

Zambian editor, journalist released on bail

LUSAKA: A Zambian newspaper editor and a journalist arrested after publishing information related to corruption were released Friday on bail.



Post editor Fred M'membe and journalist Mukosha Funga were freed after posting bail of about 30,000 kwacha (\$3,800) each.

The two were detained on Thursday, four months after the newspaper published a letter that Zambia's anti-corruption commission allegedly sent to President Edgar Lungu.

The letter reportedly informed Lungu about an inquiry into allegations that his aide Kaizer Zulu received a bribe of \$200,000 from a Chinese company to obtain business in the southern African country.

The two are due to appear in court August 17. If the court decides to put them on trial, they could face a maximum sentence of 25 years in jail.

Zambia is increasingly restricting the freedom of the press. Journalists are being intimidated and threatened with arrest as the government faces criticism over economic problems, said Andrew Sakala, president of the Press Association of Zambia.

Many Zambians complain about rising food and fuel prices and dwindling agricultural production.

The letter was published in *The Post March*, but M'membe and Funga were not questioned until May. Police justified the arrest by saying the letter was a classified document.

DPA

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