

Gordhan set to fight for his political survival

If there was any doubt before that the Public Protector is front and centre of the battle between factions in the ANC, bolstered on one side by the EFF – whether by design or, as Busisiwe Mkhwebane claims, because she has approached the matter without fear or favour – it has been blown away by the vociferous reaction of interested parties to the report that condemns Public Enterprises Minister Pravin Gordhan for breaching the Constitution and the Executive Ethics Code. And the ANC's silence on the matter – the only major political party that has yet to respond – is in itself telling, suggests [Legalbrief](#). If the Public Protector is correct, Gordhan's days as President Cyril Ramaphosa's corruption fighter-in-chief are numbered, and should the President fail to act, his much vaunted 'new dawn' will be dead in the water. Gordhan's response to the findings, though, was unequivocal. Noting that no formal notice had been received from the Public Protector before her media briefing on Friday – apparently this is done only occasionally as a courtesy – he said, via his lawyer Tebogo Malatji, that **the Public Protector 'continues to get the facts wrong, get the law wrong and is demonstrably biased'**. He added: 'The Constitution, in section 181, envisages the Office of the Public Protector to be independent, impartial, dignified and effective. To date, in this matter, it has failed in all four respects.' He said he would proceed with an 'urgent review' of the findings, and details would be announced this week. Gordhan is planning to seek several interdicts to stop parties implementing Mkhwebane's report – against Ramaphosa, National Assembly Speaker Thandi Modise, Minister of State Security Ayanda Dlodlo and National Police Commissioner Khehla Sitole, all of whom have been given instructions by the Public Protector to act on her findings, says a [Daily Maverick](#) report. Mkhwebane is also likely to face an interdict from enforcing the strict remedial action she has outlined in the report. A report in [The Mercury](#) quotes insiders as saying Gordhan was due to file papers at the Gauteng High Court (Pretoria) before the end of the week to interdict Ramaphosa, which would allow him enough time to file a separate application in the same court to review Mkhwebane's findings.