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STORMERS CLIMB TO SECOND | P14

BUSINESS REPORT | P9

SA'S WATER CRISIS | P4

STORM BREWS AS DA DISQUALIFIES KHAKHAU

DA leadership race controversy deepens after Khakhau's forced withdrawal

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THE 'forced' withdrawal of DA spokesperson Karabo Khakhau from the party's leadership race could trigger another political storm within a party that has been marred by leadership squabbles ahead of its elective congress next month.

This is according to several political analysts after Khakhau announced at the weekend that she was barred from contesting the party's upcoming federal council deputy chair position for allegedly owing more than R4 000 in party tithes.

Political analyst Professor Ricky Munyaradzi Mukonza said the situation reflects poorly on the DA, regardless of the technical details.

"This creates the impression that the DA puts up barriers that prevent black members from contesting leadership positions. The party needs to clearly explain why Khakhau was excluded from next month's conference."

Khakhau announced her 'forced withdrawal' from the race in a statement shared on social media on Saturday.

"It is with a heavy heart that I inform you of my forced withdrawal from the deputy chairperson race of the federal council," she said.

She explained that the issue stemmed from a missed payment in July last year, which she said was rectified promptly.

"I mistakenly missed a payment in July. I had paid all my tithes from January to June and continued with August and September. On October 14, I was notified of the outstanding July tithes of R4 250. Within 24 hours, I paid R8 500, covering both July and October. I have continued to pay monthly and do not owe the DA a cent," she said.

Another analyst, Professor Ntwanano Mathebula from the University of Johannesburg, described the situation as unusual, particularly in light of Khakhau's claim that other party leaders with outstanding payments were not treated in the same way.

"Karabo says she doesn't owe the DA anything. She is a national spokesperson and Member of Parliament. We are talking about a young African woman with strong credentials," Mathebula said.

He added that the issue hinges on how the party's constitution is applied. "If the rules say members who owe should be excluded, then that must apply consistently to everyone. It cannot be selective," he said.

Mathebula also pointed to allegations of internal tensions within the



John Steenhuisen

party, including claims of coordination between national and provincial structures to block Khakhau's candidacy. He said her public stance suggests she believes her exclusion is linked to her views and political positioning within the party. Khakhau, who serves on Parliament's portfolio committee on higher education, said the DA's Free State leadership refused to issue her a letter of good financial standing, despite her insistence that her account was up to date.

The decision was later upheld by the party's federal executive.

"This is despite precedents where leaders in similar situations were allowed to contest and, in some cases, went on to win," she said.

She had been set to contest the deputy federal council chair position against senior party figures, including Sello Seithloho, Annelie Lotriet and Thomas Walters.

In her statement, Khakhau warned that the DA risks alienating a key voting bloc if it fails to address internal dynamics.

"There is no party in South Africa that will succeed without mobilising the majority of voters, who are black, young and female," she said.

Mukonza echoed that concern, warning the decision could have electoral consequences, particularly as the country heads towards local government elections.

"The decision could alienate voters at the polls," he said.

He also noted that internal contestation within the DA is not unusual during periods of leadership transition, especially following John Steenhuisen's decision not to seek re-election as party leader.

"It is a common political phenomenon. What we are seeing are competing camps, and ultimately those with influence and organisational strength will emerge at the conference," Mukonza said.

Mathebula added that Khakhau's future within the party remains uncertain, suggesting her situation mirrors that of other high-profile black leaders who have previously exited the DA, including Mmusi Maimane, Lindiwe Mazibuko and Phumzile van Damme.

ALLAN BOESAK'S ENDURING LEGACY



CHAIRPERSON of the Sekunjalo Group, Dr Iqbal Survé greets Dr Allan Boesak who celebrated his 80th birthday at the Castle of Good Hope yesterday. The event honoured Boesak's lifelong contribution to justice, faith and the Struggle. (SEE PAGE 2) | ARMAND HOUGH Independent Newspapers

NATION

Who is protecting Feroz Khan? Calls mount for counter-intelligence head to testify

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THE Madlanga Commission of Inquiry and the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee have been urged to summon the head of counter-intelligence within the SAPS Crime Intelligence division, Feroz Khan, who has been accused of being "a political fixer" and politically protected.

Khan, who joined the police service in 1991, has been at the centre of several controversies involving professional misconduct, political interference and private business interests.

This was after KwaZulu-Natal Police Commissioner, General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi, recently claimed that Khan received protection from senior politicians to shield him from investigations.

During his testimony before the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee, Mkhwanazi alleged that former Police Minister Bheki Cele pressured him in 2021 to protect Khan during an investigation into a massive drug bust.

This was after Khan was accused of defeating the ends of justice and bringing the SAPS into disrepute for allegedly interfering with the investigation after other officers reportedly tried to steal the narcotics.

However, Khan was acquitted of all charges in a disciplinary process in 2025. This was after he won an appeal after urgently applying to the Labour Court to prevent the police from instituting an expedited disciplinary process in 2024.

Mkhwanazi, in previous testimony to the Ad Hoc Committee, claimed that Cele asked him to persuade Major General Jabulani Khumalo—who was investigating Khan—to resign from the SAPS in exchange for a five-year position in Gauteng. Mkhwanazi described this as an attempt to derail the probe and stated he had not spoken to Cele since that day.

Cele, during his testimony, had denied allegations that he interfered in operational policing decisions, characterising his interactions as part of legitimate policy oversight. He described

Mkhwanazi's claims as "unfounded and misinformed". Mkhwanazi also described the vetting unit, under Khan, as a "dirty office" that allegedly uses its power to delay or obstruct security clearances for integrity officers while protecting others.

He also revealed that his top-secret security clearance expired in 2018, and despite applying for renewal, he has not received clearance, adding that Khan has deliberately obstructed this process.

He further claimed that Khan's influence reaches into the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) and other external networks, effectively "shaping conduct" beyond the police force.

During his testimony at the Madlanga Commission, Crime Intelligence head General Dumisani Khumalo also indicated that Khan was close to controversial businessman Brown Mogotsi, through WhatsApp messages.

This was after Mogotsi allegedly facilitated communication between suspected drug kingpin Vusimusi "Cat" Matlala and Khan. MK Party MP, Vusi Shongwe, also expressed concern regarding the absence of Khan from the witness list.

Political analyst Zakhele Ndlovu said Khan should also respond to the Madlanga Commission and the Parliament Ad Hoc Committee to allegations levelled against him.

"He has been implicated in serious allegations of misconduct that include intimidation, abuse of authority, and being friends with criminal elements. The question is, who is protecting him? Why has he not been called to testify before the Madlanga Commission and the Parliament Ad Hoc committee? Whose responsibility is it to call witnesses to testify? Obviously, if he is doing bad things, then some powerful people would protect him," said Ndlovu.

Security expert Andy Mashaile said that while he is hoping that the Ad Hoc Committee will explain its decision in its final report not to call Khan to testify, he believes that he will be called before the Madlanga Commission, as he is implicated as a key player enabling organised

crime networks by frustrating the effectiveness and efficiency of policing.

Mashaile added that those responsible for promoting Khan as head of counter-intelligence must explain this move, based on the SAPS' human resources policies.

In 2023, Khan faced a public backlash for attending an EFF gala dinner, where he shared a table with individuals allegedly linked to illicit activities like cigarette smuggling, Adriano Mazzotti, who had previously donated to the EFF.

It was reported that Khan's expensive ticket was purchased by Mohammadh Sayed, a close friend of Khan and business partner to Mazzotti.

Mkhwanazi also claimed that Khan introduced him to the EFF leader Julius Malema in a meeting where Khan "bragged" about his access to high-profile politicians.

Malema has since denied any corrupt ties, stating that while he knows Khan, Mkhwanazi is dragging his name into internal police disputes to "fight Khan".

Concerns have also been raised regarding Khan managing substantial business interests while overseeing police security, with calls questioning the compatibility of these roles. This was after Khan was identified as an active director of multiple lucrative businesses, including a motor parts chain, Spares Oasis, which is valued at approximately R21 million.

The organisation Public Interest SA recently called on National Police Commissioner General Fannie Masemola to suspend Khan. This followed allegations that he summoned MK Party parliamentarian Sibonelo Nomvalo to a private venue and compelled him to engage via video call, during which Khan reportedly warned him to "stop suffocating" him.

SAPS spokesperson Athlenda Mathe said questions would be forwarded to relevant departments but could not comment at publication. Madlanga Commission spokesperson Jeremy Michael added that the Commission does not comment in detail on matters arising from testimony.

NATION

Probe into fuel rationing affecting Garden Route, West Coast

STAFF REPORTER

THE Fuel Industry Association of South Africa (FIASA) is working with Agri Western Cape (Agri WC) to identify fuel suppliers that are rationing supply, following reports that some farmers are only receiving about 20% of their usual monthly diesel allocations.

Premier Alan Winde said isolated reports of shortages are due to suppliers not releasing fuel to customers, which is impacting the agricultural sector.

"These effects are most acute in the Garden Route and West Coast districts.

"It is unethical for suppliers to delay the delivery of fuel while waiting for prices to increase. Any supplier found to be engaged in this conduct will be assessed for legal liability and recourse," Winde said.

"The Western Cape Government recognises the very real concerns raised about the impact of the Middle East conflict on fuel supply in the province. We want to assure residents that there is sufficient fuel supply in the Western Cape to meet demand."

Winde said the Provincial Disaster Management Centre is monitoring the situation in coordination with FIASA, Agri WC, Regional Disaster Management Centres, the Department of Health and Wellness: EMS, and Eskom.

"There is no cause for concern. There is more than enough fuel in reserve. All suppliers must immediately release full orders of fuel to all clients. We will not tolerate suppliers unethically holding onto fuel while our agricultural sector is under pressure," said Winde.

"Fuel is a critical resource for the agricultural sector, particularly as we head into the fruit-picking and winter grain-planting season. This is a sector already under pressure as a result of Foot-and-Mouth Disease; it is unacceptable that unnecessary fuel rationing now poses an additional stressor," he added.

At this stage, all other sectors, including all Western Cape Government departments, are not affected by fuel shortages, Winde said. The Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources has also reassured the public of a stable fuel supply and warned against panic-buying. This comes as ongoing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East have pushed international crude oil prices above \$100 per barrel, creating uncertainty in global energy markets.

In a statement, the department said any local delays were minor and operational, not a national problem, and urged people to buy fuel as usual and trust official information.

"Calls for the public to rush to the pumps are irresponsible. They place undue pressure on supply systems, cause congestion at service stations, and generate anxiety among consumers."

