

Sanef slams Cape Times' editor's dismissal

The South African National Editors' Forum says it is shocked and concerned at the sudden removal from office of the editor of the Cape Times, Alide Dasnois, and the offer of redeployment elsewhere in the newspaper group.



Sanef says that in the absence of a statement from the Cape Times or Sekunjalo Holdings - the new owner of Independent Newspapers - explaining why Dasnois was suddenly dismissed, Sanef is concerned whether it has any connection with the publication of a story in the newspaper on Friday.

The story was about a finding by the Public Protector that the awarding of a fisheries tender by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to Sekunjalo Marine Service Consortium was "improper". The consortium is a subsidiary of Sekunjalo Holdings.

Threats, threats

Sanef says the Cape Times has subsequently received a letter from lawyers acting on behalf of Sekunjalo Investments, claiming that the story was inaccurate. The company has also threatened to sue the paper and the editor and journalist who wrote the report in their personal capacity for damages.

Sanef says it condemns any interference with the independence of editors and journalists when carrying out their duties and calls on Sekunjalo Holdings to clarify the issues relating to Dasnois' sudden dismissal without delay and to desist from making threats against the staffers.

The Independent Group is a signatory to the newly-formed co-regulatory press mechanism, which is a product of a public process led by the late Chief Justice Pius Langa. Sekunjalo, the group's new owners, should lead by example by using this system to lodge its grievance against the newspaper or seek other editorially permissible remedial mechanisms instead of taking actions that raise the spectre of shareholder interference.



Madiba's final resting place

Image extracted from IOL website.