

January 2016

Thurs 7

Headline – *'No apology' over wild animals sold to China* – is the stance taken by environment minister, Oppah Muchinguri, when the nations wildlife services are so short of funds which will allow more conservation work and the upkeep of the national parks; site that bring much needed foreign tourists and boost the countries economy.

The defence of the project, which began with the shipment of 100 elephants, in 7/15, came during the ministers visit to a Chimelong safari park in Guangzhou. Such to the authorities in Beijing deem the pilot project a success they have enquired over the purchase of other wild animals; baboons, hyenas and lions as well as more elephants.

Such a wholesale sell of wild animals, native to the African continent, has angered the Zimbabwe Task Force, a conservation body, as they claim that the previous sales many of the recently sold elephants “were sentenced to a life of inhumane treatment.” - GDN page 20 C1 -

Tues 12

Headline – *Outcry halts scheme to raffle right to hunt a lion* – an idea thought up by one of the countries professional hunters Martin Neal. His thought was to launch his scheme at an international gathering of hunters in the American city of Las Vegas. Tickets would be sold; with a hoped for 100 purchasers, for \$1, 500 / £1. 030 each.

The British based charity, Lion Aid, expressed their horror at such an escapade. However there was the option for the winner to decide to electronically tag the animal for research purposes rather than end its life.

In defence of his actions Neal argued that there were more lions in hunting areas than in national parks. Such animal culls were in the best interest of the domestic animals; goats and cattle that were essential to the lives of the countries rural communities. - GDN page 18 C 1 -

February

Wed 3

Headline – *Top law officer charged with abuse of office* – after dropping charges of attempted murder of the president after they were found outside the farm, owned by the Mugabe family, outside Harare.

The two who were among a gang of four; two army corporals, a retired soldier and a fourth unnamed person, were detained by police outside the prime minister 's owned dairy farm on 22/1. At that time the group were found in possession of petrol bombs and ammunition.

Once back at the police station two of those detained were freed by prosecutor general Johannes Tomana who is also a loyal member of the ruling Zanu PF government. He now faces 15 years in jail if convicted. The future trial, of the government official, will hear evidence two two of the four would be bombers who have agreed to give evidence against him.

However all four of the would be bombers will now face the more serious charge of treason after a recent decision by government lawyers. - **GDN page 16 C 5** -

Fri 5

News item, such are the dangers of famine, due to the ongoing drought that affecting the country; due some say to the effects of El Nimo, that president Mugabe has declared a 'state of despair.'

Having to admit such will, in the presidents mind, make it easier for him to appeal to the international community for food aid as current food stocks are at an all time low thus leaving about 2m people facing possible starvation. With the ongoing drought coinciding with the beginning of the planting season the next harvest, due in 3/17 will again fall well below expectations. - **BBC news Radio 2 15. 00** -

Mon 22

Headline – *Lavish party for Mugabe 's 92nd despite drought* – which affects as many as 3m people according to officials of the United Nations World Food Programme. Much of this food aid comes from the United States.

As to celebrating the presidents age; family were allowed access on 21/2, while the state will honour their leader on 27/2. At the public 's gathering in the south eastern city of Masvingo is anything like the £695, 000 spent on his last birthday celebrations then those that oppose the rule of the president will once again be ignored. - **GDN page 17 C 5** -

Mon 29

picture caption Zimbabwe 's President Robert Mugabe and his wife Grace, at a party for his 92nd birthday held in drought stricken Masvingo, near the historic site of the ruined city of Great Zimbabwe. State media said the celebrations for the man who has ruled the country since 1980 is expected to cost £570, 000. - **GDN page 13 C 1** -

March

Wed 2

Headline – *New party to challenge Mugabe* – one that was foreseen, by the former vice president Joice Mujuru, aged 60, in 2015 (qv 29/9). Speaking to the press, about the aims of the Zimbabwe Peoples First political party, she said its aims were to revive the nations economy and improve relations with the west.

One of the new parties hardest tasks, in her opinion, would be to bring jobs to the people which has been hampered in the past by the Zanu governments black economic empowerment laws; which has scared off the international investor. Before the 2018 presidential election there will be approaches to other political parties to form a political common front against this present regime.

Commenting on this new political challenge Zanu 's national commissioner, described members of the ZPF as a “gathering of losers.” - **GDN page 21 C 4** -