

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
ON THE
DEATH OF TWO PROSPECTIVE RECRUITS IN KABWE
BY THE
THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND INTERNAL SECURITY (MR
MWIIMBU), MP

Madam Speaker, I thank you for according me this opportunity to issue a ministerial statement, on the matter of urgent public importance raised by Hon. Sydney Mushanga, Member of Parliament for Bwacha Constituency, regarding the death of two people during the pre-running exercise to identify would-be recruits in the ongoing Zambia Correctional Service recruitment exercise in Kabwe District.

Madam Speaker, the tragedy that befell the two prospective recruits who were attending interviews at Mukobeko Correctional Facility came as a surprise to the Government and indeed the whole nation. On behalf of the Government and indeed on my own behalf, I sincerely express my deepest condolences to the families of the deceased and sympathise with the entire group of candidates who shared time with the deceased candidates for such a traumatic experience. The deceased were participating in the first day of the recruitment exercise on Tuesday 1st November, 2022, which involved physical exercises when they met their fate.

Madam Speaker, since the New Dawn Government was elected into office in August 2021, one of the priorities has been to create employment in order to contribute to socio-economic development in our country. The New Dawn Administration has prioritised creating employment opportunities, especially for the youths as espoused in the United Party for National Development (UPND) manifesto. It is about giving these youths the security of knowing that they do have a future in their own country. That is why it is very traumatising that the candidates died while trying to clinch an opportunity offered by the Government in this country.

The brief facts, Madam Speaker, are that the victims were among the shortlisted candidates attending interviews for recruitment as warders in the Zambia Correctional Service in Kabwe District. The interviews, which involved running 12 km within Mukuyu Farms situated next to Mukobeko Correctional Facility, were conducted on 1st November, 2022. Later in the night, on that date, one case of sudden and unnatural death of a prospective recruit was reported at Kasanda Police Station by a correctional service officer. The matter was recorded as a brought-in-dead at the police station. The following morning, another report of sudden death and unnatural death of a prospective recruit was made by a relative at the same police station.

Madam Speaker, in the first incident, Kasanda Police Station in Kabwe received a report of sudden death and unnatural causes from the officer-in-charge at Mukobeko Clinic around 2100 hours on 1st November, 2022. The officer in charge brought in the dead body of Mr Mubanga Chileshe aged thirty years, who is alleged to have died during the job interview at Mukobeko Maximum Prison area. Physical inspection revealed that the deceased had multiple bruises on the body. Police opened an inquiry file and the body was deposited in Kabwe Central Hospital mortuary awaiting further investigations.

Madam Speaker, on Monday, 7th November, 2022, a post-mortem examination was conducted on the body and preliminary results indicated that Mr Mubanga Chileshe died as a result of right-sided subdural hemorrhage due to blunt impact trauma or injuries to the head.

Madam Speaker, in the second incident, Kasanda Police Station received a report of sudden and unnatural death around 0900 hours on 2nd November, 2022 from a sixty-one-year old man of unmarked house in Kawama Overspill Masiye area in Kabwe. The man reported that his twenty-eight-year-old nephew, Stanley Siwale, of the same abode, died in Kabwe Central Hospital after allegedly being beaten by suspected correctional service officers during job recruitment interviews at Mukobeko Correctional Facility area.

Physical inspections revealed a deep fresh cut on the lower part of the body. The police opened an inquiry file into the matter and deposited the body in the mortuary awaiting further investigations. On 7th November, 2022, a post-mortem examination was conducted on the body. Preliminary results indicated that the victim had bruises on the body. The samples have

been taken for toxicology and histology tests. Investigations in both cases are ongoing as the police await the final results which are likely to be received within four weeks.

Madam Speaker, the loss of life of two vibrant youths who were eager to serve the nation under circumstances that perhaps could have been avoided is regrettable. To ensure that no more lives are lost under such circumstances, the ministry will ensure among other measures that:

- (a) would be recruits are subjected to medical examinations before they are engaged to do any physical activities; and
- (b) capacity building is continuously offered for our instructors to be able to appreciate the unique capabilities of recruits.

Madam Speaker, I would like to urge the bereaved families to remain calm as investigations are being undertaken by the Zambia Police Service. The nation will be informed about the outcome of the investigations in due course.

I thank you, Madam Speaker.
