

Cases to watch

By  [Shan Raddiffe](#)

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Crime, cartels, corruption, fraud, defaults, divorce... There's no shortage of work for South African courts. Here are a few cases that may pique the public interest this year...



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Anything and everything to do with state capture, Zuma or the Guptas

Where do we even start? From [dairy farms](#) to Eskom, the Guptas seem to be involved in it all. And once Zuma officially steps away from the protection the Presidency has offered him all these years, the Supreme Court of Appeal has ruled that prosecutors will be allowed bring back 783 counts of corruption against him relating to a 1999 arms deal. Although we may not see any of these faces actually appear in a courtroom on charges this year, inquiries and investigations into Zuma and the Guptas will definitely be on the legal watchlist in 2018 and beyond.



Why it's taken so long to prosecute state capture cases in South Africa

24 Jan 2018



Oscar, again

The court proceedings against former Paralympian Oscar Pistorius for the murder of his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp, captured such vast attention in 2014 that the trial got its own TV channel. Originally charged with culpable homicide, Pistorius received five years and was release on house arrest after just 10 months. The State appealed the judgement and the Supreme Court of Appeal responded with a murder conviction and a six year sentence. Another State petition later, challenging what it called a "lenient sentence", and the SCA upped Pistorius' time from six to 13 years. In December last year, Pistorius filed with the Constitutional Court, appealing the new sentence. All eyes on the ConCourt for their say.



Pistorius gets increased sentence

24 Nov 2017



Stellenbosch family axe murders

23-year-old, Henri van Breda stands accused of the murder of his parents and brother, and attempted murder of his sister in their home in 2015. Van Breda has testified that an unknown assailant wearing gloves and a balaclava is responsible for the deadly attack on his family. During the [63-day trial](#), the court heard the accused's recorded call to emergency services (which came hours after the attack), state prosecutor Susan Galloway threw a spotlight on contradictions between his testimony and the evidence, there was a trial-within-a-trial as the defence complained that Van Breda had been treated as nothing but a suspect from the start, and Van Breda received a diagnosis of juvenile myoclonic epilepsy. Following the conclusion of the defence's case on 29 November last year, presiding Judge Siraj Desai postponed the case, stating that closing arguments will be heard on 12 February 2018.



New ruling puts court trials in the spotlight

Dario Milo and Lavanya Pillay 26 Jun 2017



On the Rohde to murder or suicide?

Jason Rohde, now the former CEO of Lew Geffen Sotheby's International Realty in South Africa, is on trial for the murder of his wife, Susan, who was found dead in their hotel room while on a company conference held at Stellenbosch's Spier Wine Estate in July 2016. During the court hearings, it emerged that Jason had been having an affair with a colleague who was attending the conference. Susan was painted by the defence as jealous and volatile, having insisted on attending the weekend-long event to keep an eye on her husband. They'd been seen arguing just a few hours before her body was found in the bathroom with an electrical cord from a hair styling tool around her neck and door hanger. The defence claims she was emotionally unstable and she committed suicide. The prosecution, however, believes the scene was staged, and that she died from manual strangulation at the hands of husband. [The case](#) was postponed on 5 December and will continue on 5 February.



WhatsApp evidence reveals Rohdes' bitter love betrayal

Aron Hyman 7 Nov 2017



Captain KGB

Captain Morris 'KGB' Tshabalala, a crime intelligence officer, was arrested while checking in with his parole officer in Pretoria central earlier this month. He's been charged with theft and defrauding the police service of more than R500,000. Tshabalala joined the police force in 2002, despite having been convicted of armed robbery in 1996. He served only two of his 10 year sentence before being released on parole. He's been denied bail and the case postponed to 22 March. SAPS officially dismissed him from their employ yesterday, 29 January.

Lack of Life Esidimeni

Around 144 psychiatric patients reportedly died from starvation and neglect after they were removed from the Life Esidimeni homes, following the Gauteng Health Department's cancellation of its contract with the company, and placed in the care of ill-equipped NGOs. The hearing is currently underway.

#LifeEsidimeni: What Qedani Mahlangu's testimony may mean for David Makhura





24 Jan 2018



#LifeEsidimeni: Gauteng health department gave NGO Precious Angels R1m, Barbara Creecy says

Katharine Child 31 Jan 2018



ABOUT SHAN RADCLIFFE

Shan Radcliffe is the editor of Bizcommunity HR, Education and Legal.

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