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## Operational costs worry ZAMPALM

By Willie Sitali in Mpika

Wed 06 Jan. 2010, 04:00 CAT [2737 Reads, 0 Comment(s)]

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MANAGEMENT at ZAMPALM Limited has expressed concern at the high operational costs it is incurring on its multi-billion Kwacha palm tree project in senior chief Kopa's area in Mpika.

Palm project manager David Subakanya said the firm was spending K120 million every month to produce electricity to sustain operations at the 3,000 hectare palm plantation.

Subakanya noted that the huge expense has had negative effects on the palm tree project. He appealed to the government to intervene in ensuring that power supply reaches chief Kopa's area to enable ZAMPALM to cut down on operational costs.

Subakanya was speaking when Northern Province minister John Chinyanta visited ZAMPALM offices in Mpika recently.

He explained that ZAMPALM had so far planted 240 palm trees on 1,600 acres of land from its nursery of 520 seedlings.

Subakanya revealed that 300 workers had since been employed at the palm plantation that is situated over 100 kilometres away from Mpika boma.

He added that once expansion programme for the palm plantation was completed, more people would be employed by ZAMPALM at the plantation.

Subakanya observed that Northern Province had a lot of investment opportunities, especially in agriculture, due to good climatic conditions in the region.

And Chinyanta expressed happiness with huge investment pumped into the palm tree project in Mpika. Chinyanta commended ZAMPALM for creating employment for people of chief Kopa's area, adding that it was government's desire to attract investment in rural parts of the country in order to help develop the areas.

He urged local and foreign investors to consider investing in Northern Province because of abundant natural resources that had remained unexploited for a long time now.

ZAMPALM, a subsidiary of ZAMBEEF, is investing billions of Kwacha in the palm plantation in Mpika district, which is the first of its kind in Northern Province.

The firm has acquired 20,000 hectares of land for the project in senior chief Kopa's area.

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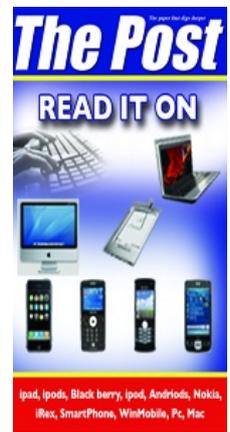
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