

Malawi's decorated media mogul dies

Malawi's most decorated media mogul-cum-politician, 70-year-old Dr Aleke Kadonaphani Banda lost the lymphatic leukaemia cancer battle at Morningside Medi-Clinic in Johannesburg, South Africa on Friday, 9 April 2010.

 By [Gregory Gondwe](#) 12 Apr 2010

Dr. Banda who at the time of his death was running one of Malawi's two biggest print media houses, the Nation Publications Limited (NPL) is also credited for having started Malawi's first weekly, *The Malawi News* that is one of the publications under the banner of Blantyre Newspapers Limited (BNL), which was also part of his brainchild.

He was also the first director general of state-owned Malawi Broadcasting Corporations (MBC).

In recognition of his media influence, Media Institute of Southern Africa Malawi Chapter MISA-Malawi as well as the Media Council of Malawi (MCM) have issued statements.

MISA-Malawi chairperson Brian Ligomeka said the media fraternity will remember late Dr. Banda as a media freedom advocate as well as a campaigner for freedom of expression.

"Banda's keen interest in the promotion and enhancement of the media industry prompted MISA to recognise his efforts by awarding him the prestigious MISA Regional Freedom Award in 2007 becoming the first Malawian recipient since its introduction in 1993," observed Ligomeka.

Ligomeka said Dr. Banda's involvement in journalism started at a very tender age of 13 when he was in primary school at the Globe and Phoenix Mine School at Que Que in Zimbabwe, then the Southern Rhodesia where he used to write articles for *African Weekly* and the *Bantu Mirror*.

Back to Malawi in 1959 he started a publication called *Mtendere Pantchito* literally meaning "freedom at work", which carried articles that tackled trade union as well as political issues.

NPL, which he established at the dawn of the multiparty system in 1993 started as publisher of a bi-weekly called *The Nation* before turning into a daily and before influencing the establishing of two more weeklies *The Weekend Nation* and *Nation on Sunday*.

A statement signed by MCM chairperson Rev. Patrick Semphere and executive director Baldwin Chiyamwaka while acknowledging as many as over ten ministerial that Dr. Banda served saluted him for not abandoning the media fraternity.

"In spite of the many top government and political portfolios ...held in his ...life. He never betrayed his maiden profession of journalism. His career in journalism did not only end at pioneer-level but he also participated in developing the industry," read the statement.

ABOUT GREGORY GONDWE

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...](#)

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