“During the coming campaigning, all the issues must be discussed openly and not in dark corners. Be vigilant against ‘sellouts’ who pull out ‘half SWAPO and half RDP’ as soon as possible, before the elections. Leaders assigned by SWAPO to the regions must be in charge of the regions to ensure stability within the Party.”

RDP stands for the Rally for Democracy and Progress, and RDP, started luring other opposition parties into some sort of a coalition to challenge SWAPO Party in coming elections, political pundits wrote off the idea, arguing that it wouldn't stick because such parties have nothing in common that unite them. That assessment was spot on.

This week, RDP, announced that it no longer entertains the idea of a coalition at all, thus killing and burying its own initiative in full public view. RDP is a project that has gone off the rails. Even some opposition parties which almost fully fell for the idea have now realized that there is absolutely nothing worth discussing with RDP.

Early last year, RDP, confounded some opposition parties, by fielding candidates in a regional by-election which was held in Okahandja Constituency in Otjozondjupa Region. The other parties agreed but waited for more detailed discussions and modalities on how the coalition would work. Most importantly, they wanted to have a say in how a candidate should be chosen.

In arrangements like that, one needs some detailed and cut-and-dried guidelines on how they would work together and how the interests of so many different political parties would be catered for. Arrived at by one party, however, is as well-nigh impossible as trying to empty a swimming pool with a spoon. Even RDP itself which mooted, initiated and led the process knew in their heart of hearts that such an arrangement would not work. If anything, it would only serve as a marriage of convenience.

Sure enough, it did not take long before opposition parties who had bought the idea of holding a candidate in Okahandja got the shock of the political life. Without consulting them, RDP simply announced that the “coalition’s candidate” would be Christopha Pahus, who is also a RDP member, thus double-crossing the others. It dealt with them in bad faith.

Such opposition parties were caught off-guard. When RDP made the announcement, it was too late for them field candidates of their own. They grudgingly went along with the idea, as there was virtually nothing they could do, given the time constraints.

The RDP candidate was massacred there. We thought that the idea of forming a coalition got buried there as well. We assumed, too, that opposition parties which were hoodwinked into that futile and suicidal exercise had learned a lesson or two. They are, we have now learned, slow learners indeed.

Then came November’s Presidential and National Assembly elections in which, in its calculation, RDP estimated to get “at least 30 seats,” enough to dent SWAPO’s two-thirds majority, thus making it impossible for the ruling Party to form a credible government, just as it happened in Zimbabwe and Kenya. It only managed to get eight seats. Its leaders could not believe it.

What surprised political analysts as well as ordinary people was that the same RDP which. told the same opposition parties into the Okahandja debacle managed, once again, to fool them into another political quagmire – boasting not only the outcome of the elections but also Parliament itself.

Slow learners indeed but that might be too light a phrase to describe their latest move, but two opposition parties, namely the Congress of Democrats, CoD, and the DTA, saw the foolishness of RDP’s latest political move, and eventually they returned to Parliament, RDP, they realized, was simply trying to short-circuit them into their larger political chess-board.

RDP wanted a bigger crowd to boycott the elections and Parliament. This would have enabled it to make a lot of noise in Europe, which has regagg SELF包装 itself into some sort of custodian and saviour of “democracy” in Africa, arguably threatened by former liberation movements. Remember the “regime change” doctrine being pursued by the very countries that colonized Africa! As one politician has put, saving “democracy” has become Europe’s latest undertaking to “civilize” Africa.

None of the RDP’s political gambles has worked. SWAPO Party’s two-thirds majority remains intact. Its boycott of and absence from Parliament have not deprived the National Assembly of the quorum it needs to pass laws. Therefore, when RDP’s Information Secretary, Nginghina@wando@2@kashume, announced this week that RDP’s central committee decided three weeks ago that the “formation of a coalition at this moment is not practical,” he was just confirming before the nation that all is not well in SWAPO.

In simple terms, he is saying that the project has failed. Like a whirlwind, RDP has come to pass.

Caught between this abysmal failure to create a political territory for itself and bewilderment by the uncertain future, RDP has run out of gas. It has failed to offer better alternatives to Namibia’s economic and social challenges than SWAPO Party has done. It has no new ideas, just more ranting.

When a political party comes to that pathetic end, all is lost. For nearly 40 years, Hifidpo Hamutenya had built a huge political fortune in SWAPO Party. In less than two years, however, he has managed to squander all that, clumsily. Now he is a political pauper, stripped of his political fortune by sheer opportunism, insatiable hunger for power and a terrible sense of timing.

Nurse your wounds. “Shituna iha hadhwa.” (Do not wake up sleeping lions.) Those who wished and prayed that RDP would bring about a debilitating split in SWAPO Party have now realized the futility of their own wishful thinking. SWAPO Party’s tried and tested commitment to Namibia’s social and economic development has stood the test of time and weathered many storms.

We are soldiering on. For, this is just the beginning of our long march to social and economic prosperity, with SWAPO Party in the driving seat. Some may fall by the wayside, as Hifidpo has fallen. History is littered with such miscarriages and political carcasses. Coalition or no coalition, our guiding torch, the flame of freedom, will shine our way.