

# FARLAM TAKES AIM AT COPS

---

**Vusi Xaba**

---

MARIKANA Commission of Inquiry chairman retired judge Ian Farlam yesterday charged that the police didn't want to bring witnesses whose testimonies conflicted with the SAPS official version of events.

Farlam said there has been a problem with police bringing in witnesses who were likely to give evidence that conflicted with each other's versions.

He went on to question statements that have been submitted after Lieutenant-Colonel Salmon Vermaak's testimony last month. He said police lawyers did not call Vermaak because they did not like him as a witness.

This came up during evidence leader Advocate Charles Wesley's cross-examination of the commander of the North West public order policing unit, Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Merafe.

The commission, which sits in Centurion, is probing the circumstances that led to the deaths of 44 people during a strike by mineworkers in Marikana in August 2012.

Wesley had asked Merafe to produce his cellphone and check if he still had text messages which one of the operation commanders, Brigadier Adriaan Calitz, had sent regarding the ordering of 4 000 rounds of ammunition during the strike.

Police legal representative Advocate Sesi Baloyi objected, saying that was not necessary.

But Baloyi disagreed with Farlam's assertion about the police not being willing to call witnesses whose versions differed from that of their other witnesses.

■ [xabav@sowetan.co.za](mailto:xabav@sowetan.co.za)

# New Dana single about Marikana

FANS of Simphiwe Dana can finally let out the breath they've been holding since 2010's *Kulture Noir*. The singer has unexpectedly released a new single, *Nzima*.

It is vintage Dana: socially aware, inspired by the Marikana massacre.

And the timing of its release, just before Freedom Day, on Sunday, was an attempt to remind us "what the past 20 years have been about and to point out whether we are meeting Madiba's vision".

— *Andile Ndlovu*

# Police versions clash

By **SIMON NARE**

**RETIRED** Judge Ian Farlam yesterday lashed out at the police

legal team at the Marikana Commission of Inquiry for bringing witnesses who gave different versions of events on the day of the massacre.

The commission chairman said: "The police can't call a variety of witnesses to give different stories and ask us to pick which one is correct."

Farlam pointed out that several police officers, some of them senior, had given testimony which was later disputed by others.

Yesterday under cross-examination by evidence leader Advocate Charles Wesley, Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph Merafe said Brigadier Adriaan Calitz had instructed him to order 4 500 rounds of live ammunition the day before the massacre, which Calitz had earlier denied.

Farlam also spoke about Lieu-

tenant-Colonel Salmon Vermaak, who was dumped by the police legal team because his version of events differed from what they were building their case on. Vermaak had heavily criticised the way the situation was handled by the police.

Yesterday, Merafe insisted that Calitz had called him on 15 August 2012 and instructed him to order the live ammunition, which he did.

He couldn't say when the call was made but said he remembered entering it into his book.

"I received the call and noted it down. The evidence that I spoke to Brigadier Calitz is there," Merafe said.

Farlam asked the SAPS if Calitz would be recalled in light of the new testimony.

The only police witness set to return is national police commissioner General Riah Phiyega. Farlam said if Merafe is believed, it would mean that Calitz had not been truthful.

# Platinum strike talks to continue

MARATHON talks aimed at ending a crippling three-month strike in South Africa's platinum sector will resume today after the world's top producers and union Amcu spent two days haggling over an offer tabled last week by the companies.

"They have adjourned and will meet again [today]," an industry source said.

The talks involve the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (Amcu) leadership and chief executives from Anglo American Platinum, Impala Platinum and Lonmin.

No talks had been scheduled beyond yesterday. Neither side would comment on the talks. – Reuters