

On Heroes Day

A FEW days from now, Namibians from all walks of life will commemorate Heroes Day on August 26.

Significantly this is a remarkable day, because of the nature of the liberation activities which occurred on that day between the indigenous brave sons and daughters of this country and the then colonial forces at Ongulumbashe in the northern part of the country.

Those liberation activities germinated or brought about national independence and democracy. It has been a bitter struggle as it was depicted by the Honourable Minister and veteran politician Andimba Toivo ya Toivo during his political trial.

It was a life or death situation but despite that, the Namibian people under their then vanguard liberation movement Swapo fought heroically and pledged or vowed not to stop their struggle until all colonial evils were buried and genuine national independence based on the concept of democracy was achieved.

On 21 March 1990, the pledge of the Namibian people became a reality and the nation was crowned with the shining star which eventually placed our country and nation on the world map.

Before the achievement of national independence and democracy, thousands and thousands of our brothers and sisters, the loved ones who consistently stood firm against the then colonial forces, sacrificed their precious lives.

It is therefore true, that Namibia is a land of the brave and it is also practically true that the majority of those who have made it possible for this country to be classified as the land of the brave are the more neglected citizens and therefore they do not enjoy the fruits of their braveness.

What if the dead arise?

It is very dehumanising and an unbelievable situation to always see the heroes and heroines of our country running round the streets of Windhoek and other major cities without work, when in practice the position which they rightly deserve and are qualified to do are being occupied by foreigners.

Practically speaking, the labour situation in an independent Republic of Namibia shows that, cowards who fought in defence of injustice and colonialism are today the people enjoying the fruits of braveness.

Apart from those who have sacrificed their lives for national independence, democracy and justice to prevail, we have the limping injured ones who today, because of the war for national independence and democracy, have lost some parts of their bodies.

The obvious questions which suggest themselves include whose responsibility it is to succour these brave sons and daughters and whether there is any mechanism in place to enable them to enjoy the fruits of their bravery.

There are many answers to these two questions: some of today's politicians are of the opinion that it is Swapo's duty to look after the brave sons and daughters and give them essential facilities.

On the other side of the coin, some intellectuals are of the opinion that they should be looked after by their families.

All in all, both answers are baseless and do not suit or fit into present political reality.

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The government has laid down a foundation of peace and stability based on the concept of the policy of national reconciliation. In my view, we were or are given these golden opportunities to reconcile our differences politically, economically and socially.

Since our constitution guarantees job opportunities for those who served in the then colonial administration, it would augur well for progress if our constitution writers would have dealt with the future plight of the Plan freedom fighters in depth.

A distinctive law or act should have been put in place to differentiate between the nationalist fighters, the heroes who bravely fought, not because of monetary gain or any other promises, but because of their political commitment and loyalty to the cause of bringing down the evils of colonialism. They should be distinguished from those who practically and heroically fought be-