Media Watch

Issue No. 181  July, 2019

PROMOTING FREEDOM OF THE MEDIA AND ENSURING THE HIGHEST PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Allow us to publish

MwanaHALISI

News

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Let these papers publish again

MwanaHALISI, Mseto and Mawio were popular weeklies with a devoted readership. Whack...the government descended hard, banning their publication and for a long period now, they are out of circulation.

The government seems to have forgotten them as a cabinet minister said in a recent interview that no newspaper is banned, recalling only the Citizen that was suspended for seven days.

It seems, the three popular publications, as far as the authorities are concerned do not exist!

They were banned for a variety of reasons including doing bad journalism, according to state perceptions.

The fact that they went to court, and the government decision was overturned ordering the papers to be licensed and continue their business, seems the authorities are either oblivious of the ruling or pretending to be so.

The publishers of the newspaper could not take this lying down and came out clean reminding the authorities of their predicament, which apart from denying readers their right to enjoy the publications also their workers have been suffering for loss of work after the papers were banned.

The case of these three publications reflects negatively to the authorities as their decision, not to implement court ruling, constitutes negation of rule of law with adverse impact on good governance.

Foremost, the authorities should be aware that by continuing to ban the newspapers, they are suppressing freedom of expression as well as freedom of press.

These freedoms are essentially human rights and for a government which boasts of good governance, transparency, accountability and above all democratic, closing newspapers, disregarding court rulings is contrary to the avowed civilized stance.

The authorities should change, remove obstacles and allow the publication of the three newspapers.

They should also amend the Media Services Act of 2016 as ordered by the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) in its ruling following the challenge raised by the Media Council of Tanzania, Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) and Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) to turn it into a friendly legislation.

We insist here, that the authorities should really change and accommodate it. Suspending or banning newspapers should be relegated to history.
Allow publication of MwanaHALISI Mseto and Mawio, Govt urged

By MW Reporter

The Government has been urged to let three newspapers - MwanaHALISI, MSETO and MAWIO to print and circulate following court decisions to unban them.

The authorities had banned the newspapers due to variety of reasons including violation of journalism ethics but the newspapers challenged the decisions in court and won.

Publishers of the newspapers, Hali Halisi Publishers Limited (HHPL) in a press statement released on July 12, 2019 urged the government to respect the Court’s decisions and let MwanaHALISI, MSETO and MAWIO continue their business for the sake of her employees who have suffered for long.

The publishers came out with the statement following remarks by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Prof. Palamagamba Kabudi.

Interviewed by the BBC in London, UK, broadcast on July 10, 2019 Prof. Kabudi, denied knowledge of any newspaper in Tanzania that had been suspended by the Government except The Citizen newspaper which he said was suspended for 7 days.

For the benefit of Minister Kabudi and the public in general who might have been misled by the minister’s interview, the HHPL Managing Director, Saed Kubenea who is also a Member of Parliament for Ubungo Constituency on Chakama ticket, in a signed press statement said hitherto, MSETO newspaper which was suspended in 2016 is still suspended, MwanaHALISI and MAWIO which were suspended in 2017 remain suspended to date. These three weeklies’ are Published by Hali Halisi Publishers Ltd (HHPL).

During the interview, the minister also said that the suspended newspapers can seek redress from the Minister (possibly the minister of Information).

According to HHPL statement “this is next to impossible as the minister concerned is the one who suspends newspapers without giving the concerned parties an opportunity to be heard”.

“HHP Limited attempted to seek redress from our courts as demanded by the constitution but so far we have not been able to have our newspapers in circulation despite the High Court ruling in our favor”, the statement said.

The following narration as explained in the statement sheds light on the difficulty faced by HHPL to get the papers back in circulation to save our employees who are almost starving.

On the 26th and 27th July 2012 the government issued and caused to be published in the Government Gazette an order suspending the publication of MwanaHALISI.

On 30th July 2012 the Registrar of Newspapers wrote a letter to HHPL informing us of the Government decision to suspend the publication of MwanaHALISI.

On 30th July 2012 the registrar of Newspapers wrote a letter to HHPL informing us of the Government decision to suspend the publication of MwanaHALISI indefinitely.

Aggrieved by the decision we then filed an application for judicial review challenging the indefinite ban on MwanaHALISI through Miscellaneous Civil Case No. 27 of 2013 that was filed before the High Court of Tanzania (Dar es Salaam District Registry) at Dar es Salaam. Due to the government’s representative non-appearance on the date the application was fixed for hearing the High Court proceeded to hear and determine the application ex parte, granting our prayers as sought in the chamber summons, the major ones being an order of certiorari quashing the order issued and published through government notice No. 238 of 27th July 2012 banning the MwanaHALISI newspaper indefinitely.

The Government preferred Civil Appeal No.

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Saed Kubenea Managing Director of HaliHalisi, the publishers of MwanaHALISI, Mseto and Mawio newspapers.
Allow publication

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13/2016) to challenge the decision.

When the appeal was called for hearing in October 2016, the appellants sought an adjournment for the reason that they intended to make a supplementary record of appeal; the adjournment was thus granted by the Court of Appeal.

But in the meantime we had filed two preliminary objections to challenge the competence of the appeal, one on the grounds that the appeal was premature and therefore incompetent for reasons that the decision sought to be challenged by the appellants emanates from an ex parte judgment, which is not appealable without first filing an application to set aside the ex parte judgment by the High Court.

The appeal was called for hearing again on the 14th day of May 2019 but for reasons unknown to us or the Court the government representatives did not enter an appearance. In the circumstances, our counsel moved the Court under Rule 106(7) of The Court of Appeal Rules, 2009 to strike out the appeal for want of prosecution. Consequently the appeal was struck out for want of prosecution as prayed by our counsel.

On the 7th day of October 2016 we filed an application before the East African Court of Justice challenging an order suspending the publication of MSETO Newspaper, an act which violated the provisions of the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community (EAC). On the 21st day of June 2018 the EACJ delivered its decision in our favor. The government of Tanzania filed a notice of Appeal which was admitted by the EACJ registry and marked as Application No. 03 of 2018.

Since July 2018 to 13th May 2019 the Government had not taken any steps towards prosecuting its appeal. This delay therefore prompted our counsel to file an application before the EACJ through Application No. 03 of 2019 seeking an order of the Appellate Division of the Court to strike out the notice from its records for want of essential steps towards prosecution of the intended appeal. It is our hope and prayer that this issue will end here.

On 19th September 2017, The government alleged that a series of articles in our newspaper (MwanaHALISI) it was clear to the minister that the conduct and story writing style employed by us in the newspaper was in violation of journalism ethics, and thus the editor of the newspaper was required to show cause as to why disciplinary measures should not be taken against the newspaper. Despite the short time within which it was required of us to submit our explanation, the editor of the newspaper nevertheless replied to the allegations accordingly and categorically clearing the newspaper of any wrongdoing.

Notwithstanding the editor’s submission, the government proceeded, vide a letter with Reference Number IPR/750/103, to suspend again our MwanaHALISI newspaper from publication and ordered a re-registration in the event that after suspension the applicant would be desirous to continue with the publication of its newspaper.

We were aggrieved by the Government’s actions; hence on the 20th day of November 2017 we filed for leave to apply for prerogative orders vide Miscellaneous Application No. 90 of 2017. The sought leave was granted on the 2nd day of February 2018 by His Lordship I.P. Kitusi J, who directed us to file the main application within 30 days from the date of his ruling.

Following Honorable Justice Kitusi’s order, on 14th February 2018 we filed the main application vides Miscellaneous Civil Case No. 02/2018. By the court’s order, the main application was heard by way of written submissions.

Upon complying with the court’s schedule for filing of submission by both parties to the matter, the court’s ruling was handed down on the 24th day of July 2018 by Her Ladyship Mutungi J, deciding in our favor.

On the 9th August 2018 the government’s representative vide a letter with reference number AGC/ Misc/MARCH/20/18/10/22 applied to the Registrar of the High Court to be supplied with copies of proceedings, ruling, drawn order, exhibits, certificate of delay in case of any delay.

On the 27th day August 2018 the Registrar of the High Court vide a letter with reference number Misc./CIVIL C./ NO/02/2018 informed the government that the requested copies were ready for collection.

As a matter of procedure, the government was supposed to file for leave to appeal to the Court of Appeal within 30 days from the date of the decision which they sought to challenge, something which they did not do.

Realizing that the government has not acted on their notice of appeal, we filed notice of Motion.

Up to the date we filed the notice of Motion, the Government had not filed their memorandum of appeal, which they were supposed to file within 60 days from the date they were informed by the Registrar that the requested copies were ready for collection.

In view of the above position, we can safely conclude that the government has abandoned its appeal.

One may wonder why the appeal was filed in the first place. We are tempted to believe that the aim is to deny us an opportunity to work for our livelihood.

Regarding MAWIO newspaper – this was suspended for 24 months from 15th June 2015. We successfully challenged the suspension and on 13 Dec 2018 Hon. Masoud J ordered that we were condemned unheard contrary to the Law of Natural Justice. Fortunately the government this time around did not appeal.

Consequently, Victoria Media Services, the Publishers of MAWIO applied for license as per the law, all required documents were submitted since 28th December 2018. On 16th April 2019 a reminder was sent to the Registrar of Newspapers but to date, that is 8 months after our first letter, a government department, has not even responded to our two letters.

Mark you, the newspaper on 15th June 2019 had served the entire 24 months of the punishment.

May we urge the Government to respect the Court’s decisions and let MwanaHALISI, MSETO and MAWIO continue their business for the sake of their employees who have suffered for long.

July 12, 2019

Prof Palamagamba Kabudi, Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation.
New media law bill expected in House of Reps September

By MW Reporter

At last light can be seen at the end of the tunnel as media stakeholders in Zanzibar have been informed that the bill for the much awaited new media legislation is expected to be tabled before the House of Representatives in September, this year.

Speaking during a consultative meeting on July 14, 2019 which attracted a wide section of stakeholders, a legal officer of the Ministry of Information, Tourism and Antiquities Mustafa Omar Abdalla spoke on draft bill of the Media Services Law of Zanzibar 2019.

He said the draft is expected to be presented before the ministry’s executive committee.

He said the draft will then be tabled before Ministerial Principal Secretaries and the Attorney General for final inputs before it lands to the House.

“We expect in September, the bill on Media Services Act 2019 to be tabled before the House of Representatives to get views of representatives and eventually to be passed into law”, he explained.


These remarks by a senior government official attest that
New media law bill expected in House of Reps September

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process for new media legislation in Zanzibar is gaining momentum while stakeholders press for broad participation.

During the consultative meeting on the proposed legislation stakeholders appealed for transparency to avoid coming up with a repressive law.

"Views by stakeholders are crucial and they should be accommodated in the new law", they emphasized.

They noted that though they have been involved all along in the process but at this final stage, it was imperative they fully participate.

Senior Programmes Officer of the Media Council of Tanzania – Zanzibar office- Shifaa Hassan said the Council had taken several steps including collecting views from stakeholders as a crucial move to ensure the new law would take on board and satisfy needs and requirements of the media practitioners.

"From 2010, the Council has taken various steps in collecting views from stakeholders in order to have a good media law", she explained.

The views gathered by the Council were shared with various civic organizations and also presented to the government to help in preparations for a friendly media law which would promote press freedom and democracy.

The Director of the Zanzibar Legal Service Centre, Harusi Mpatani said the new law should positively consider and accommodate media practitioners, media outlets and social media.

She said social media is playing a crucial role and should be well covered by the law.

A senior manager with the Tanzania Media Women Association (TAMWA), Hawra Shamte appealed for close cooperation and urged the government to appreciate contribution from other institutions in the process for a new media law and the right of individuals to question development issues.
The Coalition on the Right to Information (CoRI) has resolved to accept the government’s offer to have a sound working relationship with the media.

The Government, through the Minister for Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Dr. Harrison Mwakyembe, offered an olive branch for cooperation with media during the commemoration of the World Press Freedom Day held in Dodoma on May 3, 2019.

A letter to that effect from CoRI will be delivered to the Minister.

The response by CoRI was made during its meeting on July 16, held at the boardroom of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) and presided by CoRI chairperson, Kajubi Mukajanga who is also the Executive Secretary of the Council.

The meeting decided first to accept the government offer then to proceed to work on other logistics like setting up a team that would liaise with the government on matters pertaining to the media.

The atmosphere during the CoRI meeting was positive as members welcomed the government overture.

CoRI chairperson noted however that such a committee between the media and government was established after previous engagements between the two sides but did not function due to a number of reasons.

This time around Mukajanga was optimistic that under a new arrangement things will work.

The intended cooperation would promote a proper and functioning rapport between the two sides.
Complaints Procedures

1. Since one of the Council's major objectives is to reconcile and mediate between journalists or media institutions on the one hand, and members of the general public and other institutions on the other, complainants must, before complaining to the Council, first ensure that all avenues and possibilities of reconciliation have been explored to no avail.

2. All possibilities of reconciliation will not have failed if complaints will not have been allowed to pass through relevant institutional channels. For example, a complaint has first to go to the editor, then chief editor, managing editor, managing director, publisher of chairman whichever is applicable at a given media institution. Some complainants having failed to agree with authors of the stories (reporters) being disputed, they decide to file complaints, directly to the Council, ignoring higher authorities which are in fact better placed to settle such disputes.

3. Ensure that at the time of filing the complaint, the story being disputed was published or broadcast not more than 12 weeks from the date of publication or broadcast a per Council Rules of Procedure (Section 10.1).

4. Because mediation is one of the basic pillars of the Council, the Council cannot help complaints whose express purpose (of complaining to the Council) is to get money. Money awarded to complaints in terms of fines from respondents is only a result of mediation, not the basis of filing complaints in the Council. Therefore, the Council advises any would-be complainant whose purpose of coming to the Council is to get money to take their cases to the courts to law.

5. Complaints filed in the Council must be in writing and must be accompanied by evidence annexed to prove particular allegations of facts.

6. Complaints to the Council must also state what remedy the complainants want from the Council. For example, a complainant might demand an apology to be printed on the front-page of a newspaper, or broadcast on prime time of a radio or television programme, or money to defray costs incurred (by the complainant) in the process of filing the complaint, etc.

7. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Council settlement, he/she can resort to court action. However, evidence adduced during the settlement shall not be reproduced in court, in which case, the Council can be called as ‘Amicus Curiae’

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CoRI extends time for petition on Azory Gwanda

By MW Reporter

It was days, months, now it is one year and six months the whereabouts of journalist Azory Gwanda are not known.

Gwanda disappeared on November 21, 2017 from his work station in Utete Rufiji, Coast Region.

Efforts to press the authorities to find him have not paid off so far.

The Coalition on the Right to Information (CoRI) has resolved to extend the campaign to seek more signatures for its petition on the missing journalist.

The decision to extend the campaign was reached at a CoRI meeting held on July 16, 2019 under the chairperson, Kajubi Mukajanga.

CoRI members were unanimous in extending the campaign to ensure that more people sign the petition which will be presented to the Minister for Home Affairs and the Dean of Diplomatic Corps in Tanzania.

They resolved to encourage more people especially media stakeholders and media practitioners to sign the petition.

Platforms of social media influencers will also be used to ensure the petition attracts more signatures.

CoRI’s petition on Azory Gwanda has laid out seven pleas as follows:

One, the Ministry of Home Affairs publicly declares that Azory Gwanda is missing;

Two, the Government allocates resources for the security organs to conduct a thorough investigation of Gwanda’s disappearance in accordance with the Police General Orders No. 232 in relation to the investigation of missing persons;

Three, Security organs, particularly the police force, provide periodic reports on the progress of the investigation;

Four, Media outlets regularly publish his information as a missing person;

Five, Media owners come together to develop a protocol for journalists who go missing including mechanisms for getting information on investigations from the relevant authorities and for public communication plans;

Six, The Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG) executes its mandate to follow up on Gwanda’s disappearance with the relevant authorities;

Seven, the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps should be ready to provide resources to support the government’s investigation of Gwanda’s disappearance.

The link for the petition was http://bit.ly/AzoryPetition

Meanwhile Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has called on the Tanzanian government to provide a detailed public account of the fate of freelance journalist Azory Gwanda after the country’s foreign minister, Palamagamba Kabudi, said in an interview that the journalist is dead.

In a recent interview with the BBC’s “Focus on Africa” program, Kabudi said that Gwanda had “disappeared and died” in the country’s eastern Rufiji region, and said that the government has since “been able to contain that kind of extremism” in the region.

Gwanda went missing on November 21, 2017, after investigating mysterious killings and disappearances in his community, and the Tanzanian government has never delivered a promised investigation into his case, according to CPJ research.

“For a year and a half, Azory Gwanda’s family and the Tanzanian media have pleaded with the government to explain what happened to their loved one and colleague,” said CPJ Deputy Executive Director Robert Mahoney from New York.

“Then suddenly the foreign minister mentions, almost in passing, that the journalist is apparently dead. This is wholly inadequate and distressing. The government must immediately share publicly all information it has about Gwanda’s fate.”

The Minister has refuted the comments on Gwanda arguing his remarks were wrongly interpreted.
The High Court in Mwanza ordered a fresh trial of a case in which three journalists were convicted and jailed for robbery with violence.

The journalists - Christopher Gamaina of Raia Mema, Zephania Mandia of Chanel Ten and Manga Masabala of Mzawa were convicted and jailed by the Magu District Court. Ruling on the appeal against conviction and sentence, High Court Judge Siyani on July 24 quashed the ruling by the Magu District Court of criminal case no 11/2018.

In his ruling, the judge dismissed all the evidence presented by the prosecution and ordered the case to be heard by another magistrate.

He said, by ordering fresh trial, it is intended to protect the interest of justice of both sides. In case after the fresh trial, the accused are convicted again, the period they had already served in prison should be considered in sentencing them.

The defendants were advised to seek bail again.

Gamaina and two others were jailed by the Magu District court for 30 years while another one was jailed for four years. The appellants in the case were represented by Advocates Constantine Mutalemwa and Amri Linus.

The appeal was initially scheduled for hearing on June 17, 2019 before Judge Siani but could not proceed as the judge was not present.

It was called before the District Registrar Hon. Kingweri but could not proceed as the judge was not present.

Christopher Gamaina of Raia Mwema newspaper, who together with two other journalists had appealed against conviction and jail term for robbery with violence.
To Azam Media and the media fraternity in the country in general, Monday July 8, 2019 was a sad day. It was the day that a fatal road accident cut short the life of five brilliant young media practitioners of the company who were on assignment to cover the launching of a new animal park of Bugiri in Chato, the home district of President John Magufuli.

Those killed in the accident when their vehicle collided with a lorry in a remote area towards Igunga were Charles Wandwi, Saidi Haji, Salim Mhando, Florence Ndalema and Sylvanus Kasongo.

Hundreds of Dar es Salaam residents including cabinet ministers, leaders of political parties, representatives of media bodies and media practitioners thronged the premises of Azam Media, the offices in the capital and the funeral service.

The five workers of Azam media who died in car accident.

Grief grips Azam Media as five workers die in road accident

By MW Reporter

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Grief grips Azam Media as five workers die in road accident

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Azam Media to pay their last respects to the deceased.

The atmosphere was sorrowful - grief stricken relatives, colleagues and friends some failing to resist breaking down in tears as the bodies of cameramen Said Haji and Charles Wandwi, switcher Salim Mhando, soundman Florence Ndibalema and engineer Sylvanus Kasongo were brought to the company premises along Mandela Road.

The late Mhando had won the Excellence in Journalism Award Tanzania (EJAT) in Tourism and Conservation for Television on June 29, 2019.

The five, along with three others who were injured were heading to Chato, where the President- John Pombe Magufuli was scheduled to inaugurate Bugiri National Park on July 9, 2019.

The injured include cameraman Said Mwinshehe and Artus Masawe – engineer and reports say their conditions are improving.

Representatives of media bodies, Media Council of Tanzania, Tanzania Editors Forum, Tanzania Media Women Association and Media Owners Association of Tanzania expressed their condolences to Azam Media following the death of the five workers.

The Minister for Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Dr. Harrison Mwakyembe used the occasion to sound a stern warning to people who take photos of accident victims in bad shape and post them on social media.

He said this was unfair to the victims as such photos are in bad taste. He asked those taking such photos and posting them on social media to ask themselves how would they feel to see photos of their relatives in such state.

He said that he was giving the last warning and that from now on legal action will be taken against culprits.

Salim Mhando of Azam TV (right) receives the Excellence in Journalism Award Tanzania (EJAT) 2018 on Tourism and Conservation from Dr. Severin Kalongo, the representative of World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Country Representative. Salim died in a car accident alongside four other workers of Azam Media.
A debate is raging amongst senior editors following imminent signs that are pointing to the deterioration of the efficacy of the media industry – both to the public, which is the justification for its existence and to the owners, who invested with expectation to make money.

Culprits most mentioned – weak media management, failure to adapt to developments in science and technology, declining professionalism, skills deficiency, conflicting objectives, fear and threats, media unfriendly laws, covert sabotage, government ownership and others. The truth, of course would only be established if research and verification is conducted similar to the informed opinions contained in the 2017/2018 State of the Media report.

Apart from those views, as of now we can only give opinions based on hunch. The following outlook is my contribution to the debate as to whether the media is grinding itself to a halt or not.

The newsroom is no longer at ease, as they say. Credible surveys and empirical research by media scholars reported in the editions of this publication in the past three months point to an alarming situation: the media (some, if not most) are relinquishing their surveillance function, which is their raison d’être. Investigative journalism – the pride of the profession, has gone down the drain. ‘Childish’ and cheap programming is now the norm. The monthly pay check is now a rare phenomenon with some practitioners sitting several moons before pocketing one.

Veteran journalist Attilio Tagalile, in the May edition of Media Watch, listed a myriad of professional failings that are letting down the profession in the eyes of the public. In general, as summed up by researchers Christoph Spurk from Switzerland and Abdal Ilah Khatunzi from the School of Journalism of the University of Dar es Salaam in the 2018 Media Year Book, the quality of media reportage is pitiable.

The practice of journalism has not been easy either; an element of fear has crept in following a spate of threats, harassment, torture and loss of life. There has never been sympathy from civic leaders, who unfortunately seem to rejoice with the woes afflicting the media. Some regional and district leaders would be too glad to have all journos thrown into dungeons as mosquito fodder. They would rather do without them because ‘no news is good news’! Their attitude interpreted means they have dubious acts they would not like exposed to the public and superior leaders.

Working in such an environment where the leadership is suspicious and would not condone any criticism or exposes of misuse of power makes professional life a big challenge. How newsrooms overcome the challenge is what makes the difference between a failed newsroom and a functional one. The winners are those that can turn the challenges into opportunities.

State of the Media Report, 2017/18 released by the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) in April this year, paints a very challenging environment under which the media is operating, extremely discouraging but nonetheless still optimistic that ways will be found to circumvent them. The above reports, by the way, are readily available on the Media Council of Tanzania website. On that account, it is obvious newsrooms are distressed. The outcome has been quite disastrous, some losing their best professionals to better paying outlets, while others are quitting the sector altogether to join what they perceive to be more safe work environments.

What went wrong, one would ask. It is unfortunate when President John Magufuli met businessmen on June 7, 2019 no one from the media advanced specific issues got to do with media operations. However, most of the challenges faced by other sectors do also apply to the media industry.

The president would have been told that media outlets are dying because of state and civic power suppression and denial of the means of survival, especially adverts and sponsorships by public institutions. They would have alerted him to the new mechanism of losing jobs by closing down outlets, especially newspapers which results in the government losing revenue. He would have been told how reporters are hunted down and kicked out of events. The President would have heard how a ‘crooked’ law has given power to a ministry to perform the work of the judiciary. Those are but a few; complaints are many.

For the quarter century we’ve had plural media, not a single minister served tenure without closing down a newspaper. It’s like a ritual; one cannot claim to have been a minister of information if a newspaper was not closed during tenure of office. It’s probably a measure of successful ministerial-ship! Rarely do we hear of hospitals, schools, roads, airports and others closed because of an error committed by a practitioner to please the egos of those in civic and political power, but it happens in media.

In media of this country, simple stories touching on the egos of a civic leader results in loss of jobs that in turn makes hundreds to go without food and loss of government revenue. As of this publication, there are several newspapers locked up which did not have the right to fight it out in court, and even those that won their appeals, the controllers have just refused to issue licenses, as is the case with MwanaHALISI, Mseto and Mawio newspapers. The law still vests information officials with power to supersede the court process.

On the other hand, when it comes to issues of media philosophy and infrastructural development that impact on the integrity of the newsroom, other factors are at play tormenting the industry, thus weakening its usefulness.

The first factor to be considered is whether the media are based on a philosophy embraced by the country, since media practice is a reflection of the ideals of a particular society. If the country is a democracy, the media are equally free, independent and diverse. There would be media owned by the public, the government, private and communities, all serving the interests of all the people that profess the national ideals as promulgated in the constitution.

Likewise, if the country is dictatorial, the media become tools of administration propagating the whims of the leadership. Ownership is limited to the government and its institutions, including trusted cronies. A lot of the leadership, including the President have expressed displeasure at the media for not supporting the government all the time. This is tantamount to abdicating the watchdog role, which the public recognises as the legitimate function of media in the society. As more and more media outlets succumb to government pressure to turn them into public relations organs, so is the failure to serve the public.

Tanzania is a democratic country as declared in the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, Article 3(1). It would be expected therefore that media would likewise reflect the ideals cherished in democratic institutions – freedom, independence, diversity, rule of law and integrity.

How do our media measure up to these principles? Leaders brag of increased media outlets as a sign of the country embracing free media, but what is not said is that if the numbers do not go hand in hand with diverse content, they are as good as just one outlet. Television broadcasting is a good example of government monopoly. Out of the 26 registered with the communication authority – TCRA, 12 are owned and operated by the government – central and local, another two are operated by government institutions, religious institutions two and six by private persons, one of whom has three outlets and the ruling party – CCM, four outlets. This means that only four television media houses could claim to be independent in outlook.

There is also the issue of access. All people should be able to access media content as guaranteed in the constitution. If this is not feasible because of recent situations that have brought about logistical, economic and technological impediments, then the media would definitely be failing the people.

Television viewing is problematic in rural and remote areas because of lack of electricity, lack of television signals, inability to own satellite receiver.

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The deadline for entries is 15th September 2019. The finalists will be announced on 1st October 2019 while the winner will be announced on Wednesday, 30th October 2019.

**For more information, follow @APO_Source and #APOMediaAward on Twitter.**

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**OPPORTUNITIES**

**CALL FOR ENTRIES:**

APO Group African Women in Media Award to Recognise Support of Female Journalists for Women’s Entrepreneurship in Africa

A USD 2,500 cash prize, an all-expenses paid trip to a prestigious International Women’s Forum, and online courses from one of the most respected international universities

**LUSANNE, Switzerland, July 22, 2019/ -- APO Group (www.APO-opa.com), the leading media relations consultancy and press release distribution service in Africa and the Middle East, presents the inaugural APO Group African Women in Media Award set to recognise, celebrate and empower African women journalists who support female entrepreneurship in Africa.**

The Award will be bestowed to the winner at the 5th Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum’s (AWIEF) (www.AWIEForum.org) Conference, Exhibition and Awards hosted at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC), 29-30 October 2019, with the theme ‘Enhancing impact: digitalization, investment and intra-African trade’.

AWIEF’s prestigious annual event is a platform that sees global thought leaders, industry experts, policymakers, academics, development organisations and investors gather to dialogue, connect, network, share, collaborate and transact in a combined effort to boost Africa’s entrepreneurship ecosystem for women.

Lionel Reina, CEO of APO Group said, “We are extremely excited for the opportunity to highlight the work of female journalists sharing the stories of women entrepreneurs in Africa. The APO Group African Women in Media Award is part of our commitment to supporting the development of journalism on the continent.”

Entries for APO Group African Women in Media Award must offer valuable insights into African female entrepreneurs while appealing to a global audience.

The award is open to African woman journalists and bloggers, whether directly employed or freelancers, working in the continent of Africa who have produced a story that has been broadcast or published in English, French, Portuguese or Arabic in the form of a printed publication, a television feature, a radio story, a website or a blog whose primary audience is based in Africa.

Stories must have been broadcast or published between 1st January and 15th September 2019.

Stories are judged on content, writing, analysis, creativity, human interest and community impact.

All stories must be submitted in electronic format:

- **Print:** upload the scan(s) of the published article;
- **Radio:** upload the SoundCloud link;
- **Website:** upload the URL; and/or
- **TV:** upload the YouTube link.

TV material must first be uploaded to YouTube (www.YouTube.com) and radio material to SoundCloud (SoundCloud.com). If one is not a member of these sites, one will need to sign up in order to upload the video or radio material. Once one has obtained the link, one must enter it in this online entry form when inputting one’s story details.

The online entry form is available here: http://bit.ly/APOaward

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A Media Watch Publication

**Opportunities**

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**AWIEF**

AWIEF (www.AWIEForum.org) is a pan-African women’s economic empowerment organisation that promotes and supports female innovation, technology and entrepreneurship across Africa through a portfolio of high impact programmes. AWIEF's mission is to foster the economic inclusion, advancement and empowerment of women in Africa through entrepreneurship support and development. AWIEF's programmes and activities include accelerators, capacity-building and training, networking and mentorship, AWIEF Awards, AWIEF Digital Hub, and building the AWIEF community of African women entrepreneurs. The year-round activities culminate in convening and hosting the popular and widely attended annual international and multi-stakeholder AWIEF conference, exhibition and awards event, currently in its fifth edition. Website: www.AWIEForum.org.

**SOURCE**

APO Group
Maxence Melo Mubyazi the co-founded and Managing Director of Jamii Forum has become the first Tanzanian and the 23rd African to be awarded the International Press Freedom Award by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) since they were introduced in 1991.

As for African bloggers, Zone 9 bloggers of Ethiopia are in record as recipient of the CPJ award in the last 28 years.

Speaking on his nomination for the award, Melo, said he was both excited and comforted for the international recognition.

He recalled that he had gone through negative experience as at one time, for his zeal to protect sources of information, he was seen as sellout.

Observers note that with the trend of things in current administration, Tanzania would produce more awardees of freedom of expression and press awards.

According to CPJ, Maxence Melo Mubyazi, is a champion of online freedom of expression in Tanzania, who co-founded and is the Managing Director of Jamii Forums, an online discussion site and source of breaking news.

Melo has been charged under the country’s restrictive Cyber Crimes Act and, in 2017, appeared in court 81 times.

The event to present the international Press Freedom Award to Mello and other awardees, will be held at the Grand Hyatt New York in New York City on November 21, 2019.

The CPJ statement released on June 26, 2019 from New York, states that the Committee to Protect Journalists will honor journalists from Brazil, India, Nicaragua, and Tanzania with the 2019 International Press Freedom Awards amid the erosion of press freedom in democracies around the globe.

The journalists have faced online harassment, legal and physical threats and imprisonment in their pursuit of the news. CPJ will also honor the editor of Pakistan’s Dawn newspaper, Zaffar Abbas, with the Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award.

CPJ’s 2019 awardees are:

Patrícia Campos Mello, a reporter and columnist at Brazil’s daily Folha de S.Paulo. During the Brazilian presidential election campaign in 2018, Campos Mello was attacked online and docked in response to her coverage of supporters of then presidential-candidate Jair Bolsonaro allegedly sponsoring bulk messaging in WhatsApp.

Neha Dixit, a freelance investigative journalist in India who covers human rights. She has faced legal and physical threats, as well as online harassment, after reporting on alleged wrongdoing by right-wing nationalist groups and police. Lucía Pineda Ubau, news director; and Miguel Mora, founder and editor; of Nicaraguan broadcaster 100% Noticias. The pair was imprisoned in December 2018 in relation to their coverage of political unrest. They were freed on June 11 after six months behind bars, under surveillance and in isolation most of the time. Maxence Melo Mubyazi, champion of online freedom of expression in Tanzania, who co-founded and is the managing director of Jamii Forums, an online discussion site and source of breaking news. Melo has been charged under the country’s restrictive Cyber Crimes Act and, in 2017, appeared in court 81 times.

"The winners of CPJ’s 2019 International Press Freedom Awards represent the very best of journalism, people who have put their lives and liberty on the line to bring us the news. While we

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facilities and continuity through the pre-pay modality introduced recently (Saritimes, Zuku, Azam, Continental etc) and inability to own receivers (smartphones) that would enable access to online content in audio and video formats.

Despite that setback, as of October 2018, which is the latest date of the data posted on the website, TCRA had issued over 180 licenses to online radio and television content providers. The new licensees are quite many and given the multiplying nature of media consumption, audience growth could equally be substantial using digital platforms.

Traditionally radio was claimed to reach most people in the country, a claim made when the propagation mode included FM, MW and SW wavebands. The migration to digital broadcasting has left only FM mode in use. The weaknesses of this system are known: short distance reach of its waves and the susceptibility to hindrances from hills, valleys and tall edifices. Out of the 135 registered radio stations in the country listed on the TCRA website, 90 are clustered in the urban centres of Dar es Salaam (26), Mwanza- 16, Iringa 11, Dodoma and Mbeza – 9 each, Arusha 8, Tanga 7, Morogoro 5 and Moshi 4. The remaining 28 centres with radio outlets have one or two stations each. Given the expanse of the country, many people may not be served by FM radio.

Digital platforms – cellphones and computers that are fast overtaking the traditional channel formats are still a rare commodity in much of rural Tanzania. There could be many reasons, but mostly, I think, is the nature of the handsets that are in use. To be able to effectively use a phone for radio and television services, one needs a smart phone, which is still highly priced far beyond the income of the rural dweller to buy and maintain, let alone power challenges in rural Tanzania.

Print media is almost nonexistent in a lot of areas of the country, leave away the fact that newspapers circulation has dwindled greatly, mainly due to technological evolution. It is true the newspaper is in deep trouble. Prints are few because readers are few nowadays. The digital revolution has been too fast not to allow time for adjustment and realignment of newsroom culture to convey the newspaper to the mobile viewer. The one thousand shillings one pays to buy one newspaper is enough to buy airline and get all the news available online for a whole day. A lot of people are reading their mobile phones throughout the day at their convenience and would have little time for newspapers.

On the other hand, digital platforms in urban centres have now become vogue and may supersede the traditional radio and television receivers. Blogs and social media enable real time viewing of events and, in fact, because of their nature, allow everyone to take part by interaction on the content in real time. This is why technology is being embraced and some newsrooms have taken the opportunity to expand their outputs to align with the new consumer culture of mobile phone usage.

As newsrooms adopt the new online format, some adjustments will have to be made, like training and acquisition of the technology. In cases where the newsroom runs the traditional and the new online systems, we would not expect a decline in terms of decreased workers, but on the contrary, that is if they can retain and acquire the skills needed, otherwise it will necessitate to resource and retire those who cannot cope. In fact it is an opportunity for expansion, skills enhancement and innovative management.

Similarly, advertisers are using the digital platforms more than traditional newspaper formats, eroding more the ability of the newspaper to be in circulation. Every newspaper is lamenting the fall of advertising revenue and hardcopy sales. On this account, even without quoting numbers, one can say with authority that some newsrooms are shrinking in personnel (layoffs) and print circulation from what we see happening in newsstands.

This is to prove the hypothesis that has been true over the centuries that when a communication medium changes and so do the consumption behaviours and practices. A good example is what you are reading. Media Watch - a journal that used to print and circulate in hard copy, but now wholly digitized and available on the internet and mobile phones only.

Newsroom shrinkage is also when media fail to grow with democracy and instead stagnate or revert to practices reminiscent of the pre-liberal era – the time between independence and 1992. Regressive practices include those ordered by the media services law, like establishment of statutory media council with powers to license journalists, dish out fines for offenders and criminalize libel and defamation and the government prescribing what to publish and the right to seize equipment and properties. In short the law puts the media sector under the auspices of the government, especially by using vague statements that would be interpreted infavour of the government.

With such a legal regime the watchdog role of the media is completely subverted. To the public, the media are a failure on that account, which is what I would call newsroom decline. In Tanzania, we do not have public service media, though the national broadcaster and newspapers owned and managed by the government give unsuspecting consumers impression that they are.

Those are not. They are not public service institutions and will never be under the current set-up and policy. They are government institutions to further the interests of the regime in power for what it assumes to be the best interests of the public. The public cannot use the same to question the government on its actions.

The other forms of media ownership are equally problematic. Private media is for profit and would invest only in areas and content that attracts money. The results are obvious - cheap content that is superficial and reaching only popular clusters found mostly in urban areas. As the economy declines, quality content that costs more is done away with, especially investigative stories and innovative talent, a fact already reported in the State of the Media Report mentioned earlier. Mediocrity sets in and hence a decline of media efficacy. Media in a democracy is also owned by communities through a system that allows it to become a real public service utility. This mode of ownership, pioneered by UNESCO sponsored outlets in the 1990s, is still very much underdeveloped in the country. TCRA has licensed 27 community radio stations posted on its website, 16 commercial and 11 non-commercial. Is it possible for a community radio to be privately owned and operated on a commercial basis? This is an area that needs a study to find out how the two systems are operating and with what effect.

My conclusion is that newsrooms are not shrinking in terms of numbers since new ones are being opened in the digital platforms and much of the broadcasting spectrum has a lot of space for more radio and television. Digital newspapers will not completely replace the traditional formats but will co-exist as the market will demand. It only requires innovation in content provision to attract readers, listeners and viewers. The new platforms require the same skills: reading, listening and viewing. In my view the newsroom is shrinking as professionals refuse to admit that they are advocates and activists of the profession. What do we believe in? The professional journalist works for an ideal – the best which society would like to be.

The cardinal principles of the profession are the guiding ideology which a true media practitioner should defend at all cost: truth and accuracy, independence, fairness and impartiality, humanity and accountability. These principles apply also to the online content meant for communication to the public: internet, social media, blogs and forums.

On the increase are media, especially print and online that completely abuse these principles contrary to professional ethics and still allowed to operate in the country. Their content is not journalistic and should be viewed as such. Media regulators and other authoritative bodies supposed to protect the public from this abuse are blind to this silent killer of the profession. This is what I would call media decline at its worst in the eyes of the public. Unless sober media outlets rise against this abuse by exposing the malaise amidst them, the public will continue to be betrayed.
The Media Council of Tanzania (MCT) has urged the Police Force to immediately release investigative journalist Erick Kabendera, who is being held since July 29, 2019.

The Council in its statement on the arrest of the journalist issued on July 31 and signed by its Executive Secretary Kabendera is a renowned journalist who is critical of Tanzania's president, IPI Director of Advocacy Ravi R. Prasad said, referring to Kabendera's critical coverage of Tanzania President John Magufuli.

"The question of his citizenship was investigated and resolved in 2013. Therefore, his current detention is clearly aimed to threatening and intimidating him," Kabendera, who received a David Astor Award in 2009, was arrested and his parents questioned over their citizenship in 2013.

Later, the Ministry of Home Affairs said that the citizenship of Kabendera and his parents was "not questionable". The ministry had also directed the department of immigration to take action against those officials who were responsible for ill-treating the journalist and his parents. Press freedom in Tanzania under the present government has suffered a huge backlash. Several newspapers, radio and television stations, and news websites have faced bans ranging from a few weeks to several years under disproportionate laws.

Earlier this year, the East African Court of Justice that some of the provisions of the Media Services Act, the primary regulation used to suspend media organizations, violated fundamental rights. During an IP mission to Tanzania in April, the government committed to working with the journalist community to revise the Act.

However, retaliatory measures like the arrest of Kabendera cast doubt on the government's sincerity to amend relevant legislation and uphold press freedom.

Kabendera was arrested on July 29, 2019 after plain clothed police surrounded his house at Mbweni. Initially his cell phone communication was cut off, before the police moved to arrest him in a manner that attracted suspicion.

In a statement earlier the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) expressed concern on Kabendera's arrest. The Commander of Police for Dar es Salaam Special Zone, Lazaro Mambosasa told journalists on July 30, 2019 that the police are holding the journalist for public outcry over the manner in which the journalist was detained," said CPJ Sub-Saharan Africa Representative Muthoki Mumo.

"Kabendera should be released immediately and this sham of an investigation terminated. Tanzanian authorities must stop harassing their critics."

Kabendera has reported for several regional and international publications, including the British newspaper The Guardian and the website African Arguments. His most recent reporting in the regional weekly The East African covered alleged divisions in Tanzania's ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi, amid alleged plots within the party to block Magufuli from running for a second term.

Press freedom has drastically deteriorated in Magufuli's Tanzania. CPJ has documented the use of suspensions, restrictive legislation, and intimidation to muzzle journalists.

The freelance journalist Azory Gwanda went missing in 2017 and the government has yet to provide a credible accounting of his whereabouts.

When asked about Gwanda on July 30, Mambosasa told journalists that he could not provide details because it was necessary to keep investigations "secret" to protect evidence before it was brought to a court.

On its part, IPI vehemently condemned the arrest of noted journalist Kabendera in Tanzania and demanded his immediate release.

"The detention of Erick Kabendera is unacceptable and reprehensible. It is an attempt to silence a journalist who is critical of Tanzania's president," IPI Director of Advocacy Ravi R. Prasad said, referring to Kabendera's critical coverage of Tanzania President John Magufuli.

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Musiba should not be allowed to use media to propagate, agitate for enmity

- **All professional benchmarks do not provide room for unethical conduct**
- **Online media services should abide by regulations**

By Gervas Moshiro

It’s quite some time since I heard someone called Cyprian Musiba throwing verbal venom at some people he says are anti-establishment. This Musiba has now become famous and infamous, depending on which side one is and calls himself a free citizen, patriot and activist. He calls himself a journalist (albeit perveted) and now owns a newspaper – Tanzanite and an online TV.

Matters came to a head early July when two ex-CCM secretary generals wrote an open memorandum to the head of state complaining about him.

The reaction to this memorandum has been swift and furious, not from the addressee but from Musiba supported by a chain of others who are now drumming their damnation of that memo. The coterie include some parliamentarians, regional and district commissioners and a host of so called independent party stalwarts. The online television has become their haven where, probably, they feel free to say anything against adversaries.

In the process of this condemnation, it’s become an opportunity to bring into the open other citizens long awaited for an opportunity to literally ‘roast’ them and if need be, as some have said they will, incarcerate or liquidate them. Now this is dangerous, especially so because, some online media are now partners in this saga and

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are now naively propagating the hate syndrome as if nothing is wrong.

What I find obnoxious is the use of media, whatever the format, to propagate and agitate for enmity amongst people using a licensed organ that has a role that contradicts what it is doing and the authorities are mum about it.

All of a sudden the word ‘clip’ is becoming synonymous with a magic container of private chats of ‘conspirators’ aimed at ousting the president from power. The agitators, apart from invoking negative past activities, also try hard to associate their victims with the opposition and build a picture of a power hungry clique all out to sow discord in the society.

Someone called to find out if I had seen a certain ‘clip’ trending online – of either (Bernard) Membe or (Nape) Mzauye or Zito (Kabwe) or (January) Makamba or (Abdulrahman) Kinana. Some of the ‘clips’ are telephone conversations between two people, ostensibly not knowing they were being recorded. In some it’s someone (independent activist/patriot/free citizen) talking to journalists and even answering their questions as regards the saga. In the process of viewing the several online TVs spread with the coverage, it’s when I discovered that there is something terribly wrong that needs to be addressed by the media and regulating authorities. I dread to think of the consequences if we don’t.

By using a media benchmark, what I see on most of the online TVs regarding the fallout of the Makamba-Kinana memorandum has several flaws, the biggest of them being disregard of the law. As regards information rights, the constitution of the country is very clear: Under Article 16(1) the right to private communication is guaranteed.

The Electronic and Postal Communication Act (EPOCA) regulations of 2018 that operationalizes Article 16 clearly demands authorization before anyone can disclose any private information. According to the regulations, the duty to safeguard the confidentiality of electronic private information is vested in the service providers.

In the same constitution, Article 18 gives the citizen right to communicate unhindered to anyone and to any place through any means of communication that is within the law.

Private communication is also well protected under Rule 6(1) of the EPOCA regulations that prohibit any person to intercept any communication anywhere within the republic. Interference with any other person’s communication is only allowed when ordered by law and listening to the clips with private chats I could not get their legal basis, leave away their relevance to the lives of the people.

Within the media industry, the Media Services Act, 2016 is very clear on matters of privacy and truth. In Section 7, Article 47(1)(a)(ii) it prohibits publication of any false information that ruins the reputation, rights and freedom of others and is an offence punishable by fines and imprisonment.

Electronic and Postal Communications (Radio and Television Broadcasting Content) regulations is also very prohibitive of material that relates to private affairs hence invading their privacy. Even with public figures, the crucial thing here is to ensure that any allegation is supported by facts before release to the public, a factor not present in the so called clips. It is important to note that online radio and television licensees under the Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Government Notice No. 133, 8(b) requires adherence to journalism and professionalism.

Online services content must be such that it does not “cause annoyance, threatens harm or evil, encourages or incites crime, or leads to public disorder, content that advocates hate propaganda or promotes genocide or hatred against identifiable group”, the law states.

All legal prescriptions governing the media sphere – the constitution, Media Services Act, the TCRA Act and the Electronic and Postal Communications Act regulations – all demand adherence to professionalism and are very mindful of how private communication should be handled.

Benchmark number two is to see how the outputs measure up to ethical standards. In the Code of Ethics for Media Professionals produced by the Media Council of Tanzania under Code of Ethics for Reporters, truth, accuracy and privacy are key principles guiding media output. Whatever the argument, the main thing is to understand the boundaries of private and public life and this is where the contention is. There is a case in the courts filed against one of the ‘activists’ which may give us answer to the validity of the privacy breach.

What astounds me more is the audacity of the clips’ producers who seem to have no idea of what broadcasting is all about. Portrayal and publishing of the day’s occurrences including comment on those events through TV or radio or print or online is journalism. The cardinal rule here is that the event and outcomes must be true.

I could not see any journalist interrogating the statements uttered by the ‘activists’ to find out the truth, following vague assertions that if need be, the activist will throw into the open all truth, as a threat to keep everyone else quiet. A real journalist would demand the truth first as a condition for publication and not otherwise.

Regulatory authorities have been quiet for reasons best known to them, however what seems odd is the licensing of a person to occasionally post online clips and pieces of recordings, and call it television. Like the traditional forms of broadcasting, the online services regulations are very elaborate and I wonder why should we be treated to the kind of content that we get from some online TVs which are but occasional bits and pieces of very unprofessional reportage, some threatening national security.

Online media is becoming very popular because it still has some latitude to expose social vices and dare publish what others would not. This, however, does not give it credit if social responsibility is not observed.

The online channel is but a carrier that technologically has some advantages over the traditional forms of broadcasting, although the gap is narrowing as the traditional forms create their online services as well as an extra means of communication.

It would be absurd to have two systems that are treated differently, one with an iron hand and the other with a soft touch. Had what I see on some online TVs shown on the traditional screen, some outfits would have closed shop a long time ago. A channel of communication should never give advantage over others when the content is the same. Any administration, regulation or law that discriminates, is automatically null and void as stated in Article 13 of the constitution of the Republic.

No matter the excuses, there is no room in media to publicly insult, threaten and disparage others because this is the foundation for hatred and if not properly managed may develop into a social conflict that may threaten national security. There is need for online media services to abide by regulations or else we will end up in trouble.
CoRi congratulates Melo for winning International Press Freedom Award

By MW Reporter

The Coalition on the Right to Information (CoRi) has congratulated Maxence Melo Mubyazi the co-founded and Managing Director of Jamii Forums who has been picked as winner of the International Press Freedom Award by the Committee to Protect Journalist (CPJ).

The motion to congratulate Melo was moved by Anastazia Rugaba, the Advocacy Manager of Twaweza during a CoRi meeting held under its chairperson, Kajubi Mukajanga on July 16, 2019.

The congratulatory motion was unanimously endorsed by a round of applause from the members who attended the meeting. Melo is one of five journalists in the world who have been picked by the CPJ for the award.

According to CPJ, Maxence Melo Mubyazi, is a champion of online freedom of expression in Tanzania, who co-founded and is the Managing Director of Jamii Forums, an online discussion site and source of breaking news.

CoRI to expedite compilation of dossier

From page 21

researches. Some said that some sectoral bodies query whether some of the researches are useful despite being cleared by the law. Others were also challenging the requirement of permit for conducting a research.

Though it’s a requirement of the law, some argued that “they are doing it politically”.

Mukajanga appealed to those tasked to prepare the documents on the number of researches that seek approval to be published and the challenges faced by organizations under CoRI in relation to the Statistics Act, to expedite compilation and have itsubmitted to intended bodies - AU/UN and other international Bodies such as the World Bank, IMF and UN Human Rights.

Twaweza – member of CoRI and essentially research body has over 14 researches that have not been endorsed by NBS.

CoRI is made up of the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), Sikika, Twaweza, Tanganyika Law Society (TLS), Jamii Forum, Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC), Tanzania Editors Forum (TEF), Policy Forum, Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), Union of Tanzania Press Clubs (UTPC) and Media Institute of Southern Africa-Tanzania Chapter (MISA-Tan).

Melo win CPJ award

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celebrate their courage, we lament that it is required,” said Joel Simon, CPJ’s executive director.

“The sad reality is that around the world independent journalism is threatened by populist authoritarians who disdain and disarage the work of the independent press. This is true in the countries represented by our honorees and many others.”

CPJ’s 2019 Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award recognizing extraordinary and sustained achievement in the cause of press freedom will be presented to Zaffar Abbas, editor of Pakistan’s daily newspaper Dawn. Abbas, who has decades of experience as a reporter in Pakistan, has led Dawn since 2010. Under his leadership, Dawn and its reporters frequently have come under government pressure.

“Zaffar Abbas is the embodiment of journalistic courage, which is why the board is so pleased to honor him with the Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award,” said Kathleen Carroll, chair of the CPJ board.

“Every day he fights to deliver facts to Dawn’s readers in the face of pressure, obstacles, and blockades from the institutions in Pakistan that would much prefer to go about their business without scrutiny from the press or the public.”

All of the winners will be honored on November 21, 2019. For information on how to purchase tables, call Buckley Hall Events at (914) 579-1000 or CPJ’s development office at (212) 300-9021, or email CPJdinner@buckleyhallevents.com.

Other Africans who have been awarded the Press Freedom Award and their countries and the year they awarded in brackets are as follows:


An almost aura of despondency hanged at a recent meeting of the Coalition on Right to Information (CoRI) after it became clear that a planned arrangement to compile a dossier on various researches that have not been published was not accomplished.

CoRI chairperson, Kajubi Mukajanga, urged the team assigned the task to expedite the exercise as some of the researches may be outdated before they are published.

Under the Statistics Act, researches cannot be published unless they get “the green light” of the National Board of Statistics (NBS).

Most CoRI members have researches which have not been published for months waiting for approval.

Mukajanga cited the Research on Media Owners Monitor (MOM) conducted by the Reporters Without Borders from Germany in conjunction with the Media Council of Tanzania.

Though the report was launched in November last year, the complete research has not been released as its statistics await the approval of NBS.

He said by the time the research gets the approval, some of its facts will be outdated citing the case of media mogul Reginald Mengi who has since died.

“This country is being closed and closed…. we'll get to a point that before you marry, you should have a permit”, Mukajanga quipped.

During the CoRI session held on July 16 after the parliament amended restrictive articles of statistics legislation, some members said there are still challenges as new issues are raised relating to release of

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