

Daily News lays off staff

Zimbabwe's only independent daily newspaper, The Daily News, and its sister publication, The Daily News on Sunday, will lay off the bulk of their staff by the end of the week.

The publishers, Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (ANZ), have bowed to the financial pressure caused by the regular closure of the pro-opposition newspapers by the authorities.

ANZ chief executive officer Sam Nkomo told workers on Monday that the company was facing viability problems and had been left with no option but to lay off 250 staff out of a total workforce of 300.

The newspapers have faced repeated closures by the police since September last year, after the ANZ refused to register under the government's controversial Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA).

The editor of The Daily News, Ngobile Nyathi, said all departmental heads had been asked to come up with a list of skeleton staff that would continue to run the newspaper.

"The skeleton staff is so that, in the event of the newspaper being given a licence to operate, the small team would be able to produce a newspaper while recruitment takes place. But, for now, about 250 people will be retrenched," said Nyathi.

The retrenchment of staff came as a surprise to workers in view of the fact that the supreme court is expected to make a final ruling on 3 March on whether the newspaper can legally operate.

The supreme court had refused to entertain the newspapers' challenge to the constitutionality of AIPPA, ruling that they should register under the government-appointed Media and Information Commission (MIC). The ANZ's subsequent attempts to register were rejected by the MIC.

Source: [UN Integrated Regional Information Networks](#)