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SHAW NOW PROHIBITED FROM LEGAL PRACTISE

High Court issues interim order amid Fidelity Fund Certificate dispute in major R60 billion class action case

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THE Gauteng High Court, Pretoria, has ordered that lawyer Douglas Shaw, who has been driving the R60 billion class action against four of the country's major banks, may not practise as an attorney on his own account at this stage.

The ruling, issued yesterday by Judge Petrus van Niekerk, is pending the outcome of an application by the Legal Practice Council (LPC), which wants Shaw to be either suspended or removed from the roll of legal practitioners for not having a Fidelity Fund Certificate.

The LPC's urgent application did not go ahead yesterday, as the parties indicated that they still wanted to exchange court papers. Indications at this stage are that the urgent bid by the legal watchdog will return to the urgent court on May 12.

While the parties agreed that the matter could not go ahead at this stage, Judge Van Niekerk questioned what should happen in the interim until the matter is resolved.

The judge commented that "this matter is in the public interest, and I cannot allow him to practise without a certificate". The judge said that whether the application was being postponed or not, he was set on issuing an interim order.

Counsel for Shaw explained that he has not been practising since the matter of the Fidelity Certificate came up in court earlier.

Judge Van Niekerk said Shaw could give an undertaking that he will not

practise for his own account, but the judge insisted on an order in this regard.

Shaw is meanwhile set on fighting his suspension, as he had applied for his Fidelity Fund Certificate but said it was not issued to him as the LPC still required more documentation, which, according to him, he did supply.

The LPC issues the certificate, a vital document for attorneys and certain advocates. If they appear in court on behalf of clients without it, it could be regarded as a criminal offence.

It came to light in February, as the R60bn long-awaited class action was due to kick off in the Johannesburg High Court, that Shaw did not have a Fidelity Fund Certificate for this year. This fact was divulged to one of the banks via a whistle-blower.

Shaw explained that he had the certificate last year, but it was not renewed for this year. He, however, assured the court that he is on the brink of receiving it and that only a few documents required by the LPC were still outstanding, which, according to him, have now been submitted.

But Judge Leonie Windell was adamant that without it, he would be off this case. She also requested the LPC to investigate the matter and to report back to the court. The Gauteng arm of the LPC, in its report, stated that Shaw not only brought the legal profession into disrepute but also committed a criminal offence when he appeared without a Fidelity Fund Certificate.

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TENSIONS

A STREET vendor gestures as he tries to persuade a protester of his South African citizenship during a protest march against undocumented migrants, supported by members of ActionSA, Operation Dudula and the March and March movement in Pretoria yesterday. | AFP

NATION

SADTC set to oppose court bid by universities in escalating Dental Technology Accreditation dispute

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THE South African Dental Technicians Council (SADTC) confirmed it is preparing to oppose legal action brought by three universities, signaling an escalating battle over the accreditation of dental technology programmes that has left students across the country in limbo.

The regulator said it has formally received court papers from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), alongside the Durban University of Technology, and the Tshwane University of Technology, and has already moved to respond. "We have instructed our legal team to oppose and deal with the matter accordingly," the Council said.

The legal action follows a long-running dispute between universities and the SADTC over the accreditation and regulation of dental technology programmes.

The standoff has disrupted academic programmes, delayed graduations, and raised concerns about whether affected students will be able to practise pro-

fessionally. Despite the court challenge, the SADTC said its position remains unchanged. The regulator has maintained that it has the statutory authority to oversee the education and training of dental technicians and to ensure that programmes meet the required standards before graduates can be registered to practise.

"The role of the statutory council/regulator in the education and training of dental technology as stated in the Act and the regulations should be upheld for the benefit of the students and the protection of the public," the SADTC said.

The dispute centres on compliance requirements, including the approval of laboratory facilities and the alignment of university programmes with regulatory standards.

The Council has previously warned that students graduating from non-accredited programmes risk being unable to register and work in the profession. Universities however, have pushed back, arguing that the regulator has overstepped its mandate and that programmes remain

accredited at an institutional level through the Council on Higher Education.

The universities said they would issue a joint statement. At CPUT, students have spent months without classes while negotiations between the university and the regulator stalled.

Teaching disruptions began in 2025, and although plans have been outlined to resume classes, progress remains tied to regulatory approval of facilities and programme conditions.

Students have described their uncertainty over whether their qualifications will ultimately allow them to enter the workforce.

The latest legal action now places the dispute squarely in the courts, even as government has attempted to broker a solution.

The Department of Higher Education and Training previously indicated that it was engaging with the Department of Health on the matter, but attempts to obtain an update from the department on the outcome of those engagements have been unsuccessful.

NATION

Government extends fuel levy relief to ease prices

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THE South African government has extended and expanded its temporary fuel levy relief measures in an effort to shield households and businesses from continued fuel price pressures driven by the ongoing Middle East conflict.

In a joint announcement, the National Treasury and the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources confirmed that the temporary reduction in the general fuel levy, initially introduced in April, will remain in place through June, with phased adjustments before ending in July.

The departments said the original relief package, announced on March 31, was introduced to provide "limited short-term relief to households from rising fuel prices following the Middle East conflict."

With international oil prices remaining elevated, government said further intervention had become necessary.

"To provide further relief and to address concerns of higher inflation and negative impacts on economic growth due to increasing fuel prices, the following relief measures are proposed for May and June 2026."

Under the revised measures, the R3 per litre fuel levy reduction on petrol will be extended until June 2, 2026.

Diesel users will receive even greater relief, with the levy cut increasing by 93 cents to R3.93 per litre from May 6 to June 2, effectively reducing the diesel general fuel levy to zero during that period.

"The general fuel levy for diesel will decrease from R0.93 per litre to R0.00 per litre," Treasury said.

From June 3 to 30, the relief will be scaled back as government begins phasing out the intervention.

For that month, petrol relief will be reduced to R1.50 per litre, while diesel relief will be lowered to R1.96 per litre.

The full fuel levy will be reinstated from July 1, with petrol returning to R4.10 per litre and diesel to R3.93 per litre. Government estimates the total cost of the temporary relief measures from April through June at R17.2 billion in foregone tax revenue.

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