

Journalist dismissed over leaked interview

The Malawi Institute of Journalism (MIJ) radio has fired its sub-editor Joseph Mwale over a leaked recording of a conversation where President Bingu wa Mutharika's young brother, Professor Peter Mutharika was captured discussing his ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) candidature in the 2014 presidential elections.

 By [Gregory Gondwe](#) 22 Aug 2011



Joseph Mwale

The recording starts from where the reporter Mwale introduced himself and asked Peter Mutharika to get his reaction after his party endorsed his name to stand as DPP presidential candidate.

However, after talking to the reporter Mutharika did not cut down his call and was recorded talking ill of other DPP officials.

The recording which is 14 minutes long, then found its way to YouTube and this made MIJ fire Mwale who was a sub-editor for allegedly invading the privacy of Mutharika.

Mwale told *Malawi News* that he had been told that he was fired because he violated Section 1.7 of MIJ conditions of service which stipulates that journalists must guard against invading a person's right to privacy.

He said part of what he recorded was used by MIJ radio station on 1 August 2011 lunch hour news bulletin which was also repeated the following day.

"How can they accuse me of invading the privacy when the material was legally obtained," Mwale was quoted in the paper as saying.

Mwale said he wanted to edit the clip and transferred through the Long Area Network (LAN) shared folder which inevitably made the clip accessible to all members of the editorial staff at the radio.

Mwale called to a disciplinary hearing

He said they (newsroom) agreed that the clip is a sensitive matter and should not find its way outside the newsroom only to get an offer from UK based *Nyasa Times* online publication to buy the clip at K15 000 (US\$90.90).

Mwale said he feigned ignorance by telling *Nyasa Times* that he does not know anything about the clip on to be called to a disciplinary hearing and received a termination letter a day later.

Mwale found guilty

The termination later indicate that Mwale was found guilty by a three man disciplinary hearing on charges ranging from breaking the MIJ ethics code, infringing Peter Mutharika's privacy and the likelihood of bringing costly lawsuits to the Station.

"Due to the gravity for the charges raised at the disciplinary hearing this morning, management has decided to relieve you of your duties," the letter then dropped the bombshell.

Mwale has since challenged the dismissal through a letter he has written the institution and is exploring ways to pursue a legal challenge on the decision.

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 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](https://twitter.com/Kalipochi).
View my profile and articles...

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>