

# CAPE TIMES

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## DA FACES BACKLASH OVER 'CADRE DEPLOYMENT'

*City defends appointment of mayor's chief of staff to Castle of Good Hope board*

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WHILE DA MPs continue to decry the "growing scandal of new ANC cadre deployments as Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) 'administrators'", the DA-led City of Cape Town has come in defence of the appointment of Mayor Goerdin Hill-Lewis' chief of staff, James-Brent Styan to the Council's seat on the Castle Control Board instead of a councillor who is an elected official.

The Castle Control Board governs and manages the Castle of Good Hope on behalf of the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans.

Before moving to Hill-Lewis' office, Styan was Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning MEC Anton Bredell's spokesperson for a number of years.

At the recent council meeting on Thursday opposition parties slammed the DA for what they described as double-standards.

GOOD councillor Roscoe Palm accused Hill-Lewis and the DA of cadre deployment in light of Styan's appointment to the position.

"By rights, a City of Cape Town councillor should be appointed to this position on the Castle Control Board. When viewed through the lens of cadre deployment, it all begins to make sense. Just as the Mayor deployed his loyal cadre Gareth van Onselen as Council's representative to UCT in 2021, here we see another insider appointment. Here we see the deployment of someone who loyally worked for MEC Bredell, and now the Mayor. The mayor gives appointments to his loyal circle of trust. It's not what you know, it's who you know," said Palm.

The DA in the province referred questions to the mayor.

Mayoral spokesperson Lyndon Khan said the position was unpaid, so it was not cadre deployment.

"They clearly haven't a clue what the term 'cadre deployment' means. No Capetonian is happy with the very poor way in which the Castle has been managed in previous years. It's time for some fresh energy there to help the Castle achieve its huge potential," said Khan.

However Palm maintained that cadre deployment was not about whether a person is paid or unpaid.

"It is about the abuse of public appointments to reward political allies. The Mayor misses the point. Paid or unpaid, it is a City Council appointment to represent the people of Cape Town on the Castle Control Board. Styan was not appointed because of any particular

knowledge of heritage, history, or tourism. He was appointed because he is the Mayor's Chief of Staff, and formerly worked for MEC Anton Bredell. He is a loyal DA cadre. That is the definition of cadre deployment - appointing insiders and loyalists to public positions, not on merit or expertise, but on party allegiance.

"When Goerdin Hill-Lewis deploys one of his cronies to a heritage site of significant indigenous value, this heritage is soon imperilled, as with the Amazon development. If the Mayor truly wanted to bring 'fresh energy' to the Castle, the City could have drawn on the vast pool of expertise that exists in our universities, heritage and cultural institutions, and civil society. Instead, the Mayor chose a political proxy whose first loyalty is to him and his party, not to the people of Cape Town," Palm said.

National Coloured Congress (NCC) councillor, Anastatia Davids said the DA has once again shown its hypocrisy. "While it condemns the ANC for cadre deployment, it quietly does the same by appointing loyal insiders instead of elected councillors. This proves the DA does not trust its own councillors and is driven more by loyalty than by merit."

The ANC in council noted they supported the motion but would monitor the situation closely.

ANC caucus spokesperson Judy-Ann Stevens said: "While we supported this item in Council, we must place on record our concern about the ongoing practice of cadre deployment by the DA. Mr Styan previously worked closely with MEC Bredell, and his appointment again raises questions about whether merit and transparency are being undermined by political connections. As the ANC we will continue to monitor the functioning of the Board to ensure that the Castle of Good Hope, a site of deep historical significance, is managed in the interest of all South Africans and not reduced to a playground for DA patronage."

Styan did not respond to requests for comment by deadline.



James-Brent Styan

### SPRINGBOK WOMEN SHINE



SOUTH Africa's fly half Libbie Janse van Rensburg celebrates scoring a try during the Women's Rugby World Cup pool D match between South Africa and Brazil at Franklin's Gardens in Northampton, central England. The Bok women sent a strong statement with their 66-6 win. They will take on the Italians in their next fixture on Sunday. | PAUL ELLIS AFP

### NATION

## MTN's Iran 'dealings' could severely hurt US-SA relations

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THE US Department of Justice's (DoJ) investigation into MTN's alleged bribery and corruption in securing contracts in Iran and Afghanistan could significantly impact relations between the two countries, already strained due to existing trade tensions.

That is according to African Politics and International Relations expert at the University of Limpopo, Professor Kgothatso Shainotes following reports that MTN chairman Mcebisi Jonas, also President Cyril Ramaphosa's envoy to US, has spoken out against a relentless campaign he believes is aimed at isolating SA, labelling it a concerted effort by influential individuals to render the country a pariah state.

MTN Group is facing a US DoJ grand jury investigation related to its operations in Afghanistan and Iran, including allegations of bribery to secure a mobile phone license in 2005, during Ramaphosa's tenure as MTN chairman.

President spokesperson Vincent Magwenya did not respond to a request



EXPERTS warn that MTN's corruption investigation could affect South Africa's ties with the US.

for comment on the allegations that MTN bribed Iranian officials to secure a mobile phone license during Ramaphosa's tenure. The DoJ grand jury probe relates to MTN's past operations in its former subsidiary in Afghanistan and its 49% stake in Iranian telecom company Irancell. MTN Group has confirmed that it has been approached by its external US counsel regarding a DoJ grand jury investigation.

MTN Chief Corporate Affairs Officer Nompilo Morafo said the telecommu-

nication company is cooperating with the DoJ and voluntarily responding to requests for information.

She said MTN exited its Afghanistan business in early 2024.

"MTN has not been charged with any violations of the law. As we are dealing with an ongoing investigation, MTN is limited in what it can say at this time. We will provide further information when we are able to do so," she said.

This development comes amid a backdrop of tense ties between Pretoria and Washington, DC, which saw President Donald Trump imposing punitive measures on South African exports.

Shai said relations between the US and SA have hit a low point, not seen since pre-1994 and the most recent investigation is likely to further strain ties between the two nations, even without conclusive evidence.

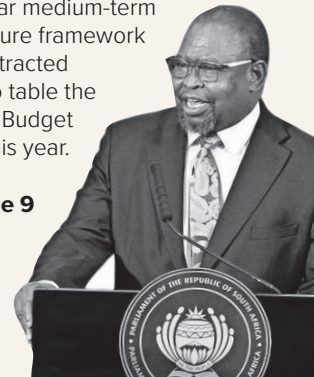
"The US tends to prioritise beliefs over evidence in its foreign policy decisions, particularly when it serves the interests of white supremacy and privilege in both countries," he said.

Shai said the credibility of the investigation and the US Department of Jus-

### BUSINESSREPORT

FINANCE Minister Enoch Godongwana has warned that the rising levels of unemployment and muted economic growth in South Africa were posing challenges to the fiscus ahead of November's Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS). This comes as the official unemployment rate in South Africa rose to its highest in one year from 32.9% in the first quarter to 33.2% in the second quarter as the jobless population surged by 140 000 in the three months to June, resulting in a total of 8.4 million individuals seeking work. Godongwana on Friday announced that the MTBPS will be tabled on 12 November, setting the agenda for the three-year medium-term expenditure framework after protracted efforts to table the National Budget earlier this year.

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### NATION

## Attorney struck off the roll for rewriting magistrate's judgment

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A CASE before the Eastern Cape High Court, in which it had emerged that an attorney allegedly wrote a judgment on behalf of a magistrate to favour her clients, was described by a judge as "unprecedented in the annals of the judiciary in the country".

This followed an application by the SA Legal Practice Council, in which it asked the court that the name of attorney Zoleka Ponoane be struck from the roll of legal practitioners due to misconduct.

The misconduct complained of occurred in the regional magistrate's court at Sterkspruit, during 2012. Ponoane represented various plaintiffs in

an action against the minister of police, based on alleged assaults, unlawful arrests and detentions by the police.

The six plaintiffs were all represented by Ponoane as their attorney of record. After hearing evidence in the matter, the magistrate reserved his judgment. He subsequently prepared a draft judgment which was four pages long. He sent the unsigned draft judgment to Ponoane.

Shortly after she received the draft judgment she discussed it telephonically with the magistrate. It is alleged that during this conversation an agreement was reached that Ponoane would rewrite the draft judgment. It was neither sent to the minister's attorney nor was he informed of her involvement in rewriting the draft. In the "final" judgment, Ponoane

was awarded damages to be paid by the minister to her clients, and a costs order was granted in her favour.

As costs to be paid had at that stage not yet been argued before the magistrate, the minister's legal team suspected that there had been a gross irregularity or misconduct in the writing of the judgment. A criminal case on a charge of corruption was opened against the magistrate by the police, but he had meanwhile died. The minister's legal team earlier obtained an order that the matter had to be heard afresh and that the judgment by the magistrate had to be overturned. Having discussed the judgment received informally, including its structure and the defective order issued, the magistrate asked her to provide him

with an example of the way in which it should be done, which she did, Ponoane explained. The court, however, rejected this explanation. Judge Avinash Govindjee, who dealt with the LPC's application, commented that although the incident arose many years ago, and despite the respondent continuing to practise since that time without blemish, it cannot be said that there is genuine remorse which counts in her favour.

"The various attempts to gloss over her actions, including the persistent denial of wrongdoing during both the review application and disciplinary proceedings are indicative of someone who experiences regret, not genuine remorse," he said in ordering her name to be struck from the roll.



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NEPOTISM IS THE LOWEST AND LEAST  
IMAGINATIVE FORM OF CORRUPTION.  
| DANIEL ALARCÓN