



**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**  
**MINISTRY OF WATER DEVELOPMENT AND SANITATION**  
**PRESS STATEMENT**  
*(For Immediate Release)*

**MINISTRY OF WATER DEVELOPMENT AND SANITATION CLARIFIES MISLEADING PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND PAYROLL STATUS AT LUAPULA WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION COMPANY LIMITED**

**Mansa, Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026** - The Minister of Water Development and Sanitation, **Hon. Eng. Collins Nzovu, MP**, has noted with serious concern a circulating audio interview attributed to Mr. Harry Kalaba, President of Citizens First, alleging that Luapula Water Supply and Sanitation Company Limited (LpWSC) suspended 43 employees for inquiring about their salaries.

The Minister categorically refutes these assertions and wishes to correct the record to prevent the public from being misled by inaccurate and unverified claims. As an essential service provider responsible for public health and water utility management, LpWSC operates within established legal and administrative frameworks. Matters affecting its operations must therefore be addressed with accuracy, responsibility, and due regard for the facts.

Hon. Nzovu has clarified that the allegation that 43 employees were suspended for making salary inquiries is false. No employee has been suspended for inquiring about salaries. Rather, thirty-three (33) employees were issued exculpation letters, not suspension letters, following their participation in an unauthorized "go-slow" action on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

The Minister explained that an exculpation letter is a standard procedural notice requiring an employee to explain or justify their conduct before any determination is made. It does not constitute suspension, removal from duty, or dismissal. Established disciplinary procedures must not be misrepresented as punitive measures when they are, in fact, lawful administrative processes designed to uphold order and accountability.

The assertion that employees have not been paid for three months is equally inaccurate. The verified salary payment record is as follows:

- December 2025 salaries were paid on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026.
- January 2026 salaries were paid on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026.
- February 2026 salaries are currently being addressed within the prevailing financial framework and operational cycle.

Management remains actively engaged in ensuring that financial obligations are met in a structured, transparent, and responsible manner.

The Minister has further dismissed as unfounded claims that administrative letters were issued to intimidate union leadership. No suspension letters were issued to the local union or any branch officials. All administrative actions undertaken were strictly in accordance with established disciplinary procedures relating to unauthorized industrial action.

Due process must not be misconstrued as intimidation. The Ministry further affirms that it is actively engaging both Management and Union leadership at Luapula Water Supply and Sanitation Company Limited to facilitate constructive dialogue and ensure that an amicable and mutually beneficial resolution is achieved.

The Minister has, however, acknowledged that Luapula Water Supply and Sanitation Company Limited, like many other commercial water utilities, is facing financial challenges largely due to low tariff structures, which have made it difficult to meet daily operational costs. He further stated that Government, through the Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation, continues to provide financial support to water utilities across the country to cushion these challenges and ensure the sustained delivery of essential services.

Allegations that the Managing Director was absent from duty and residing in Lusaka are also false. The Managing Director travelled strictly on official duty and remained fully engaged in Company affairs throughout the period in question. Leadership continuity and operational management structures remained intact at all times.

Hon. Nzovu reiterated that while the Ministry respects the role of public figures in contributing to national discourse, commentary on matters affecting essential public services must be grounded in verified facts. The circulation of unsubstantiated information risks creating unnecessary public alarm and undermining confidence in a critical service provider entrusted with safeguarding public health and water security in Luapula Province.

Luapula Water Supply and Sanitation Company Limited remains committed to transparency, lawful governance, constructive engagement with its workforce, and the uninterrupted provision of water services to the people of Luapula Province.

**Issued by:**

Prince Chiyuni  
Principal Public Relations Officer  
**Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation**