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# Racial face-off flares on Facebook

SEVENTY percent of racism cases investigated by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) come from social media, said commission spokesperson Isaac Mangena.

One social media platform distributing racist content, a Facebook page titled SA News, and subheaded "Challenging News Headlines in Southern Africa", has raised the ire of justice officials.

The page has, as its cover picture, a photograph of the old South African flag and the British and Dutch flags as flown at the Castle of Good Hope. The administrators of the page rewrite current news and add the race of suspects.

The Cape Times only saw mention of black suspects.

The most recent racist post was made on Monday night, the intro read: "Jogger raped by black rapist two metres from passing traffic."

Also on Monday, another post read: "It was reported that police have launched a manhunt for black thugs who robbed a Nigerian AU delegate on the evening of 10 June."

While no charges have been laid against the page administrators, Mangena said race profiling was "dangerous" as South Africa was still recovering from years of racial discrimination and segregation.

He said with the increase in users of social media, particularly over the last two years, the SAHRC had experienced a spike in complaints arising from it.

"Social media presents a platform for people to speak their minds. A lot of the time it is bad things.

"It was a miracle that South Africa overcame decades of oppression, and we need to continue moving forward. Most of the racism cases (the SAHRC) investigates are made on social media. It accounts for around 70 percent," Mangena said.

Regional head of justice and constitutional development, Hishaam Mohamed said the Protection from Harassment and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination acts prohibited people from profiling others along racial lines.

Mohamed encouraged all South Africans to report acts of discrimination.

"The person administering the page is on the wrong side of the law. Not many people are aware that they have rights against cyber crime, that the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development has laws against such discrimination," Mohamed said.

When the Cape Times contacted the administrator of the page and asked about the content and the cover picture, the replied received was:

"We aim to act as a counterweight to the overt and covert anti-white racism that seems to have become acceptable and commonplace in society."

The administrator refused to identify him/herself, but said the page was administered by "a group of volunteers doing it for no pay, using our own data costs... we have all been affected by this madness in some way."

The page is supported by just over 3 700 likes.

So far for the month of June, the Cape Times found at least 26 posts that contained racial profiling on the page.

Advocate Sabelo Noxaka said no matter the race of the administrators of the page, it was unacceptable and illegal and steps could be taken.

Questions to Facebook's press office were not answered by deadline.

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