

I'm not a robot



Ferial Haffajee's latest Daily Maverick article sees the journalist returning to the scene of the Estina Dairy Farm scandal.Now called the Integrated Vrede Dairy Project, Haffajee calls it the 'original sin site of State Capture'.During the State Capture Enquiry it was revealed that tens of millions of rand, meant to uplift Black farmers in the Free State, was instead misdirected and used to pay for the wedding ofVega Gupta.CAPE TOWN - An R800 million hospital oxygen plant tender is to be investigated by the Public Works Department.This comes after the Daily Mavericks investigative unit blew the lid on the dodgy dealings of the Independent Development Trust (IDT) - which handled the tender on behalf of the Health Department.The IDT is a State-owned entity set up to manage the implementation and delivery of critically needed social infrastructure on behalf of the government.Public Works Minister Dean Macpherson said the IDT cant investigate itself, and its not been forthcoming in sharing documents to get to the bottom of the corruption allegations.Since the dodgy oxygen plant tender has been exposed, the Health Department has indicated it plans to terminate its relationship with the IDT.Daily Mavericks investigation has revealed that two out of three companies responsible for providing oxygen to the countrys hospitals dont have South African Products Regulatory Authority Registration, and the other potentially submitted fraudulent documentation.Macpherson said the IDTs board of trustees is not currently quorate with only seven out of 12 members in place, one short of a quorum.This is why I will be appointing an independent firm to investigate the alleged corporate governance failures that have led to this breakdown in trust.Macpherson said his interactions with the IDT over the last two months lead him to believe there are serious governance issues compounded by the fact that its not been able to produce financial statements for the past year.Media Monitoring Africas William Bird said he hopes the move highlights to the public just how important journalism is."It would be nice to think all journalists in all newsrooms should shut down. But that would be like asking all emergency responders to not go to work for one day to highlight the crisis in emergency services."And obviously that sounds like a good idea but you can't, which highlights the fact that journalism is a fundamental public service. Its something that's essential for democracies to function."video-js]:h-full [&>video-js]:w-full>JOHANNESBURG - President Cyril Ramaphosa has requested a meeting with Justice and Constitutional Development Minister Thembi Simelane amid allegations that she received undue benefits from the VBS bank.Daily Maverick recently reported that Simelane brokered an unlawful investment of R349 million of municipal money into the now-defunct bank during her term as Polokwane mayor.ALSO READ: ActionSA lodges complaint with PP against Justice Minister Simelane over VBS links Simelane must account for VBS-linked corruption allegations against her: Judges MatterThe news report said that some of the money was transferred from a bank to a wealth management fund, which later gave Simelane loans totaling R475,000.Simelane has pleaded her innocence, saying the loan was to buy a coffee shop in Sandton and she had since repaid it.Presidency spokesperson Vincent Magwenya said: "President Ramaphosa has noted with concern media reports containing allegations of corruption against the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Ms Thembi Simelane. The president has requested a detailed report and briefing from the minister on the matter."Agriculture Minister John Steenhuisen's appointment of a controversial podcaster as his chief of staff has sparked huge debate around the message it sends about the DA, and the responsibilities of the GNU.Roman Cabanac is a conservative social media activist whose views have been decried as racist and homophobic.RELATED: 'What he said is racist': John Steenhuisen slammed for hiring Roman CabanacDaily Maverick's Rebecca Davis penned an article titled Steenhuisen's podcast bro appointment of Roman Cabanac is a low for the DA.On the Afternoon Drive's Plan B, the journalist says she says she's doubling down on her comments 'much like Steenhuisen who's shown no indication that the position is going to be reconsidered in any way'.Davis highlights what she says is an extraordinary amount of whataboutery, also from the DA itself, in response to the concerns that have been raised around the appointment by herself and others.JOHANNESBURG - The Daily Maverick has announced a 5% retrenchment of its permanent staff, a first in the publications 15-year history.In a statement released on Thursday, the publication also said it would be reducing its operating costs, citing economic pressure in the media industry.Earlier this year, the Daily Maverick shut down for a day to highlight the crisis that the global journalism industry faces, in an attempt to highlight what it called the global state of emergency in journalism.Daily Maverick founding CEO, Styli Charalambous, said the publication was committed to providing support to staff members through this period.The publication also said that it would not be putting up a paywall for its articles, saying that this would limit the impact its journalism has.Last week, former Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development,Thembi Simelane, attended the 14th International Congress of Justice Ministers in Rome without a hint of shame or irony.All the while, reports continued to swirl around her. On Monday, a joint News24 and Daily Maverick multi-part series detailed allegations of her lavish lifestyle seemingly far beyond her means during her tenure as Mayor of Polokwane.The latest allegations come in the wake of serious questions which remain unanswered regarding her connection to unlawful investments in VBS Mutual Bank, also during her tenure as Mayor of Polokwane, in 2016.Late on Monday night, President Cyril Ramaphosa was finally moved to act - sort of. In a truly bizarre and it must be said, irrational move, Rampahosa reshuffled his Cabinet.Simelane and Mmamoloko Kubayi, Minister of Human Settlements, will now swap positions, with Kubayi moving to Justice and Constitutional Development.Ramaphosa is given to inaction, but this reshuffle makes absolutely no sense whatsoever.Simelane faces serious allegations which will not go away simply because she has changed Cabinet positions. In fact, her position is even more untenable given that the president appears to be going to extraordinary lengths to protect her Cabinet position.Of concern too is that Kubayi has no background in law, nor does she have any experience in the administration of justice. It renders her appointment even more baffling.But she did not appoint herself. So, more worryingly, it indicates that the president has an inadequate grasp of precisely how important the justice portfolio is. Assigning it repeatedly to neophytes will only have a deleterious impact on the rule of law.At the time the allegations against Simelane broke several months ago, Freedom Under Law and others called for full transparency relating to the allegations against the minister. In August, Ramaphosa requested a detailed report and briefing from the minister on the matter".Ramaphosa has had this report since mid-September when he requested time and space to deal with the matter. In September, the president told the National Assembly that he needed "the time and opportunity to consider this matter so that finality can then be reached". Since then, the presidents inexplicable inertia has compelled the Democratic Alliance (DA) to make a PAIA request for access to the report.The facts relating to VBS-linked loan are worth revisiting. They tell us, at the very least, that Simelane has ethical questions to answer, and at worst, that she is unfit to represent South Africans in any position.In late August, a joint investigation by the Daily Maverick and News24 reported that Simelane had received a loan of over R500,000 from a company which had brokered unlawful investments into the since-collapsed VBS Mutual Bank by the Polokwane Municipality, at a time when the minister was the mayor of the municipality. It was reported that the minister had used the loan to purchase a coffee shop in Sandton.It is worth highlighting why the story has attracted so much attention, and why the issues it raises are so concerning.The incident raises serious questions about Simelanes judgment, and her understanding of principles of ethics and conflicts of interest. The allegations invited a comprehensive explanation of the circumstances under which the loan was received, the extent to which the minister had knowledge of the link to VBS Bank, and what steps she took to convince herself that the transaction was above board.This is particularly so since she was mayor of the very municipality which had invested money into VBS. There are also questions over why she received the loan from an entity which was not even a registered financial services provider. In responding to the story, the minister had claimed that the loan was a purely commercial agreement which has since been repaid. However, at the time of writing, and despite the minister having appeared before a parliamentary portfolio committee, no copy of either the loan agreement or proof of the loans repayment has been made public.The very perception of corruption or conflicts of interests is extremely concerning, as they undermine public confidence in our systems of government.On 6 September, the minister appeared before Parliaments portfolio committee on justice and constitutional development. Unfortunately, Simelanes appearance, and the information that has subsequently been revealed (or not revealed), have only made matters worse.The ministers explanations did not address the concerns raised by the allegations. Indeed, they further called her judgment into question. She has been quoted as saying that she took the loan because it was difficult to obtain a loan because of high interest rates available from commercial banks, and that it was difficult to obtain a loan as a black person. With respect, this race card is tired and bears the hallmarks of deflection. It also does not answer any of the concerns about the loan she eventually received at a reported 47% interest rate.The minister has still not made the loan agreement or proof of repayment public, or given a reasonable explanation why the repayment was delayed. The circumstances surrounding the link between the loan and the VBS funds also remain unclear.It is especially concerning that it appears that the loan may only have been repaid once issues with VBS became public, raising pointed questions about why the loan was not repaid sooner, and about the precise circumstances under which the loan was made.The questions will remain and the deep concerns about Simelanes probity will follow her to the new ministry.The president has done the country a disservice by shuffling Simelane to the Human Settlements portfolio. He should have acted with conviction and relieved her of her position. It would have sent a message that he is interested in accountable governance beyond the lip service he pays to it when the moment requires.But, in every sense, it is vintage Ramaphosa, lily-livered when the moment presents itself and seemingly more concerned about reading the political tea-leaves within his party and defending the indefensible than properly exercising his executive authority in the best interests of the country. COPYRIGHT 2025 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED His latest annual is have I got GNUs for you and he addresses the latest things happening in our political space.Many of these cartoons deal with Jacob Zuma, who he believes is the biggest threat to our Constitution.After three decades in this space, he says it has become more difficult to do what he does, while holding on to his authentic voice.With most of his cartoons being online and on social media, he says his work is sometimes taken out of context and the intent can be lost.

How was the heliocentric theory created. How does the heliocentric theory work. How did the heliocentric theory change the world. How was the heliocentric theory revolutionary. How was the heliocentric theory received.