

ZCEA slams call for corporal punishment

By Agness Changala

A DECENT Christian society should aim at teaching and not inflicting body pain on children and its future leaders, Zambia Civic Education Association (ZCEA) executive director Judith Mulenga has said.

Reacting to Zambia United Christian Action (ZUCA) president John Jere who called for the re-introduction of corporal punishment in schools to return the lost respect for teachers by pupils, Mulenga said it was a pity that a man of God should be preaching violence.

“Jesus Christ condemned violence in all his teachings and we are not saying children should not be disciplined,” she said. “They should be disciplined and be made to realise that for every action, there is a consequence.”

Mulenga said corporal punishment was not syn-

onymous with discipline.

“Discipline comes from the Latin word ‘disciplinare’ which means ‘to teach’ and the word ‘corporal’ comes from the Latin word ‘corpus’ which means ‘body’ and the word ‘punishment’ comes from the Latin word ‘punier’ which means ‘pain’,” she said.

Mulenga said corporal punishment resulted in immediate compliance by the person who was being punished but did not result in a life change in attitude and values because research had shown that a person who received corporal punishment often repeated the behaviour but one who

was taught the consequences of bad behaviour changed their attitude for the better.

She said there were non-violent means of disciplining children that were more effective than corporal punishment.

“All corporal punishment teaches a child is that it’s ok when you are bigger or in a position of power to use violence on persons that disagree with you,” she said. “In any case, why should children be less protected from violence just because they are younger and more vulnerable?”

Mulenga wondered what kind of society refused to protect children from violence and yet accorded adults all the protection they needed against violence.