

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
ON
INCREASED NUMBER OF MURDER CASES IN CHADIZA PARLIAMENTARY
CONSTITUENCY.

Madam Speaker, thank you for this opportunity to issue a ministerial statement on the matter of urgent public importance that was raised by Hon. Jonathan Daka, Member of Parliament for Chadiza Constituency, on the increasing number of murder cases in Chadiza Parliamentary Constituency.

Madam Speaker, let me begin by stating that the number of murder cases in Chadiza Parliamentary Constituency has reduced compared to last year, 2021. In 2021, the Zambia Police Service recorded three murder cases while only one case has been reported in 2022. The nature of reported cases includes murder, manslaughter and rape.

Madam Speaker, on 2nd March, 2021, a male adult aged twenty-two by the name of Mr James Sakala died whilst visiting his clients in Kaphako in Chief Mwangala's area in Chadiza District. The victim was believed to have been a traditional healer from Mpeta Village in Chief Maguya's area in Chipata District. The victim is alleged to have claimed, on many occasions, that he could be buried alive and still come back to life.

Madam Speaker, on 2nd March, 2021, he asked his clients in Chief Mwangala's Chiefdom to bury him alive. Unfortunately, after he was buried, he suffocated and died.

The two suspects who buried him alive have since been arrested and charged for manslaughter. The deceased was first buried in Kaphako area, but was later exhumed and taken for reburial in his home village. The body was, again, exhumed by the State pathologist to allow for post-mortem to be conducted. The two suspects have since appeared in Chipata High Court for the offence of manslaughter where they were granted bail. The post-mortem results are yet to be communicated.

Madam Speaker, in another case, on 3rd October, 2021, around 0500 hours, the Zambia Police Service received a report that a female juvenile by the name of Bridget Phiri of Mfwinta Village in Chadiza District was found dead near a shop. The deceased was a Grade 4 pupil at Katosha Primary School. She had gone to watch a *nyau* dance on 2nd October, 2021, at around 1600 hours within the same village. She was found dead the following morning near a named shop in the area. Officers from the Zambia Police Service visited the scene and discovered that the body had bruises on the right elbow and knees. There was also some blood on the private parts. Post-mortem examination was conducted at Chadiza District Hospital and no physical injuries were detected. However, some specimen samples were collected for further examination at the food and drug laboratory in Lusaka. The results have not yet been received. The matter is still under investigations as a homicide case. No arrests have been made so far.

Madam Speaker, the third case involved two victims, namely Mr Benson Zulu, aged forty-eight of Mugulula Village and his associate, Mr Lloyd Banda, aged forty-one of Chamani Village, both of Chadiza District. Brief facts of the matter are that on 11th November, 2021, at around 0600 hours, the duo were reported missing. It is believed that the two victims had gone to make charcoal in the bush on the day when they went missing. There was a heavy downpour of rains characterised by thunder and lightning. The two bodies were discovered under a curved rocky mountain at Chatuwowo Hills in a decomposed state. The manner and gesture in which the two bodies were found at the scene suggested that they may have been struck by lightning. The two bodies were picked and later buried at their respective villages.

Madam Speaker, on 29th December, 2021, the two bodies were exhumed and post-mortem was conducted by the forensic pathologist. The results have not yet been communicated. However, the preliminary information from the doctor after examination suggests that the two could have been struck by lightning.

Madam Speaker, further, on 4th July, 2022, at around 1300 hours, a female pupil aged sixteen of Isaac Village in Chief Mwangala's area was found dead in the bush. The deceased went missing from home on Saturday, 2nd July, 2022, at around 1400 hours. After informing her mother that she had gone to Chimutanda Village to watch a football match, she never returned home until

she was discovered dead on 4th July, 2022. The body was inspected and found to have bruises on both legs and back. There was also some whitish stuff around her private parts. The body was deposited at Chadiza District Hospital mortuary.

Madam Speaker, on 6th July, 2022, post-mortem was conducted at Chadiza District Hospital and the preliminary results indicated that the victim died of strangulation. The victim also had bruises in her private parts suggesting that she could have been raped. Some samples were collected from the body for further Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) examination in Lusaka. The boyfriend to the deceased aged seventeen of Chimutanda Village in Chief Mwangala's area in Chadiza District was picked up and detained to help with investigations.

Madam Speaker, it is regrettable that innocent citizens are being targeted by these criminals. These illegal attacks do not only breach peace in the country, but also contravene the provisions of Part III of the Constitution of the Republic of Zambia, which provides for, among others, the freedoms of movement and association.

Madam Speaker, to curb these criminal acts in Chadiza, the following are some of the measures being implemented by the Zambia Police Service:

- (a) conducting community sensitisation of residents, especially parents not to permit children susceptible to would-be attacks to move alone owing to the prevalence of murders;
- (b) conducting sensitisation in schools with a view to ensuring that the safety of children is enhanced through the schools' liaison unit, under the Community Services Directorate;
- (c) enhancing sensitisation of the population on personal security through meetings, radio, and television programmes; and

- (d) intensifying patrols in Chadiza District and intelligence information gatherings to ensure criminals are apprehended.

Madam Speaker, I would like to urge all peace-loving Zambians to be law-abiding. I appeal to all citizens to report any persons or groupings intending to attack any individual or group to the Zambia Police Service. I also appeal to the people of Chadiza to remain calm as law enforcement agencies are professionally conducting their duties.

Madam Speaker, I thank you.