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President



PARTNERSHIP WITH BUSINESS SHOWS THAT WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

The remarkable progress made in the partnership between government and business over the last nine months shows just how much we can get done when we work together.

The partnership was established in June last year to tackle the electricity supply crisis, the severe challenges in freight rail and port operations, and crime and corruption. These areas were identified as the most immediate obstacles to faster growth and job creation. By addressing these challenges we would be able to unleash great potential in our economy. We decided on a focused ap-

proach, undertaking those actions that would have the greatest impact in each area. Where appropriate, business has participated in government's broader response to these challenges, and has dedicated substantial resources and skills in supporting government's work. Since the partnership began, the private sector has contributed more than R170 million of direct support and has mobilised over 350 technical experts. More than 130 CEOs of the country's leading companies have pledged their support.

This collaboration builds on several successful partnerships be-

tween government and other social partners in recent years. Drawing on the collective capabilities of business, labour and civil society, we were able to mount an effective response to the COVID pandemic and develop an economic recovery plan. We have also worked together in other areas, such as in combating gender-based violence, putting in place a national minimum wage and turning the tide against HIV and AIDS.

Last week, we held our regular meeting of ministers and business leaders to assess progress and chart the way forward. Sig-

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nificant strides have been made across all the areas of work.

Since November 2023, load shedding is 61% lower than the same period a year ago. Among other things, this has been made possible by the return of units at Kuisile power station and the impact of new generation capacity from rooftop solar and private sector investment. Under the leadership of its new Group CEO, Eskom is finalising an agreement with business to deploy additional independent skilled experts to support Eskom.

Business is supporting a number of the workstreams of the National Logistics Crisis Committee (NLCC), providing technical, security and operational expertise to Transnet's efforts to improve the performance of ports and freight rail.

Working together with all stakeholders, Transnet has, for example, achieved a 45% reduction in vessels anchored outside the Port of Durban and a 36% reduction in the waiting time to anchor for container vessels. A major success has been the provision of security by business on the rail network, which has resulted in a 65% reduction in criminal incidents on the Northern Corridor, reducing the number of trains cancelled. Work is currently underway to ramp up the deployment of SAPS resources to secure network infrastructure in the longer term.

Steady progress has been made in the crime and corruption focal area. Through the Joint Initiative on Crime and Corruption (JICC), the private sector is providing business information and resources to assist with the fight against infrastructure crime. Support has also been provided to modernise the 10111 helpline, with a pilot project initiated at the main call centre in Midrand, and the establishment with the Hawks of a forensics analysis centre.

Building on this progress, government and business are now focused on actions that will make a considerable and lasting difference over the course of the next few months.

Among other things, we are working to increase electricity generation capacity from different sources by up to 10,600 MW, which will enable a significant reduction in the severity of load shedding by the end of this year. This includes improved Eskom plant performance, additional private investment in rooftop solar and large-scale power projects, and connecting projects from previous renewable energy bid windows to the grid.

Following the recent appointment of permanent executive leadership, Transnet is focused on rebuilding internal capacity and drawing on private sector technical resources to restore the operational performance of strategic rail corridors.

An important part of the work to tackle crime and corruption will be the passage of the NPA Amendment Bill, which will strengthen the independence and investigating capacity of the NPA. It will also enable the establishment of additional infrastructure to support the Investigating Directorate as a permanent entity, including a dedicated forensics laboratory. A key focus of the partnership is to secure South Africa's removal from the Financial Action Task Force grey list by at least June 2025.

While this partnership between government and business has been focused on specific immediate actions, the broader work to grow the economy and create jobs draws on the contributions and capabilities of all social partners and stakeholders.

As we work to rebuild our economy, we will strive to deepen these partnerships and to reach out to all South Africans to be involved in these efforts. By broadening the involvement of all social partners in this work, we will continue to build durable social compacts that make a real difference in people's lives.

We have long believed that it is only by working together that we can make progress. The partnership between government and business has shown what is possible when we are focused and committed towards the achievement of a common goal ■

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

ANC NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL CANDIDATES LIST

The ANC's list of candidates for the 2024 National and Provincial Elections is characterised by diversity, inclusivity and experience.

The candidates have been carefully selected through a rigorous, transparent and democratic process that reflects our commitment to organisational renewal. The ANC's focus on strengthening internal structures, such as the Electoral Committee and Integrity Commission, ensures that capable individuals are chosen to implement our programme of a better life for all.

The ANC candidate selection process, which began in August 2023, was guided by a new set of rules aimed at promoting transparency, integrity, meritocracy, vibrant internal democracy, broader participation of the Alliance and mass democratic movement, and a thorough evaluation of each candidate's profile.

These rules ensured that only the most qualified individuals were considered for candidacy, according to strict criteria.

Candidates must meet requirements such as possessing a post-matric qualification, completing leadership modules at the



Oliver Tambo School of Leadership, being ANC members in good standing, demonstrating commitment to the democratic movement, and having no criminal record.

By enforcing this criteria, we are paving the way for a new phase of governance that will drive our country's transformation journey forward.

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The ANC Candidate Selection process aims to ensure that only the most qualified and deserving individuals are nominated for positions.

Candidate Selection Criteria

We have implemented strict criteria to ensure the integrity and credibility of our candidates. Firstly, it is important that candidates do not have any pending court cases or disciplinary hearings. This allows them to fully focus on their responsibilities without distractions or legal complications.

In addition, candidates who have been recommended for suspension by the NEC after their cases have been finalised by the Integrity Commission are also not eligible for nomination. This shows our commitment to upholding ethical standards and holding our members accountable.

Furthermore, candidates who are already public representatives or members of government executives must undergo a satisfactory performance review. This ensures that those in positions of respon-

sibility are effectively fulfilling their duties and serving the interests of the people.

To maintain transparency and trust, all candidates must agree to have their criminal records vetted and make financial or other interest declarations before their final nomination. This allows us to have a clear understanding of their background and any potential conflicts of interest.

Candidates must also be willing to undergo a lifestyle audit or other investigations by the Provincial List Committee or Election Committee. This further demonstrates our commitment to transparency and accountability within our organisation.

Moreover, candidates must accept and abide by the organisational decisions of the ANC and adhere to the Electoral Code of Conduct. This ensures that they are aligned with our values and principles and are committed to upholding the integrity of the ANC.

Lastly, candidates must agree to sign deployment contracts, in

which they undertake to implement the ANC's electoral mandate and the decisions of the organisation. This may include re-deployment and recall as circumstances may require. This ensures that our candidates prioritise the tasks outlined in the electoral mandate and are willing to comply with organisational decisions. The Electoral Committee guidelines outline the specific requirements for the ANC list, which are crucial in ensuring that the ANC represents the diverse needs and aspirations of the South African population.

To begin with, the ANC list must encompass a wide range of skills, experiences and capacities to effectively address the complex challenges facing our nation.

Additionally, the list should be representative of all national groups, taking into account the provincial demographics. This guarantees that the ANC truly reflects the diversity of our society and gives a voice to all communities.

Moreover, the provincial lists should have a fair geographic dis-

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tribution throughout each province to ensure that every region is adequately represented and no area is neglected.

The ANC list must also reflect the character of the liberation movement by including members from various organisations such as COSATU, SACP, SANCO, the mass democratic movement, and key sectors of society. This allows the ANC to effectively advocate for the interests of all South Africans. The ANC candidates represent an inter-generational mix and advance the generational transition in our country. For the first time, the 1976 and 1980s generations (Gen X), together with Millennials, constitute over 60% of candidates on the ANC's lists. The rest are made up of the remainder of the earlier generation of struggle veterans and Ama-2000s (Gen Z). The Tintswalos – the children of freedom – talented, educated, diverse and vibrant, are taking their rightful place in our movement and country.

Many of the pioneers of our democracy, those who formed part of our first thirty years of democratic parliaments, have retired. These include comrades Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Pravin Gordhan, Pam Tshwete, Amos Masondo, Yunus Karrim and John Jeffery. We thank them for their contribution to our democracy and governance. We know that they will remain activists working for a better South Africa, and we will continue to draw on their wisdom and experience.

The qualifications, skills and combined experience of our 2024 Candidates reflect a party that has gained enormous experience in governance and development. The new additions to our lists bring with them experiences in



civil society, business, the youth, student and trade union movements, and traditional leadership, which will only enrich how we govern and represent people over the coming five years.

The ANC lists also deliberately bring in candidates from all national groups. More than half of our candidates (53%) are women and 40% are young people, traditional leaders, persons with disability and members of the LGBTQI+ community.

This is a team of the people, by the people, and for the people: ready to work with all South Africans to implement the ANC's 2024 Election Manifesto, to do more, together!

These candidates were selected through a rigorous, democratic, participatory and transparent process that lasted over eight months, overseen by an independent ANC Electoral Committee, chaired by former President Kgalema Motlanthe.

We thank the Chairperson and all esteemed members of the Electoral Committee for the dili-

gence, commitment and integrity with which they carried out this important task.

In carrying out the mandate given by the Special Extended NEC, the ANC Electoral Committee was asked to provide a list of candidates appearing on the ANC candidate lists who: appeared before the ANC Integrity Commission, and in respect of whom the Commission submitted reports; and are named in the State Capture Commission Report.

A number of individuals who fall into the above categories were either not nominated as candidates or were found by the Electoral Committee to be ineligible due to having criminal records, stepping aside as a result of criminal charges, or being suspended pending ANC disciplinary processes.

Of the persons named in State Capture Commission Report, only 20 are current or former NEC members and / or public representatives. Of these only 6 appear on the ANC 2024 candidate lists.

Based on the response of the Electoral Committee, the Nation-

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al Officials compiled a report containing the names of candidates, a summary of the matters in respect of which they engaged with the Integrity Commission and/or they were named in the State Capture Commission Report.

The report contains three parts dealing, respectively, with:

- a. Candidates with no adverse findings by the Integrity Commission;
- b. Candidates with adverse findings;
- c. Candidates named in the State Capture Commission Report who have no Integrity Committee reports.

The report deals with 16 persons who appear as ANC candidates. The report was presented to a Special NEC meeting on Thursday, 7 March 2024.

In the report the National Officials made the following recommendations:

1. Candidates in respect of whom the Integrity Commission made no adverse findings are eligible to stand as ANC candidates. A total of 9 of the 16 candidates fell into this category.
2. Of the candidates in respect of whom the Integrity Commission made adverse findings:
 - a. Three candidates are eligible to stand as ANC candidates pending finalisation of their reviews, appeals or other processes.
 - b. Two candidates are not eligible to stand as ANC candidates.
3. (3) Candidates who are named in the State Capture Commission Report and who did not present themselves to the Integrity Commission as directed by the NEC, and who have

been referred the National Disciplinary Committee, are not eligible to stand as candidates.

The Extended NEC noted the report and commended the National Officials and the Office of the Secretary General for the thorough and expeditious manner in which they discharged the mandate given to them.

The NEC reiterated both the principles that ANC candidates must be persons of integrity and that the organisation is committed to respecting the rights of its members to due and fair process.

Accordingly, the Special NEC resolved that the above candidates should be allowed to stand as ANC candidates pending completion of their various outstanding appeal, review or disciplinary processes. Should they be elected, their positions as public representatives will be re-assessed based on the outcomes of these processes.

The ANC's 54th and 55th National Conferences highlighted the need for organisational renewal to address internal weaknesses that have affected the movement's ability to lead socioeconomic transformation effectively.

The NEC is implementing various measures to renew the organisation, including strengthening the Electoral Committee and Integrity Commission, introducing stricter rules for candidate election, enhancing cadre development, and promoting accountability, and introducing monitoring and evaluation initiatives.

The progress made in the renewal process demonstrates that the ANC is moving forward and will continue to do so with our collective efforts. Renewal is not a gimmick, but a means to empower the ANC as a more effective tool for liberation in the hands of the people. While candidate selection

is crucial, it is just one step in the ongoing journey that the ANC is taking alongside the people of South Africa.

President Ramaphosa made the following clarion call at the launch of the ANC 2024 Elections Manifesto:

"All leaders and public representatives, once elected, must be held accountable through the rigorous monitoring and evaluation system adopted by the NEC.

The ANC remains committed and resolute to pursue the transformation agenda in order to build a better life for all, leaving no one behind.

We will do so in a manner that will ensure that when we celebrate the centenary of the Freedom Charter in the next 30 years, the legacies of apartheid, colonialism and patriarchy which still loom so large in South Africa, will be a matter of history.

Our confidence rests on the fact that:

We've achieved the impossible together.

Our biggest victories we've won together.

Our deepest sorrows we've felt together.

Our biggest strides, we've made together.

The biggest odds, we've defied together.

And so today we can say with certainty:

We will do better, we will do more, and we will do it faster.

Together." ■

Open Letter to my Comrades

■ By **Hanief Ebrahim**

Allow me an opportunity to express outrage and opprobrium at the evident bias one encounters in our media, these days.

Who owns the narratives, the stories and the headlines about our 30-year history, in leading South Africa as the government of the day and the governing party, the ANC? Even more so, over the last 5-10 years?

If one reads the various SA media agencies i.e. Business Day, The Sunday Times, City Press, The Citizen, The Sowetan, The Daily Dispatch, The Star, Daily Maverick, M&G, Financial Mail - just about anything and everything else, our history is being written for us.

And, by and large, it is a slew of stories writ large with extreme rancor, vitriol and recrimination desperate to bury us – it’s actually quite startling if not deeply offensive!

And, it’s always only cast in one dimension: the ANC is corrupt, incompetent and must be removed from all and or any levers of power, at all costs whatsoever, “finish and klaar”.

The lens used, is always the recent past. More or less. Much like 7 October 2023 and 11 September 2001 are stripped of its



historical underpinnings. We are expected to focus on what happened over the last few years, not the past. The future must belong to those who claim the ANC must be buried.

Even if it means other political parties trudging off, in person or with letters, to the USA, Eastern Europe and Israel. No irony is noted in the use of such bizarre and bifurcated logic that serve

to undermine our democracy. No exhaustive analysis is done when the world’s biggest economy is called upon to punish us in the Global South-because we dared to challenge the hegemony of the empire. The deafening silence, posture and pandering to vested interests of Israel is rather nauseating.

It may mean too, setting up new “For Change” movements – us-

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ing truck-loads of money whose sources we can only surmise and taking people from the very belly of our movement, to lend a veneer of credibility to “alternatives”. A ceaseless quest to unseat us, if only in the “public eye”, in a macabre dance to influence the electorate.

As the government and the ANC, we should be left with absolutely no doubt that we are under concerted, vicious and unprecedented attack. This is so not just from the “opposition benches”. Again, if one reads the daily and weekly newspapers, it would appear that the strategy is a planned one which includes the media in concert with party political vested interests.

In the last few days, almost every negative story has a DA “shadow” person retorting with an alternative if not parallel narrative. Yesterday, for example, the Business Day ran with the following bold, front page headlines: “ANCs electoral support slides below 40%” - this off the back of a Brenthurst telephone survey of 1506 registered voters across SA. “Qualifications of Senior Managers a Mystery” – casting all manner of untested aspersions about Senior Managers in the public service. “Building sector confidence plummets to lowest levels since 2020” – Not unsurprising but fits the narrative being fed. “Cabal of cabbages has the skill to steal election”-Really? “Leaked list hints at cabinet shakeout” ... and so on and so forth.

Two days ago, the Sunday Times led with “How ANC chose its MPs: At least 10 criminally charged leaders won’t be candidates - but some implicated by Zondo will”. Followed by “Speaker’s arrest

looks imminent”; “Tsunami of water problems swamps Joburg”; “Sale of SAA “in jeopardy”” and “SOE’s track record ‘bodes ill for state bank’”. There was even an article “Magistrate courts cesspits of moral depravity” which was rebutted by Deputy Minister John Jeffery. But the damage was done, arguably!

Some other examples from today’s press: “Water, power near collapse”; “Jozi heads for catastrophe”, “Joburg staring down a barrel”; “ANC preoccupation with the past” (The Citizen). “Gordhans’ retirement-good ride-dance”; “Water crisis can turn into health disaster”; Zuma’s MK set to be kingmaker (The Star). “State is complicit in keeping women on the margins”; “Elections add further layer of risk to SAs schizophrenia” (Daily Dispatch). “ANC to blame for lack of restoration of conquered land (The Sowetan). “MK Party could rule KZN”; “Election is DA’s best chance in 30 years”; “Govt failure leaves schools bursting at the seams” (City Press).

And so the tyranny of the fifth estate continues unabatedly - pummeling and caricaturing the government and the ANC with jingoistic nonsense, obfuscating facts and planting provocative barbs.

I recently travelled far and wide across Gauteng over the past few days. One would swear we live in different countries? From Brakpan, Benoni and Delmas; Vereeniging, Sebokeng to Soweto, Ennerdale and Alexandra – life goes on - democracy is when we mete out the fairest treatment to the most underprivileged among us.

In Houghton, on Sunday, cadres were putting up an ANC Greater JHB marquee - out in the public eye doing what it is best at – engaging, connecting and touching communities with the messages wrapped in its Manifesto.

Admittedly, our ANC-led government taking Israel to the ICJ, and speaking out against their egregious genocidal conduct has rallied the forces against us. It matters not, to some, that we have a history of struggle against injustice, indignity and racism. We, as the ANC-led government, stand for international solidarity wherever oppression may occur. Think the people of Palestine, the people of Cuba and many others, across the globe. The deafening silence, posturing and pandering to vested interests, most notably by the developed North as it relates to Israel is rather sickening. But, history has no blind spots. Another truth is also possible.

If one looks at a bus, a big bus, when one stands behind it, another stands in front of it, others on the left side and the right side. Wherever you may stand, no one is seeing the same image? If you want to draw this bus, you will have to ask all the people from wherever they stand, to tell you what they have seen. If you ask one, we have one side of the bus, two, you have two sides. If you want the whole bus, you ask people from all the sides. That is the same with our ANC journey over the past 30 years.

We do have an alternative portrait of an ANC at work, an ANC in the midst of a fundamentally changing South African society an ANC making a difference. In every slide, there will be light, and of course shade. Criticism is

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welcome. But crying wolf at every turn becomes an absurdity in and of itself - a self-fulfilling prophecy. The problem with all this wolf crying is that when the wolf comes, no one is going to listen. I for one have already stopped listening. No one will listen once you set off the alarm bells for your own parochial gains.

In the towns that I visited, the lived experience is a transcendental and eye-opening one. "Seeing", as Berger noted, does come before words! "The child looks and recognizes before it can speak. But there is also another sense in which seeing comes before words. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relation between what we see and what we know is never settled".

We have been on a journey, striving together to achieve a new national democratic society. We were determined to cast off the tyranny of apartheid and built a democratic state based on the will of the people. We sought to transform the lives of millions of South Africans, providing the necessities of life and creating opportunities that never existed before. We have unlocked a diverse economy whose minerals, agricultural products and manufactured goods reach every corner of the world, while creating jobs in South Africa. We returned to the community of nations, rescinding the status of a pariah state earned during apartheid, extending a hand of peace and friendship to all countries and all peoples.

We cannot deny the progress South Africans have made over

the last 30 years, just as we should not serve only to diminish the severe challenges that we continue to face.

There were times of great difficulty, when the very essence of our constitutional democracy had been severely tested. Yet, we have triumphed on a journey that has not yet ended. It must not end. Not yet.

An essential bedrock of democracy is that we respect those elected to serve us. I have the sense that most parties and politicians do not necessarily support the view in the media that ANC politicians are self-serving, power hungry and only interested in doing whatever it takes to get re-elected.

It is for this reason that I found DIRCO Minister, Dr Naledi Pandor's cerebral utterances so profound erudite and pugnacious when she noted: "I challenge the notion that everyone in the ANC is corrupt"; "I have not stolen one penny of public money" and "Not all of us are corrupt - we have integrity". Indeed, a woman of unimpeachable personal integrity. Of course, this is not to say, there are not some bad apples, nor that in even some of the best politicians there are no flaws. We are human beings after all.

There are, however, ANC politicians, and most of us, who are in politics because we want to make our country a better place for those who live in it, in line with our constitutional values. You may disagree with this and hold us to account for our mistakes and failures but the current vogue of cynicism about the ANC is wholly destructive. I have a sweeping sense of history and hold a passionate belief in the importance of collective public action in sup-

port of our ideals as articulated in the Freedom Charter and encapsulated in our Constitution. I do not mind being constantly challenged and questioned – in a way it has helped me immensely as I serve and will continue to strive to implement the policies and objectives of the ANC.

Karl Marx is alleged to have said "Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it". That is my *raison d'être* - to be part of and affirm a counterintuitive truth that changes the South Africa I was born into and shape it to one that sets free everyone else. Wearing a blanket of duty to and for our people, for at the intersect of power and principle there is still space for the art of the possible.

I don't want a revolution stopped half-way. To underline the point made by one of our own, Cde Joel Netshitenze recently - in his view South Africa's economic trajectory is steadily changing. Changing for the better. It must be underpinned by South Africans acting together to intensify the reconstruction and recovery project.

Alas, just as objective social reality exists, not by chance, but as the product of human action, so it is not transformed by chance. Transforming our reality is an historical task, a task for us, as the ANC.

Let us do the right thing and come out in our numbers on 29 May 2024 ■

Power to the People!

Cde Hanief Ebrahim is ANC Jeanette Schoon Branch, Ward 87 & ANC VL Member

We should not condone political vandals

■ By **Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)**

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) appeals to all political parties and candidates to abide by the Electoral Act and other laws of the Republic in their excitement for the May 29 2024 elections.

Whilst it is understandable that parties and candidates are looking forward to election day, and some are just bored and many are simply desperate for a quick headline or click on social media, they do need to behave with some degree of sobriety and common sense. Those that struggle with this and who threaten to break the laws or instigate others to do so should be collected by the South African Police Service as well as receive the appropriate sanctions from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the Electoral Court.

With two and a half months of the elections season remaining, we have had to endure unacceptable behaviour from several political parties and their candidates. These range from the promises of a civil war by a candidate of the MK Party, to the repeated threats by the Economic Freedom Fighters against any teachers employed by the IEC to assist with the smooth running of the elections and more recently a somewhat strange letter by the Democratic Alliance appealing to various governments

from countries in the West with a history of flawed elections to help run South Africa's elections!

South Africa has many issues that need to be sorted out and many challenges that defy belief. It's natural for citizens to be cynical about everything in a democracy. However, these should not temper with reality. We have a proud track record painstakingly fought for over many decades prior to 1994 and collectively built and nourished since, of running free, fair and credible democratic elections with a high turnout.

The May 29th elections will be our 7th national and provincial elections, not counting the 6 local elections and countless by-elections. The IEC has an enviable record of running our elections without fear or favour that is recognised across the political spectrum, leave aside the little letter sent by the DA to some Embassies.

We have built a culture of political parties and voters accepting elections results, even when their preferred parties lose elections and power. The Inkatha Freedom Party accepted defeat in KwaZulu-Natal to the African National Congress (ANC) many times. The ANC itself accepted the loss of office in the Western Cape as well as major cities across the country without a moment's hesitation.



Elections come with the usual drama and silliness, but our aspirant public representatives should carry themselves with some dignity. They definitely should not dare to undermine the rule of law. The IEC, Electoral Court and the SAPS should not hesitate to rein in those political delinquents who are tempted to colour outside the lines, especially those that threaten violence.

Democracies are noisy, but we should not be condoning political vandals ■

Remembering the historic elections of 1994

■ By **Mac Maharaj**

Thirty years ago, on Thursday 10 March 1994, the Bantustan government of Lucas Mangope was panic stricken. His Ministers had fled the capital and Mangope had a helicopter ferry him to refuge at Motswedi where he was guarded by paratroopers.

In 48 days time South Africans were due to cast our votes on the basis of one person, one vote. For the first time in the history of our country black and white, male and female, workers and company bosses, farm labourers and farm owners, maids and madams were going to stand in the same queue, lining up to cast their votes as equals to build a non-racial, non sexist, united democratic SA.

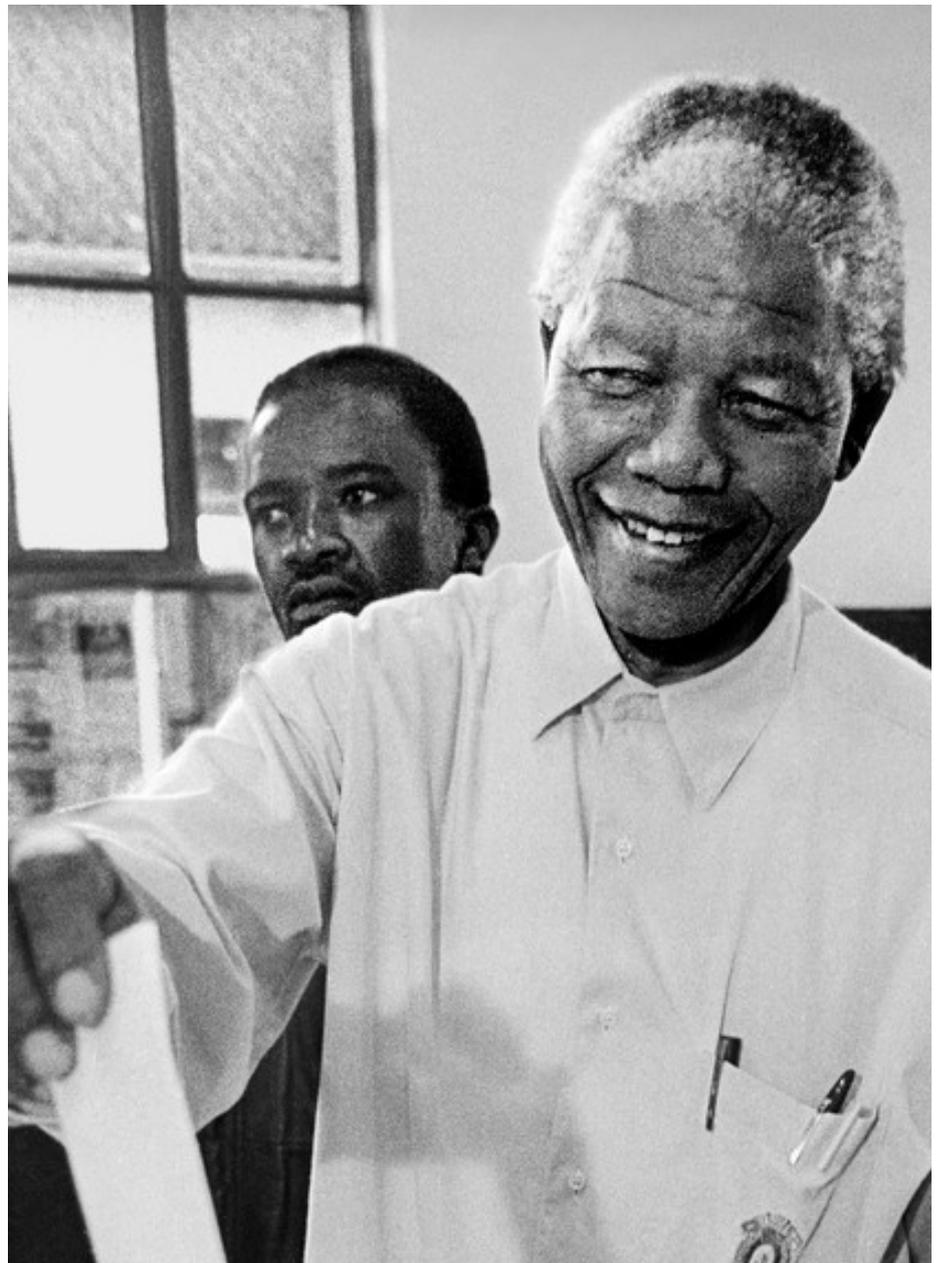
But there were those who were resisting the advent of democracy.

- On 17 June 1992 the Boipatong massacre took place.

- On 7 September 1992 the Ciskei forces killed 28 peaceful demonstrators at Bisho.

- On the 10 April 1993 our hero Chris Hani was murdered in cold blood.

- On 25 June 1993 the AWB and other right wing



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forces gathered under the banner of the AVF and stormed the World Trade Centre in a desperate effort to derail negotiations.

In October 1992, the white-right joined with representatives of the Bophuthatswana, Ciskei and KwaZulu bantustans to form the Concerned South Africans Group (COSAG). They had a common goal: a fragmented SA in which power and privileges accumulated under colonialism and apartheid would be entrenched.

The coming together of the white and black right-wing formations was a peculiar amalgam. Lucas Mangope, Chief Buthelezi and Oupa Gqozo, the heads of the three bantustans never set foot at Codesa and the Multi Party Negotiating Forum (MPNF). Their delegations were led by Rowan Cronje, Walter Felgate and Mickey Webb.

The IFP walked out of the MPNF

in June 1993, while Bop and Ciskei continued to participate until October 1993.

By the end of 1993 a pathway to democracy was agreed. Despite interventions to postpone the elections scheduled for 27 April 1994, the date remained cast in stone.

The Transitional Executive Council was established in January 1994 to ensure that the apartheid regime did not exploit the advantages it enjoyed whilst it remained in government as political parties fought electoral battles.

Formations of the white and black right-wing were blocking those living under their jurisdictions from participating in the elections. Voices were raised questioning the wisdom of proceeding to hold the elections on the 27th April 1994.

But the people on the ground held

a different view. Civil servants in Bop became anxious about their future. Mangope refused to hear them and continued to oppose their re-integration into a unified South Africa. The Crisis Committee called for a general strike. Mangope would not yield. The Bop police joined the strike and the Bop Defence Force under the command of Lt Colonel Jack Turner was deployed to maintain order. By the 9th of March the staff of the Bop Broadcasting Corporation joined the strike and students at the Mmabatho University began boycotting. Mangope called for outside help.

The AVF under Gen. Constand Viljoen responded to Mangope's appeal and forces mobilised under Col Jan Breytenbach mustered at the Mmabatho Air Force base, while the large contingents of the AWB paramilitary took positions near Mafikeng and Rooigrond. Both forces were there to help restore order, bolster Mangope's



power and help him resist taking part in the April elections.

The AWB paramilitary randomly killed civilians whose deaths we commemorate today. The predominantly black Bop Defence Force (BDF) saw the inability of their superiors to control the AWB gunmen, and mutinied against their white officers and forced the Afrikaner militias to retreat. The retreating AWB continued to shoot black citizens. The TV stations showed three members of the Afrikaner militia killed by a black policeman while they pleaded for their lives.

The SADF mustered forces in the precincts of the so-called SA Embassy in Mmabatho in readiness to help Mangope.

The Management Committee of the TEC intervened. Mandela insisted that FW de Klerk prevent the SADF from intervening to restore power back into the hands of Mangope. By 11 March Mangope was con-

finied to Motswedi. On Saturday 12 March the TEC Management Committee appointed Job Mokgoro and Tjaart van der Walt as joint administrators of Bophuthatswana.

The doors to democracy were forced open in Bop by men and women of all ages and all walks of life.

The lives we commemorate today are part of the price people paid in order to uphold the unity of our country, to save it from being dismembered into fiefdoms in the service of maintaining privileges and power accumulated under colonialism and apartheid.

In the wake of the collapse of Mangope's rule, Mickey Webb, the leader of Oupa Gqozo's delegation, faced with rising labour unrest in the Ciskei, tried to forestall the same fate for Gqozo. He appealed to the TEC for help to restore law and order. The TEC promptly obliged by removing Gqozo from

power and appointing Zam Titus as the administrator to govern Ciskei until the April election.

At the same time several events brought the IFP into the elections just four days before the 27 April. The IFP and the apartheid regime secretly connived to pass legislation establishing the Ingonyama Trust as a repository for the communal land in KwaZulu with His Majesty the King as the sole Trustee. At the same time talks, facilitated by Washington Okumu and business, brought the Inkatha Freedom Party back into South Africa's democratic elections of 1994. Thirdly, information reached the TEC that more than a 1000 men were secretly undergoing training at Mlaba Camp near Mkuze in Northern Natal. Their training was brought to a halt with a joint SADF/TEC raid on the Mlaba premises on 26 April 1994,

The pushback from the AVF began to fracture when the AWB stormed the World Trade Centre in June 1993. Gen. Tienie Groenewald, with the knowledge of Gen. Viljoen, set out on a mission to kidnap leaders of the ANC and the NP, secretly fly them to a venue provided by Savimbi in Angola, where they would be forced to renegotiate with the AVF. This military adventure was set in motion at a time when the AVF had already decided to take part in the elections. This attempted coup was only called off on 23 April 1994 as a result of a memorandum signed by Viljoen on behalf of the AVF and Thabo Mbeki for the ANC.

This is a broad brush picture of the machinations, threats, manoeuvres, coup plans and pitfalls that had to be overcome in order to ensure that free and fair nation-wide elections took place on 27 April 1994.

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All these machinations were thwarted because of the resolute and steadfast actions of the masses of the people. In commemorating those who gave up their lives, we honour also the people of Bop, including the civil servants, police and soldiers, the strikers and boycotters in Bop. They stood up for a united democratic SA.

We meet on the eve of the seventh general elections scheduled for the 29 May 2024.

There are many challenges the country faces today. Despite the progress we have made in changing the lives of the people, much more needs to be done to bring about the transformation that is envisioned in the 1996 Constitution of SA and championed by the ANC. And there is a pressing need for the ANC to cleanse and renew itself.

The key elements of this transformation are redress for the past, and the building of a society based on the principles of equality, non-racialism and non-sexism within the context of a growing economy founded on a people-centred participatory democracy.

The progress of the past 30 years is marred by mis-management, state capture and corruption, unacceptable levels of crime including gender based violence, as well as the problematic architecture of local government which is the coal face of service delivery.

These challenges have opened up spaces in our democracy for elements to derail the goals set out in SA's Constitution. Some seek to achieve this by clinging to the idea fragmenting our country under the guise of federalism and confederalism. Others using the cloak of traditionalism seek to promote

ethnicity as a means to subvert our democracy and return us to a country modelled on the bantustans.

This understanding of the past we come from should permeate the homage we pay to those who helped us achieve democracy.

In honouring them let us rededicate ourselves to addressing the challenges our country faces.

We were under no illusions when we created a constitutional democracy. Some said we had thereby achieved liberation. But Madiba in The Long Walk to Freedom reminded us that "that is not the case." He wrote that "the truth is that we are not yet free; we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed. We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road."

Whenever I find myself becoming despondent when I witness disputes and dissension leading to almost a state of paralysis within the ANC; when I begin to feel a sense of despair about whether it is fit for purpose as the organisational vehicle that will guide and lead the people to freedom, I remind myself of the advice Walter Sisulu often gave me in prison. The people, he said, were the makers of history. But in order to achieve freedom they needed an organisation capable of understanding their needs and able to channel and guide their energies towards that goal.

Throughout its existence the ANC has periodically been beset with huge internal challenges. That lies in the nature of the struggle for socio-economic-political development. In effect there are, he told me, two struggles. The one is the main struggle - the struggle for lib-

eration. Within it, there is another struggle - the struggle make the organisation fit for purpose.

After 1994 our challenge has been to use the democracy we won in order to achieve the socio-economic transformation essential to give meaning and content to freedom. And Madiba had the foresight to caution us that this is a "longer and more difficult" part of our journey to freedom.

Today we face not only the challenge to transform our country, but also the challenge to make our organisation fit for purpose, for that is what we mean when we say we need to renew the ANC.

On the current political landscape of our country there is no other formation other than the ANC that espouses the socio-economic transformation envisaged in our Constitution; that has that objective in its DNA. But without renewal the ANC will not be able to fulfill its mission.

Let us continue to fight for the renewal of the ANC. For the content of renewal involves rooting out corruption, developing a membership intimately linked to the people; a membership that ensures that everything we do is people-centred and committed to building a participatory democracy.

Let us cast our votes to forestall the efforts of those who want to take us backwards rather than forward to the transformation enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa ■

Green Gold: Sparking Growth in South Africa's Emerging Cannabis and Hemp Markets

■ By **Cde Faiez Jacobs**

In his State of the Nation Address (SONA) delivered on February 10, 2022, President Cyril Ramaphosa articulated the ANC led government's intention to formalize and expand the domestic cannabis industry. This move aims to capitalize on global demand and enhance local production and exports, directing a strategic pivot towards leveraging the cannabis sector as a key driver for economic growth and job creation.

This emphasis on the cannabis industry reflects the broader vision to address economic inequalities and generate employment opportunities, especially in light of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Cde President Ramaphosa's acknowledgment of cannabis's economic potential resonates with a commitment to innovation and economic reform, aiming to position South Africa at the forefront of the burgeoning global hemp market.



Recent passing of Cannabis for Private Purposes Bill, which we passed is seen as a step forward in decriminalizing cannabis for private use, aligning with the Constitutional Court's judgment. It aims to provide a legal framework

for private cannabis use, prevent unnecessary arrests, establish legal provisions for medical use, recognize religious practices, and balance decriminalization with regulation. We believe decriminalization will reduce criminal

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control, create jobs, and boost the economy through various commercial products derived from cannabis and hemp.

In a significant move toward embracing the economic potential of the cannabis and hemp industry, the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Small Business Development held a comprehensive briefing session on 7 March 2024. This session, which saw presentations from Hemp4Life and the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA), highlighted the burgeoning opportunities within this demand-driven sector, alongside the challenges small businesses face in accessing these prospects. The insights from this meeting underscore the importance of strategic, regulatory, and support frameworks to unlock the vast potential this industry holds for small businesses, thereby contributing to South Africa's broader economic development and social upliftment.

Opportunities Unveiled:

The cannabis and hemp industry is recognized for its extensive value chain, encompassing cultivation, processing, and manufacturing of various products. According to Hemp4Life, a pivotal distinction between cannabis and hemp lies in their economic valuation – with cannabis possessing immediate economic value in its raw form, whereas hemp demands processing to extract valuable products such as CBD crude oil or isolate. This differentiation underlines the diverse opportunities within the sector, from high-value medicinal cannabis to industrial hemp applications in textiles, construction, and health products. The demand-driven nature of this industry, as outlined by SAHPRA, points to a burgeoning market with significant growth

prospects for entrepreneurs and small businesses willing to navigate its complexities.

Challenges to Overcome:

Despite the promising outlook, small businesses face substantial barriers. Key among these is the challenge of securing funding from both private and government entities, a hurdle that Hemp4Life emphasized during the briefing. The Committee also noted that of the 107 successful SAHPRA licence holders only 7 was Black and was concerned that the current regulatory landscape, which is tailored more towards large enterprises, stifles the entry and growth of small-scale operators. We want the Cannabis industry to favour Black, Small Community and Cooperative drive enterprises not Multi-National companies and existing cartels. SAHPRA's acknowledgment of these issues, including the need for legislative amendments to foster a more inclusive environment, highlights the critical role of policy in leveling the playing field.

Detailed Challenges and Addressing Strategies:

- **Complex Regulatory Environment:** Navigating the licensing and regulatory requirements remains a significant hurdle. A simplified and transparent licensing process, with clear guidelines and support services for applicants, would greatly benefit small entrepreneurs.
- **Access to Finance:** The reluctance of traditional financial institutions to fund cannabis-related businesses due to legal ambiguities and perceived risks is a significant barrier. Establishing dedicated funding schemes, such as grants or low-interest loans

tailored for this sector, could alleviate this challenge.

- **Market Access and Competition:** The dominance of large corporations in the market restricts small businesses' growth. Implementing policies that prioritize small-scale farmers and businesses in government procurement, along with facilitating access to export markets, would provide much-needed support.

Empowering Small Businesses:

To translate these recommendations into tangible outcomes for small businesses, a multi-faceted approach is required. This includes providing targeted financial support and incentives, facilitating access to markets, and offering technical assistance to navigate the regulatory landscape. Moreover, fostering partnerships between government, private sector, and academia can spur innovation and ensure that small businesses are well-equipped to compete and thrive in this industry.

Let's Expand Opportunities for Small Businesses by:

- **Innovation in Product Development:** Beyond CBD oil and textiles, there's potential in exploring innovative applications of hemp in biofuels, biodegradable plastics, and health supplements. Small businesses can leverage local biodiversity and indigenous knowledge to create unique products for both local and international markets.
- **Agro-tourism and Education:** With the growing global interest in cannabis and hemp, there is an opportunity to develop agro-tourism ventures, offering educational tours, workshops, and experiential visits to farms and processing

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facilities. This not only diversifies income streams but also plays a role in destigmatizing the industry.

- **Technology and Agri-tech Solutions:** Small enterprises can also focus on developing technological solutions for the industry, including precision farming tools, blockchain for traceability, and platforms for market access and regulatory compliance.

Strategic Recommendations:

To address these challenges and unlock the industry's full potential for small businesses, SAHPRA and stakeholders have proposed a series of strategic actions. These include amending schedules to allow the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development to regulate the cultivation of cannabis for various purposes while ensuring SAHPRA oversees its cultivation for medicinal use. Such regulatory adjustments would not only streamline the licensing process but also broaden the scope for small businesses to engage in different segments of the value chain.

As the Committee Chairperson, I emphasized the necessity to destigmatize the use of cannabis and hemp, reflecting on the progressive legislative frameworks already established by the government and the Constitutional Court. This call to action is pivotal in shifting public perception and creating a supportive ecosystem for entrepreneurs in this space. It is estimated that tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of South Africans may have been affected by criminal records for cannabis possession over the years. The scope of the problem has been significant, impacting many lives through criminal re-

ords that affect employment, education, and social standing. The recent legal changes, including the Cannabis for Private Purposes Bill and its provision for expunging criminal records related to cannabis possession or use, indicate an effort to mitigate these impacts. The bill's adoption and its focus on privacy rights and protection against the harms of cannabis use reflect a shift towards a more progressive approach to cannabis legislation in South Africa

Additional Strategic Recommendations for Empowerment:

- **Education and Capacity Building:** Initiatives to educate potential entrepreneurs about the industry's legal aspects, business opportunities, and sustainability practices are crucial. Partnership with academic institutions to offer training programs and workshops can enhance skills and knowledge in the sector.
- **Infrastructure Support:** Developing shared processing facilities and innovation hubs can reduce operational costs for small businesses and encourage collaborative efforts in product development, research, and marketing.
- **Policy Reform and Advocacy:** Active engagement with policymakers to advocate for reforms that benefit small businesses is vital. This includes lobbying for the amendment of restrictive laws, advocating for tax incentives, and ensuring small businesses have a voice in policy discussions.

Conclusion:

By addressing these challenges with strategic actions and supporting the growth of small businesses in the cannabis and hemp industry, South Africa can unlock a significant economic opportu-

nity that promotes entrepreneurship, job creation, and innovation. This industry holds the promise not just for economic gain but for contributing to sustainable development goals, including enhancing agricultural diversity, promoting environmental sustainability, and improving health outcomes through alternative medicines. It's a pivotal moment for stakeholders across the board to collaborate and ensure that the potential of this green gold is fully realized for the benefit of all South Africans, especially those venturing as small business owners into this new frontier.

The briefing by Hemp4Life and SAHPRA marks a critical juncture in South Africa's journey to harness the economic and social benefits of the cannabis and hemp industry. By addressing the highlighted challenges and implementing the recommended strategic actions, there lies a promising pathway to empower small businesses, stimulate job creation, and drive inclusive economic growth. As the Portfolio Committee on Small Business Development advocates for these changes, the vision of a thriving, equitable, and sustainable cannabis and hemp industry in South Africa becomes ever more attainable. The collective efforts of all stakeholders are essential to realize this vision, ensuring that the benefits of this green gold are accessible to all South Africans, particularly those in the small business sector, who stand to gain the most from its growth and development ■

By Cde Faiez Jacobs, ANC MP and Chair of Portfolio Committee for Small Business Development, Former ANC WC Provincial Secretary

Ukhongolose policies remain at the centre of political discourse

Parties generally agree on issues facing SA; the difference is how they see these being addressed.

■ By **Yacoob Abba Omar**

A review of the political party manifestos for the May elections shows that the umlungu vs ukhngolose divide continues to characterise SA.

As I have indicated before, Nelson Mandela University-based linguist Andiswa Mvanyashe explains that the word umlungu “can refer to an employer, a black person of a certain ethnicity with a lighter skin colour, someone of higher standing, a wealthy person — or simply a white person”. Preserving the socioeconomic status quo, and in some cases getting nostalgic for the privileges of the past, is its default position.

Ukhongolose, a colloquial term to refer to the ANC and its traditions, depicts politics that has its roots in the struggle against apartheid and has an agenda to continually transform society from the vestiges of the past to one where a non-racial, non-sexist, unitary

constitutional democracy prevails.

By and large the political parties agree that among the burning issues facing the country are creating employment and lifting South Africans out of poverty; reducing inequality, crime and corruption; and improving service delivery, infrastructure, education, health-care and housing. The difference is how the parties see these being addressed.

The ANC’s slogan, “Let’s do more, together” emphasises the all-of-society and national unity approach that has been the hallmark of the ukhngolose tradition, while the DA’s “Ready to rescue SA” smacks of the paternalism of umlungu. Its right-wing alliance partner, the FF+, is trying to mobilise its base around “Restore and Rebuild”, a not-too-subtle call to return to the “good ol’ days” of apartheid.

Interestingly, there is broad consensus on the need to maintain the social net until SA gets onto a job creation trajectory. This is indicative of universal acceptance of the ukhngolose position on the need to maintain the social grants to ensure that the majority of our people do not sink into absolute poverty.

The ANC’s manifesto emphasises its intent to maintain the social security net as a step towards a basic income grant. This net includes prioritising food security, maintaining and expanding subsidised basic services, strengthening health services, promoting cheaper and subsidised solar power, regulating rental prices for student accommodation, and ensuring the national minimum wage increases in line with inflation.

Rise Mzansi, which remains avowedly rooted in the ukhngolose tradition, states in its man-

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ifesto under “Individual, Family and Community Well-being” that it will tackle hunger and ensure food security and affordable basic services, while tackling substance abuse and drugs.

Notwithstanding the misogynistic, homophobic, xenophobic and violence-threatening rhetoric of the MK party leadership, its modulated manifesto also commits the party to “transformative change across all sectors of SA society” by laying down “a clear path towards a more equitable, secure and prosperous future for all South Africans”.

At the extreme end is the EFF’s populist manifesto, which can be summed up in three words: “nationalise”, “double” and “scrap”.

Its seven pillars and priorities call for the expropriation of land and the nationalisation of mines and banks without compensation. It commits to doubling social grants and the scrapping of student and electricity debt.

Notwithstanding the DA’s free market orientation, it has also realised that it needs to address the penury millions of its non-supporters face. Its manifesto commits it to lift 6-million people out of poverty and support some form of social grants. Its ideological fellow traveller, ActionSA, does not hide behind the DA’s niceties, pushing extreme free market positions while claiming to support “economic empowerment of black South Africans”, despite being critical of the government’s BEE policies. It also

commits to support some form of social grants.

At the extreme end of the umlungu spectrum, the FF+ emphasises the “restore” message, with its manifesto speaking of preserving groups in the name of self-determination and independence of communities. Clearly its ideal would be many more privileged Oranias across the country.

Eleven weeks to go: enough time to read the manifestos, compare them against the party leaders’ speeches and actions, and make up your mind which party is placing the needs of all South Africans first.

• **Abba Omar** is director of operations at the Mapungubwe

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”

...AND YET GENOCIDE ON INNOCENT CIVILIANS IN GAZA CONTINUES

■ By **Sephoka David Sekgobela**

The biblical “*Great Commandment*” or “*the Golden Rule*” in Luke 6:31 and Matthew 7:12 stipulates that, “*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*”.

The Israel-Palestinian conflict raises many issues, and there seems to be more questions than answers. If the annihilation of the Jews by Adolf Hitler and the Nazi’s was not good, what makes the ongoing genocidal acts of the Israeli apartheid regime against the innocent Palestinian civilians, mainly women and children more tolerable? Are Jewish lives more important than those of the others, including the Palestinians? Is mass murder acceptable only whilst committed by the Jews against the other nations? How?

South Africa reported Israel to



the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague, Netherlands, for committing acts of genocide against innocent civilians, mainly women and children in Gaza. The hearings took place on 11 -12 January 2024. Both parties put their respective matters before the ICJ,

with Israel frantically trying to defend itself against the maiming and killing of innocent Palestinians, mainly women and children. There were initially suggestions that South Africa did not have *locus standi* in the matter, and allegations of double standards, be-

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cause South Africa did not make similar intervention in the Russia-Ukrainian conflict. There were all sorts of insults and accusations by Israel and its sympathisers, including in South Africa, for South Africa allegedly “*aiding and abetting a terrorist organisation*”. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies used unsavoury terms against the government to describe their position.

The ICJ ruled in favour of South Africa, as expected. In summary, the ICJ ruled, *inter alia*, as follows:

1. South Africa has *locus standi* to bring the application to the ICJ.
2. Some of the Israeli actions indeed amount to genocidal acts.
3. The court could impose its own provisional measures and need not be identical to those requested.

Without making use of the phrase “*immediate ceasefire*”, as anticipated, the provisional measures ordered, which had the same effects, were as follows:

1. Israel must prevent all conditions in Article 2 of the Genoc-

cide Act, i.e. not to commit any further acts of genocide.

2. Israel must ensure none of the aforementioned acts of genocide occur.
3. Israel must ensure sufficient aid is available to the besieged Palestinians.
4. Israel must take urgent measures to ensure the improvement of the conditions of life in the occupied territories.
5. Israel must give report to the ICJ within a month as to what it has done, and South Africa would then be allowed to engage the court as to the contents of the said report.

However, the crucial question that many people asked immediately thereafter was whether Israel would implement those measures proposed by the ICJ, and what would be the effect of the ICJ ruling on Israel’s staunch supporters, particularly the US, UK, Canada, and many other western countries. Would it be wrong to suggest that those countries like the US who have been arming the Israeli government to commit genocidal attacks against innocent civilians in Gaza should also be hauled be-

fore the ICJ for aiding and abetting the apartheid Israeli government? Why shouldn’t they?

Despite the ICJ ruling for immediate cessation of hostilities and preservation of human lives, Israel has instead intensified attacks on the Palestinians, with the Israeli Prime Minister openly defying the ICJ. Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has initially vowed not to respect any ruling against Israel, and thus exactly what he is doing. Everyone is now waiting to see what the UN would do to ensure that those provisional orders were implemented.

The Israeli atrocities are continuing unabated, and all in the name of self-defence. Horrific attacks on women and children, the elderly, and people with disabilities at the so-called safe places and hospitals, are going on unabated. One tends to ask oneself what kind of people are these Israelis who could carry out those inhumane attacks against other human beings. One is further inclined to question the psyche of anyone who supports and/or sympathizes with them, for any reason whatsoever, in committing such heinous crimes.

Without trivializing the Jewish holocaust, isn’t what the Israelis are doing to the Palestinians exactly what Hitler and/or the Nazi’s was doing to the Jews before WWII? The Nazi’s are alleged to have used genocide to eliminate the Jews, and that was deemed not acceptable by the international community, but the same or even worse atrocities against the Palestinians are today widely accepted by the Israeli Jews and their sympathizers. Isn’t that ironic that what is good for the Israelis, namely the right to life, is not good for the Palestinians, which

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the Israelis are describing as human animals and sub-humans? In other words, what is good for the goose is not supposed to be good for the gander as well.

Against the backdrop of what Hitler did to the Jews, perhaps this would be the right time to get clarity as to what actually happened in the so-called Jewish holocaust. We are being told that Hitler simply hated the Jews, but are not being told why. What actually drove Hitler and/or the Nazi's to try to wipe out the Jews from the face of the earth? What is it that Hitler and/or the Nazi's saw in trying to exterminate the Jews that many people could not see, until today? What the Israeli Prime Minister and his cohorts do not realize is that, what they are doing to the Palestinians today, is exactly what Hitler did to their forebears in the so-called Jewish holocaust.

There are those who are earnestly starting to question what prompted Hitler to commit acts of genocide against the Jews. However, for fear of generalization and stereotyping, there is a need to identify who are problematic people within the Jewish community, because a pump-gun approach will not be fair. There is a need to differentiate between Zionists, and Jews in general. *"Zionism is a political ideology. Judaism is a religion. Most Zionists in the world are not Jews. Sadly, most Israeli settlers are Zionists. They believe all of Palestine, including the Zionist Settler State of Israel, is the National Home of the Jews. They support Netanyahu in this War on Gaza, Westbank, and Lebanon".* We cannot use the same brush to paint all Jews, or, people of Jewish origin.

What is perplexing is that the Palestinian genocide is perpetrated



by the offsprings of the survivors of the 1940s holocaust. One would expect that, as people who know and understand the pain that Hitler inflicted on them, the Jews would be sympathetic towards the plight of the innocent Palestinian women and children whose respective husbands and fathers are being annihilated. Some of the parents are crying for their children, whilst some children are also crying for their deceased parents. There are genuine and justifiable reasons for anyone not to be empathetic to the so-called Jewish holocaust victims, including the survivors and their descendants thereof.

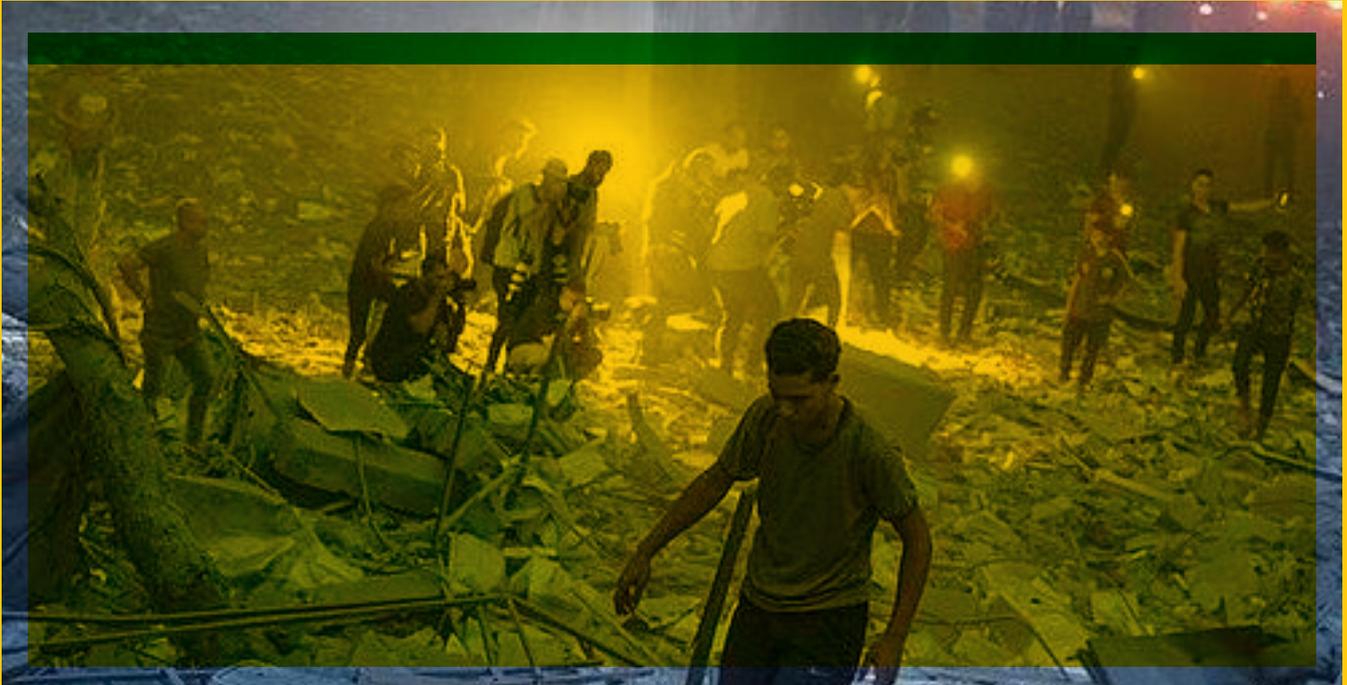
Victory for South Africa at the ICJ does not come without consequences, and it would have been naive to assume that there would not be any backlash from Israel and its supporters. There have been debates about what could be the actual socio-economic implications of the ruling for South Africa. South Africa did the right thing with the ICJ case, and it is strange that it should be punished for doing the right thing. Whoever

feels the need to punish South Africa for standing up against genocidal attacks on the innocent civilians in Gaza, is welcome to take his investment elsewhere.

It is about time that, more than ever before, South African government be actively involved in strengthening its international geopolitical and socio-economic relations with the like-minded nations across the globe. The politics of alignment have started in earnest. South Africa's membership of BRICS is crucial more than ever before. The BRICS Summit in South Africa in August 2023 saw BRICS accepting new additional member countries, including members from the OPEC countries. We need to strengthen the relationship with BRICS member countries in all respects - economically, militarily, and otherwise, in anticipation of the likelihood of economic sanctions against South Africa by the western countries, including the US. South Africa needs to look at the bigger picture like countering the inevitable economic sanctions from Israel and its allies ■

Genocide John

■ By **Hassen Lorgat**



*ohnny, Johnny you can't hide
 You're supporting the
 genocide
 D.A. D.A. you can't hide
 You're enabling the genocide*

*Neutral John then speaks
 to the over 30 thousand Gazan
 martyrs
 and the global solidarity
 movements saying:
 "One man's genocide
 Is another man's freedom
 fighting"*

*Oh, Mother Sumud,
 Did you hear that?*

*Oh, Valiant Mother of
 Palestine
 Do not cry*

*Do not cry for your deserted
 children
 because Genocide John refuses
 to see the truth*

*Even when it's written
 in the same red blood of all
 humans*

*"We don't pro-Israel or
 Palestine
 We're pro-peace"
 He whispers in the soft
 seductive voice,
 that so pleases his masters*

*But at least we heard him
 speak words
 that are hidden from their
 election manifesto
 words that will forever be
 etched deep in our minds:
 White upon black*

*Whilst Johnny flies the flag of
 neutrality
 the wisdom of the Arch
 from the heavenly skies rains
 upon his lost flock:*

*Dear John
 ... If you are neutral in
 situations of injustice,
 you have chosen the side of
 the oppressor.*

*If an elephant has its foot on
 the tail of a mouse,
 and you say that you are
 neutral,
 the mouse will not appreciate
 your neutrality.*

*It is your Western duplicity
 that drives our struggles
 to reclaim our full humanity
 it's a shame that you can't
 deny
 You're complicit in the Gaza
 genocide*

*Johnny, Johnny, you can't hide
 You're supporting a genocide
 D.A. D.A. you can't hide
 The Democratic Alliance
 supports the Genocide*

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

16 - 22 March 2022

Source: SA History Online, O'Malley Archives and The Africa Factbook

■ 16 March 1892

Dr JS Moroka born



Dr James Sebe Moroka, medical doctor, landowner and politician who was elected president-general of the African National Congress (ANC) from 1949 to 1952, was born in Thaba Nchu, Orange Free State. He was the great grandson of Chief Moroka I of the Barolong Boo Moroka at Thaba Nchu.

■ 16 March 1972

Film maker Shriley Frimpong Manso born

The award-winning film director and producer was born in Kwahu Ghana. Redefining women's roles in her films, she described her work and efforts to promote other African filmmakers through her on-line streaming Sparrow Station, as 'seeking to raise the standard of film production in Ghana and Africa by telling progressive African stories as seen through eyes of Africans.'

■ 16 March 1984

SA and Mozambique sign Nkomati Accord

Mozambique signed the Nkomati Accord with apartheid South Africa, a non-aggression pact where the South African government undertook no longer to support the RENAMO rebel group and the Mozambique government undertook to no longer provide refuge to the liberation movements (ANC and PAC). President Samora Machel signed this accord under great pressure, with RENAMO engaged in a civil war and the SADF incursions into Mozambique. The Nkomati accord did not last long, with further invasions by SADF.

■ 16 March 1994

New Flag and National Anthem Unveiled



The Transitional Executive Council unveiled South Africa's new "interim" national flag and Die Stem and Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika as joint national anthems, and the flag was first flown on 27 April 1994, when

all South Africans went to the polls to elect a government, for the first time in the country's history. The flag and anthem were adopted as national symbols.

■ 17 March 1820

British Settlers arrive in South Africa



After the Napoleonic wars, Britain experienced a serious unemployment problem; to solve this problem, it started sending settlers to its colonies. The first British Settlers arrived in South Africa on 17 March 1820, in Table Bay on board the Nautilus and the Chapman till then a Dutch colony, and started the process of the British takeover of South Africa, especially the Cape colony and Natal. This first group were sent to Algoa Bay, later Port Elizabeth and now Qerbeha. They were sent to settle in the Eastern Cape, as a buffer against the amaXhosa and to boost the English-speaking population. The settlers were given farms and equipment to support them, near Bathurst. Others continued on to Natal (now KwaZulu Natal). This

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

period saw one of the largest stages of British settlement in Africa, and approximately 4,000 Settlers arrived in the Cape, in around 60 different parties, between April and June 1820.

■ 17 March 1905

Einstein completes his Quantum theory of light paper

Albert Einstein, one of the most influential physicists, finishes his scientific paper detailing his Quantum Theory of Light, one of the foundations of modern physics. It explained that light is a “composition of small packets of energy called photons, with wave-like properties.”

■ 17 March 1932

Archeologist Patricia Vinnicombe born

Vinnicombe was born in the Cape Province, and was fascinated by the ancient rock arts. In 1958, she catalogue all the rock art in the Drakensberg Mountains. She published a book on this topic, *People of the Eland* in 1978.

■ 17 March 1992

Whites-only referendum vote Yes for end to Apartheid

On this day in 1992, nearly 69 percent of white South African voters backed FW De Klerk’s - which included the repeal of racially discriminatory laws - and effectively endorsed the dismantling of apartheid.

■ 17 March 2000

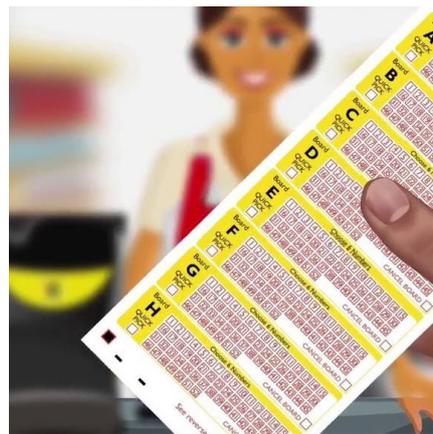
Fire at Dooms day Cult headquarters in Uganda led to discovery of bodies

A fire broke out at the headquarters of the doomsday cult Move-

ment for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God in Kanungu, Uganda, when their church was burned, in what was alternately called a mass suicide or a homicide perpetrated by the movement’s leaders. Following this incident, in which more than 300 people were killed, including 78 children, mass graves in various locations were discovered, containing the remains of people believed to be murdered (most of them stabbed). This raised the death toll to 780 and possibly more, the largest such incident in recent history at that time. The MRTCG was an ultra-conservative Catholic group, registered in Uganda in 1994 and started a boarding school in 1998, which was deregistered because it was in conflict with the country’s constitution. They predicted that the end of the world will be on 17 March 2000, and when this did not happen, the mass suicide, homicide took place.

■ 17 March 2000

First National Lottery begins



The first national lottery started in South Africa, with its slogan *Thatha maChance, Thatha maMillions*. A percentage of proceeds of the Lottery goes towards arts, sports, culture and community development, and it is regulated by the National Lottery Commission.

■ 17 March 2008

Lagos Bus Rapid Transportation system

The first section of Lagos Bus Rapid Transportation System (Lagos BRT) begins operation, with dedicated lanes for buses. It offers high capacity rapid transit services but on dedicated lanes or city streets. Lagos has around 9 million daily commuters, by 2022 the fleet of BRT buses had a daily ridership of over 200,000 passengers.

■ 17 March 2021

President Magufuli passed on

Tanzania’s government announced the passing of President John Magufuli of heart complications on this day, at a hospital in Dar es Salaam. The announcement was made by his Deputy Samia Suluhu Hassan, who went on to become President. Magufuli was mourned by Tanzanians across the country, known during his tenure for roaming the country to meet his constituents and demanding on-the-spot solutions. He initiated mega infrastructure projects, like the multinational Standard Gauge Railway, to ease the transfer of goods between the port of Dar es Salaam and the city of Kigali in Rwanda, and subsequently to the Burundian capital, Bujumbura, and Goma in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Tanzanian government is currently developing its part of the railway, starting from the Dar es Salaam – Isaka – Mwanza section. Magufuli also expanded major highways, linking Tanzanian cities and connecting neighbouring countries.

■ 18 March 1950

University of Free State founded

The University of the Free State was founded on 18 March 1950. The institution began as a small college in

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

what was then the Orange River Colony, called the Grey College School in 1904. By 1907, the college had 29 students and ten lecturers and in 1910 the college was declared an official educational institution in Arts and Sciences. In 2001, the University was renamed the University of the Free States. Today the University boasts over 30 000 students in seven faculties and a satellite campus in QwaQwa.

■ 18 March 1963

Guinea-Bissau gains Independence



Guinea-Bissau, the home of Amílcar Cabral, launched its war of independence against Portugal (joined by Cabo Verde). Guinea-Bissau is in west Africa, and borders Senegal and Guinea, with a population of just under 2 million people. Historically the territory was part of the Kaaba/Ngabou Empire (1537–1867), until being colonized by the Portuguese from the 16th century. Cabral and others formed the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC), which conducted an armed liberation struggle against colonialization.

■ 18 March 1965

Yvonne Chaka Chaka born

Chaka Chaka, ‘Princess of Africa’, singer, songwriter, entrepreneur, humanitarian and teacher was born in Dobsonville, Soweto on this day.

Her 1988 hit, Umqombothi parachuted her to fame across the continent, in a music career that spans over 35 years.

■ 18 March 1979

Government claims responsibility for Mdluli’s death in detention

The South African government admitted responsibility for the death of ANC member, Joseph Mdluli (50), on 19 March 1976, and paid a measly R28,616 in damages to his widow. Mdluli died of an injury to his neck while being detained in Durban security headquarters, a day after his arrest in connection with the 1976 Gwala treason trial. Four security policemen were charged with culpable homicide, namely Mr Frederick Van Zyl, Col. A.R.C. Taylor, Mr Mandlakayise Patrick Makhanya and Mr Zabulon Ngobese. During their trial they claimed that Mdluli had tried to escape and had fallen over a chair. A pathologist presented evidence disputing the police version. All four accused were acquitted on 25 October 1976, the fifth day of the trial. The presiding judge said there was insufficient evidence to connect them directly to the death and called for further investigation.

■ 19 March 1983

Comedian Akite Agnes born

Akite became popular for her ‘observational humour’ of daily Ugandan live, mainly doing stand-up comedy but also acting on TV from 2008. She was born on this day in Kampala and educated

■ 19 March 1998

First black cricketer to represent SA in a test match

Makhaya Ntini becomes the first black cricketer to represent South

Africa in a test match, played at Newlands, Cape Town.

■ 19 March 1999

Gadaffi sets date to hand over Lockerby suspects



Libya, led by Brother Leader Gaddafi sets a date to hand over the two Lockerbie suspects, in a letter to the UN Secretary General by 6 April 1999. The date is confirmed in a letter to the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan. This followed engagements on the issue by President Nelson Mandela.

■ 20 March 1602

Dutch East India Company formed

The United East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, VOC) was a chartered company established on 20 March 1602 by the Netherlands. Chartered companies were given exclusive rights to trade and colonized on behalf of their governments. It amalgamated different Dutch companies into the first joint-stock company in the world, granting it a 21 year monopoly to carry out activities in Dutch colonies in Asia. Statistically, the VOC eclipsed all of its rivals in the Asia trade. Between 1602 and 1796 the VOC sent almost a million Europeans to work in the Asia trade on 4,785 ships. Much of its profits was based on the colonies it established and slave labour.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

■ 20 March 1953

First Mountain Zebra born in Cradock Mountain Zebra Park

The Mountain Zebra is an endangered species native to South West-ern Angola, Namibia, and South Africa. It is boldly striped in black and white or brown and white with a white underbelly and no two individuals look alike. Due to overhunting, the Mountain Zebra population came close to extinction, with only 100 remaining in the 1930s. The Mountain Zebra Park near Cradock, Eastern Cape was established, and on 20 March 1953 the first foal was born. This success has continued until today with the Mountain Zebra population now standing at 9 000 mature individuals, though it is still regarded as an endangered animal.

■ 20 March 1960

The Pondoland Revolts starts

The Pondo people fiercely resisted the rise of the colonisers and their attempts to reshape and re-engineer Pondoland and to co-opt their Chiefs. Violence erupted around issues such as Chiefs who collaborated with the Apartheid state, the land reclamation programme, the Bantu Authorities system and spontaneous revolts against further imposition into the Pondo people's life. The specific protests which started in the district of Bizana arose from the rejection of the tribal authorities and self-government of Transkei, initiated by the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951. Between August and October 1961, 30 Pondo people were sentenced to death for their participation in the revolt. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) heard details of these events and decided that the remains of the twenty-three men that had been executed in Pretoria and buried in a Mamelodi cemetery, were to be ex-

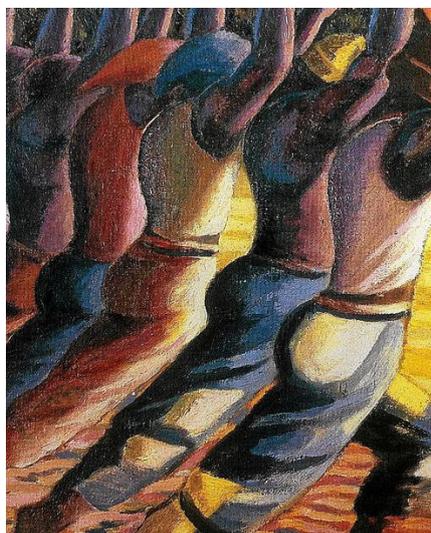
humed and returned to Pondoland for reburial. Govan Mbeki wrote a book about these events, *The Peasants Revolt* (1964).

■ 20 March 1988

Battle of Afabet

A battle that started on 17 March 1988 in war between Ethiopian and the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Army, the Nerdaw Command of the Derg is destroyed, with over 8,000 Ethiopian soldiers killed, more captured and the Command when surrounded, forced to burn their tanks and munitions. Historian Basil Davidson described the Battle of Afabet as the "most significant victory for any liberation movement since the Vietnamese victory at Dien Bien Phu."

■ 20 March 1993

Passing of renowned artist Gerald Sekoto


On this day, eminent artist and musician Gerard Sekoto (80) died in Paris. He was the pioneer of urban black art and social realism, and his paintings today rank amongst the top ten most expensive works of art in the country. Sekoto was also an accomplished pianist and composer of over 29 songs. Historian Basil Davidson likened the battle to the

■ 19-20 March 2003

Invasion of Iraq by USA, again

The United States invade Iraq, by air on 19 March 2003 and land on 20 March 2003, assisted by the United Kingdom, Australia, and Poland. The invasion saw the overthrow of the Iraqi regime led by Saddam Hussain and the Ba'ath Party, with the party banned in the aftermath of the invasion. The US claimed the intention of the invasion was to "disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, to end Saddam Hussein's support for terrorism, and to free the Iraqi people". The Iraq War, which was termed illegal by then UN Secretary, Kofi Annan, caused hundreds of thousands of Iraqi deaths and lasted from 2003-2011, with the public execution of Saddam Hussain in 2006. The war also saw the destruction of infrastructure in Iraq, and widespread looting of the country's rich cultural heritage.

■ 21 March 1903

JB Marks born


John Beaver (JB) Marks, teacher, trade unionist and political activist was born in Ventersdorp, Transvaal (now North West Province) on 21 March 1903. He was the seventh child of an African railway worker, John Thelelwa Marks, and Betty Esau, who was of White descent. He

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

joined the ANC and became president of its Transvaal branch. In 1928 he was recruited to the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) by Brian Bunting, was elected to its Central Committee in 1932, and eventually became its Chairperson. He was also active in the labour movement, elected as President of the African Mineworkers Union in 1942. JB Marks was one of the leaders of the Defiance campaign, was banned under the Suppression of Communism Act, listed as a co-conspirator in the Rivonia trial and asked by the ANC NEC to leave to help establish the movement in exile, where he served as ANC Treasurer General. He died on 1 August 1972 after a severe illness, and was buried in Russia. His remains were repatriated and reburied in 2015.

■ 21 March 1961

Sharpeville and Uitenhage Massacres



During peaceful anti-pass law protests, organised by the PAC, protesters were gunned down by the apartheid government in Sharpeville, with 69 people killed. The massacre became a tipping point in South African history, and in the aftermath liberation movements launched armed struggle.

■ 21 March 1975

Inkatha National Cultural Liberation Movement formed

The Inkatha National Cultural Liberation Movement was founded on 21 March 1975 at KwaNzimele, in Northern Kwa-Zulu. Inkatha emerged, along with the Black Consciousness Movement, to fill the vacuum in Black politics caused by the banning of the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). It was the precursor to the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP).

■ 21 March 1985

Funeral goes shot on 25th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre



On this day, residents from Uitenhage attended a funeral of one of six residence killed by apartheid police the week before. On the way from the graveyard to the house of the resident in Langa, the police blocked attendees with armoured vehicles and opened fire, killing 35 people and injuring 27 others. Ironically, this day was also the 25th commemoration of the Sharpeville massacre.

■ 21 March 1990

Namibia achieves independence from South Africa



After decades of a liberation struggle led by SWAPO, Namibia gains independence. UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar swears in Sam Nujoma as first President, in the capital Windhoek.

■ 21 March 1996

SA Human Rights Commission sworn in



Parliament established the Human Rights Commission to promote and protect human rights. It is empowered to investigate violations and advise government on implementation of human rights. On 21 March 1996, Human rights day, members of the Human Rights Commission were sworn in. Dr. Barney Pitso was its Chairman and Ms Shirley Mabusela deputy chairperson. Other members of this first SAHRC include Dr. Max Coleman, Rhoda Kadalie, Helen Suzman, Brigalia Bam, Adv C De Jager, Anne Routier.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

■ 22 March 1945

Arab League formed

The Arab League was formed by Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Yemen, with the objectives to promote economic growth in the region, resolve disputes between members, and coordinate political aims. The Arab League formed a common market in 1965, and by 1999 Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, Syria, and Yemen were members; the dream of a full common market was never reached, but over time reduced customs duties and taxes amongst member countries. The 22 Members states of the Arab League as of 2018 are Algeria, Bahrain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

■ 22 March 1960

Nonkululeko Nyembezi born

The prominent engineer, business woman and corporate executive, was born on this day in Pietermaritzburg, KZN. She obtained her first job at IBM, and went on to serve in executive positions in steel, telecommunications and finance sectors. She also served as Chancellor of the Durban University of Technology

■ 22 March 1961

Nkrumah calls for sanctions against Apartheid South Africa

in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre, Kwame Nkrumah, president of Ghana and one of the founders of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) calls for the 'total political and economic sanctions' against apartheid South Africa.

■ 22 March 1963

Business icon Tony Elumelu born

Nigerian economist and business icon was born in Jos, Plateau state. He ran major banks in Nigeria, as well as his family-owned conglomerate, Heirs Holdings founded in 2010. He plays a major role in supporting African entrepreneurs and startups, through the Tony Elumelu Foundation. Elumelu was one of the African business persons supporting the African Union Africa for Ebola initiative, during the 2014 pandemic in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

■ 22 March 1980

Singer Wahu born

Kenyan singer Rosemary Wahu Kagwi, who shot to fame with her breakout hit, Sitshiki in 2005 was born on this day in Nairobi. When the MTN Africa Music Awards launched in 2008, she was the first recipient of the Best Female Singer category.

■ 22 March 1985

Treaty to Protect the Ozone Layer signed

The ozone layer protects the earth from excessive ultraviolet radiation which could cause mutations and damage in human, animal and plant cells. In 1974 scientists published their first scientific hypotheses that chemicals, particularly chlorofluorocarbon gases (CFC), could remain trapped in the stratosphere for decades or even centuries, release chlorine and thus break down the ozone layer. The Vienna convention signed on 22 March 1985 is a multilateral environmental agreement in which "states agree to cooperate in the relevant research and scientific assessment of the ozone problem, to exchange information and to adopt appropriate measures to prevent activities that harm the ozone layer." This treaty is seen as one of the successes of multilateral cooperation, leading to drastic reduction in the production of CFC gasses ■

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

17 - 22 March 2024

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

■ 17 March

Red Nose Day

The day uses comic relief, wearing the red nose, to raise funds and awareness about a range of causes.

■ 17 March

World Sleep Day

The day focuses on the importance of sleep to our physical and emotional well-being, and on various sleeping disorders.

■ 18-24 March

South African Library Week



South African Library Week
 Theme: *Reimagine | RePurpose | Rediscover ... Libraries!*
 25 March 2022 (10h00) Lawn in front of the Library

DATABASES A-Z
 ReImagine!
 RePurpose!
 ReDiscover... Libraries!
 OPEN ACCESS
 LibCal
 ASK a LIBRARIAN
 #WeAreSMU | www.smu.ac.za

South African Library Week was originated by the Library and Information Sciences Association of South Africa (LIASA) to raise awareness about the importance of public libraries in communities. Public libraries face an increasingly difficult environment -

more people use them (especially learners), but they face tightening budgets. We should therefore be reminded by the words of broadcaster Walter Cronkite, *"whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation."*

■ 18 March

Global Recycle Day

Planet Earth gives up billions of tons of natural resources each year, and her health continues to decline. As humans mainly responsible for this decline, we must reduce waste, reuse items and restore the health of the planet. One vital way of doing this is through the practice of recycling.

■ 19 March

International Read to Me Day

'Every day is International Read to Me Day!' is an audacious campaign working to build a community where volunteers from around the globe read every ten minutes, 24 hours a day, supporting families by sharing the love of reading! The day aims to (a) empower children to ask for more support, not just from their family but also from their community. Marking a day when kids can ask to be read to is a key part of this strategy. (b) Promote, encourage and inspire reading activities within communities. (c) Showcase organisations that are passionate about improv-

ing the literacy standards of the children around them. (d) Address the disparity between resources and where they are distributed, by supporting a book drive and sending the collected books to locations around the world to those who are looking for books! (<https://www.readtomeday.com>)

■ 20 March

International Day of Happiness

Since 2013, the United Nations has celebrated the International Day of Happiness as a way to recognise the importance of happiness in the lives of people around the world. In 2015, the UN launched the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which seek to end poverty, reduce inequality, and protect our planet - three key aspects that lead to well-being and happiness. The United Nations invites each person of any age, plus every classroom, business and government to join in celebration of the International Day of Happiness.

■ 20 March

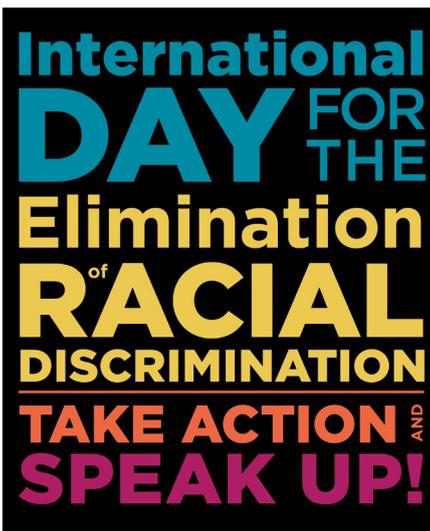
World Oral Health Day

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO): Oral health refers to the state of your mouth covering teeth, lips, tongue, palate, etc. Diseases and condition include dental problems with your teeth, mouth cancer, cleft lip, etc. The Global Burden of Disease Study 2019 estimated that oral

diseases affect close to 3.5 billion people worldwide. The theme of World Oral Health day 2024-2026 is: "AIn 2024, FDI will be leading with "A HAPPY MOUTH, IS A HAPPY BODY" encouraging people to understand the benefits of a happy, healthy mouth by shedding light on the intricate link between oral health and general health.". A healthy mouth and a happy body go hand in hand.

■ 21 March

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination



The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on the day the police in Sharpeville, South Africa, opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration against apartheid "pass laws" in 1960. The genocide in Gaza against the Palestinian people by the apartheid Israel government, is fundamentally in violation of the global struggle for the elimination of racial discrimination. We recall how in 2001, the US and Israel staged a walk-out from the World Conference Against Racism, hosted by South Africa.

■ 21 March

World Social Work Day

World Social Work Day advocates for the important role this plays in ensuring that the needs of vulnerable individuals, families and communities are met.

■ 21 March

World Poetry Day

Every 21 March is World Poetry Day. It is a day to encourage people to read, write, teach, and publish poetry and to recognise the great cultural contribution poetry makes to human society.

■ 21 March

World Down Syndrome Day

World Down Syndrome Day (WSDS), 21 March, is a global awareness day which has been officially observed by the United Nations since 2012. Down syndrome is a condition in which a person has an extra chromosome (small "packages" of genes in the body). They determine how a baby's body forms and functions as it grows during pregnancy and after birth.

■ 21 March

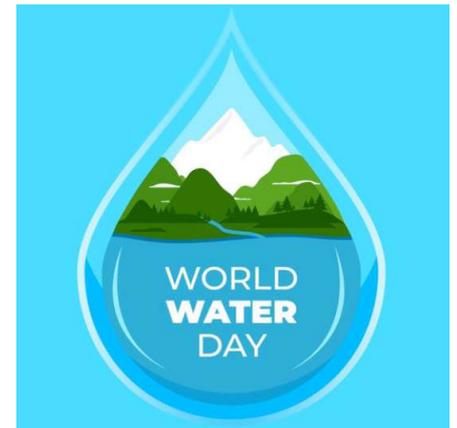
International Day of Forests



The International Day of Forests is held annually on 21 March to raise awareness of the importance of forests to people and their vital role in poverty eradication, environmental sustainability and food security. Forests also provide health benefits for everyone, such as fresh air, nutritious foods, clean water, and space for recreation. In developed countries, up to 25 percent of all medicinal drugs are plant-based; in developing countries, the contribution is as high as 80 percent. (<http://www.fao.org/international-day-of-forests/en/>)

■ 22 March

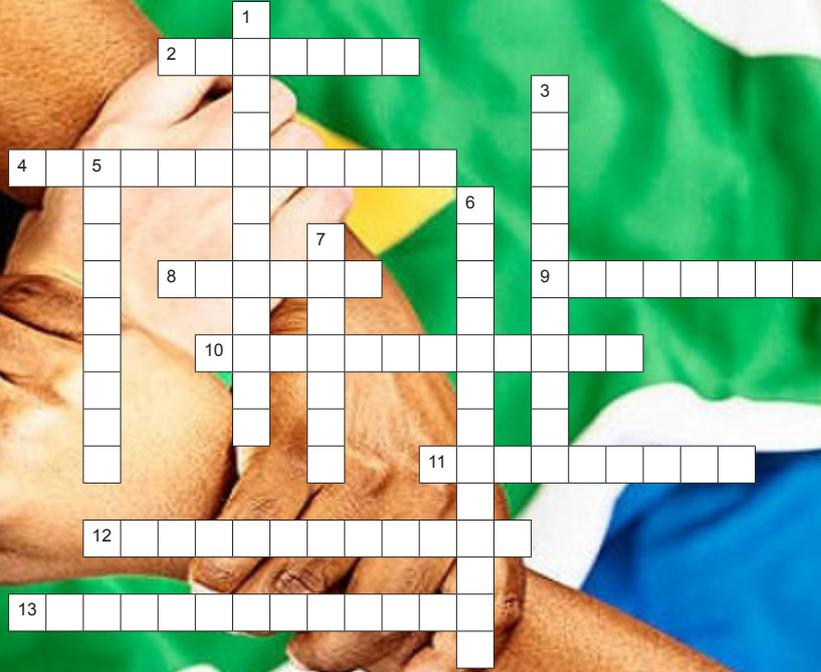
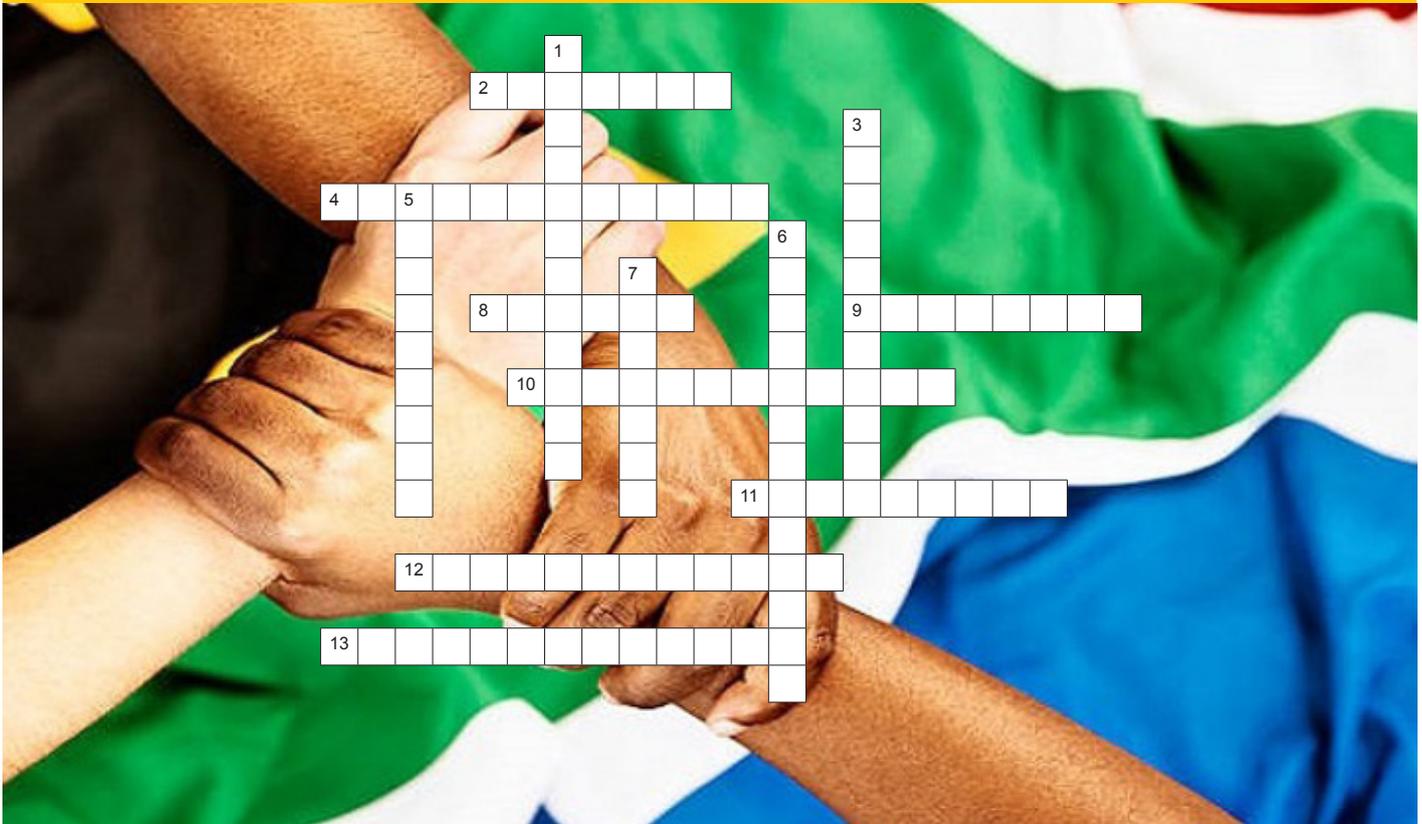
World Water Day



Today, water is under extreme threat from a growing population, increasing demands of agriculture and industry, and the worsening impacts of climate change. The day also raises awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water. It is about taking action to tackle the global water crisis. South Africa faces a complex water crisis, on the one hand we have floods and dams that are full or overflowing, yet we don't have enough water for communities and towns, because our infrastructure have not kept up with population growth and are poorly maintained. There are also areas that face droughts and whole cities that may run out of water■

X-WORD

21 March 2024. 30 Years of Human Rights



Across

- 2. Our democratic values
- 4. Supreme law of South Africa that protects all our human rights
- 8. Government has to progressively build a ... life for all
- 9. Democratic values
- 10. Principles of Constitution (1996)
- 11. Principles of Constitution (1996)
- 12. Principles of Constitution (1996)
- 13. Human rights include

Down

- 1. South Africa's transition to democracy came about through ...
- 3. Human rights day coincides with the ... Massacre on 21 March 1960
- 5. Principles of Constitution (1996)
- 6. Principles of Constitution (1996)
- 7. Principles of Constitution (1996)

WORD BANK

- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|--------|
| Sharpeville | rule of law | redress | better |
| Constitution | non-sexism | human dignity | |
| socio-economic | non-racialism | equality | |
| Negotiations | social justice | freedom | |

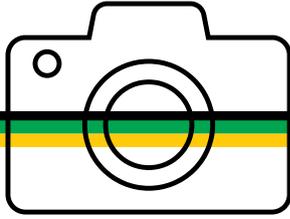
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IN PICTURES



ANC President Cyril Ramaphosa on the Elections Campaign Trail.

