

Information minister, MBC boss fired

Information and Civic Education Minister, Patricia Kaliati and state owned Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) CEO, Bright Malopa have been fired.



By Gregory Gondwe: @Kalipochi 11 Apr 2012

Newly instated Malawian president, Joyce Banda announced at a press briefing on Tuesday 10 April 2012 that Blantyre Member of Parliament, Moses Kunkuyu will now take over as Information and Civic Education Minister while broadcaster Benson Tembo takes over as the CEO of MBC.

Patricia Kaliati is reported to have stepped on the toes of many media practitioners due to an intolerant approach her leadership at the ministry had taken. During her tenure of office, radio stations were being closed at every excuse she could come up with while government also introduced the 'spy machine' called Consolidated ICT Regulatory Management System (CIRMS).

She also made enemies after teaming up with Malopa to deny dissenting views on MBC television and radios. Malopa hosted programmes on MBC that castigated president Banda during the time she was vice president, especially soon after she had fallen out of grace of the late president, Bingu wa Mutharika.

Dr. Tembo started as an intern at MBC in the 1970's and he was the first head of MBC TV, at that time it was called Malawi Television. He was later posted on diplomatic mission before he returned to Malawi where he engaged in media consultancy.

Commentators have said the action by president Banda is going against what she pledged, that there won't be any room for revenge. An anonymous member of an internet media forum said MBC is the main tool president Banda has for reaching millions of Malawians.

"A man such as Bright Malopa, who has been very hostile to the president, cannot be allowed to continue sitting at the helm of the MBC in such circumstances. The president could not work with him.

There has to be mutual trust to work with someone. This, too, cannot be classified as revenge," said the contributor.

He further said Patricia Kaliati was an unmitigated disaster in her role as spokesperson of her government.

"Having boldly declared that Joyce Banda cannot be president four days ago, I guess there could be no mutual trust between the president and Mrs. Kaliati. Her dismissal cannot be classified as revenge," he said.

He further said the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines revenge as: 'something that you do in order to make somebody suffer because they have made you suffer.'

"Surely it should be expected that any new president, even one taking over without acrimony, should reserve the right to shuffle the deck," he said.

ABOUT GREGORY GONDWE: @KALIPOCHI

Gregory Gondwe is a Malawian journalist who started writing in 1993. He is also a media consultant assisting several international journalists pursuing assignments in Malawi. He holds a Diploma and an Intermediate Certificate in Journalism among other media-related certificates. He can be contacted on gregorygondwe@gmail.com. Follow him on Twitter at @Kalipochi. View my profile and articles...