



# ANC TODAY

VOICE OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

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Conversations with the  
**President**



## A BUDGET TO GROW THE ECONOMY AND SUPPORT DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

**L**AST week, the Minister of Finance presented a national budget that would help us to achieve more rapid and inclusive economic growth while supporting our developmental goals.

Over the last five years, we have taken several actions to get our economy back on track. We have implemented far-reaching reforms in the energy, logistics, water and telecommunications sectors to address the binding

constraints on growth. We have created a stable macroeconomic environment to encourage investment. And we have expanded public employment and social protection to create jobs and provide an income for those who are unemployed.

This budget takes us further along the path of reviving our economy and rebuilding our institutions, in at least three important ways.

First, the 2024 budget shows that

we're staying the course in our commitment to achieve a sustainable fiscal trajectory.

Over the past fifteen years, our debt burden has grown to a point where we are spending more on interest payments than we are on education or health care services. By reducing debt, we will create more space to spend on the things that matter – building our infrastructure, improving our schools and hospitals, and making our communities safer.

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# CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT

At the same time, the less the state borrows the more can be invested in the economy. This will help to create a virtuous cycle of investment and growth in the years to come.

Second, the budget protects critical services and social spending, making sure that government can deliver on its most important obligations to all South Africans.

We have allocated additional funds for service delivery, which will help to pay the salaries of police officers, teachers, nurses and doctors. This year alone, we will spend more than R480 billion on education, R272 billion on health and R265 billion on other services like water, housing and public transport.

A further R7.4 billion will go towards the Presidential Employment Stimulus, which has already created more than 1.7 million opportunities for work and livelihoods over the last three years, ensuring that key programmes like school assistants will continue.

We are also increasing social grants to help the poorest households cope with the rising cost of living. Additional money has been allocated to the fight against corruption and state capture, following through on the commitment I made in the State of the Nation Address.

Third, the budget includes new measures to support growth and create jobs, while rebuilding infrastructure.

A new R2 billion grant has been established to fund the rollout of smart meters in municipalities, which will help to modernise our electricity system and reduce load shedding. A generous in-

centive will be introduced to support the manufacturing of electric vehicles from 2026 onwards, as part of our commitment to position South Africa as a leading player in the green economy.

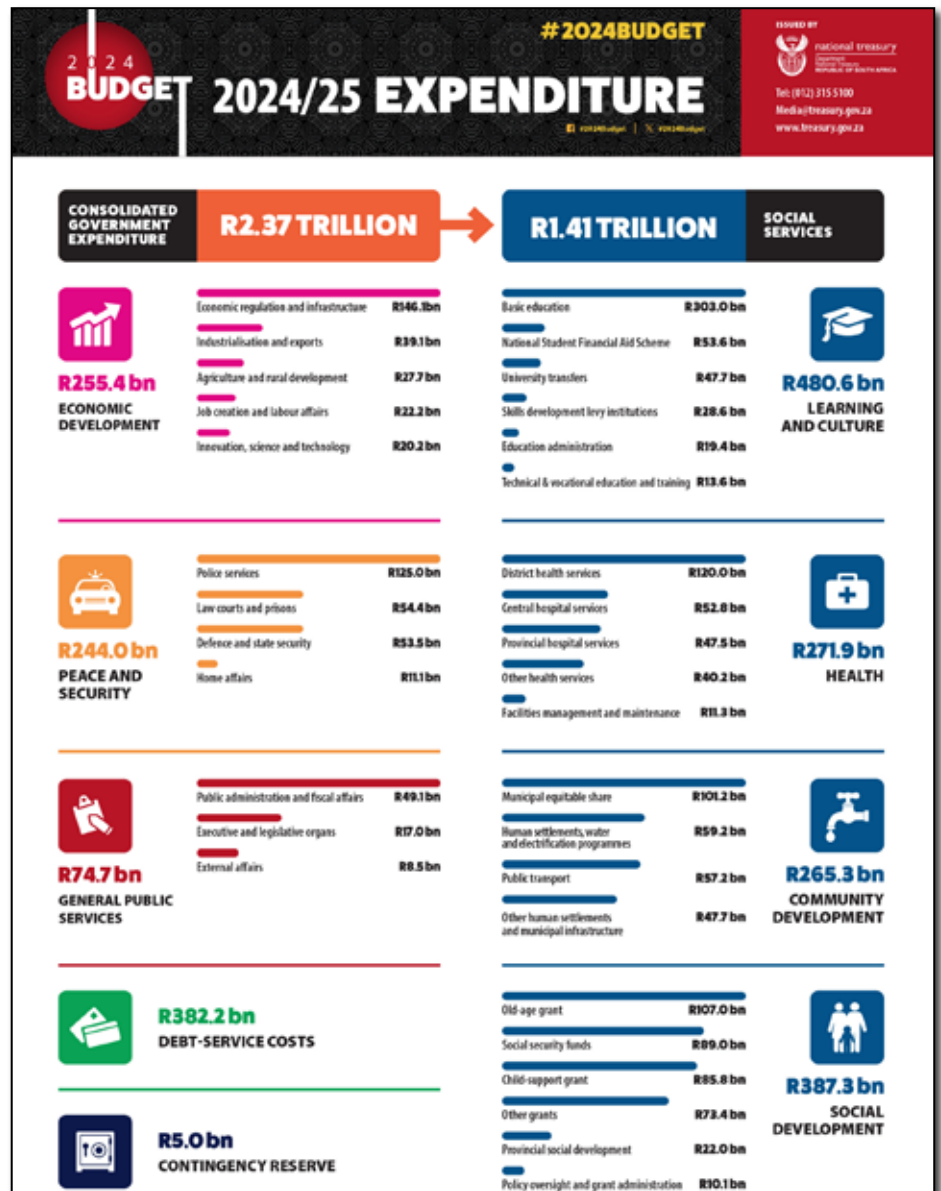
Innovative new funding instruments have been introduced for infrastructure projects, and the National Treasury has published revised regulations to make it easier to implement public-private partnerships. These measures will enable much greater investment in infrastructure.

Our economy has been weighed down by more than a decade of

low growth and rising debt, made worse during the state capture era as confidence was eroded. During the course of this administration, we have worked hard to change this and build a foundation for higher growth and more jobs.

The 2024 budget shows that we are heading in the right direction. We are determined to continue on this path, following through on economic reforms, getting our public finances in shape and protecting basic services for the poor.

Working together we will ensure that better years lie ahead.




# THE ANC ELECTIONS MANIFESTO


## OUR PLAN FOR PUTTING SOUTH AFRICA TO WORK

**S**INCE 1994, the South African economy has been radically transformed. The country is a much better place today than it was 30 years ago. South Africa's working class has, over the years under democracy, secured a fairer labour dispensation and rising wages. The black middle class, and cadre of black professionals have grown exponentially in wealth and influence. Access to land and tenure security for black South Africans in rural areas has increased.


Currently, the number of people employed has reached its highest ever level with over 16.7 million employed. A skills revolution, which led to creation of new cohort of professionals in various sectors of the economy, has provided pathways from basic education to further and higher education to children of all races.

The firm economic foundation which we laid, helped our economy to withstand the economic crisis of 2008 and later the COVID-19 pandemic. Both these devastations left our economy battered but it remained very resilient. The adoption of the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP), which included accelerating reforms and revitalization of various sectors,





**PRIORITY 1**



**Put South Africa to work: Our Jobs Plan**

Let's put South Africa to work, together, through public employment programs that create work opportunities in the public, small business, and social sectors.

placed our economy on a sustainable recovery from the pandemic, until it surpassed pre-pandemic levels in terms of size and number of jobs.

Building on the back of this progress, much more needs to be done to create more jobs and lift the living standards of those who have been left behind. The ANC, through its Manifesto, is recommitting itself to putting the people's needs and dreams at the centre of its programme, as it is the only party in South Africa that is capable of building on the successes of the first 30 years of democracy – and securing a better life for all.

The ANC's 2024–2029 manifesto, outlines a clear and realistic

plan which arises from a period characterised by major economic transformation that has resulted in valuable lessons learnt, which bodes well for pivoting the economy towards accelerated growth. The ANC-led government, to put the economy on a firm foundation, is already taking decisive action to resolve the two major infrastructure challenges which are constraining growth, investment, and job creation, namely; load-shedding and the inefficiency of rail and ports. In addition, we have also increased investments in the expansion of water infrastructure.

We will intensify the implementation of the Energy Action Plan and the recently adopted Rail and Ports Strategy to ensure

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that we achieve energy security and a more efficient logistical system. We are making progress towards solving the passenger rail challenges. The Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa, has to date restored operations on 26 out of 40 commuter rail corridors.

To continue with the restoration of our commuter rail corridors, more money will be spent over the next three years to modernise our passenger rail network. Infrastructure investment will continue to play a central role in stimulating growth. As part of our infrastructure build, we will be undertaking significant water infrastructure projects which include dams, water treatment plants, pump stations and pipes in underserved areas.

Investment in economic and social infrastructure will ensure basic services are affordable by maintaining and expanding subsidised basic services like water, houses and electricity for the poor. We will develop more subsidised human settlements. The housing policy will continue to evolve so that we can continue to build more subsidised houses, upgrade informal settlements and provide basic services, build more rental stock for the missing middle and confront urbanisation through the development of integrated human settlements in well located areas.

Our manifesto reflects the fact that ANC policies are driven by the interests of the masses of ordinary people and the working class, whose interests we continue to put at the centre of our economic policy. Our economic policy interventions seek to promote economic growth and transformation and our overriding economic objective is to acceler-

ate job creation, particularly for young people.

The ANC understands that to achieve this objective, which will improve the lives of millions of people, our interventions must be economically sound and must be sustainable over the long term.

For example, we know that it is through avoiding ever-rising public debt that we will be able to sustainably allocate more resources towards social spending and improved infrastructure investment in schools, clinics, and hospitals, and enhance community safety.

In addition to strengthening the fiscal position of the State, the ANC manifesto outlines commitments for the democratic state to play a more effective role in leading structural reforms and guiding increased levels of investment, to achieve accelerated employment creation.

Given the constraints of the fiscus, we will increase the efforts to crowd-in private sector investments, including through prescribed assets to infrastructure projects and industrialisation.

We will place industrialisation at the centre of our efforts to grow the economy by protecting existing industries, such as the steel industry and advancing the in-

dustries of the future, such as electric vehicles manufacturing.

We will continue to unapologetically pursue an inclusive and transformed economy by promoting and monitoring substantive participation of black people, women, youth and persons with disabilities in the mainstream economy, through legislative and policy interventions. This entails ensuring that the black industrialists programme leads to the quantitative and qualitative increase and participation of Black Industrialists in the national economy, selected industrial sectors and value chains, as reflected by their contribution to growth, investment, exports and employment. This further entails the creation of multiple and diverse pathways and instruments for Black Industrialists to enter strategic and targeted industrial sectors and value chains.

In seeking to accelerate industrialisation and enhance infrastructure, boosting investment and job creation to significantly higher levels, structural reforms will be complemented by various mechanisms which mobilise additional private sector investments towards building an inclusive economy. These mechanisms will be well designed to ensure that they result in a win-win situation.



**Put South Africa to work:  
Our Jobs Plan**

Expand public employment to sustain **2.5 million work opportunities** delivering public goods and services in communities.





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# GASLIGHTING OF CADRE POLICY A SMOKESCREEN: THE DA'S REAL PLAN IS TO DECLARE THE TRANSFORMATION AGENDA UNLAWFUL AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL

**T**HE ANC prides itself as an organisation that discusses all its policies openly and embarks on robust public engagements before it adopts them.

This tradition was developed and perfected over almost a century – from its first Constitution adopted in 1919 to the Bill of Rights (1923), the African Claims (1943), the Freedom Charter (1955), Strategy and Tactics documents (1969 to date), the Harare Declaration (1989) Constitutional Guidelines for a Democratic South Africa (1991), Ready To Govern (1992) to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994).

The adoption of ANC Cadre Policy and Deployment Strategy in 1998 followed a similar process and it was based on the resolutions of the 1985 Kabwe Consultative Conference and the 1997 National Conference of the ANC.

The key elements of ANC Cadre Policy and Deployment Strategy are summarised in the 1997 policy document as follows:

a. **Recruitment:** emphasis placed on recruiting from the motive forces who stand to gain from change and will therefore be keen to ad-



- vance transformation policies. Steps must be taken to ensure they understand and internalise ANC policies.
- b. **Education and training:** political education, academic training and specialised skills constitute a defining feature of a cadre. Other attributes include patriotism, revolutionary morality, humility, hard-work, discipline, loyal and selfless service, dedication and keen interest in learning and self-improvement.
- c. **Deployment and redeployment:** deployment must be according to specialty, aptitude, qualification, experience and capability. Cadres should be correctly

placed and promoted at the right time so that they may fully apply their talents and creativity. Cadres must also be redeployed to new areas of work so that they develop all-round skills to lead the process of national democratic transformation.

- d. **Promotion and accountability:** the political performance of cadres, through the knowledge of everyone's work ability and personal life should guide placement and promotions. Guard against favouritism, opportunism, regionalism, ethnic/tribal or gender discrimination.
- e. **Preservation of cadres:** preservation should include considerations around working conditions, preservation of skills, health and security.

These key elements of our Cadre Policy and Deployment Strategy have guided the implementation of our national democratic transformation agenda, also referred to as the National Democratic Revolution – the comprehensive transformation of our country into a non-racial, non-sexist, united, democratic and prosperous society.

The ANC has not made it a se-

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cret that its primary mission is to eradicate all forms of colonialism, patriarchy and apartheid and empower those who were excluded and exploited.

The transformative Constitution of our country makes it mandatory to *“heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights”*. Transformation is therefore a key constitutional imperative.

The DA-led right-wing forces opposed to transformation have launched an ideological offensive that has deliberately and systematically sought to fundamentally distort and crudely caricature the ANC Cadre Policy and Deployment Strategy.

For quite some time, a false narrative has been pushed vigorously in the media about the exact nature, purpose and actual practices pertaining to the deployment of cadres. There has also been a concerted effort by the anti-transformation forces to use the courts in their fight to slow down, stop or reverse the transformation agenda, by trying to impose a conservative interpretation of the Constitution and the law of our Republic.

We would like to deal with **FIVE CORE ELEMENTS OF THE RIGHT-WING IDEOLOGICAL OFFENSIVE, GASLIGHTING AND NARRATIVE WARFARE** against cadre policy and deployment strategy. The primary objective of the DA’s narrative is to discredit and defeat the National Democratic Revolution and the national democratic transformation agenda led by the ANC Alliance constituted together with the SACP, COSATU and SAN-

CO, as well as the entire spectrum of progressive forces in our country.

**Firstly, the DA’s spin-doctors and ideologues have invested heavily in churning out the false narrative that the policy and practice of cadre policy and deployment strategy is an aberration in a democracy, and is therefore unlawful and unconstitutional.**

Nothing could be further from the truth.

In many democracies, it is common practice that a party that has won elections seeks to ensure that the people who are appointed to senior positions in the administration understand and support the policy agenda of the democratically elected governing party, so long as such people are appointed in accordance with the legal procedures and they meet the competency requirements for such positions. After all, parties are elected to lead government on the basis of their policies and performance. And deployed cadres in this regard become the stewards to steer the policy paradigm as entailed in the elections manifesto of the party that won the elections.

A study of several countries carried out by the OECD in 2007 found that political involvement in public administration is essential for the proper functioning of democracy. The study argued that without it, an incoming political administration would find itself unable to change policy direction, as long as there are safeguards to protect the public service from being misused for partisan purposes instead of national interest. Importantly, the study found that more political influence in

staff matters may work well if there are checks and balances.

Essentially, political parties ensure that for their policy agenda to be carried out systematically, they must develop their own members so that they have shared vision and values and encourage them to acquire the requisite skills. In many democracies, party schools or training institutes are even funded through the public purse. Some parties rely heavily on recruiting people who share their vision and values, recruiting from universities and think tanks. This practice is very prevalent in the United States of America where every incumbent that wins elections replaces the entire top echelons of the administration. Of course, there are other democracies where the practice is different.

The DA is profoundly dishonest and misleading the public in presenting itself as a party that does not deploy its members into the public service to pursue its policy agenda. In this regard, the DA pretends that all its deployees are merely recruited by mere chance and not through a deliberate organisational effort to advance the DA’s agenda.

There is evidence in the City of Tshwane and the Western Cape that the DA itself has been practicing its own version of deployment of its leaders and members into positions of administration where the party governs. This includes a parallel process of the DA Federal Executive candidates for employment in DA-led municipalities as described by Alan Winde in a submission to the Public Protector in 2021, in which he correctly argued that such internal rules and policies are *“wide-spread [and] common”*.

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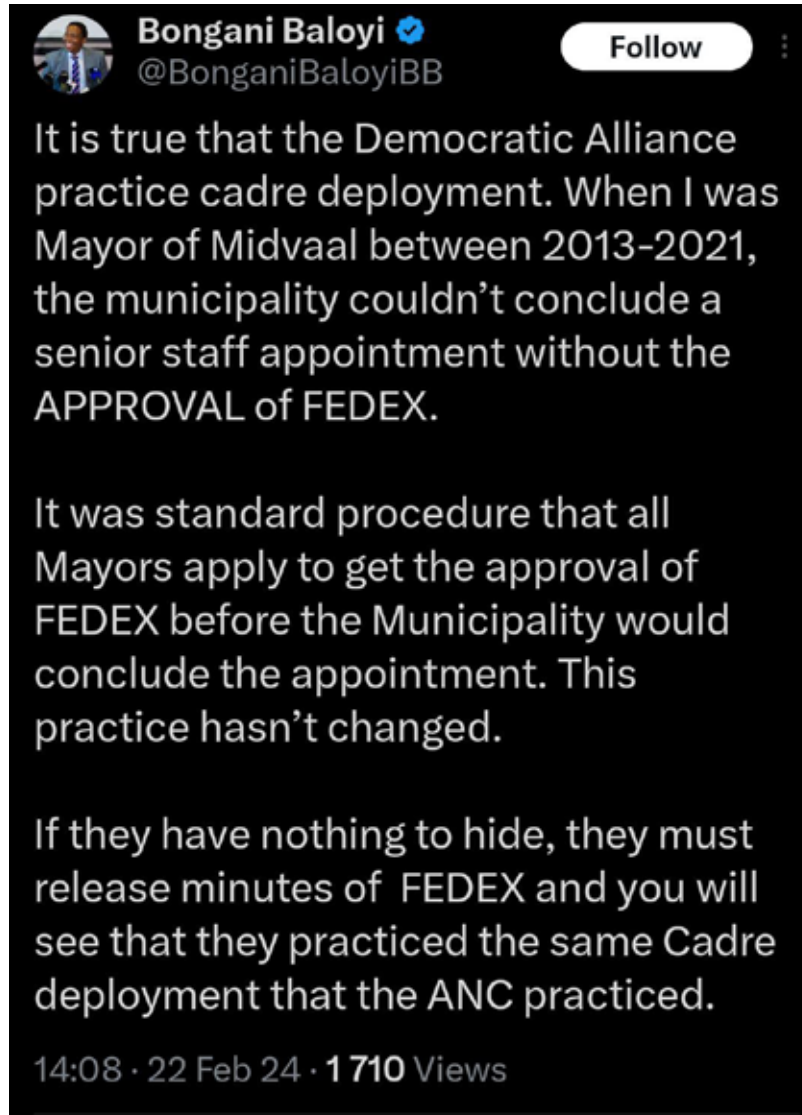
The narrative that the deployment of cadres is unconstitutional and unlawful, has no basis in law, hence the High Court correctly found that the DA failed to point out to any text, neither in the Constitution nor any statutes that supports their claims. It is an ideological and philosophical pre-occupation of liberal extremists and neo-conservatives who want to declare as unlawful and unconstitutional, any policy that seeks to dismantle and transform the apartheid-colonial and patriarchal social and economic legacies. Their case was a failed anti-transformation intervention through the courts.

The courts have been some of the terrains on which some of these political battles are fought as substitute for electoral victory and the idea being to plant negative narratives about the legitimacy of the ANC national transformation agenda. In many cases, the courts have given a transformative interpretation of our laws as mandated by the Constitution. We do not believe that the right-wing will succeed in trying to use the courts to subvert transformation. There are many judgements that have upheld the transformative impulses and imperatives of our country's Constitution.

Recently, the DA approached

the courts to declare cadre policy unconstitutional and unlawful and they could not convince the Gauteng High Court on their ideological and philosophical spin. The High court verdict was straightforward: ***“there is nothing unconstitutional about a***

candidate for any position. What is wrong is where the prescribed legal processes are not followed in the appointment of individuals, whether it be to the public service, the judiciary or state-owned enterprises. If the due legal process is flouted, then those doing the flouting should be held to account.



***political party influencing the policy direction of a government, including the appointment of senior personnel to public service, so long as the public service is protected against being misused for partisan purposes.”***

There is indeed no law preventing a private body, such as a political party, from discussing potential

Many nominations to positions in public entities are made by Parliament or through specialised bodies like the Judicial Service Commission. Political parties actively participate in the parliamentary processes that select and make final recommendations or decisions on suitable candidates. This is done precisely because parliament must likewise satisfy itself that those being appointed into this crucial arm of the State are fit for purpose, same as the Executive does within its purview of administrative governance.

It should be expected that parties will have internal discussions

about which candidates to support for these positions in public entities and they even vote for such candidates. In other instances, members of parliament also decide on whether to remove people from specific public entities in line with the Constitution. It is no accident that votes for candidates to such positions are almost always along party lines. Indeed, political parties



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should be encouraged to have such discussions because that is likely to produce a more considered outcome than simply relying on the whims of individual MPs. This is political involvement and consequently it results in deployment of specific candidates.

To argue that any such criticism of any candidate undermines the independence of the judiciary or any other public institution like the SABC or JSC or PSC, is breathtakingly dishonest for a party that has often criticised individual candidates (often Black) in parliamentary interviews.

So, the question whether any party, in its own internal processes, discussed the names of particular candidates or not is not material if the final decision is in accordance with what the constitutional or legislative prescripts demand.

So, the DA has no case on this matter, as the court has ruled.

**Secondly, another ideological and philosophical in-comprehensions being churned out by the DA propaganda machine is that the ANC Cadre Policy and Deployment Strategy is responsible for state capture and corruption.**

There is no truth to this false narrative.

Those of us who live in South Africa know fully well how State capture was carefully orchestrated and executed by the Gupta brothers and their network of enablers in government and in big corporations. There is ample evidence from the Zondo Commission and several court cases.

In its lapse of logic, informed by

the attempt to hoodwink voters, the DA has suddenly and opportunistically forgotten that State capture and corruption is not a party political agenda but a result of calculated actions by networks of individuals who seek to weaken and destroy the capacity of State institutions so that they can loot large sum of public funds for their own selfish benefit. The DA wants to excuse the thieves and give them political cover that they were stealing for the ANC instead of ensuring that those responsible for State capture and corruption in our land must face the consequences of their selfish and greedy deeds.

The ANC has tightened its own internal processes to hold all its members involved in wrongdoing accountable and has further taken steps to give more teeth to anti-corruption agencies of the state.

No member of the ANC can say they were given a mandate by the ANC to loot the public purse. It is not plausible and there should be no excuse.

**Thirdly, the DA's gaslighting flies in the face of the very essence of multi-party democracy. Cadre recruitment and deployment are amongst the key functions of political parties, and political parties are critical to multi-party democracy.**

Political parties are key to our multi-party democracy, which we fought for and is guaranteed in the Constitution. The government is therefore the expression of people's choices, expressed through elections. It has been argued that ***“political parties are the key mechanisms that make the democratic chain of political delegation and account-***

***ability work.”***

The literature on political parties across the world therefore converges on the following key tasks that political parties perform in democratic societies:

- a) Soliciting and articulating public policy priorities and civic needs and problems as identified by members and supporters.
- b) Socialising and educating voters and citizens in the functioning of the political system and the generation of general political values.
- c) Balancing opposing demands and converting them into general policies.
- d) Activating and mobilising citizens into participating in political decisions and transforming their opinions into viable policy options.
- e) Channeling public opinion from citizens to government; and
- f) Recruiting and training candidates for public office.

Most political parties campaign on a policy platform (manifesto) and when they are elected to govern, seek to implement its political programmes in government. This is an important part of 'legitimisation' of democracy and depends on the ***“extent to which policies submitted for public approval before an election translate into material outcomes once a political party has won power.”***

For any serious governing party to leave this ***‘programme-to-policy-to-implementation’*** to chance, as the DA well knows, is irresponsible.

**Fourthly, since the early days of our democracy, the DA has also been pushing the narra-**



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**tive that cadre policy and deployment strategy is the cause of government failure because this is ostensibly about deploying people who have no qualifications and competencies for the positions to which they are deployed.**

In the key elements of cadre policy outlined earlier, there is clearly stated emphasis about the importance of skills, qualifications, competence, accountability and performance and other core values and attributes in the deployment of cadres.

The very definition of a cadre rests on the fundamental idea that a cadre is someone who has received specialised training in preparation for assignment to a particular responsibility - whether in a military context, public service context or political context - training, demonstrable experience or tested ability to carry out certain core tasks, is central to determining the suitability of a cadre.

There are also citizens who are not members of the ANC who have been deployed by our movement to specific positions on account of their expertise and patriotic loyalty to our country, its constitution and its transformation agenda. This includes members and leaders of opposition parties, some of them deployed as diplomats in our foreign missions abroad.

The DA sought to excuse the appointment of unqualified people as the inherent problem of cadre policy and deployment strategy. Appointment of unqualified or inexperienced people into positions that require expertise and experience is a malpractice that is totally inconsistent with the

stated cadre policy and deployment strategy of the ANC.

At the Zondo Commission, our President, Comrade Cyril Ramaphosa, made the point clear that there is nothing wrong with the policy itself but there are known weaknesses in its application in instances where merit is not observed:

***“It is the ANC’s view that the practice of cadre deployment should not be inconsistent with the principles of fairness, transparency and merit in the appointment of individuals in public entities. Cadre deployment cannot be faulted in principle; it is a common feature of democratic practice around the world.*”**

***But we would concede that there are weaknesses in its practical implementation that make the case for greater clarity, both within political parties and the State.”***

The 54th National Conference of the ANC has called on the organisation to ensure that no unsuitable individuals are deployed in the name of cadre policy and that more investment should be made in the development and encouragement of ANC members to undergo rigorous ideological, academic, technical and ethical training as part of the Renewal Project.

This will enable the ANC members to play a central role in improving service delivery and transforming our country to heal the divisions and injustices of our past and create a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights, as mandated by the Constitution of our Republic.

The ANC has also tightened its processes of selecting candidates for national and provincial legislatures in order to ensure that we attract individuals and identify people with the necessary expertise, skills and experience, including young people who are talented and committed to social justice and fundamental change.

It is our firm view as the ANC that a proper and full implementation of cadre policy as defined in our documents will help to speed up transformation and service delivery and weed out corrupt and incompetent people from State institutions. This is consistent with the professionalisation of the public service and the building of a capable, ethical and developmental State.

**Fifthly, the DA then concludes by putting forward the false narrative that all the social and economic problems of South Africa can be traced to ANC’s cadre policy and deployment strategy – and these are deep structural inequalities, continuing racism, spatial and economic apartheid and the fact that the face of unemployment, poverty and inequality is Black and female, all apparently because of cadre deployment.**

This is not only ridiculous but it is also incredible that the DA believes that South Africans are stupid or simply forgetful.

An honest conversation among South Africans cannot be based on such a false starting and conclusion described by the Gauteng High Court as *“speculation and conjecture”*. To tackle persistent disparities in our society, we need more fundamental transformation and genuine partnerships. To

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try and avoid an honest conversation by heaping all the blame on cadre policy is neither serious, truthful nor helpful.

The question that arises is why is the DA seizing on cadre policy and hoping that the courts and the electorate will buy into their plan to declare transformation unlawful, unconstitutional and therefore illegitimate? Why does this party think that South Africans will not see through its profound naked hypocrisy and its real intentions? Why does the right-wing think that people will not see through their agenda of funding many small parties in order to fragment the forces that seek genuine transformation of our country through the unity of the motive forces for change that stands to benefit from such change?

In delivering this year's January 8th Statement, the President made reference to the fact that the DA-led anti-transformation forces are converging, hoping to stop, derail and reverse the transformation agenda and in pursuit of these objectives they have accordingly adopted many strategies and tactics.

The ideological offensive on cadre policy and its caricature and distortion is aimed at mobilising South Africans, including many blacks and women professionals, who have been the beneficiaries of transformation policies, against the ANC.

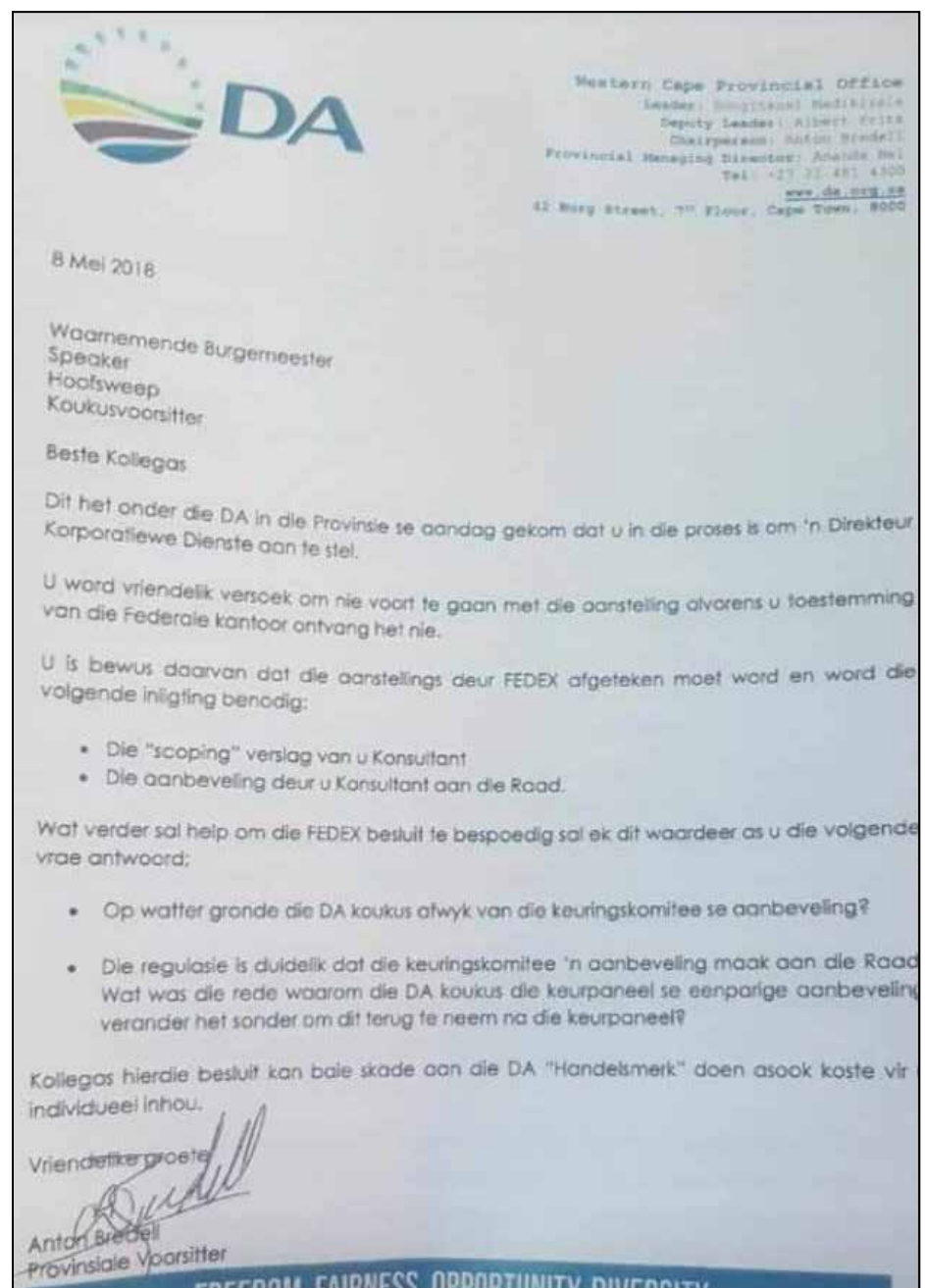
What the DA and other parties that practice deployment have failed to tell the people of South Africa is the very fact that they too practice deployment. The difference is that they deploy mainly white males as their fight back strategy against national transformation in order to

preserve the legacy of colonialism and apartheid.

Unlike the DA, the ANC is open and transparent. Everything we seek to achieve and in whose interest we are pursuing any policy, is clearly stated in our public documents and in the public domain. The National Democratic Revolution and the transformation agenda we are pursuing are no secrets. We have nothing to hide!

Can the DA share with South Africans its minutes and records of deployment decisions and explain what policies underpin such deployment? In other words, in pursuit of what kind of society and on whose behalf is the DA governing in the Western Cape and several municipalities?

The ANC awaits the release of the DA records of deployment with bated breath.



Letter by former DA Western Cape Provincial Leader to the George DA Caucus instructing them to stop the appointment of a Director of Corporate Affairs in the municipality unless it has been approved by the DA Federal Executive.

# Response to allegations of blocking apartheid trials

■ By **PRESIDENT THABO MBEKI**

**A**S a general rule, I subscribe to the understanding that government functions on the basis of legal continuity. I therefore always defer to government to clarify policies and programmes adopted and implemented while I was in government.

Accordingly, it is with some reluctance that I respond to Ms Karyn Maughan's article: "Long-awaited NPA report gives no answers on ANC govt's alleged blocking of apartheid trials" published on **News24** on February 21. However, failure to challenge some of what Ms Maughan has written would assist to perpetuate various falsehoods.

During the years I was in government, we never interfered in the work of the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA). The executive never prevented the prosecutors from pursuing the cases referred to the NPA by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

I insist on this despite a 2021 Supreme Court of Appeal judgment which found, on the strength of uncontested submissions by former National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP), Advocate Vusi Pikoli, that the NPA "investigations into the TRC cases were stopped as a result of an executive decision" which amounted to



*"interference with the NPA."*

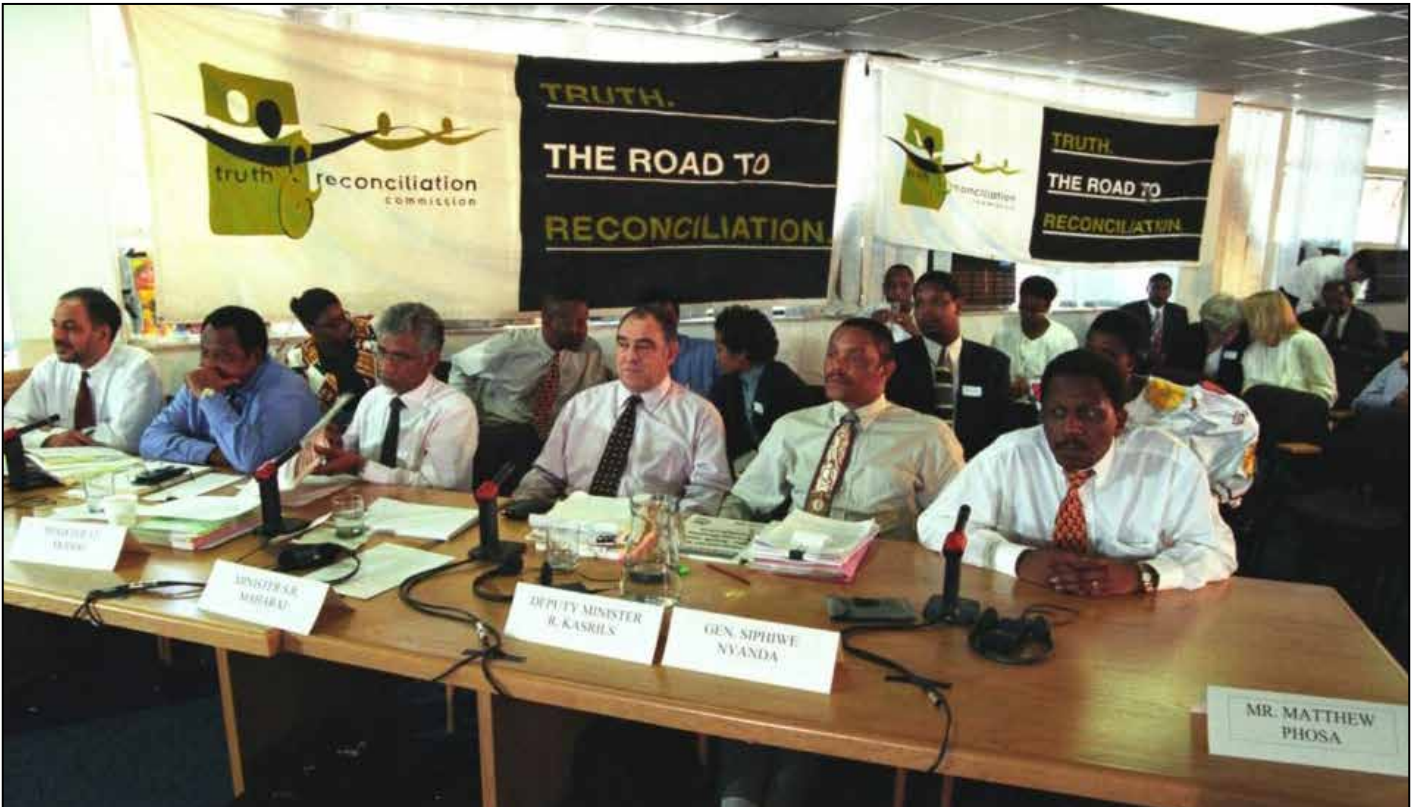
I repeat, no such interference ever took place. If the investigations Adv Pikoli referred to were stopped, they were stopped by the NPA and not at the behest of the Government as alleged by the Advocate. There is no record of a single instance when the NPA stopped investigating and prosecuting any case on account of the so-called "executive interference" – at least not during the period 1999 – 2008.

There are some questions which the NPA must answer honestly.

- Who in the executive instructed the NPA not to do its work? Will the NPA publish this 'instruction' which, presumably, will be in its archives?
- Why did the NPA accept and respect what would have patently been an illegal instruction?

Instead of propagating falsehoods, the NPA must investigate





and prosecute the cases referred to it by the TRC.

I also recall that the same Pikoli who allegedly buckled under pressure of “*executive interference*” concerning the TRC cases, earned a lot of respect by portraying himself as an independent and principled NDPP who defied an “*all too powerful*” President Mbeki, who was supposedly hell-bent on stopping him from investigating and arresting the late former National Commissioner of Police, Jackie Selebi.

The question arises, what happened to his cherished independence and commitment to principle when he acquiesced to ‘members of the executive’ on the TRC cases?

In her article Ms Maughan also refers to so-called “back door amnesties”.

What happened in this regard is that years after the dissolution of the TRC, some prisoners ap-

proached the Government arguing that they had been imprisoned for political activities – and were therefore political prisoners – but had not had the opportunity to apply for amnesty with the TRC.

The Government thought that rather than ignore these approaches, it should institute a process akin to what was pursued by the TRC Amnesty Committee to allow these prisoners to make presentations. After studying the submissions and using his Constitutional powers, the President would decide whether to grant amnesty to any of the prisoners.

Ultimately, this did not happen because the courts ruled that the intervention would violate the TRC Act. But there was nothing “back door” about the process. I addressed a joint sitting of the Houses of Parliament on this matter on November 21, 2007.

Conveniently, some people forget that the ANC was the princi-

pal architect of the Constitution of the Republic. During the years when I served as Deputy President and President of the Republic, I, together with my colleagues in Government, always bore this in mind and acted knowing that the Constitutional prescripts we helped to negotiate were binding on us.

There was never any Minister of Justice during those years who was ever authorised to instruct any NDPP to act in one way or another. No NDPP, including Pikoli, ever approached me to complain that he/she had been instructed by a Minister, or any other official, to violate the independence of the NPA as prescribed by the Constitution.

The NPA must demonstrate enough integrity by apologising for not processing the TRC cases, rather than engage in dishonourable behaviour of trying to hide behind a fig leaf which is nothing more than pure fabrication.



# Improving School Infrastructure to Create Healthy and Productive Spaces of Learning

■ By **MAVHUNGU LERULE-MAKHANYA**

**W**E are working hard to put the era of young girl children and women caught in the unfortunate situation of finding themselves experiencing their monthly cycle in public spaces without sanitary pads behind us. We say those situations belong in the past where we had no influence or power to impact the lives of these flowers of our nation.

One significant initiative addressing this challenge is the declaration of 2023 as the Year of Infrastructure, particularly aimed at restoring the dignity of black children. This initiative, led by policymakers and officials such as the Limpopo Department of Education, marks a crucial step towards creating a conducive learning environments for all learners, particularly girl children.

One of the fundamental aspects of this initiative is the focus on improving school infrastructure, including the provision of decent schools and enhanced sanitation facilities. It is widely recognised that learners thrive in environments where they feel safe, comfortable, and respected. Access



**“ Research the world over has proven that a safe and healthy learning environment produces happy learners. The Limpopo Department of Education is engaged in efforts to develop and improve infrastructure in our schools. ”**

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to clean and hygienic sanitation facilities not only contribute to the physical well-being of learners, but also foster a positive learning atmosphere.

By investing in infrastructure, especially in rural areas helps ensure that no child is left behind due to inadequate educational facilities. Today we can report that a learner attending in a decent school and improved sanitation facility is a happy learner. We have noted in our analysis that we have new schools, especially from the rural areas, that have done well in the 2023 matric exams.

Our effort in pushing for better learning facilities was not in vain. The work of creating a teaching and learning environment that is conducive is one that must con-

tinue unapologetically. In that way, we shall be able to demand top performance across the system, knowing that we have done our part as the Limpopo Department of Education.

Remarkable progress has also been made in improving the schooling experience for learners, particularly in addressing crucial aspects of health and hygiene. From providing menstrual hygiene products to upgrading sanitation facilities, these initiatives are reshaping the educational landscape for the better, ensuring a more inclusive and supportive environment for all learners.

One such story of transformation comes from Kamogelo, who vividly recalls the challenges and

discomfort she faced as a young learner navigating the onset of menstruation in class. Her initial embarrassment and discomfort were swiftly alleviated by the intervention of a caring teacher who provided her with sanitary pads. But this was not the case for many learners, especially those from poor backgrounds in rural areas.

Years later, Kamogelo's own child brings home a pack of sanitary pads distributed by the school. This simple act triggers memories of Kamogelo's own struggles and highlights the progress that has been made in addressing the menstrual health needs of learners.

Across the educational sector, there has been a concerted ef-



## CURRENT AFFAIRS

fort to eradicate pit latrines and upgrade sanitation infrastructure in schools. In the 2022/23 financial year, an allocation of R30 million was disbursed to schools for the purchase of sanitary towels, aimed at supporting female students across all grade levels and preventing any disruptions to their attendance.

Our reports indicate that this initiative ensured that every learner from the 3,624 schools is able to “access these essential supplies”, thereby promoting educational continuity and inclusivity. In the past six years, significant milestones have been achieved, with 1,493 sanitation projects completed and ongoing efforts to finalise the remaining few.

Additionally, 159 infrastructure projects inclusive of water and sanitation have been completed, ensuring that learners have access to clean and hygienic facilities conducive to learning. These endeavours symbolise far more than mere enhancements to infrastructure; they mark a profound transition towards placing the utmost importance on the health and welfare of our learners.

By providing access to sanitary products and safe sanitation facilities, schools are not only addressing practical needs but also fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where learners can thrive. Amukelani Banyini, a former teacher said the effort is a significant intervention as menstrual stories are a sad reminder of the past where people were often caught by surprise in the midst of lessons or public appearances.

These were girl children who were just going through one of life’s natural cycles but because



they did not have the necessary health cosmetics to help through, they were embarrassed and inconvenienced. As Kamogelo reflects on her own experiences and witnesses the positive changes in her child’s schooling, she is filled with relief and gratitude.

The strides made in addressing menstrual health and improving sanitation facilities are a testament to the power of collective action and the impact it can have on transforming the schooling experience for the better. In the past, the syllabus had no Life Orientation subjects, so the mockers of those girls were not equipped with knowledge to know that menstruation is a natural process.

In conclusion, the efforts to enhance health and hygiene in schools represent a significant step forward in creating a more equitable and supportive educational system. By prioritising the needs of students and investing

in essential infrastructure, we are laying the foundation for a brighter future where every child can learn and thrive without barriers. The commitment to eradicating pit-latrines in schools is a commendable initiative that prioritises the health and dignity of learners.

Access to safe and hygienic sanitation facilities is essential for creating a conducive learning environment and ensuring the well-being of learners. Our new sanitation design features a space for a SHE bin and friendly for “small feet.”

We are encouraged in this regard by the words of the founding father of our freedom, freedom fighter and first president of a democratic South Africa, the selfless Dr Nelson Mandela when he said: *“Together as a nation, we have the obligation to put sunshine into the hearts of our little ones. They are our precious possessions. They deserve what happiness life can offer.”*



# Is this the most Pro-Poor Manifesto since 1994? Critical Reflections on the 2024 ANC Election Manifesto

■ By **TISETSO MAKHENE**

**W**E are members of the community before we are members of various organisations. I therefore make this reflection on the manifesto of the ANC, not because I am a member of the organisation, but because I am a South African, with interests in its development.

Having read the entire Manifesto of the ANC, word by word, as I always do for all such manifestos, I must state that this one warmed my heart, and filled it with such emotions of hope as I felt 30 years ago.

In his message to the people of South Africa, and whilst delivering the 2024 Manifesto at Moses Mabhida Stadium today, President Cyril Ramaphosa said;

*“In the 2024 elections, we will therefore go beyond celebrating accomplishments. We learn from the past, from mistakes and setbacks, as we learn from achievements.”*

The President argued that in the coming electoral term, the movement, when elected, will focus its attention on six priorities to trans-



form the economy and create jobs.

## **Strategic and Ideological Focus of the Manifesto**

For me, the following text, which is contained in page 19 of the Manifesto, is a summary of the commitments by the ANC, at least at a strategic level:

*“We must balance market dynamics with state intervention to foster inclusive economic progress and address historical disparities.*

*As a middle-income country,*

*South Africa needs to industrialise and reduce its reliance on primary commodity exports and the import of luxury and capital goods. Monopoly concentration inhibits the growth of small businesses and cooperatives and new entrants into markets.”*

No nation that emerges from colonialism and Apartheid will expect the market forces to correct the injustices of the past.

Only an intentional and interventionist approach can salvage and bring it closer to the people.



## CURRENT AFFAIRS

### The state and jobs

I am relieved that, under the section “Put South Africa to work”, we have rejected the flawed and nonsensical notion that “government doesn’t create work”. It is the central mandate of a progressive government to create jobs.

I am pleased that the manifesto proposed a multilateral approach to this mandate, which involves, amongst others:

- Deepening the gains made by creation of job opportunities through the Presidential Employment Stimulus, amongst others;
- Embarking on massive support for SMMEs, especially those in the manufacturing sector, to further influence job creation; and
- Engaging the private sectors, including through incentives, to create jobs.

### Industrialization and transformation of the economy

Perhaps the most notable feature of the Manifesto is its bias towards building industries. The Manifesto commits that the movement, once elected, will “consolidate industrial and sectoral master plans into a comprehensive industrial policy to drive localisation.”

In this regard, the Free State Department of Economic Development (DESTEA), is far ahead, thanks to its forward-thinking.

The ANC further commits to leveraging the state’s procurement budget to bolster local businesses producing goods and services while incentivising private enterprises to follow suit. Once again, the Free State Department of Economic Development is ahead in this regard.

**ANC 2024 ELECTIONS MANIFESTO** **PRIORITY 5**

**DEFEND DEMOCRACY AND ADVANCE FREEDOM.**

**OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS, WE WILL:**

- 1** Promote and defend the rights of all South Africans against racism, sexism, gender-based violence, homophobia, discrimination and other intolerances.
- 2** Advance the rights and dignity of children, youth, older persons, persons with disability and members of the LGBTQI community, and continue the fight for women’s emancipation and a truly non-sexist society.

**LET'S DO MORE, TOGETHER. VOTE ANC**

**ANC**  
A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL

Lastly, the ANC commits to support at least 2 000 Black Industrialists, especially women, youths and people with disabilities. This is massive, and needs our support and appreciation.

### On export taxes

This signifies a partial victory for the ANC Youth League, which called for massive reduction in the export of raw materials.

The ANC has committed to implement export taxes on essential raw materials like cobalt, lithium, graphite, chromite, manganese and platinum to encourage local value addition, particularly for low carbon production.

The ANC Youth League must, however, push that such taxes also include other precious metals like diamonds, gold and coal,

as well as agricultural produce like maize.

### On land reform

Perhaps the lowest point of the Manifesto, as well as that of the current leadership of the ANC, is the failure to robustly and frankly deal with land. The Manifesto is wishy washy on this aspect and more work needs to be done. I don’t know what is so difficult to be radical and expropriate land without compensation for public good.

The Manifesto does however call for the elimination of asset inequality, which is consistent with the NDR. What is required, whether Section 25 is amended or not, is for elected and deployed cadres to be radical and use the current provisions to distribute land for residential, tradi-

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

tional, religious, commercial and industrial use for all, especially the Blacks in general and Africans in particular.

### On creative industries and digital hubs

This is another heart-warming part of the Manifesto. It is responsive to needs of the motive forces of our revolution. The youth in general and creatives in particular are important if we are to liberate people's minds and ensure our heritage is recorded for generations to come. They are also crucial to ensure that important messages and teachings are transferred to various audiences.

The ANC commits, in this regard, to:

- Establish and resource creative industries and digital hubs in townships and rural areas; and
- Develop the creative industries, prioritising training, the rights of creative workers, protection of intellectual property, and support for creatives and companies in the sector.

### Transformation of the financial sector

I wish to take time and take off my hat in this regard, for the current financial slavery can only inhibit the development and transformation of our economy. I appreciate the commitments made by the ANC in this regard.

*“South Africa needs a transformed financial sector with diversified ownership and control – public, private and social – which provides affordable credit, invests in industrialisation, infrastructure and job creation, facilitates financial inclusion and prioritises domestic investment” – the Man-*

*ifesto states. I agree vehemently with this assertion.*

The ANC commits, amongst others:

- To engage financial institutions to invest on Industrialization for local production;
- Creating development and sectoral banks focused on specific sectors aligned with the industrial policy and action plans;
- Empowering cooperative banks by removing regulatory barriers to entry, including the review of the National Credit Act and support the growth of cooperative banks; and
- Ensuring that development finance institutions are well-capitalised to provide concessional lending to small enterprises and social enterprises, and develop their capacity to support regional development.

### Towards a developmental macroeconomic posture

The ANC posits that it is important to align macroeconomic policy with social and economic priorities. As opposed to the current

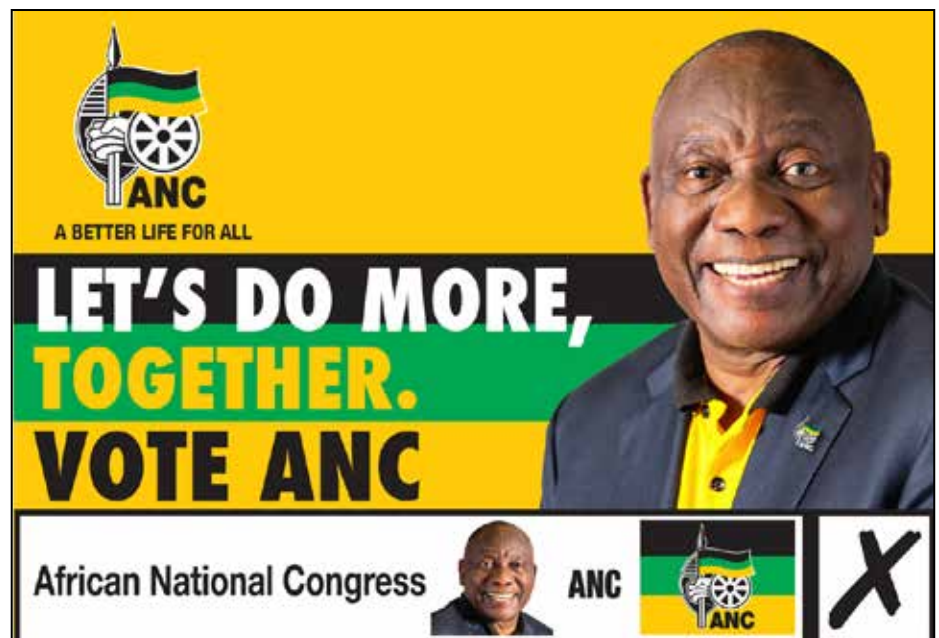
arrangements, where monetary policy is driven outside of the confines of the broader goals to lessen unemployment and poverty, the Manifesto promises to ensure policy coordination.

The ANC, perhaps realising the effects of austerity on development, also asserts that expansionary fiscal policy must be explored. This will lead to more government expenditure which is crucial for economic growth.

In summary, this is arguably the ANC's best manifesto since 1994. It's pro-poor outlook makes it to stand out from the rest. Even if I were not an ANC member, I would still go out to encourage people to vote for the ANC.

What we need, once elected, is for the ANC to deploy capable cadres to ensure that all the priorities are implemented. That would put us right on the path towards the achievement of the national democratic society.

*Tiisetso Makhele is an African Marxist, a public sector economist, a cultural activist and a social commentator. He writes in his personal capacity.*







# THEIRS IS A REMARKABLE TRUE STORY OF RELENTLESS STRUGGLE

## A Dedication to Certain Victory of the ANC in the Coming Elections in Honour of the African Slave People of La Amistad

■ By **PHATSE JUSTICE PIITSO**

**T**HE voyage of the slave people from the African continent across the Atlantic Ocean into the Americas was a passage of unimaginable crimes recorded in the history of the struggles of humanity.

Scholarly research and historical attributions attest that in the history of human civilisation, there were no such crimes against humanity, of the magnitude of extermination of the indigenous people of the Americas and enslavement of the people of the African continent. The slave trade remains a hallmark of a testimony of unprecedented crimes inflicted on the African people by European powers.

For a period of over four centuries, an estimated thirty million indigenous people of Americas were exterminated and more than hundred million people from the African continent forced into slavery. Of the total number of people abducted from the African continent, an estimated number of forty million reached the shores of the American hemisphere whilst sixty million perished through the valley of death of the middle passage.

In the slanderous hands of their masters, they were chained like animals on the legs, arms and necks, suffering the worst forms of torture, rape, famine, disease and genocide. The sick were

thrown overboard into the sea by the captains of the ship so as to cover their loss from insurance and those who tried to revolt were ambulated and forced to eat their own flesh.

The prolific writer, Phillis Wheatley, the first African slave to publish a book, condemned slave owners as modern Egyptians, making comparisons between the enslaved Africans and the Hebrews of the Old Testament. In her book, *On Being Brought from Africa to America*, she says the following:

*"Twas mercy brought me from Pagan land,  
Taught my benighted soul to understand,*

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

*That there's a God, that there's a Saviour too;  
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew,  
Some view our sable race with scornful eye,  
Their colour is a diabolic die.  
Remember, Christians, Negros, black as Cain,  
May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train."*

In his autobiography, the African slave Olaudah Equiano, says the following about the horrors of the trans-Atlantic crossings:

*"When I looked around the ship too and saw a large furnace of copper boiling, and a multitudes of black people of every description chained together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted of my fate and quite overpowered with horror and anguish, I fell motionless on the deck and fainted. I asked if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces and long hair."*

He further says:

*"The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This wretched situation was again aggravated by the galling of the chains, now become insupportable; and the filth of the necessary tubs, into which the children often fell, and were almost suffocated. The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable."*

During the plenary session of the United Nations General Assembly, to commemorate the two hundredth anniversary of the end of the trans-Atlantic slave trade,

speaking on behalf of the African group of states, the South African Ambassador to the United Nations, Comrade Dumisani Kumalo, said the following:

*"Up to this day, the waters of the Atlantic Ocean are said to remain dark and murky, with the blood of Africans stolen all along the western coast, as far south as the windy coast of Namibia and all the way to the dry shores of the Sahara."*

European imperialism established a lucrative slave trade route throughout the regions of the African continent, from the shores of Mozambique to Angola, from the Congo Basin to the north and west coasts of Africa and from the Sahel region to the Horn of Africa. Our continent was turned into a field of harvesting human cargo to serve the interests of colonial powers.

It is for this reason that we dedicate the victory of our glorious movement, the African National Congress, in the coming national general elections, to the heroism of the slave people of La Amistad ship. Theirs is a story of remarkable history of relentless struggle which has today become a testament, that humanity is capable of overcoming seemingly insur-

mountable obstacles.

We dedicate the decisive victory of the ANC to the heroes and heroines of the slave people of La Amistad ship, whose contribution to the treasure-store of human civilisation continues to shape and broaden the horizons of the very future which is still to come. The future of the freedom of humanity which is not just a necessity but the most fundamental desire.

During the year 1841, fifty three African slaves abducted from the present day Republic of Sierra Leone, destined to work at the sugar plantations in Cuba, revolted against the masters of the crew, taking control of the ship, and redirecting it back home to the African continent. The group was captured and arrested by the US coast guards, who charged them with murder and conspiracy to escape from their masters.

The 6th President of the United States of America, Mr John Quincy Adams, who after his term of office worked as a legal practitioner, saw it necessary to represent them in the supreme court of appeal, where he won the legal battle, restoring the freedom of the slave people and their right to return back to their mother conti-





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ment. This was unprecedented in the history of the barbaric middle passage of slavery across the Atlantic Ocean.

President John Quincy Adams, stands on the rostrum of generations of humankind, as amongst those of the few who have changed what the past history could not change. He demonstrated to the world that true generosity is the human heart, becoming a source of light to the hopeless, by standing in support of the freedom and dignity of the slave people.

It was indeed the first time in the history of the dark ages, that slave people survived the worst forms of human terror of genocide and extermination and returned to their country as free men and women. Their heroism exemplifies the highest standards of resilience of the human spirit.

We proudly count the heroes and heroines of La Amistad ship as pioneers of the modern age of humanity, versatile giants who waged protracted struggles against the powerful forces of imperialism and colonialism. Their selfless contribution to our struggles for freedom and equality is a signpost of one of the greatest moments in the history of the human development.

The beautiful episode of the history of the slave people of the La Amistad ship, is a testimony that the desire for peace, freedom and equality, has been the principal assignment of millenniums.

What remains is how the world community of nations spare humanity from acts of self destruction.

This will depend on how the 'ci-

vilised' world free itself from the ravages of barbarism, holocaust, genocide and all other forms of political and social manifestations, which seek to gravitate humanity towards the brink of catastrophe.

Throughout history, the ANC has been part of the common effort of humanity, to build a world of solidarity and internationalism. The ANC continues to be part of the forces of progress to build a better world of peace and stability.

We believe the course of history depends on those determined to make the world a better place for all, expanding on the fortitudes of the frontiers of liberty, peace and tranquility. We believe the future belongs to those with great enthusiasm to be true to the aspirations of humanity.

*Ambassador Phatse Justice Piitso is a member of the ANC and the SACP. He writes in his personal capacity.*

**A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL**

**LET'S DO MORE,  
TOGETHER.**

**VOTE ANC**

African National Congress   

**TRIBUTE**

# Tribute to **Patrick Ricketts** (Cde Blah)

## - A FIGHTER TO THE END

■ By **ERNEST THERON**



**T**HE Veterans League in the Western Cape learnt with shock and sadness about the news of the death of Patrick Ricketts. He was a character in the ranks of the ANC and MK veterans who you would never miss. His distinctive beards and somehow falling glasses defined the character. In the ranks of the ANC, he was simply known as Blah. He also referred to people not as comrades or leaders but merely – as Blah. This is the simplicity that we in the Veterans League appreciate; something we hoped would be the kind of character of an ANC member. A member marked by modesty and simplicity. Therefore, as the Veterans League, we declare as we write this tribute about Blah that comrades in the ranks of the ANC in Western Cape should know that we pay tribute to a hero known at home as Patrick Ricketts but also known as Blah.

We in the Veterans League spoke to several comrades and people who have interacted with

Blah throughout his life. All attest to one thing about him: he was a real mensch. This is the person who left his home together with many others from his home town, Paarl, to seek better means of fighting the Apartheid system. This was the year of the mid-1980s when the violence and brutality of the Apartheid government needed more and more to swell the ranks of MK in order to be equipped with better skills in fighting. The process started with the uprisings in the Vaal Triangle in 1984 and quickly spread across South Africa to the shining pearl stone of Paarl. This development led OR Tambo to correctly declare the 1980s as the decade of liberation.

Blah and his group from the areas of Paarl, Worcester, Robertson, in the area of Boland were all the products of death-defying youth. He received his training in Angola in a camp called Caxito. Incidentally, the same camp which had the current Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans,

Cde Thabang Makwetla, as the camp commissar. He was lucky to share his life in Caxito with some of his comrades from Paarl and one, the late Mthetheleli “JJ” Tintana, who became famous for his soccer prowess and gained the nickname “*Mfeneayigugi*”. Caxito camp was meant for shorter courses or what was called crash courses. However, according to Cde Thabang Makwetla, the Blah group stayed slightly longer than planned.

This is the group of the mid-1980s that OR Tambo, the Commander in Chief of MK, called the Young Lions Detachment. They were named as such in honour and celebration of a death-defying youth of the mid-80s who, with their agility, stones, and petrol bombs, made Apartheid unworkable and South Africa ungovernable. Nelson Mandela, in 1986 had this to say:

*“I am not a violent man. My colleagues and I wrote to Malan in 1952 asking for a round table*



## TRIBUTE

*conference to find solutions to the problems of our country, but that was ignored. When Strijdom was in power, we made the same offer. Again it was ignored. When Verwoerd was in power we asked for a national convention for all the people of South Africa to decide on their future. This too was in vain. It was only then, when all other forms of resistance were no longer open to us, that we turned to the armed struggle.”*



Similarly, Blah did not join the struggle because he enjoyed violence or the discomforts visited by his family. He did so because all doors were closed, and the choice was to surrender to servile and brutality of oppression.

As Cde Thabang Makwetla describes, he was just Blah in the camp. A purist and fundamentalist who helped to keep us on course under difficult moments. He was never intimidated by the rigours of the road less travelled.

Nat Serache describes him as follows, *“those who walked with giants and never lost the common touch know that Blah belonged to that company. While others insisted on being addressed using titles, Blah was proud to be counted with the foot soldiers of the revolution. His small but assertive voice rose from Paarl’s streets, growing up and multiplying. Comrade Blah was a voice of the people who refused to call a spade a big spoon used in the garden. He was a product of the masses and always refused to tell them half-truths, even when his honesty stepped on some big toes. His greatness lay in the fact*

*that he was humble but flatly refused to be timid”.*

The Parabat Veterans Organisation (PVO) makes very interesting comments about Blah, who they call Blaz. They wrote that Blaz (sic) is an ex-MK soldier who has previously repatriated MK remains from other countries. He knows everyone in the SA government as well as many Angolan government and military influential people. Blaz was a vital key to the Angolan embassy and the SA DIRCO, which both helped make our project possible. As many of you now know, we were asked by the Angolan embassy to solve a problem that had received no satisfaction since 1981. They wanted to know what we had done with their FAPLA Captain Jeronimo. After an exhaustive investigation, the PVO established the fate of Captain Jeronimo, much to the relief of both the Angolan ambassador and Captain Jeronimo’s widow, Rita. (For those who may now know what Parabat is. This is the 1 Parachute Battalion, established in 1961, involved in cross-border incursions. But post 1994, it was part of the integration into the SANDF.

These testimonials about Blah reflect one singular characteristic: the ability to reach out to any person and across any divide. That is the kind of a person he was. During his deployment in Botswana, he was known by many and became handy in the support system and securing of safe houses. He was able to establish many useful contacts for the underground. As a mechanic whose skill was sought by many, there was no job too small for him.

Post 1994, Blah integrated into the SANDF and became a colonel. He retired to focus on his internationalist duties and his calling of bridging the people gap. He became central in the repatriation of many of his comrades who died in Angola. He facilitated that they are buried in Paarl and was central in the establishment of the Heroes Acre there. He also established the liberation route between South Africa, Namibia and Angola and linked up, as attested by PVA, even forces opposed to the ANC.

It is also gratifying to state that when the NPA Missing Persons Missing People Task Team ultimately managed to locate and identify the remains of Billy Holiday (Norman Pieterse), it was Blah who was central in identifying both the family and place of Billy Holiday. After some efforts, he managed, and thus, a sad chapter of this dear cadre of MK was closed with the family being able to give them closure and bury their son in a dignified manner.

As the Western Cape Veterans League, we dip our revolutionary banner in salute and honour of this



## TRIBUTE

great patriot. We know how hard it will be for Blah's wife, Farieda and family. Farieda herself, a former member of MK, was arrested together with her young son, Timol (named after Ahmed Timol), by the Apartheid regime. As Farieda said, conveying the message of the passing on of her dearest husband, "*Blah's march was cut short this morning. The Grace of Almighty he joins his son Timol ... He had a full and fruitful life. Sadly, he left us too early*".

Fortunately, his wish shall be satisfied as he shall be buried in his hometown of Paarl in the Heroes Acre he was an architect of. We reach out to his family and children and salute them for borrowing this humble hero of our people for the just cause of freedom.

Let it be known to them, too, as we pay tribute to this fighter, that he remained true to the cause of the ANC till his last days. As the ANC is now to face the battle of election and the celebration of thirty years of freedom, there shall be an unpicked ballot paper, which certainly was to be in the hands of Patrick Ricketts and would have added his cross to yet another mandate to the ANC for it to serve the people of South Africa.

The Western Cape Veterans League is ready and prepared, together with our comrades in the MKLWV, to give this hero of our people a deserving send-off. You struggled all your life, and you never feared a moment would come when we, the living, would sing our goodbyes to you. You were, indeed, one of those indispensable ones, Blah.

**Ernest Theron** is Provincial Secretary of the Veterans League in the Western Cape.

## *Eksê Bla Whatkind?*

By **CHRIS FERDALE**

Eksê Bla Whatkind dan nou?  
 Djy Tawaaf te gou  
 Ons wieties nog van struggle en wat  
 hoe lyk die harde stofpad  
 vannie Paarl tot in Pretoria  
 Ons moet nog die Front Lines  
 vannie borders vannie n wattas democracy oorkruis  
 Jy het die nuwe kontrak  
 en die stukkende Windows of Opportunity hard debate  
 Hul het ons Babatjie Freedom  
 sommer by die agterdeur  
 mettie badwater ytgesmyt  
 Die pad is hard gemaak  
 ons eie comrades maak dit swaar  
 om ons Freedom te gaan haal  
 hier lê die bloed nog nat  
 oppie N1 teerpad  
 die pyn en lyding vannie  
 bullets lê oral innie land tot in  
 Lesotho, Angola en Mozambiek  
 Wat sou Solomon Mhlango  
 nou sê  
 Die Bras lê nou nog kaal  
 en armgat op Wynberg se heuwel  
 Militere hospitale  
 praat bloedstories en natgesig traanverhale  
 Ek dink aan Basil en Cecyl  
 en die jong laities Ashley en Anton  
 en dai is net die comrades wat ons ken  
 jou lyne loop lank tot innie kampe  
 van bloedsweet harde klippe kou  
 en soutvreet verby die DRC.  
 Vandag moet Radio Freedom jou song sing Amjoni my masekind  
 Die *Umchinewami* moet jou naam uitblaker  
 Salute tot ons weer oppie lang pad ontmoet  
 Wees gegroet patriot  
*Wenzenina*  
*Umzima Lomtwalo*  
*Ufuna Madoda*  
 We are not afraid to go to prison  
 It is for Freedom that we gladly go  
 Oneline Bafana  
**Hamba Kahle!**



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

2 – 8 March 2024

Source: SA History Online, O'Malley Archives, Africa Today/Yesterday and The Africa Factbook (2020)

### 2 March 1825 Earthquake in Algeria kills 7000

A major earthquake in Blinda, 50km south of Algiers kills 7000 people and destroys the city. Blinda was hit by another large earthquake in 1867.

### 2 March 1918 UNISA officially opened

South Africa's biggest university, the University of South Africa (Unisa) was officially opened on 2 March 1918. It had been known as the University of the Cape of Good Hope since it was established in 1873. Today, Unisa is one of the mega universities of the world, with over 300 000 students in 130 countries. In 2000, the University merged with Technikon SA and also incorporated the distance education component of Vista University.

### 2 March 1939 Writer Oyono Mbia born



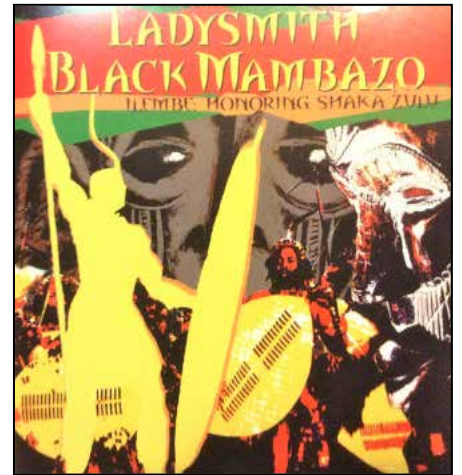
Cameroonian poet and dramatist, Guillaume Oyono-Mbia was born in Zoetele, Cameroon, one of the few authors who achieved success in both English and French, with dramas such as *Trois prétendants... un mari* (1962; *Three Suitors... One Husband*), *Until Further Notice* (1967), *Notre fille ne se mariera pas!* ("Our Daughter Will Not Marry!"), and *His Excellency's Train* (1969), all written on his favourite theme of youth versus adult, modernity versus tradition. He was professor of literature at the University of Yaoundé, served in the Ministry of Culture and in 2013 became president of the first Grand Prix of Literary Associations.

### 2 March 1959 Miles Davis records Kind of Blue

Miles Dewey Davis III (1926-1991) was US trumpeter, bandleader, and composer, and amongst the most influential and acclaimed figures in the history of jazz and 20th-century music. *Kind of Blue* is considered the best-selling jazz album in history and one of the most influential works of jazz music ever produced.

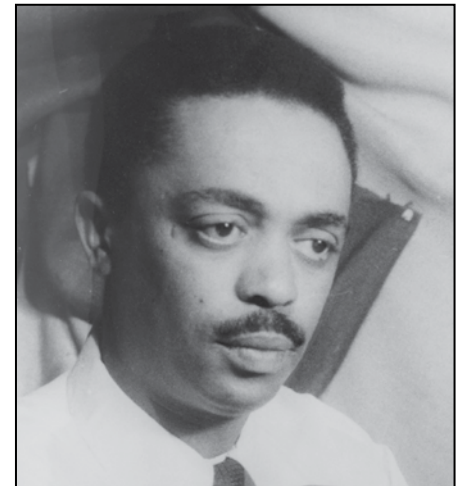
### 2 March 1987 Ladysmith Black Mambazo wins first Grammy

Ladysmith Black Mambazo, with founder and lead vocalist Joseph Tshabalala, became the first South African group to win a



Grammy award. The group won the award for the best traditional folk album. The album '*Shaka Zulu*' was produced by music icon Paul Simon. Ladysmith Black Mambazo went on to win a total of five Grammys.

### 3 March 1919 Author Peter Abrahams born



South African writer and journalist, Peter Abrahams was born in Vrederdorp, Gauteng. He is best known for his third novel *Mine*

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

**Boy** (1946). He went into exile and worked as a journalist in London, where he met Nkruma and Kenyatta, fictionally combining them into the lead character of his novel *A Wreath of Udumo* (1956), forecasting the difficulties facing newly independent states. Abrahams in 1956 moved to settle in Jamaica, where he passed on at the age of 97. His memoir *The Coyaba Chronicles* was published in 2000

### 3 March 1971 Beatles unbanned



The SABC lifted its ban on the Beatles music on this day.

### 3 March 2004 Caribbean countries boycott UN mission in Haiti

Angered by the manner in which Haiti's President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was forced to flee his country, the fifteen-nation Caribbean Community said it would not provide troops for the United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Force in Haiti. Aristide was overthrown twice, first in a military coup in September, 1991, and finally in February, 2004. He claimed he was abducted at gunpoint by United States Marines. After two-and-a-half-months' exile in Jamaica, he was offered amnesty in South Africa.

### 3 March 2014 Lupita Nyong'o wins Oscar



Kenyan Lupita Nyong'o wins an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress for her performance in the 2013 movie, *12 Years a Slave*.

### 4 March 1890 Architect Gerard Moerdijk born

Gerard Leendert Pieter Moerdijk, of Dutch descent, was born in the Waterberg district, Transvaal (now Limpopo Province). He was one of the first Afrikaans architects and pioneered new designs for churches, adapting them to South African requirements and using local materials. He designed approximately ninety churches, numerous houses, halls and public buildings, and the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria.

### 4 March 1901 Poet Jean-Joseph Rabearivol born

Malagasy poet, widely regarded as Africa's first modern poet and Madagascar's greatest figure was born in Antananarivo. As a poor child, he taught himself to read and drive, driven by a passion for literature. He committed suicide at the age of 36, and at Independence of Madagascar in 1960, he was declared National Poet.

### 4 March 1932 Miriam Makeba born



Miriam Zenzile Makeba, world famous singer, actress and campaigner against apartheid was born in Prospect near Johannesburg.

### 4 March 1975 Ethiopia nationalizes land

With the Land Reform Proclamation, the Derg government led by Mengistu nationalized all rural land and abolished tenancy. No family may have a plot larger than ten hectares and no one may employ farm workers.

### 5 March 1937 President Olusegun Obasanjo born

Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigeria Head of State (1976-1979) when he oversaw the country's transition to a democracy, and elected President from 1999-2007 was born in the city of Abeokuta, in south-west of Nigeria. He was one of the proponents of NEPAD and the formation of the African Union, and continues to play an active role in peace and security in the continent.

### 5 March 1943 Artist Mmakgoba Sebidi is born

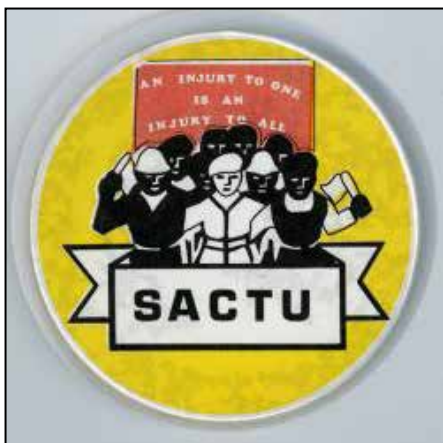
Mmakgoba Helen Sebidi was



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

born in Marapyane (Skilpadfontein) in the Hammanskraal area. She developed a life-long love for the designs of traditional arts when as a young girl she accompanied her grandmother who was a traditional wall and floor painter. She studied with John Mohl and taught pottery and clay sculpture at the Katlehong Art and in Alexandra. She sold many of her paintings at the art fair, *Artists under the Sun*, in Joubert Park. In 1998 Mmakgoba Sebidi was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to the USA and exhibited her work at the Worldwide Economic Contemporary Artists Funds exhibition. Helen Sebidi, as she is known professionally, has become a recognized artist in South Africa and internationally. Her work is exhibited regularly in major galleries across the country and abroad and her work routinely included in standard reference books on South African art.

### 5 March 1955 Birth of SACTU



The South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), was formed at an inaugural congress held in Johannesburg on 4 and 5 March 1955. It became the leading non-racial trade union co-ordinating body, and ally of the African National Congress (ANC) led Congress Alliance. It recognized the link between political

and economic struggles, organizing against racist and exploitative labour practices and the first national living wage campaign in 1957. SACTU also organized night schools and factory cells for workers. When the banning of organisations of 1960 happened after Sharpeville, its activities went into decline, with many of its leaders forced into exile or victims of bannings and imprisonment. SACTU reorganized in exile, mobilizing support against apartheid amongst working class and trade union organisations and giving support to the emerging trade union organisation inside the country, to the process of trade union unity which eventually led to the formation of COSATU in 1985.

### 5 March 1957 Ghana National Museum opens

As part of independence celebrations, the Ghana National Museum opened in Accra on this day. By 2022 it became the largest and oldest of six museums operated by the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board.

### 5 March 1975 WHO publishes indictment of Apartheid

The system of Apartheid was not only detrimental to the cultural, economic and emotional wellbeing of those on whom it was imposed, but also on their physical wellbeing. This was shown by a study done by the World Health Organization in 1975, which showed that Apartheid as a system through impoverishing its subjects, exposed many to physical ailments and deficiencies that could be avoided at minimal cost. This degradation was so extreme that there was a marked difference between the life expectancy

of White South Africans and Black South Africans. Further, the infant mortality rate of Black South Africans outstripped the mortality rate of White South Africans. This was one of the many contradictions of the Apartheid system that eventually led to its downfall.

### 5 March 1997 Munitoria building burns down

The Munitoria building, a municipal building in Pretoria burned down in 1997. The fire spread though the building very quickly and was already out of control by the time fire fighters arrived. It took four days and 252 fire fighters to put out the fire completely and was the biggest fire the country had ever seen at the time. In the end, nothing could be salvaged, with damage estimated at R 353,4 million and thousands of public records destroyed. The building was 44 years old, non-compliant with the South African national building regulations, SANS 10400 and a known fire hazard. There were no casualties as the fire started after hours. The building was demolished in 2013.

### 5 March 2020 First SA COVID case



On Thursday March 5, 2020, the National Institute for Communicable Diseases confirmed that a suspected case of COVID-19 has tested positive. The patient was a 38-year-old male who travelled to Italy with his wife, along with a group of other ten persons.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

### 6 March 1957 Ghana gains independence



On 6 March 1957, the Gold Coast (now known as Ghana) gained independence from Britain. Ghana became a member of the Commonwealth of Nations and was led to independence by Kwame Nkrumah who transformed the country into a republic. The country was the first to gain independence from European colonialism. Before it was colonised, Ghana was made up of a number of independent kingdoms, including Gonja and Dahomey in the north, Ashanti in the interior, and the Fanti states along the coast. The flag of the newly independent state was designed by Theodosia Salome Okoh. The red signified those who had died for independence, the gold is the mineral wealth with the green representing the rich grasslands of the area. The black star is the symbol of the people and of African emancipation.

### 6 March 1979 Bethal Trial Resumes

The trial of 18 Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) members, which began in December 1977 and had already taken over 100 court sessions, resumed in Bethal (also known as State v Mothopeng and 17 others). The defendants faced charges under the Terrorism Act, and a number of alternative counts

under other legislation. Zephaniah Mothopeng, who was also an internal leadership member of the banned PAC, was accused number one. They were convicted and jailed for their alleged role in fermenting revolution and for being behind the Soweto uprising. During the course of the Bethal trial, four of those awaiting prosecution died in police custody. They were Naboath Ntshunsha, Samuel Malinga, Aaron Khoza and Sipho Bonaventura Malaza. Vusumzi Johnson Nyathi, another trialist, miraculously survived after he was thrown out of the window during an interrogation session. Nyathi, who suffered spinal injuries, was later charged and found guilty of trying to escape from custody. He later sued the Minister of Police without success.

### 6 March 2006 Tsotsi wins Oscar



On 6 March 2006, the South African film *Tsotsi*, starring young actors Presley Chweneyagae and Terry Pheto and directed by Gavin Woods, received the Oscar for the best International Film at the 77th Academy Awards in Hollywood. Set in Soweto the movie *Tsotsi* traces six days in the life of a ruthless young gang leader who ends up caring for a baby accidentally kidnapped during a

car-jacking. *Tsotsi* was the third African film to win an Oscar in this category, the other being *Z* (Algeria, 1969) and *Black and White in Colour* (Cote d'Ivoire, 1976).

### 7 March 1909 Author Godfrey Mzamane born

South African writer is born in Fobone, Cape, known for his 1959 novel written in isiXhosa, *Izinto Zodidi* (Things of Value).

### 7 March 1921 Todd Matshikiza born in Queenstown



South African artist, composer and writer, Todd Tozama Matshikiza was born to a musical family in Queenstown in the Eastern Cape on 7 March 1921. He obtained music and teaching diplomas and took up a teaching post in Alice. In 1947, Matshikiza moved to Johannesburg where he established a music school, the Todd Matshikiza School of Music. He was also one of the first black journalists to work for Drum Magazine. Matshikiza wrote the music for the musical *King Kong*, which became a huge success both locally and abroad. In 1960, he and his family left South Africa and relocated to London. After a few years of performing in night clubs and freelancing for a few London Publications, Mat-



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

shikiza moved to Zambia. He took up a post as a newscaster and producer for the Zambian Broadcasting Cooperation. Matshikiza missed South Africa and was pained by the fact that he was banned in his own country. He died on 3 March 1968, at the age of 47 in Lusaka, Zambia after a sudden illness and was survive by his wife and two children. His son John Matshikiza was a well-known actor before his untimely death in 2008.

### 7 March 1967

#### Author Michael Daniel Ambatchew born

One of Ethiopia's most prolific children's book writers, was born in Moscow. He published his first poem at the age of 10, his first book was *Animal Tales of Sidi-ma* (1997), and he was named one of the best African children's writers by the Pan African Writer's Association, with his books published in Ethiopia, USA, South Africa and now Ghana. He is a founding member of the "Writers of Ethiopian Children", and has produced eight bilingual anthologies with the group.

### 7 March 1982

#### Frontline states meet to oppose Apartheid regime

Six Front Line States meet in Maputo and decide to coordinate further their military and economic policies to counter South Africa's economic and military aggression.

### 7 March 1994

#### Bophuthatswana (Bop) erupts

The Bantustan created under apartheid erupts, after its Bantustan leader, Lucas Mangope crushed widespread labour and

popular unrest, after he announced that Bop will boycott the pending non-racial elections. The Bop military joined the revolt, especially after right-wing Afrikaner militias, including the AWB, stepped forward to protect the Mangope government.

### 7 March 2007

#### M-Pesa launched

M-Pesa is launched in Kenya by Safaricom as a mobile money platform, allowing money transfers and payments using a phone app, including for those without bank accounts. M-Pesa has grown to serve more than 51 million customers and 465,000 businesses. The service is provided by 600,000 agents across Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Ghana and Egypt. M-Pesa processes more than 61 million transactions a day, making it Africa's largest fintech provider, and it has attracted 42,000 external developers to create additional services for the platform.

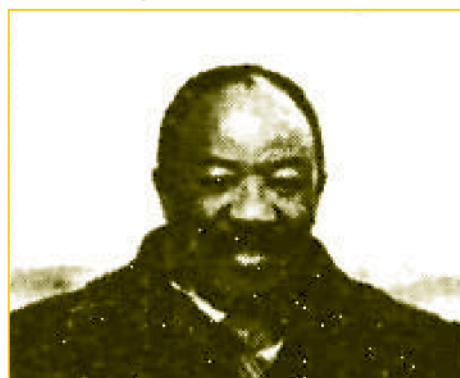
### 8 March 1986

#### Moses Mabhida dies in Maputo

Moses Mbeki Mncane (Baba) Mabhida, trade unionist, politician, Umkhonto weSizwe commander and Secretary-General of the SA Communist Party, died of a heart attack in Maputo, Mozambique, and was buried

there in a temporary grave on 29 March 1986. In 2006, Mabhida's remains were transferred to South Africa by the South African government for reburial at his home in KwaZulu-Natal. The eulogy at his funeral was done by then ANC President Oliver Reginald Tambo, and he said:

*"We have gathered here today to bid farewell to a warrior. We have converged from all corners of the globe to pay homage to a revolutionary. We have convened on this grieving piece of the earth to salute a patriot. We who have walked with the giants know that Moses Mbheki Mabhida belongs in that company too. We who have filed among the ranks know that he was proud to count himself a foot soldier. A colossus because he was supremely human. Like the pure note of a bugle, (his) voice rose from the depths of the Valley of a Thousand Hills, and multiplied. It rose and grew and multiplied, reverberating from Durban's Curries Fountain until it was heard in Dar es Salaam and Havana, Moscow and Managua, London and Jakarta, Beijing and Rio de Janeiro, Prague and Washington. And in Pretoria the centres and symbols of oppression and repression – the Union Buildings and the Voortrekker Monument – heaved and trembled as they received his message: Death to Fascism! Down with Fascism. Freedom for my People!..."*





## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

2 – 8 March 2024

Source: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org), [www.au.int](http://www.au.int), *The Africa Fact Book (2020)*, [www.daysoftheyear.com](http://www.daysoftheyear.com)

### 3 March

#### Wangari Maathai Day for Africa Environment and World Wildlife Day



Wangari Maathai, a biological scientist with a doctorate in veterinary anatomy, was the founder of the Greenbelt Movement in Kenya, encouraging communities to reverse environmental degradation by planting millions of indigenous trees and advocating and working throughout her life for the protection of the environment and communities. She became the first African woman to win a Nobel Prize for her work. The African Union recognized her contribution, when it named Africa Environment Day after her. The day is also globally celebrated as World Wildlife Day, because on 3 March 1973 the UN members signed the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

### 3 March

#### World Hearing Day

The day raises awareness of hearing loss and ear diseases. Key message by the WHO on this day are that good hearing and communication are important at all stages of life and that hearing loss (and related ear diseases) can be avoided through

preventative actions such as: protection against loud sounds; good ear care practices and immunization.

### 4 March

#### World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development

UNESCO proclaimed 04 March as World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development), to raise awareness of the role of engineering in modern life. Engineering is defined as “the branch of science and technology concerned with the design, building, and use of engines, machines, and structures.” The day is also used to promote awareness of engineering as a career, and the importance of young people, especially girls and women, studying science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

### 4 March

#### International Day of Mathematics

Greater global awareness of mathematical sciences are vital to addressing challenges in areas such as artificial intelligence, climate change, energy and sustainable development, and to improving the quality of life in both the developed and the developing worlds. In many countries, 14 March (3/14) is already celebrated as Pi Day because  $\pi$ , one of the world’s most widely-known mathematical constants can be rounded to 3.14.

### 4 March

#### World Obesity Day

World Obesity Day was established in 2015 as an annual campaign with the goal of stimulating and supporting practical actions that will help people achieve and maintain a healthy weight and reverse the global obesity crisis. “Half of all adults in South Africa are overweight (23%) or obese (27%). And

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

the World Obesity Federation anticipates an additional 10% increase (37%) in obesity among adults by 2030. Overweight and obesity hugely increase the risk of non-communicable diseases.”

### 5 March

#### International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness

Since the founding of the United Nations, multilateral disarmament and arms limitation have been central to the Organization’s efforts to maintain international peace and security. Weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, continue to be of primary concern, owing to their destructive power and the threat that they pose to humanity. The excessive accumulation in conventional weapons and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons jeopardize international peace and security and sustainable development, while the use of explosive weapons in populated areas is seriously endangering civilians. New and emerging weapon technologies, such as autonomous weapons, have also received attention in recent years. The Interna-

tional Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness plays a role in deepening the global public’s understanding about how disarmament efforts contribute to enhancing peace and security, preventing and ending armed conflicts.

### 8 March

#### International Women’s Day

International Women’s Day has its origin in a strike and march by over 15,000 women in New York in 1908, demanding better pay, shorter working hours and the right to vote. In 1910, at the International Conference of Working Women, Clara Zetkin proposed that it be celebrated as International Women’s Day, and the first celebration of the day was held in 1911. The day has been used by women to organize and mobilise against their social, political and economic exclusion and exploitation, and to celebrate the achievements that women have made. A century later, the struggles against gender-based violence, for equal pay for equal work, for representation, and for the recognition of women’s rights as human rights are ongoing.

# 8 MARCH 2024



The theme of International Women’s Day 2024 is: **‘INSPIRE INCLUSION’**

## X-WORD

### #ANCManifesto 2024



#### DOWN

1. SA President who introduced social wage in 1994.
2. Democratic South Africa seeks to ... us in our diversity.
4. From Manifesto to ...
5. Let's do More, ...
6. 27 April 1994 was a turning point in our country's...
10. Over 30 years of freedom, we ... much together.
12. **Priority 2.** Build our ... for an inclusive economy.
14. **Priority 1.** A ... to put South Africa to work
16. **Priority 3.** Advance ...
18. ANC mission: **A better... for all.**
21. **Priority 3.** Defend ...

#### ACROSS

3. Number of priorities set out in ANC Manifesto.
7. **Priority 6.** Build a better ....
8. Our battle cry.
9. Economy ... in size since 1994.
11. Democratic SA recognized kingdoms and one ...
13. Years since dawn of South African democracy
15. **Priority 6.** Build a better ...
17. **Priority 3.** ... in ...
19. **Priority 3.** Tackle the high cost of ...
20. 2055 will be a centenary since the ... Charter.
22. Create dedicated ANC ... to report on implementing Manifesto.
23. ANC Manifesto Implementation Plan with clear ... targets.
24. Which world class stadium named after an ANC stalwart hosted the ANC 2024 Manifesto launch.

#### WORD BANK

Unite    six    Mayihlome    Mandela    history    thirty    achieved    invest people  
 jobs plan    womens    Africa    queen    action    tripled    together    world    industries  
 living    website    outcome    democracy    Moses Mabhida    freedom    life

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# MAYIHLOME RALLY 2024





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