



ZAMBIAN ATHLETICS NEEDS SERIOUS LEADERSHIP — SAMUKONGA

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MALISAWA: GERMANY SPORTS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME WILL BROADEN MY KNOWLEDGE

By Enock Phiri



Renowned Zambian sports journalist Memory Malisawa says her participation in a Sports programme in Germany will broaden her understanding of the sports industry and provide valuable exposure to how sport is managed and developed beyond journalism.

Malisawa is among 15 sports delegates from around the world selected to attend the programme, which is supported by the Government of Germany through the Federal Foreign Office and the German Embassy in Lusaka.

The programme is designed to expose participants to various aspects of sports management and allow them to learn from Germany’s experience in developing and managing sport.

Malisawa says the programme will give her an opportunity to gain knowledge in areas where Germany has made significant progress, while also creating a platform to interact with sports associations and organisations in the country.

“It’s a program to make us learn more about Sports and areas that Germany has done well for us to also learn or improve on and give us a platform to meet different Sports associations and organizations in Germany, including the Federal Foreign Office.”

The programme covers a wide range of areas, including the social role of

sport, participation and inclusion, voluntary work, sports diplomacy, major sporting events and the growing importance of e-sports.

Malisawa says the exposure to Germany’s preparations and experiences in hosting major sporting events is particularly important to her professional development.

“It also gives us a chance to see how ready they are, they bid to host Major Sports events like the Olympics 2032, 2036, 2040 and 2044,” she said.

The learning experience has also included practical exposure to Germany’s sporting infrastructure, with Malisawa and fellow delegates visiting Berlin’s iconic Olympiastadion, a venue with a long history of hosting major international football and athletics events and the home of Hertha BSC.

She also witnessed Germany take on Mali at the 2026 FIBA Women’s Basketball World Cup, giving her an opportunity to experience another major international sporting event from a different perspective.

For Malisawa, the programme comes at an important stage in her career as she seeks to expand her expertise beyond sports reporting, presenting and production.

She says her interest in sports management has been strengthened

by her recent academic and professional development in the field.

“All this helps in Management of sport which I am interested in and currently pursuing,” Malisawa said.

She also sees the programme as a continuation of her efforts to build her knowledge in sports administration, following a Sports Administration Course she completed under the Olympic Committee of Zambia late last year.

“So I am very excited to be part of this program because it gives me an opportunity to expand my knowledge in sport, following my Sports Administration Course, which I recently did under the Olympic Committee of Zambia late last year,” she said.

Malisawa’s participation in the international programme adds a new dimension to her career, combining her experience in sports media with a growing interest in sports administration and management.

She is expected to use the knowledge and international exposure gained from the programme to further develop her understanding of sports management and contribute to the broader development of sport in Zambia.

MALAMBO CALLS FOR FOOTBALL TALENT ACADEMIES BEYOND PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

By Lucky Chama



Football Strategy and Development Expert Franklyn Malambo has challenged the Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) and other African football associations to establish Football Talent Academies that develop not only players but also the wider professional workforce needed to drive the game.

Writing in his Beyond the 90 column, Malambo argues that African football’s development agenda must move beyond its traditional focus on identifying and nurturing players.

“A Football Talent Academy is a structured development programme that identifies, trains and prepares the next generation of football professionals across the entire football ecosystem — including coaches, technical directors, administrators, analysts, referees, medical staff and other specialist roles,” Malambo said.

He believes Zambia cannot sustainably improve its football by concentrating solely on player development while overlooking the people responsible for coaching, managing and supporting those players.

“We cannot only talk about academies, competitions and pathways to professional football without asking a fundamental question: Who is developing the people who work with players and run football institutions to get desired results?” he asked.

Malambo says modern football requires a multidisciplinary workforce involving coaches, analysts, scouts, technical directors, administrators, medical personnel and performance specialists.

“You cannot build better players without also building better people around them,” he said.

He further argues that football education should move beyond qualifications and certificates towards practical competence, proposing a system that combines education, mentorship, assessment and club placements.

“While FAZ, CAF and FIFA courses provide valuable qualifications, the goal should go beyond certificates to producing professionals who can perform effectively,” Malambo said.

Rather than creating a completely new institution, Malambo proposes that FAZ establish strategic partnerships with universities, professional bodies, clubs, other football associations and international organisations.

He suggests institutions such as UNZA and CBU could provide the academic foundation, NIPA could support administration and management training, while ZCAS/ZICA could contribute expertise in finance and commercial aspects of football.

Clubs, he says, should become “practical laboratories” where participants gain hands-on experience.

“For example, an aspiring analyst should not just spend time in the classroom but should spend eight to 12 weeks within a club to gain hands-on experience,” he said.

Malambo also wants Zambia to broaden its ambitions beyond exporting footballers by developing professionals who can compete internationally.

“We are accustomed to thinking about exporting footballers, but why shouldn’t we export analysts, coaches, scouts, administrators, technical leaders and football executives?” he asked.

He proposes starting with a cohort of 15 to 20 people across different areas before gradually expanding the programme.

“The fact is, whether we like it or not, getting results relies on more than the player. It also depends on the people working behind the players, their competence and the systems supporting them,” Malambo said.

“Again, I ask: Who is developing the people who work with the players to produce the desired results?”

ELITE LADIES PROVIDE 11 PLAYERS FOR U17 WORLD CUP PUSH

By FT Reporter



The Elite Ladies FC have emerged as one of the biggest contributors to Zambia’s preparations for the 2026 FIFA Under-17 Women’s World Cup, with 11 players called up to the provisional national team camp ahead of the tournament in Morocco.

The World Cup is scheduled for 17 October to 7 November 2026, giving the players an important opportunity to compete for places in the final squad that will represent Zambia on the global stage.

The selection of 11 players from one club underlines the depth of talent within The Elite Ladies and places the club at the centre of Zambia’s preparations for the tournament.

The Under-17 technical bench has structured the preparations around two local assessment camps in Lusaka. The first runs from 6 to 12 September, followed by a second camp from 13 September to 3 October.

Four Elite Ladies midfielders, Agness Mwaka, Faith Kajiya Kapilingo, Jane Roshety Chirwa and Hildah Kangwa, joined the

initial assessment camp on September 6.

Seven more players are expected to join the assessment camp beginning September 9. They are central defenders Esther Ngabwe and Gift Chisha Mazimba, striker Phidah Muzuwa, left-back Faith Kaunda, midfielders Loveness Daka, also known as Ebube, and Lilian Namalambo Mwenda, and goalkeeper Winfridah Mutale, popularly known as Super Magnet.

For the 11 players, however, the call-up is not an automatic ticket to Morocco. Their performances during the assessment period will determine whether they remain with the national team beyond the first camp or return to their club.

Those who impress the technical bench will remain in camp from September 13 as the squad moves into the next phase of preparations, while those who do not make the cut could return to club duties.

That situation creates an interesting balancing act for The Elite Ladies, particularly with the 2026 Charity Shield against Kansanshi Dynamos

Queens scheduled for September 19.

The club could therefore potentially regain some of its players in time for the Charity Shield, depending on the outcome of the national team assessments.

The broader pathway is clear: players who survive both local assessment camps will travel to Morocco for an international training camp beginning October 4, continuing until the World Cup kicks off.

With 11 players in contention, The Elite Ladies have a significant stake in that process. Beyond the prestige of having a large contingent in the provisional squad, the assessments provide the club’s young players with exposure to a higher level of competition and an opportunity to establish themselves on the international stage.

For the players, the immediate challenge is equally straightforward, perform consistently, compete for places and convince the technical bench that they belong in Zambia’s final World Cup squad.

BANDA MAKES BALLON D’OR TOP 30 FOR THIRD STRAIGHT YEAR

By Lucky Chama



Zambia Women’s National Team captain Barbra Banda has been named among the 30 nominees for the 2026 Ballon d’Or Féminin, earning her third consecutive nomination for the prestigious individual award.

Banda has been included among the 30 nominees for the 2026 Ballon d’Or Féminin, alongside Malawi Women’s National Team star Temwa Chawinga.

The nomination further underlines Banda’s standing among the leading players in the women’s game, having established herself as one of the Orlando Pride’s key attacking players and a prominent figure in the National Women’s Soccer League (NWSL).

The Ballon d’Or awards are organised annually by French football magazine France Football, with the ceremony co-organised with UEFA. The award recognises the outstanding male and female footballers in the world, regardless of league or nationality.

The voting period for this year’s award covers the entirety of the 2025/26 season, from August 3, 2025 to July 19, 2026, including major international competitions.

However, the recently concluded Women’s Africa Cup of Nations, which ended on August 16, 2026, will be considered for the next edition of the award.

Banda’s latest nomination adds to an impressive list of individual accolades for the Zambian forward. She was named the 2024 BBC Women’s Footballer of the Year and also won the CAF Women’s Player of the Year award.

The Copper Queens skipper has also represented Zambia at two Olympic Games and the FIFA Women’s World Cup, further cementing her status as one of the most recognisable figures in women’s football.

The final three players will make the Ballon d’Or podium at the awards ceremony scheduled for October 26, 2026 in London.



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SAMUKONGA DEMANDS SERIOUS LEADERSHIP IN ZAMBIAN ATHLETICS

By Lucky Chama



Zambian sprinter Muzala Samukonga has expressed disappointment over the continued use of personal resources by athletes representing the country at international competitions, calling for urgent intervention to improve athlete welfare and the development of athletics.

Samukonga, writing on his Facebook page, criticised the current leadership of Zambia Athletics under president Bernard Bwalya, arguing that athletes should not be expected to finance expenses such as air tickets while performing national duties.

“You cannot build champions when you burden them with costs that government through the association should cover,” Samukonga wrote.

He questioned how Zambia could expect to develop the sport and produce medal-winning athletes when competitors are required to pay their own travel costs to represent the country.

“How can we expect to grow the sport and win medals when athletes are being asked to pay for their own air tickets to represent the nation?” he asked.

Samukonga said representing Zambia is a national responsibility that should receive appropriate support from Government, particularly through the Ministry of Sport and Zambia Athletics.

He further criticised what he described as a lack of major achievements, proper athlete welfare and a clear development plan under the current administration.

“Since this current administration of Zambia Athletics came in office, there have been no major achievements, no proper athlete welfare, and no clear development plan for athletics in Zambia,” he said.

Samukonga also compared the current situation with the previous administration led by Elias Mpondela, saying that while he felt the former leadership “didn’t do much”, he believed there had been visible effort on national duties and other matters concerning athletes.

He called on the Ministry of Sport and other stakeholders to intervene and ensure Zambia Athletics is led by people capable of mobilising resources, accounting for them and prioritising athletes.

“Us as athletes deserve better,” Samukonga said.

“Until then, talent will continue to go to waste. This is too much now and it has gotten out of control and has to be addressed.”

NAMIBIA TO FACE RUSSIA IN SOCCER FRIENDLY IN OCTOBER

By Xinhua



Namibia will face Russia in an international football friendly in Yekaterinburg on October 3, the Namibia Football Association (NFA) announced Tuesday.

The fixture follows an agreement between the NFA and the Russian Football Union, which also confirmed the match on Tuesday.

Namibia head coach Collin Benjamin welcomed the opportunity for the Brave Warriors to test themselves against a higher-ranked opponent, saying exposure to different footballing environments would help his players develop.

Benjamin said his players needed such matches regularly to build experience and competitiveness, "making them ready to face their peers at continental level in the CAF/Africa Cup of Nations."

Russia is ranked 35th in the latest FIFA men's world rankings, while Namibia sits 121st.

The friendly will follow Namibia's opening two matches in the 2027 Africa Cup of Nations qualifiers.

According to the Confederation of African Football's schedule, Namibia will face the Republic of the Congo on September 24 and Comoros on September 29 in Group G, which also includes Cameroon.

ZAMBIA LEARN U-20 AFCON COSAFA QUALIFIER FIXTURES

By Lucky Chama



Zambia’s Under-20 national team will face Malawi, Comoros and Botswana in Group C of the TotalEnergies CAF U-20 Africa Cup of Nations COSAFA Qualifier Mozambique 2026.

The fixtures for the regional tournament have been confirmed, with 12 teams set to compete from September 18 to 27, 2026.

The Young Chipolopolo will begin their campaign against Malawi on Friday, September 18 at 15:00 hours at Estadio do Zimpeto in Maputo.

Zambia will then face Comoros on Monday, September 21 at 11:00 hours at ABB 2 in Matola before completing the group stage against Botswana on Wednesday, September 23 at 15:00 hours at ABB 1.

The 12 participating teams have been divided into three groups of four, with the teams playing a round-robin format.

The three group winners and the best runner-up will advance to the semi-finals, scheduled for September 25.

The two finalists will secure qualification for the TotalEnergies CAF U-20 Africa Cup of Nations Ghana 2027, which will be held next year.

Zambia’s Group C campaign therefore presents three crucial fixtures, with the Young Chipolopolo needing a strong start against regional rivals Malawi before facing Comoros and Botswana.

All matches at the tournament will be broadcast live on FIFA+ and the COSAFA YouTube Channel.



LEGAL ACTION AGAINST FIFA TO INCLUDE WOMEN'S SCHEDULE

By BBC Sport



Legal action from the top European leagues and global players' union Fifpro against Fifa has been extended to include the world governing body's "abusive conduct" towards the women's game.

European Leagues, which represents 53 professional divisions, including the Premier League, and 1,328 clubs in 34 countries, first filed the complaint to the European Commission to protect the welfare of men's players in October 2024.

The complaint stated that Fifa abused a dominant position under European competition law allegedly by not including national leagues and player unions over the new men's international calendar announced in 2023.

In a statement on Tuesday, it said it is extending the scope of its complaint to include "Fifa's abusive conduct regarding the women's international match calendar and related women's football regulatory

decisions".

"Fifa's conduct threatens the growth and financial sustainability of women's professional leagues, and risks player health and wellbeing," European Leagues said.

"The European Commission must now act to ensure that EU law is respected and that the future of women's professional football is not determined unilaterally by Fifa."

MWEETWA BACKS POWER DYNAMOS TO OVERTURN AL MERRIKH DEFEAT

By Lucky Chama



Former Zambia striker Nchimunya Mweetwa believes Power Dynamos have what it takes to overturn their 1-0 defeat to Al Merrikh and progress to the next round of the CAF Champions League.

Power Dynamos suffered the narrow defeat in the first leg last Saturday, with Al Merrikh converting from the penalty spot. The Zambian champions will host the Sudanese side in the return leg at Levy Mwanawasa Stadium this Saturday.

Mweetwa says the biggest task for head coach Oswald Mutapa will be to ensure the players recover mentally from the disappointing first-leg result and approach the return fixture with confidence.

"In the friendly games, there should be one or two goals they've scored, so it hasn't been easy on their side. But I believe in the team they've assembled," Mweetwa said.

"They just have to work on their names, especially at home. They have to psych the players. Mutapa is a seasoned coach and I'm not seeing

him failing to psych the players and put them in the right frame of mind to beat that team."

Mweetwa also believes playing the return leg at home gives Power Dynamos a significant opportunity to turn the tie around.

"At their home ground, that team had to beat them through a penalty. It says a lot. It says that Power Dynamos obviously gave them a tough time," he said.

"At our home ground, I would love to see that game. I hope the boys will come, like we say in football, that they will come to the party."

Football analyst Enock Phiri also believes Power Dynamos can benefit from their familiarity with Levy Mwanawasa Stadium.

Phiri pointed out that Power played their entire CAF campaign last season at the venue, making it effectively a home ground despite being away from their traditional base.

"I am very confident because they

played the entire group stage last season using the same Levy Mwanawasa Stadium. This time around, it has become home to them in as much as it is away from home," Phiri said.

He, however, identified goalscoring as an area Power must improve, particularly after their limited output during pre-season.

"Looking at how their pre-season was in a four-club tournament, Power Dynamos didn't score more than two goals. Which means they have to sharpen the combination of Amine Hiver, Fredrick Mulambia, Budo [Joshua Mutale]," he said.

Phiri remains confident that Mutapa will find the right formula to produce the required result on Saturday, although he expressed concern over poor attendance at continental matches in Zambia.

"I think the coach by now knows what to do. Obviously, he will deliver the much-needed result at Levy Mwanawasa Stadium," he said.

AFRICA'S NETBALL ELITE SET FOR NAIROBI SHOWDOWN AS WORLD CUP DREAMS GO ON THE LINE

By Enock Phiri



The countdown is on.

With just 12 days to go before the Netball World Cup Sydney 2027 Africa Qualifier gets underway in Nairobi, Kenya, ten African nations are preparing for a tournament where every pass, intercept and goal could prove decisive.

The tournament will run from 19 to 26 September 2026, with Africa's leading netball nations battling for places at the 2027 Netball World Cup in Sydney, Australia.

The competition brings together 10 teams, but only four African nations will ultimately represent the continent at the global showpiece.

According to the current world rankings, South Africa lead the African field in fifth position globally, followed by Uganda in sixth.

Malawi are ranked ninth, Zimbabwe 11th, Namibia 15th, while Zambia sit 17th in the world.

Kenya, who will have home advantage, are ranked 22nd, with Botswana occupying 27th position. Tanzania and Nigeria are also part of the tournament line-up.

With such a closely watched competition ahead, the rankings provide an indication of the strength of the field, but they will count for little once the first whistle is blown in Nairobi.

FOUR AFRICAN TICKETS UP FOR GRABS

The qualification race has already seen South Africa and Uganda secure their places at the 2027 Netball World Cup.

That leaves two additional African qualification spots to be decided through the regional qualifier in Nairobi.

For the remaining teams, therefore, the mathematics are simple: perform when it matters or watch the World Cup from home.

The pressure will be particularly high on the likes of Malawi, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Zambia and hosts Kenya, who will all be looking to challenge the established order.

ZAMBIA UNDER PRESSURE TO DELIVER

Ranked 17th in the world, Zambia enter the tournament with a point to prove.

The Copper Queens of netball will need to produce consistent performances against a field that includes several highly experienced African sides.

Their position in the rankings places them behind South Africa, Uganda, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Namibia, but rankings do not decide matches.

For Zambia, the Nairobi assignment presents an opportunity to turn potential into results and push their way into the conversation for one of the remaining World Cup places.

HOME ADVANTAGE FOR KENYA

Kenya will have the backing of the home crowd when the competition gets underway.

Ranked 22nd globally, the hosts will hope familiarity with the conditions and support from the stands can give them an advantage against some of the continent's more established netball nations.

But with only two remaining World Cup places available, home advantage alone will not be enough.

THE ROAD TO SYDNEY STARTS IN NAIROBI

From 19 September, the focus shifts from rankings to performance.

South Africa and Uganda may already have their World Cup tickets secured, but the remaining teams will be fighting for the final opportunities to join them in Sydney.

For Zambia and the other contenders, the message is clear: eight days of competition could determine whether their World Cup dreams become reality.

Nairobi is ready.

Africa's netball stars are coming.

And with only two World Cup places left to claim, the battle for Sydney 2027 is about to begin.