

Purge continues at Independent Media

Independent Media has made at least four people in its management ranks redundant over the weekend.



Iqbal Survé is executive chair of Independent Media and Sekunjalo. (Image: [The Media Online](#))

Business Day has reliably learnt that Western Cape managing editor Martine Barker was escorted out of the group's Cape Town offices on Friday and that outspoken *Cape Times* executive editor Tony Weaver has been made redundant.

Packages were given to Western Cape circulation manager Graham Shaw and Gauteng counterpart Pierre Joubert. They have already left. This comes on top of the resignations, and immediate departures of *The Star* Editor Makhudu Sefara and of *The Mercury* Editor Philani Mgwaba late last month.

Former *Cape Times* editor Alide Dasnois was formally dismissed last week after being found guilty in a company internal disciplinary hearing. She has taken her case to the Labour Court.

In Weaver, Independent will lose an award-winning journalist.

Sefara was crowned editor of the year in the Standard Bank SikuVile Awards in May, when Weaver won the prize for his Man Friday columns in support of Dasnois, who won the South African National Editors' Forum Nat Nakasa award for courageous journalism last month - after her suspension.

These editors and senior management departures follow the resignations of a number of senior journalists over the past six months.

No response

Requests for comment were referred to Independent's deputy group executive chair, Tony Howard, who did not respond to phone and e-mail messages.

The transfer of Independent Media's ownership from its former Irish owners to the consortium headed by Sekunjalo Investments occurred almost a year ago. A condition of the R2bn deal set by the Competition Commission was that no retrenchments would take place for 12 months after the transactions. Iqbal Survé is executive chair of Independent Media and Sekunjalo.

However, there could be further upheaval at the newspaper's titles amid restructuring and reorganisation in management, administration, and editorial functions. In a confidential communiqué from Dr Survé to his top managers, which *Business Day* has seen, he announced the movement of editors.

"I am also of the view that editors need to be moved from their existing titles to others within the group," he said. "This is common practice internationally and in business. It also represents an opportunity for the geographic relocation of title editors. Therefore, I will be having conversations with title editors and business unit heads over the next few months to discuss relocation from your existing titles to other titles or relocation to content hubs or relocation in other strategic business units."

Source: *Business Day*, via I-Net Bridge

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