



CFE WELCOMES HIGH COURT RULING IN UNISA CASE AGAINST JOURNALIST EDWIN NAIDU

20 August 2026

The Campaign for Free Expression (CFE) welcomes today's decision of the Gauteng High Court, Pretoria, to strike from the urgent roll an application brought by the University of South Africa (UNISA) against journalist Edwin Naidu and EdNews.Africa, with UNISA ordered to pay costs on the attorney-and-client scale.

CFE provided financial support to enable Naidu to defend the application, which sought urgent orders requiring the removal of reporting published on EdNews.Africa and restraining Naidu and the publication from further reporting of specified statements concerning an alleged governance crisis at the University.

Naidu and EdNews.Africa opposed the application on several grounds, foremost among them that UNISA had failed to establish urgency. They pointed out that the principal article had already been online for more than three weeks by the time of the hearing; that UNISA had waited 16 days after its publication before instituting proceedings; and that substantially similar reporting remained publicly available elsewhere.

CFE considers the outcome significant. Orders requiring journalists to remove published reporting, or restraining what they may report in future, engage the constitutional protection of freedom of the press and should not be sought or granted lightly. This is particularly so where the reporting concerns matters of legitimate public interest involving the governance of a major public institution.

The Court's decision today means that UNISA failed to establish the urgency required to obtain the immediate takedown and restraint orders it sought. The award of costs on the punitive attorney-and-client scale is also notable.

CFE will continue to support journalists facing legal proceedings that threaten their ability to undertake legitimate public-interest reporting. Journalists must be able to investigate and report on the exercise of public power without being subjected to unjustified legal restraints.

Naidu and EdNews.Africa were represented by Michael Power, Tina Power and Sophie Smit of Power Law Africa.

Moxii Africa was admitted as amicus curiae in the proceedings.

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