

e.tv: Golding claims of ANC/Sactwu threat to editorial independence refuted

NEWSWATCH: John Copelyn, chair of ENCA parent company Sabido Investments, has dismissed claims by suspended CE Marcel Golding that the ANC had tried to influence the channel's news agenda, reports *BD Live*.



Marcel Golding's claim of politically inspired attempts to interfere in e.tv's editorial independence has been refuted by John Copelyn, chair of ENCA parent company Sabido Investments. (Image extracted from the [HQ website](#).)

For more:

- *BD Live*: [ENCA chair dismisses allegations of threat to editorial independence...](#) According to the *BD Live* report, "in an e-mail to staff, John Copelyn, the chair of ENCA parent company Sabido Investments, dismissed accusations by suspended CE Marcel Golding - who resigned on Monday - that the governing African National Congress (ANC) had tried to influence its news agenda."

The claim alleges the channel's editorial independence is threatened by a "political and trade union plot to sway coverage on its 24-hour ENCA news channel".

- *Moneyweb*: [Hogan letter explains HCI resignation...](#) HCI independent director Barbara Hogan also resigned from the board on Sunday because, according to the *Moneyweb* report, she did not believe an unauthorised share transaction warranted Golding's suspension and "was appalled at the unprofessional way the board handled the inquiry into the matter".

- *Cape Times*: ['Serious blunder' by e.tv boss...](#) Aziz Hartley, writing in the *Cape Times* says "Hosken Consolidated Investment chief executive John Copelyn has written a candid letter to staff at e.tv and eNCA about how his business relationship had fallen apart with company chairman Marcel Golding and why the company had to act against Golding" and quotes Copelyn as saying Golding made a "serious blunder when he accumulated shares in another company without any financial approval".

• DA requests ICASA to investigate political interference at e.tv

The Democratic Alliance has called on ICASA to investigate Marcel Golding's allegations that Minister Ebrahim Patel and other individuals linked to Zuma have attempted to influence editorial decisions at e.tv.

The party wants the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) to launch an Inquiry, as provided for in Section 4 of the ICASA Act.



In its call, the DA says "Golding - the Chairperson of Hosken Consolidated Investments, the company that controls e.tv's holding company, Sabido - has made a number of explosive allegations that point to repeated attempts to influence e.tv's news coverage. These, according to the DA, include:

- "Yunus Shaik (brother of Schabir) has exerted growing power and influence at HCI since his firm was contracted to advise on "business strategy in relation to government" in 2013;
- "On 24 March 2014, Shaik sent an email to the COO of Sabido stating that the Minister of Economic Development, Ebrahim Patel, wanted footage of President Zuma opening a dam to be broadcast on the e.tv evening news;
- "On 29 April 2014, Minister Patel requested footage of a Reserve Bank meeting to be aired during a live debate he was scheduled to have with a member of an opposition party, in the belief it would bolster his argument;
- "On 19 May 2014, Shaik sent a message to Golding requesting that Golding watch an e.tv story on gambling

addition before it was aired to ensure it portrayed Tsogo Sun - an affiliate of HCI - in a positive light; and

- "On 14 August 2014 Andre Kriel of the Union SACTWU instructed Golding by SMS to ensure live coverage of Minister Patel's delivery of the Violet Seboni Memorial Lecture."

The DA says, "these allegations paint a picture of growing pressure on e.tv to skew its coverage in favour of a cabal with close links to the President. This kind of political pressure on a broadcaster is in contravention of Section 192 of the Constitution, which stipulates that broadcasting must be regulated 'in the public interest, and to ensure fairness and a diversity of views broadly representing South African society'."

The DA will be requesting ICASA to investigate whether:

"Pressure was exerted on e.tv to skew its coverage in the instances documented by Marcel Golding; and e.tv caved in to pressure in any of these instances.

"Section 4 of the ICASA Act obliges the regulator to investigate complaints of this nature, stating that it 'must investigate and adjudicate complaints submitted to the Authority in terms of this Act, the underlying statutes, and licence conditions.' We trust, therefore, that ICASA will act on the DA's request to investigate."



- *SA Labour News*: [Sactwu denies e.tv interference and says it will not back HCI boss for re-election...](#)

According to the *SA Labour News* report, *Cape Times* has reported that the SA Clothing and Textile Workers' Union (Sactwu) will not support suspended Hosken Consolidated Investments (HCI) executive chair Marcel Golding in re-elections to serve on the company's board and has also rejected as untrue Golding's claim Sactwu had attempted to influence editorial content at e.tv.

- **Also see**

Legalbrief Today: [Political interference claims prompt e.tv resignations.](#)

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