

# Is SA okay with the k-word?

SIZWE SAMA YENDE  
sizwe.yende@citypress.co.za

**A** top private school in Mpumalanga says it will keep teaching a Herman Charles Bosman story that uses the word "k\*\*\*\*r" 21 times.

Last year the story, Unto Dust, sparked a furious row between a 16-year-old Grade 9 pupil and his teachers at Uplands College in White River - which ultimately, he and his mother claim, led to his expulsion.

The SA Human Rights Commission is investigating. Its spokesperson, Isaac Mangena, told City Press the teaching of "such material" in either public or private schools "should be condemned and discouraged, especially considering the offensive history our country comes from".

But Uplands College's executive head, Austin Clarke, said Unto Dust was "an exceptional piece of writing by an exceptional South African writer" and would be part of the Grade 10 syllabus this year.

The 16-year-old, Siphosiso, said he had complained about the story and its repeated use of the word k\*\*\*\*r in class. At the time last year, he was in trouble for allegedly being disruptive in class, not submitting his homework and not cooperating with teachers. His mother, who asked not to be identified, said her son suffered from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and that Uplands simply couldn't deal with his condition.

The teenager, who has enrolled at a different school this year, said: "The story has a lot of k-words. When the teacher was reading it, she would emphasise the word, and all the white kids would look at us [the black children] and laugh.

"I told her the story was inappropriate," he said. "I think I was targeted for the fact that I was the only child who raised it."

Clarke said he didn't remember the matter being brought to his attention. Uplands has a new head of its English department. Clarke preferred not to comment on Siphosiso's disciplinary issues.

"The story does use the word 'k\*\*\*\*r' repeatedly - in the context of how the characters in the story would have realistically spoken at that time," Clarke said.

"Before reading the story, we discussed the word and why it was in the story and our class discussion revealed, in no uncertain terms, that they were well aware that misuse of this word would not be tolerated."

He said Bosman used irony "fantastically" to deride racists.

"The English department expressly chooses literature that encourages pupils to confront difficult issues in the classroom. These include racism, sexism, freedom of speech, sexuality, religious fundamentalism, exploitation of the vulnerable and so on. These issues are pertinent to our society and are intentionally raised in literature selected by Uplands."

Uplands College is registered with the Independent Examination Board, whose chief executive, Anne Oberholzer, told City Press its schools were encouraged to "confront difficult issues in the teaching programme".

"These issues are pertinent to our society and are often raised in literature selected for study in schools. What is key is the teacher and how the literature is managed in the learning context," Oberholzer said. Siphosiso said that after discussions with a psychologist and his mother, he'd decided to in future rather raise issues that upset him at home.

## TALK TO US:

**Do you think it's problematic for pupils to study stories that feature offensive terms or ideas?**

SMS us at 34263 using the keyword STORIES and tell us what you think. SMSes cost R1.50. Alternatively, talk to us on Twitter (@City\_Press) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/citypress.co.za) using the same keyword and then your comment. Please include your name



Herman Charles Bosman



REGRETS Lufuno Gogoro says he was among those who believed Julius Malema would be a good leader

PHOTO: ELIZABETH SEJAKE

## 'We apologise for Malema'

Lufuno Gogoro says Julius Malema is doing a terrible job of leading the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), but he partly blames himself.

Gogoro, a self-proclaimed founder of the red berets, says he and others worked hard to get Malema on board after coming up with the idea for the EFF.

In an echo of Malema apologising for helping to bring President Jacob Zuma to power, Gogoro says he and his fellow fighters "apologise for bringing Malema into the EFF".

Proudly sporting one of the party's trademark berets, he said this week: "We founded the EFF, believed in it and identified Malema as a potential leader because he was a crowd-puller and had a daring character."

"He had also revived the spirit of participation in politics for the youth at a time when we thought politics was for old men."

Gogoro was a member of the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) under Malema's leadership when the latter was hailed before an ANC disciplinary committee for misconduct.

"We supported him through hard times because he represented our view," he said.

Gogoro was also among those ANCYL members who formed the Asijiki Defence Force and camped outside Luthuli House during Malema's disciplinary hearings.

Despite their vocal support, he said Malema was "doubtful at first and not optimistic about EFF" when they approached him.

"But we ... convinced him otherwise. In the end he joined us and brought in some people and mobilised support."

"He was down and out at the time. We rescued him from the political dustbin because we believed in him and that South African politics could not lose such a young, brilliant politician - but we were very wrong."

"We believed he had learnt from his mistakes and would turn out to be a good leader - but how wrong we were."

Gogoro has emerged as a thorn in Malema's

side since he was sidelined at the EFF's Gauteng and national conferences.

He is now one of the commander in chief's most vocal detractors.

The 35-year-old, who hails from Limpopo like Malema, comes from the province's Nzhelele area in Vhembe.

But he is also a familiar face in Gauteng, where he rose to prominence about five years ago as the spokesperson for the Greater Gauteng Business Forum.

The forum was working to shut down foreign-owned shops in townships.

"I still believe foreign-owned shops are killing local businesses and they need to be regularised so we don't have too many swallowing local businesses," said Gogoro.

He said the other option was to find a way of getting foreign and local businesspeople to work together.

In 2013 the forum said it believed foreigners should be placed in work camps and not be allowed to do business in townships.

But Gogoro said this was not his view.

"I'm the one who has, after the recent looting of foreign-owned shops, helped them reopen the shops in my area [of Freedom Park near Eldorado Park]."

"I am totally against looting and xenophobia, because we're disciplined fighters in the EFF and not hoodlums or anarchists."

His quest is to "save the EFF from Malema and remove him from the party leadership so we can get back to representing the poor and marginalised and not [fight] Malema's political and personal battles with Zuma".

But who will replace Malema? Gogoro rather fancies his own chances and has been mocked for making his ambitions clear on social-media platforms.

"I will lead the EFF. It doesn't matter when,

but God will protect me." He hastened to add: "I am aware that the decision lies with branches."

He also rated Khanyisile Litchfield-Tshabalala and Andile Mngxitama as excellent leadership candidates, saying they would be "more focused" than Malema.

"The man is obsessed with Zuma and he is using the platform in Parliament and everywhere to take a swipe at Zuma, so 'pay back the money' has become a hit track for our MPs, who seem to have forgotten about our manifesto," said Gogoro.

"While people must be held accountable, it will not help the poor, unemployed, domestic workers and security guards whether Zuma pays back the money or not."

"Lots of time, energy and logistics have been spent while people are still living in poverty and fighting for a living wage."

"Malema instigates people to do wrong and distances himself from them. He promised to join the masses in protests, but he's rarely there because he is busy chanting 'pay back the money'."

Gogoro said this was not to say Zuma should not repay the money taxpayers forked out for security upgrades at his Nkandla home, but the fight to hold him to account should be more organised.

"A dedicated committee could gather logistics and popularise the campaign while our parliamentarians raise other burning issues, as cited in our manifesto."

Contacted for comment on Friday morning, hours after he and his EFF MPs were evicted from Parliament by security personnel, Malema sounded exhausted.

He said he had more serious things to do than respond to Gogoro's comments about him. "I am not going to entertain that. We are focused on national issues," he said.

Lufuno Gogoro  
**Newsmaker**  
by  
Poloko Tau

## British law firm acts for Bloem prisoners

RUTH HOPKINS  
news@citypress.co.za

Forty-three inmates who allege they were tortured by warders in a Bloemfontein prison are preparing to bring their claim before the British High Court.

British law firm Leigh Day is representing the prisoners and served an urgent "letter of claim" to security giant G4S's headquarters in Crawley in the UK on Thursday.

G4S won a R15 billion, 25-year contract in 2000 to build, run and manage the Mangaung Correctional Centre (MCC).

"The instructions we have received from our clients attest to a culture of abuse and fear that appears to have been endemic in MCC for years," Leigh Day's letter to G4S reads.

"Many allegations involve inmates being taken to solitary cells where there are no cameras, stripped naked and forced on to a metal bed, with water thrown on them, before being repeatedly shocked with electric shields, including to the head and genitals. These incidents are alleged to have been accompanied by brutal assaults, verbal abuse and in some cases serious racial abuse."

The firm is also acting for the mother of a former inmate who died in custody.

In October 2013, the Wits Justice Project revealed that the Emergency Security Team - warders armed with electric shields and batons who are called to emergency situations - allegedly assaulted inmates routinely.

Inmates, warders and other sources have claimed that the security team would kick, punch and electroshock inmates with their shields, after first dousing them with water. Leaked video footage shot inside the prison also revealed that an inmate - who had no record of mental illness - was forcibly injected, seemingly with antipsychotic drugs.

Twelve of Leigh Day's clients claim they were forcibly injected. Violence at the Mangaung prison was

PRISON  
TORTURE



exacerbated by G4S's dismissal of about 330 warders in September 2013 following a prolonged strike. The situation spiralled out of control and the department of correctional services stepped in and took control of the prison.

In August, G4S was handed back control of the jail. A government investigation into the alleged abuse has been finalised but not yet released.

In November last year South African attorney Egon Oswald, who is collaborating with the British lawyers, was denied access to the Mangaung prison by correctional services.

Oswald has clients in the prison who allege they were abused while in the care of G4S, but he says a department official told him he couldn't consult with his clients because they hadn't applied to see him.

If the claim is successful, it will be a landmark case for prisoners incarcerated with the biggest security provider in the world.

G4S runs eight prisons and several immigration and juvenile detention centres. Its annual revenues are worth £7.4 billion (R132 billion).

With 618 000 employees in 120 countries, it is the largest employer quoted on the London Stock Exchange. Leigh Day has given the security giant three

months in which to provide a response. If G4S - which has to date categorically denied allegations of electroshocking and forced medication - declines to settle, the case is expected to go to the High Court in London later this year.

A G4S spokesperson said the company "insists on the highest standards of care and we do not tolerate the mistreatment of prisoners".

"When these allegations arose in 2013, the department of correctional services investigated the claims and returned the operation of the facility to us on August 1, 2014, having not presented any evidence to substantiate the accusations."

Leigh Day attorney Tessa Gregory said: "Our clients allege they were subjected to unspeakable acts of brutality while they were entrusted to the safe custody of G4S."

"This is not the first time that G4S and its subsidiaries, operating across the globe, have faced accusations of human rights abuses. It is important that companies, even those as large as G4S, understand that there will be consequences if they do not respect the human rights of those they are paid to provide security to," Gregory said.

Hopkins is a journalist with the Wits Justice Project



### DISCRETIONARY GRANT FUNDING FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM LEVY-PAYING COMPANIES

The W&RSETA hereby invites Small and Medium Levy-Paying Companies registered with W&RSETA to apply for the discretionary grant.

Registered Employer Organizations (Associations) that operate in the Wholesale and Retail Sector are also invited to apply on behalf of their member companies.

The allocation of funds is at the sole discretion of the SETA.

#### Requirements:

- Application forms are available on [www.wrseta.org.za](http://www.wrseta.org.za) or any W&RSETA office and should be submitted electronically at [smme@wrseta.org.za](mailto:smme@wrseta.org.za) or dropped off at any W&RSETA office by no later than 27 February 2015; and
- Each company can apply for a maximum of fifteen thousand rands (R15 000.00).

#### Qualifying Criteria:

- Training interventions should be targeted at employed learners (18.1) only;
- Training can be in the form of either skills programmes, learnerships or non-credit bearing programmes;
- Training should be conducted by any Accredited Training Provider/TVET Colleges/HETs; and
- Only small levy-paying companies (less than 50 employees) and medium levy-paying companies (between 50 and 149 employees) can participate.

Application Forms received after the closing date will not be considered. Registration of learners after 20 March 2015 will result in disqualification. Allocations are subject to the availability of funds and are at the sole discretion of W&RSETA.

**Submission of Applications Closing Date: 27 February 2015**  
**Registration of Learners Deadline: 20 March 2015**

All enquiries to be addressed to Twanano Masango on 012 622 9523 or [tmasango@wrseta.org.za](mailto:tmasango@wrseta.org.za)

#### ABOUT W&RSETA

The Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority is a public entity which was established to address skills development within the Wholesale and Retail Sector through the implementation of learnerships, disbursement of grants and monitoring of education and training. The W&RSETA aims to increase the level of investment in education and training in the Sector and to ensure the return on that investment. Our mission is to develop a skilled and capable workforce in the Wholesale and Retail Sector, thereby contributing to the sustainable socio-economic development and growth of the country.



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