



Parliamentary Monitor

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our parliament

our voice

paramende yedu

izwi redu

Ipalamente yethu

ilizwi lethu



28 November, 2011. Issue 14

Point of Correction

In our Parliamentary Monitor issue last week, we erroneously referred to the Deputy Speaker as Tabitha Khumalo. In our haste to meet the deadline, we hurried the proof reader and couldn't pick out the mistake. We are very embarrassed by such a pedestrian mistake and would like to unreservedly apologize to Honourable Khumalo for the error. There has not been any news on whether the Professor Welshman Ncube led MDC had written the Speaker firing Nomalanga Khumlo.

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The Bottom-line

These parliamentarians have no power to fire me or even pass a vote of no confidence since my post is a constitutional appointment.

2 Motions, Signs of **COMMOTION**

Parliament was a hotbed last week. There were two bills, one by the Mbizo MP Settlement Chikwinya (MDC-T) on the "alleged irregular issuance of broadcasting licences by the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ)" in November. The other motion was by MDC-T's Hwange Central MP, Brian Tshuma, calling for the dismissal of the Clerk of Parliament, Mr Austin Zvoma, accusing him of incompetence and unprofessional conduct. While the latter motion has already been dismissed as out of place, with the Clerk quoted in the media as saying: "These parliamentarians have no power to fire me or even pass a vote of no confidence since my post is a constitutional appointment," it is a clear sign that there are some things which are not in place. One thing that stands out is that the legislature, to some extent has been frustrated by the contact of the clerk, citing the failure to follow procedures during the elections for a Speaker. The other motion is a clear sign that BAZ's functions are under the spotlight. BAZ is a constitutional body that operates "independently" but under the Ministry of Information (and Publicity.) Last month, BAZ announced that Zimpapers' Talk Radio and ZiFM owned by Supa Mandiwanzira had been certified to operate radio stations. This, was part of the imple-

mentation of the GPA which sort to free the airwaves and bring plurality in broadcasting. As Chikwinya put it: "Constitution Amendment 19 and the Broadcasting Services Act, which seek to give rise to media plurality, were passed by Parliament and the House cannot be a bystander if some provisions of those Acts are contravened by the Executive." The moving of the two motions are a clear sign that Parliament as an institution is faced with a crisis. At one level, the crisis can be explained in the conflict between the politicians, MPs and the administrators, the Clerk. This is something that has been going on for some time if one looks at it also from the conflicts between the Clerk and the Speaker. This is a situation which may paralyse the operations of Parliament as the two, administrators and politicians, continue to bicker. The results are already evident, with the politicians seeking the ouster of the Clerk. It is not for us to judge. We do not seek to have a value laden approach to the whole issue together with the issue of radio licenses. Ours is an appeal for a systems approach, that is an approach that looks at the institutions, their functions and see how they would best serve certain purposes. For example, Parliament has a function in our society. The duties can be

legislative or oversight. Parliament is an institution that processes certain inputs for example questions on development, policy, laws and it also plays a watchdog role over the executive. The outputs are what we see as laws, papers on policy, policy approvals and with what is happening now, it would not be too harsh to say the environment under which Parliament operates has been poisoned and it would not be difficult to see the results. Even BAZ's functions, despite drawing its pith from the constitution, have been poisoned also and nothing good will come out of it. It is thus important to start institutional reform programs. These will depoliticise institutions so that they play their constitutional role. Politics is ubiquitous, it is a fact, but it is still possible to depoliticise institutions and let them operate in the given political environment. What is happening is a continued poisoning of the political environment to the detriment of the functions of the constitutional bodies. BAZ could still have been depoliticised and function well but it has been heavily politicised and now being doubted. This is the cost of letting politics take the lead without having a clear demarcation on what roles are expected.



To Whip or Not To?

By the Village Observer

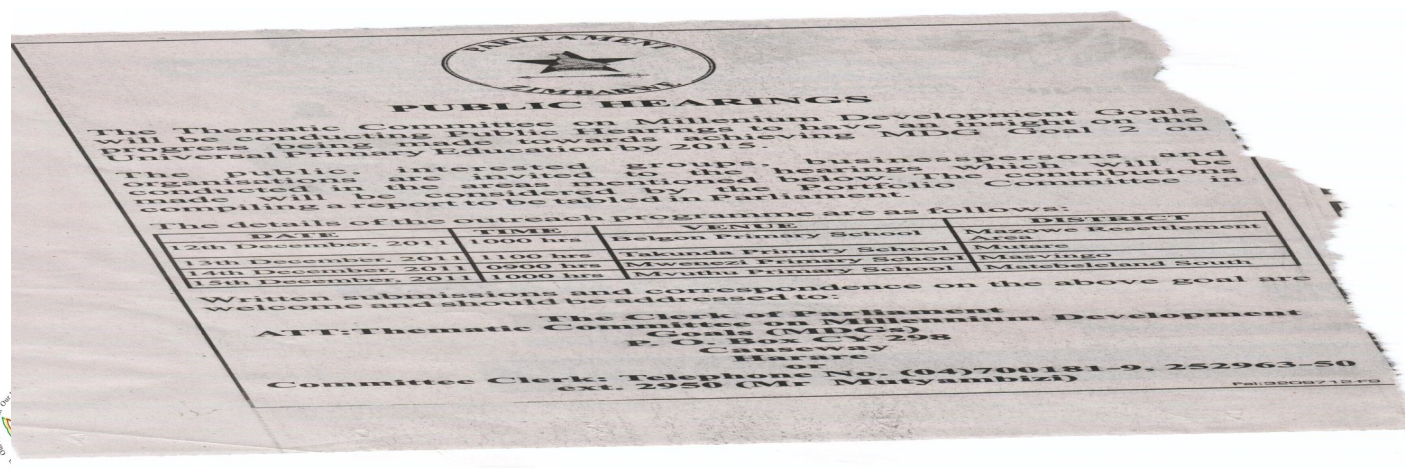
My friend calls himself Matigari. This is after the protagonist in Ngugi wa Thiongo's novel by the same title. He, to some extent, fits the character of the protagonist. He sees things in a very simple but deep manner. He sees the other side and proffers solutions when others are looking for a way out. We often differ on our political outlooks. He dismisses my world view as tainted by globalisation. He argues that while we may have been villagised by globalisation, there are some problems specific to the village which will never be solved no matter 'how wired we may become.' Last week, after my brief stay in the City of Kings and Queens, Matigari asked me a very simple question. "What do you think about the whipping system?" I tried to answer the question as asked but I realised my response was being circumlocutions. I realised that I had not had a very deep thought on the issue especially in the Zimbabwean context. Matigari, naughtier on realising that I was stuttering and wobbly in my response added a question: Does it serve any purpose in our Democracy? You

should have been there to hear how he pronounced the word Democracy! I realised the sharpness of his wit and quickly thought of damming such wisdom as an input for this week's instalment. Matigari had no kind words for the whipping system calling it the 'dictatorship of the ruling elite.' As usual, Matigari appeared to have thought over the issue for long. He said he had read from a torn newspaper at one of the most unlikely places and he had been left wondering whether we were better off without the system. "Mislike me not for my awkward opinions. But man, if democracy is all about competing ideas which are debated, then why should one class ask the representatives of the people to take a certain stance. Is this not a case of the party becoming more powerful than the will of the people. Are we not giving the party touch power? And what makes the party think that its position should prevail over that of the MPs?"

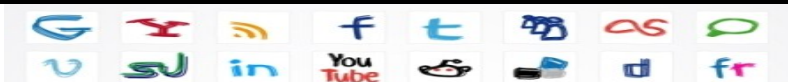
Matigari's reasoning, simple as it seemed struck me. He attacked me for saying it worked saying it was because my worldview had been impaired by the acceptance of everything about democracy. He said while it could have worked in other countries, democracies, the whipping system had been abused. What stops

the party from abusing its power. If one differed with the party position, then it should be known and that MP should be given a platform to explain why he holds that position. It could be they are speaking on behalf of the people they represent. The party may not represent anyone except some elites who financially support it and those with necessary political capital. We have the same problems with democratic centralism, the product of a genius called Lenin, his full Russian name is complicated. It was used to wage a struggle and post the struggle, it was abused. The issue is that the chief whip should only whip MPs into line not the party line. s/he should make sure that they attend sessions. What made Matigari worried was that the executive had a tendency of whipping the MPs, threatening them if they chose otherwise. The problem comes when one looks at it with the lenses of separation of powers. The executive will now be two pillars in one in a democracy and who knows, they could also be controlling the judiciary and that, according to Matigari was a dictatorship.

Parly Committee Meetings



Virtual Public Gallery



Using Social Media to Monitor Parly

PMTZ's facebook group Parliamentary Monitor is an interactive virtual public gallery where instead of being spectators, citizens raise issues and seek solutions. As part of the integration of the social media platform and this e-newsletter, we take excerpts of some of the posts on the facebook group and share with others.

Nyamutatanga Makombe > Parliamentary Monitor

Guys do you think tribalism is good or bad to Zimbabwean Politics. Should we say that the MP for Dotito (MT Darwin) should come from that area and not say from Tamandai in Chipinge?

7 December at 10:25 · Like · Unfollow post · Remove like 2 people like this.

Cathbert Mashonganyika

The MP must registered voter in his constituency, otherwise soon we will have a foreign based President(maybe we already have). The MP also needs an office in that constituency, that way can he keep in touch with the people and have hands on on projects

7 December at 10:34 · Like · 2 · Remove

Reward Mushayabasa

Tribalism is the bane of Africa. It's sad our politicians always play the tribal card to further their political ambitions. Reminds me of a friend who once reminded me that because of intermarriages tribal politics is gradually loosing it's totemic value.

Peter Muchirahondo

Its a sensitive issue but Mps should represent their constituencies of origin.

7 December at 10:48 · Like · Remove

Cathbert Mashonganyika

Not of origin, cause if I move to Nyanga from Gwanda, become a registered voter there, I should qualify to be an MP. Also if I move to Namibia, become a citizen there, and become a voter there, I should qualify to contest for public office, ie MP, or even Pres-

ident

7 December at 10:59 · Like · Remove

Jeffrey Gogo

tribalism is that illicit department in politics that produces hate, and with time causes e bearer to lose focus and direction. I do not think MPs should be restricted to contest in their area of origin. If that happens, perhaps it is because they have a better appreciation of e challenges in their area, n could b trusted better solutions, from own experiences

7 December at 14:20 · Like · Remove

Goodwill Ngirishi

Sadly our country is tribally colonised in zim,en that started towards the end of 2nd chmrenga wen victory was near leadership en positions bcome the major war,leading to us losing real zim man by malawian en other foreign elements,...long story?correction jus simple,candidature by origin no endosement.,ndau chpnge,vhitori masvingo!no foreign objects they steal wealth for their enrichment!

7 December at 14:43 · Like · Remove

Peter Muchirahondo

Enter Alassane Quattara he's not frm Ivory Coast.

7 December at 14:59 · Like · Remove

Nyamutatanga Makombe

While i am against tribalism in its totality, I also have problems with the current crop of leaders who try to see things with a national outlook yet problems specific to their constituencies are relegated. Let's take the history of uneven development in Zimbabwe. If GDP grows 10%, does it mean a better life for me in Zongoro or for Xy in Harare. this is where I say we can start have a sort of resource tribalism where leaders, traditional and political would say to the state (fiscal authorities) since you are extract-

ing this resource from us, make sure x% returns and develop critical sectors.

7 December at 15:21 · Like · 1 · Remove

Gilbert Kagodora

Imi vanhu vekuNyombwe ndozvakada. Kumiririrwa nemunhu anongoonekwa pamavhoti saka chaipa chii.

7 December at 16:45 · Like · Remove

Ruzvidzo G Manyika

That is not tribalism at all. How does having a person in tune with the need of his constituency given that he is from the same become a negative connotation ?

Therefore how do we pick Presidents, Senators or Governors then ? It boils down to someone who is in touch with the grassroots and electorate.

7 December at 17:04 · Like · Remove

Nyamutatanga Makombe

@ Ruzvidzo G Manyika, My point is can we say, for argument's sake, if i am fromMutasa and by chance I become an MP, i can start saying all posts for public service be filled by those fromMutasa and if there is Ngoda, I say it should benefit my people first. My issue is when we elect the MPs, they think they are national figures, try to address the national issues to the neglect of the domestic. in other words can we say regionalism can be a catalyst for even development?

Feedback? info@pmtz.org



On page 1 we carried a story on two motions moved in Parly. Here we take, verbatim, what some of the Parliamentary Monitors think of one of the motions and the work of BAZ.

Veneranda Langa > Parliamentary Monitor Mbizo MP Settlement Chikwinya (MDC-T) yesterday gave notice in the House of Assembly to move a motion on the alleged irregular issuance of broadcasting licences by the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) late last month. The motion is expected to be seconded by Zaka Central MP Harison Mudzuri (MDC-T). The motion would call upon Parliament to dissolve the current BAZ board, unilaterally appointed by the Minister of Media, Information and Publicity Webster Shamu on September 30, 2009.

7 December at 15:04 · Like · Follow post like 2 people like this.

Godwell Gwavava

Infact , as far as I am concerned no new broadcasting licences have been issued. This is an extension of the ZBC.

7 December at 15:08 · Like · Remove

Ruzvidzo G Manyika

But why wait AFTER the licences were

awarded when you were against the composition of the board veduwe ? Imi vanhu hamusi right shuwa shuwa.

If you were not in agreement with the composition of the board way back in 2009, then why wait 2 years and after licences have been awarded ? This smacks of anti-zimbabwe tactics and mindset.

7 December at 15:10 · Like · Remove

Godwell Gwavava

Do you mean Zimbabwe tactics is only allowing people of the same mindset to broadcast their views?

7 December at 15:20 · Like · Remove

Ruzvidzo G Manyika

What same mindset ? Where is your proof ? How did you group them and conclude they are of identical mindsets ?

Are the licences not specific on broadcast content ?

7 December at 15:23 · Like · Remove

Godwell Gwavava

Do not need to group them. Why should I? No need to prove the obvious? Ku prover kunaani?

7 December at 15:27 · Like · Remove

Ruzvidzo G Manyika

@Gwavava, You described Zimbabwe tactics

as you say, therefore I asked.

Anything can be linked to ZanuPF if it does not please certain quarters. The strange fact is how we are told ad naseum that ZanuPF is a disintegrating party with few supporters, therefore why doesn't the "bigger" party use it's size and might (if it exists at all) outside of their newsrooms.

If one makes an accusation, then one must support it with facts or evidence when confronted.

7 December at 15:34 · Like · Remove

Gilbert Kagodora

It is greatly commendable that the MP has seen the light but unfortunately it is a bit late. You will recall that on awarding the licences the BAZ chairman considered the score they gave to the companies but the chairman himself was the last amongst the interviewees for a job in the Media commission. I do not know what will this be called.

7 December at 16:52 · Like · Remove

Cathbert Mashonganyika

Any blind man should see that this is a biased BAZ, so MP has to do something about it. Complaining at a rally in Gweru will change nothing.parliament is the right route.

8 December at 03:13 · Like · 1 · Remove



Serious communication breakdown

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