

Media storm over Malema's tender excesses

A picture of unrestrained excess and cronyism is painted in three Sunday newspaper reports claiming ANC Youth League president Julius Malema's millionaire lifestyle is being bank-rolled by lucrative government contracts awarded to his companies, writes [Legalbrief](#).

The [Sunday Times](#), [City Press](#) and [Rapport](#) all allege Malema has benefited substantially from several tenders - and that most of them stem from his home province Limpopo, where he wields significant influence. According to the [Sunday Times](#), official tender and government documents show Malema was involved in more than 20 contracts, each worth between R500 000 and R39m between 2007 and 2008. One of Malema's businesses, SGL Engineering Projects, has profited from more than R130m worth of tenders in just two years. Among the tenders awarded to SGL, notes the report, was one by Roads Agency Limpopo, which has a budget of over R2bn, and which is headed by Sello Rasethaba, a close friend of Malema. Rasethaba was appointed last year shortly after Malema's ally, Limpopo Premier Cassel Mathale, took office. [Full Sunday Times report](#) [Full City Press report](#) [Full report in Rapport](#)

Both the ANC and the Youth League have strongly defended Malema, In a report on the [News24](#) site, the ANC pointed out Malema had not breached any law or code of ethics by being involved in business. Spokesperson Brian Sokutu said: 'Comrade Malema is neither a member of Parliament or a Cabinet Minister and he has therefore not breached any law or code of ethics by being involved in business.' ID leader Patricia De Lille said Malema should stop pretending to represent the poor when he was living in opulence earned from the poor and ordinary taxpayers in a society plagued by the worst inequalities in the world. She called on the SARS to 'tell us if Malema has paid his taxes'. [Full report on the News24 site](#)

COPE president Mosiuoa Lekota is demanding an official probe into the procedures followed in the awarding of the tenders to companies linked to Malema. 'COPE is not surprised at the headlines of Malema riches - it is probably the tip of the iceberg. We have to demand better legislation to stop this looting of state coffers,' Lekota is quoted as saying in [The Citizen](#). 'There needs to be a general review of the tender process,' Public Service Accountability Monitor spokesperson Derek Luyt told the paper. He said, however, there was no problem with Malema simply holding company directorships as he was not a government official. He said no political party ought to tender for government business. Malema's case was 'murky' because he was a member of the ruling party which ran government. [Full report in The Citizen](#)

Malema is expected to address the media today. According to a [Beeld](#) report, today's press conference will be about the tenders and 'other issues, such as the nationalisation of mines'. The report also quotes Scopa chairperson Themba Godi as saying although no Act prevents the awarding of tenders to politically-connected people, 'the current climate' requires tender processes to be transparent. [Full Beeld report](#)

A similar business-for-pals report is unveiled in the Sunday Tribune. It says a company owned by the family of Premier Zweli Mkhize has secured a government tender worth R3.3m and there are reports that it is the beneficiary of more state work. The company, Bookize Supply Corporation cc, was mentioned in the Government Gazette as having secured a R3.3m tender from the Department of Correctional Services last month. The company previously had a tender with the SA Police Service. The report says these revelations are sure to fuel the row in the ANC alliance over so-called fat-cat comrades, which was raised a notch this weekend when Zwelinzima Vavi, general secretary of Cosatu, called for a lifestyle audit of politicians and their relatives. [Full Sunday Tribune report \(subscription needed\)](#)