

Sunday Times investigation unit wins award for Pule scoops

The Sunday Times investigation unit scooped the top prize at Friday night's Vodacom Journalist of the Year awards for their exposé of disgraced former communications minister Dina Pule.



Dina Pule: Exposed. (Image: GCS)

Mzilikazi wa Afrika, Rob Rose and Stephan Hofstatter won the news print category for the story, published in June last year, of how Pule's boyfriend, Phosane Mngqibisa, an events organiser, was awarded the contract for the ICT Indaba organised by Pule's department.

The team also exposed how Mngqibisa accompanied Pule on several overseas trips at taxpayers' expense.

The unit's series of reports also linked Pule to an alleged plot to assassinate the top parliamentary officials who were probing her misconduct. Pule was fired in July.

The reporters came under scathing attack in the course of their investigation.

Maya Makanjee of Vodacom said the reporters' coverage of the Pule story spoke truth to power at several levels.

Convenor of the judges, Mary Papayya, said: "This team's probe into the conduct of the then minister of communications was unrelenting and truly showed the fourth estate doing its job without fear or favour."

The same team of reporters also scooped the Global Shining Light Award at the Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Brazil last month.

The award honours investigative journalism in a developing or transitioning country.

They received the award for their ground-breaking and shocking exclusive reports on a notorious KwaZulu-Natal police unit dubbed the "Cato Manor hit squad".

The reports exposed how a group of senior policemen allegedly tortured and killed police suspects in custody.

The officers were arrested and are facing murder charges in court.

Source: Sunday Times, via I-Net Bridge



Dina Pule likes her Christian Louboutin shoes. MPs also saw red when it was found she had lied to Parliament. (Image: Arroser, via Wikimedia Commons)