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Conversations with the **President**



Over 200,000 young people start work in schools today

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

TODAY marks the 'first day at school' for about 200,000 young people at over 20,000 schools nationwide. This time, however, they are not arriving at school as learners, but as working adults. They are participants in the fifth phase of the Basic Education Employment Initiative, the largest youth employment programme in South Africa's history.

After a year's pause, the initiative returns to townships, villages, inner cities, farms and special needs schools, bringing hope, energy and incomes to places where opportunities are too often out of reach.

The initiative is a flagship programme of the Presidential Employment Stimulus, which has,

since its inception in 2020, supported the delivery of jobs and livelihood opportunities in our country. The Basic Education Employment Initiative is implemented by the Department of Basic Education and by provincial education departments. It is now funded by the UIF Labour Activation Programme and national government.

This programme is designed to develop the work skills that employers say they need, such as time management, task management, teamwork, problem solving, IT, admin and much more.

In the process, participants undertake roles aligned to school priorities to ensure these young people add real value, enhanc-

ing the learning environment for learners and strengthening learning outcomes.

The Basic Education Employment Initiative offers opportunities for young people at all skills levels. Graduates are prioritised for work in the classroom, where their tasks allow teachers to spend more time on teaching and lesson preparation. Curriculum Assistants support maths, science and technology. Reading Champions promote literacy and a culture of reading. Lab and Workshop Assistants support technical subjects. Others support IT and school administration.

They also tackle essential maintenance, such as fixing doors, painting peeling walls, maintaining school vegetable gardens

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and playgrounds. Care and Support Assistants work with School Support Teams to identify and support children at risk. Still others spark life into sports, art and music, activities that inspire learners, uncover their talents and build pride in communities. Together, these roles provide real work experience to young people and vital support to our education system.

The best possible advice to the young people starting at schools this week comes from a former participant in the programme. In 2023, Sibongile Joni was a Curriculum Assistant at Emsengeni Primary School in the Eastern Cape. She has since been employed in an NGO called Masinyusane.

She has this advice for participants now starting in the programme: *“Be reliable: your consistency builds trust. Be willing to learn, ask questions, accept feedback and grow daily. Take initiative: if something needs to be done, do it without waiting to be told. Treat every task as important, no matter how small, because excellence in the small things builds your reputation. Always be professional: your attitude, respect and conduct matter. Build strong relationships with staff and learners. People open doors for those they trust and enjoy working with. Lastly, make the most of the trainings offered, they equip you with the skills you’ll need for your next step.”*

She says this journey has taught her that growth doesn’t come overnight. She says: *“Start strong. Stay consistent. You’re building your future today.”*

Every participant has their own hopes and dreams for their fu-

ture beyond this programme. Whether they pursue a career in education, undertake further studies, search for a job or embrace self-employment, they won’t be starting from scratch. From this programme, they will carry invaluable skills and experience. Yet, in a tough labour market, they will each need to tackle their next chapter with creativity and initiative.

As a society, we cannot leave young people to navigate the transition into work alone. Together, we need to step up to assist them.

These young people will leave the school environment having shown up, contributed and made a difference. They will have worked in high-pressure environments with limited resources and will understand deadlines and responsibility.

To employers, we say: give them their next opportunity, mentor their enthusiasm, help take their potential to the next level.

We also need to reach those young people who want to be entrepreneurs. We need to find new ways to support those who

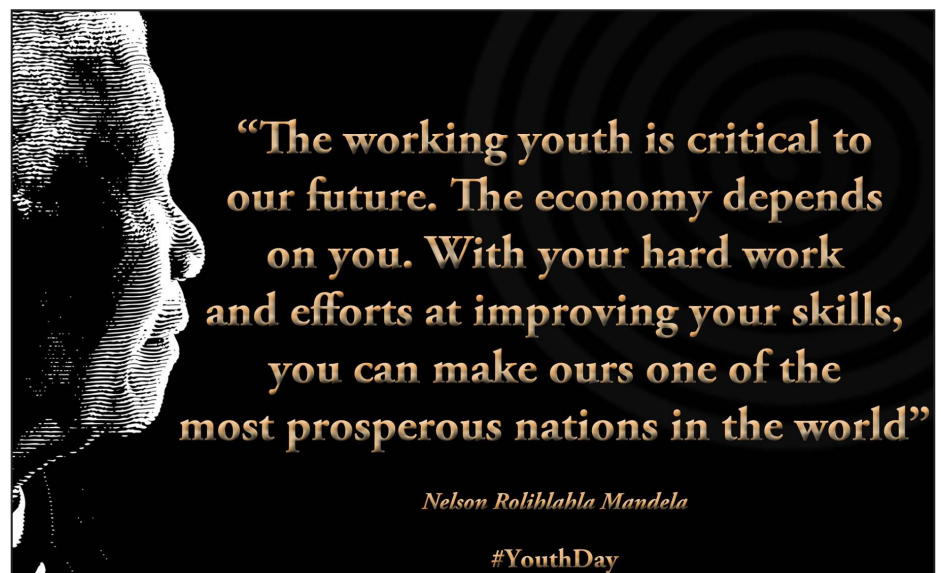
want to create their own jobs and local value, to connect them to finance, training, markets and networks.

Today we celebrate this cohort of young people beginning meaningful work, many for the first time. But let us also not forget those who applied for these posts but who weren’t selected.

Through the Presidential Employment Stimulus, we have demonstrated the government’s capacity to address the youth unemployment problem. Through this programme we have been able to give young people work experience and a pathway to formal employment or even further education.

We do believe that this will have a much longer term benefit for the employability of young people. This is but one initiative that seeks to address the youth unemployment challenge. We still have much more to do to address the plight of young people.

These young people are showing us what they are capable of. It is up to all of us in society to give them the opportunities they need to thrive. ■





Farewell Isithwalandwe-Seaparankwe Mama Gertrude Shope

EULOGY BY **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**
AT THE **SPECIAL OFFICIAL FUNERAL OF ISITHWALANDWE GETRUDE SHOPE**

WE are here to bid farewell to Mama Gertrude Shope, Isithwalandwe, freedom fighter, trade unionist, icon of the women's movement.

Her passing comes less than a week after we buried Cde Lungi Mngaga-Gcabashe, the Deputy President of the ANC Women's League. As we laid her to rest, we observed that in an African hut, there's a pole that stands in the middle of the hut. It is called Intsika, or a pillar.

Women – our mothers, our grandmothers, our wives, our sisters,

our aunts and our daughters – are izintsika. Like the pillar that holds the structure of the hut together, women hold up our homes, our families and the nation.

To have lost two women leaders – *izintsika* – in such close succession is a great loss. And yet, even amidst our grief we take comfort in the legacies they left behind.

We gather not just to remember the name Gertrude Shope. We gather to honour a life that helped to shape our country's democracy.

Mama Gertrude Shope's life is and was intertwined in the fabric of our

of democracy.

Her's was a life that was quietly and unshakably committed to the struggle for our people's liberation.

As we pay tribute to Mama Gertrude Shope, one of the outstanding matriarchs of our struggle, we should remember that she was a torchbearer for women's emancipation.

We should remember her for her lifelong contribution to the struggle for freedom for all, especially for women silenced in the margins of apartheid oppression and patriarchy.



She taught us that liberation without the liberation of women means that our revolution is unfinished. She also taught us that democracy without the voice of women is a fragile and partial democracy.

Today South Africa stands tall as a constitutional democracy that enshrines the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all.

We have stood firm in our conviction that the struggle for racial equality cannot be separated from the struggle for gender equality.

We have made significant progress in advancing women's rights in education, health, social protection, political representation and economic participation.

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report has called our country "*a beacon of hope*" in the quest for gender equality worldwide.

This progress was not achieved by chance.

Gertrude Shope and others made it happen. She birthed and moth-

ered it. She nurtured it with discipline, wisdom and responsibility.

This progress is the result of deliberate policies implemented by successive democratic governments since 1994.

This progress is the result of a progressive Constitution and Bill of Rights that was forged in the trenches of struggle – a struggle waged by legions of brave women and men who dedicated their lives to seeing a South Africa that is non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, prosperous and free.

Ma Gertrude Shope was foremost among them.

At the age of 29, a time when many young people are still trying to find their feet in the world, she was already a revolutionary.

By her late twenties Ma Shope was a teacher by profession, having received her training in Zimbabwe, and was teaching domestic science at Pimville High in Soweto.

This brought her into direct contact with one of apartheid's most insidious policies, Bantu Education.

To witness the dehumanising of black children in the classroom struck her to the core. She refused to accept the dictates of her role to impart inferior education that prepared black children for little more than a life of menial labour.

She joined the ANC and became involved in the campaign against Bantu Education in the early 1950s.

When the Congress of the People adopted the Freedom Charter in 1955, she personally took up its mantra that the doors of learning and culture shall be opened.

She took to heart the view expressed by Dr AB Xuma that education and political rights must go hand in hand with social justice and equality for all.

Ma Shope's resistance to Bantu Education was a bold declaration that every African child was deserving of knowledge, respect and dignity.

She became involved in the women's movement, joining the Federation of South African Women, FEDSAW.

A year before the Congress of the People in Kliptown, FEDSAW had adopted the Women's Charter, setting out a vision of gender equality that found expression in the Freedom Charter itself.

In 1956, when more than 20 000 women marched on the seat of apartheid power to demand an end to the pass laws, Ma Shope was among the organisers.

She helped to mobilise women around the country, to inform them about the demands of the protestors and to arrange transport to Pretoria.

She belonged to a generation that took the baton from the pioneering work of women activists like Charlotte Maxeke, who once said: *"This work is not for ourselves. Kill that spirit of self and do not live above your people, but with them."*

Ma Shope lived by this creed.

In its tribute to Ma Shope, COSATU reflected on the great personal sacrifice that commitment to the struggle entailed. She quit her teaching career, her source of income, as part of the campaign to boycott Bantu Education.

Abandoning one's personal aspirations in pursuit of a greater cause is the very epitome of servant leadership.

There are arguably few amongst us who would today do the same. Such was this calibre of leadership, such was this level of commitment to one's people and to the greater good.

Ma Shope's activities soon drew the attention of the apartheid authorities. She made the decision to go into exile in 1966, where



she would join her husband Mark who was active in the trade union movement and the ANC in exile.

While in exile, she worked tirelessly across Africa and abroad, mobilising support for the anti-apartheid cause.

She played a key role in drawing global attention to our struggle, including participating in the work of the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid.

Just as international solidarity helped win us our freedom, just as Ma Shope taught us, we will continue our principled solidarity with peoples everywhere suffering oppression and persecution.

As the head of the ANC's Women's Section in exile and later as President of the ANC Women's League, Ma Shope had a profound grasp of the realities facing women in South Africa.

She knew that the triple burden of oppression based on race, class and gender would not evaporate once apartheid ended.

In the early 1980s, Ma Shope gave an interview where she was asked why she thought it was important for women in the liberation movement to organise sep-

arately.

The interviewer asked if women were organising separately to revolt against men.

Ma Shope said:
"We are not declaring war on men. We know that the society we live in has made men think a certain way. So, men are also victims. Together, men and women must change their attitudes to each other."

This statement is as relevant today as it was when Ma Shope spoke these words.

As president of the ANC Women's League from 1991 to 1993, Ma Shope was instrumental in revitalising women's voices within the democratic transition.

She worked to ensure that gender equity was embedded in the new South African Constitution, refusing to let women's rights be treated as a secondary issue to national freedom.

Despite our progressive Constitution, despite South Africa having made considerable progress in advancing women's rights, persistent inequalities threaten to undermine our advance as a society.

Women are still more likely to be poor than men. Women are still more likely to be unemployed than men. Women are the primary victims of intimate partner violence, abuse, rape and other forms of sexual violence.

Ma Shope's life's work is not yet complete.

It is up to us to take forward women's struggles for full equality, for freedom from violence, and for the right to live in security, comfort and peace.

And like Ma Shope said all those years ago, this is not a struggle that must be waged by women alone.

Men must be at the frontlines of the fighter for gender equality. They must alongside their mothers, grandmothers, sisters and daughters.

The young women of the ANC Women's League are the worthy inheritors of Ma Shope's legacy.

We have seen the great work be-

ing done by the League to advocate for the rights of women and children and to empower them.

The women of South Africa have inherited the bravery, discipline and commitment of the generation that shook JG Strydom, the then Prime Minister of apartheid South Africa.

As we lay Ma Shope to rest, we renew our commitment to realising a South Africa in which women and girls enjoy true freedom.

Isithwalandwe Ma Shope served South Africa and her movement with distinction throughout her life.

Her unwavering commitment to women's rights and her extraordinary leadership laid a firm basis for us to continue building a country that gives voice to the voiceless.

Her legacy lives on in the ANC, in the ANC Women's League and in the Gertrude Shope Peace-building and Capacity Building Programme that was set up to support women peacemakers

and conflict mediators on our continent.

We thank her for her service to South Africa and to the women of our country.

In the interview I spoke of earlier, Ma Shope was asked what message she had for the women of her country. To which she said:

"My message to women is that we should stand up for our rights. The time for women to be found in the kitchen is long past. Let us, together with our menfolk, correct the wrongs and ills of our society. This is the challenge facing us today. Join your organisation in your thousands, for without you there is no revolution."

Ma Shope, as men and as women, we will indeed give effect to your clarion call.

We owe this to you and to the many women and men who gave their all for South Africa to be free.

Lala Ngoxolo Mbokodo,

Isithwalandwe-Seaparankwe. ■



Neither Will nor Capacity? Rebuilding Statecraft and Public Ethos in the Post-Unipolar World

■ By **BUSANI NGCAWENI**

A quiet yet profound public value crisis is entrenched in the Global South governance systems and state machineries. We know this and often attribute it to institutional fragility or faltering policies. At a deeper level, however, we recognise a more extreme reality that we have been reluctant to engage. We stand as onlookers to the constant churning of inspiring policies for a better future, yet we have not seen the change these policies are meant to drive. This reflects a massive disconnect between authority and agency, between the moral purpose of public leadership and the skills required to enact it. In our haste to throw solutions at the crisis, we have not sufficiently grappled with its underlying causes.

Our thinking has vacillated between whether states lack political will or execution capacity, losing sight of the interconnection between the two and how they have reinforced each other over time. This is not an academic puzzle but an existential fault line across the Global South. It is the result of a governance paradigm that systematically eroded state capacity under the guise of modernisation and the supposed reinvention of governance.



The private sector, as a template for best practice, has unfolded in various forms, sometimes as mildly contesting approaches to managing public institutions.

The cruder expression of this approach falls under what is widely known as New Public Management, a paradigm exported to developing countries during the height of the neoliberal era. The core of this reform ideology, often imposed through external conditionalities,

emphasised privatisation, performance targets and managerial control. It ushered in the tyranny of the log frame, where governing was reduced to measuring inputs and outputs, with little emphasis on context, capability or the political economy of programmes. It promised efficiency and accountability but delivered something far more insidious.

In much of Africa, the wholesale adoption of the reinventing



government approach led to the outsourcing of core functions. This was particularly evident in South Africa's deeply entrenched state tender system. One central consequence, aside from widespread abuses, has been the fragmentation of the state into a series of relatively autonomous entities with reduced policy coherence and limited collective implementation. Mainstream departments were encouraged to create entities that minimised politics and maximised financial gain for the few, supposedly under a more sustainable private sector-infused model.

This shift hollowed out institutional capacity, turning capable leaders into contract managers and beneficiaries of the very systems they were meant to govern. Talented individuals became process bureaucrats, stripped of their confidence, agency and core competencies. The real work was outsourced to private firms. Many saw this coming, but few anticipated the extent and depth of its impact. Red tape became entrenched, and corruption proliferated, along the lines that Abhijit Banerjee contemplated in

A Theory of Misgovernance.

Today, we face the full consequences of this hollowing out, as our public institutions falter in response to a rapidly evolving global order. Mariana Mazzucato and Rosie Collington, in *The Big Con*, aptly argues that the public sector has been infantilised, especially in the Global South.

It no longer initiates or shapes markets but merely reacts to them. Strategic vision has been displaced by an obsession with compliance. Innovation has been outsourced to private entities focused on cost-saving and private returns from public value-driven policies. Public leadership has been reduced to survival through rituals of risk aversion. A clean audit has become a zeitgeist more prized than any other measure of public value. There is now a profound loss of any shared understanding of the state's value for current and future generations.

We have witnessed the collapse of a governing ethos.

The late African intellectual

Thandika Mkandawire reminded us that the post-independence African state was once imagined as an ambitious, central agent of transformation. It was not perfect, but it was politically confident. Neoliberalism eroded that confidence, replacing it with managerialism, cost-cutting and the illusion of private efficiency. Mkandawire argued that today's challenge is to reverse this trend by reasserting the state's transformative role, not as an abstract ideal but as a practical, accountable and adaptive institution.

As power becomes more diffuse and development pathways less self-evident, the capacity of the state to act strategically and the will of its leaders to do so becomes ever more critical. Tragically, our indecision on this crisis has created space for African leaders, elected or appointed, to be absorbed into systems that deprive them of the imagination, tools and resolve to govern effectively. Many preside over bureaucracies they neither inspire nor control. Surrounded by technocratic intermediaries and consulting firms that thrive in the vacuum of disoriented leadership, politics

has been reduced to procedure and governance to a reactive theatre of drift. All that often remains are a bunch of bandits ready to enforce the supreme leader's stay in power. Statecraft is lost.

Between political will and execution capacity lies the critical notion of statecraft. It thrives on clarity, coherence and courage. It enables us to move beyond the tired refrain that there is no political will or that leaders lack the ability to manage the state. To rebuild statecraft, we must understand it not as mere administration but as a leadership, professional and moral vocation grounded in strategic capacity. It involves aligning long-term vision, institutional design, bureaucratic coordination and policy tools to govern effectively amid complexity.

This erosion of leadership is rooted in decades of political marginalisation, institutional fragmentation and the decay of public ethos. Public ethos refers to the shared moral orientation that binds authority to purpose. In the context of statecraft, reskilling is not a technocratic fix but a multidimensional transformation. It entails cognitive development such as systems thinking and adaptive governance, scenario planning as well as ethical formation grounded in justice, integrity and service. It involves learning to manage institutional ecosystems, political contests and complex policy environments. This is a political and pedagogical imperative, equipping public leaders with technical competence, reflective capacity and an ethical compass.

This vision aligns with Professor Mashupye Maserumule's advocacy for a governance model

rooted in *ubuntu* and *post-colonial thought*. For him, Africa's governance crisis stems not only from weak institutions but from a lack of ethical leadership grounded in local values, communal responsibility and moral accountability. Rebuilding statecraft, then, is not just about competence. It is about cultivating an ethos rooted in dignity, service and historical consciousness. This ethos, standing in contrast to the private-sector model of reinvented government, supports a tradition in which leadership is both intellectual and ethical, rooted in the lived realities and aspirations of the people. Yes, the people, not just market agents.

Guy Mhone's concept of *democratic developmentalism* offers a powerful theoretical framework for this renewal. He urged African states to overcome their enclave nature by developing integrated, democratic and developmental capacity. This means reclaiming policy space, planning strategically and embedding public leadership in broader struggles for inclusion.

Effective governance must be transformative, distributive and politically embedded. Building

public leadership is itself a strategic capacity. Boon Siong Neo and Geraldine Chen, writing in *Dynamic Governance: Embedding Culture, Capabilities and Change in Singapore*, argues that strategic capacity involves aligning vision, resources and institutions to navigate complexity. Experiences from Singapore and other Asian nations demonstrate that capable governance is not accidental but the result of deliberate leadership development, institutional learning and merit-based recruitment. Francis Fukuyama puts this succinctly in a paper titled *The Patterns of History*.

Even the most capable leaders must navigate institutional resistance. As Samuel Bacharach explains in *The Agenda Mover*, leadership is not just about ideas but about shepherding those ideas through institutions, aligning stakeholders and managing obstacles. Leaders must therefore be equipped not only with vision but also with strategic tools to realise it.

Examples of renewal abound. Indonesia's post-Suharto reforms cultivated a new generation of leaders with political and policy skills. Vietnam's Communist Party instituted



five-year leadership training cycles tied to national planning targets. Rwanda has invested in data-driven delivery and disciplined bureaucracy. India's digital public infrastructure shows how strategic intervention can unlock developmental potential. In the Gulf, the UAE and Saudi Arabia have introduced governance innovations, signalling a move toward strategic capability in a post-oil era. China's long-term vision has produced unparalleled industrial and poverty-reduction achievements. Kenya's Huduma Centres illustrate the importance of both digital infrastructure and a public service ethos.

South Africa's ongoing challenges, policy drift, institutional incoherence and state capture, highlight the perils of failing to build strategic capacity. The growing disconnect between the governed and the governing is unsustainable. These international examples are not blueprints but provocations. They show that institutional inertia is not destiny.

Governance is not passive. It is an active expression of collective

purpose. In a recent (April 2025) dialogue hosted by the National School of Government and Fudan University, Professor Kishore Mahbubani, author of *The Asian 21st Century*, urged African leaders to reskill and master governance as an intellectual and ethical craft. His call is timely. Our future depends on leaders who can think strategically, act decisively and govern ethically. This requires bold reskilling, not a return to orthodoxy but a forging of new pathways rooted in African traditions, comparative learning and a sober view of global realities.

The work ahead is not only institutional renewal. It is the reassertion of the public good as the organising principle of governance. To lead well is to think well, plan wisely and act ethically. It is time to rebuild the infrastructure of public leadership, not as a technocratic task but as part of a broader political project to restore the dignity of the state, the purpose of authority and the soul of governance.

From the foregoing we can distil

three frontiers as a conclusion. National and regional/international development must progress along three critical dimensions: (i) reskilling for effective decision-making with a focus on mastering statecraft and moving beyond pomp and ceremony, (ii) building resilient institutions (both hard and soft) that diligently implement development plans, (iii) and forging domestic and global compacts to manage national and geopolitical contradictions.

All of this depends on the Global South countries cultivating developmental elites — men and women who are obsessed with development, unwavering in their pursuit of meaningful change.

As the Inanda proverb goes: ultimately, effective governance is not just about leading by the rules, but making rational and ethical choices in the best interest of society. We learn from history that capable states are characterised by the diligent management of public affairs and courageous pursuit of society's aspirations for economic justice and social cohesion. ■



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GOLDEN SINKHOLES AND THE DEMOCRATIC DUTY TO CLEAN UP APARTHEID'S LIES

■ By **STAN ITSHEGETSENG**

IN Kliptown – where the Freedom Charter was born under candlelight defiance – the Presidency of South Africa will, on 6 June 2025, ignite a new flame of national renewal through the launch of the National Clean Cities and Towns Campaign. This is no ordinary civic programme – it is a national signal that the time has come to clean up not just physical litter, but the lingering structural rot of apartheid's engineered dysfunction.

Choosing Kliptown was not symbolic – it was surgical. Here, in the birthplace of people's power, the ANC once declared a new South Africa. Today, it reaffirms that declaration – not with rhetoric, but with a multi-sectoral reconstruction mission backed by the Presidency, Gauteng Province, and the ANC-led City of Johannesburg.

Let the facts be clear: apartheid did not leave us “world-class infrastructure.” It left us weapons of slow destruction – asbestos pipes, rusted steel, unrehabilitated mine dumps, and cities built to exclude. That infrastructure now collapses before us. The so-called “City of Gold” is riddled with sinkholes left behind by colonial mining ventures that

exported our wealth but left their mess. Today, when we attempt to fix these holes, we are mocked by the same elite who ran away with the gold.

Johannesburg's infrastructure crisis is not failure. It is inheritance.

And the ANC, together with all spheres of democratic government, is now cleaning, restoring, and rebuilding with precision and constitutional discipline. That is why rebuilding takes longer under democracy. We consult. We protect rights. We do not move people like apartheid's bulldoz-

ers. We build for the many, not the few.

At the Walter Sisulu Square – the sacred precinct of the Freedom Charter – this campaign comes alive. This site, abandoned under previous coalitions, is now being revived with urgency under Executive Mayor Sello Dada Morero, whose focused leadership is translating politics into progress.

A strong team of MMCs is at the heart of this recovery:

- MMC Nomoya Mnisi (Economic Development) – spearheading the formal registration and dignified allocation of vend-

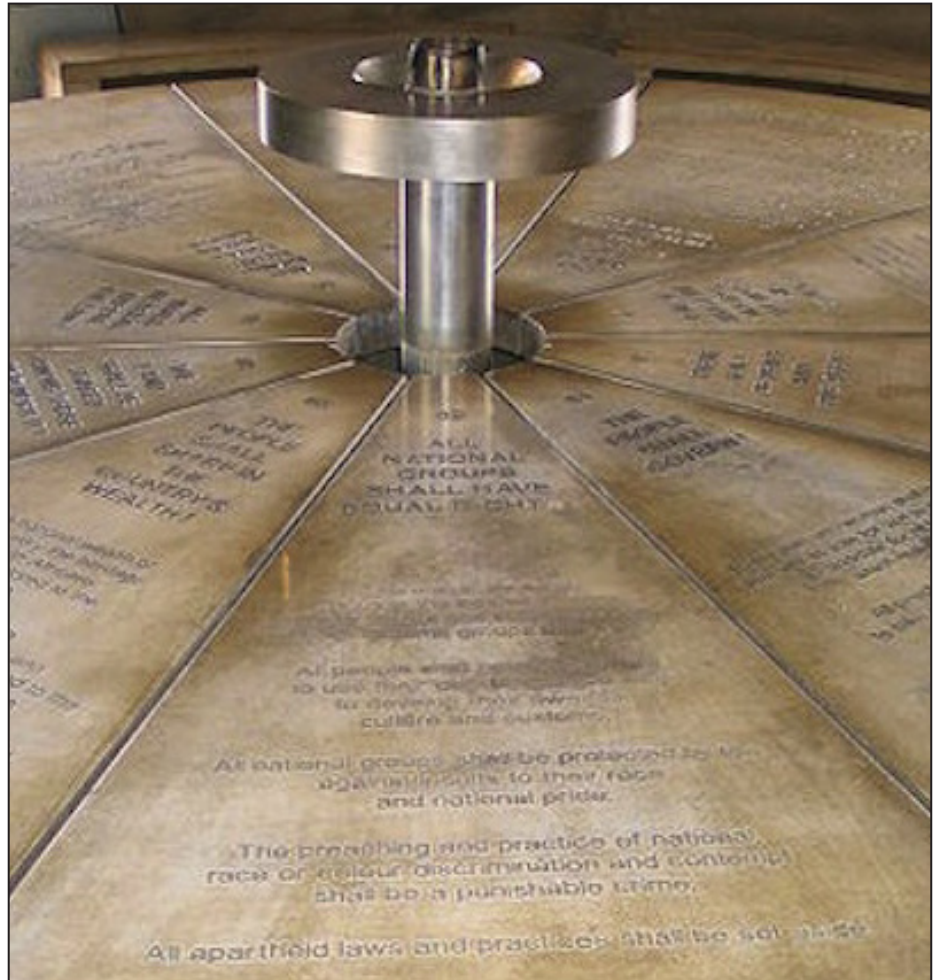


ing spaces to reposition the precinct as a vibrant, orderly tourism hub.

- MMC Jack Sekwaila (Environment and Infrastructure Services) – coordinating city entities to drain submerged spaces and restore functionality.
- MMC Eunice Mgcina (Development Planning) – providing spatial alignment and design guidance for lasting precinct rejuvenation.
- MMC Mgcini Tshwaku (Public Safety) – intensifying visible policing and ensuring security infrastructure is restored and respected.
- MMC Loyiso Masuku (Corporate and Shared Services) – anchoring administrative stability and interdepartmental efficiency.
- MMC Kenny Kunene (Transport) – integrating transit routes with the precinct's commercial regeneration goals.
- MMC Nkojoku (Community Development) – ensuring cultural dignity and civic education return to the Freedom Charter Square, despite political differences.

Together, these public servants represent a powerful cross-party, cross-discipline commitment to revolutionary urban renewal—done the democratic way.

The pyramid where the Freedom Charter is engraved is once again standing not just as a relic of struggle, but as a platform for future growth. But there are challenges. One recent incident saw vendors burning impepho and marketing the pyramid as a sacred flame from ancestors. While creative, this undermines the true political significance of the site. This is not a Sangoma



shrine – it is a site of revolutionary vision, and it must be protected, formalised, and respected.

The Presidency is to be applauded for choosing Kliptown for this historic launch. And the people of Johannesburg must take pride that this city leads the nation in practical renewal. Not just speeches, but actual work: cleaning, paving, draining, securing, reimagining.

Let us declare with unapologetic clarity:

- We are not cleaning apartheid's streets to win applause from its beneficiaries – we are cleaning them to reclaim our sovereignty.
- We are not repairing pipes because democracy failed – we are doing it because democracy refused to inherit poison.

- We are not nostalgic for “order” under apartheid – we are building justice with dignity under democracy.

The ANC is not perfect, but it is present. It is not magical, but it is methodical. And under our stewardship, golden sinkholes are becoming golden streets.

Let the 6th of June be remembered as the day the Freedom Charter met the broom.

Let Kliptown rise – not in memory of the past, but in the name of the future.

In Johannesburg, democracy is not just alive.

It is cleaning. It is building.

It is coming back stronger. ■

Rekindling the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) for Youth Struggles

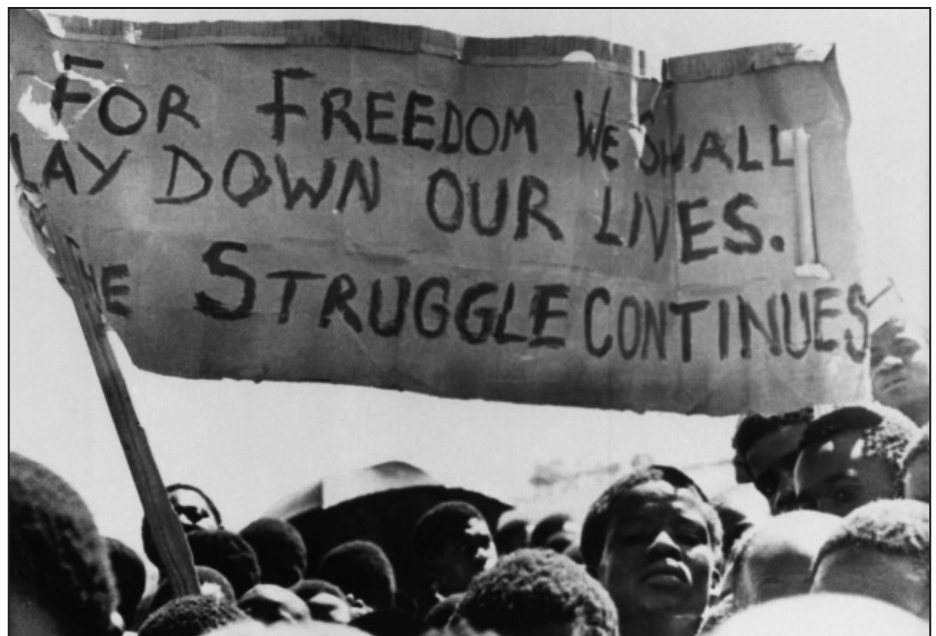
■ By **MABILO NKADIMENG**

THE purpose of this article is to form part of the literary work to stimulate a debate on the future trajectory and role of the ANCYL, on the occasion of the 49th anniversary of the 1976 June uprising.

This debate should be located within many initiatives and instruments such as the National Development Agency (NYDA) established for youth mainstreaming to create jobs and youth entrepreneurship for an inclusive economy.

On the occasion of the 49th anniversary of 1976 Youth Uprising and Youth Month we need to transcend celebrations with a sense of reflection and introspection with a view to repurpose and orientate the role of the youth movement. The revolution continues, change is needed not the scarecrow of chaos akin to the Arab Spring but constructive engagement and finding creative ways to create jobs and to change the negative mood of despondency to hope. South Africa has walked a difficult path. A debate is a necessary platform to address challenges facing young people.

South Africa stands at a precipice – a nation with a youthful popula-



tion, yet one where the majority of young people are locked out of economic opportunity, overwhelmed by social crises and disillusioned by political institutions.

Amidst this storm, the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) is called to account: is it still the fearless vanguard of youth aspirations or has it lost touch with the very constituency it was created to serve? This is not a rhetorical question. It is a political imperative.

A League Adrift or a League Reborn?

The ANCYL's historic mission, as

articulated by its founding leaders, was to inject radicalism, energy and renewal into the ANC while acting as a platform for youth empowerment and mobilisation. Leaders like Anton Lembede, Nelson Mandela, Peter Mokaba and others didn't just occupy positions – they shifted paradigms. Their leadership was rooted in relevance to the generational crises of their time.

Today, the generational mission is different, but no less urgent. We face an unemployment rate exceeding 60% among youth. The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) is reshaping economies, but our education and skills sys-

tems are stuck in the past. Townships and rural villages are becoming laboratories for drug abuse, gender-based violence and despair. Yet, the League is too often invisible where it is most needed.

The Political Role of ANCYL in the 21st Century

To remain politically relevant, the ANCYL must abandon the comforts of rhetoric and step boldly into action. It must assert itself in the following five key areas:

1. Economic Justice for the Youth Majority

The League should drive a political agenda that demands economic inclusion. This includes advocating for youth-specific procurement allocations, startup capital for youth-owned enterprises, and rural economic stimulus packages tailored to the informal and township economies. Where is the ANCYL in shaping the public discourse on wealth redistribution, industrial policy, or the digital economy?

2. Education Reform and Skills Alignment

It is not enough to chant “Free Education” while young graduates remain unemployed. The League must push for curriculum transformation in TVET colleges and universities, aligning education with economic needs – digital literacy, artisan skills, agribusiness, coding and climate innovation.

3. Strengthening State Institutions for Youth Development

Political mobilisation must trans-



late into institutional reform. The ANCYL must pressure entities like the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), SETAs and SEDA to be more responsive, efficient and youth-driven. These agencies exist to serve the youth – not frustrate them.

4. Social Cohesion and Moral Leadership

South African youth are under siege from drugs, gender-based violence, xenophobia and mental health crises. The ANCYL must emerge as a moral and activist voice – organising community forums, GBV campaigns, and healing spaces, while addressing the social decay that threatens youth potential.

5. Political Education and Grassroots Organising

The future of the ANC depends on the political consciousness of its young cadres. The ANCYL must invest in political education that transcends slogans – shaping young thinkers, policy advocates, and ethical leaders. It must rebuild trust at ward level, create participatory youth desks and act as a bridge between government and young citizens.

A League Without a Base Is a League Without Power

Too often, the ANCYL is seen as a vehicle for internal careerism – used to climb political ladders rather than serve communities. If the League is to reclaim its legitimacy, it must build a mass-based presence in communities. Political relevance is not bestowed by titles – it is earned through struggle, sacrifice and service.

From Protest to Power, From Power to Purpose

The ANCYL must evolve or risk becoming obsolete. In a rapidly changing socio-political landscape, young people are turning to alternative movements, digital activism, and community-based initiatives for leadership. If the League cannot meet them where they are, others will.

To paraphrase Anton Lembede: the youth of today must not be spectators. But neither should their vanguard. The League must lead – not in name, but in action.

The future is calling.

The ANCYL must answer – not with speeches, but with actions.

Fight, Produce and Learn should be purposeful, advancing the struggle through requisite skills commensurate with the demands of complex conditions and time, to produce leaders with a vision to serve the country and the youth as opposed to parochial acts, to learn from the lesson of the past and the rich values and legacy of Majombozi, Sisulu and the past leaders of the ANCYL. ■



Reclaiming the Soul of the African Struggle: Advancing Progressive Renewal Through Political Education and Training

■ By **KEFENTSE MKHARI**

I was recently privileged to be part of an African National Congress (ANC) delegation to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, where we facilitated a historic Joint Political School with the governing party of Côte d'Ivoire – the Rally of Houphouëtists for Democracy and Peace (RHDP). Held from the 26th to the 30th of May 2025, the programme was more than a mere gesture of solidarity; it was a strategic intervention in the long-term survival and renewal of Africa's progressive movements.

As a young activist and cadre entrusted with co-facilitating sessions on youth mobilisation and inclusive governance, I arrived in Abidjan with a deep sense of responsibility. What I found there, however, exceeded my expectations. The engagement with RHDP leaders, intellectuals, youth activists, and public officials reaffirmed something that many of us within the ANC some-

*To govern a country well,
one must govern the
party well."*

– Chinese proverb

times forget, that is, the ANC is still seen across the continent as a symbol of progressive and people-centred leadership - an enduring emblem of struggle, transformation, and hope.

A Meeting Ground of Struggles, Ideas, and Responsibilities

The timing of the Political School was intentional. It coincided with Africa Day and the Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank, which were held under the rallying theme **"Making Africa's**

Capital Work Better for Africa's Development." In a similar spirit, our Political School convened around six key pillars:

1. Organisational and Leadership Skills
2. Progressive Values, Principles, and Ethos
3. Women and Youth Mobilisation and Organisation
4. Progressive and Inclusive Electioneering
5. Ethical, Accountable, and Inclusive Governance
6. Pan-African Unity in a Volatile Geopolitical Climate.

These were not abstract themes. They were presented, discussed, and debated in relation to the lived realities of Africans today, particularly the youth, women and working poor who continue to carry the burden of economic marginalisation.

I was privileged to lead two sessions on youth mobilisation and inclusive governance, with an



emphasis on youth inclusion in policy development, economic transformation, and service delivery. The quality of engagement, the hunger for ideas, and the commitment to people-centred leadership that I witnessed among our RHDP counterparts was a clear signal: the struggle continues, but so too does the will to win.

The ANC as a Continental Beacon – With Work to Do at Home

Despite our many internal challenges, some of them structural, others self-inflicted, the ANC continues to inspire. To RHDP cadres, the ANC is more than a political party. It is a liberation movement with a historical and ongoing commitment to justice and dignity. Many of the RHDP leaders I interacted with expressed admiration for our democratic traditions, our stance on international solidarity, and our foundational principles of non-racialism, non-sexism, and unity.

But this admiration also comes with expectation.

We are reminded that how we conduct ourselves at home has

continental consequences. If the ANC fails to renew itself, it does not just affect South Africa; it weakens progressive forces across Africa. If we fail to uphold ethical governance, we set a dangerous precedent. If we marginalise youth and women, we betray our historical mission.

The lesson from Abidjan is simple but profound: renewing the ANC is not a South African imperative alone – it is a continental necessity.

Learning from RHDP: Building with Intellect and Ideology

One of the most inspiring aspects of the Political School was the intellectual stature of many of the RHDP leaders. Professors, researchers, and policy experts are actively embedded in the party's structures. They are not perched in ivory towers; they are shaping governance, training cadres, and building organisational systems. This is a model the ANC must reflect on seriously.

We cannot rebuild a movement capable of leading the National Democratic Revolution in the 21st century without returning

to the ideological and intellectual depth that defined our historical leadership. We must attract young scholars, thinkers, organisers, and policy developers. We must create space for them to contribute meaningfully and not merely as spectators, but as full participants in the task of party-building.

From Colonial Scars to Governance Failures – The Triple Challenge

The ANC's head of delegation, Cde David Makhura, in his opening remarks, reminded us that our historical wounds remain unhealed because we have not yet eradicated their root causes. Africa's political crisis today stems from three interconnected problems:

1. The enduring legacy of Colonialism – our systems of knowledge, governance, and development are still tethered to foreign models and structures.
2. Post-colonial governance failures – too often, our leaders have replaced colonial administrators without transforming the systems they left behind.
3. Weak intra-African solidarity – our failure to work together as a continent continues to leave us vulnerable to economic exploitation and geopolitical irrelevance.

As African progressives, our task is to confront all three.

We must decolonise not only our textbooks but our institutions and economies. We must transform governance so that it works for the poor and not just the powerful. We must forge alliances, such as the one between the ANC and the RHDP, that are rooted in shared struggles, values, and strategies.

Political Education as a Weapon of Struggle

The Political School reminded me why political education is not just a necessity but a powerful weapon that we must utilise in the renewal of our movement. Without clear ideology, movements drift; without historical consciousness, leaders become aloof; without ethics and values, power corrodes; and without mobilisation, our political parties decay into election machines with no soul – shells of their former glory.

If the ANC is to renew itself, it must seriously invest in cadre development. Not just workshops and slogans, but systematic, multi-tiered and professional education and training that deepens political consciousness, strengthens ethical leadership, and cultivates the discipline needed for revolutionary transformation.

Let us strengthen our political schools. Let us support institutions like the OR Tambo School of Leadership with our best minds and our deepest resources. Let us take seriously the challenge of ideological rearmament. Because without it, the national democratic project is defenceless.

Youth and Women – Not on the Margins, But at the Centre

One of the most urgent challenges facing both the ANC and RHDP is how we recruit, train, and empower the next generation of leaders. Youth participation cannot be tokenistic. Women's leadership cannot be confined to "women's issues." Both must be central to party renewal and national development.

In our sessions on youth mobilisation, it became clear that the

frustrations of young Africans are rooted not in entitlement but in systemic exclusion. They want to lead. They want to serve. They want to contribute. What they lack is opportunity, trust, and structured pathways into meaningful leadership.

The ANC must fix this!

If we do not, our organisation will grow old, rigid, and irrelevant. We need to urgently build a political culture that values young leadership, not as a threat but as an asset. This progressive culture must also value women's leadership, not as charity but as a fundamental necessity.

From Party-to-Party to People-to-People Solidarity

The relationship between South Africa and Côte d'Ivoire is at a historic high. Our governments cooperate diplomatically and economically. But party-to-party relations, as the ANC–RHDP Political School showed, offer something even more profound, i.e., the opportunity to build ideological, strategic, and grassroots-level solidarity.

The MoU being finalised between our two parties must not become a document filed away in archives. It must live in joint campaigns, shared policy development, exchanges of young leaders, women's forums, governance innovation platforms, and united action at the multilateral fora, including but not limited to the African Union and United Nations.

We must speak with one voice as African progressives. Not just about what we reject – imperialism, exploitation, coups, armed conflicts, corruption, etc. – but about what we are building: an

African continent that is free, democratic, prosperous, peaceful, and progressively led by its people.

A Final Reflection: Let the Work Continue

As I boarded the flight home, I felt deeply moved by the experience. The work we began in Abidjan is not complete. It is only the beginning. But it affirmed something I have always believed: the renewal of African politics will not come from foreign consultants or donor-funded NGOs. It will come from committed cadres in our own ranks; cadres who study, who struggle, who build and tirelessly serve with diligence and humility.

The ANC has no choice but to renew. That renewal must be led not from the top down, but from the inside out, that is, from the branches to the NEC, from the youth to the veterans, from the classrooms of political education and training to the corridors of power.

Let us truly commit to that renewal.

Let us raise our ideological clarity, rebuild our ethical base, strengthen our institutions, and mobilise a new generation of leaders.

Let us continue the work of true socioeconomic freedom, not as a memory, but as a living mission.

Let the work continue!

Amandla!!! ■

Kefentse Mkhari is a Public Relations and Communications coordinator at the OR Tambo School of Leadership. He was one of the ANC Delegates to the RHDP–ANC Joint Political School.

Imam Khomeini:

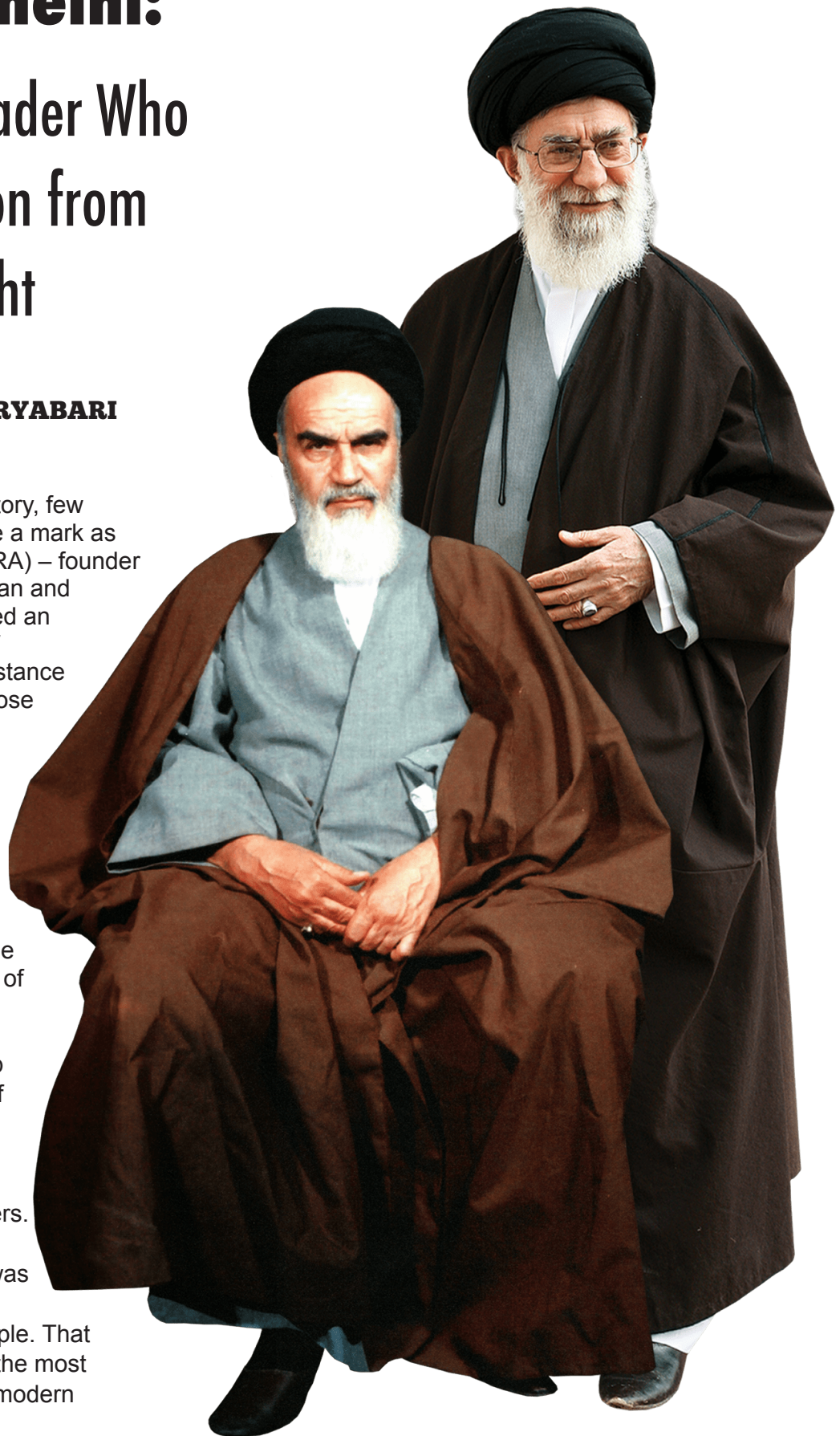
The Revered Leader Who Rescued a Nation from Darkness to Light

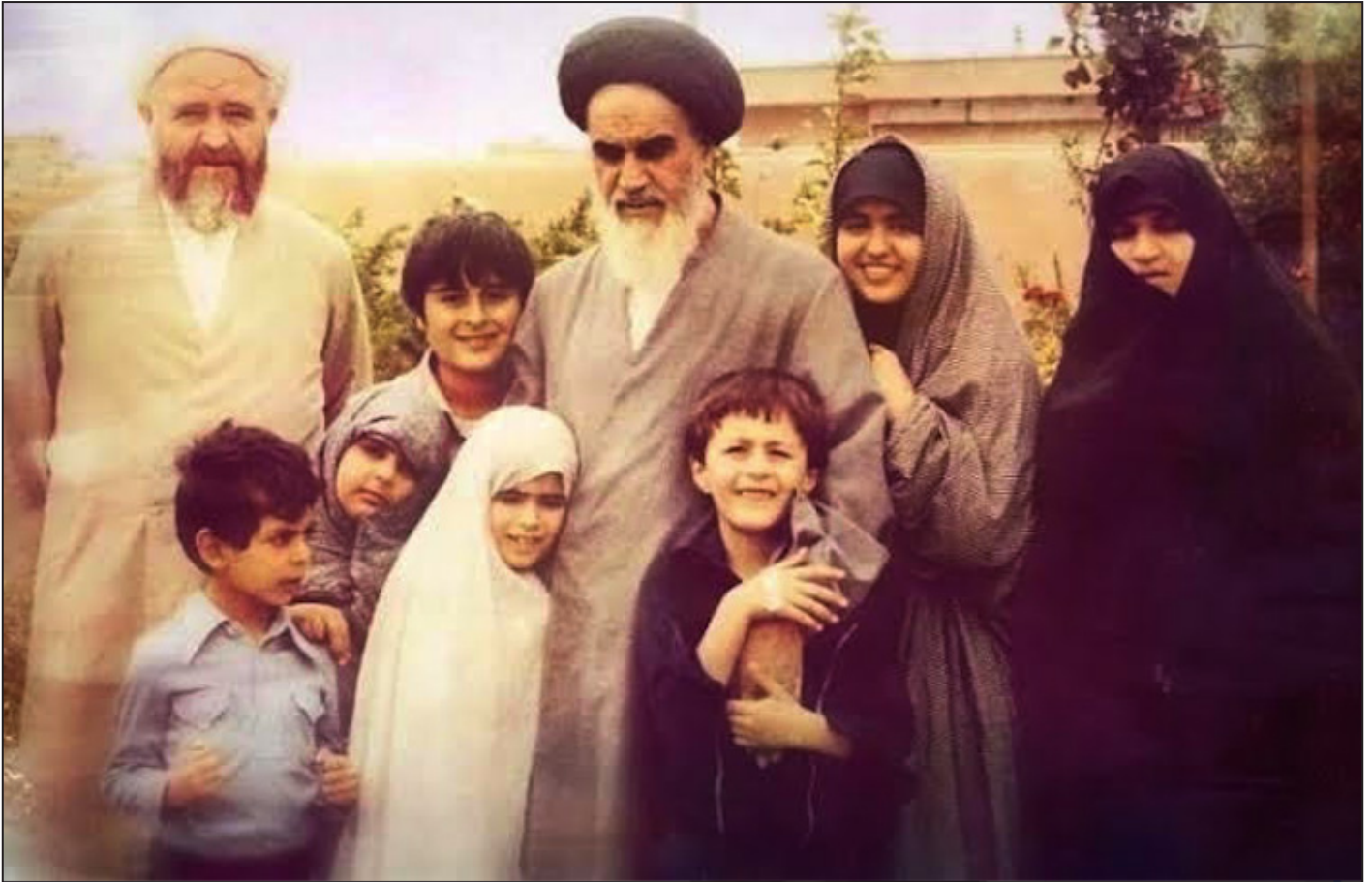
■ By **DR MUSTAFA DARYABARI**

IN the annals of modern history, few figures have left as indelible a mark as Imam Ruhollah Khomeini (RA) – founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the towering leader who ushered an oppressed nation into an era of independence, dignity and resistance against global tyranny. Even those who once perceived him as an adversary now regard him with a level of reverence, if not admiration, for the sheer conviction and clarity with which he led a seismic revolution.

This week we commemorate the 36th anniversary of the demise of Imam Khomeini.

When Imam Khomeini stood up against the autocratic regime of Reza Shah Pahlavi, many dismissed him as a lone cleric daring to confront the might of monarchy and its foreign backers. But what he carried was far greater than military arms – it was unwavering faith in God and an unbreakable bond with the people. That bond would soon ignite one of the most remarkable transformations in modern geopolitical history.





The Iran that Imam Khomeini inherited was shackled: morally, politically and economically. A once-proud civilization had been reduced to a client state, its resources exploited and its culture suppressed. But with an unflinching resolve, the Imam guided the Iranian people out of a dark alley of foreign domination and moral decline into a path of self-reliance, spiritual revival and national sovereignty.

It was not just a political revolution; it was a reawakening of identity and belief. The Imam restored a sense of pride and purpose to the Iranian people. He instilled in them the belief that dignity could not be negotiated and that a nation could indeed chart its own destiny; not through the barrel of a gun but through the power of faith and unity.

Despite facing relentless pressure

from global powers, the Islamic Republic of Iran not only survived but thrived. Sanctions, economic warfare and attempts at diplomatic isolation were intended to break the spirit of a nation. Instead, they became a crucible through which Iran forged new strengths. From scientific innovation to military self-sufficiency, from nanotechnology to satellite launches, Iran has emerged as one of the most technologically advanced countries in the region – all while standing firm on its ideological and sovereign principles.

One can only imagine what path Iran might have taken had Imam Khomeini not risen to confront the Shah's regime. Would the nation have remained in the clutches of dependency and moral erosion? Would it have forfeited its cultural soul for fleeting material comfort? Would it have been as unflinching in its support for Palestine

as it is today? These questions underscore the magnitude of his intervention.

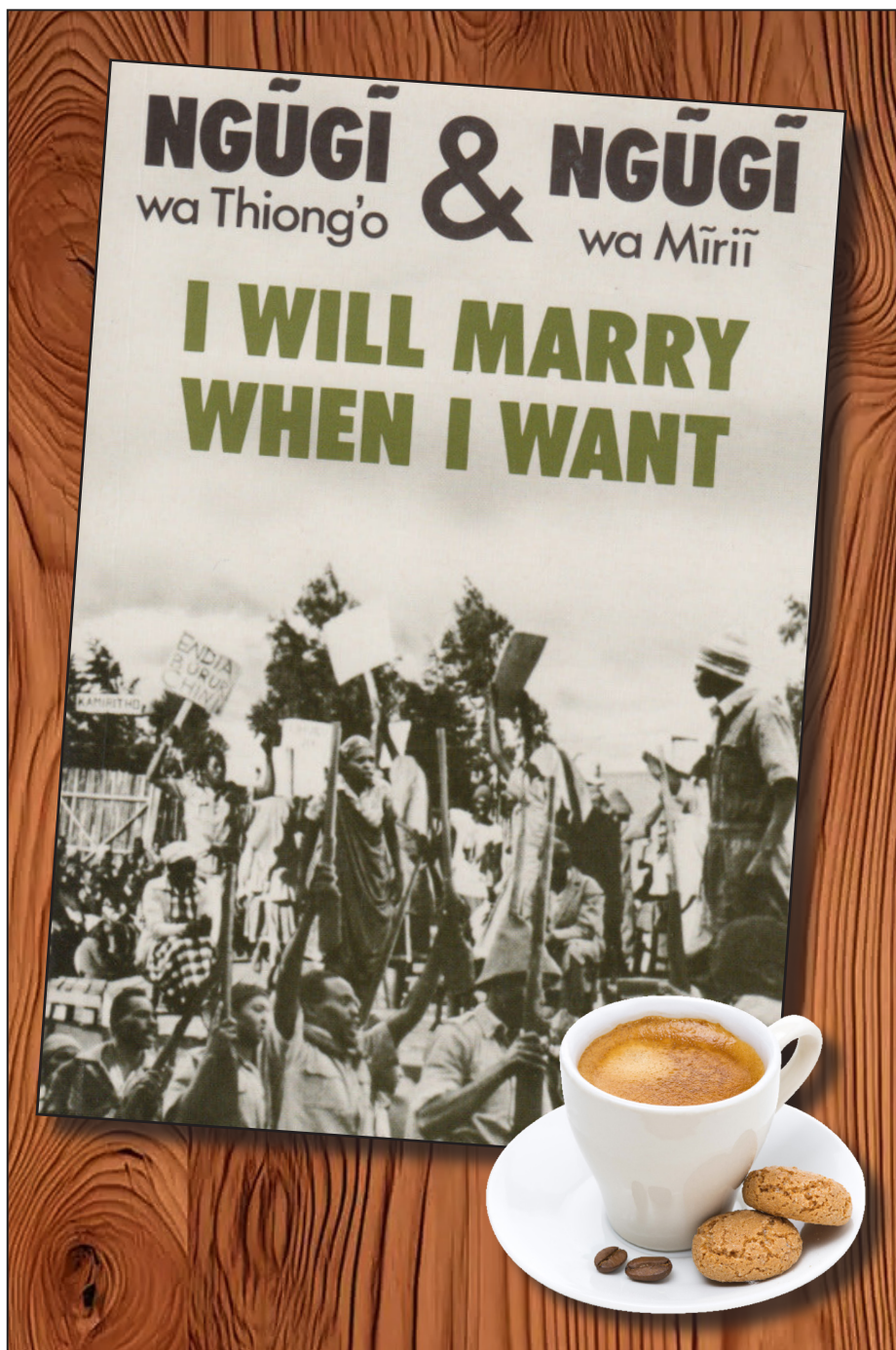
Imam Khomeini's legacy lives not just in the political structure he helped create but in the resilience of a people who now know the value of independence and the price of freedom. He proved that courage in the face of tyranny, guided by divine faith, can reshape the course of history.

Today, as nations across the world grapple with injustice, occupation and moral confusion, Imam Khomeini's life stands as a beacon; a testimony that true leadership is not about yielding to power but standing firm for what is right, no matter the cost.

Dr Daryabari is the Cultural Counselor in the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in South Africa.

I Will Marry When I Want: A Twist of Tale

■ By **BUSANI NGCAWENI**



SOMETIME in the late 90s we came across a book titled *I Will Marry When I Want* by the recently departed sage, **Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o**. We were finishing university, excited, staring at an uncertain future in liberated South Africa. Affirmative action laws were in the making, becoming an economic reality some few years later in the new century. Some chaotic policies were implemented which restructured government, with thousands of teachers exiting the system and nurses leaving the country for England and the Middle East. We had joined the WTO and widely opened the economy prematurely, causing an unemployment bloodbath. Anglo American, the country's largest industrial company, reset manufacturing assets, retrenching hundreds of workers in factories like Mooi River Textiles. Lion Match, a pride of blue-collar workers in Durban, was retrenching (electrifying the country meant less use of matches for lighting candles and paraffin lamps).

Yes there was excitement in the country with rapid changes. But we were aware of the socio-economic realities. And so the expectation that finishing degrees was a step towards

winding down the curtain from the dating scene was a stretch. The girls didn't directly say so – that they wanted to settle. Neither did the parents. But we were aware of the imminent expectation.

Therein comes *Ngũgĩ*. Without opening a single page, understanding neither content nor context, the book became a sword and a shield in our fragile hands. We were ready to use any primitive and modern approach to spear fighting. We stabbed at the slightest provocation: “*I will marry when I want.*” We lifted the shield and made sure the face was fully covered so that no body language reading could take place because we were clear that although we were hyperactive in the dating scene, we would marry when we wanted. It was jocular.

We had agency. We could dare. *Ngũgĩ* armed us. Having read his other novels and plays in literature classes earlier, we could not be questioned, especially by natural science, engineering and commerce students and graduates who had serious deficits when it came to discourse analysis and the abuse of language. We twisted the tale to good effect.

It would take years before we opened the pages of the classic to understand the context and content of the title.

Penned with ***Ngũgĩ wa Mirii***, the play is not about marriage in a romantic sense. Marriage in the play is a metaphor for freedom of choice, autonomy and resistance against manipulation by the powerful in Kenyan society who, like in other post-co-



lonial societies, were subverting freedom by looting resources. The focus of the play is on economic oppression, social justice and the failure of the democratic dispensation to bring true liberation to ordinary Kenyans. At the time of its writing (1977), 14 years after Madaraka (self-rule) and the declaration of the Republic, the country was in a nervous condition.

I Will Marry When I Want is a wide window into vexing issues of class inequality, land ownership, corruption, exploitation and the betrayal of independence ideals.

The context of the book is economic and social systems of a post-colony being dominated by the local elite aligned with foreign interests. The story centres on Kĩgũũnda and his wife Wangeci, working-class peasants who struggled to maintain dignity and ownership of their small piece of land in a society increasingly controlled by the wealthy elite. Truly speaking, it is a condemnation of neo-colonialism, an insidious system where the local ruling class and foreign capitalists continued to exploit the poor despite the end of formal British rule. The

play denounces the hypocrisy of religious institutions and the betrayal by Kenyan elites who enriched themselves at the expense of the people they once claimed to represent.

I know you are now thinking about Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Congo, Senegal, Angola, Malawi and South Africa. Yes, in their own variants, they too have Kĩgũũnda and Wangeci, victims of the post-colonial elites looting state resources, and the democratic indifference of politicians. You are not wrong.

In a way we had Kĩgũũnda and Wangeci in our dating episode, duped. We twisted the title meaninglessly.

In a sense the play was a chronicle of a death foretold for South Africa because in about the same years as after Kenya's independence, we too would go through a Kĩgũũnda and Wangeci moment, shattering dreams by industrialising corruption, stunting the economy and crippling local governments. Scammers and rapists parading as prophets are on rampage. That is our socio-economic reality as we bid final farewell to Africa's doyen of literature. ■

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

07—13 June 2025

Source: SA History Online, O'Malley Archives, Africa Today/Yesterday, The Africa Factbook and Amazwi SA Museum of Literature

7 June 1914

Father of Nigerian Church music made Master of Music

Thomas King Ekuyandoyo Phillips, is made organist and Master of Music at the Cathedral Church of Christ in Lagos. He composed two solo works based on local folks songs, and his 1953 book Yoruba Music was the first study of African music by a university trained African musicologist. Phillips did a baccalaureate degree of music at Trinity College in London.

7 June 1917

Addis-Djibouti railroad inaugurated

The railroad between Addis Ababa and Djibouti is inaugurated, boosting Ethiopian trade by providing the land-locked country a rail route to the sea.

7 June 1942

Muammar Gaddafi born



Former President of Libya (1969-2011) was born on this day in Qasr Abu Hadi. A nationalist who pursued the goal of an independent Libya, as a united Arab republic, came to power through a coup d'état. Committed to socialism and nationalism, he ruled in accordance with his Third International Theory, contained in his simplified Green Book, first published in 1975. Gaddafi also played an important role in the African continent, and in the formation of the African Union, in the context of the Grand Debate about African unity. In 2011, NATO invaded Libya, and Gaddafi was killed during the invasion in 2011.

7 June 1951

Pixley ka Isaka Seme passed on



Pixley ka Isaka Seme died in Johannesburg on 7 June 1951. He was a political activist, journalist, lawyer and a co-founder of the

African National Congress (ANC). His funeral service was conducted by the bishop of Johannesburg, Ambrose Reeves, on 17 June. Tributes were made by, among others, Chief Albert Luthuli, A. B. Xuma, Z. K. Matthews and D. D. T. Jabavu, a representative of the Swazi monarch and the secretary of native affairs. When a tombstone was unveiled at his grave in 1984 Mangosuthu Buthelezi spoke.

7 June 1953

Johnny Clegg born



Johnny Clegg, renowned South African and global music icon was born in England in 1953 to an English father and a Zimbabwean mother. He left England for Zimbabwe where he lived until the age of seven. He and his mother immigrated to South Africa following her marriage to a South African Journalist. Owing to his step father's job as a crime reporter, Clegg became exposed to township life when he would

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

accompany him on assignments. It was at this stage that Clegg met Sipho Mchunu, the man who would later become his music partner, when they formed the band Juluka.

7 June 1981.

July's People published

South African Nobel Literature Laureate, Nadine Gordimer (1923-2014) published her highly acclaimed novel, *July's People*, about a white family seeking refuge in their former worker's rural village in the midst of a civil war.

8 June 1948

George Orwell's 1984 published

George Orwell's dystopian novel 1984, was published in England on this day. The novel is set in a future dark ages of totalitarianism, the use of the African continent as a battle ground for western and eastern superpowers, fighting proxy wars and wars of conquest.

8 June 1960

Augustine Neto arrested

Angolan activist Antonio Agostinho Neto, president of the MPLA was arrested by Portuguese authorities. His medical patients and supporters marched to seek his release. The police fired on unarmed demonstrators, killing 30 protesters, in an event known as the Massacre of Icolo e Bengo.

8 June 1963

Naledi High School founded

Naledi High School, the site where historic anti-Bantu Education student uprisings were first felt, commemorated 50th anniversary on 8 June 2013. On 8 June 1976, security police ar-



rived at Naledi High School and attempted to arrest the leader of the local branch of the South Africa Students Movement (SASM), Enos Ngutshane. In retaliation, students stoned the police and burned their car. The students were unhappy about being compelled to use Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. On 16 June 1976, unrest broke out at Naledi High School and Tsietsi Mashinini led the peaceful protest of learners in Soweto, in what became known as the June 16 uprising.

8 June 1988

Four ANC cadres killed near Piet Retief

On 8 June 1988, Surendra Lenny Naidu, Lindiwe Mthembu, Makho-si Nyoka and Nontsikelelo Cothoza, all African National Congress (ANC) members were shot dead when their car was ambushed at Piet Retief on the eastern Transvaal (now Mpumalanga) border. Eugene de Kock appeared before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in connection with their murder.

8 June 1998

General Sani Abacha of Nigeria died

General Sani Abacha, the 10th President of Nigeria died at the Presidential palace in Abuja, allegedly from poison, though no autopsy was committed. Abacha was the first soldier in Nigeria to reach General level, without skip-

ping a single rank. He was Minister of Defense when he seized power from a transitional government in 1993. Abacha's rule saw significant growth of the Nigeria economy (ending privatization, reducing inflation rate from 54% to 8.5%, investing in road infrastructure, reforming the insurance industry to support SMMEs), but also by political crisis such as the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa under his leadership.

8 June 2019

Gautrain starts journey



The express commuter light rail train, known as Gautrain is opened to the public, the initial phase, including from OR Tambo International Airport to Tshwane runs for 8 kilometer.

9 June 1953

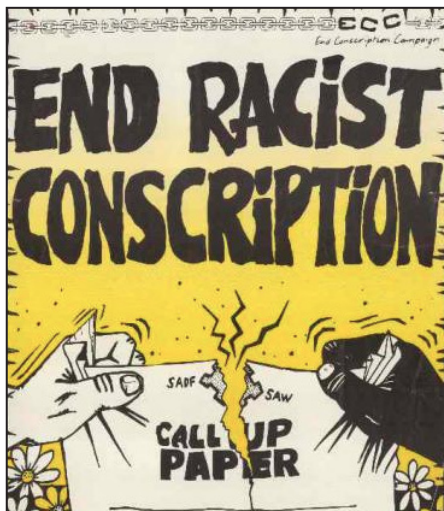
Calestous Juma born

Professor Calestous Juma (1953-2017) Pan African economist, scientist and academic was born in Port Victoria, Kenya. He was noted for his work on sustainable development, technologies and developing economies, and wrote a number of books on various topics. His most notable work is titled 'The New Harvest: Agricultural Innovation in Africa.'

9 June 1967

Military service becomes compulsory for White men

The Defence Amendment Bill, designed to make military service compulsory for White young



men, was passed on 9 June 1967 – with the support of the opposition. Conscription was instituted in South Africa in the form of 9 months of service for all white males between the ages of 17 and 65 years old. Conscripts became members of the South African Defence Force (SADF), or the South African Police (SAP). They were used to enforce the government's stance against liberation movements, anti-apartheid activists and the 'communist threat'. In 1972, conscription (national service) was increased from 9 months to 1 year, as well as 19 days of service annually for 5 years as part of the Citizen Force. The End Conscription Campaign was formed in 1983 to campaign against white conscription and to call for troops out of the townships and from neighbouring countries.

9 June 1983 MK cadres executed

On 9 June 1983, uMkhonto we-Sizwe (MK) operatives, Jerry Moolodi, Terry Mogoerane and Thabo Motaung were executed for their part in a hit on Wonderboom police station. The ANC declared the execution a crime against humanity and defended the attack on the police station as an act of liberation. It called for the MK operatives to be treated as prisoners

of war under the protection of the Geneva Convention.

9 June 1994 Waku Kungu School bombing

As the Angolan civil war drew to an end, government planes mistakenly bombed a school in Waku Kungu in the mistaken belief that it was a UNITA base, killing 89 children.

9 June 2011 85% of Kilimanjaro snow cover disappeared

Measurements show that 85% of snow cover of Mount Kilimanjaro has disappeared since the first measurement taken a century before in October 1912.

10 June 1921 Anti-colonial Young Kikuyu Association formed

Father of Kenyan nationalism, Harry Thuku forms the Young Kikuyu Association to oppose British colonialism and return stolen lands to Africans. He changed the name to the East African Association to unite Kenyans.

10 June 1906 Chief Bambatha killed



The Bambatha Rebellion of 1906 was led by Bambatha ka

Mancinza (c. 1860–1906), leader of the Zondi clan of the Zulu people, who lived in the Mpanza Valley (now a district near Greytown, KwaZulu-Natal) against British rule and taxation in the Colony of Natal, South Africa. On 10 June, a large militia from Durban, Johannesburg and the Cape under Colonel McKenzie engaged the Bambatha troops along the Mome stream near the Nkandla forest. In a half-hour's engagement, Bambatha's followers were massacred, and nearly 600 lives were shed. Bambatha's body was decapitated. Several influential chiefs continued resistance in the Lower Thukela River area until July, but the rebellion was effectively crushed. Over the next six months 5 000 dissidents were arrested, tried and some eventually served life sentences.

10 June 1962. Science fiction author Ahmed Khaled Tawfik born

Ahmed Khaled Tawfik Farrag was an Egyptian author and a physician who wrote more than 200 books, in both Egyptian Arabic and Classical Arabic. He was the first contemporary writer of horror and science fiction in the Arabic speaking world and also the first writer to explore the medical thriller genre. Tawfik is considered by many to have been one of the most influential writers of his time.

10 June 1983 Bloukrans Bridge opens

The Bloukrans Bridge, joining Eastern and Western Cape, previously reached through the Bloukrans pass opens on this day. The 216 high metre bridge is the world's highest single-span bridge, and known for bungee jumping.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

10 June 1990

Miriam Makeba returns after 31 years in exile



After spending 31 years in exile, living across Africa and the world and a fierce campaigner against apartheid, Mam Miriam Makeba returned home on this day, after the unbanning of organisations. Her music became synonymous with the South African struggle for freedom, and after her return home, she continued her music career and activism, until she passed on at a concert in 2008. Her music remains amongst the African and global classics.

10 June 2016

Dar es Salaam introduced bus rapid transit system

The Tanzanian city of Dar es Salaam introduced a fleet of 18-meter long buses to ease traffic congestion on the capital's roads, where commuters would spend up to eight hours in traffic. The bus rapid transport system which was introduced in 6 phases, started in 2012. Nearly 180,000 daily commuters used the system by 2017, with the 140 Golden Dragon buses

11 June 1892

Sherlock Holmes star born in Johannesburg

Actor Basil Rathbone, one of the movies greatest Sherlock

Holmes was born in Johannesburg. The family fled to Britain when the Boers in the Transvaal Republic accused his father of being a spy. Rathbone became a Shakespearian actor before venturing to Hollywood.

11 June 1912

Midwife Pauline Berthé born

Malian midwife and pioneer in women's health, Pauline Berthé was born in Sikasso, French Sudan. She also practiced in Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire and in 1972 was awarded Mali's highest National Order.

11 June 1932

Athol Fugard born

South African director, actor and writer, considered amongst the country's greatest playwrights was born in Middleburg, Eastern Cape. Fugard grew up in Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) and is known for his anti-apartheid work such as Boesman and Lena (1969), Master Harold and the Boys (1982) and Sizwe Bansi is Dead.

11 June 1953

Chuka Massacre

British captured and executed 20 people suspected of being Mau Mau fighters in Chuka, Kenya. No one was ever held accountable for the massacre.

11 June 1963

African Women's Development Fund founder born

Nigerian feminist activist, Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi was born on this day in Liverpool, England. She co-founded the African Women's Development Fund, which



to date trained over 6000 women across the continent. Most went on to occupy senior positions in their countries.

11 June 1963

President Tshisekedi born

President of the DRC, Felix Tshisekedi was born on this day in Kinshasa. A member of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDSP) since his youth, he was elected in 2018, marking the end of the Kabila government which ruled the country since 1997, the first peaceful transition of power in the country.

11 June 1988

British Anti-Apartheid Movement hosts Mandela Concert

On 11 June 1988, the British Anti-Apartheid Movement (BAAM) held an 11-hour rock concert at Wembley Stadium in London to pay tribute to Nelson Mandela on his 70th birthday on the 18th of July. Peter Gabriel delivered his anti-apartheid anthem Biko. Whitney Houston, Phil Collins, Miriam Makeba, Hugh Masekela, Simple Minds, Eurythmics and Dire Straits also performed. 72,000 people went to the concert and it was broadcast live on BBC-2 to sixty different countries with an estimated audience of a billion people.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

11 June 1977

Police arrest Student leader Dan Montsitsi



Almost a year after the June 16 Soweto Student Uprising, Security Police announced the arrest of Soweto Students' Representative Council (SSRC) leader Dan Sechaba Montsitsi. Four NUSAS members were also arrested for the same reason, namely plans to commemorate the Soweto uprisings. Dan Montsitsi went on to become a leader of the civic and mass movement, and a member of parliament after 1994. He passed on in August 2021.

11 June 2010

Opening game of the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup in South Africa

Opening of the FIFA Soccer World Cup Finals in 2010, the first to be held in Africa, with the match between South Africa and Mexico (1:1 draw). Later that day France played against Uruguay in the second match of the day, also with a draw and no goals.

12 June 1917

Ansuyah Ratipul Singh, medical doctor, community worker, poet born

On 12 June 1917, Dr Ansuyah Ratipul Singh, medical doctor, novelist and community worker, was born in Durban. She moved to Lon-



don where she completed her degree in Medicine at the University of Edinburgh in 1944. In 1946, Dr Singh returned to South Africa and became involved in the Passive Resistance Movement in Durban. She published numerous professional articles. Although Dr Singh was known for her medical work, she was also known as a novelist and the author of two three-act plays; with *Behold the Earth Mourns* (1961) her most well-known. Dr Singh also lectured widely to students on a range of topics ranging from health and family planning, to the arts and the role of women in the Indian community. Dr Singh was also an accomplished pianist,

and a talented amateur dramatist. She continued her medical work until her death in 1979.

12 June 1963

Coldest day in Pretoria

The coldest day in Pretoria in recent history was on 12 June 1963. The temperatures plummeted to a minimum of -3, 6 and a maximum of 7, 5 degrees Centigrade. It had been a 110 years since temperatures were that low and it has never been as cold since.

12 June 1964

Rivonia Trial judgment delivered

The Rivonia trial, which changed the course of South African history, judgment was delivered on this day. Eight of the accused Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki, Walter Sisulu, Andrew Mlangeni, Dennis Goldberg, Raymond Mhlaba, Elias Motsoaledi and James Kantor were found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment in the Pretoria Supreme



The Rivonia Trial ends

Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, Elias Motsoaledi, Andrew Mlangeni, Raymond Mhlaba and Dennis Goldberg are found guilty on all four charges and sentenced to life imprisonment. Ahmed Kathrada is found guilty on one charge of conspiracy while Lionel Bernstein is found not guilty. He is later re-arrested, released on bail, and placed under house arrest.



Court. The accused may have received the death penalty, but for a national and global campaign to prevent this.

12 June 2005

Rain Queen Makobo Modjadji VI passes on



On 12 June 2005, Rain Queen Makobo Modjadji VI died in a hospital in Polokwane, Limpopo Province. Rain Queen Modjadji VI is a direct descendent of one of the royal houses of Monomotapa, which ruled over the Zimbabwean people in the 15th and 16th century. Rain Queen Modjadji VI began her reign in April 2003 when she succeeded

her grandmother Mokope Modjadji V. Makobo Modjadji VI is the first Rain Queen to have received formal education, and went on to complete high school. The legend of the Rain Queen has been told for centuries, as even Shaka Zulu is said to have asked for her blessing. As the name suggests, the Rain Queen is responsible for bringing rain, and directs an annual rainmaking ceremony in her royal compound. The legend of the Rain Queen was also popularized by the books '*King Solomon's Mines*' and '*She*' by author H. Rider Haggard, which drew the world's attention to the role of the Rain Queen of the Balobedu people.

13 June 1964

Nelson Mandela and fellow Rivonia Trialists arrived on Robben Island

Nelson Mandela arrives on Robben Island to start his lifelong sentence, along with fellow Rivonia trialists – Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Elias Motsoaledi and Andrew Mlangeni.



Dennis Goldberg was separated from the group because he was white, and served his sentence in Pretoria.

13 June 1912

South Africa Defense Act paves way for Union defense force

The South Africa Defense Act was passed, and the Union Defense Forces (UDF) formed, integrating forces from the two British colonies and two Boer Republic that formed the Union of SA in 1910. This was the forerunner of the South African Defense Force and after 1994, the non-racial and non-sexist SANDF.



The future belongs to our youth.
As some of us near the end of our political careers, **younger people must take over.** They **must seek and cherish the most basic condition for peace**, namely **unity in our diversity** and **finding lasting ways** to that goal.”

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

07—13 June 2025

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

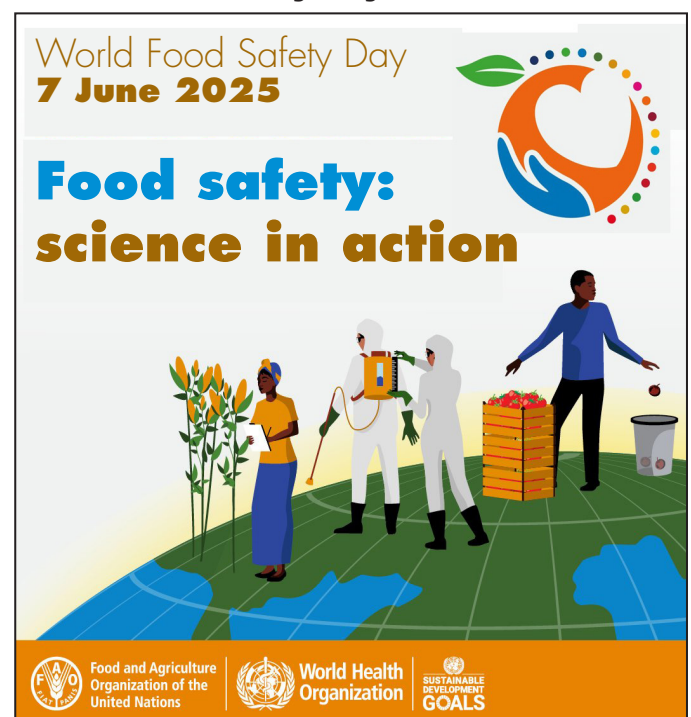
7 June Africa Border Day



A year after the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) was formed in 1963, it adopted a resolution where countries agreed to “*the principle of the respect of borders existing on achievement of national independence*”, in order to prevent costly border wars between newly independent countries. These borders were of course largely based on colonial borders decided at the Berlin conference, and are therefore often arbitrary, dividing villages, communities and peoples. As a result, although there was/is OAU/AU agreement on the principle, in practice there has been a number of border dispute between countries, which had to be resolved either through mediation or settled through the International Court of Justice. In 2007, the African Union Ministers in charge of Border issues adopted the Addis Ababa Declaration on the African Union Border Programme, which became a section within the Peace and Security Department. The same declaration designated 7 June as **African**

Border Day, with the aim to ‘transforming African borders from barriers to bridges.’

7 June World Food Safety Day



World Food Safety Day is celebrated annually on 7 June to draw attention and mobilize action to prevent, detect and manage foodborne risks and improve human health. The theme for 2025 is **Food safety: science in action**. Science is at the heart of food safety. It helps us understand what makes food unsafe and guides us on how to prevent foodborne diseases. The theme draws attention to the use of scientific knowledge as key to reducing illness, cutting costs and saving lives. Last year, we had several incidences of school children getting sick from eating contaminated snacks bought from street vendors, with some unfortunately dying from consuming the poisoned snacks. This prompted quick action from government to ensure food safety. The Nation-

al Department of Health requires that all foodstuffs shall be safe for human consumption in terms of the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectant Act, 1972 (FCD Act). This Act addresses the manufacture, labelling, sale and importation of foodstuffs. The food control section within the department is responsible for ensuring the safety of food in South Africa. This service is based on the basic needs of communities and the right of South Africans to make informed food choices without being misled.

8 June

World Oceans Day

During the Rio Earth Summit, participants and activists advocated for World Oceans Day, to raise awareness about also protecting the oceans as an integral part of our planet's ecosystems. In 2008, the UN thus declared 8 June as World Oceans Day. The ocean connects, sustains, and supports us all. Yet its health is at a tipping point and so is the wellbeing of all that depends on it. As the past years have shown us, we need to work together to create a new balance with the ocean that no longer depletes its bounty but instead restores its vibrancy and brings it new life. The World Oceans Day 2025 theme is as follows: ***"Catalysing Action for Our Ocean & Climate"***. It's a call to action to get everyone involved in the conservation of our precious oceans for future generations.

12 June

World Day Against Child Labour

Every 12 June, the International Labour Organization joins forces with ILO constituents and partners around the world to commemorate the World Day Against Child Labour. This year's theme, ***"Progress is clear, but there's more to do: let's speed up efforts!"*** reflects both the progress achieved and the urgency to intensify action to meet global targets. The 2025 World Day will focus on a key



milestone: the release of the 2025 global estimates and trends of child labour. This ILO and UNICEF joint report will provide a comprehensive overview of where we stand in our global commitments to eliminate child labour. Although the detailed data are not yet available, the estimates and trends identified will guide policy debates and calls for renewed commitment and investment.

11 June

World Knit in Public Day

Although we now buy most of our jerseys and woolen clothes ready-made, knitting remains a creative way for thousands across the world to make something with their own hands. Knitting is not only creative, but also relaxing and World Knit in Public Day bring together knitters, men and women, young and old, to share their love of knitting. South Africans use this day to also do the ***"67 blankets for Madiba"***, to contribute warm knitted blankets to homeless people.

13 June

World Albinism Awareness Day



People with albinism face multiple forms of discrimination worldwide. Albinism is still profoundly misunderstood, socially and medically. The physical appearance of persons with albinism is often the object of erroneous beliefs and myths influenced by superstition, which foster their marginalization and social exclusion. This leads to various forms of stigma and discrimination. In some communities, erroneous beliefs and myths, heavily influenced by superstition, put the security and lives of persons with albinism at constant risk. These beliefs and myths are centuries old and are present in cultural attitudes and practices around the world. One of the most prominent South African persons living with Albinism was ANC leader from the North West, Reverend OJ Tselapedi.