

## ONLINE SMEAR CAMPAIGN AGAINST BNFA/SINYINDA—A WASTE OF ARTILLARY POWER

by Mwananyandi Mukunyandela

Over the past one week we have seen a flurry of online publications clamouring to throw muck and mire at the Barotse National Freedom Alliance (BNFA) in general and Mutompehi Clement Wainyae Sinyinda in particular. This online onslaught is a continuation of Linyungandambo and its affiliated/sympathetic online media's sustained smear and mudslinging campaign against BNFA and its Chairperson General.

This time round the frenzied rush to publish articles with blatant lies aimed at causing the worst possible damage to BNFA and its commitment to the noble cause for Barotseland's RIGHT to self-determination has been precipitated by Mutompehi Sinyinda's visit at the Namuso Kuta on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016 in the company of some Malozi who are neither members of BNFA nor the BNFA Executive Committee (Execom). Clearly, the visit was not a BNFA affair and the issues reported as discussed are simply the product of malicious imagination of a vile group of people bent on gaining political mileage by planting wrong stories, which is nothing but mere fabrications devoid of even an iota of truth.

We have been here before, I mean similar stories about BNFA/Sinyinda being compromised, bought and betraying the cause of a free Barotseland. We have heard that Mr. Sinyinda would be made vice president of Zambia, that he travelled to Kalabo to bring *Sangomas* who are camped at his house with intent to bewitch the Litunga and Afumba Mombotwa and that he was the one responsible for the arrest of Mombotwa. These and much more lies have been proven by the passing of time as the creative malicious imagination by vile people who thrive on such vices.

The BNFA Execom may choose or not choose to give a comprehensive rebuttal to the malicious articles that have been flying around over the past several days. I am well aware of BNFA policy of avoiding as much as possible to engage in shadow boxing tactics with persons or entities that purport to be in the struggle for Barotseland for the mere fact that such fights divert attention and moral resources from the real struggle itself. The purpose of this article is simple: to assure the people of Barotseland that from where I am standing, the malicious lies peddled in the articles that have been flying around are simply that, malicious lies and no one needs to believe any of them.

Mutompehi Sinyinda and his lieutenants in the BNFA are not the '*new kids on the block*', they have been around for far too long in the struggle, some of them for more than two decades, investing time, resources and reputation. The fruits of their untiring labour speak volumes for them and are there for the whole world to see. It would be utter folly for them to betray what they have stood for all these years. In fact it would be tantamount to self-mutilation.

On the other hand Barotse people and patriots should be wary of persons or entities that are too quick to throw mud at others, based on unfounded rumour mongering. This is what we have seen over the past few days as social media was falling over each other, publishing crazy and unfounded stories simply for the gratification of their huge appetite to malign BNFA and Mt. Sinyinda. Some Linyungandambo operative and affiliated/sympathetic media seem to be trying to build a whole career on maligning Sinyinda and BNFA.

It has been well spoken that; 'if you live in a glass house don't throw stones and if you can't take blows don't throw blows'. Other players have simply exercised maximum restraint by not engaging full thrust in this mudslinging and smear campaign for the mere reason that we cannot engage in

side wars at the expense of the real struggle to secure Barotseland's RIGHT to self determination. To do so will be a demonstration of mixed priorities.

Barotseland patriots and activists will do well to clearly identify their common enemy and concentrate their efforts on fighting that common enemy and putting aside all differences, perceived or real, for the time being rather than waste time and artillery power on each other while the enemy is having a field day.