

‘Show your mettle’

Lungu challenges mining firms to seize the hour of high copper prices ...as MUZ endorses his candidacy for 2021

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PRESIDENT Edgar Lungu has challenged mines in the country to take advantage of the rising copper prices on the global market by expanding operations for them to earn more returns.

Mr Lungu also insisted Vedanta Resources which promoted Konkola Copper Mine (KCM) since 2004 had gone and Government is ready for any court challenge on the matter.

He said that government was determined to support local mine ownership.

“We need to raise the Dangotes (Aliko) and reclaim mining and economic sovereignty... we need more locals to control the economy, Vedanta has gone, wherever they will take us

we are ready to defend our position,” Mr Lungu said.

He praised KCM management for keeping the mine assets intact while continuing production under a challenging environment and wondered how the mine could fail under local management.

The president said this at Konkola Rugby Grounds yesterday when he addressed mine union officials, KCM management and workers in Chililabombwe.

He said the Patriotic

Front (PF) Government had continued recording successes because of siding with the people and that it would continue pursuing people-centred development.

“One Zambian based in the United Kingdom recently told me how he got amazed about the country’s infrastructure outlook. We have achieved a lot because we listen to the people,” Mr Lungu said.

He warned Zambians against listening to some politicians whom he said survived through criticising each government that came into power.

Mr Lungu said he was fully prepared for 2021 general elections and beyond. *To Page 2*

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KCM acting chief executive officer Enock Mponda thanked the president for his support during the period of liquidation.

Meanwhile, Mineworkers Union of Zambia (MUZ) president Joseph Chewe who led mine unions’ solidarity march said the unions were behind the leadership of President Lungu.

“We are in support of your leadership because while others are siding with Vedanta, you have decided to be on our side. We cannot hide that we have endorsed your leadership beyond 2021,” Mr Chewe said amid cheers from miners.

He urged the president to resolve matters regarding Chambishi Metals and Mopani Copper Mine (MCM) saying the two assets needed attention.

Addressing union leaders and Lubambe Copper Mine employees, President Lungu said that with the rise in copper prices, both managements and their workers needed to produce more and take advantage of the spike in copper prices.

Mr Lungu who visited Lubambe Mine for the

you should ask for more money. So it is up to you labour leaders to encourage your members to work hard.

“To the workers and the union, we are in this together, because the more we produce the better for the economy, the better for the cash collector, the better for everything we do,” he said.

Mr Lungu said he was impressed with the operations of Lubambe Mine and pledged his administration’s support as the mine expanded its operations.

Lubambe Copper Mine director of operations Tony Davis said the mine had increased production by 70 per cent.

Mr Davis said the mine had invested heavily in equipment and technology and recruited a number of local people to enable it achieve the required production level.

“The future of Lubambe lies to the south, what we call the Extension Project. As you are aware, the mine has completed an Advanced Concept Study for this project. This sleeping giant is in excess of 250 million tonnes at 3.64 per cent total copper,” he said.