

Zambia Breaking News: State's Cholera Fight Backfires - Oppressed Traders/Residents Run Riot, Block Roads, Chinese Truck Set Ablaze, Choppies Supermarket Looted, Military in Door-to-door Search!!!

By Mainda Simataa | ELA General Secretary on Kanyama Riots | Lusaka Zambia | 12 January 2018 |

Current Situation!

The government had it coming, but they wouldn't listen! Result today? One female police officer reportedly beaten to death by a rioting mob after being dragged out of a speeding getaway Police Land Cruiser; one Soldier seriously injured by stone-throwers, a South-African Boer-owned supermarket looted, a Chinese-donated garbage collection truck set in flames, an undisclosed number Kanyama compound residents (mostly women traders) bleeding and injured, roads blocked with burning tires, smoke and tear-gas everywhere, and a military response team crashing down door-to-door, beating innocents, in search of looted items! These are the scenes of chaos and confrontation characterizing what was, only a week ago, a bustling hive of trade (SOWETO MARKET). But today it is a scene of chaos and carnage, and all because a corrupt, uncaring, and overzealous Patriotic Front (PF) government went about handling a Cholera outbreak the wrong way - as if it were caused by traders whose only crime is to try and earn a living on the streets, since they have no other alternative in a country of 85% unemployment rate, and 90% poverty levels! The PF has literally failed in planning and implementation of anything!



The Masses Have a Breaking Point!

A joint team of Zambia Police and Zambia Army attempted to displace traders from their temporary trading grounds, and this, for the second time this week, met an organized

resistance!!! The people had been pushed too far, they made a stand, and a riot reminiscent of the 1991 riots that brought down the dictatorial regime of UNIP ensued.

Ever since the government embarked on their chaotic cholera clean-up; or a displace and destroy mission of street vendors and other traders to be precise; the PF has paid no heed to the social and economic ramifications that have befallen the poorest of the poor - ordinary men and women who make a living from the streets and open markets in Lusaka which the state has smashed with evil pride and satisfaction! Hunger has since besieged many homes, and the masses who have no voice, are starving in silence...until this morning when they reached a breaking point!



It Was Bound to Happen!

From the moment the Patriotic Front (PF) government declared a bizarre war on Cholera, and decided to launch a military-led clean-up campaign by forcibly displacing all street vendors and traders operating in designated markets in and around the Capital's (Lusaka) Central Business District - CBD; no contingency or social compensation plan was put in place to cushion the social and economic impact that was bound to afflict the traders, and destabilize the city's economy in general!

The poor men and women who depend on trading in and around city areas have been pushed too far; for over a week, they have had nothing to eat, no money in their pockets, and most important

of all, no alternative place to trade! For the past one week since the brutal enforcement of the statutory instrument to curb the spread of Cholera, government had been courting trouble by deploying military personnel who have been in the business of smashing make-shift stalls, and preventing the poor women and traders from continuing their business even inside their own compounds! The people have suffered, bread-winners, single mothers, widows, child-led households, are without means to feed themselves.



Constituency Development Funds (CDF) and Toll-Gate Revenues Looted in the Name of Fighting Cholera!

Instead of finding suitable and timely alternatives to allow the poor traders to continue with their business, what we have seen is a government capitalization on tragedy! While our poor people have been starving, these cholera crusaders with fat government jobs are getting fatter and richer with allowances emanating from the Cholera crisis! They have become 'cholera contractors', tragedy entrepreneurs getting richer from awarding themselves contracts to supply tissue, chlorine, beddings, mattresses, medicines, sanitizers, garbage collection, and whatever else is

being cashed out from the 600 million US dollars that have been donated and/or diverted from other budgeted-for departments, leaving an already diseased, hungry and angry population with an additional debt-burden!

The corruption and cannibalization of Zambia's public resources by the khakistocratic and kleptomaniac PF regime knows no boundaries! The PF must go, and the sooner the better! Because to wait until 2021 for a government that is looting even in times of crisis, is a clear sign that they will be nothing left to build on, or to start with when they depart government in 2021, and as we all know, their departure is now a sure fact!!!

The PF Looters Must be Tried and Jailed!

For justice to prevail, whenever that may be, all well-meaning Zambians must insist that whichever political Party assumes power in 2021, or earlier, must immediately arrest all the perpetrators of these financial and social crimes which our people have been saddled with for far too long! We are not living life in Zambia, we are merely surviving and holding onto dear life - day by day! Our country is now under siege from local political looters and foreign exploiters who are capitalizing on crisis to take over trading spaces and lands were our own people have been displaced from in the name of fighting Cholera! This crisis serves and stands to profit those with power, and leave the rest of us in shambles!

The Struggle Continues!
Down with the PF regime!
Down with all the Capitalist Exploiters!

The author of this article is a Socialist Revolutionary, Pan-Africanist, and Leader of the ELA and Africa Section of the RCIT | email: maindasimataa@gmail.com | Twitter: [@MSimataa](https://twitter.com/MSimataa)