

Dog-bite

A DURBAN man is suing the police for more than R600 000 after being badly bitten two years ago by three police dogs which were allegedly set on him by members of the Durban dog unit.

Mr Bongani Bekebu told the Durban high court yesterday he had been unlawfully arrested by members of the Durban dog unit on

.. June 17, 1998. He said he was not given reasons for his arrest.

He was then charged for being in possession of suspected stolen property and being in possession of dagga. The charges were later withdrawn.

He said the policemen had let the dogs loose on him at an open sports ground in Isipingo.

One, dog latched on to my leg and was holding on. The others

were biting me. This lasted for

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man sues police over attack|

SCARRED:
Bongani
Bekebu

B shows the

Â\$ dog-bite
wounds to
his leg and
arm.

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about 30 minutes,â\200\235 he said. Mr Bekebu, who is claiming more than R600 000 damages from the minister of safety and security, said he spent about three months in hospital because of his injuries. â\200\234I donâ\200\231t know why the government still employs police officers

who torture people,â\200\235 he said.

Mr Bekebuâ\200\231s attorney, Mr Feisal Abrahams, told the court he had reported the matter to the head of the Independent Complaints Directorate, Mr Stix Madlala, but had received no information about how the investigation against the policemen was proceeding.

Sgt Mark David Bristow, one of the policemen who allegedly let the dogs loose on Mr Bekebu, emphatically denied this had happened for no reason. Sgt Bristow told the court he and his dog, Kaizer, had won the best dog and handler competition twice.

He had stopped the car Mr Bekebu was driving in Umlazi as he suspected it was stolen.

â\200\234When I told him to alight with his hands up, he came out and fled into the nearby bushes.

â\200\234I realised I would not catch him on foot as it was dark and the bush-

es were dense, so I took Kaizer out of the vehicle and wamed Bekebu in English and Zulu that if he did not come out I would release my dog into the bush.â\200\235

Sgt Bristow said there was no reply and he released his dog and commanded him to apprehend Mr Bekebu. â\200\234A short while later, I heard screams and my dog barking. I ran in the direction of the screams.â\200\235

Sgt Bristow said he later realised that Mr Bekebu's wounds were serious and summoned an ambulance to take him under police guard to hospital.

He denied that three dogs had attacked Mr Bekebu, saying only his dog had attacked him.

Responding to Mr Bekebuâ\200\231s allegations that he had been attacked

for 30 minutes, Sgt Bristow said: â\200\234If
the dog had attacked him for 30
minutes, Bekebu would not be sit-
ting here today.â\200\235

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Provinces could

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| IF South Africa was to get rid of its
| nine provinces, the African skies
| would not fall, , !

{ - Demarcation Board Chairman Dr

' Mike Sutcliffe = yesterday told

| the â\200\230Institute for Housing of South

Africa conference in Durban it was

possible for provinces - â\200\234and

| Provincial legislatures - to be
| scrapped.

This would markedly enhance the

| powers of local government and

make their direct:relationship with

| national Government more mean-
ingful,

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The white paper on local

â\200\234muni..

faced increasing

government - noted. that

localities have f;

! demands and expectations, often

without an increase in the resources |

to deal with these demandsâ\200\235,

governments were

month, provincial governments

would become mere â\200\234post boxesâ\200\235.

In the past six years, delivery of

services at community level had

suffered because of the bureaucratic

Nature and size of provincial

governments.

' The introduction of powerful and

civil-based ward committees similar

to street committees, was poised to

|enable â\200\234people on the ground to

Sutcliffe

influence decisions concerning their

developmentâ\200\235,

The new system would give local

government more powers, paving

the way for a departure from the .

current! -ter - governance

system .. comprising' national,

provincial and local government,

â\200\230Functions = such as - housing

development and the Proclamation

of townships would fall within the

local government jurisdiction, s

Ultimately the aim was â\200\234to move

away from-the present system of

representative democracy = to
participatory democracyâ\200\235.

He added that apartheid legacy
still permeated local government
structures, which had been plagued
by poor delivery of services. /

â\200\234Integrated development planning
will become the defining feature for

development Programmes in the
Sutcliffe said after the new local |
slected next
'had - addressed _ e
â\200\230raised by 'traditfonal lsadsrs
\regarding their rols in municipal

new municipalities,â\200\235
He said aithough the Government
mast grievances

â\200\230politics, putting this matter to rest
â\200\230would take another six years,

view, introducing the new

In his ,
local government bodies would not

cost taxpayers ek,
. â\200\234The big costs would be to
pstablesh municipalities in poor
pldces - like Mkuze for instance.â\200\235 .