

Judge Hoff's judgement disappoints

I WOULD like to express my disappointment and dismay through your newspaper regarding the ruling for the Caprivi 13 accused by Judge Elton Hoff.

Judge Hoff's ruling for the 13 demonstrated to the nation that the judiciary in Namibia is in the wrong hands.

If we look at this issue critically, the judgement was well orchestrated to be interpreted as if the Government did not follow whatever rules or procedures should be followed. But, in fact, Judge Hoff formulated it (the ruling) in such a way as to allow the state to re-arrest them, creating room for 'reactionary institutions' (sic.) to cry foul about the judiciary and painting Namibia as a country which does not respect its own laws. This is not the case at all.

The charges remain: the accused allegedly planned and declared war against the Government of the Republic of Namibia. Where we supposed to sit back with our tails between our legs, while our hard-earned peace is being disrupted and our country being destabilised?

We all know the results of war - the disruption of the well-earned peace, destruction of property, loss of life, hunger, poverty and other setbacks. Those who wanted to secede the Caprivi had misguided objectives, were driven by selfishness and hunger for political power and they - if found guilty - should rot in jail.

The security forces should be commended for swift action and a job well done. They have sent a

clear message to would-be terrorists that Namibia is a well-protected democratic country and whoever tampers with her sovereignty will feel the wrath of the Namibian law.

Whose interest does the so-called court ruling serve?

What made the 13 accused leave the country under the cover of night? Who invited them to the neighbouring countries were they were hiding? If they had a genuine cause, why didn't they hand themselves over to the authorities of the countries in which they were hiding?

But were Judge Hoff and his court blind and deaf the day when he ruled that return of the 13 to Namibia violated some international laws and procedures guiding extradition.

Which procedures did the 13 follow when they allegedly carried out their attack at Katima Mulilo? Why should we follow some procedures by bringing misguided elements to be tried back home? Who is he (Judge Hoff) to determine the fate and the interest of the Namibian nation?

(Under the Namibian Constitution, the accused is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. This letter has been shortened and edited to avoid libellous statements and possible contempt of court. Words like 'terrorist' should be reserved for persons convicted - not suspected - of certain crimes - Ed.)

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