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Sata urges intensified graft fight

Posted December 10, 2013 by Diran Chama in Featured



By DELPHINE ZULU, NCHIMUNYA MUGANYA, JULIUS PHIRI and ISAAC MUKANDO -

PRESIDENT Michael Sata has said the unprecedented developmental projects his Government has embarked on will be undermined if the country does not fight corruption.

Mr Sata said his administration had put in place massive developmental projects intended to benefit Zambians but warned that if corruption was tolerated, it had the potential to retard development.

He was speaking in a speech read on his behalf by Justice Minister Wynter Kabimba during commemoration of the International Anti- Corruption Day at Government Complex yesterday.

The President said the fight against corruption would remain the top priority as could be seen from the reinstatement of the Abuse of Authority of Office Act to deter public officials from mismanaging public resources.

“My Government has embarked on unprecedented infrastructural developments in this country through construction of roads, health facilities, schools and improved public workers remuneration.

“These developmental projects intended to better the lives of our people will be undermined if we let corruption subvert our development agenda,” he said.

He said it could not be denied that corruption was a threat to development, democracy and stability.

The President said corruption was a serious roadblock to economic development as it aggravated inequality and injustice once public money was stolen for private gain.

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) chairperson Timothy Kabalata said this year’s commemoration held under the theme ‘Zero Corruption, 100 per cent Development’, gave the institution an indication of how much the economy could be transformed if the right steps were taken to combat the vice.

“Let us not only speak against corruption but let us also act against it. The transformation we want to see must begin with each one of us. We must not only condemn the vice in public and yet we secretly practise it,” Mr Justice Kabalata.

Transparency International Zambia (TIZ) president Lee Habasonda said Government should ensure that the new Constitution allowed for more accountability and transparency so that corruption could be easier to address.

African Parliamentarian Network against Corruption (APNAC) chairperson Cornelius Mweetwa said politicians should desist from donations that were beyond their means because they could be perceived to be corrupt.

In Choma, APNAC has called for a robust review of the public service to enhance the fight against corruption.

APNAC representative Partner Siabutuba said most corruption cases arose from public service institutions, hence the need to broaden the platform towards the fight against corruption.

In Chipata, the ACC in Eastern Province urged stakeholders not to sit idle but to participate in the fight against corruption.

ACC regional manager Raymond Banda said during the commemoration held at Pine View in Chipata yesterday that people should not only condemn corruption in public while secretly practising it.

In Kitwe, Copperbelt Permanent Secretary Stanford Msichili, said corruption was a hindrance to the development of the country and the general uplifting of people’s livelihood.

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