

Marikana: One year later...is the worst behind us?

Tomorrow South Africa will mark the one year anniversary of the Marikana tragedy. This day will forever be known in history as one where our country seemed to regress to the 1970's. Up until last year, many South Africans thought that we had gone past the days of police firing on citizens.

Marikana started as a wildcat strike but soon turned into a blood bath, reminiscent of Apartheid days.

However, a year later and the tensions are rife. What has transpired this past year is that our labour relations have become more vulnerable to violence.

A rain of assassinations of union leaders has made competition for members between NUM and AMCU deadly.

But what Marikana has also taught employees, is that if they make enough noise and cause enough chaos, then their demands will be met.

More unions are threatening strike action if their demands are not met and wage talks are regularly ended in either deadlock or a murder.

We are no closer to any type of truth or reconciliation on labour matters, and some analysts fear that the worst is still to come.

The rise of Julius Malema's EFF party may also come at an opportune time. All he needs to boost his party is some union affiliation.

NUMSA Strikes

South Africa's biggest union for the manufacturing sector, NUMSA, plans to launch a national strike in the auto industry from August 19 after wage negotiations deadlocked, a senior union official said on Wednesday.

If nothing else, these are interesting times in our country. I wait with baited breath to see which path we choose.

Until next week

Michelle