

Media...Vultures?



By [Rod Baker](#)

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NEWSWATCH: Makaziwe Mandela had a go at the media recently, calling them 'vultures', so Zakes Naledi, writing in BD Live, has tried to put a little perspective on the issue. (Video)



(Image: J.M.Garg, via Wikimedia Commons)

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- BD Live: [Privacy can't be selective: iLIVE...](#) By and large most people would agree that the local media, certainly, have done their best to treat Nelson Mandela and the issues around his health with tact and sensitivity. Likewise, a number of observers might reckon the overseas media also appear to have tried to bear sensitivities in mind. Makaziwe Mandela, Nelson Mandela's eldest daughter, was having nothing of it, however, and lambasted the media for being what she reckoned is racist and acting like vultures.

There are many factors that come into play when it comes to coverage of the situation, three of which are:

- (1) Madiba is a global icon and there is intense interest in him, so people want to know what his condition is, how he is progressing, and so on;
- (2) The government's handling of the news around his condition has generally not been that stellar, so that leads to media feeling they need to get to "the real story", and
- (3) Where there is not a free flow of information (subject very strictly to conditions of doctor/patient confidentiality, naturally), or that flow is perceived to be overly censored or possibly deliberately misleading, rumour and speculation tend to abound.

And that is where the trouble starts.

Madiba deserves the respect and privacy he has so rightly earned, but the people of SA and the millions around the world who revere him simply want to know, within reasonable bounds, what is happening.

The media is there to provide that information; we're not vultures. As Nakedi writes, while the Mandela family deserves its right to privacy, it cannot demand that that privacy should be selective; subject to doctor/patient confidentiality, surely we all deserve to be kept in the loop? Right?

ABOUT ROD BAKER

Rod Baker is Content Director at Bizcommunity.com. A journalist since before computers, he worked on a wide range of magazines and, in his youth, rose through the ranks from being a lowly and abused sub-editor, to a high and still abused editor and publisher. He has been editor and publisher of a number of magazines, as well as a newspaper. He has edited many books, and written a number too. Email him at rod@bizcommunity.com

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