

Gordhan differs on free pass from SARS

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Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan believes that management at the South African Revenue Service (SARS) should be held to account for failing to take action against employee Luther Lebelo, who wrote a scathing letter to *Business Day* late in November attacking credit ratings agencies and the government for allegedly kowtowing to them.



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Lebelo, who is SARS group executive for employee relations, wrote the letter in his personal capacity, but Gordhan thinks he should not have done so. SARS informed Gordhan that it would not take disciplinary action, saying Lebelo wrote the letter in his private capacity.

However, the minister indicated in a written reply to a parliamentary question by DA finance spokesman David Maynier on Friday that action ought to have been taken.

His comments are yet another example of his misgivings about the way SARS is being run by commissioner Tom Moyane. In a series of replies to questions Gordhan has complained about the lack of co-operation and accountability of top management and has criticised Moyane's failure to act against his now suspended second-in-command, Jonas Makwakwa.

In his reply on Friday, Gordhan said that as far as the finance ministry was concerned, "Mr Lebelo, as a senior and influential manager in SARS, should not be commenting on a sensitive and serious matter such as ratings in the public domain."

In his letter Lebelo, who is linked to the Progressive Professionals Forum headed by the Gupta-supporting Mzwanele Manyi, described credit ratings agencies as "economic gangs" that were organised by the Central Intelligence Agency and were used by SA's western oppressors to whip the country into line and to impose their own preferred economic and social system.

Source: Business Day

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