We all crave for press freedom and human rights, but telling President Pohamba to go to a school for people with special needs might help. But in this class you don’t belong. Resign immediately” were the words: A=Excellent; B=Good, C=You are okay, D=Average. E=Poor, F=Hopeless, U=Ungraded.

Harold Evans, one of Britain’s greatest editors, whose writing and editing skills have made The Times of London what it is today, once said that journalism is an honourable profession, if not sacred. It is so honourable and sacred that those who seek a life living in it should be held to certain standards, largely because the whole profession depends and feeds on honesty, integrity, accuracy, as well as balanced and fair reporting.

The last edition of Insight magazine had a scorecard, rating the entire cabinet, starting with President Hifikepunye Pohamba himself as class captain. President Pohamba, according to Insight, has performed so “poorly” that he is graded with E. Newspaper scorecards are very subjective, and at times, misleading anywhere in the world. It caused a national uproar in South Africa last year.

It was heated because the South Africa’s national TV always at the receiving end of the Euro-centric media in that country, just as the Namibian Cabinet is here – has never been rated fairly and objectively. So furious was the South African Cabinet that it also threatened to come up with its own scorecards, rating and grading journalists in that country. Media houses there screamed at the top of their voices, describing the move as a threat to that haystacked phrase “press freedom.”

I do not know what indicators Insight used to measure the performance of the Cabinet and arrive at the grading as published in the magazine. But the grading has taught us why those graded poorly deserve such ratings. Needless to say that the whole grading process was informed by sheer anti-Pohamba tantrums. There is no way an informed and balanced mind could fail to arrive at that conclusion.

And Tangeni Amupadhi should know better. One of the reasons President Pohamba kicked Amupadhi out of State House last year, and vowed never to speak to him again was precisely because of such unfair ratings. The former speaker was very incensed when a journalist uses his or her pen to bring down a person he or she hates by all means possible. It is an unwise war to start, and it has always boomeranged.

We have enough journalistic carcasses here to prove that point. The late Chris Coetzee exponentially used the Times of Namibia to bring down the SWAPO Party government shortly after independence. His negative bickering and constant smear campaigns were so dismal that Namibia’s first Minister of Finance, Dr Otto Hertigel, dismissed his articles “as lying and false.” And there were so many other people from the media who, when a journalist uses his or her pen to bring down a person he or she hates by all means possible. It is an unwise war to start, and it has always boomeranged.

Max Hamata tried and failed to use Informante to bring down Founding President Nujoma. He never spared him. He fabricated stories to advance his agenda, which eventually flopped when he was forced to resign as Editor of Informante. The owners of Informante could no longer take the heat. So Amupadhi had to go. But Namibia, it seems, is not in short supply of such people.

Amupadhi has now resuscitated the ghosts of Coetzee and Smith, seeing nothing “good” in President Pohamba. The President has a score to settle with the President for having kicked him out of State House? Insight’s grading is grouped in seven categories: A=Excellent; B=Good, C=You are okay, D=Average, E=Poor, F=Hopeless, U=Ungraded.

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