



# THE NEW AGE



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**CYBER CRIMINALS STEAL IMAGES AND NAMES OF WELL-KNOWN PEOPLE TO LURE CLIENTS WITH 'EASY MONEY' ONLINE**

# Celebs riled by ID theft

LESLEY TSHAMANO

HIGH profile personalities want to put a stop to the illegal use of their names and faces in advertisements on websites and social media pages.

Some of the celebrities who have fallen victim to the scams of unscrupulous con artists include businessmen, sports people and celebrities.

The owner of Mamelodi Sundowns and billionaire businessman Patrice Motsepe, comedian Trevor Noah and Kaizer Chiefs midfielder Simphiwe Tshabalala are among the list of people who pop up on seemingly bona fide websites and social media sites as the faces of products promising clients a means to a quick buck. Even Virgin Active owner Richard Branson is not spared by the daring cyber criminals.

The adverts and messages are designed to persuade consumers to buy anti-aging creams, diet pills or sign up for the latest binary numbers money craze.

An advert with a grinning Noah reads: "How Trevor Noah made his millions", while soccer star Tshabalala appears on an easy, cash-making ad that reads: "This Cape Town guy makes \$1000 (R13685) hour online."

The former Bafana Bafana star is furious about the illegal use of his brand and said he had unsuccessfully tried countless times to have the advert removed.

"It is very disturbing. It takes a lot for one to build a brand and then peo-



**CAPTURED IMAGES:** Simphiwe Tshabalala, Trevor Noah, Richard Branson and Patrice Motsepe are all victims of name and face theft by con artists running websites selling anything from goods to bogus financial instruments. PICTURES: GALLO IMAGES

ple just come and use your name like that for free. I am not happy about it," Tshabalala said.

"I have been trying to get them removed but have not been successful."

Deputy Minister of Telecommunications and Postal Services Prof Hlengiwe Mkhize acknowledged that the growth of technology and easy access to infor-

mation had made celebrities easy targets of cybercrime.

"These are not ordinary criminals. They are highly specialised people who focus on developing web and communication strategies and they search for potential targets. They will pull together a profile in such a way that it looks credible," Mkhize said.

She said the problem with the internet was that there was an overload of information but little security. "We generate a lot of information but we do not create protection walls to secure the information that we accumulate," she said.

She said the recently proposed cyber-crimes bill aimed to stop cybercrime and improve security.

It would fill the legal instrument void, she said and even lead to prosecution of cyber criminals.

"The success rate in identifying and prosecuting these people is unfortunately lower than we would like. This is in part due to the international nature of the internet which allows the registration of domains in different parts

of the world," she said. "The bill will allow the training of police, specialists, investigators and analysts who will be able to detect threats. Also, it will allow for successful prosecution. It's the only way to reduce the incidents."

Offenders could be fined up to R10m or jailed for 10 years, depending on the seriousness of the offence.

But until the bill is passed, lawyer Zola Majavu said victims could always take legal action against the perpetrators.

"It is always possible to sue culprits for identity fraud provided their identity is confirmed," Majavu said.

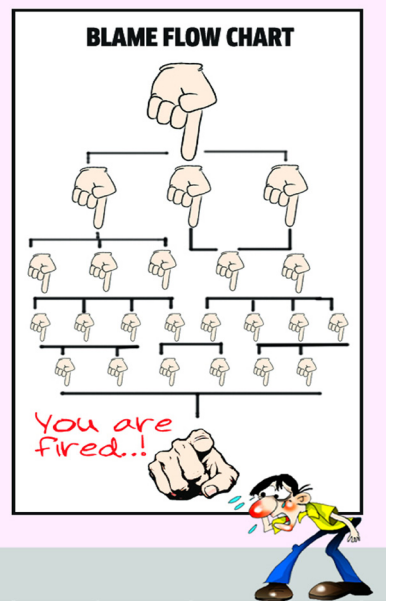
Cybersecurity expert Dr Joey Jansen van Vuuren said the fake ads were normally installed on genuine websites with malicious links through hacking, a technique hackers used to compromise poorly protected websites.

"They are usually propagated using Google Ads. Social media also plays a huge role in this as people tend to repost articles that have a click-bait punch line. These sites typically run adverts with high response click-bait lines," Van Vuuren said.

He said it was not easy to get rid of these sites because they were legitimate websites but compromised malicious intent. More than a billion of these sites exist globally. "More bogus sites are created every day. When one bogus site is shut down it can be immediately replaced by one or many other replica sites," he said.

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## BLINKERS OFF



## Downs hit Japan

NEVILLE KHOZA

IT PROMISES to be a good sporting weekend for sports fans with an action-packed line-up.

Cape Town is abuzz with rugby fever as the highly anticipated Cape Town Sevens takes centre stage from tomorrow to Sunday.

The Blitzbokke aim to defend the title they won last year and having made the perfect start by winning the Dubai leg last weekend, they will look to make it two wins out of two.

The action doesn't end there as football fanatics are also catered for. The Telkom Knockout final between SuperSport United and Cape Town City takes place at the Peter Mokaba Stadium in Polokwane tomorrow.

Sunday will see Mamelodi Sundowns open their Fifa Club World Cup campaign against Kashima Antlers of Japan at 12.30pm.



Seabelo Senatla

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## Court orders EFF to pay up

DUDU DUBE

LAWYERS representing Oakbay Investments say they are open to negotiations with the EFF before a court order to attach the party's assets is implemented early next year.

Yesterday, the North Gauteng High Court granted Oakbay permission to attach assets worth R180 000 that the party owed in legal costs.

The court order stems from an application for an interdict to stop EFF leader Julius Malema from mak-

ing any threats against the company and its employees early this year.

Malema made the threats at a press conference where he said The New Age and ANN7 journalists were no longer allowed to cover his party's events and if they did, their safety would not be guaranteed.

Oakbay was granted the interdict and the EFF was ordered to pay the legal costs for both the initial application and again when it attempted to appeal the interdict.

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## Coffin case duo denied bail

LUNGANI MNGUNI

OUTSIDE the Middleburg Magistrate's Court, the crowd's message was made clear through the symbolism of crucified white dolls - no bail should be granted to the two accused in the so-called coffin case.

Their wish came true as Willem Oosthuizen and Theo Jackson, accused of shoving Victor Rethabile Mlotshwa into a coffin and filming their misdeed, were yesterday denied bail.

The duo are charged with assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, kidnapping and defeating the ends of justice.

Magistrate Jongilizwe Dumehleli said the pair could try their luck at a bail application in the high court before their case was heard, but the two would stay in jail until then.

Dumehleli recalled the video which had gone viral.

"It is not surprising to see the whole world shocked when they saw a man

shoved in a coffin," Dumehleli said. "What is shockingly aggravating is the manner in which the victim screamed, urging the men not to do this."

There were several questions which needed to be answered: "Who in their right mind the state wanted to know, carries a coffin around? Could it be that this coffin was used for other assaults?"

The investigating officer told the court that the duo had threatened to shoot Mlotshwa, called him the k-word and assaulted and threatened him for more than an hour.

Because of this, the state vigorously opposed the bail.

Oosthuizen and Jackson have denied the charges but have admitted in their affidavit that their act was "negligent" but not meant to cause harm.

They suggested that Mlotshwa was trespassing. The state argued that there had been no complaints of trespassing.

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Rethabile Mlotshwa



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