News Updates: Zizipho Pae and Wolwerivier **[1]**

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In this article I share updates on a couple of stories which I have covered. These updates are from the broader media.

Zizipho Pae

In my article "When Fairy Tales Offend [2]" I mentioned the case of Zizipho Pae, who was expelled from her position as a member of the UCT SRC for a comment on her private Facebook profile in which she said that the SCOTUS decision to legalise same-sex marriage across the USA was "institutionalising sin".

Since then, the SRC's decision was overturned [3] by the UCT Vice Chancellor Max Price for flaws in their process to expel her. In a statement [4] by Price earlier, he wrote:

> At the same time, we strongly affirm the rights of members of the UCT community to express their sincerely held views and beliefs. Universities in particular should be safe spaces in which differences of opinion can be asserted and debated—even when (and perhaps especially when) the consequences of these differences weigh so heavily on the wider society. In this case, we also take guidance from the Constitutional Court on the particular case of religious beliefs. A 1998 ruling held that "those persons who for reasons of religious belief disagree with or condemn homosexual conduct are free to hold and articulate such beliefs". This is especially so when a religious belief is articulated in a way that is not intended to insult, harm or discriminate, and if there is no incitement to taking harmful action against others.

Despite being ordered to reverse their decision, the UCT SRC was not happy about the decision:

> Meanwhile, despite the setting aside of the invalid expulsion of Pae from the SRC, SRC President Ramabina Mahapa told the Cape Times the SRC sticks with its reasons for expelling her. He said the SRC supports the "queer community" and condemns Pae for inflicting hurt by her conduct.

They subsequently reshuffled the SRC portfolios and gave Pae, much to her ire [5], non-executive portfolios.

> Badenhorst said the SRC's decision to reshuffle Pae was a blatant attempt to "punish, silence and shun her for expressing her religious convictions". "It is clear that the SRC, which is supposed to be representative of all students, is not an environment where difference of belief or opinion is welcomed."

Addditionally, an MP for the official opposition [6] was forced to apologise to Pae for harassing her:

> Redlinghuys today apologised to Pae for his series of comments on Pae's Facebook page which he says were not intended to cause any harm, reports the Cape Times. Redelinghuys's apology followed a meeting last night with DA Chief Whip John Steenhuisen whose intervention followed a call by the Christian View Network for the DA to dismiss Redelinghuys for "a long series of mocking, insulting and other pro-homosexual messages which amount to harassment" and a call by the ACDP for the MP to apologise for his remarks.

Richwood/Wolwerivier

Last year I wrote a series of articles [7] on the relocation of the people of the Richwood informal settlement to the remote area of Wolwerivier. This story has now been followed up on in a couple of other reports.

The Mail & Guardian [8] wrote a piece in which it drew comparisons to the Apartheid practise of forced relocations.

> The experience of peripheral abandonment, food insecurity and poverty, both in means and in opportunity, remains as the motif linking Wolwerivier and its new "urban poor" inhabitants to the forcibly resettled camp communities of apartheid.
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> ...
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> The previous night saw a Cape winter storm of biblical proportions. The city authorities sent out an early warning for vulnerable families to brace themselves—dig trenches, move to higher ground, unblock storm-water drains.
>
> Hoffman must have missed the memo. As the cold front rolled in sheets of rain from the South Atlantic to make landfall on the peninsula, he was drinking heavily.
>
> "You find your place, somewhere where they will not find and kill you," he says, not for the first time conjuring these bogeymen in describing his new, timid street identity.
>
> "And then you find your drink and you must take it all—because you will fall right there. Your insides must be warm or you won't make it through. The night is cold. Sometimes it is wet. But if you have your plastic... if you are warm inside and somewhere else in your mind, you can forget and survive."

GroundUp [9] reports that the City of Cape Town "cannot continue to ignore the crisis at Wolwerivier":

> Urgent, sustained and integrated support from the City of Cape Town, working with their partners in other spheres of government, is needed to ensure that Wolwerivier does not become defined by the social ills typical of apartheid era relocation camps. This is especially important to acknowledge as we enter into the debate over the City's plans to extend Wolwerivier to 6,000 housing units—an agricultural area currently devoid of the infrastructure, social amenities and job opportunities needed to sustain its current—never

> mind projected—population of peri-urban poor.
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> ...
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> Streetlights, mobile health services and scholar transport, all incidentally conditions upon which the Western Cape government issued the environmental authorisation for the building of Wolwerivier, had not been completed or extended to the settlement before the move. Subsequently, children were regularly missing school because of a taxi commute which is either too expensive or too inconsistent for many families to rely on.

It does seem that, tragically, money talks, and those without it cannot participate in the dialogues.

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