

Teachers to call for armed guards

Demand for drastic action against violent pupils

PREGA GOVENDER

A TEACHERS' union wants Basic Education Minister Angie Motshemba to urgently deploy armed guards at schools to protect teachers from violent pupils.

About 3 000 delegates who attended the National Teachers' Union's national conference earlier this month unanimously endorsed a resolution calling on the department to beef up security at schools following a spate of attacks on teachers.

At least 47 000 of South Africa's 391 829 teachers at state schools are members of the union.

The union's deputy president, Allen Thompson, said it had resolved to ask the department to provide an armed security guard for every 300 pupils at a school.

A document was being prepared for submission to Motshemba on Friday.

The union's bid to protect its members comes amid revelations by the Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie that its teachers were lodging complaints of verbal and physical abuse almost daily.

A survey by the Sunday Times found that at least 13 pupils in three provinces have been expelled since January for assaulting or threatening to assault teachers. They include:

- Two in Limpopo who were found guilty of insulting and intimidating teachers;

- Seven in Gauteng who were expelled for "pushing and threatening" teachers; and

- Four in the Western Cape, including one who burnt a teacher's hair with a cigarette lighter.

A further 29 pupils in Gauteng and four in Limpopo were expelled for assaulting fellow pupils. In the Western Cape, the call centre of the Safe Schools project received reports of 116 assaults at schools between January and June.

In the most serious case, a pupil from New Eisleben Secondary School in Nyanga, Cape Town, was stabbed to death this month.

The Gauteng education department, which appears to be dealing with the largest number of complaints of pupil attacks on teachers in recent weeks, is taking unruly pupils to meet inmates at Johannesburg Prison in a bid to get them to reform. So far, 1 322 pupils have visited the prison.

From next year, pupils found guilty of serious misconduct in Gauteng could be forced to attend diversion programmes at school, after hours, for two to three weeks or up to three months.

Teachers are also being abused by pupils on social networking sites. A Grade 9 pupil at Protea School in Springs on Gauteng's

The disregard for my authority is getting the better of me

East Rand was made to apologise to her teacher recently after saying on Facebook: "If she should die, I'll dance on her grave."

The principal, Wynandus Bezuidenhout, said the pupil had been suspended for seven days and given a final written warning.

Teachers this week spoke of their terror at setting foot in the classrooms because of being constantly targeted by pupils.

A female teacher from a primary school in Welkom in the Free State described how she was reduced to tears in class on several occasions after being insulted by a group of pupils who called her a whore. She outlined the abuse in a six-page report to the Onderwysersunie this week.

"The disrupting of my class, verbal abuse, emotional abuse,

disregard for my authority is getting the better of me. I cannot handle it any more."

Zascia Hakkesteeg, a teacher, was punched in the face by a 14-year-old Grade 7 pupil at Jim Fouché Primary in Johannesburg. She said she felt hurt, shocked, violated and terribly humiliated.

"I don't think I can walk into a class again and own that class. We're getting abused verbally and mentally by these kids and it's getting worse and worse."

The pupil attacked her after she asked him to remove his black jersey because it was not part of the school uniform. She has laid a charge of assault.

Anthony Meyers, director for psychosocial support in Gauteng's education department, said winter camps were held this year to assist undisciplined pupils.

A 17-year-old Grade 9 pupil from Ekangala Comprehensive High School, outside Pretoria, who attended a camp, said he had learnt his lesson. He said he was forced to attend the camp because he had passed off a friend's assignment as his own.

"I got angry with the teacher who said I was not fit to be in the grade after she found out it wasn't my assignment."

Basil Manuel, president of the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa, said schools did not have sufficient intervention strategies, for example, counsellors to deal with children with behavioural problems.

"Society is pretty violent at the moment and schools, being a microcosm of society, are reflecting what society is doing."

govenderp@sundaytimes.co.za

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IMPROVISING: Yvonne Chaka Chaka during the 21 Icons shoot with filmmaker Adrian Steirn at Hyde Park High School in Johannesburg
Picture: GARY VAN WYK

People's princess whose fame does a power of good

THEKISO ANTHONY LEFIFI

IN her previous life Yvonne Chaka Chaka was "in love with DJs" — thanking them through songs for playing her songs. The rest of her time was spent "working hard every day to make umqombothi" (African beer).

Today the "Princess of Africa" is respected internationally for her humanitarian work and is one of South Africa's best exports.

Chaka Chaka said that when she was a young girl she never imagined that she would be the first African woman to receive the World Economic Forum's Crystal Award for artists who improve the world through their work.

Her mother wanted her to become a lawyer, but the *Burning Up* star decided to follow her heart. Chaka Chaka believes she would have been a terrible lawyer.

She is a goodwill ambassador for Unicef and the Roll Back Malaria Partnership, and is passionate about doing her bit to help eradicate the disease, which claims more than 600 000 lives each year, most of them in Africa.

"I want to be the voice of the voiceless," said the woman who features in this week's 21 Icons project.

Chaka Chaka realised early in her career that she could use the platform she was given to affect people positively.

"People should use their fame positively and correctly," she said.

Her choices of songs, such as *Motherland* and *I Cry for Freedom*, was part of trying to do just that during the apartheid years.

In 2006, Chaka Chaka

established the Princess of Africa Foundation. Among many other projects, it has trained more than 100 women to be community healthcare workers in Limpopo villages where malaria prevalence is high.

She advocates the empowerment of women and says women who say South Africa is not ready for a female leader are themselves shackled by their own insecurities.

Chaka Chaka, a mother of four, spends much of her time motivating children through talks at schools and events.

"I always say to them, be what you want to be and never let anybody tell you what you want to be."

As inspiration for his portrait of Chaka Chaka, photographer Adrian Steirn used her refusal to allow a poverty-stricken background to deter her from becoming what she wanted to be.

"She told me that when she was growing up she was too poor to afford a microphone, so she would sing holding a broomstick," said Steirn, founder of the 21 Icons project. "Now she sings for kings and queens — it's a real rags-to-riches story."

The resulting image shows Chaka Chaka doing exactly that on stage while in the background a tiara rests atop a piano — a reference to her status as "princess of Africa". The portrait, signed by Chaka Chaka, will be auctioned at the end of the series and the proceeds donated to her foundation.

The portrait is published in the R16 edition of Sunday Times today.

Tonight at 6.57pm, SABC3 will broadcast a short film on the shooting of the portrait.

BID NO: SCMU: 11-2013/14

TERMS OF REFERENCES FOR TRAINING PROVIDERS TO
OFFER TRAINING ON

SOUTH AFRICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (SASL) AND BRAILLE

The ETPD SETA in partnership with North West and Mpumalanga Departments of Education and Training is looking for accredited training providers to facilitate the implementation of part qualifications on SASL and BRAILLE.

BONGANI MTHETHWA

THERE is no evidence to back the prosecution of President Jacob Zuma's wife, Tobeka Madiba-Zuma.

Based on the findings of an investigation into a complaint of in-

Zuma wife: no evidence of intimidation

This follows a case brought by a 23-year-old woman who claimed Madiba-Zuma had sent her two threatening cell-phone text

At the time, Madiba-Zuma described the woman as "disturbed" and said she had invited her to stay

But Madiba-Zuma said the woman's welcome ended after suspicions emerged about the alleged abuse

request for comment this week. KwaZulu-Natal police spokesman Colonel Jay Naicker said the case was thoroughly investigated by a senior officer in the province. "The investigation was finalised