

Tanzania: High Court orders newspaper to pay defamation damages

The High Court of Tanzania has resolved the case involving former minister for good governance, Wilson Masilingi and the local Swahili newspaper, *RAI* and its columnist, Prince Bagenda. The ruling followed a defamation case that was filed by Masilingi claiming that the writer and the newspaper published a defamatory statement in its edition of 2 August 2005.

The newspaper published a lead story on page one titled, *Waziri achangisha wapiga kura na kujenga ghorofa*, translated as, "Minister solicits money from his voters to build a flat".

The court has the newspaper and Bagenda to pay Masilingi the some of Tshs 15 million (about US\$9 000) as damages for publishing malicious and defamatory statements against him.

The court instructed *RAI* newspaper to pay Tshs 10 million and Bagenda is supposed to pay Tshs 5 million. In addition, the newspaper is required to publish an apology on the first and second pages of the same newspaper in words that Masilingi will be comfortable with before they are published.

It was ordered by the court that the damages be paid within 14 days after the ruling in addition to publishing the apology.

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