

IN BRIEF

Trump wades into land row ...

Soon after a Fox News report on land expropriation without compensation in South Africa, United States President Donald Trump tweeted that he had asked secretary of state Mike Pompeo to look into “farm and land seizures and the large scale killing of farmers”. Fox’s Tucker Carlson had called President Cyril Ramaphosa a “racist” for seizing land and changing the Constitution, although neither has happened yet. Afrikaner lobbyists AfriForum claimed some credit for Trump’s concern, having visited the US earlier this year to seek support for its fight against land seizures and farm murders, which it regards as genocidal. After Trump’s tweet and the fallout, the South African government said it would “engage with” the US government through diplomatic channels. Good luck with that.



... while Cyril urges calm

Meanwhile, Ramaphosa was at pains, a day or two before the Trump utterance, to say South Africa’s land reform process would be orderly and that it would not be a matter of nationalising all land, as the Economic Freedom Fighters (who have driven the debate) would like. During president’s question time in Parliament, Ramaphosa said: “We should not rob our people from this deep yearning and quest to own their own property.” The Democratic Alliance cheered. Ramaphosa also said state land would be made available and that the “intention of the proposed amendment [to section 25 of the Constitution] is to strengthen the property rights of all South Africans.” The president had earlier met AgriSA and the Agricultural Business Chamber, a meeting described as “cordial and constructive”. There would be no wild land grabs, said Ramaphosa.

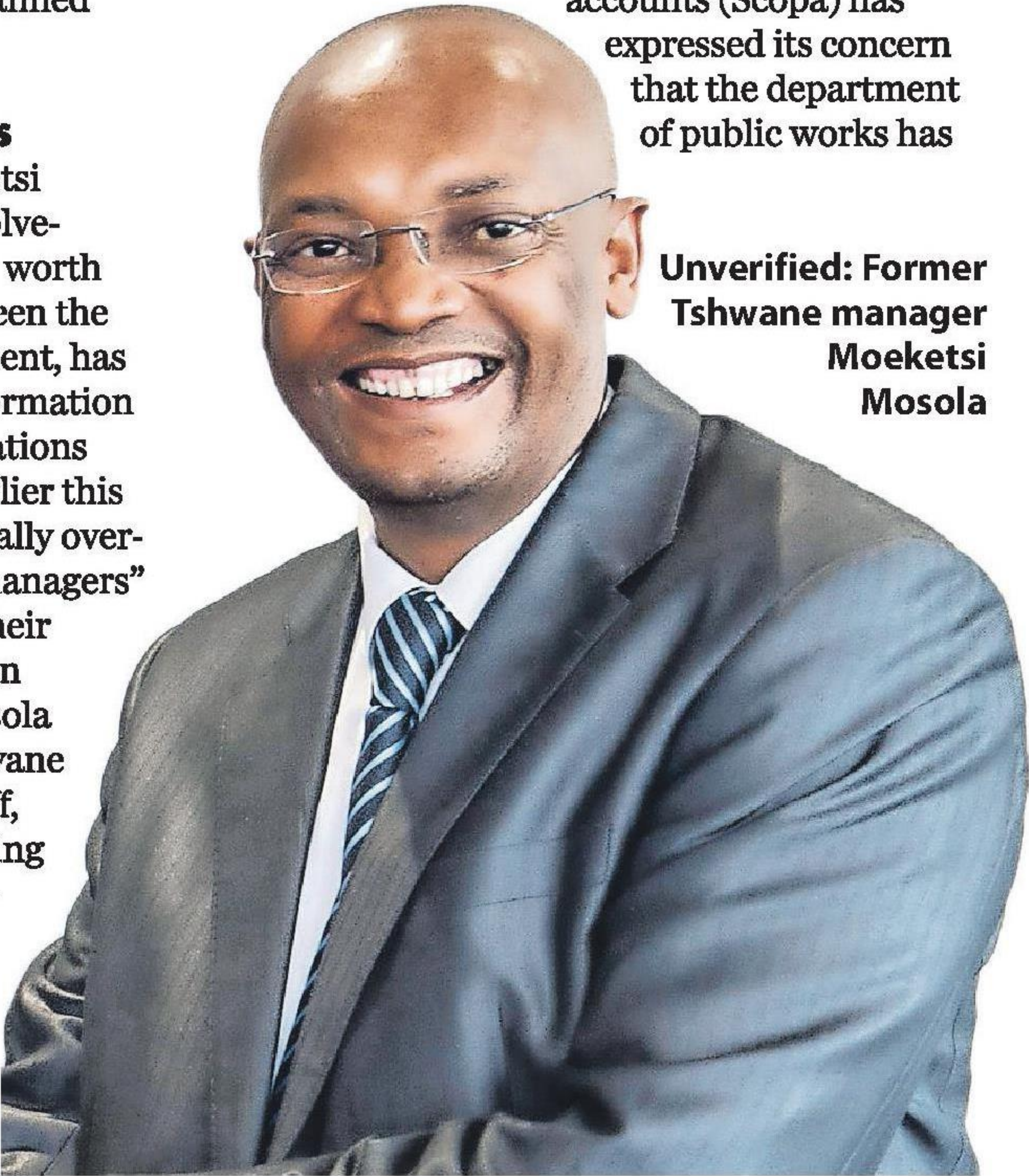
Life’s a beach for racist grocer

A video of one Adam Catzavelos giving a kind of weather report from a beach in Greece, in which he said there was an “amazing sea and not one k****r in sight”, had South Africans riled up this past week. Twitterati swore to hunt him down, a charge was laid at the Human Rights Commission and restaurateurs stopped buying from Catzavelos’s family business, St George’s Fine Foods. Catzavelos was fired from the business and, said the family in a statement, “his minority shareholding will be unwound” (see Tweet of the Week). Nike was also briefly dragged into the fight when it was said Catzavelos’s wife worked for the sports company, and Nedbank and Radio 702, which hosted an entrepreneur programme Catzavelos was part of, distanced themselves from him. He was also banned from his children’s school.



Verifying body won’t verify this

Tshwane municipal manager Moeketsi Mosola, who was suspended for involvement in alleged tender irregularities worth R12-billion after much conflict between the parties in Tshwane’s metro government, has also been accused of giving false information about the verification of the qualifications of senior managers at the metro. Earlier this year Mosola claimed he had “personally overseen the appointment of all senior managers” reporting to him and had “verified their qualifications” with the South African Qualifications Authority (Saqa). Mosola made this announcement after Tshwane mayor Solly Msimanga’s chief of staff, Marietha Aucamp, resigned after being shown to have lied about her qualifications. Saqa stated: “The City of Tshwane’s claim that it used Saqa to verify the qualifications of its senior managers before appointing them is false.” It cited the case of emergency services chief Previn



Govender, who, it said, had misrepresented his level of qualification. “Saqa does not have any verifications agreement with the City of Tshwane, which means that it is not true that the City of Tshwane had verified the qualifications,” said the authority.

Section 25 report ‘not true’

Joint constitutional review committee co-chair Vincent Smith denied this past week that an interim report on the written public submissions on the proposed change to section 25 of the Constitution had been leaked to the ANC’s national executive. The report draws on 149 886 submissions so far — there are more than 300 000 still to be looked at before the final report is ready in September. The report shows that 60 157 (40.14%) of the written submissions said section 25 should be reviewed, and 89 327 (59.6%) believed it shouldn’t. Julius Malema, whose Economic Freedom Fighters have pushed for a constitutional amendment, said: “It is not true that these written submissions are a true reflection of the view of the people.” He also told the review committee: “This is a setup.”

Half a mil for ministerial braais

Parliament’s standing committee on public accounts (Scopa) has expressed its concern that the department of public works has

Unverified: Former Tshwane manager Moeketsi Mosola

TWEET OF THE WEEK



Gwen Ironsi
@MizIronsi

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Allow me to translate, "This idiot is messing with our coins so we have agreed to throw him under the bus. For recording this crap he is being demoted, he will now be a silent partner till the noise dies down" the family is hopping mad he got reckless, sorry"

Media statement from the Catzavelos family and St George's Fine Foods on the racist issue involving Adam Catzavelos:

"The family of Adam Catzavelos is appalled by the video in question. It is abhorrent and we fully disassociate ourselves from the sentiments expressed. We reject racism in any form. Adam Catzavelos has been dismissed with immediate effect from the family business, St George's Fine Foods, and his minority shareholding will be unwound as soon as practically possible. Given the high-profile nature of this development, the business has been temporarily closed for the protection of all its staff. We have no further comment at this stage." — Nic Catzavelos (brother)

6:41 AM · 22 Aug 2018

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spent nearly half a million rand on braai and entertainment areas at ministerial houses. “The state is spending exorbitant amounts of taxpayers’ money on buying and maintaining these houses when some of them are not even being utilised by ministers or deputy ministers,” said a Scopa press release. It now wants further details from public works about the 148 houses it owns, which are allocated to ministers and deputies. Scopa would like to know how much the department is spending on the upkeep and the rates for these dwellings, and wondered how it decides what to buy — some of the houses are worth R4-million, others R9-million. Scopa has asked the department to report back to it on August 29.

Women unwelcome at hearing

Another parliamentary committee, the portfolio committee on co-operative governance and traditional affairs, condemned the disorder at a public hearing on the proposed Customary Initiation Bill, which would make traditional initiations safer, in KwaMhlanga, Mpumalanga. Chaos developed at the hearing when some people objected to women, who are traditionally excluded from knowledge about and participation in such initiation rites, attending the hearing without the permission of a chief. Chairperson Richard Mdakane said he believed this attitude was “repressive, disorderly and perpetuates discrimination against women”.