. She persevered hard grueling training because her heart was set on excelling and excel she did.

In February of 2016, she represented the country in Zimbabwe in what was her first international competition in Shot put and Discus.

The competition was an eye opener though it required a lot focus and determination. Although she did not know what to expect in Zimbabwe, she managed to defy the odds and won first position in the Under 17 category. This gave her and teammates a morale boost as they prepared for the African Union Sports Council competition in Luanda, Angola.

"When we went to Angola, it was more scary. The difference this time was that we weren't competing against one country like in Zimbabwe but against many countries across Africa. We really had to be not only physically prepared but also mentally strong," she says.

Competing in both Shot put and Discus, despite not coming out top, Tamandani managed to set a new personal throw record in Shot put.

"Normally, I would throw 8 meters but on that

day, I managed 12 meters. Of course, that was not enough to beat team South Africa which was throwing 16 or 17 meters. Nevertheless, I was really happy with myself because I came out fourth," she smilingly recalls.

On her return from Angola, Tamandani's resolve was to train for the Junior Olympics. However, the training program she intended to undergo was put on hold.

"It's quite saddening that people think the normal sport for girls is netball. No wonder Shot put and Discus are not popular sporting activities in Malawi," she says.

Tammi hopes to study Sports Science not only out of love for sports but to inspire young girls across the nation to embrace sport beyond the norm.

She believes that with enough exposure girls in Malawi can excel in sport not only in netball but untraditional sports such as Shot put and Discus.



Fact File:

Name:	Tamandani "Tammi" Banda
Sport:	Shot put and Discus
Age:	18
Hobbies:	Cooking, spending time with family, singing, reading, taking long walks and going to church.



MAYOR'S TROPHY: A RESPITE TO PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS



Former Mayor Noel Chalamanda interacts with players

By Charity NG'OMAIKALIRA

Heroes are made not only in class; others are made on the sports field. Sport has been an integral part of our culture bringing unity and entertainment for years. The Mayor's Trophy, a competition where primary school learners from within Blantyre City fight for honors in football and netball, has since its return in 2016 not only identified but also set the stage for lifetime excellence of such heroes. After long periods of classroom work, primary school boys and girls in Blantyre City have been spending substantial amount of time on the sports field either preparing or competing for honors in the Mayor's Trophy.

The trophy has come in handy to pupil's physical education needs owing to the fact that for years the country's school curriculum has had no one cohesive schedule in that area. Physical education was and continues

to be helpful among learners in building their bodies and developing their mental capacity.

Initially, the trophy started in 1968 and has since produced numerous football and netball stars who have gone all the way to play for big local and international professional clubs and respective national teams namely Flames and Queens. Of the many great talents unearthed through the Mayor's Trophy is Joseph Kamwendo who is one of the country's finest football ever. Shakira, as Kamwendo is popularly known within football circles, has played professional football in Denmark for Nordsjaelland FC, South Africa for Soweto giants Orlando Pirates, Mozambique for Mulcamano and DRC for TP Mazembe.

Locally he has played for Civil Sporting Club and Be Forward Wanderers. Kamwendo is all praises for the re-introduction of the Mayor's Trophy: "It's very important because this is



One of the teams pose for a photo

where you can get exposure."

He adds: "It was nice and a great feeling to take part in the Mayor's Trophy competition because this is where I realised that I can make it big in this game. Its reintroduction is going to be a great opportunity for some of the players (participating in the competition) because in football everything is possible.

"Chairman of the trophy's organizing committee, Councillor Mike Mambo, says the Mayor's Trophy is like a talent hub. "The trophy puts together talented boys and girls who will represent the country at different levels in the future," he says.

When it was first re-introduced in 2016 the trophy was solely bankrolled by the City Council. Thereafter, several corporate citizens such as SPARC Systems, FDH Bank and First Merchant Bank have invested substantial amounts of money to keep the initiative running.

The Mayor's Trophy will act as a ground for talent identification for teams in the FMB Under-20 league, regional football leagues and the TNM Premier League, formerly known as the Super League.

From the contingent that has participated in Mayor's Trophy since its reintroduction, it is a foregone conclusion that sooner or later the country is going to witness several football and netball stars carrying the national flag higher both home and abroad.



Hon. Kondwani Nankhumwa MP, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development: presenting a trophy to a winning school in netball category

Stars shine at FMB Under 20

By Chipso CHIMWAZA

On January 10, 2018, His Worship Wild Ndipo, Mayor of Blantyre City had special visitors. Special because they were not clad in suits but were in sports attire; carrying a glittering trophy with broad smiles on their faces. Griffin Saenda Stars were hosted by the Mayor at Town Hall where they presented him with the FMB Under-20 Football Trophy which they had won in the 2017 season.

Based in Blantyre City's Naperi Township, the team was established in 2000 by Griffin Saenda Junior as

a way of helping the youth to ascertain their talent and skills in football.

"Coming from a background of sports in my family, I know how important football is to the youth and that made me establish the team and named it Griffin Young Stars," says Saenda who recently was voted '2017 Best Coach' at the Malawi Sports Awards organized by Malawi National Council of Sports.

The team has no sponsor save for the money from Saenda's pocket. However, this does not bother him because he believes a team cannot only rely on sponsors to run its affairs. What every team needs most is passion and dedication.

"Young Stars has existed for 18 years without a sponsor but that does not let us down. Our determination and hard work has made us reach this far," he says.

Saenda's dream and vision is to see the young stars play in locally acclaimed football clubs such as Nyasa Big Bullets, Be Forward Wonderers, Silver strikers and even the national team.

"With the potential, sacrifices and hard work, I believe and hope that one day my dreams will come to pass," says Saenda with confidence.

The team, which started with 18 players and grew to 25 players in 2017, conducts its training sessions at Blantyre Youth Centre.

"Our biggest achievement came in 2010 when we won the FMB league for the first time and also the Presidential Cup. These achievements greatly motivated our team," says Saenda adding that the team won the Presidential Cup again in 2013 and 2014.

The victories changed the status of the team and two of its players—Peter Banda and Maxwell Dauda—were drafted into the Under-17 national team where Banda won the golden boot at the COSAFA Cup in 2016 in Mauritius.

The tournament was introduced by First Merchant Bank (FMB) in 2011 as one way of promoting football among the youth in Malawi.

Saenda says winning the 2017 FMB Under-20 is another milestone for the entire Blantyre City since Lilongwe teams dominated the competition for the past four years hence presenting the trophy to the Mayor.

"The visit has also motivated my players as they will put an extra gear to perform well and to continue putting Blantyre City on the map and be recognized as one of the cities that produce good players," he says.

Mayor Ndipo was excited with the success of Griffin Young Stars and pledged support to the team.

"When I hear such stories happening in the City, I feel honoured as I know that the youth are doing something positive for their well-being, for the City and Malawi as whole," says Ndipo.

Team

captain Ohm Kang'oma says during the 2017 tournament, the team won all the 34 games they played.

Kang'oma says every player put up their best performance to ensure success in the competition.

"Our secret is God first plus hard work. We are very determined because this is our passion and we always want to be the winners," he says.

He also says being a team

of young people

who still attend school,

education is highly prioritized and all

players go to school. Some are in secondary schools while others are pursuing tertiary education.



Griffin Saenda Young Stars presents the trophy to the Mayor



The conquering team

"Coming from a background of sports in my family, I know how important football is to the youth and that made me establish the team and named it Griffin Young Stars,"