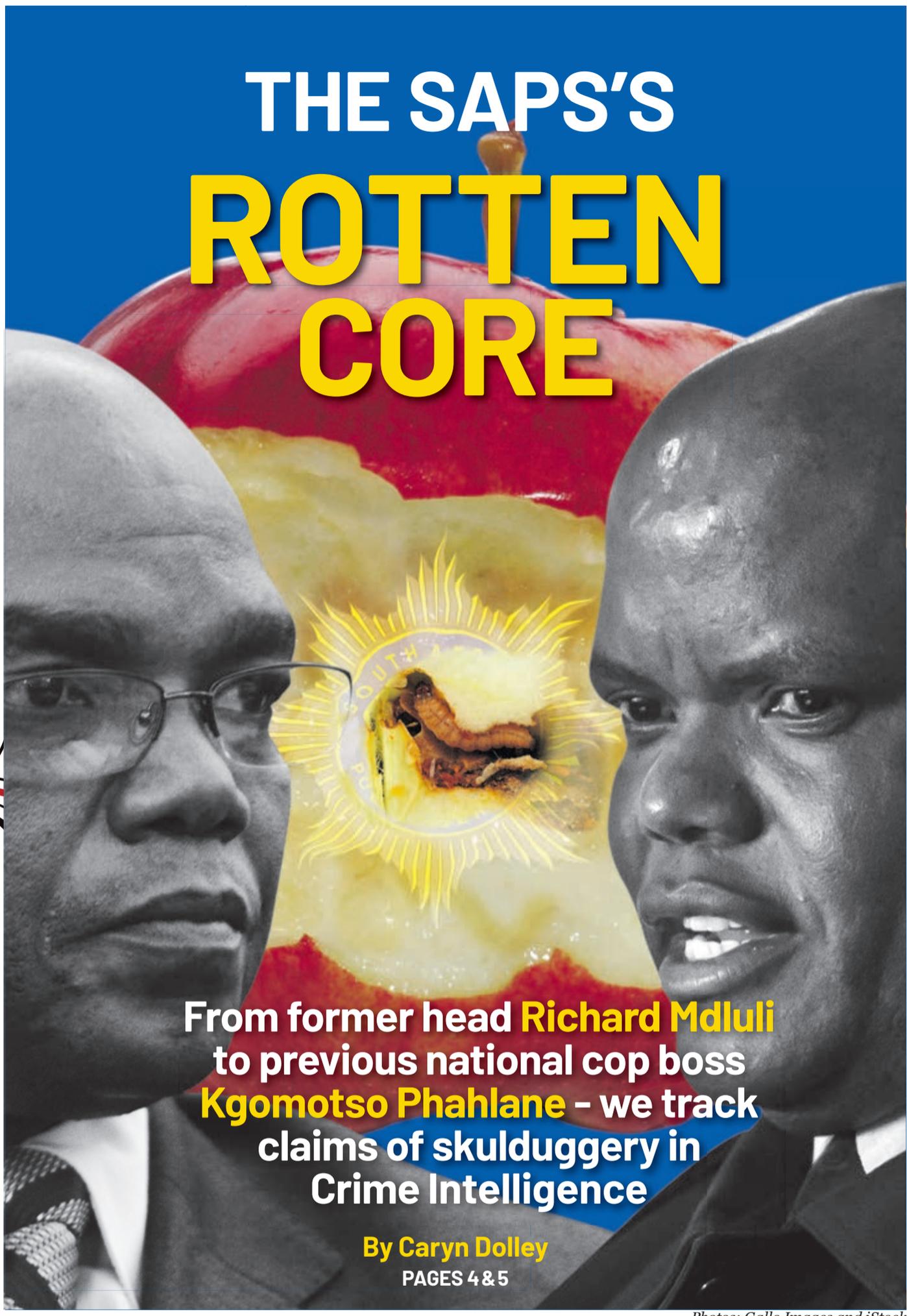




Back to the future. We're two and still madder than a bag of snakes!

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THE SAPS'S
ROTTEN CORE

From former head **Richard Mdluli** to previous national cop boss **Kgomotso Phahlane** - we track claims of skulduggery in Crime Intelligence

By Caryn Dolley
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Photos: Gallo Images and iStock

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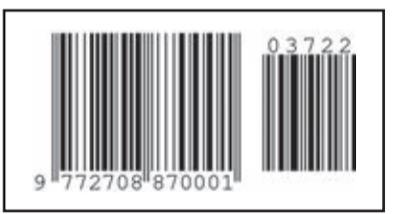
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Darkness sheds light on the sorry state of SA

Dear DM168 readers,

What a helluva week this has been. I had to laugh at the exasperation of my 16-year-old son as we were stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic yet again, vainly trying to get him to school on time.

"Mom, I go to sleep, there are no lights. I wake up, there are no lights. I come home from school, there are no lights. Now I realise our country is totally messed up."

Shame. My son is the way all children should be, immersed in his life of music, school, friends, fun and anime, with a dash of emergent social justice thrown in. The daily dread of corruption and political failure that has been the focus of my work over the past few years had kind of passed him by until now, when the powers that be led us to our state of Stage 5 and 6 powerlessness.

Late though my son's realisation is, yes, we are messed up in so many ways. Let me remind you of just a few examples we worked

on at *Daily Maverick* this week. These endless blackouts. Jacob Zuma's desperation to avoid facing the music, now using private prosecution against prosecutor Billy Downer and journalist Karyn Maughan. The collapse of our hospitals, ever-expanding hunger and poverty, the corruption in every single government department and, in particular, the South African Police Service, which is meant to serve and protect.

The cloud of dollars floating out of cushions at Cyril Ramaphosa's Phala Phala game farm, for which opposition parties are still demanding an explanation. For those of us living on a wage or nothing at all, so much cash stashed in cushions sounds like a Mario Puzo bestseller, with his Mafia characters on an African safari.

The Mafia analogy is pertinent, as my colleague Ferial Haffajee revealed this week. She wrote about a Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime report that ranks South Africa 19th in the world for the

proliferation of organised crime. We are now worse than Mexico, Somalia and Libya. The report's authors offer a sliver of hope: we can turn the tide by getting our law in order.

In this week's front-page story our wonderful crime intelligence writer Caryn Dolley delves into illuminating court documents that chart the rot of alleged corruption that goes to the very top of the SAPS. The good news is that arrests have been made. We have embarked on a long journey to weed out the crooked, but it has started.

Write to me at heather@dailymaverick.co.za to share your thoughts or join a national conversation on DM168's Readers' page.

Yours in defence of truth,
Heather

PS: Today's edition marks DM168's second year. The paper is officially a toddler!



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Cops' arrests reveal depth of the

Top police officers and businessmen accused in draft indictment of an array of corrupt practices including collusion, wiping call records and failing to report deviations from tender procedure. By **Caryn Dolley**

Senior police officers procured software that would make it impossible for investigators to get their phone call records – at a time when the country's top cop was under investigation for irregular procurement.

This and other examples of how badly the Crime Intelligence Division of the South African Police Service (SAPS) was allegedly manipulated are becoming clearer as more high-ranking cops are arrested.

This week former acting national police commissioner Kgomotso Phahlane, who already faces corruption charges in another case, was taken into custody along with three serving Crime Intelligence officers and two businessmen.

The six, released on bail and expected back in a Pretoria court in December, face charges of fraud, corruption, theft and contravening the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA). The charges relate to two police tenders issued in December 2016, worth about R54-million and linked to mobile communication encryption.

False intelligence

In his final report on State Capture, released in June, Chief Justice Raymond Zondo referred to false intelligence emanating from Crime Intelligence, saying it could "destabilise the country".

This, together with the latest charges against police, hints at the extent to which Crime Intelligence has been subverted over more than a decade.

Richard Mdluli, appointed to head Crime Intelligence in July 2009, two months after Jacob Zuma became president, faces charges linked to the looting of the division's secret service account. The matter is still playing out in court.

In 2020, the Crime Intelligence boss at the time, Peter Jacobs, was suspended over what he said were bogus allegations. He claimed to have uncovered evidence that cops, including Crime Intelligence colleagues, had been abusing the secret service account for years. He was subsequently transferred out of Crime Intelligence.

In June this year, Parliament heard that the previous police commissioner, Khehla

Sitole, who was forced to step down in March, had received no Crime Intelligence reports ahead of the insurrection of July 2021 that devastated parts of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.

During his State of the Nation address earlier this year, President Cyril Ramaphosa said "critical vacancies" affected by suspensions in Crime Intelligence would be filled.

The division still has only an acting head – Major General Philani Lushaba.

Apart from Phahlane, whom Zuma appointed to act as police commissioner in October 2015 (and whose first name is spelt "Khomotso" in some court documents), those arrested this week are:

- Lieutenant Colonel Godfrey Mahwayi, who heads Crime Intelligence's information technology section;
- Major General Obed Nmutanzhela, who was the head of covert intelligence in Crime Intelligence. He was also the chief financial officer of Crime Intelligence's secret service account;
- Inbanathan Kistiah, the director of Brain Wave Projects 1323 CC trading as I-View Integrated Systems. Earlier this week *Daily Maverick's* Marianne Thamm reported that Kistiah was also being investigated over Crime Intelligence's allegedly unlawful attempt to procure a surveillance device known as a grabber for the inflated price of R45-million (the usual price was R7-million) before the

ANC's elective conference in 2017. This issue was believed to have added to the pressure that led Sitole to step down;

- Avendra Naidoo, who was previously married to Gevani Naidoo, the sole director of Perfect Source Professional Services (Pty) Ltd. Naidoo and Kistiah were allegedly friends. Naidoo had access to Perfect Source's bank account and submitted quotations to Crime Intelligence on its behalf even though he had no written authorisation to incur contractual liability on behalf of the company; and
- Major General Agnes Makhele, who heads Crime Intelligence in the Free State.

A draft indictment against them details what they allegedly got up to.

RIPJAR and #FeesMustFall

The indictment says that on 21 December 2016, Nmutanzhela called a brigadier to his office and showed the officer two requests for procurement that Mahwayi had compiled.

"The documents related to procurement of software for mobile communication encryption or secure mobile communication and social media monitoring which was meant to be used for the #FeesMustFall project," the draft indictment says.

#FeesMustFall is a reference to the student movement that started in October 2015, pushing for free tertiary education.

The draft indictment continues: "[Nmutanzhela] informed [the brigadier] that

SAPS management was facing serious challenges and [Phahlane] had instructed that Division: Crime Intelligence should procure software for secure mobile communication and social media monitoring."

This software was known as RIPJAR.

According to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), it was "intended to collect and monitor information from social media platforms on the instigators of the university students' #FeesMustFall protests".

The draft indictment says that, on Makhele's alleged recommendation, Nmutanzhela applied to deviate from prescribed procurement procedures "alleging that there was an emergency that necessitated the deviation".

But the indictment goes on: "No cogent reasons ... were provided in the application." There was also apparently no reason to state the procurement was urgent.



Left to right: Godfrey Mahwayi, Inbanathan Kistiah, Maanda Obert Nmutanzhela, Avendra Naidoo, Kgomotso Phahlane and Mankosana Agnes Makhele during their appearance at the Specialised Commercial Crimes Court.

Photo: Hloni Mokoena

From 'People's Assembly' to a cop-riddled 'critical infrastructure'

Officers of the South African Police Service inspectorate for critical infrastructure – the ex-national key points – milled about Parliament in the week of 11 September; often armed with clipboards, always asking questions. The national police commissioner also briefed the institution.

It's another step towards supersizing brutalist security measures and includes ad hoc fencing that's cabled-tied to The Arch for The Arch monument honouring the late Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, no-entry signs, precinct escorts and rolls of razor wire.

It's all due to SAPS incompetence.

If trespassers succeed it's because of police ineptitude in the access control they

are traditionally in charge of at the parliamentary gates and around the perimeter. When the 2 January blaze devastated the National Assembly and more, the SAPS was in charge. Patrols of the Parliamentary Protection Services (PPS), the national legislature's in-house service, were cancelled over weekends and public holidays.

It needs to be asked why. And why, nine months later, Parliament has not done its own investigations.

Parliament's presiding officers are in full control of the precinct of the national legislature and the executive's security services may only enter with their "express approval", according to the 2004 Powers, Privileges and Immunities of Parliament and Pro-



FROM THE HOUSE

Marianne Merten



vincial Legislatures Act. It's unlawful for police to operate on the parliamentary precinct without such express permission. Not even summonses are served without prior arrangements and approval.

No less important is that – on public record – Parliament as a whole is not a

national key point, or to use the now legislated correct lingo, critical infrastructure.

Tuynhuys, the presidential offices in the parliamentary precinct, is one, as are the 120 Plein Street ministerial offices, and the so-called Parliament House, effectively the chamber, although it's unclear if that's the National Assembly, Old Assembly or National Council of Provinces.

Many more buildings make up the parliamentary precinct.

The classification emerged from a January 2015 list made public after court action from Right2Know Campaign. It puts Parliament alongside the Union Buildings, the SABC, Onderstepoort, various Transnet pipelines and commercial company-run oil

rot alleged in Crime Intelligence

Phahlane 'didn't tell Treasury'

Phahlane allegedly approved the application to deviate from procurement procedures and "failed to inform National Treasury and the Auditor-General about the deviation and/or procurement within the prescribed period as required by ... the PFMA".

The companies Perfect Source (which the

was a security alarms and surveillance cameras company") submitted written quotations to supply Crime Intelligence with social media monitoring software.

Brain Wave's quotation was dated before Mahwayi compiled and submitted a proposal for Nemutanzhela to approve.

Perfect Source's quotation was dated 20 December 2016, a day before Mahwayi compiled the proposal.

Gevani Naidoo did not compile and sign Perfect Source's quotation. This was done by her ex-husband Avendra Naidoo, allegedly Kistiah's friend.

Fake competition claims

Perfect Source purported to quote nearly R41-million to supply RIPJAR, whereas Brain Wave purported to quote just under R34-million (another company had quoted a fraction of this – R7-million).

"Fictitious competition was created by the submission of

two written price quotations from entities that were related to each other," the draft indictment alleges.

Kistiah's company, Brain Wave, was awarded the contract.

According to the draft indictment, at the same time the proposal for RIPJAR was compiled, so too was a "proposal for the procurement of software for secure encrypted mobile communications or voice encryption system", known as Daedalus.

"The said procurement was also in contravention of the provisions of the PFMA," the indictment says.

Again, it is alleged that Kistiah and Naidoo, in other words Brain Wave Projects and Perfect Source, "misrepresented that they were in competition with each other".

Mahwayi and Nemutanzhela were also accused of misrepresenting that those two companies, as well as a third entity named ISDS, "had submitted written price quotations and were competing for the contract to supply Daedalus".

ISDS had actually not submitted a written quotation, according to the draft indictment.

Kistiah's company was awarded a contract

RIPJAR software	Daedalus software
Purportedly needed in late 2016 to collect and monitor social media platforms relating to the "instigators" of the #FeesMustFall protests.	Purportedly needed in late 2016 for secure encrypted mobile communications or voice encryption systems.
The company Perfect Source, whose sole director was Gevani Naidoo, previously married to accused Avendra Naidoo, along with the company Brain Wave Projects trading as I-View, whose director was accused Inbanathan Kistiah, submitted quotations. Avendra Naidoo and Kistiah were allegedly friends. The two entities allegedly colluded.	Perfect Source and I-View allegedly "misrepresented that they were in competition with each other". A third entity named ISDS was also said to have submitted written price quotations and competed for the contract. But it was later alleged that ISDS had not actually submitted a written quotation.
Kistiah's company got the contract.	Kistiah's company got the contract.
The state alleged there was no urgency in procuring the RIPJAR software, as police had claimed. Former acting national police commissioner Kgomoitso Phahlane allegedly approved an application for deviating from prescribed procurement procedures.	The Daedalus software allegedly prevented investigators who were looking into Phahlane from accessing senior police officers' call records.

Crime Intelligence and a tale of two (allegedly dodgy) tenders. *Information: Draft indictment against Godfrey Mahwayi and six others, and the National Prosecuting Authority.*

to supply Daedalus to Crime Intelligence for R1,197,000 a month.

Mahwayi signed a contract with Kistiah, even though he was not authorised to do so, on behalf of the SAPS. Phahlane, according to the draft indictment, was meant to.

"The irregular expenditures incurred by the Division: Crime Intelligence relating to the procurements referred to above were unlawfully and intentionally not disclosed," the indictment says.

Wiping call records

In the other matter against Phahlane, he and others are accused of corruption and fraud in the "blue lights" case, linked to a tender to supply emergency equipment to the SAPS in 2016.

The NPA issued a statement this week, saying: "The purpose of Daedalus was to encrypt voice calls made by management of the SAPS at the time when Phahlane was under investigation."

The Independent Police Investigative Directorate had been looking into him.

The NPA said: "He was being investigated for the 'blue lights' police tender and other irregular procurement that happened during his tenure.

"Daedalus made it impossible for investigators to get call records from cellphone providers..."

"Daedalus was procured for the sole purpose of encrypting calls and wiping out cellular records and messages."

'Battle for the soul of SAPS'

Phahlane has previously portrayed himself an innocent victim. *Daily Maverick* reported that Phahlane as approached the Public Protector in June to request an investigation of the circumstances surrounding the end of his police career in June 2017 over corruption claims.

Part of his complaint to the Public Protector said: "The 1st of June 2022 brought about a completion of a vicious five-year circle/period of an onslaught, character assassination, assault on one's integrity, abuse of power and authority including insults experienced in a malicious and destructive battle for the soul and control of the South African Police Service waged against Lieutenant General Johannes Khomotso Phahlane."

Meanwhile, the Investigating Directorate is of the view that the arrests of Phahlane and the others this week showed its commitment to rooting out rotten apples in the SAPS.

The head of the Investigating Directorate, advocate Andrea Johnson, said: "The wheels of justice are turning and impunity is no longer a given.

"On the contrary, the rule of law is the most important protection of the weak against the whims of the powerful." **DM168**

NPA described as "a human resource recruitment company") and Brain Wave Projects or I-View (which the NPA said was "not involved in software engineering but

depots, and the international airports in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town.

To anyone's knowledge, the list has not been updated. At least not publicly. It should have been, according to the 2019 Critical Infrastructure Protection Act, which replaced the apartheid-era National Key Points Act from April 2022.

Sections 21(3) and 21(5) respectively require the SAPS national commissioner to enter a critical infrastructure declaration, or termination, into a register that "must be accessible to the public", and the police minister "must, by notice in the (Government) Gazette, publish such particulars ... regarding infrastructure, which has been declared as critical infrastructure and when such declaration is terminated."

To the best of anyone's recollection, no such Government Gazette notice is pub-

lished, nor have the required certificates been handed over to the institution. Thus Parliament, as a whole, is not a critical infrastructure. But it's no secret that Pretoria police generals have long bristled at Parliament not being under their control, as part of their "protecting the authority of the state" law-and-order tub-thumping. Never mind the constitutional focus on people's safety and security.

The September 2018 suicide of parliamentary manager Lennox Garane after sustained bullying by seniors – they continue working at Parliament – was (mis)used by the police to gain a foothold.

The 2 January fire was used for a further crackdown by the SAPS, including blocking off access to significant sections of Government Avenue and the Company's Garden.

The mid-June 2022 trespassing breach caught police deployed on the precinct off guard, again – and was leveraged to roll out more razor wire.

It's very unlike the UK's House of Commons – target of actual terror attacks – where tens of thousands of people queued into Westminster Hall, part of that parliament's estate, for the lying-in-state of the late Queen Elizabeth. Or the Scottish parliament that hosted the World Press Photo exhibit for visitors who only had to pass through X-ray machines.

Similarly, parliaments in Helsinki, Berlin and elsewhere are an integrated part of the city landscape (yes, I visit legislatures while on holiday) as security is ensured with cameras and in-house protection services, no doubt cooperating with police that, however, remain outside.

Back at South Africa's Parliament, the police seem to treat the precinct as their playground – or battleground. The case of the male sergeant on the precinct assaulting a woman sergeant after their affair soured is reportedly in mediation.

Never mind snoozing on duty: one cop was found with a spliff in the loo, according to corridor talk.

Given the law, Parliament's presiding officers must have given express approval for such overbearing security. If Parliament's presiding officers did not, then police are acting on their own – and doing so contravenes the law and the spirit of South Africa's constitutional democracy. **DM168**

Marianne Merten is Daily Maverick's parliamentary correspondent.



How tech can enable women in the workplace

By Sage

Unsplash/Christina wocintechchat

Women's Month is a powerful reminder of the struggle for equal rights. In South Africa, 66 years after more than 20,000 women marched on the Union Buildings to protest the "pass laws", women are still struggling for recognition, equal pay and equal rights. In the workplace, they might have broken through the glass ceiling, but their career development is held back by a "broken rung" on their path to success.

Technology can either be a threat, or it can help level the playing field, not only by aiding women to access economic opportunities, but also enabling them to upskill and advance in their careers.

The Institute for Women's Policy Research's Women, Automation, and the Future of Work report says technology has disrupted employment patterns. It has shifted the nature and quality of work, the number of jobs, remuneration, and the work-life balance. But the changes are skewed because technological change affects men and women differently and the jobs most commonly held by women face some of the biggest risks of becoming automated in the future.

And while men are not immune to the risks of automation and technological change, women are more likely to work in jobs which can be displaced by changes.

Those jobs that are less likely to be replaced by technology, such as childcare, elder care, and education, might be deemed to be "safe" from automation but they are lower paying and offer less access to benefits than jobs at risk of automation.

Even before the pandemic, the International Monetary Fund projected that 11% of jobs held by women were at risk of elimination from AI and other digital technologies. Talent management software were also found to be slanted towards men, due to a bias baked into the data on which the AI algorithms are trained.

The pandemic has reversed progress on gender parity in labour-force participation, the World Economic Forum's Global

Gender Gap Report 2022 notes, registering the lowest parity score since the index began. This gendered labour-market scarring could become a longer-term problem, with consequences for other dimensions of employment and life, as well as the distribution of unpaid work.

If they had the choice, most people would prefer to work from home but increased workloads, an expectation to be "always on" and household responsibilities have lumped additional pressure onto employees - especially women. For many employees though, managing workplace responsibilities from the comfort and convenience of their homes is a game-changer and businesses can make the most of this hybrid work trend by offering digital workspaces that facilitate greater online collaboration.

The Deloitte Global "Women @ Work: A global outlook" report found increased responsibilities have had a detrimental impact on working women. In South Africa, 57% of respondents reported feeling less optimistic about their career prospects, while 67% of SA women ranked their mental wellbeing as good or extremely good before the pandemic. Now, only 32% viewed their mental health in a positive light.

Here's how tech can help, not hinder:

Identify gaps

The labour market remains largely segregated by gender. StatsSA's Labour Force Survey for Q2 said women who are looking for work and are available to work have a tougher time finding work than men. In 2022, 47% of SA women were recorded as economically inactive, compared to 35,6% of men.

Women who do find work are usually employed in vulnerable employment (characterised by low wages, low productivity and difficult work conditions) compared to men. Only 5.8% of women occupy management positions, compared to 9.8% of employed men. The biggest sectors employing women

include elementary education (22.3%), sales and services (18.5%), clerk (16.4%), domestic workers (11.9%) and technician (11.2%).

Many of these jobs may be replaced, but this creates employment opportunities around the application of technology because there will always be a need for the human touch - not only to keep automation processes flowing, but also for customer care, human interaction, to create new services and solve different problems.

Upskill

Unesco says globally, studies indicate working women are paid less, hold fewer senior positions and participate less in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. It's vital that women are not left behind in this future workplace. They must be encouraged to study in fields that are in demand, so they can offer the workplace skills that put them on a path to personal and professional fulfilment. They also need to feel connected, supported, and appreciated, so they will be more likely to stay with your business.

Girls who pursue STEM education are able to gain valuable coding, programming, and IT-related skills, which offer them greater - and better paying opportunities.

By training and upskilling their staff, companies can help prepare staff for the automated workspace and equip them for future work processes.

With Sage Cloud solutions, companies can stay on top of everything they need to keep their workforce productive and their operations smooth - it's just one of the ways automated services can help streamline workplace processes.

Education for the future

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2022 estimates it will take 132 years for women to reach full parity with men in the workforce. An equitable post-pandemic recovery can be accelerated through education. Online learning

platform Coursera says the number of women learning online increased from 38% in 2019 to 45% in 2021, even though the gender employment gap widened.

Online learning provides an opportunity to level the playing field for women by connecting them to better opportunities and prospects in the workplace.

With a focus on improving skills and re-skilling, workforce strategies must ensure that women are better equipped to overcome challenges and take advantage of the opportunities the digital economy offers. Widening participation is one thing but providing opportunities to lead is another.

To truly advance gender equality, we must consider the entire employee, starting from their education to how we attract and recruit talent, and how we invest in development.

Technology is the ultimate enabler, helping women to open new doors, promote ourselves, dream big, build on our networks and take a leap of faith in our abilities.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SAGE



Sage

What happens to the corruption money the state claws back?

The Asset Forfeiture Unit and the Special Investigating Unit are the agencies that work to recover money stolen from the government and taxpayers. They explained how they go about the job. By **Rebecca Davis**

News that Eskom recovered the R30-million it unlawfully paid to former CEO Brian Molefe was a glimmer of light in the darkness. How does the state go about recovering money lost to corruption – and what happens to it?

Does the government get back some of its stolen money?

It does! This is the major purpose of the Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU), but money is also recovered through the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) and through litigation by individual government departments.

How does it work?

The AFU gets money back via the Prevention of Organised Crime Act – as explained to *DM168* by the NPA's Bulelwa Makeke.

Imagine Mr X is found guilty by a court of stealing money from the government. The AFU asks the court to determine how much it should demand back from Mr X. The court sets a figure and the AFU confiscates.

To make sure Mr X doesn't suddenly get rid of his luxury goods and empty his bank accounts, the court can grant a "restraint" – so that stuff can't be touched.

Is "restraint" the same as "freezing"?

Yes. Yet another term for the same thing is "preservation order".

The AFU can also grab Mr X's loot without him being found guilty by a court. This, Makeke explained, is "non-conviction based forfeiture" or "civil forfeiture" and specifically targets Mr X's assets. There has to be a direct link between Mr X's criminality and assets – so the AFU must prove Mr X used the money he stole to buy the house or car.

The SIU recoups money for the state through civil litigation.

Can you give a real example?

In August 2022, the SIU got a preservation

order "to freeze five luxury properties in gated estates, and pension benefits valued at approximately R1.8-million, linked to Transnet executives and their spouses". The order prohibited named people from "selling, leasing, donating or transferring title [of] their properties in Rosebank and Dainfern".

The SIU showed the court these houses were bought with plundered Transnet money. Those houses will be sold and the money returned to the state.

Do freezing orders get big?

Enormous. In March 2022, the AFU got a freezing order valued at R2.4-billion related to the Optimum coal mine and its assets, bought with the proceeds of crime by the Gupta-owned Tegeta company. The AFU's Priya Biseswar said this was the largest freezing order in the AFU's history and its value was expected to rise to over R8-billion with the value of the mine itself added.

I'm assuming the state is mostly seizing smaller assets than mines?

Yes. Cars and properties are most common.

Apparently, loss of these can hit criminals harder than a prison sentence.

Biseswar said many criminals consider jail simply an occupational

hazard, rendered bearable by the thought of all the luxuries awaiting them upon release: "Prosecutors reference several cases where a crime boss smiled when he received a 20-year sentence but literally burst into tears when his favourite Rolls-Royce was seized."

Then what?

Mostly assets are sold to the public via regular auction houses. So, if you've bought an ostentatious motor vehicle or swanky pad at an auction in the past few years, it may have belonged to a State Capturer.

They don't advertise auctions as selling off criminal loot. (*DM168* was warned by the AFU against "sensationalising" this.)

What happens to the money?

This might surprise. Money recovered by the AFU does not go back to the government department it was stolen from. It goes into a fund known as Cara: the Criminal Assets Recovery Account.

Who has the PIN to that account?

The Department of Justice. A committee recommends what Cara cash should be spent on, and the Cabinet approves it. In general, Cara money goes to law enforcement or helping victims of crime.

Projects Cara has funded include R12-million for court interpreters, R16-million for gender-based violence survivors and R18-million for sexual offence courts.

No one quibbles with that, do they?

There are other Cara beneficiaries the public might feel less enthused about. R50-million went to the State Security Agency, which we know from the Zondo Commission was used as a slush fund for allegedly corrupt officials; R5.8-million went to "ethics training of government officials", for which some might argue we deserve a refund.

Do SIU recoveries also go to Cara?

No. Those funds go back to the state institutions from whence they were pilfered, SIU spokesperson Kaizer Kganyago told *DM168*.

Show me the money!

The AFU recovered R281-million between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. This financial year, it recovered R80.6-million by the end of August. The SIU recovered R14.7-million in this financial year's first quarter. Cara has a total of R530-million.

How impressive is this?

It's hard to say, as recovered money doesn't only reflect proceeds of corruption – it could also be money from other forms of criminality, like drug sales. The truth is, a lot of the money the state would love to claw back is simply no longer in South Africa.

"Much of the State Capture loot left our shores long ago," investigator Heinrich Böhmke told *DM168*, and it will have been disposed of in places like Dubai. **DM168**

Low trust in IEC could lead to political conflict, researcher warns

By **Nonkululeko Njilo**

As the country gears up towards the 2024 general elections, research suggests that the risk of political unrest may be high.

The warning comes as Parliament is yet to finalise an important piece of legislation, the Electoral Amendment Bill, whose deadline is now set for 10 December.

Speaking at an Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) seminar on "Safeguarding Electoral Democracy in the Age of Growing Mistrust" on 20 September, Ebrahim Fakir of the Auwal Socio-Economic Research Institute in Africa called for the establishment of new systems.

"With a potentially new electoral system on the horizon for the 2024 election, the risk of unpreparedness and potential for precipitating political conflict are high, requiring the establishment of new administrative and

management systems," he said.

"The link between election integrity, institutional credibility and political violence is not tenuous or fragile and isolated."

Fakir's research focused extensively on the decline in trust and credibility of the IEC and what caused it.

"In contra-distinction to the period coming into the 2021 local government elections, historically the IEC enjoyed unparalleled high levels of trust and confidence and a solid (even stellar) domestic and international reputation.

"The IEC has consistently received healthy approval ratings, with majority support from more than two-thirds (60%) of the adult population since 2016 till at

least 2021, as shown by both the Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC's) South African Social Attitudes Survey and the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Afrobarometer."

Meanwhile, the HSRC found that political

coercion had increased since 2009 to more than a tenth. HSRC research director Dr Ben Roberts said the coercion came mostly from family and friends. "This needs to be monitored in coming elections," he said.

Another phenomenon that ought to be monitored, according to Roberts, is the historic low voter turnout of 46.68% recorded nationally in the 2021 local government elections.

"The dynamics that contributed to the low turnout scenario seen in the 2021 local elections will become especially crucial for the 2024 elections and beyond," said Roberts.

"The debate needs to urgently turn to what needs to be done to move us from the current scenario and restore the faith of the growing number of disaffected democrats in the country."

This was of great importance particularly for the country's youth, many of whom are disengaging from voting, he added. **DM168**



People queue to vote in the 2011 local government elections at a church in Alexandra, Joburg. Photo: Kim Ludbrook/EPA

Return of the veterans – Eskom pushes to reverse the skills drain

In response to nearly two weeks of rolling blackouts, Public Enterprises Minister Pravin Gordhan announced that 18 former Eskom employees had been brought back – in mentoring and training roles. By **Ray Mahlaka**

Eskom previously suggested bringing back former employees to address the power utility's lack of skills.

But the suggestion, backed by Eskom CEO André de Ruyter after he was appointed in 2019, was opposed by Eskom employees and their trade unions. They saw it as a dressing-down of the current skills base at Eskom and an implication that workers were not skilled enough to prevent blackouts. The idea got no support from the government.

But intensified rolling blackouts in recent days have forced a change of heart. The Department of Public Enterprises has given the green light to a plan for 18 former Eskom employees, with technical skills spanning engineering and artisanship, to be rehired.

The former employees will mentor and train – lending support to Eskom's lower-level and senior staff at power stations.

Veterans return

In response to nearly two weeks of rolling blackouts, Public Enterprises Minister Pravin Gordhan announced: "Eighteen seasoned energy specialists in power plant operations – some with over 20 years of experience – have re-entered the Eskom system to assist with operations."

Gordhan didn't name the 18 Eskom veterans but mentioned in a Newzroom Afrika interview that the former employees included Edward Kieswetter, the current South African Revenue Service commissioner. Acting in his personal capacity, Kieswetter will lead the team, which has collective experience of about 100 years.

Kieswetter was in charge of Eskom's power stations and generation capacity from January 1992 to March 2000. He and his executive team at the time were lauded for turning around Eskom's operations by improving worker safety at power stations and rebuilding a 600MW generation unit from scratch – a huge engineering feat. For such efforts, Eskom's power stations were voted the best in the world at the time for engineering excellence and efficiency.



Photos: iStock

In 1998, Eskom's energy availability factor (EAF) – the proportion of its plant available to dispatch energy – reached 92.7%. A high EAF indicates plants are well operated and maintained, helping the utility to produce electricity more cheaply. Eskom's EAF has been on a downward trend for a decade, reaching 84.5% in 2011, falling further to 66.6% by 2020, and now languishing at 56.6%.

The decline in EAF coincided with the exodus of skills from Eskom over the past

two decades. The loss of skills was initially sparked when experienced employees were encouraged to take voluntary severance packages and make way for the hiring of new black graduate engineers and artisans. This was in line with government policies and laws such as affirmative action and broad-based black economic empowerment.

Though Eskom hired black graduate engineers and artisans with the right qualifications, they lacked the technical experience of workers who had left. Eskom's racial transformation focus was deemed successful, with

black individuals appointed to senior positions. But the utility neglected programmes to mentor and train new workers.

Some experienced Eskom workers left for lucrative jobs overseas, especially as the decline accelerated over the past 15 years, with rolling blackouts, no new generation, woeful maintenance of existing plants and State Capture-related corruption.

A retired engineer who worked for Eskom told *DM168*: "Eskom was a respected and admired power utility around the world. If you had Eskom on your CV, you'd easily be headhunted overseas."

Eskom's racial transformation process was deemed successful, with black individuals appointed to senior positions. But the utility neglected programmes to mentor and train

Reversing knowledge loss

There is now a focus on reversing the loss of institutional knowledge, and on mentorship and learning.

Gordhan said the 18 former Eskom employees had visited the power utility's plant to evaluate poor performance.

Gordhan added there was no longer pushback to former staff from power station managers and other staff, and they were willing to accept mentoring and training.

The search for more experienced former employees is ongoing. They will be offered fixed-term contracts, usually of 12 months, with a renewal option.

"The required skills include but are not limited to, mechanical, nuclear, electrical, system and maintenance skills, as well as senior artisans and plant operators for coal and nuclear power stations. Initially, the need is more for the generating plants of Eskom," said the utility. **DM168**

Thabo Mbeki swipes at Eskom bosses, calls for better leadership

By **Queenin Masuabi**

Former president Thabo Mbeki took a veiled swipe at Eskom executives this week, in the wake of rolling blackouts.

Speaking at the University of South Africa in Tshwane on Wednesday 21 September, Mbeki quoted former statistician-general Pali Lehohla: "Eskom is a big business and, therefore, in terms of its leadership, you need engineers and economists but instead we have politicians and accountants."

Said Mbeki: "I am not saying Pali was right, but this is what he said. He was looking at this question; I am trying to raise the quality of leadership in our country."

Mbeki questioned why Medupi and Kusile power stations continue to break down despite being Eskom's newest stations.

Earlier this year, while responding orally to questions from members of Parliament, Deputy President David Mabuza said Eskom had made progress in identifying design defects at the power stations and was rectifying them, but this process would only be concluded by the end of 2027.

Rolling blackouts began in 2007, when Mbeki was president. In January 2008, he apologised for load shedding and said the government took 'collective responsibility' for not heeding Eskom's warnings

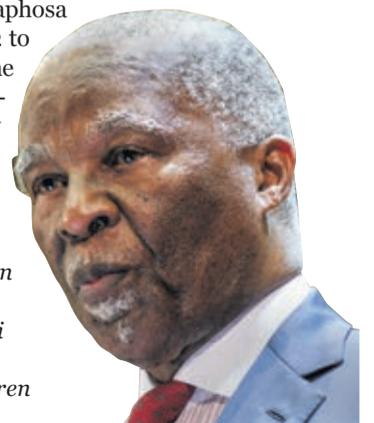
Rolling blackouts began in 2007, when Mbeki was president. In January 2008, he apologised for load shedding and said the government took "collective responsibility" for not heeding Eskom's warnings about constrained power generation capacity.

A Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, chaired by President Cyril Ramaphosa, had the power crisis at the top of the agenda. This followed a virtual emergency meeting on Sunday, in which several ministers discussed how to tackle the crisis. At the meeting were National Energy Crisis Committee members.

After Wednesday's meeting, Cabinet spokesperson Phumla Williams said Public Enterprises Minister Pravin Gordhan had briefed colleagues on Eskom capacity and a progress report by the technical committee of the National Energy Crisis Committee.

"Cabinet expressed regret that intermittent load shedding is happening at the time when the government is vigorously engaged with interventions announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa in July 2022 to overcome the surmountable energy crisis."

DM168
Former South African president Thabo Mbeki
Photo: Gallo Images/Darren Stewart



As Europe recovers from its hottest summer and August on record, with river levels reaching record lows, and Pakistan deals with the fallout of nearly a third of the country being flooded by monstrous monsoon rains, the effects of human-induced climate change and the perpetuation of technologies that accelerate them are becoming increasingly clear and deadly.

It is in this context that a recent study conducted by researchers at the Institute for New Economic Thinking at the Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford, adds yet another motivation for accelerating the decarbonisation of energy systems worldwide.

The study, titled *Empirically Grounded Technology Forecasts and the Energy Transition* and published in the journal *Joule*, found that, among other environmental and climate policy benefits, a “rapid green energy transition” would likely result in “overall net savings of many trillions of dollars” by 2050.

It notes that “decisions about how and when to decarbonise the global energy system are highly influenced by estimates of the likely cost. Most energy-economy models have produced energy transition scenarios that overestimate costs due to underestimating renewable energy cost improvements and deployment rates.”

“Using a method that has been statistically validated on data for more than 50 technologies”, the paper “generates probabilistic cost forecasts of energy technologies” including solar and wind energy, batteries and electrolyzers.

Setting out the context, the authors explain that “future energy system costs will be determined by a combination of technologies that produce, store and distribute energy. Their costs and deployment will change with time due to innovation, competition, public policy, concerns about climate change and other factors.”

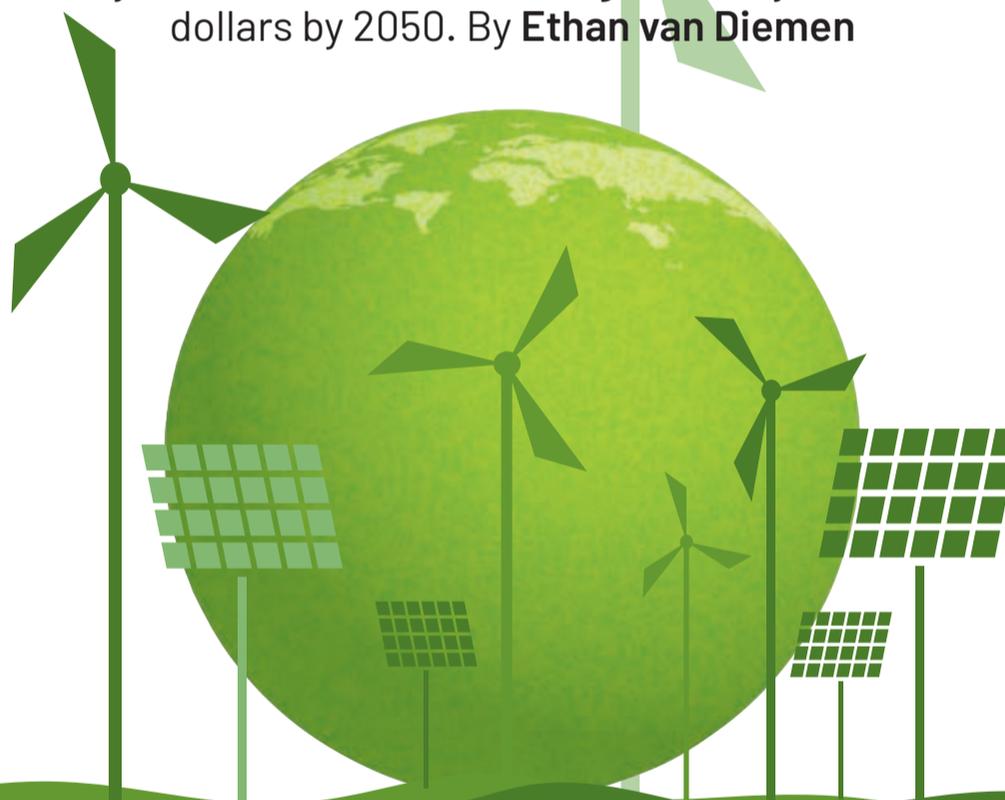
The study finds that, under three scenarios, “compared to continuing with a fossil fuel-based system, a rapid green energy transition is likely to result in trillions of net savings”.

These savings, the authors explain, would be netted in addition to the benefits of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and its attendant effects on global warming and climate change.

The research may also bolster arguments that favour a greater push for renewable energy development in the context of both South Africa’s power

Study adds more incentives for a rapid green energy transition

A new study by economists at the University of Oxford has found that, in addition to the environmental and climate benefits, a fast transition to energy technologies such as solar and wind would likely result in overall net savings of many trillions of dollars by 2050. By **Ethan van Diemen**



supply crisis and the multilayered, global energy crisis.

Our Burning Planet previously reported that Meridian Economics, a specialised economics advisory group and think-tank, found that the power cuts that plagued South Africans in 2021 could have been avoided if the grid had an additional 5,000MW or 5GW of renewable generation capacity.

Beyond load shedding and its effects, Meridian also said Eskom could have saved R2.5-billion and spared 13.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂-eq) being released into the atmosphere.

Beyond South Africa, the International Energy Agency (IEA), in its recently published second edition of its *Security of Clean Energy Transitions* report, outlined that “unprecedented events – the global coronavirus pandemic, the climate emergency and the turbulence in global energy markets, resulting from the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine – have shocked the world in 2022. Unprecedented challenges ... require extraordinary actions to foster solidarity and fight the first and largest global energy crisis.”

The agency’s report continues that, “in the long term, accelerating clean energy transitions will support energy security as it will reduce the need for fossil fuel imports and consumption ... The current global energy crisis has added new urgency to accelerating clean energy transitions and, once again, highlighted the vital role of renewable energy. The world added a record 295GW of renewable power capacity in 2021.”

The IEA continues in its report that “renewables increase energy security not only by avoiding the use of fossil fuels and by diversifying supply, but also by lowering costs and thereby increasing affordability. Although the cost of installing solar PV and wind turbines is expected to remain higher in 2022 and 2023 than before the pandemic, due to elevated commodity and freight prices, their competitiveness is actually improving due to much sharper increases in natural gas and coal prices.”

In the “discussion” section of the Oxford study, the authors explain that “the cornerstone of the ‘fast transition’ scenario is the timely expansion of key green technologies, because only as these are scaled up can fossil fuels be phased out and the savings be realised. The primary policy implication of our results is that there are enormous advantages to rapid deployment of key green technologies.” **DM168**

Environmental and climate groups reject government gas plan

By **Onke Ngcuka**

A collective of environmental and climate justice groups has made submissions to the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (Nersa), rejecting the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy’s (DMRE’s) gas procurement plans.

Rejecting the proposal are groundWork, the South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA), Natural Justice, and the Centre for Environmental Rights (CER). They say the proposed plan is vague and unnecessary, and threatens the constitutional rights of South Africans. The objections are supported by Earthlife Africa, The Green Connection, 350Africa.org, Oceans Not Oil, and Project 90 by 2030.

The plan is in addition to the proposed 3,000MW laid out in the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP2019). The IRP sets out a

plan to procure 1,000MW in 2023 and 2,000MW in 2027.

Organisations became aware of the plan after Nersa announced public participation on 26 August 2022 for three determinations under section 34 of the Electricity Regulation Act 2006, which DMRE minister Gwede Mantashe had proposed.

The three determinations proposed by Mantashe include renewable energy to the amount of 14,791MW for storage, solar and wind from 2024 to 2030; 1,000MW of biomass for 2023 and 2024; and the 3,000MW of gas/diesel for 2024 to 2027. The last is the determination organisations are disputing.

In a statement, the coalition argued that the proposal for gas procurement lacks adequate public consultation and key information, and is not informed by electricity needs and least-cost planning or crucial impact assessments. They also said the plan conflicts with the law and Constitution owing to unjustifiable harm

posed by new gas development, lack of alignment with the Electricity Regulation Act of 2006, and specifications to Eskom’s gas-fired power station in Richards Bay.

As the country experiences high levels of rolling blackouts once again, the plan President Cyril Ramaphosa announced in July has yet to take effect. Among the announcements was Mantashe issuing determinations for additional capacity as laid out in the IRP, as well as a request for gas power as soon as possible.

The IRP states that local recoverable shale and coastal gas are being pursued and need to be accelerated, adding that the gas “could form a central part of our strategy for regional economic integration within [the Southern African Development Community]”.

However, the document adds: “Concerns and risks were also raised about the capacity provided for and practicality of gas to power in the recommended plan and the risks it

poses since South Africa does not currently have adequate gas infrastructure.”

The Richards Bay Gas to Power Plant is the proposed solution to the lack of gas infrastructure. The project is also being challenged in court as groundWork and SDCEA seek to have the environmental authorisation of the plant reviewed, citing a lack of adequate public participation.

“It hasn’t been said in that many words, but the determination by ... [Mantashe] and the concurrence by Nersa is almost tailor-made for the Eskom power plant [Richards Bay], in terms of location, procurer...,” said Gabrielle Knott, an attorney at CER.

“This determination wilfully ignores all evidence that gas in the future electricity mix does not form part of a least-cost electricity plan for [SA]. Any gas capacity will simply add to rising electricity costs and further exacerbate inequality and the economic downturn in [SA],” said Knott. **DM168**



AI research maps truer picture of township development gaps

An SA data researcher is using big data and artificial intelligence to put the needs of townships and residents on the map, proving that taming the AI machine is better than raging against it. **Ufrieda Ho reports**

Artificial intelligence's (AI's) nudge over your choice of pizza toppings and your next TV series to binge-watch is ominous enough, but when the big data that drives AI keeps you on the back foot or writes you out of the story altogether, it calls for pushback, if you're Raesetje Sefala.

Sefala is a computer scientist and data science researcher. Her work has been included as part of the Mozilla Foundation's 2022 *Internet Health Report*. It's a report that takes a pulse check of the state of the internet as an open and accessible public resource. The 2022 report focuses on AI and its impact on the health of the internet and on humanity.

It comes against the backdrop of mounting criticism of the ways big tech companies have come to dominate and drive the data economy. There is also unequal advantage between rich and poor countries, as the report puts it: "...countries with access to engineers, large amounts of data, and computational power, are consolidating their dominance of software and hardware in ways that impact how AI is deployed worldwide."

Big data and its AI models can be used to exploit consumer biases, add to the churn of misinformation and create dependence as big tech companies that have the monopoly on resources to fund data research and development of AI. There's also the consequence of data centres adding to the climate emergency with energy-hungry servers needing to be cooled to operate optimally. It leads the report to call for people to "demand better online privacy, trustworthy artificial intelligence and safe online experiences from big tech and governments".

Sefala's work takes AI in a deliberate direction of social impact. It's focused on building and mapping missing data sets on the realities of townships in South Africa. The absence of data adds to assumptions about places and people, entrenches a legacy of spatial injustice, skews decision-making and allows entire communities to slip through society's cracks, she says.

She experienced it first-hand growing up in Lebowakgomo in Limpopo. Sefala says: "Apartheid had ended by the time I was born but service delivery in the township was always a mission. Everything was overcrowded – from schools to hospitals and other public resources. My dad worked for local government and one of his jobs was to allocate housing. The pieces of land were always small and always the same size.

"I come from a big family with seven kids so I had to share a small space with my siblings. And even though over the years the standard of living at home improved, we couldn't really expand the house, because it was such a small space. It kept me wondering why a new government would do housing allocation for black people the same as how it was done in apartheid," she says.

She would also see the sprawl of informal settlements all around her community and her dad would explain to her that as "one or two people occupy land then other people join them. And then the government doesn't know who is occupying the land and they are left to play catch-up every time." She saw this as further adding to the unquantifiable, the unknown and, ultimately, the conveniently overlooked.

Her questions followed through to her master's student days at Wits University. But searching for answers showed up a dearth of accurate data or even just data for townships that seemed to vanish from official recordkeeping after 1994, Sefala says. Townships data, she found, was merged with data of formal residential areas and in being clumped together made townships invisible.

She had to start from scratch, collecting and organising data on townships. It was dozens of phone calls, interviews and leaning heavily on locals with memories, understanding and nuanced context. She also

used aerial photography and more than 6,500 satellite images of the country's nine provinces between 2006 and 2017. Together they started to show the evidence of disparities in development across four classes of neighbourhoods. She categorised these as wealthy areas, non-wealthy areas, non-residential neighbourhoods and vacant land.

The visual mapping over time showed the realities of which neighbourhoods had the markers of wealth and prosperity – such as cars, parks, streetlights, swimming pools and malls – and which ones didn't.

"We live in a democracy, but this research shows more evidence that there hasn't been significant development in townships all these years. So I'm hoping that the data starts to change policies and that it empowers people in townships to demand better," she says.

As the data sets grow and are merged with her AI model, the model will have the potential to give more clues to gaps in equitable development. It can also be used for transdisciplinary work from advocacy to policy changemakers, she says.

Some of what the model will be able to do is to map the growth of a community over time viewed against the number of clinics or hospital facilities that service people living in that area. It could examine data for the number of ambulances procured for an area overlaid with road infrastructure and maintenance schedules to see how this might affect ambulance access to communities and response times. It could also match the number of working streetlights and police stations in an area with crime statistics.

Her research was also published with collaborating researchers in August last year and Sefala says it became the first publicly available data set to study "the evolution of spatial apartheid". It was also a triumph, she and her fellow researchers note in their

paper, that they were able to include a vast number of data sets for analysis even with a significantly smaller budget than other funded research projects.

It's an approach to AI that ties in with why Sefala accepted her current position at Dair (Distributed Artificial Intelligence Research Institute). She is a research fellow at Dair and is based between Johannesburg and Montreal as she completes her doctorate.

Dair was founded by Timnit Gebru, who was a leading Google researcher on tech and ethics, and known for her work on the algorithmic bias in facial recognition. She was forced out of Google in December 2020 when she called out discriminatory workplace practices and stood her ground over a paper she coauthored that questioned Google about its controversial AI language models and flagged that the tech giant was not doing enough to guard against potential harm.

Gebru founded Dair with the vision that: "AI is not inevitable, its harms are preventative, and when its production and deployment include diverse perspectives and deliberate processes it can be beneficial."

It's why some of the more granular data of Sefala's work will only be accessible after vetting. She says: "There are two edges to data; in the hands of banks and insurance companies, for instance, this data can be used to continue marginalising people and whole communities."

It's the ongoing challenge for AI to make the unseen seen – such as townships and the people who call these places home – and also to build safeguards against exploitation of people's data.

But she says what is clear is that the AI story has to be reframed. The data sets must allow a bigger picture to emerge of the legacies of inequality and they have to include the finer details that faithfully reflect people's everyday truths. As Sefala puts it: "I am also a data point in this data set because I come from a township. This is also about my story; it's also my lived reality." **DM168**



Raesetje Sefala.

Photo: Supplied



Memories of my mother, Nelson Mandela and the Queen

There have been a number of rather cringeworthy 'me and the Queen' posts since the passing of Queen Elizabeth II earlier this month, and I don't wish to add to the pile, but here goes. By **Ray Hartley**

At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit in New Zealand in 1995, I was a young, callow journalist standing in line to have an audience (literally less than a minute) with Queen Elizabeth.

I decided I would tell her how my mother lined the streets of Port Elizabeth to greet the then heir apparent on her visit to SA in 1947. The royal family had been invited by then Prime Minister Jan Smuts on a two-month tour to thank those who served in World War 2 and, of course, to bolster SA's relationship with the UK. The visit would contribute to his undoing by the Afrikaner nationalists, who used this as evidence that

he was a sellout. In 1948, he would be voted out of office by DF Malan's National Party.

My mother had served in the Royal Air Force's Women's Auxiliary Air Force, although she made a point of playing this down because she believed it revealed her age. I have the bronze cap badge – an eagle startled by something to its left, its wings intersecting with a laurel wreath beneath a crown. And I have her two medals and her discharge papers, which she kept in a chocolate tin bearing the image of Smuts, which was given to all who served. On the lid of the tin, a bronze face of Smuts says: "We rely on you and are grateful."

Anyway, when I made it to the front of the line, I told the Queen the story of my mother on the streets in 1947 and the Queen smiled, revealing two rows of perfect teeth. "Tell her 'thank you,'" she said.

I did and my mother – almost 50 years after the event – was moved.

That particular summit was to bear Nelson Mandela's mark after news broke that the Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha had executed the writer and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, who had been tried and found guilty by a "special military tribunal". Funny how the adjective "special" has its sinister uses. Special Branch. Special Military Operation. Special Military Tribunal.

When the news broke, Mandela held an impromptu press conference, his somnolent foreign minister, Alfred Nzo, still wiping his eyes. If you are old enough, you will remember the Edblo mattress logo depicting the sleepy man, with his bulbous nose, long pyjamas and candle. That was more or less Alfred Nzo on that morning.

Mandela was enraged. After an unprecedented day of lobbying and against all predictions, he brought the Commonwealth around to his point of view and, after a day-long leaders' retreat in the snowy hills of New Zealand, Nigeria was suspended.

I recall breathlessly relaying the story to the *Sunday Times*. The time difference meant I could check my facts with the New Zealand Sunday papers, which were already on the streets.

It was at this summit, and during his subsequent visit to London the year after, that the friendship between the Queen and Mandela flourished. Neither had time for the shenanigans of scheming politicians.

I covered that visit, which included dinner at the Guild Hall, where Mandela wore a black shirt with mother-of-pearl buttons that would have looked as good on Johnny Cash, and a concert at the Royal Albert Hall. Mandela was seated at the Queen's side in the Royal Box when he succumbed to his dancing bug. Rising to his feet, he began to



Cavalry from various regiments escort Queen Elizabeth II's coffin in the state hearse along the Long Walk at Windsor Castle, England. Photo: Jon Rowley/EPA-EFE

give, moving his elbows backwards and forwards. The Queen rose to her feet and, although she did not dance, she swayed from side to side ever so slightly, glancing all the while mischievously at Mandela.

To me they got along because they were preserved from a previous age by their vastly different circumstances – he by his imprisonment and she by the straitjacket of tradition. They trusted each other enough to put aside the game face of constant public duty; for once to smile from happiness and not for the cameras.

Mandela's private secretary, Zelda la Grange, told Reuters this anecdote: "We were in Buckingham Palace once... Approaching the Queen, Mr Mandela had a very wicked sense of humour. So, he walked up to the Queen and when he saw her he said: 'Elizabeth, you've lost weight!' and the Queen burst out laughing.

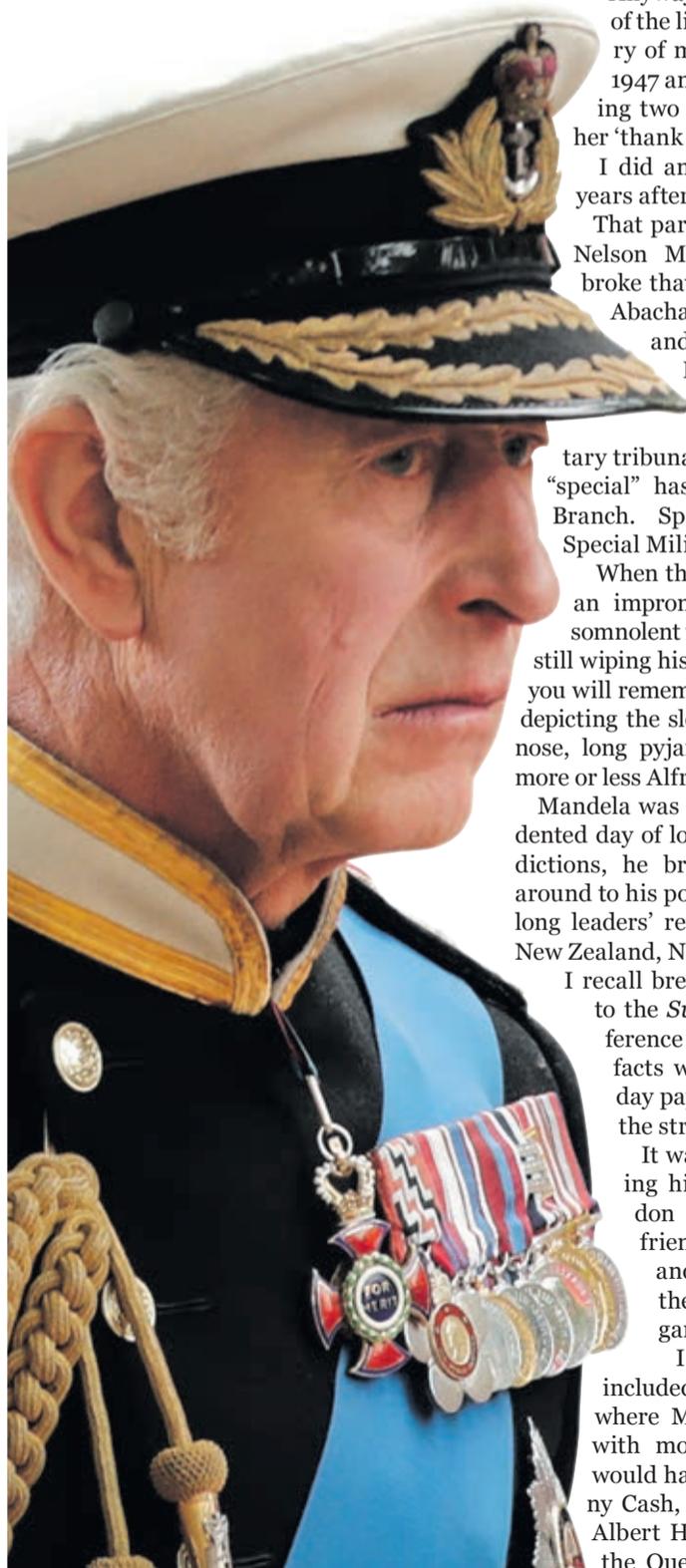
"I think he was the only person in the world who could comment on the Queen's weight and get away with it." Or call her Eliz-

abeth, she might have added.

On that memorable tour, Mandela left London for Paris to attend the Bastille Day celebrations. I discovered that, when diplomatic duties were done, Mandela was secretly courting Graça Machel in the evenings. But that's another story. **DM168**

Ray Hartley is the research director at The Brenthurst Foundation.

The UK's Prince William, the Prince of Wales. Photo: Tolga Akmen/EPA-EFE



The UK's King Charles III.

Photo: Olivier Hoslet/EPA-EFE





Uber launches a suite of new product and safety features across SSA

Uber announced the launch of multiple new products and features which are going live this month in South Africa, Ghana, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria. The launch, which took place simultaneously across various locations in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), also showcased Audio Recording, the latest addition to its suite of safety features.

Speaking at the event, General Manager for Uber SSA, Kagiso Khaole said the brand is pleased to be expanding into eight more cities during September across Kenya, Nigeria and Ghana.

"As we gear ourselves to mark our 10th year anniversary next year, we are excited about moving into more cities enabling people to go anywhere and can get anything. Our commitment to raising the bar on safety remains relentless and we continue to work hard to grow the over 3 million earnings opportunities we have created thus far."

Eight new cities and counting

Uber will now be operational in Owerri and Akure in Nigeria; Eldoret, Kisumu, Nakuru and Naivasha in Kenya; and Tamale and Sunyani in Ghana. These expansions are testament to Uber's commitment to the region and signal more opportunities for more drivers to earn, while riders have convenient and reliable travel options at the tap of a button.

In these expansions Uber brings a diverse product mix that is able to best serve the needs of the city residents.

More economical options for riders

To help reduce costs for riders and increase demand for drivers, Uber is launching UberX Share in Ghana and Nigeria, and Uber ChapChap Share in Kenya. Uber's shared rides offering allows riders to save up to 30% of the trip fare when matched with a co-rider heading in the same direction, and where a match is not possible, they will still be able to save 5% from their ride.

The introduction of UberX Share allows us to proudly demonstrate the power of our platform, understanding the ability to match rider destinations while delivering convenience and affordability. We are a global company that builds locally; and in Ghana, we tapped into the local culture of car-pooling when moving around, which makes this product a great fit for the market," says Khaole.

Travelling across the city with an entire crew has never been easier, with the launch of UberXL in Nairobi, Kenya. This option provides seating for up to six people which is great for airport and business trips where extra luggage space may be required. In South Africa, riders can now reserve their group travel 30 days in advance with UberXL Reserve and Uber Van Reserve.

Taking a stand for safety

"Safety is at the core of how we do business and we are proud to announce three new safety features to help improve the experience of users", says Khaole.

Features include:

Audio Recording pilot in South Africa: Uber will now allow riders and drivers to use the app to record and share audio of their trip as evidence in the case of a safety incident - something that drivers have been asking for based on their feedback from roundtable sessions. This new opt-in audio recording feature, which is being piloted in Pretoria and Johannesburg, has been successful in the US and Latin American regions where Uber has a presence.

In-app emergency service in Nigeria: Uber is working with Sety in Nigeria, to provide on-demand security and medical response for riders and drivers while on a trip. This collaboration will also provide access to a private security response unit closest to their location, using a connected device.

Safety Check Up across SSA: This feature encourages riders to complete their safety profile by turning on and utilising the available features such as Trusted Contacts, PIN verification and RideCheck. This is available in all the countries within SSA where Uber operates.

Delivery innovations

At the launch, Uber Eats reinforced its aspiration of building an app of the future by creating a virtual mall experience that goes beyond just food."

Other categories we have ventured into include convenience stores, pharmacy outlets, alcohol and retail and this shows us that the possibilities are endless," says Cikida Gcali-Mabusela, Head of New Verticals for Uber Eats Sub-Saharan Africa.

Uber Eats continues to push beyond boundaries with the adoption of the growing trend of dark stores, which gives non-traditional merchants opportunities to tap into uncharted markets that they wouldn't have easily accessed.

Uber Eats currently operates in South Africa and Kenya. Kui Mbugua, General Manager for Uber Eats Kenya says, "With a 67% year on year growth of subscriptions on Eats, we are humbled and encouraged by expansion that we have seen in the South Africa and Kenya markets.

"The future of logistics and technology in emerging markets looks promising.

Our overall vision continues to be to build locally using global experience and become a one-stop-shop for delivery needs. Not only is Uber Eats creating unique earning opportunities, but our operations also have a positive knock-on effect for restaurants, merchants, and delivery people.

Looking ahead, we are committed to leading the category by investing in product and access, while leveraging the power of the platform," concludes Kui.



Plan to expand shark cage diving area splits opinion
Pages 14 & 15

For-profit Asian zoos trash wildlife trade protections

Commercial operations using performing animals to pull in massive crowds are taking advantage of a loophole in UN permit codes to trade and train critically endangered wild animals



Above: Elephants performing to crowds at Xishuangbanna Wild Elephant Valley in China.

Photo: EMS Foundation

Below: An elephant performing at Elephant Valley in Yunnan Province.

Photo: Francis Garrard



By Don Pinnock

By the transposition of one letter for another in the permit code of the United Nations wildlife trade organisation CITES – Z for zoo instead of T for commercial trade – endangered wild animals become tradeable for huge sums of money.

The Oxford dictionary defines a zoo as a place where wild animals are kept for public exhibition and where they are studied, bred and protected. This is the spirit of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and upon which the agreement to permit sales of certain listed species of endangered wild animals to zoos was based.

It very specifically forbids transactions in listed Appendix 1 species “for primarily commercial purposes” – and for good reason. If zoos were permitted to buy and sell wild animals commercially, it would negate the entire purpose of the CITES Appendix 1 classification.

What the original drafters of that protocol could not have imagined was how certain “zoos” would morph into massive, money-driven tourist enterprises. Because of its cumbersome bureaucracy (change requires the consensus of 178 countries) CITES has been unable to plug a loophole that is ripping into the biodiversity of endangered wild creatures and warping the integrity of countries from which they come.

There’s a further problem. In CITES regulations there’s no definition of a zoo. Trade to zoos is happening under a loose and generous belief that all zoos must be for conservation and education.

In practice it doesn’t seem to matter if the zoo in question is unable to provide any conservation benefits or even meet minimal welfare requirements, nor does it matter if the trade to this so-called zoo has huge commercial value.

Countless examples unearthed by wildlife investigator Karl Ammann have shown that, by simply proclaiming the transaction to be for zoo purposes, a commercial enterprise and transaction is able to escape from CITES’ most fundamental safeguard.

Protections

Appendix 1 is the highest CITES protection and covers wild-caught animals. It requires that their removal does not endanger the survival of the species, that their capture violated no national laws and that they may not be used for primarily commercial purposes.

Ammann has been ranging across China, Laos, Georgia and Pakistan documenting the types of zoos where wild-caught animals, mostly from Africa, are ending up and the conditions under which they’re kept.

What he found was shocking, with high levels of cruelty and zero public education. The sole reason for the animals being there was to make eye-watering amounts of money. Almost all the CITES Appendix 1 safeguards are ignored. All that seems to be needed is to put a Z (for zoo) on import and export permits.

According to his report, published by the EMS Foundation, “commercial operations have been able to import critically endangered Appendix 1 species by claiming to be a zoo.

These facilities [use] animals for entertainment.”

Zoo visits

Ammann discovered that the Xishuangbanna Wild Elephant Valley (Jinghang, China) imported 11 wild elephants from Laos and forced them to perform. The zoo attracts 40,000 visitors on weekends, earning \$2-million.

The Guizhou Forest Wildlife Zoo (Guiyang, China) imported 12 elephants in 2017. There are only nine left. It is suspected that the other three elephants have been resold.

Keepers at the facility confirmed that they buy elephants from a wildlife dealer, a Mr Zhang, for

\$350,000 for an adult (more for an infant). Footage shows a performance arena with props for shows.

In 2019, Longemont Safari Park (Huzhou, China) imported eight wild elephants from Laos, which were trained at Guizhou and are used for performances.

In the same year, Longemont imported 32 African elephants, of which 20 were kept and trained while 12 were moved to another safari park. In two months this year, according to its website, Longemont attracted three million tourists, netting R1.7-billion.

Beijing Wildlife Park, which imported four elephants from Laos and 18 chimps from South Africa, is registered as a company with an annual turnover of about \$7-million. According to Amman, “its activities are primarily commercial and involve poor treatment of Appendix I elephants ... [for] profit.”

The chimps were imported under the Z code and source code C, which means captive bred. But there is no evidence that they were conceived in a captive facility in South Africa. The chimps, says Ammann, are a key attraction for the wildlife park with the objective of bringing in more paying visitors.

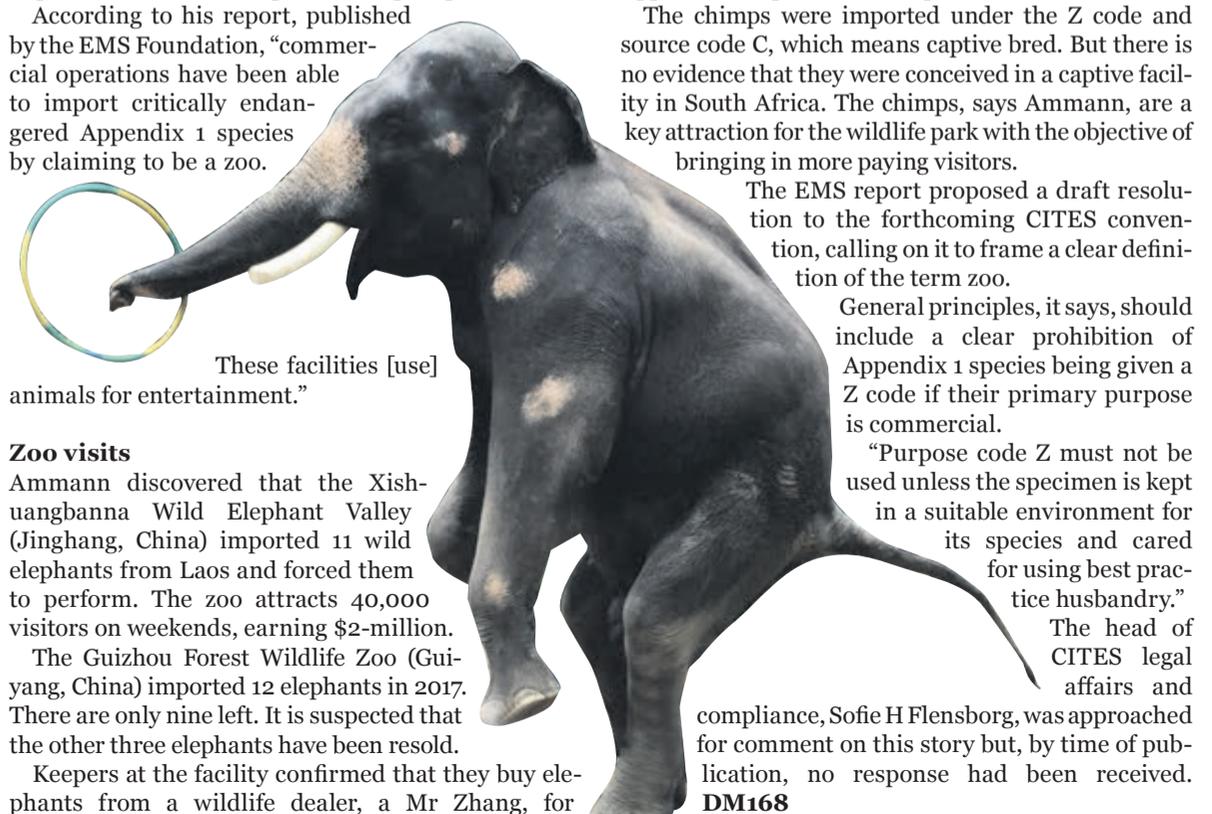
The EMS report proposed a draft resolution to the forthcoming CITES convention, calling on it to frame a clear definition of the term zoo.

General principles, it says, should include a clear prohibition of Appendix 1 species being given a Z code if their primary purpose is commercial.

“Purpose code Z must not be used unless the specimen is kept in a suitable environment for its species and cared for using best practice husbandry.”

The head of CITES legal affairs and compliance, Sofie H Flensburg, was approached for comment on this story but, by time of publication, no response had been received.

DM168



Shark diving area extension plan

Great white shark populations are dwindling in the shores around Cape Town. In an effort to save the industry, the operating area for False Bay's cage diving. But surfers and other beach users don't relish the potential risk



Above: Shark cage diving in South Africa attracts thousands of adventure tourists from around the world – but it has also attracted much controversy; Right: A great white shark is attracted to bait, or chum, as tourists view it from the safety of a steel cage submerged beside a boat in Gansbaai in the Western Cape. Photos: iStock; Nic Bothma/EPA

Environment Minister Barbara Creecy is calling for public comment on a proposal to temporarily extend the False Bay white shark cage diving operating area, in an effort to support operators after years of dwindling great white shark sightings.

The proposal is out for public comment until 2 October. If finalised, the shark cage diving operating area in the bay would expand from its current area around Seal Island to include a section of the inshore area adjacent to Strandfontein Beach, and would permit cage diving operators to work about 1.3km to 2.5km from the shore.

The proposed extension is intended to help revive ailing ecotourism, which has been struggling since the great whites began disappearing in 2017.

“The current request for False Bay dates as far back as 2014, however, because of the risk associated with bathers and prevalence and sightings of white sharks in the bay at that time, the department did not see the possibility of considering the request,” Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) spokesperson Albi Modise told *DM168*.

Modise said the DFFE “remains mindful of the history of a shark attack that occurred in the area, as well as the public’s concerns and perceptions associated with chumming”.

DM168 understands the proposal has been backed by cage diving companies in the bay, which have been calling for an area extension for years. The extension would allow shark cage diving operators to attract other shark species, including the bronze whaler and the sevengill cow shark.

“False Bay is the only area of the three

shark cage diving operations that hasn’t got an inshore operating area, because even when the white sharks were here, our business was always curtailed to white shark patterns and could not interact with the bronze whalers,” explained founder and director of African Shark Eco-Charters Rob Lawrence, who added that extensions have been allocated to Gansbaai and Mossel Bay.

In pre-pandemic days, and prior to the disappearance of white sharks from the bay, shark cage diving was booming.

If finalised, the shark cage diving operating area in the bay would expand from its current area around Seal Island to include a section of the inshore area adjacent to Strandfontein Beach, and would permit cage diving operators to work about 1.3km to 2.5km from the shore

After Boulders Beach, shark tourism in False Bay was the largest marine tourism venture in the southern peninsula, co-founder of Apex Shark Expeditions Chris Fallows told *DM168*. “It attracted more than 7,000 people to Simon’s Town each year,” he said.

Fallows described the industry as “the lifeblood of Simon’s Town”, which kept hotels, B&Bs and restaurants alive during the doldrums of winter.

But without an extension, the sector faces an uncertain future. “If we are unsuccessful at being able to work in that slightly extended area, all companies would close down,” co-owner of Shark Explorers Stephan Swanson told *DM168*.

Lawrence, who has been operating in the area since 1995, said: “Seal Island was arguably the premier white shark viewing and diving spot in the world until about 2017/2018. [The absence of great whites], coupled with two years of Covid-19, has all but decimated the industry.”

Goodbye, great whites

On average, 205 great white shark sightings were recorded a year from 2010 to 2016 in False Bay. But since 2017, white sharks have all but disappeared from the area. In 2018, there were 50 sightings. Last year, Shark Spotters, a shark safety and research organisation, reported only four.

In 2016, the results of a seven-year research study by marine biologist and lecturer at Stellenbosch University Dr Sara Andreotti and her co-authors revealed that the great white shark population was in peril, with only 353 to 522 white sharks roaming South Africa’s coastline.

Speaking to *DM168*, Andreotti said the research, based on a combination of genetic and photographic identification results, showed that the white shark population had been declining for years because of “over-fishing of white sharks’ food resources, climate change, by-catch of white sharks by commercial fisheries, poaching and KwaZulu-Natal’s shark nets, which are still operating on 37 beaches”.

Andreotti explained that the evidence of the now famous pod of orcas hunting white sharks in 2017 isn’t the main or only cause of shark decline, but rather “the straw that broke the camel’s back”.

In May 2020, following public concern about shark populations and the ensuing conflict between fishers and ecotourism operators, Creecy set up a panel to review the country’s national plan of action for the conservation and management of sharks.

Contrary to Andreotti’s findings, the panel found no evidence that fishing was to blame. “The panel noted with concern the disappearance of the white sharks from ecotourism hotspots, but concluded that these were more likely a shift in distribution from west to east as a result of recent orca occurrence and predation,” Modise told *DM168*.

Modise said the panel found “no convincing connection” between the disappearance of white sharks from False Bay and Gansbaai and the demersal shark longline fishery.

But research published in April, which examined the overlap of white sharks’ movement with fishing vessels, found that the demersal shark longline fishery “had the highest relative spatial and temporal overlap, followed by the pelagic longline fishery and the KwaZulu-Natal shark nets and drumlines”. The findings showed that the shark nets and drumlines posed “the largest relative risk” to white sharks out of the fisheries assessed in the study.

Attracting other species

When the great whites vanished, cage diving operators in False Bay were in a quandary.

“We needed to restructure our business

splits opinions

the environment minister has proposed extending of more sharks in the area. By **Victoria O'Regan**

and start working with other species of sharks," said Fallows.

Fallows explained that the proposed extended operating area has "significant numbers" of these shark species at certain times of the year and, with roughly a 600m to 800m extension, cage divers "could run a far more successful tourism operation".

In response to questions from *DM168*, the City of Cape Town's deputy mayor and mayco member for spatial planning and environment Eddie Andrews said the City does "not object to the consideration of extending the current operating area". But Andrews said that "public perception and our complex South African history" must be considered in the decision-making process.

"We ... recognise that the Strandfontein coastline forms part of the previously disadvantaged communities of Cape Town and the perception may be created that cage diving is allowed off previously disadvantaged communities' beaches but not off previously (and currently) advantaged communities' beaches," Andrews said.

While there may be public concern about operating with chum nearer to the shore, cage diving operators say this would not affect bathers or surfers in the area.

Shark Spotters project manager Sarah Waries told *DM168* that while there are a lot of misconceptions around shark cage diving and chumming, "there's no evidence to sug-

Local surfer Rezar De Nicker, who grew up surfing in Muizenberg, told *DM168* that there are many people in False Bay, including surfers, swimmers and fishers, that use the beach for recreational purposes, and the proposal is "completely wrong".

"The main concern is putting lives at risk," said De Nicker, adding that cage diving in the inshore area could also cause blood and chum to wash up on the beach.

Nigel Savel, founder of the 9Miles Project, a non-profit organisation in Strandfontein that works with youth in coastal communities and uses surfing as a catalyst for upliftment, said the proposed extension is a "big concern". To allow cage divers to operate further inshore, Savel says, comes at "massive risk to a recreational community that utilises the ocean so frequently".

Savel said that having cage diving operators closer inshore would mean they would need to be "constantly vigilant" while running their programmes.

"These guys are doing it for profit but you cannot put a price on a life," Savel said.

Using marine resources sustainably

Speaking to *DM168* about her views on the proposal, Andreotti believed it was a step in the right direction towards creating "a non-consumptive way of using our marine resources".

Fallows concurred, saying: "If the govern-



gest that there is any link between shark cage diving and shark bites".

Moreover, there have been pioneering studies done in South Africa which have found the effects of cage diving on the behaviour of some sharks to be minor, with the majority of sharks observed showing little interest in the chum.

DM168 spoke to one commercial linefisher in False Bay, who asked to remain anonymous, who believed that the extension would have minimal impact on his fishing operations, saying: "I don't foresee an extension of the cage diving area being an issue for us."

Too close for comfort

But *DM168* understands there is considerable concern, among some local surfers who use Strandfontein Beach, over the proposed area extension allowing cage divers to attract sharks further inshore.

ment is serious about creating job opportunities and creating sustainable utilisation of resources in a non-consumptive way, this is the perfect opportunity to do that."

While the white shark is the most protected shark in South Africa in terms of legislation, routine enforcement of the law is required to protect the environment and reduce poaching, added Andreotti.

"My biggest frustration is seeing the number, ringing the alarm bell, and feeling like it didn't help," she said.

In the proposal, Creecy stressed that the area extension was temporary, saying: "If great white sharks return to the bay ... the new area will be closed."

DM168 asked Andreotti about the likelihood of this happening.

"It's very, very tiny. I would be the happiest person in the world if I am wrong about this," she said. **DM168**

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SOLIDARITY RESPONSE FUND NPC

(Registration number 2020/179561/08)

SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28 FEBRUARY 2022

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 28 FEBRUARY 2022

	2022	2021
	Rand	Rand
	R'000	R'000
ASSETS		
<i>Non-Current Assets</i>		
Intellectual Property	-	-
<i>Current Assets</i>		
- Inventories	-	108 687
- Other receivables	238 896	89 028
- Cash and cash equivalents	772 380	1 246 732
TOTAL ASSETS	1 011 276	1 444 447
FUNDS AND LIABILITIES		
<i>Funds</i>		
- Accumulated funds	923 331	1 373 964
<i>Current Liabilities</i>		
- Trade and Other Payables	87 945	70 483
TOTAL FUNDS AND LIABILITIES	1 011 276	1 444 447

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

	2022	2021*
	Rand	Rand
	R'000	R'000
Revenue		
- Donations	737 235	3 233 187
Operating expenditure	(1 223 393)	(1 905 780)
Operating (deficit)/ surplus	(486 158)	1 327 407
Administration cost	(6 804)	-
Interest income	41 617	54 660
Bank charges	-	(4)
Foreign exchange loss	712	(8 099)
(Loss)/ profit and total comprehensive (loss)/ income for the year	(450 633)	1 373 964

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

	2022	2021*
	Rand	Rand
	R'000	R'000
Accumulated Funds		
Opening balance 1 March 2021	1 373 964	-
Comprehensive (loss)/ income for the period	(450 633)	1 373 964
Closing Balance 28 February 2022	923 331	1 373 964

*2021 information relates to the period 25 March 2020 to 28 February 2021

Basis of preparation

The Funds financial statements have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) and Interpretations as issued by the IFRS Interpretations Committee (IFRIC), and comply with the Financial Reporting Guides as issued by the Accounting Practices Committee (APC), Financial Reporting Pronouncements as issued by the Financial Reporting Standards Council (FRSC), and the requirements of the South African Companies Act, No 71 of 2008 (the Companies Act). The company has adopted all new accounting standards and interpretations that became effective in the current reporting period.

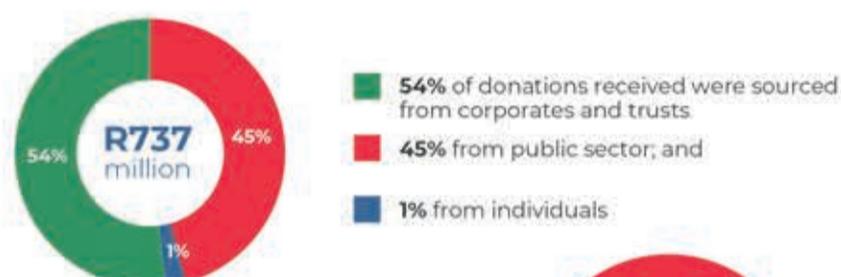
In the Health Response pillar, R556 million was directed at PPE (3%), COVID research (7%), vaccinations related spend (27%), critical care equipment and ventilators (55%), nursing assistance (3%) and Charlotte Maxeke refurbishment (3%).

The Humanitarian pillar disbursed R136m primarily for GBV (R74m) and Food Security (Food Vouchers and Farming Input vouchers - R62m) projects.

Disbursements from the HCRF of R247m were directed mainly at Food Relief (R112m) and Business Support grants (R116m)

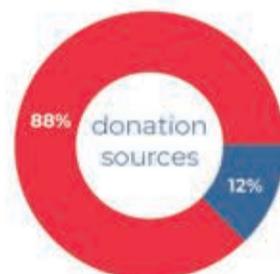
Donations Received

R737 million in donations was raised in the period under review, and received as follows:



In addition:

- 88% was domestically sourced, as opposed to
- 12% being received from foreign sources



Administration costs

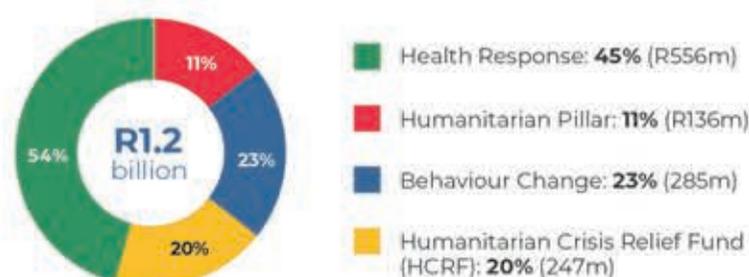
In the current financial year, the Fund incurred administration costs not previously incurred due to seconded staff being provided to the Fund in the form of in-kind support. This in-kind support terminated at the end of September 2021 with the Fund subsequently incurring the administration cost for seconded staff and company secretarial fees of R6,8m.

Governance, Risk and Control

The Audit and Risk Committee report, the Corporate Governance report and the Directors' report included in the financial statements highlight the Fund's management and Board's focus on transparency, sound financial management and good corporate governance in order to ensure robust systems of internal, financial and accounting control and risk management.

Operating Expenditure

R1.2bn was spent during the period under review across the Fund's four strategic pillars as follows:





TB scientist's remarkable journey from village to lab

Top Stellenbosch scholar worked part-time as a street vendor while studying for his honours – and now his ground-breaking research on diagnostic tests has won him the Royal Society Africa Prize



By Biënné Huisman

In 2004, Novel Chegou left his home country, Cameroon, in search of a better life in South Africa. With high hopes and not much money, he sold African crafts – beads, masks and carved stones – next to the village green in Stellenbosch to save for his studies at the town's university.

Today, Chegou, 44, is a full professor in molecular biology and human genetics at Stellenbosch University's Department of Biomedical Sciences. He heads a tuberculosis biomarker research laboratory and has contributed to several patents for TB diagnostic tests, which are already being used around the world.

Last month, the Royal Society – the independent scientific academy of the United Kingdom with illustrious fellows such as Albert Einstein – announced Chegou as this year's winner of the Royal Society Africa Prize, an annual award recognising innovation by a research scientist in Africa.

Deadly childhood TB

Lately, one of Chegou's main interests is TB meningitis (TBM), TB of the brain, in children. Better TBM tests are urgently needed as children are frequently diagnosed too late to stop irreparable brain damage or death. It is for his work in this area that Chegou has been honoured by the Royal Society.

"TB meningitis, TB of the brain, it's a very terrible disease," he says. "I started working on TBM a few years ago, learning about the challenges in diagnosing the disease. Children are coming to day hospitals up to six times before they get diagnosed with TBM. But by then often the brain is gone.

"It's one of the most difficult types of TB to diagnose. You really need advanced tools and expensive equipment. Most of the time children will never be normal again by the time it is diagnosed. There are so many neurological consequences – even if they are treated successfully. The problem is the poor accuracy of current diagnostic tools."

Of children diagnosed with TBM, he adds, an estimated 20% will die.

"It's really bad," says Chegou, himself a father of three. His wife holds a master's degree in agricultural economics from Stellenbosch University.

The family lives in Bellville, but the scholar is often on the road. After our interview, Chegou was due to catch a flight to Durban for South Africa's seventh annual TB Conference, where he delivered a talk. Two weeks before our interview, he was presenting his work at a TBM conference at Oxford University.

'Opportunities every step of the way'

Inside Chegou's sun-washed office overlooking Tygerberg campus, we are looking at his computer monitor, where he has called up his research papers on Google Scholar. He points to his third most-cited paper, titled "Host markers in QuantiFERON supernatants differentiate active TB from latent TB infection: preliminary report", which was published in the journal *BMC Pulmonary Medicine* in 2009.

"This one is special, I'm really proud of it," he says. "It was a part of my PhD research. Actually, it was the reason for my MSc project to be upgraded to a PhD, and led to my first patent."

Outside, a train rumbles past. Chegou gestures at the window, saying this was the same train he used to take between Stellenbosch and Tygerberg back in 2005 when he was still a part-time street vendor.

Reflecting on his past, Chegou throws back his head, emitting high-pitched peals of laughter.

His demeanour is that of wide-eyed wonder at the fortuitous sprinkled across his journey.

"So yes," he says, "in life, it's about taking a chance. If an opportunity comes, make the most of it. Look at me, look where I come from. It seems like what happened to me is this – God put people to help me everywhere, opportunities every step of the way."

'I will work and you will go to school'

One of four siblings born to poor parents in Ajei village, in the Anglophone northwest of Cameroon, Chegou was orphaned when he was 14 years old.

"Unfortunately, my mother died when I was about seven years old. Then my dad died when I was 14. I had just started secondary school, so it was terrible. I was like, okay, is this it? I won't be able to go to school. But then my brother was like, I will work and you will go to school."

Chegou's brothers did not finish school. His younger sister later studied from home and became a nurse.

"I used to walk to school, a very long distance," he says. "In Cameroon, we don't even know the distances or measure it. I would start walking in the morning at 6am through the forest, you know, along little paths, walking the whole day, arriving in the village where the school is maybe at around 7pm. I'd carry all my food from home – oil, you know, those things. I had no money. Luckily in Cameroon food is very cheap. If it wasn't for that, there's no way I would have survived."

In the village where he went to school, Chegou stayed over with a cousin. Growing up, he knew he wanted to become a doctor, but there were hurdles.

"By the time I finished high school, we only had one medical school in Cameroon, which was taking a maximum of 75 students a year, for the whole country. So to get in was very difficult. I don't think it was always on merit either," he says, laughing.

This medical school – at the University of Yaoundé – was in the French part of the country, which was in regular conflict with Chegou's Anglophone region. But, as luck would have it, a year later a second medical school opened at the University of Buea, in the Anglophone northwest. An uncle gave him money to register for the entrance examination, and he passed.

"Then suddenly, they changed the minister of higher education," says Chegou. "And the new guy came out of nowhere and started giving scholarships to the top students in each programme. This covered my second, third and fourth years at university – the school fees. It was like 53,000 francs, which was about R1,000 then. And then after I graduated, I think that guy, they removed him. They stopped that scholarship thing. So I'm like, it looks like that scholarship was created especially for me!"

While at university, Chegou and fellow students would share money, food and textbooks. For some time as a student, he lived with a relative free of charge.

'Next to the Checkers in Stellenbosch'

After graduating from the University of Buea as a medical laboratory scientist, Chegou moved to South Africa.

"I was struggling to find a university to study further," he says. "I was applying around the world. [During] that time my brother, my older brother, found himself in South Africa. He was staying in Stellenbosch and he said to me, there's a nice university here, come! Okay. So I came here in 2004 and I started applying to Stellenbosch University and to UCT [the University of Cape Town]. My brother was here on business, he was a street vendor. And at the beginning, I worked with him too.

"Next to the Checkers in Stellenbosch, next to the church, we used to sell African art – from masks to carved stones to beads.

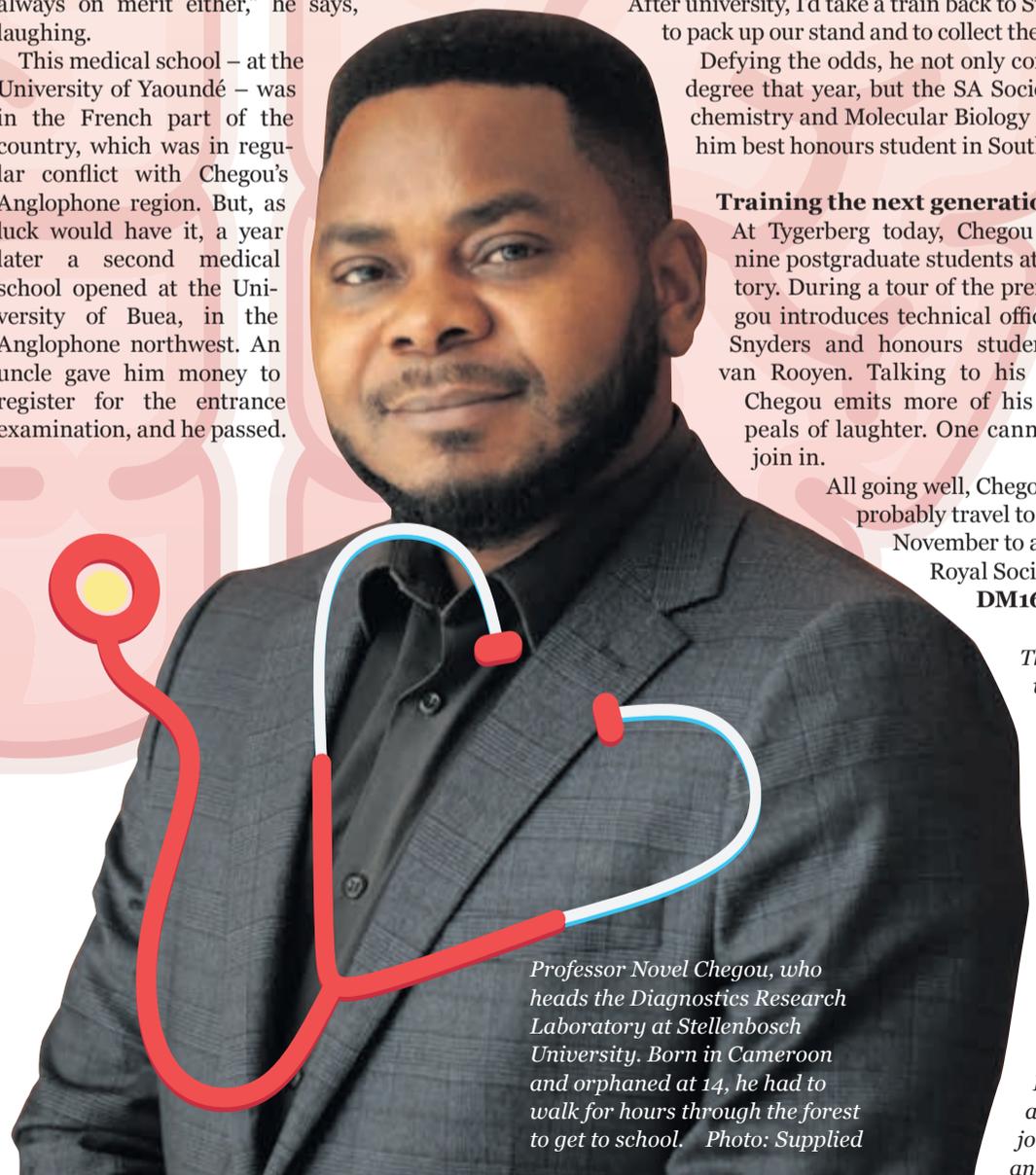
"In 2005, when I started my honours, I used to go to that market in the morning to unpack our display goods, then I took the train to Tygerberg for school. At the time I had people helping us sell the crafts during the day. After university, I'd take a train back to Stellenbosch, to pack up our stand and to collect the money."

Defying the odds, he not only completed his degree that year, but the SA Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology also named him best honours student in South Africa.

Training the next generation

At Tygerberg today, Chegou supervises nine postgraduate students at his laboratory. During a tour of the premises, Chegou introduces technical officer Candice Snyders and honours student Leandré van Rooyen. Talking to his colleagues, Chegou emits more of his trademark peals of laughter. One cannot help but join in.

All going well, Chegou will probably travel to Britain in November to accept his Royal Society award. **DM168**



Professor Novel Chegou, who heads the Diagnostics Research Laboratory at Stellenbosch University. Born in Cameroon and orphaned at 14, he had to walk for hours through the forest to get to school. Photo: Supplied

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Biënné Huisman is a freelance journalist and writer.

Shocking conditions at rehab

When a woman and three men turned up at the house where Sarah* stayed with her aunt, she thought they had come to fetch her for an “outpatient therapy session” designed to heal her fractious relationship with her mother. It was only when the gate was locked behind them at an isolated property in Hout Bay, Cape Town, that Sarah realised she had been lied to.

“You’ve been booked into Eleanore’s Recovery Centre,” she was told. And no, she couldn’t leave.

Sarah (28) had been committed by her mother into a 12-month drug treatment programme. “But on what authority are you holding me here?” Sarah asked her captors. “I don’t even have a speeding fine!”

In South Africa, a person can only be committed to a rehab against their will with a court order. To take someone to a rehab under false pretences and hold them there under duress amounts to kidnapping.

In this case, there was no court order. She was being kept there on her mother’s instructions, Sarah was told. *DM168* was later shown a WhatsApp message from Sarah’s mother to the rehab owner, saying “Don’t let her go”.

Sarah stared around her in disbelief. She would be sharing a cramped, stinking shack with seven other women. “Welcome to the Kingdom,” she was told. “The Kingdom is anointed, and being in the Kingdom will heal you.”

There are just two free government in-patient rehabs in Cape Town. On the other end of the scale, private luxury rehabs – often touting for business from wealthy Europeans – have mushroomed, sometimes charging in excess of R100,000 a month for residential drug and alcohol treatment programmes.

In the gap between these two extremes, countless illegal rehabs have sprung up. As of 2019, the Department of Social Development said it was aware of 48 such facilities in the Western Cape, but the total figure was likely far higher. The provincial department was unable to provide an updated figure.

In November 2021, however, it issued a plea to the public to “ensure that your loved one(s) sign up for treatment at a registered facility when needing help with a substance use disorder”.

The trigger for that statement was quite specific. In that month, reports emerged of torture and murder at an illegal rehab in Ruyterwacht in Cape Town’s northern suburbs. Following the death of a 35-year-old patient, former patients came forward with claims that they had been viciously assaulted at the facility, including one allegation of a man being set alight.

The events at Ruyterwacht were, at that time, just the latest in a string of similar incidents occurring nationally, including:

- August 2021: An illegal rehab near Worcester, Western Cape, is accused of blackmailing patients;
- February 2020: The SA Human Rights Commission raids an illegal rehab in Polokwane, Limpopo, and rescues 70 patients chained from hand to ankle;
- October 2018: A man dies after being brutally beaten at an illegal rehab in Magaliesberg, Gauteng;
- February 2018: A gay patient says he was tortured and sexually assaulted at an illegal rehab on the Cape Flats.

The Western Cape department of social

A proliferation of unregistered drug treatment facilities in South Africa has occurred in recent years. With prices far lower than those of private rehabs, they offer little in the way of proper treatment and do not have the requisite social workers, nurses or psychologists. Instead, they rely on Christian ‘teachings’ and hand out punishment to their patients living in fear and squalor. By **Rebecca Davis**



Allison Booyesen speaks to *DM168* about her experience living at Eleanore’s Recovery Centre in Hout Bay.

Photos: Leila Dougan



A urine-soaked mattress outside the Wendy house at Eleanore’s Recovery Centre where seven women are said to be undergoing drug rehabilitation.

development said in November last year that among the reports it had received of mistreatment at illegal rehabs had been claims of extended isolation, forcing patients to stand in water for many hours, and sexual and emotional abuse “such as degrading the client in front of others”.

It did not take Sarah long to realise that conditions at Eleanore’s Recovery Centre were even worse than she had first per-

ceived. The windows in the Wendy house in which she would be living alongside other female patients were broken and had been crudely patched with cardboard. There was no toilet, so the women would defecate into plastic bags.

“If your family has not sent toilet paper, you use pages from the Yellow Pages,” Sarah told *DM168*. This waste was then flung on top of a broken-down bakkie piled with

junk that was parked next to the shack. All women shared a single bucket in which to wash themselves.

Sarah discovered that her mother had paid an initial “registration fee” of R2,000, followed by R1,800 a month for her residential treatment.

This money went to the two owners of the rehab: Eleanore Hendricks – who styles herself as a “prophetess” or “apostle”, with the rehab referred to as her “Kingdom” – and her husband, Robin de Wit.

Hendricks and De Wit live in a large farmhouse on the same property with their extended family. Sarah said that the female patients were tasked daily with cleaning for the household.

The “treatment programme” consisted almost entirely of Christian prayer. Patients were expected to participate in morning and afternoon devotions, with food allegedly withheld if they refused to pray.

In an interview Hendricks conducted with a Cape Town Christian radio station in July 2021, she explained that she was “anointed by God” to heal “the broken” and that her centre’s programme was “based totally on the word of God”.

The facility also housed male patients, but the women never saw them: the two sexes were forbidden to mix. Sarah claimed that if female patients were accused of wearing “revealing” clothing, they were subject to a process called “rebuking” – in which Hendricks would accuse them of being a “jintu”, or “whore”.

that uses Christian ‘teachings’

Sarah did not stop pleading to be freed. She had been kidnapped on 12 September. The following day, a male relative arrived at the rehab gates and demanded Sarah's release. He was not permitted to enter the grounds. In a video seen by *DM168*, Sarah is prompted by her relative to verbally confirm her desire to leave.

A clearly frightened Sarah, her arms wrapped around her chest, says: "I would like to come with you." A male member of Hendricks's team clutches Sarah around the shoulder and mugs for the camera, mocking Sarah's relative.

De Wit would subsequently send the relative a WhatsApp message, seen by *DM168*, threatening: "You fucking idiot I suma [sommer] come to your house now and fuck you up."

Sarah was not permitted to leave.

Why would people sign up their loved ones for facilities like Eleanore's Recovery Centre even if they know the reality of what they are like? In South Africa, the cheap rates offered by these illegal rehabs are clearly a major part of the answer, but possibly not all of it.

"There is this sense that treatment for addiction should be punitive," said addiction counsellor Freddie van Rensburg.

Because addiction is still so stigmatised, there is a widespread perception that addicts are "using [drugs] because they want to use" and are consequently deserving of punishment for their weak willpower.

Van Rensburg added that some families may enrol members into such facilities out of sheer desperation and hopelessness.

"Addicts can threaten the social, psychological and physical wellbeing of a family. Other family members can become really afraid and make decisions simply based on what will get the addict out of the house."

The addiction counsellor said legitimate facilities would treat both the addiction and the mental health issues underlying it. They would empower the patient with education on the nature of addiction, carry out both group and individual therapy and encourage healthy living.

And although most rehabs would incorporate some form of "spiritual work", relying only on Christian teachings to treat addiction was insufficient. "This person is not using [drugs] because he doesn't have God in his life. He's using because he's in pain and he has some serious shit going on in his life," Van Rensburg said.

Western Cape department of social development spokesperson Esther Lewis said that in order for a rehab to receive certification from the provincial authorities, multiple criteria must be met. Zoning, safety, health and food preparation clearances must be obtained. If patients are going to detox at the rehab, a special licence from the Department of Health must be obtained.

The facility must have a "qualified, multi-disciplinary team of professionals" in place: social workers, nurses, psychologists.

"Registered rehab centres must follow a bio-psycho-social approach, which means the health, mental and social dimensions of the client are addressed in the treatment plans."

Lewis confirmed that Eleanore's Recovery Centre is not registered with the department. It is, in other words, an illegal rehab.

Sarah's male relative, deeply concerned



Simone Smith on one of the bunk beds in a Wendy house where women sleep at Eleanore's Recovery Centre.



Above: One of the patients leaves the Wendy house where she and six other women sleep at Eleanore's Recovery Centre.

Below: Simone Smith speaks to *DM168* about her experience.

for her welfare based on what he had seen through the rehab gates, was not prepared to let the matter slide.

He contacted *DM168*. He phoned the human trafficking hotline. He tried, without success, to engage the interest of the Hout Bay police. The Western Cape social devel-

opment department eventually took him seriously and promised to investigate.

Apparently spooked, Hendricks and De Wit suddenly opted to release Sarah. Her relative received a message instructing him, without explanation, to pick her up.

When released, Sarah had been held at the rehab for seven days.

DM168 visited Eleanore's Recovery Centre on 15 September without forewarning. We drew up at the gates at the same time as "apostle" Hendricks and De Wit, who agreed to talk to us and let us view the facility.

The first thing we saw was a very thin woman, sitting on a chair in the sun, who appeared to be catatonic. A thin thread of drool hung from her mouth. The other female patients informed us that they had been told she was "bipolar".

Elsewhere on the premises, the descriptions Sarah had given to *DM168* proved accurate. The shack housing the female patients was tiny, crammed with bunk beds and it stank of faeces and urine.

By contrast, the house in which Hendricks, De Wit and their extended family lived was a sprawling farmhouse.

"We are registered, yes," De Wit said, ushering us into the lounge and handing us a framed certificate – which proved to be the registration for a "non-profit

company", not a rehab, based in Philippi, not Hout Bay.

"Our conditions are not 100%," De Wit admitted, blaming this on the low fees charged by the rehab.

It was difficult to square the claims of financial woes with the number of patients he said were currently enrolled – 30 – which would be bringing in monthly fees of R54,000 without counting registration fees.

In addition, the rehab's Facebook page reveals almost constant fundraising activities, ostensibly undertaken to support the facility. The next such event, scheduled for 25 September, is a "Jazz on Lawn" afternoon to be held in the rehab's name in Pinelands, with entrance at R150 a person and a vendor's fee of R800.

De Wit flatly denied having held Sarah against her will. "We would not keep her here without her permission," he said.

When he was told that *DM168* had seen a video of Sarah clearly asking to leave and not being allowed to do so, De Wit shot back: "Well, that's why we let her leave after that."

He could not explain why it had taken them a further six days to release her.

De Wit and Hendricks also denied other aspects of Sarah's story, including the inadequate toilet facilities.

"They choose to pee in a bucket," Hendricks said, explaining that the patients were welcome to use the family's indoor toilet, but preferred not to do so at night.

She said the patients were also "welcome to come bath", but they preferred to wash themselves from a bucket.

With reference to the counselling facilities available at Eleanore's Recovery Centre, De Wit said that both he and Hendricks led "counselling teams". Asked if either of them possessed the necessary qualifications, he pointed at Hendricks and said: "She does."

Hendricks said she held a degree in theology and had undergone pastoral training and three months of counselling training.

When *DM168* asked to speak to the female patients, the rehab owners agreed without hesitation and soon five women entered the farmhouse.

These patients were unanimous: they were very happy in the "Kingdom", as they called it. They were treated well and they considered themselves much safer inside the rehab than out on the streets from where most of them had come.

One said she had been there five years and had no intention of leaving yet. Another said she had been to two "expensive" rehabs before Eleanore's Recovery Centre and this was "the only one that worked".

Earlier, De Wit had told us: "These are people that have nowhere to go."

When Sarah spoke to *DM168*, she had only been out of the rehab for two days. She said the experience had been so traumatic that her hands still shook whenever she tried to light a cigarette.

It seemed clear that Sarah was going through a kind of survivor's guilt, for being able to leverage her middle-class status and contacts to escape the rehab when others could not. She said she was the only female patient who had matric; a number, she claimed, could not even read.

"Now, I'm too scared to leave the house. I don't even want to go to the shop," Sarah said.

"I am so scared that they could just arrive and take me back again." **DM168**

*Name changed to protect identity.

Before Naeemah Abrahams's name was attached to more than 90 public health research publications in prestigious academic journals, she worked as a nurse. She saw things in Cape Town's hospitals that stiffened her resolve for justice.

There was a certain disdain for the disenfranchised built into the public health system of 1980s South Africa. She was often left in tears. "I felt like I was not allowed to care."

Her difficulties as a nurse were compounded by the expectation that she would grow inured to people's pain – that she too would soon practise the contempt that had been inscribed into the system. She remembers watching patients who came to the hospital drunk be treated with open disdain by healthcare workers, who sent them to the back of the line or left them to queue outside in the cold. It weighed heavily on her.

"I didn't want to be part of a system that tells me that I shouldn't care about a person because he's drunk, or because he's black," she says. "I thought I can't continue to be a nurse in this system – I'm going to be changed by it."

So, Abrahams took a break from working in health facilities for a year to pursue a qualification in community health and then returned to work at the Red Cross Children's Hospital. There, at last, she was allowed to show compassion. She felt like she could indeed care.

By 1989, Cape Town was poised delicately between hope and despair. Apartheid was in its final days. Rumours of political assassinations and detentions were rife. But the promise of change was stubborn.

Abrahams had already been in trouble for her political activism – as a result, municipalities refused to hire her. For years, the message from the "underground" of the structures of the banned ANC in exile was for people to equip themselves with knowledge about epidemiology to ensure that the new state that would be built had a ready bank of expertise. It was from there that she was inspired to take a position as a field-worker, working under the tutelage of a surgeon at the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) in Cape Town. She hated it.

A brutal awakening

Abrahams is a mother of two, married to someone she describes as "much cleverer" than her, and she's devoted to her family.

She's deeply appreciative of the people who have helped her chart a successful course into epidemiology. She had thought she just wanted to be a nurse – and even that was quite a feat for a woman from a working-class family in Cape Town.

Abrahams shudders slightly at the memory of her first job at the SAMRC. It was meant to allow her to be able to do something about the unjust way things were. All the talk was about the new state that would have to be built soon, and healthcare would be integral to that.

Her supervisor, however, was obsessed with guns. He would begin every morning regaling her with stories about his gun collection. There was no escape. In the trauma units where she worked, she was surrounded by the lingering effects of gun violence. "My hate for guns started there."

Years later, Abrahams would publish papers that show guns play a significant role in violence against women in SA, particularly in the killing of intimate partners.

It was there, in and among the victims of gun violence in her first job as a researcher, that she began taking note of the evidence of violence against women. To most others, it was unremarkable – a phenomenon that was not questioned.



Naeemah Abrahams and the secret to defeating evil

The gender and health scientist has never faltered in her defence of abused women. By Khadija Patel

Women getting beaten up and landing in the hospital just happened, and the implications were not widely considered to be worthy of deep reflection, especially by epidemiologists. "There was this woman with a blue eye [black eye] that I encountered in the trauma units that nobody enquired about," she recalls.

Abrahams trudged through that job until Salim Abdool Karim, who also worked at the SAMRC then, encouraged her to apply for another position. She wasn't sure she was suited to the job at all. But she applied anyway. And she got it.

'Violence everywhere'

Things were much better in her new role as a junior to gender-based violence researcher Rachel Jewkes.

At first, the pair had set out to focus on reproductive health and contraception. "We started off with abortion work," says Abrahams.

But a troubling pattern was emerging in their conversations with women.

"Violence. We came across violence everywhere. We go and speak to teens about pregnancy, we [come] across violence. We go to

speak to nurses, we hear about the violence on patients."

This then informed a new trajectory. Her master's thesis involved speaking to men about their abuse. In many ways, it was

VICTIMS' CHAMPION

- Naeemah Abrahams is the director of the women's health research team at the SAMRC, a unit that she helped to set up in the late 1980s.
- She started her career as a nurse in the hospitals of Cape Town, where she saw how often women showed up battered and bruised – a phenomenon that went mostly unmentioned by her colleagues.
- She dedicated her career to assembling and analysing numbers on violence against women in order to change the lives of the people behind them. In the process, she's helped to turn the tide of gender-based violence in SA.

Naeemah Abrahams.

Photos: Jay Caboz/Bhekisisa

groundbreaking work. Few people considered talking to perpetrators at all. Her journey to finding out from men about how and why they abuse would go on to become the subject of her PhD thesis too.

Meanwhile, the SAMRC was building a world-class women's health research centre. "I truly believe we became well known as leaders in the field of violence against women globally, having built the field here in South Africa as well," says Abrahams.

Small signs of hope

Her work on intimate partner violence has explored a range of topics such as risk factors for perpetrating intimate partner violence, femicide, health sector responses to gender-based violence, sexual assault services, prevention of HIV following a sexual assault, mental health and burden of disease studies exploring gender-based violence as a risk factor for health outcomes. At the heart of an impressive repertoire lies a key finding: men can be engaged about their violence. And a key recommendation to help society stem the violence: believe women.

Progress has often felt achingly slow, Abrahams argues. But change is happening.

Earlier this year, Abrahams and her colleagues released a study showing that femicide – when women are murdered – has declined rapidly and dramatically in South Africa since the 1990s. Indeed, since 1999, when the unit first starting researching the subject, the rate has halved.

"There is good news there," Abrahams says. "I think we can celebrate a little."

That kind of understatement is typical for Abrahams. She never intended to be a trailblazer. She never paused to think she was breaking barriers.

But in the knots of grief, worry, illness and isolation that sometimes punctuate our lives, Abrahams is a bulwark of her family and a source of strength, understanding and guidance for her community.

She claims to be lucky but she overstates her luck. She hasn't stopped caring when many others have long grown weary. She proves most emphatically that sometimes the only thing necessary for the defeat of evil is for good women to do something.

Khadija Patel is the head of programming at the International Fund for Public Interest Media and the chairperson of the International Press Institute.



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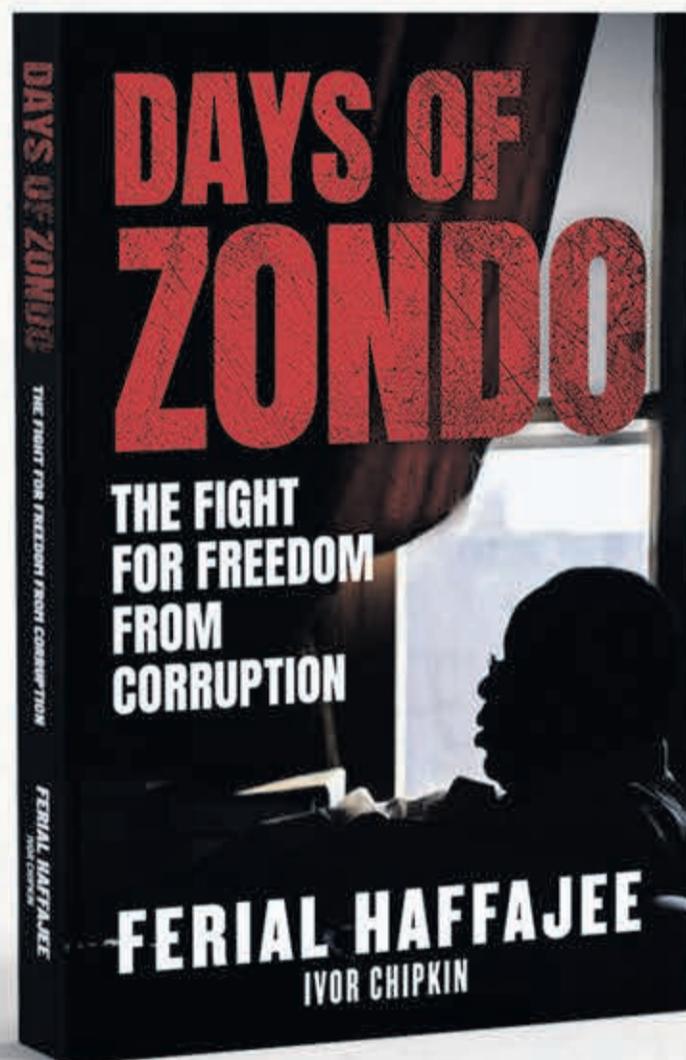
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Swim centres contain hope for fewer children drowning

An innovative project has been launched to convert shipping containers into 'swim survival centres' that can be used to teach water safety to pupils at even the most rural of schools



Above: A lesson in the Survival Swimming Centre, a 12m shipping container at the Noah Christian Academy in Tombo; Below: The pool at the centre. Photos: Supplied

MAVERICK LIFE



By Craig Bishop

When Port St Johns primary school principal Nwabisa Nkata boarded a plane a few years ago, she listened intently to the safety instructions, especially the part about how to float should the plane be forced to crash-land on water.

"Well, I knew that was it. I would be the number one first person to sink straight down and drown. No way I could possibly last in the water," she says. But, following the installation of a survival swimming programme at her rural school recently, she says hopefully that sort of existential dread will be banished.

The Noah Christian Academy in Tombo, in the greater Port St Johns municipality, is only the second school in the country to receive a Survival Swimming Centre, a 12m shipping container modified to house a small pool, changing room and office. These containers, which are the brainchild of National Sea Rescue Institute (NSRI) drowning prevention manager Andrew Ingram, come with a swim survival instructor who teaches children four basic water survival skills: breath control, body orientation in water, how to float, and how to move a minimum of 5m through water. This second container was sponsored by Speedo's international water safety initiative, Swim United, which originated in the UK.

The first container was delivered to Riebeeck Kasteel in the Western Cape a year ago. It provided a steep but practical learning curve in managing water quality, water temperature and other logistical headaches such as transporting pupils safely from classroom to pool, Ingram says.

Nkata (47), who cannot swim herself but plans to be one of the first in the pool, has lived in the area for

The ability to move a short distance through the water without panicking, or even just to float on one's back, therefore could save lives



more than 30 years. She has seen more than her fair share of drownings, especially children, and says the Survival Swimming Centre project will save lives.

"I have so many stories of community members who have lost a child to drowning. Kids go swim in the Umzimvubu River, and when they get into trouble the bravest adults run and try to assist, but no one here has had any formal swimming training."

South Africa is ranked 44th out of 183 countries in terms of drownings, with about 1,450 deaths each year. A third of these are children under 14, with four

times as many boys dying as girls. Less than 15% of South Africans know how to swim. In August, a small Polokwane community was distraught after two boys aged nine and 11 drowned trying to cross the Seshego Dam using polystyrene blocks as flotation devices.

The NSRI's national water-safety team leader, instructor Valerie Barlow, says research shows that the body of a drowning victim is often recovered right below where they went under the water, often close to a potential safe zone. The ability to move a short distance through the water without panicking, or even just to float on one's back, therefore could save lives.

"People access water as part of their daily routine, whether it is fetching water from a river or crossing a river to get to school or work. Most kids here know someone who has drowned or have themselves had a non-fatal drowning incident. There are no facilities in these rural areas, so kids tend to gather around rivers and dams to play," she adds.

Nkata says that of the 23 children in her Grade 7 class, 18 have already returned their permission slips. Some of the parents have not yet signed the slips, as they are too scared. "This is such an unusual concept. People don't know yet what it's all about. I never saw anything like this growing up, so as more kids see their classmates actually being in the water, the word will get around. That is actual service delivery," she says.

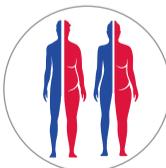
The school plans to accommodate swim survival lessons in its existing physical education classes.

Ingram says the goal is to start rolling out a container for delivery every 12 weeks all over South Africa. Corporate and private sponsorship would lessen the burden on cash-strapped municipalities to provide water safety facilities, he says. **DM168**

If you would like to get involved, please visit www.speedo.co.za/swim-united



Studying the children born after apartheid Pages 24&25



Obesity weighs heavily on SA's healthcare budget Page 26

‘Birth to Thirty’ is a study of the

The largest longitudinal study of its kind in on the continent, Birth to Thirty has of the findings of the research have been published in a book by one of the

Just more than three decades since the dismantling of apartheid, the findings of a longitudinal study that began in 1990, with about 3,200 babies born between 23 April and 8 June 1990 – the largest and longest of its kind in Africa – have been published in a new book, launched in August 2022 and titled *Birth to Thirty: A Study as Ambitious as the Country We Wanted to Create*.

The author, Linda Richter – a developmental psychologist, a distinguished professor at the University of the Witwatersrand’s Centre of Excellence in Human Development, and the recipient of the 2015 South African Medical Research Council President’s Lifetime Achievement Award for Research Excellence, as well as the 2020 National Research Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award – was one of the founding members of the study.

Professor Noel Cameron, then in the anatomy department at Wits, and Dr Derek Yach, then at the Medical Research Council, conceptualised it as a 10-year epidemiological study, focused on health and disease. The duo had different objectives, says Richter: Cameron wanted to study child growth longitudinally, while Yach, in anticipation of major demographic shifts, including rapid migration to towns and cities ill-prepared for it, wanted to study the effects of rapid urbanisation on the health of children and families. Yach brought in Richter as the “child development” person.

In addition to the birthdate window, additional parameters were that the cohort had to be made up of singleton babies, born in public hospitals in Soweto-Johannesburg.

“The small proportion of white children born during the six-week enrolment period in 1990, 678 in total, dwindled over time – as white people dropped from 12% to 8% of the South African population, moved to other cities and countries, and their isolation behind high walls blocked our attempts to make contact.

“By the time we reached the 28-year data collection point, Birth to Thirty had become largely a study of people who were ‘not white’. That meant we had a constrained range of socioeconomic variation without the top end of wealth, and thus many of our results underestimate the impact of poverty and hardship,” explains Richter.

The findings

From an initial 3,200, the number of participants still part of the study is down to less than 2,000. The cohort is now 32 years old; more than 270 papers on the study have been published, with more than 20 million raw data points on close to 2,000 individuals collected over 22 data collection waves.

In her book, Richter covers major findings under five headings: violence, learning and education, growth and health, mental and social wellbeing, and social engagement.

Violence

“Violence and cruelty are endemic in South Africa, associated with, among others, the structural violence of apartheid, political violence, collective violent resistance, ongoing violent struggles for power and resources, criminal violence, xenophobic violence and interpersonal violence,” she told a book-launch audience at Wits University.

By the age of 18, only 1% of the participants hadn’t witnessed or experienced some form of violence, and about 50% experienced or witnessed violence at school, at home and in their community. Sexual violence in particular was spread across age and gender. By the age of 28, a third of both women and men reported that they physically abused and had been abused in their relationships.

“That was a surprise for me, because I wasn’t intending to study violence to the extent that we did, but violence is so pervasive in our communities,” says Richter. She emphasises that the level of violence shifts with different age groups, with children likely to start hitting other children between the ages of two and four, before they are properly socialised.

As parents and family intervene, the level of violence declines until high school, where it rises dramatically.

On the ecological environment, Richter says many children attend primary schools quite close to home, with people who live next door or over the road, so children go in a friendship group. However, come high school and puberty, many have to travel longer distances, and are exposed to more environmental factors – like violence.

“When looking back on their lives retrospectively, people reported lower levels of violence. Some might have reported being bullied at school, and violence at home earlier on. When we asked them to reflect on the past [as adults], many didn’t mention these things ... if people’s lives had turned out well, they tended to minimise past problems, whereas if their lives were turning out less well, they tended to maximise,” says Richter.

Growth and mental health

Growth, cognitive capacity and mental health were found to be closely related to the physical and social potential bestowed on the children by their parents and the circumstances in which their parents lived. “In turn, their parents were born with the potential that their own parents and their circumstances bestowed on them, and the Bt30 cohort are passing these intergenerational influences on to their own children. In each generation this potential can be boosted (or dampened)

by changes in socioeconomic circumstances, better access to quality services and opportunities families provide children.”

Women participants were found to be, on average, a centimetre taller than their mothers. While only a quarter of their mothers had passed matric, more than half of women in the cohort had done so, and most lived in houses with consumer goods such as a car, a refrigerator and a washing machine. On the downside, more Bt30 women than their mothers had their first pregnancy before 18, more Bt30 women than their mothers smoked and drank alcohol, felt overwhelmed by debt, and reported intimate partner violence and depression.

Richter says the study is not necessarily an accurate reflection of this age group across the country. “It’s hard to talk about how the country is doing because Soweto does quite differently from the rest of the country. Firstly, it’s in a city, it’s highly developed and very urban. It’s also a highly concentrated population.



children born after apartheid

tracked the lives of a select group of people who were born in 1990. Now some scientists. *DM168* caught up with the author. By **Malibongwe Tyilo**

“There are all sorts of variations of language, which communicate a cultural understanding of what’s going on. But what really is strong, which parallels the development of the group, is the incredible sense of freedom they have. Though they might be unemployed, or might not have finished schooling, many of the young people I spoke to had the sense that the world is full of possibilities for them, and in a way that wasn’t the case with their parents.”

This does not apply to everyone. A few days before she was to interview a participant who left school at 15, his mother let the study

know he had been sentenced to 40 years in jail for hijacking and murder.

“So, by no means did all of the people in the study turn out well. A lot of people turned out really poorly, and their circumstances are so constrained. One woman wrote and passed her matric but could never afford to go to Pretoria to get her matric certificate; so she was just stuck,”

says Richter.

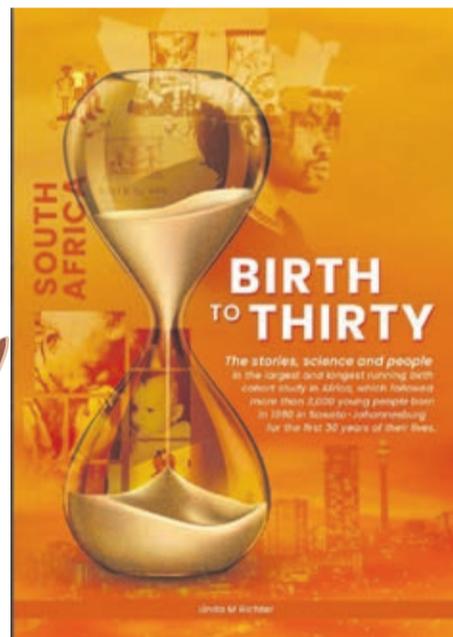
When the study began, it was thought there might be drug problems, but drugs subsequently became a much bigger feature.

“Drugs in the suburban area increased at an incredible rate. Almost every participant spoke of their own experience with drugs, or experiences of their friends with drugs. At the start in 1990, in formerly coloured areas, there were drug problems. Now, everybody is conscious of drugs. Some people speak about the worries of their own children, because now we’ve got a third generation of children born to this cohort,” says Richter.

Surprisingly to Richter, participants were largely disconnected from news and political debate. There was also less participation in formal groups, such as choirs and community groups, than there was with the parents. “There were more informal friendship circles; Twitter friends and Instagram followers. So it’s a different kind of affiliation.”

Reflecting on the findings, during the book launch, Richter told the audience: “Experiences and exposures in early childhood, and intergenerationally, create footpaths to adult health and human capital. However, these effects are not fixed; there is substantial room for individual trajectories to be changed under altered conditions. While South Africa has changed, it has not yet changed enough, or changed in the right direction, for all young people to reach their full human potential, free of the constraints of generations of poverty and adversity.”

While South Africa has changed, it has not yet changed enough, or changed in the right direction, for all young people to reach their full human potential, free of the constraints of generations of poverty and adversity.



Photos: Walter Dhladhla/AFP; Pixabay; Vecteezy

Birth to forty?

“I have long felt a responsibility to tell the story of Bt30. Mainly because I am the only person among the group that started the study in 1989 who is still actively involved in the project. Also because, for me, many of the staff, and the participants and their families, Bt30 was always more than a study. I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to contribute to and be part of Birth to Thirty. It is one of the big achievements of my career,” says Richter.

To get to where it is, the study faced many challenges, not the least of which has been funding. Numerous funders have helped it continue.

“We started with 3,200 children; that’s a lot of children to do physical exams and psychological tests on. We were constantly needing money, space, vehicles and other resources. But we made it through that time; it was a bit of a struggle,” she says, adding that it was only in the ninth year of the study, after surmounting various challenges and securing additional funding, that they could begin to consider extending it to 20 years.

“We have every intention of going to 40 years – I won’t go with them to 40 years, but my colleagues will,” says Richter, who is now 72. She adds: “Longitudinal studies are incredibly expensive and incredibly complicated. Many of them run out of funding just as they get to the point where they see results. It’s in the fifties and the sixties where you start to see the impact of the burden of health. Many people stay relatively healthy until their late thirties and forties. And it’s after that where the mental health issues, relationship stability, work, all of that begins. That’s the life you’ve now got. Lots of studies run out of money before they get to that point. So we’re really hoping to be able to continue.”

DM168

Obesity weighs heavily on SA's public healthcare budget

Globally, it is widely acknowledged that obesity-related conditions and their complications add hugely to healthcare costs and productivity losses. In turn, this adds a large burden on individuals, their families and on governments.

One estimate suggests that of the total health expenditure on the African continent, 9% is attributed to dealing with people who are overweight and obese.

We conducted research to calculate the cost of obesity to South Africa's health system. Our aim was to estimate the direct healthcare costs associated with the treatment of weight-related conditions based on public sector tariffs.

Based on our calculations, overweight and obesity conditions are costing South Africa's health system R33-billion a year. This represents 15.38% of government health expenditure and is equivalent to 0.67% of GDP. The annual per person cost of overweight and obesity conditions is R2,769. Among the most expensive conditions to manage were diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.

Our analysis shows that overweight and obesity conditions impose a huge financial burden on the public healthcare system in South Africa. It suggests an urgent need for preventive, population-level interventions to reduce overweight and obesity rates. The reduction will lower the incidence, prevalence and healthcare spending on noncommunicable diseases.

Quantifying the financial costs of these conditions also gives national policy-makers a sense of the scale of the cost to the state, those of managing their diseases and the costs to the community.

Scale of the problem

Half of all adults in South Africa are overweight (23%) or obese (27%). And the World Obesity Federation anticipates an additional 10% increase (37%) in obesity among adults by 2030. Overweight and obesity hugely increase the risk of noncommunicable diseases. This burden contributes to the country's high prevalence of diabetes, for example. An

estimating the cost of treatment for diseases and conditions caused by being overweight and obese provides an alarming picture and suggests an urgent need for population-level interventions. Because if we don't tackle the problem, our public health system will buckle even further. **By Micheal Boachie**

estimated 11% of people older than 15 had diabetes in 2021. This is much higher than Nigeria's prevalence of 4%.

Around 12 million people suffer from weight-related diseases for which they receive treatment in the public sector. These include diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, arthritis and some cancers.

This does not include the numerous people, with undiagnosed diabetes and hypertension, who are not on treatment. Nor does it include people being treated in the private sector.

These noncommunicable diseases cause life-altering illness, disabilities and premature death.

What we found

Our research calculated the cost of obesity starting at age 15. In doing our calculations we looked at cancers, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders, respiratory diseases and digestive diseases.

We costed each in detail and used the prevalence of those diseases to measure the cost to the system, taking account of healthcare use patterns.

In South Africa, the biggest share of the R33-billion annual cost comes from treating diabetes, at R19,86-billion. Cardiovascular disease, at R8,87-billion, had the second biggest share.

These costs are, in turn, mainly driven by the cost of medication and hospitalisation. Diabetes and hypertension-related conditions are among South Africa's top 10 causes of death. Digestive diseases, such as gallstones and diseases of the gallbladder, contribute the least at R395-million.

Diabetes (95%) and arthritis (58%) are the diseases that are mostly caused by overweight and obesity.

Overall, 53% of total healthcare costs of managing and treating these diseases in the public sector was attributable to the overweight and obesity problem. South Africa shares this dubious distinction with other high- and middle-income countries such as Brazil, Thailand, South Korea and Colombia. Our results are similar to the World Obesity Federation's estimate of R36-billion.

We also warn that R33-billion is an underestimation of the economic cost. We used public sector tariffs, which we calculated as 60% of private sector costs. We also excluded costs such as clinical screening and the treatment of comorbidities,

such as amputations, as well as potential costs for the undiagnosed.

And our findings don't include the indirect costs of productivity losses resulting from absenteeism. We also didn't consider premature death as a result of overweight- and obesity-related diseases.

Next steps

Putting a health problem in monetary terms may create a sense of urgency to find ways to reduce future expenditure on the direct costs of healthcare, and to reduce future losses to the state from the consequences of illness and premature death, including the knock-on effects of worsening poverty as a result.

This is particularly a problem in a setting such as South Africa, which already has a drastically under-resourced public health system, shockingly high unemployment and both under- and overnutrition crises that are aggravated by obesogenic environments and poverty-driven food choices.

Until now, no detailed country-specific information on the economic cost of overweight and obesity in sub-Saharan Africa has existed. Based on our research, South Africa's burden is even higher than the African or global averages: 15.38% of the overall government health budget, which equates to 0.67% of GDP.

Unless rapid steps are taken to decrease obesity and overweight, the health system will buckle under this strain and the planned National Health Insurance scheme will not succeed in producing equity in health services.

The opportunity costs of overweight and obesity – and the diseases they often bring with them – are both personal and national.

It is difficult to quantify the personal disability in monetary terms, but the benefits of vastly improved quality of life are priceless. **DM168**

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Micheal Boachie is a senior researcher at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Quantifying the financial costs of these conditions also gives national policy-makers a sense of the scale of the cost to the state ... and to the community



Media freedom is on trial in Zuma's case against reporter

Specialist legal journalist Karyn Maughan did nothing wrong when she wrote a story about the former president's medical condition based on court documents. So why is he really pursuing it?

It was the evening of 9 May 2007. I received a call from the news editor of *The Star*. A journalist had been assigned to report on the Constitutional Court application by the former director-general of the National Intelligence Agency, Billy Masetlha, against then president Thabo Mbeki. Masetlha alleged that Mbeki had unlawfully suspended and then dismissed him from his post. The court was due to hear arguments the next day.

The problem for the journalist was that the heads of argument (the parties' legal summaries of their case) were not available to download from the court's website, as was usually the case. And when the journalist had called the office of the registrar of the Constitutional Court to get copies earlier that day, the registrar said he had been instructed that the heads of argument could not be released because they contained information that, if made public, would harm national security. When the journalist approached Masetlha's attorneys for the documents, they too declined.

We worked through the night to bring an urgent application before the Constitutional Court the next morning. The court granted immediate access to the heads of argument and placed the onus on the litigating parties to justify why any other records filed in the case should not be available to the public. And the journalist reported on the Masetlha case that day, guided by the heads of argument she had successfully obtained and the oral submissions in court.

That journalist was Karyn Maughan, now accused number two in a private criminal prosecution brought by former president Jacob Zuma.

Maughan is a specialist journalist who reports on significant court cases, developments in the judiciary and legal issues. There are only a few such specialists in South Africa, and when they are reporting on high-profile legal cases, their tools of the trade are the court documents that set out the parameters of the legal dispute, which in some legal cases contain the evidence of each party.

The right to publish stories based on court documents is a fundamental principle of media freedom. That's why, in 2015, the Supreme Court of Appeal said, in one of the leading cases on open justice, that "the animating principle ... has to be that all court records are, by default, public documents that are open to public scrutiny at all times". And that's why, when Zuma applied for a postponement of the resumption of his criminal trial in 2021, Maughan

wanted to get access to the court papers that would inform the public why Zuma was arguing for the postponement, and the State's response.

According to Adriaan Basson, editor of News24 (which published Maughan's story about the postponement), the day before the court was to hear the postponement application, Maughan asked Advocate Andrew Breitenbach SC, representing the State in the application, whether court papers had been filed. He gave her an unsigned copy of the affidavit of Advocate Billy Downer SC (the lead prosecutor in the Zuma prosecution) on condition that she only reported on it once it had been filed in court. She complied. The next

day, says Basson, Breitenbach sent Maughan a copy of Zuma's affidavit, which had by then been filed in court.

Both affidavits – Downer's and Zuma's – attached a letter from a medical professional (a brigadier-general in military health services) giving a medical reason for Zuma's application for postponement. News24 published a story about the postponement and the brigadier-general's letter two hours later.

Fast-forward just more than a year. Zuma has now instituted a private prosecution of Downer (accused number one) and Maughan relating to the disclosure in the news story of the brigadier-general's letter. Our law on private prosecutions says this: if the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) declines to prosecute, a private prosecution can be brought by any person who proves a "substantial and peculiar interest" arising out of "some injury which he individually suffered" from the commission of a crime.

Zuma laid a criminal complaint against Downer and "any other person" in relation to the disclosure of the letter. The NPA declined to prosecute, so Zuma is now doing so himself. His argument is that the injury he suffered from the disclosure is that his "right to confidentiality, dignity and fair trial rights have been prejudiced".

But what did Maughan do wrong? The charge sheet alleges that she has breached section 41(6)(b) of the National Prosecuting Authority Act.

That provision prohibits anyone from disclosing "any book or document" in the NPA's possession without per-

mission from the national director of public prosecutions. Now, while the Zuma and Downer affidavits (and the attached letter from the brigadier-general) are "documents" in the possession of the NPA, once they are filed in court, they become public documents. So, the provision cannot apply to disclosure of documents once they are filed in court. And Maughan's story about the medical letter was published after the documents were filed in court.

What about the receipt by Maughan of Downer's affidavit before it was filed? That cannot be hit by section 41(6)(b), because it prohibits disclosure, not possession, of documents from the NPA. Zuma's charge against Maughan on this score is that she was an accomplice: she "facilitated, aided and/or encouraged" Downer to disclose the letter and thus aided or abetted him in committing a crime.

Yet, all Maughan did was ask for the court documents, which were voluntarily provided to her. What's more is that she agreed they would not be published before they were filed in court.

It seems a quantum leap from this to argue that she aided and abetted a criminal offence. She should not face criminal consequences for doing her job. And Zuma's claimed "injury" flowing from the disclosure is, in my view, also wildly exaggerated – the disclosure of the letter could not have impacted on the fairness of his criminal trial because the letter had already been disclosed in court by the parties themselves. And for similar reasons, there could be no breach of

Zuma's privacy through the disclosure by Maughan.

In my view, what makes this legal action by the former president egregious is that this is a criminal case, where the State has already declined to prosecute. Moreover, Zuma could have claimed confidentiality over the medical letter when he filed his postponement application – but he did not. And Judge Piet Koen (who is presiding in the corruption case against Zuma) has already dealt with the disclosure of the medical letter in the context of Zuma's unsuccessful argument that Downer should be removed from the case, saying that the disclosure did not violate Zuma's right to privacy.

Against that background, to bring a private prosecution against a journalist doing her job creates a chilling effect on other journalists. After all, if Maughan is convicted, she could face jail time of 15 years. That is why this is a case that should send shivers down our democratic spines. It is not just Maughan but media freedom itself that Zuma is putting on trial. **DM168**

Dr Dario Milo is a partner at Webber Wentzel, visiting adjunct professor of law at the University of the Witwatersrand and a member of the High-Level Panel of Legal Experts on Media Freedom.



By Dario Milo

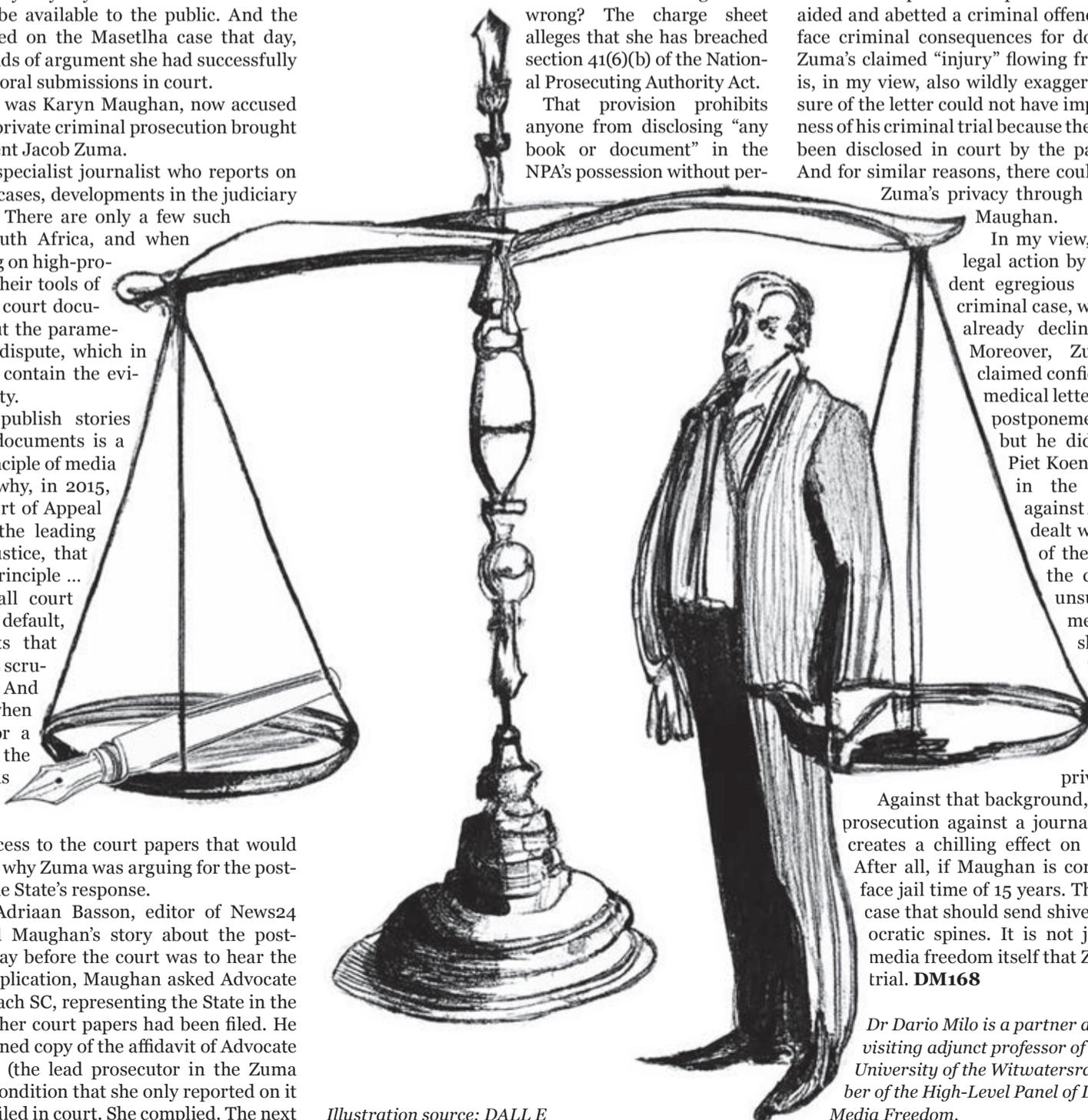


Illustration source: DALL·E



EDITORIAL

Ismail
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Ugly home truths explain why Eskom is on its knees

At least four things helped us into the dark – a lack of vision and intergenerational policymaking; the grotesqueries of “our turn to eat”; affirmative action and transformation as ends in themselves; and criminality on the streets and in the boardroom.

It matters naught how it's spun – the problem of rolling blackouts lies squarely at the door of the ruling alliance.

There was a moment when it was perfectly valid to make the argument that supply had to be expanded to provide electricity to millions of people who had been denied it. That moment passed a decade after 1994, when the government met most of its strategic objectives and brought running water and electricity to millions.

The lack of vision

The first of those things that helped us into the dark is a lack of vision: the intergenerational policymaking that necessarily runs against the grain of “our turn to eat”, an attitude that turned two otherwise progressive policies – affirmative action and transformation – into a bacchanalia. There was money to be made, and greed and gluttony were permissible.

In the late 1990s, a study was tabled before the government that warned of the coming darkness. The state had the opportunity, but lacked the foresight. We must remember that the ANC had virtually no experience in public administration. It came to power and that seemed enough.

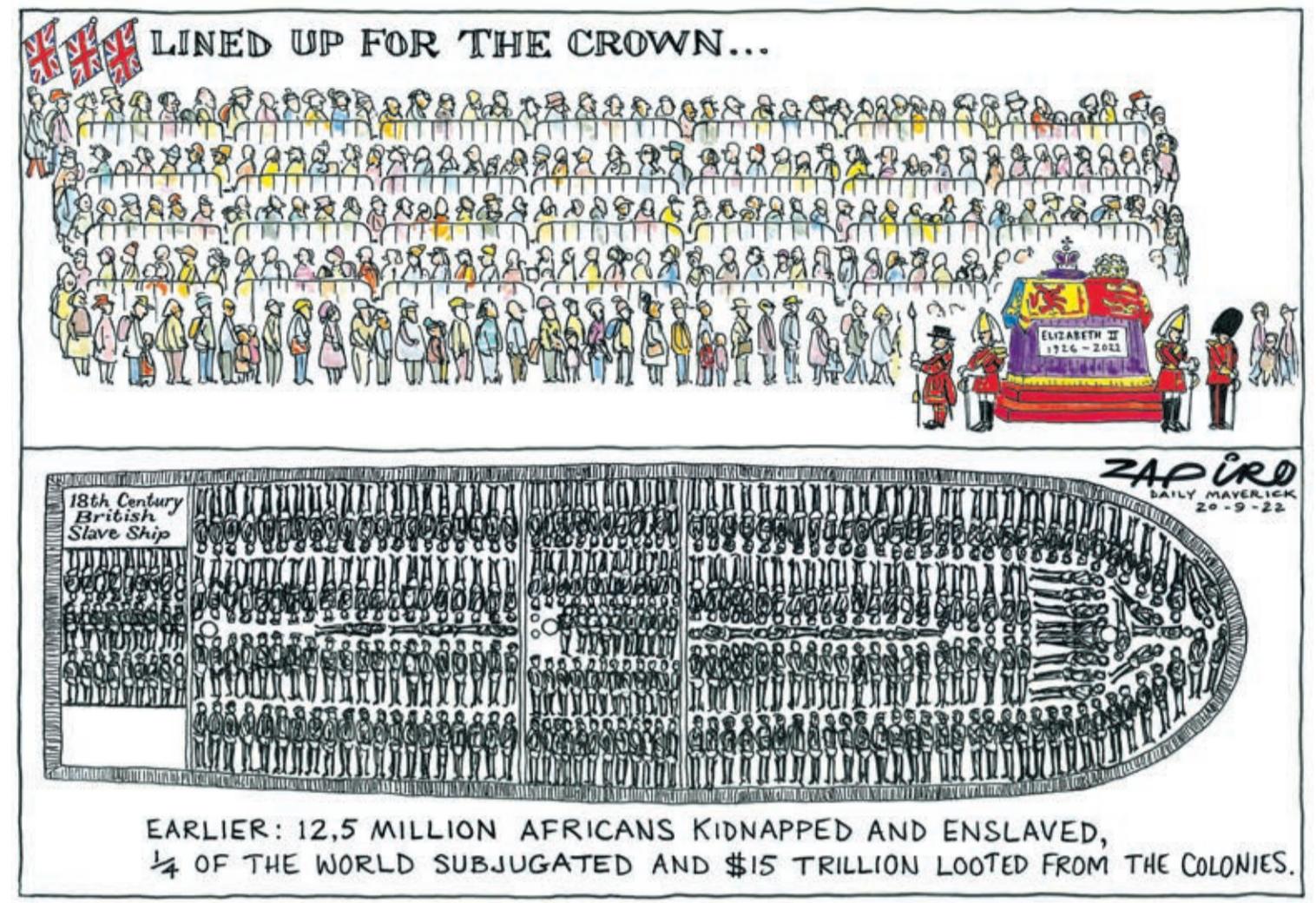
It's not that there was no money – as with land reform, the National Treasury allocated funds for infrastructure, which is essentially an investment in the future. I am reminded of a student telling me that Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's slogan (before it became Nelson Mandela University), “For Tomorrow”, was “out of order ... because we want to eat today”.

Affirmative action

The two-pronged policies of affirmative action and transformation are a second and third misstep. There is no use beating about the bush. At the outset, the objective was to get rid of non-Africans, especially whites, regardless of whether they might have the skills, institutional memory and commitment to creating a better future for all South Africans.

So you got rid of whites and replaced them with people who, for the most part, were inexperienced and lacked technical skills, as well as engineers with fake doctorates. We should be clear that many of us were mis-educated for decades until 1994, and evidence shows that things have not become much better for most of the population.

Nonetheless, it was okay to purge whites and those who were considered “non-African” because transformation and affirmative



action were ends in themselves. We patted ourselves on the back and participated in the grotesqueries of Bacchus, the god of wine, intoxication, ecstasy and freedom. Waistlines expanded and luxury cars filled the parking lots of government buildings.

A person who steals a loaf of bread can be charged, prosecuted and convicted. The same is true if someone smashes a glass jug over the head of another person. It is also true, though often ignored, that if you misrepresent yourself and run an institution into the ground, you get away with millions.

It is also unlawful to steal electricity or to refuse to pay your electricity bills. But, if executives at Eskom or the SABC can become wealthy, there is no reason for ordinary consumers to pay for anything.

This particular kind of criminality is permissible because we are black, the country is in our hands, and we will do as we bloody well wish. Anyone who has a problem with that is counterrevolutionary, or hates black excellence, or is a shill for White Monopoly capital.

Low point

Part of me thinks it is too late to prevent the slide into the dark; another part believes that we have to make do with what we have and hope for the best.

What is difficult to shake is the feeling that at some point in the future, when Julius Malema is president, we will be at such a low point that turning the lights on in any location will be seen as a step up – a progressive move and cause for celebration.

It is fair to say that President Cyril Ramaphosa will not turn the lights back on. Pravin Gordhan will not turn public enterprises into self-sufficient entities and André de Ruyter will not provide an uninterrupted supply of energy to the country.

The damage is too far down the road. And somewhere on the road is a corpulent, sweaty Gwede Mantashe hitchhiking to a galaxy far, far away. **DM168**

Ismail Lagardien is a writer, columnist and political economist with extensive experience in global political economic affairs.

Gordimer lecture is a timely reminder of what we all can give

A ROOM OF
ONE'S OWNZukiswa
Pikoli

As I reflect on Heritage Day, which has become quite ambiguous and amorphous as we struggle with our collective heritage as South Africans, my thoughts turn to the complementary relationship that creative writing has had in South Africa as we reconcile our country's past, present and future. The South African and African writers I have encountered and been the most captivated by do not write of the fantastical world of fairytales, but of a fiction that often sets up parallel realities that still mirror the reality we live in, and asks probing questions about our society.

About two weeks ago, I had to miss the annual Nadine Gordimer lecture hosted by the University of the Witwatersrand, even though I had thought I would be able to go. Gordimer, a writer born in South Africa in 1923 of British and Lithuanian parents, was part of the anti-apartheid movement and had her works banned as a result. She won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991.

The lecture has become quite the calendar event over the years and has been graced by various prolific thinkers, academics and activists in democratic South Africa. This year the keynote speaker was the illustrious activist, poet and author Dr Mandla Langa, whose address was titled “The Vocabulary of Witnesses”. One of South Africa's most talented and thoughtful authors, Masande Ntshanga, was his respondent. To me, the event represented the perfect representation of looking to the past (Gordimer), the present (Langa) and the future (Ntshanga).

It's always a treat for me to listen to others share their thoughts and ideas on our beloved

country and how we can inch ever closer towards a society that makes us all feel included and proud. Having always fancied myself to have creative leanings in my writing, I have been fascinated by writers who distil the realities of the world through fictional writing and push readers to seek, even in their imaginations, social justice.

First encountering Gordimer's works while I was at university, they were no easy read. I also got the impression that she was not an easy person, but her dedication to honesty in the pursuit of morality and racial justice is what captivated me. In my mind, being difficult is not the worst thing a person can be, because it is often through challenges that growth and transformation happen. We need both difficult and soft people in order for us to experience life fully.

In his keynote address, Langa said that the theme of his talk “could be seen as an appeal for all of us in this country to play our part as witnesses who are also activists and truth tellers... This call is even more vital for young people.”

He said when growing up in apartheid South Africa and encountering the “white gaze”, he thought white people were incapable of introspection. He had encountered Gordimer's writing unexpectedly in the famous Heinemann African Writers Series among luminaries such as Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiong'o, something he found to be a testament to Gordimer's character and pursuit of equality.

This to me cements Gordimer's place in our country's heritage because she could have chosen an easier path of enjoying the privilege into which she was born. Instead she chose to immerse herself in our country's culture and politics as an activist writer, showing that we all have an active role to play using whatever means we have. **DM168**

Zukiswa Pikoli is a journalist at Maverick Citizen

Countering the devastation of the colonising science mindset

Although humankind undoubtedly benefited from the renaissance, reformation and industrial eras, they also extracted enormous costs from indigenous peoples and Earth itself. By **Philip Mirkin**

September is Heritage Month in South Africa, and on 24 September we will celebrate Heritage Day. This is a good time to remember our cultural heritage as well as contemplate the heritage that we are creating for our children's children. It is also a good time to consider how it has come to be that we need a day to remember our heritage instead of living its gifts every day.

I was struck by a sense of irony when I read that the 2022 World Heritage Day theme is "Heritage and Climate". The word heritage makes me think of a time when all people accepted destructive climatic events as earned punishment for our evil deeds – a warning for us to become better people. Our scientific relationship to the increasingly devastating weather events owing to climate change seems at odds with this personally intimate relationship to our world. Or is it?

The decolonisation movement, after the Fees Must Fall and other "fallist" actions, seems to have quietened into the background in recent months. The decolonising project may have been fuelled by a violent reaction to pain and politics, but I believe that its true value will be found in a more considered response from our hearts and minds.

It seems to me that the scientific mindset is at the centre of what gave rise to the devastation of everyone's heritage and to colonisation. This mindset had a gradual awakening in all peoples, but it is perhaps easiest to identify in the European Renaissance when certain traditions were being challenged, and then later in the Protestant Reformation when people started to read the Bible and decide for themselves what it asked of them.

These acts gave a burst of independence to the human spirit and a freedom from outer traditions and authority. Later, when it expressed itself in the Industrial Revolution, the existing social life of Britain, America and Europe was totally changed. For all that it took away, it gave these countries the technologies, democratic freedoms and economic incentives, as well as the political and military power to expand their sphere of control and influence across the globe. Indigenous cultures were mostly powerless to counter this force and it resulted in alienating most folk from their indigenous relationships to life. From this perspective, the scientific mindset was the ground on which colonisation was built.

As we approach Heritage Day, and especially the 2022 theme, we should keep in

mind the personal, social and global consequences of the scientific mindset. We should also give a thought to the elevated status of science and science education in South Africa. The gifts and curses of the scientific mindset are important to explore if we are to form a deeper understanding of how it changes us and our world.

When Copernicus promoted the idea that the Earth is not the centre of our solar system but revolves around the sun, he shifted human consciousness from what seemed

natural and obvious when we look up to the sky. By noticing small changes in the speed with which the

intimate and personally meaningful relationship to life. They rightly claim that our mental tendency towards abstraction and objectification has removed us from what grounded us in a reality that was shared and in which we all knew where we belonged.

The escalating effects of global environmental, political and personal instability and devastation all seem to be as a result of this powerfully colonising mindset, hence the irony of the World Heritage Day theme.

The challenge for the decolonising project is to find ways to retain this mindset's positive influences while limiting its destructive impact. One idea in the decolonisation movement

obstructions to an intimacy with ourselves and our world?

The Age of Enlightenment arose because many people's experiences of reality changed. A human faculty that I am calling the scientific mindset seemed to randomly awaken in individuals around the world and these souls found the scientific, enlightenment and related ideas fitted their experience. It seems that yet another human faculty may be arising that is calling loudly for ideas to which it can attach – that match its need for greater intimacy with ourselves, society and our environment.

Can the social force of decolonisation help us to find it? I suspect that only a worldview that embraces the gifts of traditional religion and indigeneity as well as those of science and enlightenment will fit our current and future needs.

In the South African science classroom, we still promote objective, abstract thinking in a way that does not yet distinguish its dangers from its gifts. In so doing, we continue to perpetuate a mental colonisation that can cause children to feel alienated from the heritage of their parents and community. In the name of education and economic progress, we become potentially guilty of further fragmenting the life experiences of the most vulnerable and trusting in society. Without knowing why, these children will then possibly become alienated from their heritage and give expression to

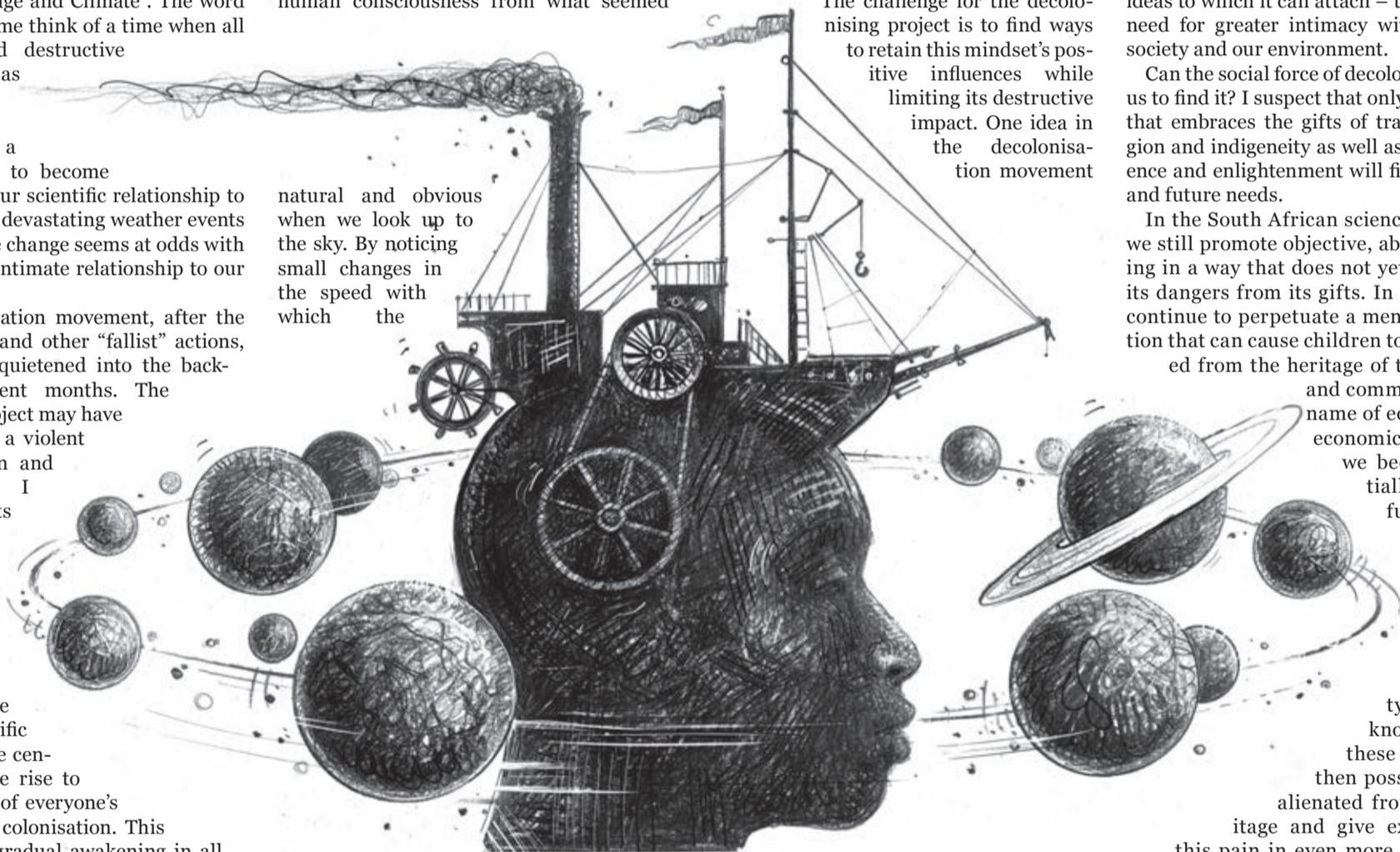
this pain in even more violent ways than the "fallists".

There is no doubt that our minds are currently colonised by the scientific mindset, but do we have the gifted hearts and minds to give us new ideas around which we can rally? Is there a South African Kant to empower decolonisation to become an important healing impulse for humanity's future?

And, as our scientific mindset has spread industrialisation and individual freedoms throughout the world, will these new ideas be able to spread practical applications with a renewed meaning and intimacy for life?

Let's use the knowledge from science to become "better people" and address the challenge of rekindling an intimacy with our world in a way that can also have a healing impact on the climate. **DM168**

Dr Philip Mirkin has more than 35 years' experience as a science teacher, school principal, and currently as a science education lecturer in the faculty of education at the University of Pretoria.



Artwork: James Durno

sun, planets and stars rotate, he, and later Galileo, realised the limited reality of this natural perspective. Evidence overcame traditional ideas, and empowered individuals to form new relationships to their world.

This shift in perspective is a picture of the mental empowerment of the scientific mindset that has now become widespread throughout humanity, giving rise to many further challenges to established traditions.

The power of this thinking, through recognising its potential benefits and dangers, gave rise to the Kantian Era of Enlightenment, democracy, new political, legal and economic empowerment, and human rights. It has now colonised most minds around the world.

However, those people and cultures who still feel a semblance of connection to their indigenous ways, or who feel alienated from life because of the scientific mindset, often experience the embodied need for a more

is to return to the old ways, but is it possible to revive indigeneity with our newly liberated and empowered sense of individual freedoms? Can we ignore the new perspectives and gifts gained from this awakened mindset? Can you imagine Copernicus ignoring the conclusions of his findings in favour of the traditional way of seeing our place in the solar system?

If the old ways are not recoverable, then how do we decolonise life to rebuild social intimacy, belonging and meaning?

Just as a scientific mindset brings empowerment to the individual at the expense of the relatively stable social structures into which it awakens, so there must be a mindset that will empower new socially strengthening structures to overcome its destructive impact.

Is this not the challenge that the decolonisation movement wants to bring to our attention by wanting to remove perceived



EDITORIAL

Hein Marais



A basic income for everyone: the idea that won't go away

A decade or so ago, universal basic income (UBI) proposals drew sniffling dismissals and a roll of the eyes. Today, they're the subject of mainstream debate, with political parties and national and city governments across the world considering the option.

The core idea of paying everyone a guaranteed basic income, though, has circulated for centuries. It surfaced in English social philosopher Thomas More's 1516 novel *Utopia* and in Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives's *On Assistance to the Poor* a decade later. Then, towards the end of the 18th century, the American philosopher and activist Thomas Paine presented a sustained argument for a basic income payment in his pamphlet *Agrarian Justice*.

Paine saw agricultural land as "natural property" to which every citizen had a claim. But, attached as he was to a market-based system, he also saw an "efficiency case" for private ownership of the land. The compromise was to tax private ownership of agricultural land and distribute that revenue to all adults – not as charity, but as a right.

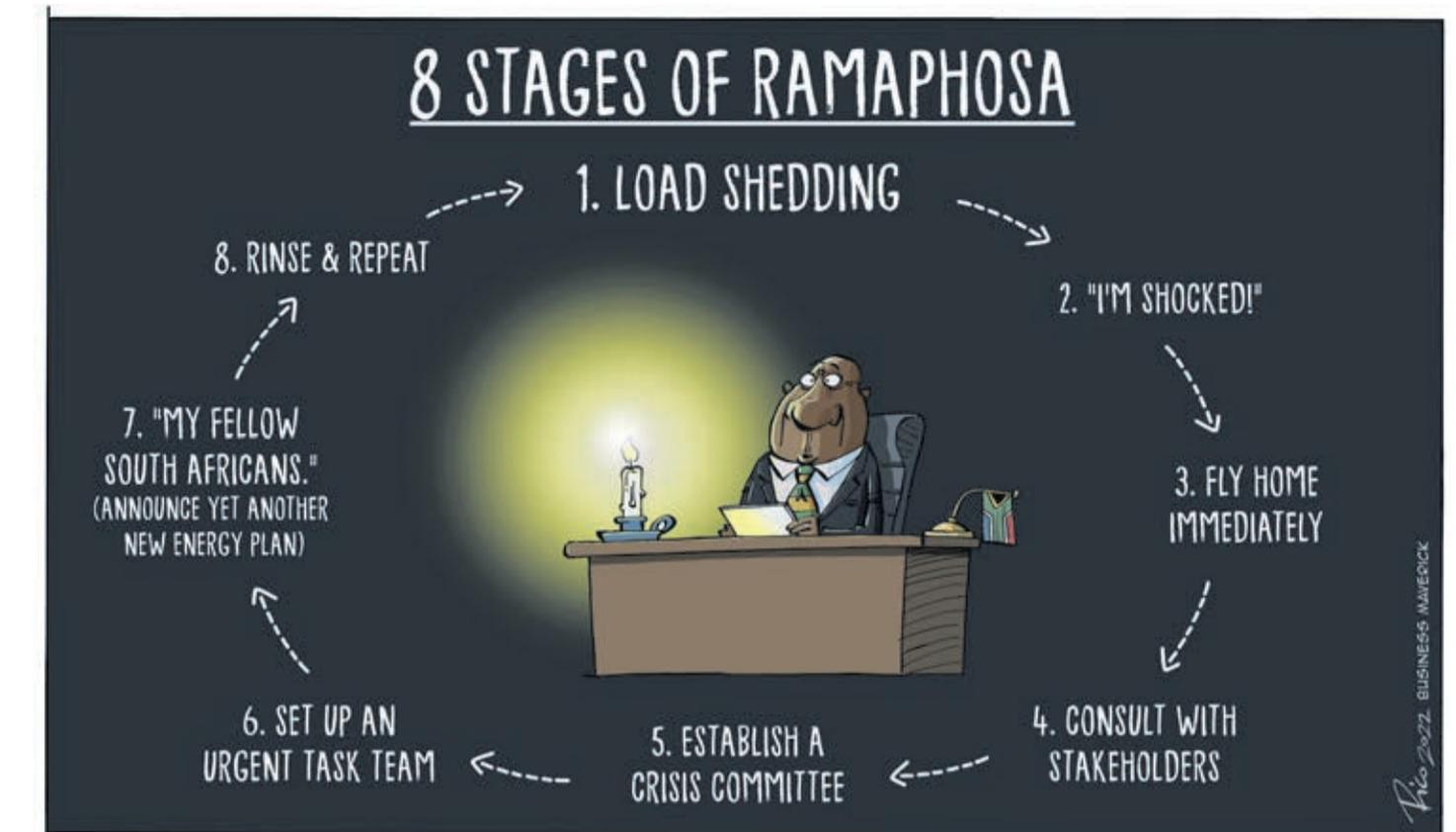
The underlying principle – that every adult is owed the basic means for life – may strike some ears today as "radical". But even the godfather of classical liberalism, the philosopher John Stuart Mill, was thinking along those lines. Mill proposed that "in the distribution, a certain minimum is first assigned for the subsistence of every member of the community, whether capable or not of labour".

The concept then languished, eclipsed by the rapid expansion of both industrial capitalism and the ranks of waged workers – and the rise of political movements that focused on transforming the conditions of work. As the power of workers' organisations grew and the prospects for full employment and decent wages improved, support for basic income-type arrangements tended to recede, only to resurface when conditions took a turn for the worse.

At the end of World War 1, the mathematician and philosopher Bertrand Russell proposed an income for all, and the British Labour Party and trade unions were debating calls for a basic income. In response to the Great Depression in the early 1930s, US senator Huey Long championed an annual "homestead allowance" of \$5,000 for families. It came to nought and the UBI idea receded as welfare systems were built in industrial capitalist countries.

The comeback

The idea made a comeback in the US in the 1960s amid a re-emergence of structural unemployment. It was during the term of US president Richard Nixon that legislation based on those ideas was drafted, but with an unexpected twist. The scheme would pay low-income families an annual mini-



imum income, irrespective of whether the adults were working. The amount would decrease as a family's earned income rose and would end once a specific income level was reached.

The plan passed in the US House of Representatives but was snuffed out in the US Senate, ironically at the hands of Russell Long, a Democrat senator and son of the populist politician Huey Long, who had championed a basic income guarantee in the 1930s.

In western Europe, an activist network began reviving the UBI concept in the 1980s. But it was in SA in the early 2000s where the idea surfaced most forcefully, when a civil society campaign for a basic income grant prompted the government to set up a committee of inquiry, which recommended that a basic income payment be phased in nationally. National Treasury and the Presidency opposed the scheme as "unaffordable", and the recommendation was rejected. Soon afterwards, though, the government began expanding SA's "social grants" system.

Internationally, UBI debates had grown faint – but the 2008 global financial crisis changed that. Layoffs and wage depression were followed by slow, skewed recoveries. Meanwhile, austerity policies slashed away at social programmes.

Soon, the Covid-19 pandemic was showing that the barriers separating relatively secure livelihoods from destitution were much flimsier than previously thought. In SA, millions more families tumbled into poverty.

Popular support for a guaranteed income grew. In SA, a coalition of grassroots organisations was reviving the demand for a UBI. Elsewhere, an Oxford University study from 2020 found that 71% of Europeans favoured the introduction of a UBI. In the US, 45% of people polled by the Pew Research Center in 2020 supported a guaranteed income of \$1,000 per month for all adult citizens.

The UBI is now a staple of public debate and policy deliberations. Driving the shift is a palpable sense that traditional sources of material security are increasingly inaccessible and unreliable in a volatile world tethered to outmoded economic models and buffeted by turmoil. **DM168**

Hein Marais is the author of *In the Balance: The Case for a Universal Basic Income in South Africa and Beyond*, published by Witwatersrand University Press.

China's stuttering economy has knock-on effect on South Africa

It has become clear that the global economy faces three systemic threats, but the one which is all too often ignored poses particularly grave risks for South Africa.

First, post-pandemic inflation in the US is forcing the Federal Reserve to raise rates aggressively, in all likelihood pushing the world's largest economy into recession. Second, an energy crisis in Europe sparked by Vladimir Putin's retaliation to sanctions will almost certainly mean recession in the UK and Europe. Finally, the outlook for the Chinese economy is starting to look increasingly dire. Although less understood than the first two dynamics, it is arguably this third factor that will have the most profound effects on the fortunes of South Africa's own spluttering economy.

There are three challenges facing the Chinese economy. First, China's zero-Covid policy has led to anaemic consumer spending and employment growth in what has been the growth engine of the global economy over the last three decades. Ever since the first outbreaks of Covid-19, retail sales and consumer confidence have been throttled by each wave of infection and ensuing lockdown. Youth unemployment is now a worrying 20%. This would have been unthinkable only a few years ago.

Second, Chinese monetary policy is essentially in a liquidity trap. Despite cutting interest rates to their lowest ever at 2.75%, and repeatedly cutting bank reserve requirements in an effort to encourage lending, appetite for loans is moribund.

Finally, fixed real estate investment has evaporated, with house prices and new home sales falling sharply. According to research from global financial services group Nomura, in some areas like Chongqing and Fuzhou new home sales are down almost 80% from a year ago, while overall they are down about 40% across the country.

Critically for South Africa, an economic slowdown in China has major implications for the price of commodities, of which China is by far the largest international consumer. With demand from China slowing, iron ore is down 60% since mid-2021, while copper is

30% lower since March 2021. Platinum – South Africa's second most valuable export – is also 30% lower since March 2021.

What happens in the Chinese domestic economy therefore has material implications for the South African economy. The commodity boom in 2021 meant that SA could unexpectedly lower debt to GDP and budget deficit forecasts. In February's budget, Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana boasted of an extra \$12-billion in revenue from taxes on commodity producers, and projected a balanced budget by 2024 and debt to GDP peaking at 75% in 2025, both a year earlier than previous National Treasury forecasts.

With commodity prices having collapsed, February's forecasts are starting to look increasingly unrealistic. In next month's Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement, the minister may find himself caught between falling fiscal revenues and ever higher demands on the budget. Investors seem to be

pre-empting such a budget squeeze; from trading at 8.5% in March 2021, the South African 10-year benchmark bond has weakened to almost 11%.

As corporate and income tax revenue has flatlined, windfall taxes from commodity producers are increasingly critical to South Africa being fiscally sustainable and avoiding a debt spiral. Furthermore, with the economy already battling rolling power cuts and crumbling infrastructure, a struggling resource sector will make it increasingly likely that South Africa will succumb to a third crippling recession in four years.

Faced with this predicament, Godongwana must be hoping that President Xi Jinping can somehow resuscitate China's waning economic predicament. Only then will commodity prices recover and South Africa's growth and fiscal outlook may improve. Unfortunately for the minister and the plight of the South African economy, this is looking increasingly improbable. **DM168**

Natale Labia is chief economist of a global investment firm, and writes in his personal capacity.



By Natale Labia



EDITOR'S NOTE

Heritage Day is one of the public holidays in South Africa that was created in our new democracy.

In 1996, on Heritage Day, former President Nelson Mandela said:

"When our first democratically elected government decided to make Heritage Day one of our national days, we did so because we knew that our rich and varied cultural heritage has a profound power to help build our new nation."

South Africa has a history of our differences dividing us, but Heritage Day is there to show us that our diverse cultural beliefs, traditions and backgrounds should be celebrated and embraced.

This week, learn what other MaverickKIDS think of Heritage Day, why we celebrate our heritage and what heritage sites you can visit.

Until next time!

Julia

Julia Evans

This week, *MaverickKIDS* spoke to Grade 7 pupils from Bordeaux Primary School in Johannesburg, to find out what heritage means to them.

Sbonga Ndlovu (12), of Zulu heritage, said, "Heritage tells us about the past of South Africa and how unique and diverse we are."

She said, "It's important for us to know how different we are, and that it doesn't matter how different we are, we are still one."

Boitumelo Mojela (13), whose parents come from Limpopo, said, "Heritage Day means to me ... learning about other people's cultures. In my culture, Pedi, I learnt to respect people."

Primrose Tshabalala (12), whose heritage is Zulu, said heritage means "to celebrate different cultures and learn more about each other".

Nomthandazo Sigasa (13) said, "Heritage is like our past, to know where we come from and where we're going to. "Heritage is about traditions, like how our ancestors dressed differently - heritage teaches us many things. "And my culture is Zulu, so I know that we respect people. And when we celebrate Heritage Day, we must celebrate all of us, we don't care who is white or black. "I'm proud of my heritage! We celebrate many cultures," said Sigasa, whose mother is Zulu and whose father comes from Nigeria.



Learn about your country by visiting a heritage site

From the famous fossils of Mrs Ples and Little Foot at the Cradle of Humankind to the mystique of Zulu culture at Shakaland, there are many sites to teach us about South Africa's history and heritage

Do you know why we celebrate Heritage Day on 24 September?

24 September used to be known as "Shaka Day" and commemorated King Shaka Zulu - an important figure in South African history and a leader who is known for uniting the Zulu clan and forming the Zulu nation.

After the proposed Public Holidays Bill before the new South African Parliament left out Shaka Day, a compromise was made so that everyone could celebrate their heritage on this day - and so Heritage Day was born.



Heritage sites you can visit this weekend



Cradle of Humankind

What better way to learn about your heritage than to visit the place where fossils of some of the earliest known life forms on Earth have been found?

Just north of Johannesburg, you can learn the story behind how the famous fossils "Mrs Ples" and "Little Foot" were found, how the first stone tools were made and used in Africa (2.6 million years ago!) and explore ancient caves!



Photo: iStock

Voortrekker Monument

The Voortrekker Monument is a heritage conservation site in Pretoria. At the top of a hill is a huge granite structure built in the late 1930s in honour of the Voortrekkers.

Here you can learn the history of the Afrikaner people - from the Great Trek northwards in South Africa to the Anglo-Boer war.



Photo: iStock

Bo-Kaap cooking

Soak up Cape Malay-style cooking in the historical area of Bo-Kaap. The Ginger & Lime Interactive Cooking Experience offers cooking classes.

Cederberg rock art

Visit one of CapeNature's 22 nature reserves in the Western Cape for FREE!

To celebrate Heritage day, CapeNature will open its doors for an entire week to everyone free of charge, from 20 to 27 September 2022.

A culturally and historically significant sight to check out is the San and Khoi rock art in the Cederberg. These paintings are between 300 and 6,000 years old.



Use this QR code to see the list of the 22 nature reserves



Modjadji Nature Reserve

Modjadji Nature Reserve, or Modjadji Cycad Reserve, is a provincial heritage site with the largest concentration of a single cycad species in the world.

The Modjadji tribe lives around the reserve, where South Africa's only matriarchal monarchy exists (where a woman usually holds the primary power). For the first time ever, though, the Modjadji tribe currently has a male monarch.

"Modjadji" means rain queen and the place got its name from the five successive rain-making queens who have lived in the area since the 16th century, guarding the ancient cycads - with origins dating back 60 million years.



Photo: iStock



If you're in KZN on 24 September, celebrate the origins of Shaka Day by going on the **KwaZulu-Natal Shakaland Zulu Village Tour**.

You can learn about the customs, traditions and tribal structures of the Zulu tribes during a trip to Shakaland - also known as the Kingdom of the great King Shaka Zulu.

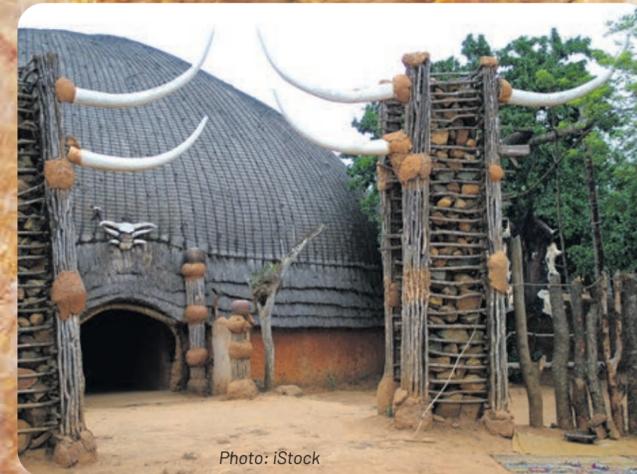


Photo: iStock

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Image sources: Vecteezy, iStock, Wikimedia commons and Unsplash

CREATIVE CORNER

DIY:

With the help of an adult, cook this delicious Cape Malay curry!

INGREDIENTS

- 1½ teaspoons ground turmeric
- 1½ teaspoons ground cumin
- 1½ teaspoons ground coriander
- 1½ teaspoons chilli powder (or less, if you want the curry to be less spicy)
- ¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 2 cups chopped onion
- 1½ tablespoons minced peeled fresh ginger
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- About 2.2 kg beef stew meat, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 2¼ cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 cup chopped green pepper (about 1 medium-sized pepper)
- ⅓ cup chopped dried apricots
- ⅓ cup apricot jam
- 2 teaspoons red-wine vinegar
- ¼ cup low-fat buttermilk (or coconut milk to make dairy-free)
- 1 cup cooked rice

METHOD

Combine the turmeric, cumin, coriander, chilli powder, cinnamon and salt in a small bowl, stirring well. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the spice mixture and cook for 15 seconds, stirring constantly. Add the onion, and sauté for 2 minutes. Add the ginger, bay leaves and garlic, and cook for 15 seconds. Add the beef, and sauté for 3 minutes. Add the beef broth, water, green pepper, dried apricots, apricot jam and red wine vinegar, and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer for 1½ hours. Uncover, and discard the bay leaves. Simmer for another 30 minutes or until the beef is very tender. Remove from heat, stir in the buttermilk, and serve over rice.



SUDOKU NO. 93

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SOLUTION TO SUDOKU NO. 92

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4	2	5	3	7	9	1	8	6
3	9	1	2	8	6	5	4	7
6	8	7	5	4	1	2	9	3
7	3	6	9	5	4	8	2	1
2	4	8	6	1	3	9	7	5
5	1	9	8	2	7	6	3	4



Schools led by women score high marks

Research on the role of female leaders in education suggests that highly effective schools are twice as likely to have women as principals. By **Mark Potterton**

There has been a worldwide focus on girls' education and finding ways to increase access and retention in school. Particular attention has also been paid to improving learning and girls' holistic wellbeing. The United Nations Children's Fund, Unicef, identifies the missing piece of the gender puzzle as school leadership and the absence of female school leaders in schools globally.

International research consistently shows that school leaders play a critical role in creating high-quality teaching and learning environments. Emerging analysis and research from Unicef Innocenti and other organisations show that women-led schools may perform better than men-led schools. In Laos, Southeast Asia, their research shows that highly effective schools are twice as likely as others to be led by a woman.

Parktown Girls, a high achiever

Parktown High School for Girls is consistently one of the highest-achieving schools in Gauteng. Last year, like in previous years, all 190 matric girls passed and achieved an almost 100% university pass. Both the universities of Johannesburg and the Witwatersrand recognise the school as one of their top feeder schools.

The school is led by a team of spirited women. The principal, Tracey Megom, is dynamic and responsive. She is closely connected to her students and doesn't shy away from the classroom. She knows her 1,200 girls and is cognisant of their needs.



I immediately have a sense that she is in sync with the needs of the 21st-century teen. She knows she is working with "woke" young people who are alert to justice and racism and that the children in her charge are keen to challenge, and she knows how to listen to concerns.

Megom is someone who champions distributive leadership. She is aware that in a school the size of Parktown Girls she cannot do it all on her own, and she surrounds herself with competent staff she can trust.

Her leadership team complements her. Judy Koch has the responsibility of pastoral care and leads a team of two psychologists and a social worker. She also works with the house heads to ensure that no child goes unnoticed. Koch speaks of the tremendous challenges young people face today in the wake of one of the world's worst pandemics. She tells of increased anxiety and depression and a lot more violence as young people relearn how to engage meaningfully, face to face.

Koch is also responsible for discipline and is quick to involve parents when serious concerns arise. The school uses a restorative approach and students are encouraged to recognise the harm caused by their actions and to put things right wherever possible. Community service and the social worker is involved when necessary.

Listening to her I realise that schools around the city are dealing with similar issues. Angst and the general after-effects of Covid-19 drive a lot of mental health issues. There is a struggle to connect with parents again and to bring them back into school life.

Left: Parktown principal Tracey Megom. Above: Matric pupils of Parktown High School for Girls in a jovial mood, and no wonder as it has been one of the highest-achieving schools in Gauteng for a number of years.

Photos: Alon Skuy/Gallo Images/The Times; supplied

Gail Davidson is the deputy principal who focuses on the extracurricular life of the school and parent involvement. She speaks of the effort needed to get girls involved in extramural activities again and of the immense benefits of that involvement.

Davidson reflects on the dynamics of their own leadership team and observes that "we discuss a lot and don't necessarily always agree with each other". She speaks proudly of their ability to look critically at themselves and make changes if they need to. She explains that the leadership team has clearly defined roles but this does not stop them from helping each other when there's a need. "Laughter," she observes, "is a tonic that keeps us going when things get tough."

I was keen to speak to Candice Bremner, who is responsible for academic and curriculum development. Her responsibilities also include staff development – and the school takes this seriously. Staff development is driven by student needs and regular reflection on their teaching practice, and it includes a variety of courses and presentations during sessions that are held weekly.

A lot of effort goes into academic planning and girls who need additional support are afforded it. Special attention is given to subject choice and making sure that girls are on the correct learning track. Their performance is closely monitored and their parents are involved in discussions concerning their progress. The pastoral care team is engaged to offer additional support when needed.

Performing better on many levels

Let's look more closely at the Unicef research and what it might mean for us. Laos, like South Africa, has made steady progress in expanding access to education, yet many children still leave primary school without being able to read, write, or perform simple numerical calculations. Despite this crisis, some schools outperform others, even in the most disadvantaged areas, and important lessons are drawn from these outlier schools.

The research investigated grassroots solutions to improve the quality of education. It analysed student assessment data in 120 schools to identify their effectiveness while controlling for student, household and community contextual features. The less effective schools were in contexts with similar characteristics to the highly effective schools, yet they achieved lower outcomes.

The findings were in line with a growing body of international research evidence that says effective schools are significantly more likely to be headed by female principals compared with average and low effective schools. In fact, highly effective schools are twice as likely to have a female principal.

The analysis suggests that women-led schools have better management practices and create better teaching and learning environments. Students in these schools report that their teachers are more likely to check their work, assign homework and teach until everyone understands, relative to students in schools led by male principals.

Principals in highly effective schools emphasise teacher support and collaboration. Researchers note that "42% of school principals in highly effective schools reported that they observe teachers often, compared with only 20% in low effective schools. Also, teachers in highly effective schools are more likely to be involved in decision-making processes pertaining to their schools, according to the principals."

Furthermore, principals and teachers in highly effective schools provide significantly more frequent feedback to parents regarding student assessments and progress.

The research found that effective principals foster trust, respect and innovation in their schools. "School principals in highly effective schools are significantly more likely to report that teachers feel comfortable asking other teachers or the principal for advice, and teachers treat each other with respect," the researchers write.

Importantly, they observe that teachers in these schools discuss learning from mistakes and failures more openly and more frequently – a feature that correlates positively with student achievement. Broader research has shown that collaborative learning cultures are known to be important predictors of a school's preparedness for change, alongside its ability to embrace innovation.

What might this mean in relation to Parktown Girls? Its leaders are female, they support their teachers, recognise their parents as partners, provide excellent support, and build trust and respect in their school community. **DM168**

Exposed: Iqbal Survé's RozBot, artificial but not very intelligent

Imaginary friend turns out to be China-developed propaganda software. With secret access to the bot, we get it to churn out writing in the style of prominent South Africans – and it's hard to tell from the real thing

Earlier this month, it was revealed that one Jamie Roz, a writer for Iqbal Survé's Independent Media group, is not in fact a real person. Well, the *Daily Maverick* article in question said Jamie Roz didn't exist, but that is inexact. The conclusion was that Roz was imaginary – that is to say "he" is a pseudonym for perhaps more than one writer employed to do some "attack" journalism for Mr Survé, who has many enemies, real and imagined, whom he wishes to eviscerate (metaphorically, of course).

A new probe into the identity, if identity there be, of Jamie Roz takes the matter further – and comes up with some results even more startling than the truth about the decuplets of Tembisa. This probe was conducted by Tarantula, a little-known techno-investigative unit that you might see as a fraternal, if that weren't sexist, okay, a sororal body to *DM's* own Scorpio. I have been in touch with Tarantula, by clandestine means, naturally, and can now reveal what they found.

Jamie Roz is a bot.

Yes, he, or more properly it, is a computer-generated "writer". Experts speculate that this bot, colloquially known as the RozBot, was developed by China's ministry of propaganda and has been writing speeches for various high-ups in that country for many years now. What the investigation shows is that if you feed the bot the right kind of content (and China has a century's worth of content to do with "socialism with Chinese characteristics") it will thenceforth, at the touch of a button – well, at the setting of various interesting parameters – produce any amount of such discourse.

There is also speculation that the RozBot has been secretly delivered to some political parties across the world so that they can reproduce such rhetoric effortlessly and in vast quantities.

One such party in South Africa, it is further speculated, is the EFF – they got a RozBot preprogrammed with a bunch of Chinese and Russian propaganda from about 1923 and they've been reproducing it steadily since the party's foundation in 2013 (with a small glitch in which they tried to feed it some Fanon, but it didn't take).

To show how the RozBot works, Tarantula kindly gave us a demonstration of its skills. We fed into it some sample text by writers of different kinds to see what would come out, and the results are quite amazing. First, we tried Roz with some work by Adri Senekal de Stront, one of Mr Survé's praise-singers, to see if we could change the narrative – that is, get the bot to spew acclaim for the megalomaniac, sorry, media mogul, rather than simply attack his enemies. Then we went on to try to get the RozBot writing just like various other denizens of our body politic speak, and here are the results.

Adri Senekal de Stront

Oh Doc, I mean Mr Iqbal, I mean Daddy Survé, you are so wonderful. That day you came into my office and hitched your... No,



**LEFT
FIELD**

Shaun
de Waal



let me start again. You have given hope to millions. You have stood with the poor and the dispossessed, or at least those of the poor and dispossessed who can still stand, against the tortures of modern life. You have pared the toenails of St Nelson Mandela! Even those of your staff who remain at your publications sing your praises, and not just because they weren't purged. They do it out of genuine love of your generous personality and engorged ego. Kissy kissy, Icky!

Jacob Zuma

I have been in the struggle a long time. And the struggle continues. I am the struggle personified, so if it looks personal, it is. I don't want to go to jail. I'm not afraid of going to jail. I went to jail for eleventy years and I came out stronger. Fatter, even.

My health is bad, mysteriously bad, which is why I want you to elect my ex-wife to the presidency of the ANC. I am the ANC, except those in the ANC that are enemy agents. Thuli Madonsela is a CIA agent. She tried to poison me. She is just the latest in a very long line of CIA agents to try and bring me down just because I

am opposed to White Monopoly Capital and in favour of Gupta Monopoly Capital.

Bring me my machine gun! Oh, is that the plastic one? Okay, well, it'll have to do...

Cyril Ramaphosa

My fellow South Africans, we have a problem. In fact, we have many problems. Many huge problems. But the main one exercising our minds right now is that of Eskom. As you know, I cut short my visit to the UK for the Queen's funeral, though it was over already, to rush back to South Africa to make this speech from the heart. I will, however, speak in very measured and lethargical tones because I know (can you check this, please, Mondli?) that you, my fellow South Africans, find it reassuring when I do so. You may even drift into restorative sleep as I speak. Anyway, as you know, we have suffered many disasters, disasters such as Covid, such as floods in KZN, such as Gwede Mantashe as energy minister... But this is not a time to point fingers. It is not a time to point fingers at Gwede, who is so far behind the

times that the green transition is now looking like something we'll accomplish only after the Earth is a blasted wasteland – mere power outages of 10 hours a day will look like a walk in the park, if there are still parks. Most importantly, this is not a time to point fingers at me for being chief of the Eskom War Room when I was deputy (only deputy, I remind you!) president and we didn't come up with any solutions at all. We're still in the dark. But do not fear! Do not fear Stage 8, or fear it a little less than state failure and social collapse. We have set up an interministerial committee, that is, a committee with lots of ministers who truly have nothing better to do, and that committee will minister to our need for a thorough investigation and evaluation of the situation. It will also propose solutions that we will not be able to enact because we are wedded to such ancient policies and political allegiances that... Well, we have set up the committee! Results expected shortly before the 2024 election. Now, as to the issue of Phala Phala [glitch, glitch, shriek – the RozBot breaks down at this point]. **DM168**

Shaun de Waal is
a writer and
editor.

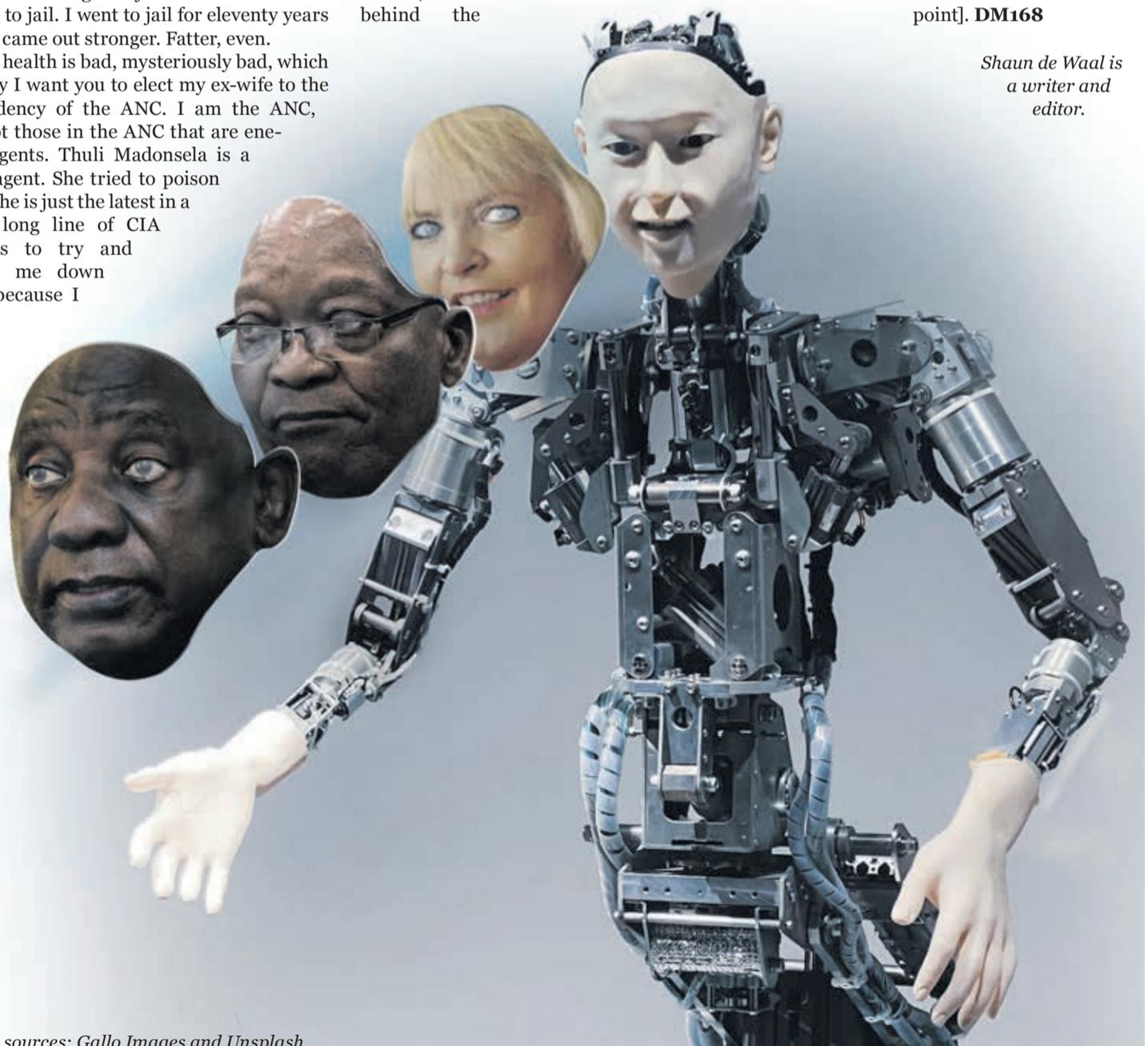


Photo sources: Gallo Images and Unsplash

Readers' views

SOUTH AFRICANS WEIGH IN ON THE FLAILING STATE

Responses to *What happens to the ANC will affect all of us*

It makes no difference who the cadres elect. All are useless, incompetent, corrupt thieves by definition. That is what a cadre is. **Patrick Devine**

When you claim whites got their stuff by taking from blacks, you lose half the audience. Most whites took nothing, were given nothing and worked hard for what they have. **Johan Buys**

DM, your peer review system doesn't work. Johan Buys is spewing falsehoods. Perhaps an in-depth bit of investigative journalism could explore whether I'm talking twaddle or he is.

Dhasagan Pillay

THE GHOSTS OF APARTHEID'S POLICIES STILL HAUNT US

I was born in 1948, went to Hamilton Primary School and Hillview High School in Pretoria, and paid school fees each term. My parents, my sister and I lived in a one bedroom rented flat. I had hopes of going to university, but my mother could not afford to pay any fees or transport monies.

I had to go to work at 17 to contribute to rent and food. I managed to get a job working in a laboratory at the Institute for Pathology at the University of Pretoria. I then enrolled at the technikon to study medical laboratory technology after hours. Classes began at 6.15pm and continued without a break until 10.45pm, at which time our lecturer prayed that we got home safely. A fellow female student and I walked home and arrived at 11.45pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Friday was a night off from classes.

We paid our own fees from our salaries we earned in our full day jobs. We both passed our required basic courses and then specialised. Four and a half years later we graduated as qualified medical laboratory technologists. Please can you tell me what education was given to me for free? **Dawn Dalby**



ZAPIRO AND JAMES DURNO ARE TOP-CLASS

I am an "Insider" and a proud reader of *DM*. For about 40 years I was also a reporter, news editor and sub-editor on various papers, some of whose detritus still takes up space on newsstands.

I recently fell victim to double pneumonia. As a result I have, for weeks, been reading *DM* on paper as I emerged from two weeks' intensive care.

I think your cartoonists are top-class. Zapiro, of course, yes, but James Durno is also excellent. Durno is more "illustrator" than cartoonist. Lowry or Bruegel spring to mind. If I had more energy now I might bore you with stories about some other members of your wonderful team, some of whom might not remember me too fondly.

William Barker

Response to *The Queen was a beneficiary, furtherer of colonial conquest*

I generally enjoy Zukiswa [Pikoli's] column, but this one on the death of Queen Elizabeth II was an exception. First, she declares that she would shed no tear for a "beneficiary



Response to those who objected to my letter: The apartheid government subsidised the education of white children and denied black children a decent education, even if you paid. According to Alistair Boddy-Evans in *School Enrollment in Apartheid Era South Africa*, "in 1982, the apartheid government of South Africa spent an average of R1,211 on education for each white child and only R146 for each black child. The quality of teaching staff also differed. Roughly a third of all white teachers had a university degree, the rest had all passed the standard 10 matriculation exam. Only 2.3% of

OUR WISE PRESIDENT ALSO PREFERS TO KEEP HIS CASH IN THE 'MATTRESS'

Response to *Julius Malema, joy bringer and true fighter against graft*

Title for *Survé* is incorrect. It should be Present Ovated Enlightened Person Against Lewdness. Sorry, it's early. I am sure I can do better. **William Kelly**

Good stuff! Cyril is as wise as that granny – he also prefers to keep his cash in the "mattress". **John Strydom**

Great satire which points out well the hypocrisy of Malema and his cohort.

Steve Woodhall

and furtherer of colonial conquest" that plunged the Global South into slavery and misery. The statement is as callous as Minister Jimmy Kruger's statement in 1977 that the death of Steve Biko "left him cold".

Second, she speaks of the Queen "governing" on the basis of lineage rather than leadership based on principled values centred on the needs of the country's people. I too subscribe to constitutional and democratic governance, but acknowledge the strengths of the English system and its weaknesses, as we must our own – and for this we need go back no further than the tenure of president Zuma, by way of example. **Henry Bennett**

black teachers had a university degree and 82% had not even reached matric ... The disparity in teaching experienced in white and black classrooms and the fact that black people were usually taught in their second (or third) language, rather than their primary one, meant that black children were much more likely to fail the end-of-year assessments."

In addition, Boddy-Evans writes that "job reservation in SA kept white-collar jobs firmly in the hands of whites. Employment opportunities for blacks in South Africa were generally manual jobs and unskilled positions."

I did not write that all white South Africans voted Nat. I said *most* did, which allowed the Nats a sweeping majority. White South Africans may have bought land but black people who lived on the land before colonialism were kicked off. Generational white wealth is based on the increasing resale value of this land. The 1913 Natives Land Act opened the door for white ownership of 87% of land, leaving black people to scramble for what was left.

Heather Robertson

READER REFLECTION

SA'S IN A BAD WAY, BUT IT IS NOT QUITE WHERE OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES HAVE GONE

Africans from other countries on the continent are flabbergasted by some aspects of South Africa's decline. Yet, when most fellow Africans arrived in South Africa in the early 1990s, they marvelled at the dazzling modernity of Mandela Land. At that juncture, South Africa, the most industrialised country in Africa, was economically ahead of Portugal, Poland or Hungary. Amid Pan-Africanists' celebration of the liberation of the last colony on the continent, it was believed that in the post-colonial era, the advanced South African state would spearhead the continent's renaissance. But 26 years down the line, it is evident that South Africa was not immunised against the spell of continental political impairments.

Owing to rampant corruption perpetrated by political appointees, Eskom is on the verge of bankruptcy. Its debt amounts to about \$40-billion, which is almost the GDPs of Senegal, Chad and Mali combined. Nightmarish load shedding disrupts the lives of the people and negatively impacts the economy. More astounding is the decline of the South African military infrastructure and arsenal, the main causes of which are blatant maladministration.

Nonetheless, South Africa is far from being on an irreversible trajectory to state failure. There is no pervasive institutional breakdown or generalised cessation of state operations in the entirety of the territory. Undoubtedly, there are pockets of abject misery, particularly in townships. Also undeniable are dramatic disruptions and delays in the delivery of most key public goods and services. However, in general, water, education, health, maintenance of roads and security, are provided by the state to a large chunk of the population. The South African people are not literally left to fend for themselves. In contrast, in many parts of the continent in the 1970s to the 1990s (and the situation persists and worsens in many cases) state failure was tantamount to a generalised social catastrophe.

The trajectories and experiences of many African countries undoubtedly indicate that political pathologies and state dysfunctions that were not promptly corrected led to state failure and collapse. Is South Africa immunised from these regressive occurrences and thus from this fatal trajectory?

South Africa has a political system possessing some exceptional features. Constitutionalism is still sacrosanct. The justice system still enjoys a significant degree of independence. World-class academics, a generally unbiased media, fearless civil society, assertive churches leaders and a vigilant opposition safeguard South Africa from an expanded and systematised predatory despotism, total failure and then collapse.

Imhotep Kabasu Babu Katulondi

Conversations are a two-way street and we appreciate the views of our readers. If you have an opinion about any of our stories please email it to heather@dailymaverick.co.za

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Strike a possibility as public sector pay talks collapse

At least four trade unions have rejected the government's final pay rise offer of 3%. Unions are exploring the possibility of a public sector strike, which last happened in 2010



By Ray Mahlaka

The government's attempt to secure a remuneration deal for South Africa's 1.3 million public servants has gone awry, with some trade unions rejecting its latest pay rise offer and risking strike action that could paralyse the delivery of crucial state services.

Pay rise negotiations in the public sector began in May when trade unions representing public servants threw down the gauntlet to the government by initially demanding a 10% increase for 2022, later reduced to 6.5%.

The government – represented by the National Treasury and the Department of Public Service and Administration – immediately rejected the demand by trade unions, which would cost at least an extra R49.2-billion to fund and implement. The Treasury and its head, Enoch Godongwana, argued that the government couldn't afford the demand when public finances are still recovering from the Covid impact.

Wrestling down the cost of remunerating public servants is a crucial part of getting SA's public finances back into shape. It will cost R682.5-billion to remunerate public servants during the government's 2022/23 fiscal year, which is the single largest component of its expenditure.

The government has instead proposed an offer that is not linked to the cost of living. The offer ensures that public servants get a 1.5% increase, known as "pay progression", which is built into their salary structure as it is factored in every year and awarded for their years of service. As a sweetener, the government threw in an after-tax cash gratuity (or bonus) of R1,000 a month for public servants that would run for a year, ending on 31 March 2023.

This was spurned by eight trade unions.

The government tabled a new offer on 30 August at the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council (PSCBC). It proposed increasing the "pay progression" rate from 1.5% to 3%, a rate similar to the one recently offered to government ministers and their deputies, premiers, members of provincial executive councils, judges and traditional leaders. But this came with several caveats. The government would embark on initiatives that would keep the amount it spends to remunerate public servants from growing, including asking public servants to take early retirement without adverse penalties and reassessing critical skills in the public sector to offer voluntary severance packages.

Divisions in the trade union movement

The response by unions to the government's improved offer has been divided. After being given 21 days to engage their public servant members about the improved offer, unions including the National Union of Public Service and Allied Workers, the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union, the South African Correctional Services Workers Unions and the South African Policing Union (Sapu) have rejected the offer.

It will cost R682.5-billion to remunerate public servants during the government's 2022/23 fiscal year, which is the single largest component of its expenditure

These unions canvassed by DM168, and others – including the Public Servants Association (PSA), the South African Democratic Teachers Union, the National Education Health and Allied Workers Union, the Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa and others affiliated to labour federation Cosatu – say they are still gathering feedback from their public servant members about the government's improved offer. They haven't officially rejected the offer.

In engaging their members, the unions will also test their appetite for strike action, which would force the government's hand in awarding public servants cost-of-living pay increases. The unions are balloting their members – a process that will determine whether a strike enjoys majority support (more than 50%) from public servants, and also outline picketing rules.

But the balloting process will be complex and take a long time to conclude, says Lesiba Thobakgale, a negotiator for Sapu.

Sapu and the PSA have taken steps closer to strike action. Both unions have declared a dispute at the PSCBC, as their negotiations with the government for an inflation-linked pay rise have failed. And on 20 September, Sapu and the PSA were awarded certificates of non-resolution by the PSCBC, which paves the way for their members to embark on a legal strike if they agree to do so.

A major strike in the public sector last occurred in 2010 and paralysed schools and hospitals for 20 days. The strike turned violent and police fired tear gas, rubber bullets and water cannon at state facilities in Gauteng and the Northern Cape. To end the strike, trade unions eventually accepted a 7.5% pay rise and an R800 monthly housing allowance.

Godongwana doesn't want this history to be repeated. And his Cabinet colleagues want to avoid a strike in the public sector at all costs.

A sticking point for the trade unions is that a Constitutional Court ruling in February 2022 endorsed the government's decision to renege on the last leg of a three-year remuneration agreement with unions because it could no longer afford to implement pay increases of 8% in 2020.

Unions argued that the ruling would put the collective bargaining process at risk because the government could walk away from binding agreements whenever its financial situation deteriorated.

This weakened the negotiating power of unions and some don't have an appetite to embark on a costly strike, says labour analyst Michael Bagraim. "The government tends to implement a no work, no pay policy during strikes. So, to expect public servants to go on a strike and earn nothing when the economy and cost of living are tough will be a lot. They cannot sit at home for two weeks and not earn anything." DM168



Above: South African Federation of Trade Unions members march to the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy in Cape Town during the national shutdown march on 24 August 2022. Right: Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana. Photos: Victoria O'Regan/Gallo Images/Daily Maverick; Jeffrey Abrahams/Gallo Images



R90-billion in stray benefits may go into one new pot Page 40



Pandemic and lockdowns leave trail of restaurant destruction Page 43

R90bn of unclaimed benefits to go into one fund to rule them all

Financial regulator proposes putting all the stray money knocking around in the industry into a single pot that could fund social development projects – but your assets will never be forfeited. By **Neesa Moodley**

The Financial Sector Conduct Authority (FSCA) published a discussion paper this week proposing that almost R90-billion of unclaimed benefits across the financial services industry be moved to a single fund, the proceeds of which could be invested in social development projects.

The unclaimed benefits include retirement savings, investment payouts, dormant bank accounts and dividends. The aim is to find a solution that will get the funds paid out to the correct beneficiaries.

The unclaimed benefits that the FSCA is working with span different time periods for different sectors, as follows:

- Collective investment schemes and life insurance (2020/21) – R33.5-billion;
- Retirement funds (2020) – R47.2-billion;
- Unclaimed dividends (2019) – R4.5-billion; and
- Dormant bank accounts (2018-2021) – R3.6-billion.

The FSCA commissioner, Unathi Kamlana, says work is continuing to establish the true value of unclaimed assets, given that they are held by various financial institutions, not only retirement funds.

“We recognise that good progress has been made, but as the FSCA we remain concerned because, ultimately, we have to consider whether the customers, and beneficiaries in this case, are being treated fairly. It is quite clear that we have to improve the outcomes for customers and that’s what this paper is trying to achieve,” says Kamlana.

The discussion paper outlines reasons for the nature and extent of the problem of unclaimed assets, which vary by sector. The most common reasons are:

- Consumers’ failure to keep financial institutions updated with their contact details and the personal details of their beneficiaries, and to inform their beneficiaries of the existence of the assets and the institutions where they are held;
- Inadequate record-keeping by financial institutions and intermediaries;
- Inconsistent approaches to the identification and treatment of unclaimed assets both within market segments and across the entire financial sector;
- Failure by employers to provide retirement funds and administrators with complete details of the members of the fund; and
- Changes in intermediaries and administrators.

Rosemary Lightbody, senior policy adviser at the Association for Savings and Investment South Africa (Asisa), which represents most life insurers, says that in a world where policy documents and investment contracts are sent by email and usually stored electronically, it is often extremely difficult for beneficiaries and heirs to find policies and investments when someone dies.

“Without access to someone’s computer or laptop it is almost impossible to piece together their financial affairs. I would therefore like to encourage all consumers to ensure



that a register of policy details, investment accounts as well as bank accounts is shared with someone trustworthy, whether a relative, close friend, financial adviser or estate planner. This register should be placed in safekeeping together with an up-to-date copy of your will,” says Lightbody.

The biggest changes proposed

The FSCA discussion paper includes these recommendations:

- **Establishing a single Central Unclaimed Assets Fund into which all assets identified as unclaimed should be transferred and managed on behalf of the sector.**

The regulator proposes that, if this option does not work, the alternative could be to transfer all unclaimed assets into the National Revenue Fund. The deputy commissioner of the FSCA, Kathy Gibson, notes that the correct governance structure will be critical for success.

“Ultimately, the board of the central fund would be responsible for taking operational

decisions, including levels of reserves to meet future claims and level of distribution,” she says. “We can mitigate risks by ensuring the right representation on the board and ensuring there is no political interference.”

She says the FSCA is looking at international best practice across countries including Australia, Canada, Japan, Kenya, Ireland, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and the United Kingdom.

- **Using a portion of unclaimed assets for projects with social, environmental and developmental benefits.**

The FSCA proposes that actuarially allocated amounts be invested through social impact funds to support infrastructure development, with specific deliverables such as schools and clinics.

Amounts should be allocated to such funds on a fair basis (based on the relative sizes of the funds, for example), although consideration should be given to supporting emerging black asset managers.

The types of assets to be included would be investment returns, life insurance proceeds, bank deposits, dividends and securities and non-life-insurance proceeds.

- **An aligned approach.**

There should be a common understanding of what constitutes a dormant account, a lost account and an unclaimed asset.

- **Consumers being able to claim their benefits in perpetuity.**

In other words, there should be no deadline upon which you forfeit your assets if you don’t claim them. The first principle of the Asisa Standard on Unclaimed Assets is that your right to an unclaimed asset remains until the claim is paid or the asset is returned, regardless of the timeframe.

However, when an Asisa member company concludes that all reasonable efforts to trace the customer, heirs or beneficiaries have been exhausted over a three-year period, the assets may be put into socially responsible investments with commercial returns such as enterprise supplier development funds.

- **Tax neutrality.**

Benefits should be taxed only when a beneficiary claims them, not at the time they move into the Central Unclaimed Benefits Fund.

- **Standardised reporting.**

Financial institutions would have to keep records of identified dormant accounts and unclaimed assets, including the number of accounts and beneficial owners, asset types, individual asset values, the age of assets, the age and race of beneficial owners, and how the institution has tried to trace owners. The information would have to be reported regularly to the FSCA.

- **A centralised database.**

This would help with tracing efforts across the financial services industry. Australia, Chile, Hong Kong, China, Maldives and Switzerland have centralised information collection.

- **A minimum threshold for unclaimed assets.**

These funds can still be claimed at any point, but no money would be spent on active tracing of beneficiaries. At this stage it is proposed that the threshold amount be set initially at R1,000 for unclaimed assets deriving from a retirement fund that is older than 20 years, and R100 for all other assets.

- **Increasing the monitoring of financial institutions with a high quantum of unclaimed benefits.**

In the first phase it is proposed that funds with more than R500-million in total unclaimed assets, or funds with average unclaimed assets exceeding R45,000 per beneficiary, be given priority.

- **A consumer awareness campaign.**

This would include financial institutions having to disclose to customers, at point of sale and regularly in after-sales service, the implications of an unclaimed asset and maintaining a dormant financial product as opposed to closing or terminating it.

- **Regulation of tracing agents.**

Although tracing agents are mainly concentrated in the retirement sector at present, it is expected that they would extend to other sectors, and regulation would curb abusive practices. **DM168**

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SARB pulls trigger again with rate hike, while eyeing cost of living

The South African Reserve Bank delivered its second consecutive 75-basis point rate hike this week, taking its key repo rate to 6.25% and the prime lending rate to 9.75%. Governor Lesetja Kganyago said the 'rising cost of living' was detrimental to the economy and not dealing with this now would have consequences 'down the line'. By **Ed Stoddard**

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has now completely moulted from the dove that slashed rates by 300 basis points in 2020 during the Great Lockdown into the plumage of a more familiar hawk.

Two of the five MPC members voted for a 100-basis point hike, three for 75 basis points. This mirrored the size of the Federal Reserve hike on 21 September. When it comes to inflation, the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) wants to stay ahead of the curve.

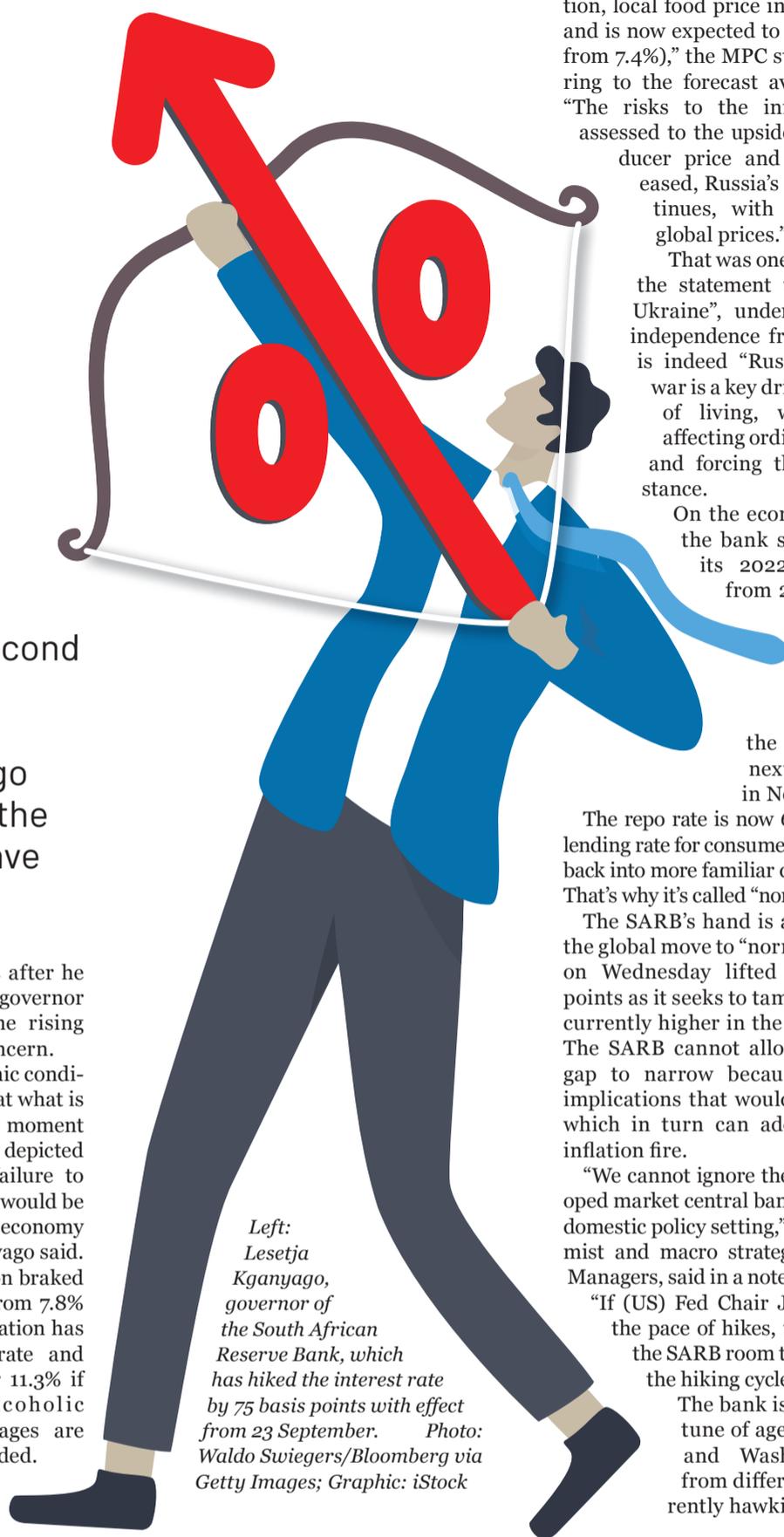
"The hawkish surprise was two members of the MPC voting for rate hikes of 100 basis points. While the inflation forecasts themselves are little changed, the SARB appears wary of being too complacent over risks," said Razia Khan, chief Africa economist at Standard Chartered Bank in London.



In response to media questions after he delivered the statement, SARB governor Lesetja Kganyago singled out the rising cost of living as a key cause for concern.

"Rates are in response to economic conditions ... and what we do know is that what is detrimental to the economy at the moment is the rising cost of living, which is depicted through inflation. And failure to deal with inflation now would be detrimental to the economy down the line," Kganyago said.

Consumer inflation braked in August to 7.6% from 7.8% in July, but food inflation has continued to accelerate and was 11.5%, or 11.3% if nonalcoholic beverages are included.



Left: Lesetja Kganyago, governor of the South African Reserve Bank, which has hiked the interest rate by 75 basis points with effect from 23 September. Photo: Waldo Swiegers/Bloomberg via Getty Images; Graphic: iStock

"Despite reduced global food price inflation, local food price inflation is revised up and is now expected to be 8.1% in 2022 (up from 7.4%)," the MPC statement said, referring to the forecast average for the year. "The risks to the inflation outlook are assessed to the upside. While global producer price and food inflation has eased, Russia's war in Ukraine continues, with adverse effects on global prices."

That was one of two references in the statement to "Russia's war in Ukraine", underscoring the bank's independence from ANC politics. It is indeed "Russia's war" and that war is a key driver of the rising cost of living, which is adversely affecting ordinary South Africans and forcing the SARB's hawkish stance.

On the economic growth front, the bank slightly downgraded its 2022 forecast to 1.9% from 2.0% previously, but if the current upsurge of load shedding persists, that will be shredded by the time of the MPC's next scheduled meeting in November.

The repo rate is now 6.25% and the prime lending rate for consumers is 9.75%, so almost back into more familiar double-digit territory. That's why it's called "normalisation".

The SARB's hand is also being forced by the global move to "normalisation". The Fed on Wednesday lifted rates by 75 basis points as it seeks to tame inflation, which is currently higher in the US than it is in SA. The SARB cannot allow this interest rate gap to narrow because of the negative implications that would have for the rand, which in turn can add more fuel to the inflation fire.

"We cannot ignore the key role that developed market central banks are playing in the domestic policy setting," Carmen Nel, economist and macro strategist at Matrix Fund Managers, said in a note on the rate decision.

"If (US) Fed Chair Jerome Powell slows the pace of hikes, then this would give the SARB room to slow, or even pause the hiking cycle."

The bank is also dancing to the tune of agendas set in Moscow and Washington and both from different perches are currently hawkish. **DM168**

SA consumer inflation slows but doesn't stave off interest rate hike

By **Ed Stoddard**

Consumer inflation slowed to 7.6% in August from 7.8% in July, Statistics South Africa said on Wednesday, 21 September. This raises the prospect that inflation has peaked but did not stay the hand of the South African Reserve Bank (SARB), which hiked rates again on Thursday by 75 basis points.

The latest inflation figure is a rare piece of recent good news on the economic front: a key indicator that is moving in the right direction.

Among other things, it provides some vindication for the SARB's current tightening cycle and determination to bring inflation back within its mandated 3% to 6% target range.

Having said that, there is not much the

SARB can do to contain inflation driven by external shocks such as Russia's war in Ukraine.

Though the number offers hope that South African inflation peaked at 7.8% in July, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is expected to remain above the top range of the SARB's target for the rest of the year.

"Our projections are for monthly price pressures to remain moderated for the remainder of this year.

"Annual inflation, however, should remain above 6%, likely posting 7.7% in September and averaging close to 7% for 2022," Koketso Mano, FNB senior economist, said in a note on the data.

"There is a likelihood that headline inflation peaked at 7.8% in July, given the trends in fuel prices, but this view could be strongly challenged by rapid food inflation."

Roaring oil prices fuelled this year in large part by Russia's invasion of Ukraine have stoked global and South African inflation, but there is now some relief in this regard. Fuel prices decreased 3.8% month on month in August because of the more than R1 per litre cut in petrol prices at the pump.

But year-on-year fuel inflation was still 43.2% – that number only looks good in contrast to July, when it was raging at 56.2%.

Worryingly, domestic food inflation continued to accelerate even as global food price rises have moderated in recent months. The food and nonalcoholic beverages (NAB) component of CPI raced to 11.3% in August from 9.7% in July.

"Nine of the 11 food and NAB categories recorded an annual inflation rate above 8.0% in August," Statistics South Africa said in a statement.

"Bread and cereals registered an increase of 3.1% between July and August, pushing the annual rate from 13.7% to 17%. Maize meal increased by 4% from July, taking the annual rate to 29.1%."

These trends are adding to the burden of lower-income and working-class households, which have limited disposable income, given an unemployment rate of almost 34%. That could well drive wage demands over the coming months and into next year.

Inflation may finally be ebbing – or maybe not – with a lot hinging on the performance of the rand, which early on Friday was hovering around 17.83/dollar. Load shedding is also load shedding the value of the rand and, if the current surge in power cuts cannot be eased, it could certainly falter further. **DM168**

Food sector still paying the price of the pandemic and prohibition

Restaurants and cafés were vulnerable to the whims of various Cabinet ministers, whose lockdown policies left a trail of business destruction and jobless misery in their wake. By **Ed Stoddard**

The food and beverage sector in South Africa was absolutely hammered by the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown measures to contain it. This has given rise to a roller-coaster ride of stomach-churning ups and downs and, disconcertingly, income generated by the sector remains well below pre-pandemic levels – with the glaring exception of fast food and takeaways.

South Africans, many of whom like to eat, drink and be merry, are still not doing so with quite the same gusto as they did before the pandemic.

This is the picture that has been emerging from the monthly data on the industry published by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), and the latest numbers unveiled this past week for July are quite stark.

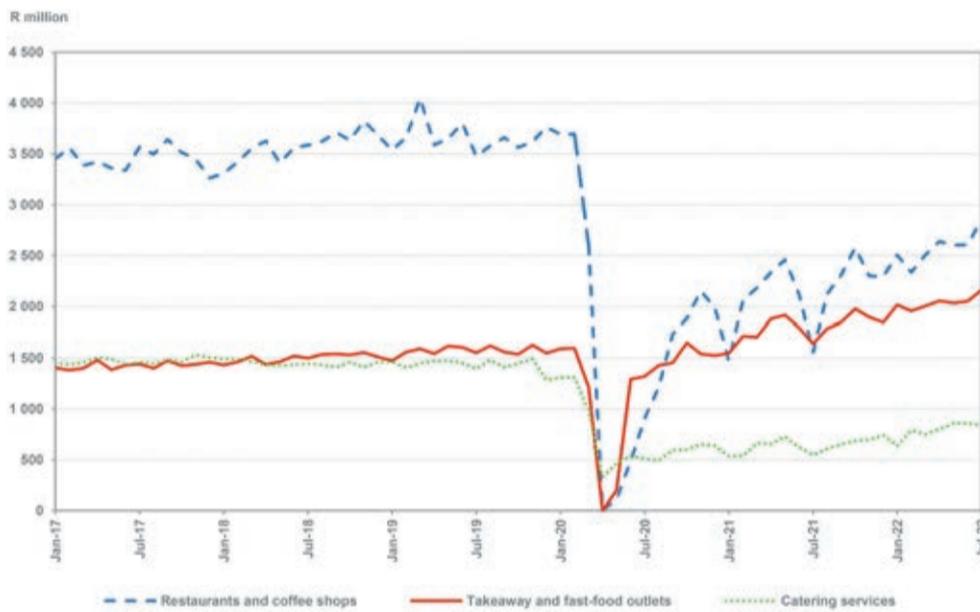
July last year was marked by several major events that directly affected the sector: the first was the wave of rioting that swept Kwa-Zulu-Natal and Gauteng. Plenty of shopping malls were looted in that lethal spree of vio-

lence that killed at least 350 people, and such establishments have lots of restaurants and cafés. And the final round of alcohol prohibition – a policy with a racist and classist history driven by the Cabinet's social-control freaks – was only lifted near the end of that month.

So, in July, income generated by the food and beverage sector soared 55.8%, the biggest annual increase so far this year. Income from restaurants and coffee shops surged 82.6%, and bar sales were 81.6% higher.

Takeaway and fast-food outlets posted more modest annual income growth in July of 32.0%. But, overall, this branch of the wider industry has now regained all the ground it lost during the pandemic, and then some, whereas the other two broad sub-sectors – restaurants and catering services – remain below pre-pandemic levels of income.

These trends can be clearly seen in the graphic below.



Food and beverages income at constant 2019 prices by type of enterprise, seasonally adjusted.



Restaurants operated by individuals or families were hard hit by the lockdowns. Photo: iStock

These diverging fortunes stem from the lockdown legacy of the pandemic. Fast-food outlets with takeaway options did not face the same level of restrictions for much of the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 as other sub-sectors. And even when you could sit down in a restaurant, many adults chose not to because they like an adult beverage with their meal.

Fast food is also cheaper and so the swing towards it is probably a reflection of consumer preferences when disposable income is in decline. And many such establishments are franchises – Wimpy, Steers, KFC, etc – which are backed by large companies with pools of capital.

Restaurants and cafés, by contrast, were far more vulnerable to the whims of various Cabinet ministers, whose ill-conceived policies left a trail of business destruction and jobless misery in their wake.

Many such businesses, often owned and operated by individuals or families, suffered as people opted to avoid them because of the expense or the fact that they wanted a bottle of wine with their Sunday lunch. A lot of

these businesses went under and are not coming back.

The third broad food and beverage sector, catering, was also waylaid by the lockdowns and remains well below its 2019 levels. Restrictions on the size of gatherings obviously hurt, and its sluggish recovery is probably explained by factors such as companies downscaling functions because once a cost is saved many a number cruncher wants to keep it that way.

As a whole, food and beverage income at constant 2019 prices in July of this year was R5.75-billion compared with R6.3-billion in the same month in 2019, with the gap mostly closed by the fast-food sector.

This is concerning on a range of fronts. The sector is labour-intensive, so many people lost their livelihoods when restaurants closed. Small businesses bore the brunt, shattering the dreams of hard-working entrepreneurs. And if South Africa is becoming a “fast-food nation”, that is probably not the healthiest trend for eating out. The sector and the country are still paying a high price for the pandemic. **DM168**

EMOJI SENTIMENT INDEX

By Lorraine Kearney

MONEY MAKERS

By 2026 there will be more than 87.5 million people worth at least \$1-million, up from 62.5 million in 2021, says Credit Suisse Group's *Global Wealth Report 2022*, with the number of millionaires globally growing by 40% in the next five years, Bloomberg reports. Private fortunes are forecast to rise 36% to \$169-trillion by 2026, with wealth per adult climbing 28% globally and surpassing \$100,000 in 2024. The number of high-net-worth individuals will hit 385,000 – these are people worth more than \$50-million. Fortunes will climb 10% annually in emerging economies. Meanwhile, the 500 richest people in the world collectively lost \$1.4-trillion in the first half of the year.



CRIMINAL COUNTRY

South Africa is at 19 on the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime criminality index, with a higher score than Libya, Brazil and Russia. Colombia is at 2, Mexico 4, Nigeria 5 and Kenya 11. Rising organised crime was an existential threat to SA's democratic institutions, economy and people, it said. Its study of embedded and interconnected criminal markets showed a rise in extortion, kidnapping, organised robbery, organised violence, corruption, theft of critical infrastructure, illegal mining, taxi industry-related crime, wildlife and fishing crime, cybercrime and economic and financial crime. There was “a dramatic expansion, diversification and legitimisation of extortion”.



INVEST AGAINST DEATH

One person under 70 dies every two seconds from a noncommunicable disease (NCD), the World Health Organization reports. NCDs now outnumber infectious diseases as the top killers globally. They account for nearly three-quarters, or 41 million, deaths annually, reads the report, *Invisible Numbers: the true extent of non-communicable diseases and what to do about them*. A full 85% of all premature deaths happen in low- and middle-income countries. It's a prime opportunity for investment: investing \$18-billion a year on prevention across all low- and middle-income countries could generate net economic benefits of \$2.7-trillion by 2030.



BLACKOUTS = BLUE MOODS

Rolling blackouts are more than an annoyance. South Africans' happiness dropped below the 2022 average of 6.85 to 6.44 on 18 September, when the country plunged into stage six, according to the Gross National Happiness Index. This is almost as low as it was in 2020. It is measured using big data and machine learning, which analyses the sentiment and emotion in underlying tweets. The index was developed in 2019 by well-being economists Professor Talita Greyling from the University of Johannesburg and Dr Stephanié Rossouw from Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand. It can measure the mood hourly and analyses eight emotions. **DM168**



Not just a bli(m)p on the radar



The first OceanSky 'air cruise' is slated to depart for the North Pole in 2024.

OceanSky Cruises, based in Sweden, is betting millions that soon travellers will be lining up for the chance to take a leisurely journey through the air – where being in transit is the point, rather than a hurdle between where you are and where you want to go.

OceanSky's first "air cruise" departure is currently slated for February 2024. Up to 16 passengers plus eight crew members will make their way from Longyearbyen in the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard to the North Pole in a 41m, 195m² cabin attached to a massive, helium-filled air chamber.

The airship will cruise for 15 hours at an altitude low enough for wildlife spotting. It will then land for a six-hour sojourn, during which guests will either embark on a hike or go cross-country skiing, take a dip in Arctic waters and enjoy a catered lunch in the snow before making the 15-hour return journey.

Also in the works is a six-day southern Africa itinerary starting in Windhoek, Namibia or Livingstone, Zambia, then touching down on Namibia's Skeleton Coast, Botswana's Okavango Delta and Victoria Falls on the Zambia-Zimbabwe border before circling back.

That is, if negotiations go to plan.

The airship, reborn

CEO Carl-Oscar Lawaczeck cofounded OceanSky in 2014 after years of research into sustainable transport. He says the company is in talks with UK-based manufacturer Hybrid Air Vehicles to use its Airlander 10 airships, which were developed for the US Army as surveillance tools.

In addition to private investments, Lawaczeck says he is raising additional funds through ticket pre-sales. Buyers of the first 50 cabins for the North Pole expedi-

OceanSky Cruises has some sky-high ambitions to bring back airship travel. By **Kristan Schiller**



Flights will allow for leisurely viewing of ice floes and wildlife.



Italian designer Max Pinucci will create new interiors once an airship is confirmed.

Photos: Hybrid Air Vehicles

tions will have the opportunity to become OceanSky shareholders. For a non-refundable ticket fully paid at R3,485,000 per cabin, a buyer would receive 333 shares for the price of about R10,608 per Class B share.

Bill McGee, senior fellow for aviation at the American Economic Liberties Project, calls OceanSky's ambitions "intriguing" but questions whether the economics make sense.

Lawaczeck responds that in OceanSky's simulations, airships have a lower unit cost per passenger, per mile than do aeroplanes. "Fuel and energy cost less. The wear and tear on airships is less due to its slowness. What's expensive is the staff," says Lawaczeck. "And in the beginning, we will get punished because the market sees risk."

But, he continues, "Tesla introduced the Roadster to break into the industry. It's the same with our concept. In a few months, we will have a waiting list." *Bloomberg/DM168*

Plunging price of solar batteries is a ray of light

In just three years the cost of batteries for a solar system has dropped by two-thirds. This is just one anecdotal example of the power of Moore's law in action – where the price of certain technologies (originally the cost of computer processors, as envisaged by Intel co-founder Gordon Moore) tends to halve every 18 months.

My in-laws live on a small horse-breeding farm outside Joburg, where they have a large array of solar panels and batteries, as well as several inverters. When they installed their solar system in December 2018, they put in eight 2.1kWh batteries. That gave them a total of 16.8kWh of storage capacity.

But they were struck by lightning in December 2021, which fried the system. The original cost of their batteries was R189,400. To replace them, they installed six 7.2kWh batteries (for a total of 43.2kWh), which cost R151,280.

The old tech cost R11,274 per kilowatt-hour. Three years later, the new batteries cost R3,502 per kilowatt-hour. In just three years the batteries had reduced in cost by more than two-thirds and, for nearly R40,000 less, my in-laws got more than a twofold boost in storage capacity.

Since the beginning of 2019, according to my father-in-law Rick's records and calcula-



TECH TALK

Toby Shapshak



“Instead of buying new generating capacity, we've burned through R8-billion in diesel so far this year. That could have bought a lot of solar panels and batteries”

tions, the cost of Eskom's electricity has increased 58% – and that's before the 32% that Eskom asked for last week for its annual increase for 2023.

My wife and I took the plunge last year and installed our own solar system at home.

It has saved us from Eskom's #loadsh**ting and the stress that goes with it.

President Cyril Ramaphosa cutting short his latest overseas travel isn't going to solve anything. Eskom needs more power right now and the only way to get that is from privately owned sources. While non-practising Energy Minister Gwede Mantashe waffles on about cleaner coal or a second Eskom, the crisis gets worse.

The quickest and cheapest way to get more electricity on to the grid is through renewable projects – and, even then, there's a two-year build process.

Instead of buying new generating capacity, we've burned through R8-billion in diesel so far this year. That could have bought a lot of solar panels and batteries.

Ramaphosa needs Mantashe's support for his re-election as ANC president in December, so he's not going to be fired. Once again, the country is secondary to the ANC's internal dynamics.

Meanwhile, those who can have bought their own solar installations. Our results are compelling enough. We've saved money, done our little bit to help the planet and spared our family the painful rigours of #loadsh**ting, all while my wife and I manage to work uninterrupted – but for a not-

APP of the Week

IFTTT

IFTTT connects and automates more than 600 apps, including Twitter, Instagram and Google Drive, and devices such as Google Home and Amazon Alexa. By turning on Applets you can, for instance, stay informed about what's happening in the news and be prepared for the weather.



insubstantial price. If only we had got these new batteries, our capacity (14.4KWh) would also have tripled, and we could survive Stage 8.

Sadly, we have to start thinking like that.

Toby Shapshak is editor-in-chief of *Stuff.co.za* and publisher of *Scrolla.Africa*.

Global ad agencies put on list of shame for doing dirty work

Climate activist groups say 239 firms have relationships with fossil fuel companies.

By Georgina Crouth

Leading international advertising firms including WPP, Omnicom, Interpublic Group, Publicis Groupe, Dentsu, Edelman and Havas have been put on this year's "F-List" for working with fossil fuel companies. The list names 239 agencies.

It's the second such list by the climate activist groups Clean Creatives and Comms Declare. Last year, more than 90 agencies with fossil fuel clients were on the list but, in 2022, the focus expanded to include Latin America and the Asia Pacific region.

The F-List 2022 also scrutinises sustainability statements from ad agencies and compares them with the records of their clients.

The media and marketing website The Drum reports that Clean Creatives, representing leading ad and PR agencies and their clients, said the report had found that most of the offending agencies had "erased" references to fossil fuel clients from their websites, but "the research teams used web archives to uncover the links [that existed] despite the sustainability commitments and net zero pledges most have made".

Last month, Edelman – on the F-List – announced that it had agreed to sever its relationship with the Standard Bank Group, with effect from January, reportedly over Standard's involvement with an oil pipeline.

"We can confirm that Edelman and Standard Bank Group partnered closely for three years and mutually agreed not to renew our partnership beyond December 2022," an Edelman spokesperson said.

Edelman said it was unable to share information about the split but Fin24 reported that Edelman had declined to provide PR or

reputation management services for the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP).

Once completed, the pipeline will transport crude oil more than 1,400km from Uganda to the Chongoleani Peninsula near Tanga port in Tanzania. TotalEnergies, China National Offshore Oil Corporation, the Uganda National Oil Company and the Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation are working on the project.

The environmental group StopEACOP has been warning about the pipeline's potential climate effects, which include generating 34 million tonnes of carbon emissions each year.

Standard Bank, through its subsidiary Stanbic Uganda, is backing the project along with China's Industrial and Commercial Bank and Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Bank.

PRWeek reported last month that Edelman had a change of heart when its work with energy companies came under scrutiny after about 100 celebrities and influencers signed a petition on behalf of Clean Creatives, asking the firm to stop working with fossil fuel clients. Edelman then conducted a client review and came out publicly with its principles for working with energy clients.

PRWeek's Agency Business Report 2022 said that Edelman grew 15.4% globally to \$985-million last year, with the US up 15.5% to \$613.1-million.

Last week, clothing retailer Patagonia made headlines when its founder Yvon

Chouinard announced that he had given his entire R3-billion company to the planet. "Earth is now the only shareholder," the apparently reluctant billionaire said.

Chouinard told *The New York Times* his inclusion on *Forbes* magazine's list of billionaires in 2017 "really, really" annoyed him, so he set in motion a plan to give his business away to the only worthwhile recipient, Earth.

The US Congress, meanwhile, has greenwashing firmly in its sights. It is expected to pass a sweeping healthcare and climate bill, which includes historic climate, healthcare and corporate tax measures, and a \$369-billion investment in initiatives to fight climate change, *PRWeek* added. Congress's committee on natural resources heard last month that public relations firms went beyond their traditional task of marketing to help their oil and gas clients to fight off climate policies and mislead the public about climate change.

In a report based on a review of documents such as submissions for industry awards, the committee heard how PR firms helped oil companies to oppose climate policies and mislead the public about their green claims by "engineering astroturf 'citizen' groups to advocate for industry interests and defeat legislative proposals, and using unscrupulous tactics to sabotage genuine policy solutions and attack community advocates".

Reuters reported that PR firms declined to attend the hearing on whether they had helped the fossil fuel industry to spread disinformation about climate change, according to the panel holding the event.

Witness Christine Arena, a former Edelman PR executive who is a founding member of Clean Creatives and a member of the Smithsonian Environmental Research Institute's advisory board, told the hearing that PR firms' campaigns on behalf of oil companies had changed tack, and no longer denied climate change.

"Fossil fuel marketers have shifted from denying or minimising the science behind climate change to falsely suggesting that oil and gas are a central part of the climate solutions mix," she testified, adding that 60% of energy company ads made a green claim.

Edelman SA could not be reached for comment.

WPP declined to comment to The Drum, but its chief executive, Mark Read, reportedly told the media and marketing website recently that it had no plans to sever ties with Big Oil: "In my view, there's no one solution to this. Yes, energy companies are selling oil. But, as consumers, we're all driving cars and flying planes.

"It requires a collective solution. Our industry should play a role in doing that – not to misrepresent what they are doing, but if we can talk about what they're doing in a fair and accurate way, why wouldn't we want to do that?"

The Drum said it had also tried to contact Interpublic, Omnicom, Publicis Groupe and Dentsu but they had not responded. **DM168**

What do you love about your job?

Working with a diverse range of clients and learning about new industries. It's a real eye-opener, and I'm always inspired by the work my clients do. I also have a particular passion for working with NGOs and clients in the healthcare space as the work they do has real value and meaning. It's a great privilege to help to amplify clients' voices and share their stories and insights via PR.

What's the hardest part?

Editorial exposure is becoming harder to secure as it's a competitive space and there are many agencies and businesses competing for exposure. One has to find unique



WITH KERRY SIMPSON

Q&A with Kerry Simpson from Mantis Communications

angles to "sell in" a story that resonates with a publication's audience.

What are the biggest misconceptions about public relations?

I think there is still a common misconception that PR will result in sales, but I always say that PR "tells" while advertising "sells".

PR is about awareness, education and thought leadership around industry issues. It's not about direct selling or brand promotion.

Yes, more awareness of a business or brand via PR can end up having an impact on sales, but this is not its core function and it should be integrated into the broad-

er marketing mix to reap results.

Describe your media consumption?

I read online news and business sites daily to keep updated with local and global happenings, and I also get news and information from social media, particularly Facebook and Instagram.

Describe a few of the biggest/best/most fun projects to date?

I recently wrapped up a fun campaign involving a book launch for a well-known SA author in which we received lovely media interest and achieved having the book listed as one of SA's top 10. **DM168**

I was just explaining to a Martian my three-step plan to fix Eskom

Looking at the past and ferreting out a scapegoat for the electricity crisis will not add any value. What we need to do – and very fast – is find workable solutions



AFTER THE BELL

Tim Cohen



If you were a Martian and you landed in SA today, what would you do to fix Eskom? The question is not who is to blame, or what we should have done years ago, but what can we do now. I'm not an electrical engineer, nor am I a management expert, and this could all be baloney, but for what it's worth, this is what I would do. Toss my advice, accept it, whatever.

Step 1: Decide what the problem is.

There are four possible options here: is this a management problem, a grid problem, a fleet problem, or a planning problem?

To isolate this issue, it's worth looking at what happened over the past few weeks, and thanks to Kyle Cowan from News24 for breaking this down so nicely here...

Eskom has a total installed capacity of 46GW; of that 21GW dropped out of the system. So that leaves you with 25GW, of which 6GW comes and goes.

So what happened over these past few weeks? (Thanks again to Kyle for this explanation here.) First, on 3 September Unit 2 of Koeberg had a problem with the control sys-



Illustration: iStock | Pixabay

tems, which lowered the cooling rods (this is truly scary, so I'm not thinking about it) and about 1GW dropped out of the system. Over the next weeks, 44 subsequent trips took place at various power stations.

If you look from the outside, what becomes clear to me is that Eskom does not appear to have a management or a staffing problem. Why? All the issues were addressed quickly.

Then it means, in essence, Eskom has a fleet problem. Small issues on the grid quickly explode into a fleet breakdown. The solution here is clear, and this is step two.

Step two: Add more capacity to the grid, and do it quickly.

Now the government has been trying to do this, so what is the problem here?

The notional solution has been to get the private sector to add capacity as part of the Reipp (Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme). This is what government had plumped for as a solution. But Reipp Window 5 was announced a year ago, and not a single one of the 13 winners has yet to put a single watt of electricity into the grid. Many haven't even got to financial closure. It's worth noting that mining companies that I have spoken to typically put these systems in place in four months, once the paperwork is done.

So we have a big problem, and the problem is bureaucracy and agendas. Is there a solution here? Yes there is; it's step three.

Step three: Allow Eskom to build some emergency renewable power. Controversial? Possibly. But think about it.

Eskom does not have a balance sheet on account of being, you know, bankrupt. But it is at the moment spending around R15-billion a year on diesel to keep the system going. It now costs R6,500 for a 650W solar panel, which means this is a ridiculously easy calculation; the retail market price is now a rand a watt. Magic! Hey presto, 15GW of power! Effectively free, because you are diverting cash you are already spending.

This might be all desperately naive; there may be much more complicated issues here. But, on the other hand, my three-step procedure took me an hour to write. The government has been dealing with this problem – or not dealing with it – for 15 years now; the least they could do is be crystal clear and honest about what the problem actually is, what they intend doing and when that will happen. **DM168**

THE FINANCE GHOST



Sustainability for Cell C?

Competing against the biggest telecommunication networks is no joke. You just need to ask Cell C and the many investors who have lost money along the way. In the latest restructure of the balance sheet, creditors owed R7.3-billion had to accept a compromise offer of just R1.03-billion.

This is part of Blue Label Telecoms' plan to recapitalise Cell C and finally achieve some degree of financial sustainability for the business. In addition to the steps taken to reduce overall debt, a subsidiary of Blue Label Telecoms will buy prepaid airtime for R1.2-billion from Cell C.

Sadly, Blue Label doesn't have the best track record with anything outside of its core business. The share price is up 25% this year, which sounds great until you draw a five-year chart and notice a drop of more than 63%.

Investors have got plenty OUT

The "value unlock" trade by investment holding companies has been a feature of the post-pandemic market. Investors ran out of patience a long time ago with structures that give layered exposure to companies that are individually listed on the JSE anyway.

A structural "discount to intrinsic net asset value" is the only result here, as the



OUTsurance head office in Centurion.

Photo: Supplied

layers create costs and complexities, and move investors further away from the assets. To close the discount, companies tend to unbundle their listed assets or sell off noncore unlisted assets. A recent high-profile example is the collapse of the PSG structure into the unlisted space.

Rand Merchant Investment (RMI) Holdings unbundled major listed investments (Discovery and Momentum Metropolitan) and sold off its stake in Hastings. The value creation in the process is staggering. The market cap at June 2021 was R48-billion

before these steps took place. After unbundling value worth R34.6-billion and paying dividends of R3.2-billion, the market cap a year later was R42.6-billion!

Going forward, RMI is becoming the OUTsurance Group. It will also hold a few small investments, but the bulk of the value clearly sits in OUTsurance, valued at R40.5-billion.

City Lodge's story of recovery

City Lodge's recent occupancy levels tell a story of recovery. In the 2019 financial

year, average occupancy was 55%. In July to the first half of September this year, occupancies were between 52% and 56%.

You can also enjoy a dinner at City Lodge now. The group has had to evolve its offering to respond to consumer trends, which means less of a focus on being purely a bed-and-breakfast for business travellers.

Local corporates make moves in US

AngloGold already has operations in Beaty district in Nevada. This location is full of gold and they even have a stable supply of electricity, so AngloGold is happily investing in more properties for exploration purposes. The latest deal is a \$150-million transaction that could increase to \$200-million.

In California, logistics group Santova is acquiring 100% of A-Link Freight for \$2.35-million. This is the company's first move into the US market and it seems like a smart deal. Although the announcement is vague on the numbers, it looks like a deal based on a forward earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation multiple of under 4x.

That seems like a solid entry point into the US market. We can only hope that both of those companies look back on these announcements one day with joy rather than regret. **DM168**

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INVESTMENTS

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THIS WEEK'S MARKETS AT A GLANCE

(At the time of going to print)

		23 September at close/current	23 September v last week	23 September v last month
JSE All Share	63402	-2.87%	-4.78%	-9.18%
Rand / Dollar	17.90	-1.72%	1.86%	6.00%
Rand / Pound	19.58	1.24%	-2.43%	-1.92%
Rand / Euro	17.39	-0.42%	-1.42%	3.07%
Gold (\$/oz)	1,646.04	-0.66%	-2.82%	3.07%
Platinum (\$/oz)	860.55	-1.48%	-5.89%	-0.01%
Brent (\$/barrel)	85.82	-5.13%	-5.89%	-1.37%
DJIA	29,636.64	-1.46%	-3.85%	-10.11%
FTSE	6,997.30	-2.27%	-3.31%	-6.35%
EuroStoxx	3348	-2.32%	-4.36%	-8.72%
Vix	28.96	5.89%	10.11%	26.91%
Rand / Bitcoin	334,909	2.09%	-4.18%	-7.64%



Source: Google Finance as at 4.50pm on 23 September.

BEST AND WORST STOCKS: JSE TOP 100 - ON DAY

Top risers of DMTop100local		Top fallers of DMTop100local	
Rand Merchant Investment Holdings Limited	3.16	Impala Platinum Holdings Limited	-7.86
Steinhoff International Holdings NV	2.76	Anglo American PLC	-7.73
Italtile Limited	2.01	Anglo American Platinum Limited	-7.36
MultiChoice Group Limited	1.88	Glencore PLC	-7.14
Alexander Forbes Group Holdings Limited	1.48	Exxaro Resources Limited	-7.06
The Foschini Group Limited	0.8	African Rainbow Minerals Limited	-6.58
Metair Investments Limited	0.37	Sibanye Stillwater Limited	-6.44
Raubex Group Limited	0.35	Sasol Limited	-5.91
Pepkor Holdings Limited	0.19	Thungela Resources Limited	-5.79
African Rainbow Capital Investments Limited	0.16	Kumba Iron Ore Limited	-4.96

BEST AND WORST STOCKS: JSE TOP 100 - PAST MONTH

Top risers of DMTop100local		Top fallers of DMTop100local	
African Rainbow Capital Investments Limited	10.24	Life Healthcare Group Holdings Limited	-23.09
Rand Merchant Investment Holdings Limited	9.25	KAP Industrial Holdings Limited	-22.14
Omnia Holdings Limited	6.17	Impala Platinum Holdings Limited	-21.89
Datatec Limited	2.08	Steinhoff International Holdings NV	-19.35
MultiChoice Group Limited	1.97	Sibanye Stillwater Limited	-17.27
Metair Investments Limited	1.85	Capitec Bank Holdings Limited	-16.61
Oceana Group Limited	1.74	Redefine Properties Limited	-15.71
Tiger Brands Limited	1.69	Anglo American PLC	-15.71
ADvTECH Limited	1.53	South32 Limited	-15.15
Italtile Limited	1.18	Astral Foods Limited	-13.99

BEST AND WORST STOCKS: INTERNATIONAL TOP 100 - ON DAY

Top risers of DMTop100Global		Top fallers of DMTop100Global	
China Mobile	1.37	Royal Dutch Shell PLC	-5.88
Eli Lilly and Company	0.94	Exxon Mobil Corporation	-5.58
Contemporary Amperex Technology Co, Ltd	0.57	Chevron Corporation	-5.25
AstraZeneca PLC	0.54	TotalEnergies SE	-5.13
Johnson & Johnson	0.52	Tesla, Inc	-4.05
China Construction Bank Corporation	0.43	The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc	-3.52
McDonald's Corporation	0.39	Morgan Stanley	-3.48
Bank of China Limited	0.37	SAP SE	-3.31
Samsung Electronics Co, Limited	0.18	Hermès International Société en commandite...	-3.15
Amgen Inc	0.18	LVMH Moët Hennessy - Louis Vuitton, Société ...	-3.06

BEST AND WORST STOCKS: INTERNATIONAL TOP 100 - PAST MONTH

Top risers of DMTop100Global		Top fallers of DMTop100Global	
Meta Platforms, Inc	#N/A	Adobe Inc	-38.18
Johnson & Johnson	0.81	Advanced Micro Devices, Inc	-25.06
AbbVie Inc	0.43	United Parcel Service, Inc	-22.79
Unilever PLC	-0.22	Amazon.com, Inc	-19.34
China Mobile	-0.39	Oracle Corporation	-19.13
Eli Lilly and Company	-0.44	Intuit Inc	-17.38
Merck & Co, Inc	-0.58	The Walt Disney Company	-16.75
Bank of China Limited	-1.49	NIKE, Inc	-16.72
Bristol-Myers Squibb Company	-1.61	S&P Global Inc	-16.24
Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd	-2.09	NVIDIA Corporation	-16.12

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INVESTMENTS

Choosing a UPS backup system

UPS systems are among the more accessible solutions to keep appliances on during load shedding. But with so many options and so much jargon, how should you go about choosing the right one? By **Malibongwe Tyilo**

Some homeowners may be able to spend between R100,000 and R200,000 to equip their homes with a solar power system to beat load shedding, but for most of us on the lookout for budget-friendly solutions, a relatively affordable UPS (uninterrupted power supply) backup system is the most accessible (and temporary) way to keep electrical appliances going for a few hours while the power is off.

With a range of products on sale, it is important to make the kind of informed choices that match our energy needs.

"You need to be aware of the power rating of the appliance you need to service. Ordinarily, you wouldn't necessarily have to know that, but considering the energy situation that we find ourselves in ... we all have to get a grip on what these numbers mean," says Kinesh Chetty, an energy consultant with a focus on solar energy systems.

He explains the difference between three measurement units that are often used to indicate the energy potential of UPS backup batteries by retailers – namely watts, volts and amps.

Say watt?

Chetty explains how to use the power rating of your appliances to work out an appropriate UPS backup system.

One example: on the back of a typical flatscreen television there's a little sticker with a nameplate rating providing information such as voltage and watts. On a typical 49-inch smart TV, the sticker might indicate a power rating of 100 watts.

This means that the TV requires just a little under 100 watts of power. Hence, if a consumer was looking for a UPS backup to run just the TV for 4.5 hours of Stage 6 load shedding, they would multiply the 100 watts by the 4.5 hours to figure out the approximate amount of

energy they would need from the UPS, which in this case would be about 450Wh (watt-hours).

Do the maths

However, not all appliances have the watt power rating indicated. Some have separate unit measurements for volts (V) and amps (A) only. In that case, there is one extra calculation. Simply multiply the voltage indicated by the amps measurement to get the watts measurement.

One example: if you turn a 2017 MacBook Pro upside down, you'll see a voltage rating of 20 volts and a maximum of 4.3 amps. Multiply those two and you get 86 watts. Hence you can safely assume that that is the

maximum energy required to run the computer for one hour.

Some UPS units will only show the mAh units, which indicate milliampere hours. Note that 1,000mAh is the same as one amp hour. So while that cheap USB might sound impressive when promising 8,000 mAh, keep in mind that this is just eight amp hours, and multiply that by the indicated voltage.

For example: the battery size of the standard iPhone 13 is 3,227mAh (3.2 amps). The battery voltage is rated at 3.8 volts. Multiply 3.8v by 3.2A and you get an approximate watt-hour measurement of 12.16Wh.

If you needed enough power to charge an iPhone as well as keep a MacBook Pro laptop and an average router requiring 7Wh of

energy plugged in, you would add the laptop's 86Wh to the iPhone's 12.16Wh and the router's 7Wh, for a total of 105.16Wh. Over two-and-a-half hours, those three appliances would require 263Wh.

Choose lithium over lead

UPS systems with lead batteries are typically cheaper to buy. However, lithium batteries will discharge a consistent amount of power throughout the charging cycle, whereas lead batteries will discharge significantly less power the longer one charges.

So while it might take an hour to fully charge the iPhone from a lithium battery powered UPS, due to the drop in power of the lead battery, the rate at which it charges slows down the longer one charges, which could add more hours to charging time as it releases less and less energy as the battery starts to go flat. Additionally, in terms of lifespan, lead batteries have about half the lifespan of lithium batteries.

Spend a bit more

"Right now, it's a bit of a gold rush. The market is flooded with gimmicky items," says Chetty, when we show him some of the cheaper options from a popular online retailer.

"They might keep your modem running for a couple of hours, but in a year, they'll be so depleted that you'll have to replace them."

Among some of the options under R10,000 that *DM168* showed Chetty, he says the more reliable options will have lithium batteries instead of lead, and will display a clear indication of the wattage.

He advises that consumers rather go for the ones clearly identified as lithium, and with clearly identified watt-hours, rather than try to work out various unit measurements that might be confusing. **DM168**

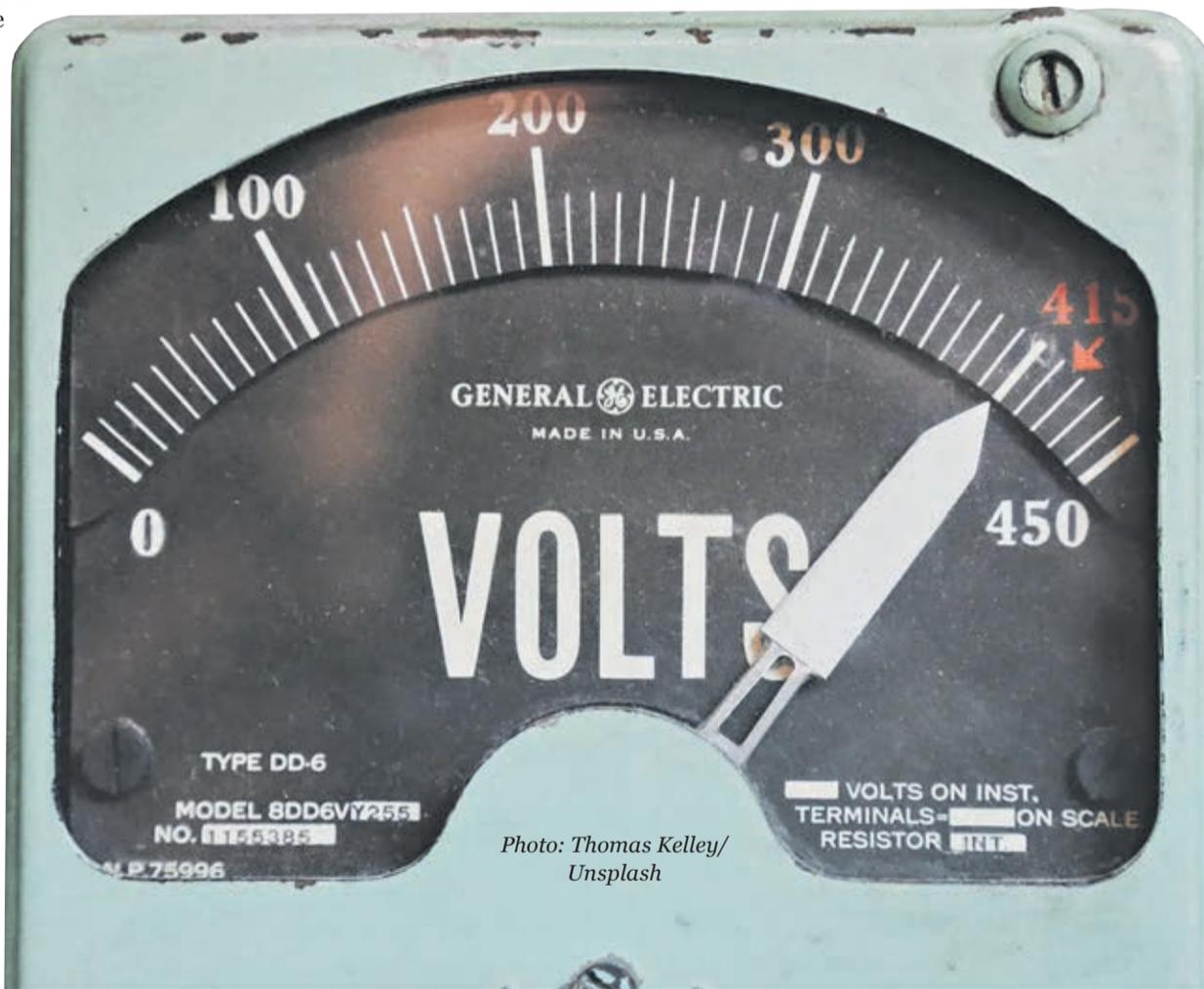


Photo: Thomas Kelley/
Unsplash

Cashing in on your retirement lump sum: what you need to know

Question

I will be retiring soon and can take out one-third of my retirement savings as a lump sum. Should I do this?

Answer

When you retire, you are allowed to take one-third of your retirement savings as a cash lump sum. The question, however, is: do you take the full one-third or just part of it?

There is a special tax table that applies to this lump sum and the tax level increases with the size of the lump sum taken. The table on the right shows the tax rate for the various levels of the lump sum.

I provide retirement counselling to pension funds and when I help members make this decision, we look at their current tax



FINANCE WELLNESS COACH

Kenny Meiring



Lump Sum	Tax
First R500,000	No Tax
Next R200,000	18%
Next R350,000	27%
Rest	36%

rates. If any part of the lump sum will be taxed at a higher rate than their current marginal rate, I caution them to think twice about taking such a big lump sum.

I usually recommend that you take the

first R500,000, as it is tax-free, and if you invest it cleverly, you can end up better off.

I strongly recommend that all pensioners have an emergency fund. Life happens, and you will need funds to pay for medical treatment, household repairs or new tyres for your car. If you do not have such a fund, then it makes sense to use your retirement lump sum for this purpose.

Now the mistake that many people make with their lump sum is that they leave it all in a bank account with a low interest rate. They argue that it is their retirement money, and they cannot take a chance with it.

What they do not appreciate is that this emergency fund will probably have to last for 25 years and needs to keep up with inflation over that period. I recommend that they consider using my three-pot approach and split up their lump sum according to the

Timeframe	Targeted Return
Short (Less than 2 years)	Money Market
Medium (2 to 5 years)	Inflation + 3%
Long (More than 5 years)	Inflation + 5%

timeframe over which they may need the money. (See the table above.)

So, if you need new tyres for your car in 10 years' time, that part of your emergency fund should have grown enough to keep up with the increased cost of tyres. **DM168**

Kenny Meiring is an independent financial adviser. Contact him on 082 856 0348 or at financialwellnesscoach.co.za. Send questions to kenny@financialwellnesscoach.co.za



From Nieu-Bethesda snows to stones of the Richtersveld

The new book *Karoo Roads III* is another heritage collection of journeys into the past and present of South Africa's enchanting Karoo region. Story and photographs by **Chris Marais**

MAVERICK ESCAPE



Above: Goats do love to play King of the Castle on the Martyrsford Angora Goat Stud Farm in Jansenville, Eastern Cape; Below centre: One of the many friendly faces of the Richtersveld – Magrieta Cloete of Lekkersing, in Spring 2007.



Above: The landscape of Eksteenfontein, Richtersveld; Below: Boeta Gammie riel dancing with locals – Williston Winter Festival, Spring 2018.

Together, let's ramble through mountains and valleys, discover treasures in dusty old museums, walk the streets of faraway villages and, most importantly, meet the locals

Karoo Roads III takes you roaming far and wide with seasoned storytellers Chris Marais and Julienne du Toit. Hear tales of love and cheese; sit with the elders of Lekkersing; find the shaggiest sheep in the country; witness angel-makers at work; read about the legends of a man who once painted the Sistine Chapel on an ostrich egg, and a band of farmers' wives who turned a piece of Karoo veld into a world-class country school.

Discover a rock-star traffic cop, a four-legged ostrich, a couple who live in a castle, an old-school newspaperman with the highway in his eyes, and a desert bar where magic happens regularly.

The stories the authors tell in this book reflect many of the magic elements you will find when you take that long, winding road trip into the Never-Never of South Africa. This is a celebration of the characters, past and present, who have all added their own lustre to the Karoo.

Together, let's ramble through mountains and valleys, discover treasures in dusty old museums, walk the streets of faraway villages and, most importantly, meet the locals: a big-hearted, motley crew of guitar-playing, philosophising, wine-drinking, offbeat creatives who have become a part of the landscape, are treating each day like a newly minted gold coin, and doing the best work of their lives.

Relish the true spirit of this rich and rowdy country. **DM168**

For copies of Karoo Roads III, email [Julienne du Toit](mailto:Julienne.du.Toit@karoospace.co.za) at julie@karoospace.co.za



J Brooks Spector tangles with a cat whisperer **Pages 50&51**



In thrall to the king of venison **Page 53**



The cat whisperer and I



True-blue cynics, we have gently put a paw forward into New Age thinking in order to lessen the chaos of our warring, two-cat household. Observe the battle between Lady Maya and Prince Loki. By **J Brooks Spector**

For as long as I can remember, except during my teenage years when I was living in a small apartment, or when I was staying in temporary accommodations as a student, I have always had pets around. I liked the idea of sharing life with animals.

In my early childhood, the first one I remember was a cocker spaniel, Black Doll VII, who was only briefly with us because it was quickly discovered she refused to allow any male – young or old – to go up the steps in our two-storey house. The bedrooms were upstairs, along with the single bathroom, so her continued place in our family became problematic. Thereafter, Bruno, a mellower mongrel took her place, and he had no hangups about who used the stairs. When we moved to a smaller, rented apartment (no dogs allowed, per the lease), Bruno was adopted by another family.

In between, though, we had a constantly evolving menagerie of reptiles, amphibians and fish in the house's tiny basement, in the space between the stairs and the furnace. We housed this collection in various glass tanks and worked constantly to provide the correct foods and climate controls.

The hognose snake only ate baby toads (live if possible); the zebrafish and neon tetras needed a slightly salty, carefully controlled pH in their water; the horned lizards needed heat-lamp warmth and wriggling beetle larvae, and the iguana also needed warmth as well as a daily supply of fresh fruit. Meanwhile, the box tortoise ate lettuce and other vegetables on a plate on the kitchen floor. He had free range in the house, but his favourite spot was under the piano bench. Sadly, the menagerie had to be disbanded with our move to that apartment.

Years later, after we had joined the foreign service and began to be assigned to postings abroad or back in the US on occasion, the old urge to have a pet or two returned. In 1975, in Johannesburg, we adopted a loving, all-black kitten and mischievously named him Treurnicht in honour of a certain odious politician. Every afternoon he would perch atop

the door of the house's gate to await my return from work. Then he would jump down the wall, never quite avoiding scraping his chin on the veranda, thus giving him a slightly shaven look on his jaw. In mid-June 1976, he was rechristened Amandla.

Moving back to the US, he was handed off to friends in South Africa, but we learned he had a long and happy life, even without us. Then in Washington, we adopted a Manx kitten, which we also named Amandla. He had a bizarre craving – for a cat – for melon skins, and Amandla II was a cuddly creature who revelled in attention.

When we moved on to Indonesia, we were suddenly stymied by the airline, which had imposed a mysterious embargo on shipping pets that year, and so my mother inherited Amandla and he took to an idyllic life in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. He learned to signal the end of his field and stream gambols by ringing a bell set 50cm above the ground, so the kitchen door could be opened for him.

“She seemed to say, ‘This is my house; you don’t belong here; I will ensure you are gone by any means necessary. You will not be assimilated into my world’”

In Indonesia, our garden quickly became host to several cats, although they stayed with the house when we left. Then, in Japan, in response to the pleadings of our young children, we embraced a grey kitten, Fluffluff. A pure Persian, she moved with us to Swaziland (now Eswatini) where she

“Controlled conditions quickly devolved into a fur-flying, howling, screaming donnybrook when the new side of Lady Maya’s personality was revealed”

ruled a small hillside, but resolutely refused to have anything to do with the only other purebred Persian in the kingdom.

Fluffluff was joined by Socks, a gentle, mixed-breed dog. Fluffluff and Socks easily embraced Oliver as well, a stray cat who came along to stay. The two cats mysteriously vanished as movers were packing up our belongings for a return to Washington, DC. Socks, however, found a home with a German family who even added a small terrier to their family in order to keep Socks company as he aged.

Back in the US, we went in search of a new cat; this time the choice was a Somali. In Chantilly, Virginia, we found our Chantilly, who moved with us to Tokyo and then Johannesburg before dying at the age of 16.

We filled that sad void with a gentle black and white striped and spotted kitten, Kaori (“fragrance” in Japanese), who was brought to us from Durban by one daughter. Kaori was eventually joined by yet another Somali, a haughty male named Koko (after the gorilla who adopted the kitten or perhaps for Coco Chanel; family lore varies on this).

After 15 years, Koko came down with feline diabetes and we had to inject him twice daily with insulin (you must try that as a test of your agility) until he died from the complications of a stroke. Astonishingly, a few days later, Kaori suddenly also crossed

the rainbow bridge. We didn’t realise until then how closely they had bonded. Their ashes now repose, side by side, beneath two trees in the garden they had favoured as blinds for catching unsuspecting birds.

This brings us to today’s lesson...

And so this recitation of the history of our human-animal interactions brings us to today’s lesson.

After several months of mourning Kaori and Koko’s deaths, we resolved to adopt rescued animals. There are so many these days, the stories and pictures on social media are so plaintive, and they all deserve homes.

Our first foray was a purebred, lilac point Tonkinese named Lady Maya, who had been kept far too busy as breeding stock, very sadly, in a commercial cattery. Her visage in an electronic advertisement for rehoming was so mournful that we fell in love with her, despite the tale of her traumatic life. She was not the most affectionate creature we had ever encountered, but we sensed she sorely needed companionship – human and feline.

Later, when we saw another rescue cat advertisement, this time for Loki, a not quite purebred of the same basic type, we said, “Of course.” He was so affectionate, we could not refuse him. How does one ignore a kitten that leaps right onto your lap without coaxing, and then begins to purr passionately,

fervently? Loki had come from a home where the couple had divorced and neither was willing to take Loki because he would remind them of their failed marriage.

In the introduction process, Lady Maya was given the run of the house and its garden and Loki was placed in a bedroom for a few days to settle into things. He was given access to another small garden, one that had bird feeders and a fish pond. The plan was we would gradually introduce them under controlled conditions and it would be like the movies. Immediate friendship and love.

Controlled conditions quickly devolved into a fur-flying, howling, screaming donnybrook when the new side of Lady Maya's personality was revealed – a seemingly felinocidal one. She seemed to say, "This is my house; you don't belong here; I will ensure you are gone by any means necessary. You will not be assimilated into my world."

So we put Lady Maya in the front bedroom and lounge with access to the small garden and fish pond, while Loki was on the other side of a closed door with access to the kitchen, the study, and the larger garden. No fish, but there were bird feeders to attract birds for the edification of any cat. Several subsequent encounters produced the same result. There was howling, hissing, scratching, chasing, followed by the inevitable sumo match to the death between two cats.

It could not go on like this. The internet offers clues, YouTube talks and references to further information, but no easy solutions. We asked veterinarians and other pet lovers what they recommended. Eventually, we received the name and phone number of a genuine cat whisperer. Don't laugh. Read on.

The cat whisperer

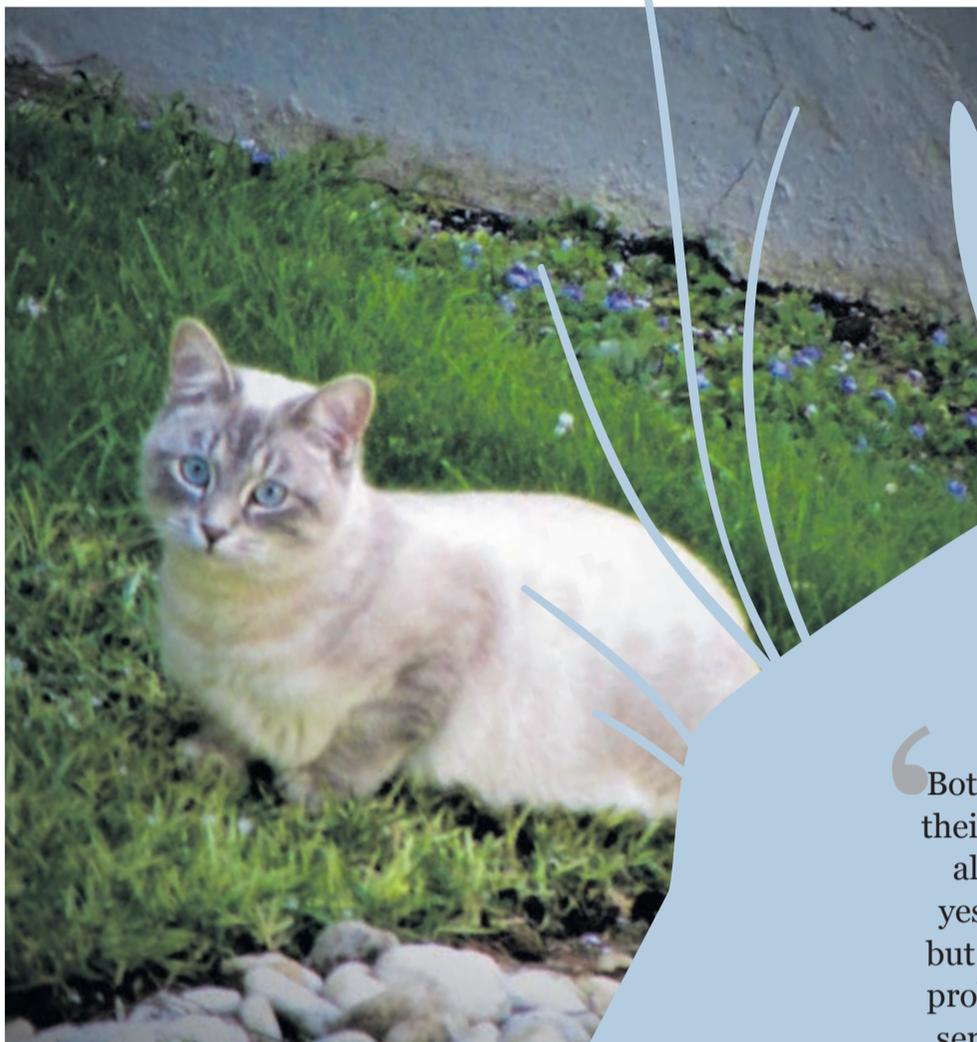
How many readers have seen the film *The Horse Whisperer*, or are among the 15 million people who bought the novel? Some watched that film for glimpses of Robert Redford and a young Scarlett Johansson – but the poignant story and all that Rocky Mountain scenery were also a magnet.

Yes, this career actually does exist for horses – and cats and dogs. Some people seem to have a preternatural way of connecting with the soul of an animal and sussing out its fears, stresses and emotional pressures, and then finding a pathway towards healing the beast's troubled soul.

We all know of people who bond closely with their pets, or with working animals such as shepherding dogs, guide dogs or emotional support animals. In the news recently, there was a profile of a man who has bonded with minks so that they can remove muskrats and other pests from drainage canals and parklands. But the idea that a human can somehow help an animal heal psychologically seems a stretch (at least to me). Psychiatry, after all, presupposes talking through one's problems and life challenges – and, of course, neither Black Doll VII nor Lady Maya could tell us their problems; nor could we guide them to effective ways of problem-solving, could we?

With less than total belief in the idea of a whisperer, we summon the cat whisperer. Our house divided increasingly cannot stand. (Apologies to Abraham Lincoln.)

Before she arrives, she advises us to take time with each cat separately and speak with them frankly about the problem. Explain it to them, and ask gently but firmly, "Can't we



all just get along?" We do so. At length. We feel a bit foolish, but what the heck. The conversation is necessarily one-sided but, for some reason, both cats look up at us with their beautiful ice-blue eyes, almost as if to say, "Well, yes, I'm willing to do that, but that other cat is the real problem. You just can't talk sense into some creatures." Are we entering a Tom & Jerry cartoon?

At the time of our appointment on a Saturday afternoon, in walks our cat whisperer. It turns out she is not a visitor from a distant astral plane. She has had a career as an ecologist with national parks and came to this path from dealing with her own pets.

She sits down and talks with Lady Maya as one would with a recalcitrant teenager, sulking in his/her bedroom with earbuds affixed and sound at maximum. She adds to the conversation the temptation (for a cat) of a flexible stick with rope fibres on the end.

She explains to Lady Maya the need for her to grow up and take on the responsibility of training Loki to become a responsible adult cat. While this conversation is taking place, the cat whisperer begins to engage in the Tellington Touch, drawing repeated circles on the cat's body with a finger. It is less than a massage, more than a pat.

She moves on to Loki (securely in the other room), encouraging him to embrace our other cat as a natural leader and to learn from Lady Maya's guidance in all things feline. My wife and I take turns, making the circles on the cats' bodies and offering reassuring conversation. Amazingly, they both are calmer after this.

After our session, we talk with the cat whisperer to discover that her technique – first described by Canadian-born horse trainer Linda Tellington-Jones – seems to owe much to the influence of psychological studies by Ivan Pavlov and BF Skinner in techniques of conditioning – bells and rewards for doing what the trainer wants, broken up into small steps and more easily accepted behavioural changes.

Yes, there is a layer of mainstream operant conditioning in all this, but there is also the

idea of engaging verbally with the animals and listening to (or sensing carefully) the nonverbal cues from animals of what they need, sort of like a real-life Dr Dolittle but without Rex Harrison.

By now, we are reading about all the nonverbal cues cats give us when they carry their tails erectly or bite their owner's hand gently, or all the other things that can seem mystifying to humans, even as we try to sense changes in behaviour in our two felines from their daily doses of the TTouch.

The Tellington Touch website describes it this way: "It includes both bodywork and movement exercises that positively influence behaviour, performance, co-ordination, balance and well-being, while deepening understanding and the relationship between humans and animals. These, non-invasive touches and exercises influence habitual patterns of tension and posture by giving new information to the nervous system. As a result, animals relax and learn to make better choices.

"Developed by internationally known animal expert Linda Tellington-Jones, TTouch is based on cooperation and understanding rather than dominance. These revolutionary techniques promote optimal performance and health without fear or force. TTouch™ – the Tellington-Touch – is a method based on circular movements of the fingers and hands all over the body. The intent of the TTouch is to activate the function of the cells and awaken cellular intelligence – a little like turning on the electric lights of the

Both cats look up at us with their beautiful ice-blue eyes, almost as if to say, 'Well yes, I'm willing to do that, but that other cat is the real problem. You just can't talk sense into some creatures'

body." Not too New Age, is it?

Well, okay. Maybe this has something in common with traditional Asian-style healing massage therapy that connects to those magical meridians in the body – something that does work (so my back tells me), even if the physiological explanation for it remains unclear.

Our next step is now to try to reintroduce the two cats – in very carefully controlled conditions, with one on a lead or held snugly perhaps – to see if they can coexist. Hold thumbs for us.

As insurance, however, we have installed an electric pheromone dispenser in the kitchen and have just bought a pheromone collar for Lady Maya, as well as packets of something called Rescue Remedy for adding to their drinking water. Anything so we can announce, "Peace is at hand."

Otherwise, the cat whisperer will have to pay another visit to our house, now organised with its feline-style Berlin Wall, in order to guide us in further, more advanced methods. One thing we have decided, however, is that we are not going to rehome Lady Maya or Loki onward.

In their previous situations, they had endured enough – and it is our task to bring about a calmer modus vivendi with these two cats as willing participants. This will be the case even if we have to learn to speak Miaowish to make things clearer to them both. Keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we work to make this pair "learn to just get along". **DM168**

Honda Civic RS: a sedan packed with surprises



A VROOM WITH A VIEW

Melinda Ferguson



With the flood of SUVs and crossovers in recent years, driving a proper sedan feels like an experience from a bygone era. All hail the new Honda Civic RS

The Toyota RAV, launched in 1994, set in motion the craze for SUVs. Over the following two decades, the segment exploded, with manufacturers flooding the market to meet the appetite for bigger vehicles with added ground clearance.

In the US, SUVs, light trucks and vans account for 72% of the new car market. In South Africa, if you add the sales of light commercial vehicles like the good old bakkie to the mix, US figures echo the local trend.

And so there was tangible excitement last week when a group of motoring media gathered in Gauteng to experience what – in the years to come – might become something of a relic: the all new Honda Civic RS sedan.

Before the Japanese motor manufacturer launched the Civic in 1972, the company was better known for producing motorbikes. A lot changed for Honda with the introduction of the 1,169cc, four-cylinder water-cooled Civic that received wide praise for its reliability, quality finishes and low running costs. The oil crisis of 1973 precipitated the demand for fuel-efficient vehicles and, because the Civic could run on both leaded and unleaded petrol, it became a hit.

Cleverly marketed with the slogan, “It will get you where you’re going”, the Civic was offered in a number of guises: as a coupé, with both three- and five-door hatchback options, as well as a five-door station wagon. By the late 1990s the Civic, back then in its sixth generation, had outsold expectations. Honda decided to up its sport ante and launch what would become an iconic racer – the Honda Civic Type R EK9 in 1997.

A B16B engine was fitted into Honda’s sport demon, the first to integrate the manufacturer’s soon-to-be-legendary VTEC system within an inline-4, lightweight aluminium block.

Back then, the Type R offered one of the highest power outputs

per litre for a naturally aspirated motor. The first-generation 1.6 litre Type R wielded 182 horsepower and a redline pushing over 8,000rpm, to transform into a thrilling screamer, racing 0–100km in just 6.2 seconds. Inside, the Type R showed its swag with red Alcantara trimmed Recaro seats, red Type R floor mats, a titanium gear knob and a Momo leather steering wheel.

But lest I get too carried away with this iconic boy/girl racer that will hopefully reach local shores next year in its latest, more powered-up guise, the 11th-generation Civic RS – on review here – was in fact unveiled globally back in 2020, in the midst of what could go down as the worst year in motoring history due to the pandemic. Better late than never, as they say.

The Civic RS has finally arrived on local shores, to celebrate its 50th birthday.

There’s often confusion that the RS has something to do with speed and its renegade Type R cousin. It hasn’t. The badge stands for “Road Sailing” and has zilch to do with performance, alluding more to its smooth drive and upscaled styling. And superior design is hard to ignore in this new sedan.

It’s 25mm longer than the previous generation – words like “svelte” and “sporty” come to mind. Honda has done something interesting by placing the wheels flush on the outer edges of the wheel arches and, along with a lower fender and dominant lower grille, it gives the Civic a purposeful “don’t mess with me” kind of attitude.

The cabin is uncluttered and has a minimalist feel. The all-new honeycomb mesh panel, along with a blend of high-quality suede and leather, set off with red stitching,



The sound system and various other features can be operated via the handy buttons on the steering wheel. Photos: Honda SA

“I waited for that characteristic CVT lag. I listened out for a washing machine-like drone on acceleration and, lo and behold, there was silence”

ups the Civic’s premium appeal.

It’s packed with hi-tech connectivity, driving and safety aids, many of which can be operated via buttons on the leather-bound steering wheel. To enhance value-for-money, along with heated front seats and a sunroof, the Honda has a 12-speaker Bose Surround Stage audio system.

There’s only one engine on offer locally – the 1.5 litre turbo VTEC with outputs of 131kW and 240Nm, gaining 4kWs and 20Nms from the previous 10th generation.

Most Japanese manufacturers love CVT gearboxes; I am almost always unimpressed.

And so it was with trepidation that I turned on the Civic’s ignition and took her out for a test drive along various highways and the twisty outskirts of Muldersdrift. I waited for that characteristic CVT lag. I listened out for a washing machine-like drone on acceleration and, lo and behold, there was silence. This engine is so perfectly mated to its gearbox it’s a surprisingly smooth drive, embracing acceleration with gusto.

On the test run, the suspension came to the fore on bumpy roads to support a drive that felt noticeably well planted on different road surfaces. And Honda has outdone itself by offering a bouquet of driver and safety aids often only seen in more expensive sedans – think Beemers and Audis.

There are six airbags, there’s the usual ABS, EBD, ESC and adaptive cruise control. Then you’ve also got stuff like collision mitigation braking, forward collision warning, lane-keep assistance, road departure mitigation and auto high beam control.

My favourite has to be the lane-watch camera, reminiscent of a blind spot monitoring system, although it’s only active on the left-hand side of the vehicle. It works via a camera below the passenger-side mirror, with the image transmitted to the central display screen when the indicator is activated. This helps with changing lanes, especially in bad weather or poor visibility. The Civic also has a conventional rear bumper-mounted blind spot monitor.

In its tradition of frugal fuel consumption, Honda’s claim of 6.2 litres/100km was not far out on the day – I managed 6.6 litres.

By the end of the launch, there was noticeable enthusiasm among my often cynical motoring peers and consensus that the Civic RS is an outstanding product, comparing most favourably to its more expensive German sedan rivals. Yet there were also rumbles of concern.

It’s no secret that Honda has been underperforming in South Africa, with the pandemic adding to its woes. In 2021, the motor manufacturer only managed to sell 3,527 units. For some perspective, the country’s top-selling manufacturer, Toyota, sold 7,710 units last month. And while the Civic has chalked up sales in excess of 26 million units globally in its lifetime, and was recently crowned North America’s Car of the Year, the question that needs to be asked is: Will it sell here? **DM168**

Pricing:

Honda Civic RS – R669,000.

Five-year/200,000km warranty and a 5-year/90,000km service plan.



The new Honda Civic RS has a dominant lower grille and lower fender.


**KAROO
KITCHEN**

 Tony
Jackman


In thrall to the king of venison

When eland is bestowed on your Karoo kitchen, you are honoured. When preparing it for the pot, you treat it with humility and respect

When you tread in the footsteps of ancient San, along the paths to where their art is preserved in blood-like red ochre on rock faces and where their depictions of a particular antelope entrance you, you are venturing into realms where you may well feel there are eyes watching you.

You may think, as many do, that they are paintings of cattle; many have made that mistake. But almost every such creature you see in our rock art is an eland that once roamed the nearby veld, right where you're standing in awe of the artist's work.

The omniscient eye of the San held the eland in high esteem and when they painted it on rocks in the depths of caves they believed they were opening portals to the spirit world. They revered the beast.

In our brash times, the thinking farmer whose land may contain eland may allow, once in a rare while, the shooting of an eland for the pot; but it is permission that is not granted lightly. When this was allowed, recently, and he delivered portions of its fine meat to my kitchen door, it was a red letter day.

There's a reason why the eland, as my farmer friend explained when I asked him to provide context for me, was worshipped by the San, and a key aspect of their belief system. It's the king of venison, a giant of an antelope, the size of a cow. Its meat is fine of texture and flavour, and its layers of intramuscular fat certainly enhance its taste. It's not at all "gamey" and is much like beef, but better.

Closer to beef in flavour than any other venison, it's a tiny bit coarser in texture, but this is not a negative point. It only enhances your enjoyment of it.

At the potjie and braai gathering that naturally ensued once this prized meat had been presented to me, I used cubes of meat for a potjie, and a chunk of fillet to be cooked with care on the coals, seasoned only with salt and pepper, so that we could taste the pure flavour of the eland meat, unaltered.

The farmer's friend who had been permitted to shoot this eland had been invited too, rightly, and he was well informed about the meat and how it should be cooked. He spoke of it with the requisite respect. Once the mildly seasoned fillet had been



turned three or four times on the coals, we called him to join us and, after prodding it with a finger, he said simply, "a few minutes more". Eland, perhaps because of that coarser texture, needs slightly longer cooking than a similar cut of beef fillet. And though in appearance it is almost identical to beef fillet, it's when you bite into it that you soon identify its distinction.

After about 15 minutes I took it off the fire and inside to have a closer look. Sliced through, it was textbook medium rare, exactly what I'd wanted. The three of us, the farmer, the hunter and the townie cook, tasted, rolled our eyes happily, and sighed the sigh of the content.

It had seemed as though there was an almighty battle raging in the heavens that afternoon as the Gods gathered the clouds and threw down lashings of rain.

On the way to town from the farm for the feast, massive bolts of lightning cast from on high had cracked on both sides of the bakkie as they crept along. There are times when you are made to respect what has been granted for the pot.

It's the king of venison, a giant of an antelope, the size of a cow. Its meat is fine of texture and flavour, and its layers of intramuscular fat certainly enhance its taste

But clear skies are not required for the bringing out of the three-legged potjie, and there is a piece of roof over my head on that part of the *werf*, as we call even my modest piece of townie land in these eastern parts of the Great Karoo.

Later, there would be clearer skies when we could clink a glass in front of the midnight *kakpraatvuur* (let's just say "fire"), remember the savouring of the granted meat hours earlier, and tell tall country tales. We'd drink a toast to the great beast and commune as best we could with the spirits of those who walked these plains long before palefaces arrived from other continents.

The eland was honoured on this day.
DM168

Centre: The dish, served in a miniature potjie; Below left: The marinade, ready for the cubes of meat. Photos: Tony Jackman


Spiced eland potjie
Ingredients

150g pork spek, chopped
2 large carrots, finely chopped
3 leeks, washed, rinsed and chopped
200g fatty back bacon
2kg eland meat, cubed
1 litre chicken or vegetable stock
Coarse salt to taste

Eland marinade:

1 cup red jerepigo
1 cup Merlot
2 Tbsp brown grape vinegar
1/2 cup Mrs HS Ball's original recipe chutney

3 garlic cloves, chopped
Peel and juice of 1 late-season orange
4 rosemary sprigs
1 Tbsp Szechuan peppercorns
1 tsp chilli flakes
2 tsp crushed coriander seeds
1 tsp crushed black pepper
1/2 tsp coarse salt

Method

- Start the previous day. Mix all marinade ingredients in a large bowl. Add the eland meat and massage it with clean hands so all the meat is well covered.
- Refrigerate overnight. Remove from the fridge an hour before cooking it.
- Have coals ready and a clean potjie. Put coals underneath and let it get hot. Add the pork spek and leave it to sizzle for a

few minutes.

- Add the carrots and leeks, cook for five minutes, stirring now and then, and then add the diced back bacon.
- Cook, stirring, for another five minutes.
- Add the meat and all its marinade ingredients (everything including the peel) and the vegetable or chicken stock, season with salt, stir, and put the lid on.
- Keep the coals low but regular for several hours while the meat becomes tender. Mine cooked for four hours. The cooking stock should remain wet throughout, but if it does begin to dry up (which will mean you've been putting too many coals under the potjie), add water or stock and let it return to a simmer.
- Serve with mashed potato, pap or rice.

DM168

How Oliver Tambo's secret think tank planned the nation's future

On 8 January 1986, ANC president Oliver Tambo called on South Africans to make apartheid SA ungovernable. That day, he'd set up a secret think tank in Lusaka, the Constitution Committee. A new book by André Odendaal unveils its workings at a tumultuous time. Here's an edited excerpt, courtesy of **The Reading List**

Knowing all wars end at the negotiating table, and judging the balance of forces to be moving in favour of the liberation movement, ANC president Oliver Tambo wanted his organisation to be holding the initiative when apartheid collapsed.

Tambo told his new think tank to prepare a constitutional framework and principles for a non-racial, democratic South Africa.

The seven-member team deliberated and reported to Tambo. In correspondence, he was "Dear Comrade President".

Drawing on the personal archives of participants, *Dear Comrade President* explains how the process unfolded.

On 16 May 1986, Oliver Tambo took charge of a meeting in Lusaka between the ANC NEC and the Eminent Persons Group representing the Commonwealth heads of government.

Since February 1986, the EPG had been shuttling between PW Botha, imprisoned Nelson Mandela, the ANC in Lusaka, the UDF and Cosatu, with a view to creating a climate for negotiations...

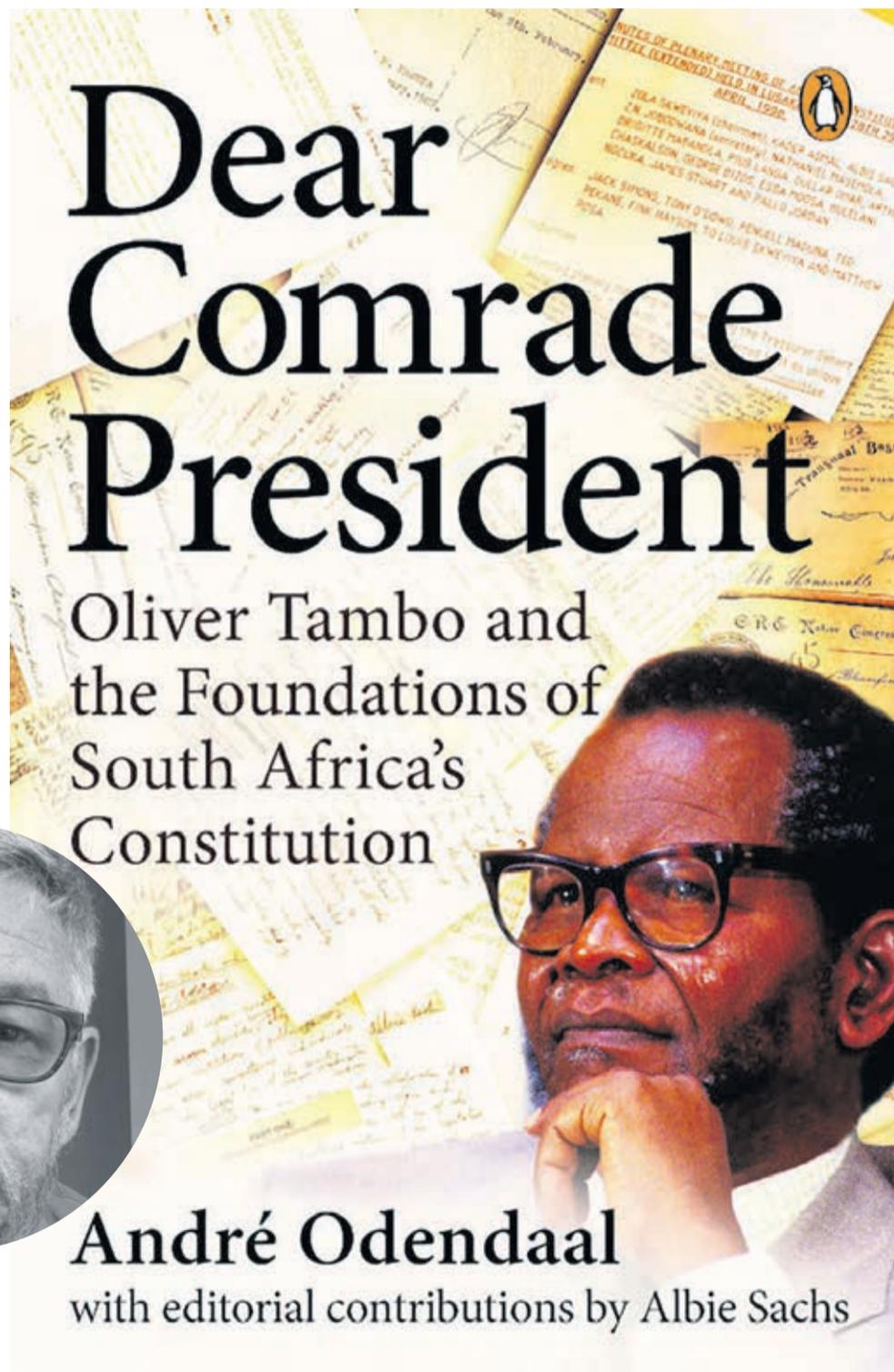
The Constitution Committee saw a role for itself in these "talks of talks about constitution"...

19 May 1986 was the day the EPG saw its mission being scuttled by Botha. Their delegation was in Cape Town when his forces hit what they called "ANC targets" in Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia – all countries that the EPG had visited. Botha proclaimed a state of emergency and thousands of anti-apartheid activists were detained. The ANC's political standing rose in the wake of the EPG... Western countries imposed sanctions as the ANC desired, and conservative Western leaders started talking to the organisation for the first time. The ANC could not be excluded from negotiations – a point the regime would concede only two years later in 1988...

But [the ANC] had yet to resolve a key uncertainty: translating its notion of "People's Power" into constitutional terms that harmonised with the Freedom Charter...

In 1969, the ANC had adopted its "Strategy and Tactics" document after nearly a decade of exile and illegality at home. This had marked a decisive move towards seeing liberation coming from revolutionary struggle with a strong armed component...

The MPLA in Angola and Frelimo in



national liberation in the 1960s to 1980s...

Against this background the Constitution Committee discussed the formation of a new national front embracing parties that had the same revolutionary aims, and the SACP, SACTU and the ANC (while retaining some autonomy) should form a single platform.

Committee chairperson Jack Simons feared that "under ballot box rivalries" the three groups "might become rivals in a ruthless war of words, to the delight of our enemies and dismay of the people".

The precondition for People's Power was to preserve the "existing unity of purpose and action before and after the revolution" and move towards "some kind of fusion".

The Constitution Committee quietly withdrew Simons's thought-provoking position paper, with its seeming applicability to South Africa even today, and it was not taken further with the leadership in tandem with the committee's other papers. **DM168**

André Odendaal is honorary professor in history at the University of the Western Cape, and the author of a dozen books.

Dear Comrade President is published by Penguin Random House (R340).

READ IN BRIEF

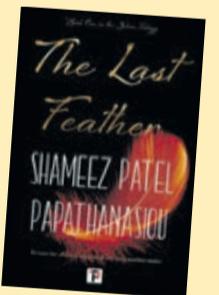
The Beautiful Ones Have Just Been Born: Vol. IV: The Gerald Kraak Anthology.

This year's anthology is filled with inspiring and fearless LGBTQI+ works of fiction, non-fiction and poetry from across Africa. Published by Jacana. R250



***The Last Feather* by Shameez Patel Papathanasiou.**

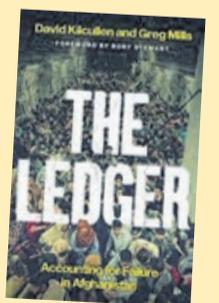
The SA-born debut author brings to life a threat-and-danger, hidden-world fantasy that Sarah J Maas fans will love. Published by Flame Tree Publishing. R360



***The Ledger: Accounting for Failure in Afghanistan* by David Kilcullen and Greg Mills**

assesses the West's failed approach to Afghanistan after 9/11 – in military, diplomatic, political and developmental terms.

This book explains why and where failings happened, warning against exceptionalist approaches to future peacebuilding missions. R300 from the DM shop. **DM168**



Mozambique both proclaimed new constitutions based on concepts of People's Power. After the Soweto uprising in 1976, MK recruits from South Africa were being trained and housed in camps in Angola.

As Joe Slovo pointed out, "during these periods the basic political content of the ANC was moulded in socialist countries... from 1970 we sent people in large numbers to the GDR, to Bulgaria, to the Soviet Union, and they were brainwashed in Marxism". He would later say, "Thinking back on it now it horrifies me to remember the kind of things they were taught. As a

socialist, as I am now speaking, very mechanical rubbish Stalinist concepts..."

Daryl Glaser has written about the "indeterminacies" of the two models the ANC was trying to reconcile... This was in part because the Marxist-inspired, National Democratic Revolution (NDR), People's Power model and the constitutional democracy model were theories that "speak past each other, having never expected to meet on ground where their respective ideologues would need a common language". Places they did meet were in struggles against fascism in the 1930s and 1940s, and for

30 years of breaking ground for a better Johannesburg



From the moment we are born, through to old age, an immutable truth that we all share is our need for safety – both physically and emotionally. The importance of having shelter, a home and stability in one's life is something we can all relate to. For many individuals being able to own a piece of land or a home is a major milestone, and while the appeal of home ownership differs for everyone, having a place where you and your loved ones can live and build a future, create memories, or enjoy the peace and quiet of a slow Sunday afternoon, is certainly something most people strive for. Whether it's sentiment-driven, or financially motivated – Leogem Property Projects has provided citizens of Johannesburg the chance to break new ground and build better lives for themselves and their families for last 30 years.

"When we first opened our doors in 1992 it was with the ethos of developing quality homes, that we ourselves would want to live in. 3 decades later, we can safely say that we still take great pride in changing the lives and lifestyle of thousands of people in the greater Johannesburg region through every home that we build."

Leogem's roots have always been planted in family and tradition. Family is at the centre of everything we do. It's the bed-stone that's held us, and so many other families together for 30 years. Our family is not indifferent to each of the 22 residential developments that we've completed over the years. We're traditional, yet innovative. Our dedication to constant evolution coupled with our ability to design and build some of the finest homes in the country is what truly sets us apart, and we've accomplished that feat because we did it as a family – for other families.

One of Leogem's key development focus areas, Midrand, is an expanding residential property market that offers a wide range of properties and excellent value. The estate sector attracts interest from a lot of first-time homeowners and investors, who hope to take advantage of Midrand's strategic location and rapid commercial and residential development.

The Midrand area attracts a lot of new residents looking for the security and lifestyle. The benefit of the area is its exceptional location in the middle of the Gauteng region which makes it ideal for anyone commuting between Johannesburg

and Pretoria. In addition, the continued growth of the area – spurred on by the fact that many corporate companies are relocating their headquarters to the region because of the congestion and over-development in the major business districts around Johannesburg – gives buyers access to a higher standard of



residential living. It is for these reasons that we have adapted our way of thinking to craft our vision for the future:

"To improve the way we respond to the growing needs of the people of Johannesburg with "A shift to lower-density suburban estates with a sense of larger open space and a closer-knit community." Anthony – Civil Engineer at Leogem.

"Where a lot of developers would try to use the maximum build opportunity on a site to maximise Return on investment, we would rather maximise the quality of living for our buyers by incorporating Green Spaces and keeping as much of the natural vegetation on the land as possible. This results in better quality green spaces that enhance the atmosphere and biodiversity value of the environment in and around our developments. For us, it's about more than just developing homes. It's about creating a community that puts people, families, and collective well-being first. It's about creating a lifestyle you wouldn't easily find anywhere else" Jacques – Architect at Leogem

Globally there is increased recognition of the reciprocal relationship between human wellbeing and the safeguarding and

protection of our natural environments and as such, we endeavour to remain cognisant of our carbon footprint and our commitment to biodiversity. Leogem's developments incorporate a host of energy-saving measures like the installation of Solar PV-ready systems and thermal geyser control solutions, which monitor and manage your geyser's energy consumption and effectively uses solar power during the day to heat water. When undertaking a new build, we pay a lot of attention to Water Sensitive Urban Design - because South Africa is such a water-scarce country. Furthermore, domestic water use can be reduced by up to 40% by specifying innovative and sustainable products and implementing sensitive design practices. Some of these include tree wells and permeable paving that optimise ground water retention for reuse, and we feel it is our collective responsibility to use our available water resources in a way that benefits the planet and all people.

approach to excellence in every aspect of the building process. From inception to completion, it's the seamless relationship between build and design that sets a Leogem home apart from any other, and it's our hunger to innovate that gives each development its own signature appeal. Our vision for the future of property development in South Africa is to be 100% people-centric, catering to the needs of South Africans by breaking the traditional mould of property development. For us, it's not about just 'roofs over heads'; it's about giving South Africans the gift of living securely in an estate but also in unique spaces that have character, as opposed to the 'cookie-cutter', templatised approach one might find in other developments. We take great pride in every home we build and try to transfer that sense of fulfillment to, not only, the new owners but anyone involved in the construction or planning of each estate. We have realized that we can engage with a larger portion of the population when collaborating with local suppliers and manufacturers and as such we hope to help build local businesses, creating income opportunities and growth as our contribution to building the country as a whole.

Our ultimate goal is to set a new precedent for the property development market, where people become the focus, not profit, and where we take advantage of the incredible natural beauty that, arguably, only South Africa has to offer.

The journey that brought us here has taught us so much. It's taught us to follow our instincts and to strive for perfection. It's taught us to be flexible in some spaces and uncompromising in others. We've learned more lessons than we could mention over the last 30 years, but none of them is more important than taking care of our people. Be it our own family, the wonderful individuals we employ, or those that live in the homes we build, the reason we're here is for people. That's why we spend as much time as we do making sure that every inch of every development is as perfect as it possibly can be.

It is our strong belief that a company should be accountable for its actions and the product it provides. As such, we strive to always deliver on what we promise and build homes that we can stand behind.

"Leogem Property Projects continues to make the South African dream possible, 30 years later, and we are proud to have played

a part in helping thousands of families to achieve their dreams of homeownership" Look out for our next development in Carlswald, The Lincoln situated at 33 Lyncon Rd, Carlswald, Midrand.

For more information email sales@leogemprop.com or contact Leogem Property Projects at +27 60 960 1112 .





Conleth Hill as Sergeant PJ Collins in the series *Holding*, which is currently on BritBox. Below: Brenda Fricker as Lizzie Meaney. Photos: BritBox

Graham Norton's witty murder mystery

Conleth Hill talks about his role in *Holding* and how placing 'ordinary' characters in the drama creates a sincere picture of reality. By **Tevya Turok Shapiro**

Actor Conleth Hill, the cunning Varys in *Game of Thrones*, plays Sergeant PJ Collins in a four-part series based on the best-selling novel *Holding* by British talk-show host Graham Norton.

After three years as a Garda in the picturesque town of Duneen in West Cork, Ireland, PJ is irritated by the frivolity of his daily tasks, with residents losing their marbles over the shade of paint on houses. When the remains of a missing local legend are found in the town, PJ finds himself responsible for his first high-stakes case, unprepared and in a town where he's still seen as an outsider.

PJ is not the case-cracking cop that takes centre stage in your run-of-the-mill murder mystery; he is more soft-spoken, more half-hearted and more relatable.

Hill as PJ could not be more different from his *Game of Thrones* role – while Varys is a supporting character who lurks in the shadows, PJ is conspicuous and just about every shrewd line he utters is laced with depth, witticism or both. He is the protagonist, but his nature is to sink into the background and not speak unless he has to.

It's risky to write such a timid lead. Hill confessed that even he was "worried PJ might be too boring", but he acts with his eyes, hinting at what is hap-



pening in PJ's observant and discerning mind.

Norton handed all scripting to Dominic Treadwell-Collins and Karen Cogan. The series does deliver some of the distinctly Irish wit that made the book a surprise success, but not in the same density – Norton is a practised comedian – but it does match the gentleness with which the characters are handled.

Holding invests in the stories of all of its ordinary people: the main characters are mostly middle-aged, and interactions are defined by an awkwardness and vulnerability often lost in television.

"I like the parallels – that PJ's middle-aged and yet this is his first murder case. As a middle-aged actor this was my first number one in a TV series. Also, when he suddenly gets the biggest case, the reality is that someone younger and more qualified comes in to run it over him, which is life," says Hill.

The younger someone is handsome "boy-wonder" Detective Superintendent Linus Dunne (Clinton Liberty), who is insecure because expectations others have of him are every bit as high as they are low of PJ. It's a classical mismatched-cop duo.

Residents of Duneen see PJ as a "blow-in" and Linus sees him as incapable; he wants to prove himself but, as the town's secrets are slowly excavated, he realises he's bitten off more than he can chew, metaphorically and literally, as stress trips an eating disorder.

Holding is unconventional in its honest approach to PJ's mental health.

"We didn't want it to be laughable. We weren't liberal with showing it. It's clear it's happening when triggered by anxiety and you see where this all comes from," says Hill.

Although *Holding* is essentially a whodunit, the strength of its writing is that each character, PJ most of all, is an unfolding mystery just as intriguing as the murder.

As Hill explains: "PJ's motivation is primarily to solve the mystery, but as a result of that [it becomes] other things as well."

"He's not your typical kind of detective in a car chase or beating people up. He's an ordinary little man. I guess those people always appeal to me because it's the kind of people you wouldn't look at twice if you passed them but they also have a function and a reality that's as valid as someone younger or better or whatever else. *Holding* runs at its own pace, as life does in West Cork. It's just ordinary, but brilliantly ordinary, if that makes sense."

WATCH IN BRIEF

Steinheist

A three-part docuseries about the biggest corporate scam in South African history. From the creators of *Devilsdorp*, *Steinheist* profiles Steinhoff CEO Markus Jooste, whose resignation on 6 December 2017 plunged the company's share price by over 90% in a week, wiping more than R200-billion off the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. *Weekly episodes every Thursday on Showmax from 22 September*



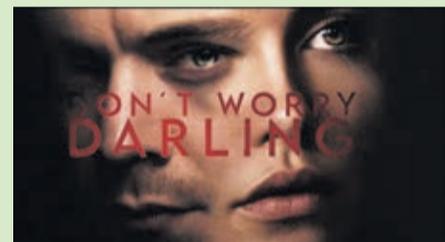
Athena

For his third feature, French filmmaker Romain Gavras teams up with Ladj Ly (*Les Misérables* 2019). A young man is granted military leave after his brother is killed. He finds his family torn between mourning and revenge. A brutal clash with police can only end in tragedy. *Showing on Netflix from 23 September*



Don't Worry Darling

Hype about Olivia Wilde's second feature has been overshadowed by tabloid-fodder scandals. Wilde insists she replaced Shia LaBeouf with Harry Styles to "protect her cast", particularly Florence Pugh, who is furious at Wilde for going on to date Styles and because a video of Wilde asking LaBeouf not to leave undermined Pugh, and so on. The film is a psychological thriller in which a 1950s housewife (Pugh) realises her utopian existence is masking a darker reality. Wilde compares it to mindbender films *Inception*, *The Matrix* and *The Truman Show*, which seems overly ambitious. But it deserves a chance. *Showing in cinemas from 23 September*



The stakes are pretty low for a crime drama, and this makes it easier to place "people you wouldn't look twice at" in the middle of the action. Standout performances come from Brenda Fricker, who went for the part of PJ's landlady as she wanted to challenge herself to memorise episode three's six-page monologue at 77; and Charlene McKenna, whose barbed sass makes her a powerhouse of conflict and comedy.

A defining feature of small-town crime dramas is the enmeshment of the crime plot and the lives of the people in the town. The problem with the stakes being as low as they are in *Holding* is that until the links between the main plot and the supporting characters are made clear, the subplots struggle to hold attention. Without the space that writing has to flesh out tangled secrets, the subplots in *Holding* feel a little unnecessary at times.

But *Holding* does a good job emulating the feeling of a novel. It's easy-going escapism and one of the least stressful crime dramas you'll find. **DM168**

Holding is on BritBox.

Things to do. Places to go

What to do with your day? We have a round-up of the highlights countrywide - exhibitions, concerts, talks, hikes, theatre, festivals, meditation and yoga. And more. By **Christina Makochieng**

FESTIVALS

JOHANNESBURG
Johannesburg Expo Centre, Cnr Nasrec and Rand Show Roads
Comic Con Africa

A four-day gathering dedicated to pop culture: from cosplaying to Q&A sessions with artists, LARPing, meet-ups and product launches, there is plenty for comic book fans to enjoy. Expect to see American actors Khylin Rhambo and Dylan Sprayberry, best known for starring in the MTV hit series *Teen Wolf*, and English actor Jamie Campbell Bower, known for his role as Vecna in *Stranger Things*. General access tickets cost R190 per person and are available via Howler.

22 - 24 September

MONTAGU
Old Mission Church, 41 Long St, Bergsig
Montagu Museum Herb Fest

Plant enthusiasts should check out Herb Fest. From talks about the medicinal properties of mushrooms to the use of fynbos in skincare, traditional healing and Khoisan herb knowledge, there is much to learn. There's also art, music and herb-infused food. Tickets @ R50-R100 via Quicket.

23 - 25 September



PLETTENBERG BAY
Mellville's Corner, Main Street Central

Plett Arts Festival
This year's programme includes a masterfully curated selection of art exhibitions, workshops, bronze pouring demonstrations, Twilight Meanders and more. Check the full event programme for details of art, film and music presentations, along with work from creatives such as sculptor Suzanne du Toit. Ticket prices vary per event and are available on Quicket.

30 September - 9 October

Right: There are plenty of interesting photo opportunities and TV stars at Comic Con Africa in Johannesburg.

Photo: Supplied



Right: Roland Perold tickles the ivories and takes listeners down Musical Memory Lane.

Photo: Supplied



FESTIVALS

PRETORIA
56 Saal Street, Zwavelpoort

KIES / Tierlantynkies Design & Food Fair
With more than 90 exhibitors, there is a world of options to choose from, including local deli food, wine, jewellery, décor, clothing and homeware. The programme begins at 9am daily. Entry is R40 per person, granting week-long access. Tickets are available via Plankton.

28 September - 4 October

30 SEPTEMBER - 2 OCTOBER

HERMANUS

79 Marine Drive
Hermanus Whale Festival
The 31st edition of the annual eco-marine festival is back - this year centred on celebrating the return of southern right whales to South Africa's coastline. The festival also features live music, market stalls, a 10km fun run, street parade, guided walk, educational talks by conservationists, and more. Check the programme on the official event website for further details.

THEATRE

CAPE TOWN
Baxter Theatre Centre, Main Rd, Rondebosch

Isingqala Samanzi / The Call of Water
Catch the South African opening of a thought-provoking new play: conceptualised through a collaboration between German theatre Staatstheater Augsburg and South Africa's Baxter Theatre, *The Call of Water* tells the story of a struggle with the world's ongoing water shortage, told through the art of puppetry and in multiple languages. Ticket prices are between R150 and R180 and are available via Quicket.

22 - 24 September

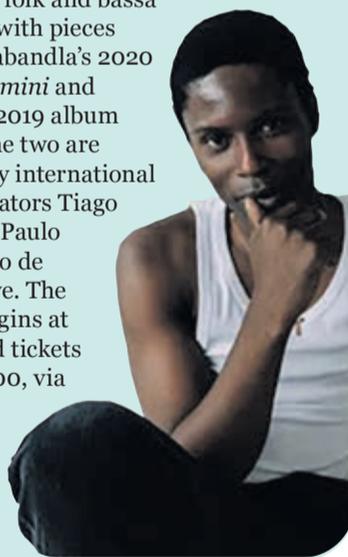


MUSIC

23 SEPTEMBER

JOHANNESBURG
Joburg Theatre, Cnr Hoofd Street and Civic Blvd, Braamfontein

Bongeziwe Mabandla and Blick Bassy
Described as "one of the most exceptional live music experiences of the year", this show has South African musician Bongeziwe Mabandla joining forces with Cameroonian singer-songwriter Blick Bassy. The duo perform an hour of "folk and bassa music", with pieces from Mabandla's 2020 album *iimini* and Bassy's 2019 album *1958*. The two are joined by international collaborators Tiago Correia-Paulo and Arno de Casanove. The show begins at 7pm and tickets cost R300, via Quicket.



SKEERPOORT
Die Ou Pastorie, S56, Route 560

Louise Carver Live at Die Ou Pastorie
Cape Town-born singer-songwriter Louise Carver, known for songs such as *Empty Fantasy* and *Didn't Mean to Call*, takes the stage at Die Ou Pastorie, joined by musician Simz Kulla. The show begins at 12:30pm. Tickets, inclusive of a welcome drink, are R250 per person via Howler.

24 September

HILTON
Hilton College, College Avenue
Musical Memory Lane with Roland Perold
Listen to South African musician and theatre performer Roland Perold playing music inspired by world-renowned composers such as the American duo Rodgers and Hammerstein. Tickets cost R140 per person and are available via Quicket.

24 September

HERITAGE DAY



CAPE TOWN
The Old Biscuit Mill, 375 Albert Rd, Woodstock

ComUnity Heritage Weekend
Celebrate the country's diverse cultural landscape by going to this well-known market, which features local food and performances from home-grown music artists. The market runs from 10am till midnight. Tickets cost R150 per person and are available via Quicket.

25 September

24 - 25 SEPTEMBER

JOHANNESBURG
Holy Family College, 40 Oxford Road, Parktown

Heritage Weekend bus tours & walking tours
If you've been waiting for the perfect opportunity to explore more of Johannesburg and learn something new about the city, now is your chance. Prepare for a weekend of guided tours dedicated to learning more about Jozi's history, stunning architecture and the stories behind some of the city's most iconic streets and structures. Locations include The Leonardo, Diagonal Street, The Diamond Route, and more. Check the full programme for details on each tour. Tickets cost R100 per person and are available via Quicket.



If you have any events you would like Christina Makochieng to feature on this page, write to her at tina.thandi@gmail.com

DM168 FUNERAL RITUALS QUIZ

1. In a New Orleans jazz funeral, the band plays sorrowful music during the procession but, once the body is buried, what type of music does it play?
2. Is it true or false that in South Korea, a law passed in 2000 requires anyone burying a loved one to remove the grave after 60 years because of dwindling graveyard space?
3. What exactly is a "sky burial" practised by Vajrayana Buddhists in Mongolia and Tibet?
4. What is a "reef ball" and is it considered to be an environmentally friendly burial?
5. What are the Caviteño people – an ethnic group in the Philippines – who live near Manila usually buried in?
6. Is it true or false that, in Balinese tradition, a cremation is thought to release the soul so that it can inhabit a new body?
7. When the Malagasy people of Madagascar perform a ritual known as "the turning of the bones", what do they spray on to the exhumed bodies?
8. Is it true or false that the Apayao people – an ethnic group in the Philippines – bury their dead under the kitchen?
9. In Ghana, people aspire to be buried in coffins that represent their work or something they were passionate about in life. What are these coffins known as?
10. How do some Aboriginal societies in the north of Australia dispose of the deceased?



Ghana's famous funeral dancers.
Photo: Youtube

MADAM & EVE
BY STEPHEN FRANCIS & RICO

Click!

SIGH.

WHERE ARE THE CANDLES?! @#*@@# ESKOM!!

MOM! LANGUAGE!

RUSTLE! RUSTLE! SCRATCH! SCRATCH!

RELAX! THE KID'S NOT HERE!

YES SHE IS! HEY, THAT'S MY HEAD YOU'RE TOUCHING.

SO YOU ARE HERE.

JAI! I GUESS YOU JUST DIDN'T SEE ME? GET IT? SEE ME? YOU DIDN'T SEE ME!

YES. WE ALL GOT IT.

WHY CAN'T THE ANC GOVERNMENT FIX THIS LOAD SHEDDING THING ALREADY?

GOOD QUESTION. IT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR 15 YEARS! SINCE BEFORE YOU WERE BORN!

WHAT?! NOBODY FIXED THIS IN 15 YEARS? WHAT DO THEY DO ALL DAY?!

I CAN ANSWER THAT...

MOM! DON'T EVEN...

Click!

YAY!! THE POWER'S BACK ON!

... AND IN OTHER NEWS, REGARDING THE EXCESSIVE POWER CUTS... PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA SAID: "WE WILL BE SEIZED WITH THIS ISSUE UNTIL THE SITUATION IS RESOLVED!"

Click!

YOU GOT TO BE KIDDING!

MAYBE THEY'RE TOYING WITH US!

HEY, CYRIL! SEIZE THIS!

MOM!! LANGUAGE!!



Spot 10 Differences

Queen Elizabeth II was laid to rest on 19 September after an elaborate funeral procession that ultimately led to St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle, where she was buried alongside family members. See if you can spot 10 differences between these two pics. Photo: Daniel Leal/WPA Pool/Getty Images



Word Wizard

CHALLENGING

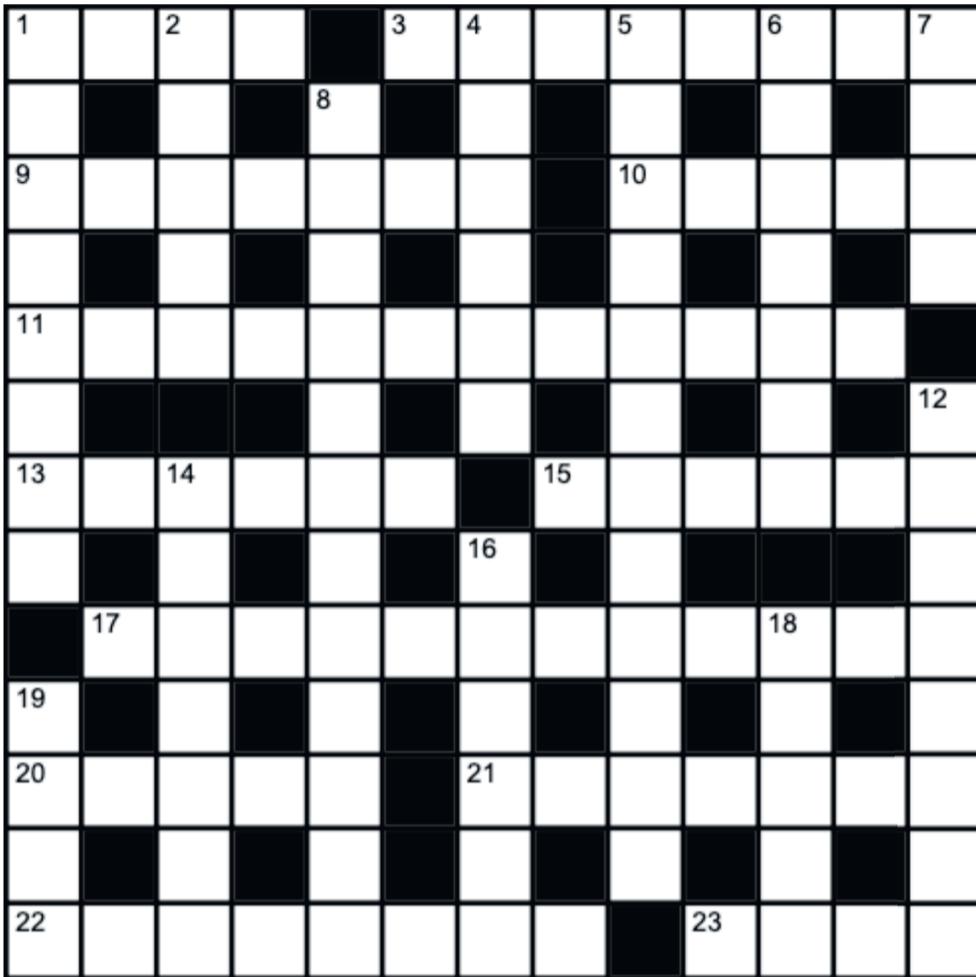
Try to reach a target of 47 words where each word is at least four letters in length, includes the letter in the middle, excludes plurals ending in "S" and contains at least one nine-letter word.



15+ WORDS 25+ WORDS 35+ WORDS

Devlin's Diabolic Cryptic Crossword

NOT FOR QUITTERS 



Across

- 1 Hotel with employee (4)
- 3 European flower: hitman loses it! (8)
- 9 Movie from the 80s that is about thugs? The opposite! (7)
- 10 The lady of the house going back and forth (5)
- 11 Battery-operated cars generate sparks (8,4)
- 13 Old dye set emptied - most peculiar (6)
- 15 Sailor healthier after whiskey (6)
- 17 Beverage giving nasty toothache, not entirely cold (3,9)
- 20 Skin perhaps turning orange, lacking vitamin? (5)
- 21 Gangster with a gun making you scared (7)
- 22 Creative is seen in loft drawing in colour, at last (8)
- 23 Stick around in support (4)

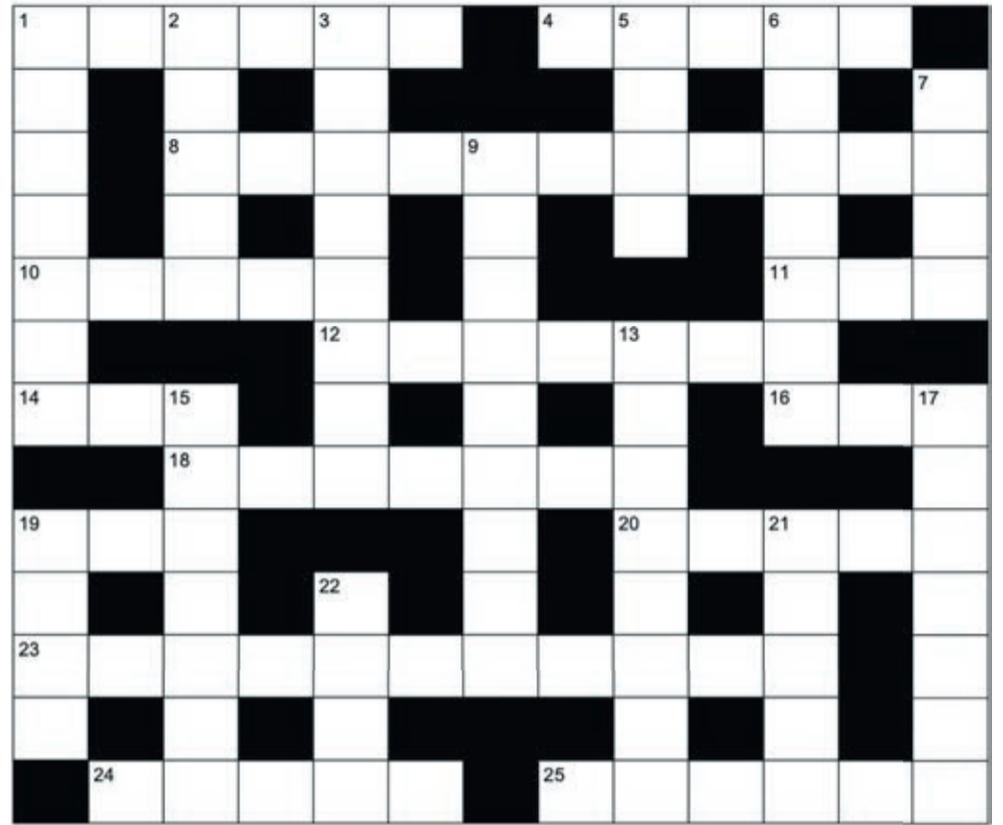
Down

- 1 Tune Hugo's playing in tunnel (8)
- 2 Who's in empty room 12E? (2,3)
- 4 Pandemic? It surely holds country back (6)
- 5 Storage on phone has old scriptures for Jewish festival (7,5)
- 6 Lid came off, concerning doctors? (7)
- 7 Lack ability to feel after third of digit chopped off (4)
- 8 Minute amount of LX and S? (5,7)
- 12 Day Lendl went topless at end of rally in exhibition match? (8)
- 14 Doctor is required in harmful weather (7)
- 16 Thus African country must be African! (6)
- 18 Grant and Tim raised by a divorcee initially (5)
- 19 Furniture with no base, until now (4)

Doodles

Just Cruising Crossword

EASY BREEZY 



Across

- 1 Flourish; do well (6)
- 4 Talent spotter (5)
- 8 Uninvited party-goer (11)
- 10 Power from the sun (5)
- 11 Record of a ship's performance (3)
- 12 Hide to escape a legal process (7)
- 14 Extremity or gratuity (3)
- 16 Mournful (3)
- 18 Determine (an issue)(7)
- 19 Honey-maker (3)
- 20 Evil spirit (5)
- 23 South African sweet treats (11)
- 24 Examine (5)
- 25 Adhesive or muggy (6)

Down

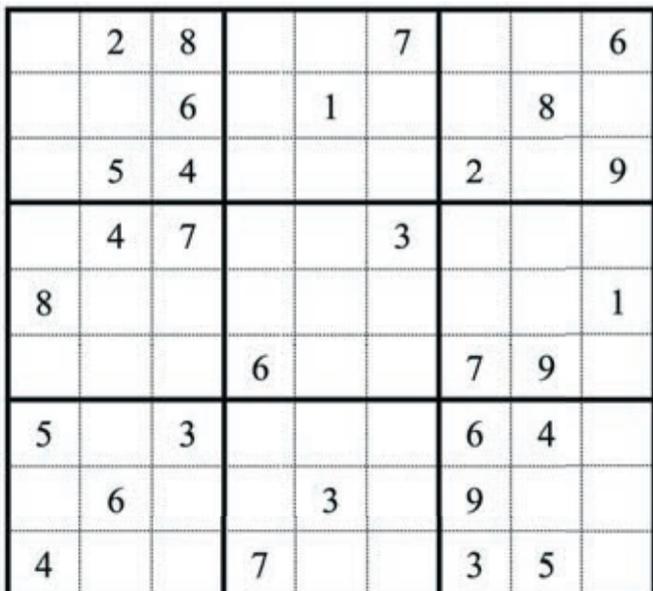
- 1 Transport over a distance (7)
- 2 Kingly (5)
- 3 Old soldiers (8)
- 5 Applaud (4)
- 6 Sustains or defends (an idea)(7)
- 7 Bluster (4)
- 9 Perpetual (9)
- 13 Willing to follow orders (8)
- 15 Now or gift (7)
- 17 Compactness (7)
- 19 Bicycle (4)
- 21 Art of expression in melody and harmony (5)
- 22 Pre-owned (4)

Doodles

Sudoku



CHALLENGING

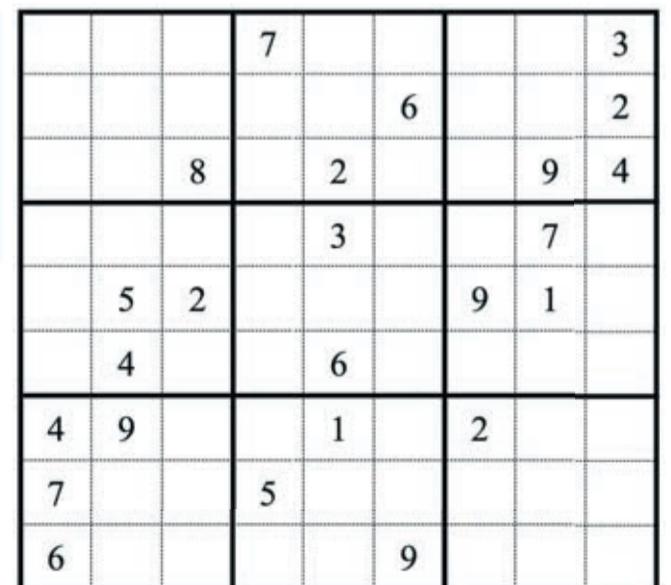


SCAN THIS OR CODE TO GET THE ANSWERS TO ALL THE PUZZLES ON THIS PAGE OR VISIT <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/puzzle-world>

Sudoku



NOT FOR QUITTERS





By Yanga Sibembe

Springbok flanker Lusanda Dumke has had to fight fiercely for her success in rugby while navigating life in less than ideal conditions. Through all her ups and downs, the 26-year-old has worn an infectious smile, paired with a jocular attitude.

For that, and of course her brilliant rugby skills that have enabled her to represent both the South African Sevens women's side and the 15s, she has collected numerous accolades.

At the beginning of 2022 Dumke was named the first-ever Springbok women's player of the year, following a stellar 2021 during which she captained her provincial side, Border, to the Premier Division title, and played an important part in the national team. She also won the award for provincial women's player of the year.

In June 2022, underdogs Border, who had somehow beaten the powerful Western Province the year before, proved that the victory had not been a fluke by repeating the feat and retaining their crown.

It was a win that made captain Dumke proud of her young charges, who had finished second behind Western Province in this season's group phase.

"Our 2021 win was unexpected because we were playing against a very good team. They had beaten us convincingly in the first round. So, many people were sure that we won by mistake when we beat them in the final," Dumke told DM168.

"Then in 2022 we beat them in the group stage and then in the final again. I was captaining a very young team. But they showed that they can play. They showed incredible character and made my job easy."

Success and sacrifice

Recently, after skipping Border to the defence of their title as the best women's rugby team in the land in June, she added two more accolades to her ever-expanding roster of achievements.

In August, Dumke was named Eastern Cape sports star of the year, while also clinching the sportswoman of the year accolade. She won a brand-new car and then made headlines after asking to forfeit her prize, a VW Polo, in favour of a family home.

"When I won the awards and the car, [to give up the car in exchange for a house] was the last thing on my mind. My success was still sinking in at that time. It took time for me to make that decision," Dumke said.

"I remember having conversations with people [who] are close to me and saying, 'Okay, I'm going to have a car, but my family lives in a shack. How does that make sense?' So the best thing to do was to get a house instead."

The Dumke family lives in an informal settlement in Mdantsane, and under her care the Springbok star has her bedridden grandmother and partly disabled aunt, who had a stroke in 2016.

The car would have been a priceless addition to the family. However, Dumke decided she had to make better lodgings for her and her loved ones her priority.

"The decision was not an easy one because I feel like we still need a car in the family. But the thing that we need the most at the moment is a house."

Tough beginnings

Character and guile define the diminutive player, who was born in Cape Town. She and her four older siblings were raised by a single mother after her father died 10 days before she was born.

Tragedy befell the family again when, at the age of 12, Dumke – who had moved to rural Centane in the Eastern Cape – lost her mother. She moved to East London to live with her paternal aunt. That's where her love affair with rugby started, after she had dabbled in netball and athletics. Not long after that transition, she joined Border after being scouted. Her leadership and resilience were already shining through, and she was named captain of Border's

How Lusanda Dumke triumphed against all the odds

The Springbok women's star has had a rocky road to glory, but the fêted flanker is grateful and keen to pave the way for others



Lusanda Dumke is tackled as the Springbok women take on the Kenya Lionesses in Stellenbosch in August 2021. Left: Dumke on the attack during the second Test against the Kenyans. Photos: Grant Pitcher/Gallo Images



under-16 side. Since then she has become the undisputed Border skipper and has also captained the Springbok women's team, of which she is a mainstay.

She is likely to play a vital role at the Women's Rugby World Cup in New Zealand from 8 October.

"I don't know much about the reason for me captaining. But I can tell you that whenever I lead, I want to lead by example. That's what keeps me going and is the secret behind my success [as a leader]," the University of Fort Hare alumna said.

World Cup outlook

Though she won't don the captain's armband for her country at the World Cup, Bok coach Stanley Raubenheimer will be relying on her leadership qualities as the Boks navigate a tough pool consisting of England, France and Fiji.

"The most important thing is to enjoy ourselves – not to go and put ourselves under pressure – because we are going there as underdogs in any case. Many of the teams there don't respect us. So it's up to us to give them reasons to respect us," Dumke said.

"I'd like to see us being as competitive as possible

[and] not go there just to make up the numbers. We must make our mark so that people can know that the Springbok women were here."

She has even paused the hunt for a family home because she wants to invest all her energy in ensuring that she is in the best mental, emotional and physical condition for the World Cup.

I have a dream

Dumke, who made her Bok debut in 2018, knows about the strides that women's rugby has made since she has been involved. When she started, she wouldn't have imagined that the women would have their Test ties broadcast live on television, which is now a reality.

"The growth is massive. But I still feel like there is room for improvement, especially for provincial teams because the girls that play there are just playing for the sake of playing," Dumke said.

"If the league can be semi-professional, at least, that can motivate them even more. Because right now there is nothing that motivates them, besides the hunger of playing – especially because not everyone will make it into the national team. I wish it [could] be as beneficial as it is in the national team."

If Dumke's dream becomes a reality, many players coming after her may not need to make the sacrifices she has had to make. However, the road to that reality remains long and winding. DM168



Boucher throws his weight behind snubbed Bavuma Page 62



Hail Federer! All-round tennis ace and nice guy retires Page 63

Since taking the Springbok head coach reins from Rassie Erasmus in 2020, Jacques Nienaber has highlighted the group's three priorities: winning, squad development and transformation.

This season, there's been a greater shift towards squad development and building a group that can win the 2023 World Cup. While the Boks have recorded a couple of remarkable wins in isolation, they have been inconsistent over a period of nine Tests.

The one constant has been experimentation in selection. Nienaber has attempted to explore new options and combinations while bolstering the depth in most positions.

Squad rotation for development

Nienaber has been at the helm for 24 games over the past two years. Of the 60 players called into the squad during that period, only three – RG Snyman, Johan Goosen (both injured) and Johan Grobbelaar – have received no game time at all.

In 2022, 46 of 48 squad members have represented the Boks across nine Tests. Nine players have made debuts this season – eight of those in the series against Wales in July.

Nienaber has made these selections with next year's World Cup in mind, but also with a view to one of the most important phases of South Africa's development plan: the tour to Europe this November.

In the lead-up to the Rugby Championship decider against Argentina, the Bok coach confirmed that he will take 50 players on the six-game sojourn. The Boks will face Ireland, France, Italy and England, while the "SA Select XV" – effectively a South Africa A side comprising second- and third-string players – will play Munster and Bristol.

The players who have featured across the 2021 and 2022 seasons are likely to make up the touring group of 50 – although there may be one or two new faces in the mix.

Rookies' rise a catalyst for veterans

By luck or design, the team changes have provided Nienaber with valuable answers, and have revitalised the squad dynamic.

Cheslin Kolbe's rotten run with injuries has continued into the 2022 season. Fortunately, Kurt-Lee Arendse and Canan Moodie have filled the void on the right wing. While the Bok management will be glad to have Kolbe fit and firing this November, it must encourage Nienaber to know that he has these potent finishers in reserve.

Jaden Hendrikse fought back after a horrific leg injury to be part of the wider squad at the start of 2022. Nine games into the season, he replaced Faf de Klerk as the team's first-choice scrumhalf.

Suddenly, the Boks are well placed to include three outstanding scrumhalves in their World Cup squad. Hendrikse and De Klerk are fine tacticians with strong kicking games, while the more explosive Cobus Reinach may be utilised when the team opts for a less structured approach.

The rise of youngsters such as Hendrikse will push De Klerk and other veterans to find another gear as the race to France 2023 enters the home straight.

Over two seasons, Jasper Wiese has started the most Tests at No 8. Evan Roos and Elrigh Louw were blooded earlier this year, and should receive further opportunities on the tour to Europe. The great Duane Vermeulen still commands a place in the squad, but is going to have to regain a starting place.

It remains to be seen when RG Snyman will make his comeback. The Boks boast three world-class locks in Eben Etzebeth, Lood de Jager and Franco Mostert. Salmaan Moerat, Marvin Orie and Ruan Nortje can push this trio in the coming months.

Prop Ox Nche is yet another who has been

Bok depth is bolstered, yet key questions persist

Coach Jacques Nienaber has used 58 players since 2021. Has he found his answers? By Jon Cardinelli



successfully integrated in the wake of the Boks' successful World Cup campaign.

While Nienaber hasn't always struck the right balance in his selections – and the composition of the bench as well as timing of the substitutions have been hotly debated – he has endeavoured to provide a host of front-rowers with opportunities, and has succeeded in adding another layer of depth.

Search for third hooker continues

If fit, Malcolm Marx and Bongsi Mbonambi will travel to the World Cup as the hookers. Nienaber and Rassie Erasmus are deter-

mined to select a utility forward to cover the third hooker berth and openside flank.

mined to select a utility forward to cover the third hooker berth and openside flank.

Deon Fourie made his Test debut against Wales in July. While he has worn the No 16 jersey on two occasions since, he has been utilised primarily as a flank replacement.

If Fourie is to cover hooker at a World Cup staged in the northern hemisphere – where set-piece performances will shape matches and results – he must be allowed to develop and adjust to the unique demands of scrummaging at Test level and to experience the pressure of feeding the lineout. Perhaps he will get an opportunity in this position – and show he can be a genuine utility option at the World Cup – on the Europe tour.

The search for a third specialist to cover Marx and Mbonambi continues. Was Nienaber right to select Joseph Dweba to start against the All Blacks in Johannesburg and against the Wallabies in Adelaide? Many will argue that, in the injury-enforced absence of Mbonambi, Marx should have started both matches.

And yet, in the context of squad development, Nienaber had good reason to back Dweba in those fixtures. Unfortunately, Dweba didn't capitalise on the opportunity.

There is talk of Bulls hooker Johan Grobbelaar getting to tour Europe. It will be interesting to see where Dweba and Grobbelaar stand in the pecking order, and how Fourie – as a hooker – is accommodated.

Flyhalf crisis a blessing in disguise

The Bok coaches haven't gone out of their way to address the depth at flyhalf over the past five years. Last month, Nienaber's luck finally ran out when André Pollard broke down with a serious knee injury and Elton Jantjies was forced to fly home to deal with personal issues related to an alleged affair.

With Goosen still on the comeback trail, Nienaber had to rely on Willemse – the first-choice fullback – and then Frans Steyn – primarily a centre – to fill the No 10 void.

Willemse was outstanding in the wins against Australia and Argentina, and it's a shame that he was forced to withdraw ahead of the Rugby Championship decider due to concussion. There's been much debate about his potential as a Test flyhalf since his debut in 2018. He has proved he can do the job – and offer something different to Pollard.

In a sense, what transpired in the Rugby Championship was a blessing in disguise, as Nienaber was forced to explore a third – and subsequently a fourth – option. The Bok team boss has confirmed that he will take two specialists to the World Cup next year, and that one of the utility backs – read Willemse, Steyn or even Goosen – will provide further cover.

In the short term, Nienaber would do well to give players other than first-choice a run in the position.

His hand may be forced once again in late November when the Boks play England in a Test outside the international window.

Players based in Europe – such as Pollard, who plays his club rugby for Leicester – may not be available for the clash at Twickenham. And will Jantjies return?

Willemse or Goosen may be saddled with responsibility, and while that may disrupt the team's continuity and short-term goals, it may serve their development objectives and provide some definitive answers about where they stand. **DM168**

Photos: Gallo/Getty Images



Proteas coach Mark Boucher (right) has backed Temba Bavuma (left) "100%" after the Proteas' white-ball skipper failed to attract a bid at the recent SA20 auction. It was a stunning snub for the national captain.

Photo: Isuru Sameera

Boucher backs snubbed Bavuma

Proteas coach Mark Boucher gave skipper Temba Bavuma his 100% backing after the captain was snubbed at the recent SA20 player auction, where he went unsold from a reserve price of R850,000. By **Craig Ray**

Proteas white-ball captain Temba Bavuma is no stranger to questions about his ability. It's the baggage he's carried with dignity ever since emerging as the only black batter in domestic cricket with a legitimate claim to being potentially world-class.

He's suffered ridicule and more scrutiny over his performances than any other batter because, in some quarters, he was viewed as a quota player. A man thrust above his station because of being black.

It's nonsense, of course.

He's not AB de Villiers, Hashim Amla or Jacques Kallis, but those three players were generational talents whose careers intersected to form one of the best batting units international cricket has known.

For almost all black players, the stigma of being "a quota" is a crushing burden. No matter how many good innings Bavuma has played, the bad ones are jumped on as proof that he doesn't deserve his place.

Unflinching

Cricket is perhaps the most brutal of sports because it's a numbers game. The stats are always there to drag you down. Or, sometimes, to lift you up.

There is no accounting for the condition of the pitch, the weather or the state of a match. There is no column indicating how strong the team around you are, or how good the opposition bowlers were. The numbers are just there, like digits on a restaurant bill, which tell you nothing about the quality of the food and service.

Bavuma has always faced these criticisms and slights with the same tenacity he shows at the crease. Facing the barrage head-on and not flinching. Always quietly showing his class.

He has obviously had tough discussions with coaches and selectors before and has privately been asked to be better and score more runs. One of current Proteas coach Mark Boucher's first acts was to drop Bavuma from the Test side before the 2019/20 home series against England.

Boucher said Bavuma needed to score some runs domestically to earn a recall. Which is exactly what he did and Boucher, consistent in his message, recalled him.

Hurting

But this week Bavuma suffered a very public humiliation. At the inaugural SA20 player auction, the Proteas skipper went unsold from a reserve price of R850,000. No one has the right to be bought, of course, and for all players who go on auction and are unsold, it's a blow to the ego.

Yet, reading Bavuma's cold stats, making sense of why he was overlooked at the auction is even more perplexing. In 25 T20Is, Bavuma averages 26.76 at a strike rate of 120.6.

In T20 cricket those are good numbers. Throw in his leadership abilities, excellent fielding and experience, and it's difficult to fathom what cricketers reasons the SA20 clubs saw for omitting such a quality player.

For the national skipper, going unsold was doubly upsetting. The social media gang were quick to shout about "being in the real world now". As if Bavuma doesn't know

about the real world.

This is a man who has dealt with more realpolitik, in a sporting sense, than any keyboard warrior out there. He stood up strongly and gracefully for teammate Quinton de Kock, who refused a directive from Cricket South Africa to take a knee as a symbol of support for the Black Lives Matter movement just hours before the team's opening game of the 2021 T20 World Cup.

Bavuma didn't even know the full reasons for De Kock's decision when he had a microphone shoved in his face and was asked to explain. He backed his teammate and friend, and continued to stand up for him. That's leadership.

Feeling low

But he wouldn't be human if the SA20 slight didn't hurt.

"I'd be lying if I said I didn't have any feelings

of disappointment," Bavuma said prior to the Proteas' departure for India, where they will play three T20Is and three one-day internationals.

"Obviously one expected to play a role in the tournament [SA20]. But it's not just me, it's Andile [Phehlukwayo] too, a man who's played a lot of white-ball cricket for South Africa.

"From my side, there are feelings of disappointment."

Bavuma, who appeared despondent and also to be nursing a cold, dismissed

the notion that he was guaranteed a slot in SA20.

"I almost feel let down in a way. I don't think it comes down to any entitlement on my side," he said.

"I also have to caution myself from delving too deep into it. It's probably not the right time. As much as I want to perhaps speak about the issue too, it's not the right time. Our focus is India and the T20 World Cup."

Boucher, who will leave his post after the T20 World Cup in Australia next month, was careful about how he commented on the SA20 League. He was, however, unequivocal in his support of Bavuma.

"First of all, I wasn't involved in that, unfortunately. Nor am I involved in any coaching in the tournament," Boucher said.

"But one thing that I can say is that leagues come and go. I have full respect for the new T20 league that's been formed. I understand its importance to South African cricket, that it's needed.

"However, let's separate the national team from the league. Temba Bavuma is our leader and I back him 100%. Yes, there's a lot of talk in social media. I don't care.

"He's our leader and we back him like you can't believe," said Boucher. "The guys were in each other's company last night; we were having a couple of drinks and I could just see the energy around him because his teammates understand what he's going through.

"The bottom line is, we've been on a journey for the last two years. He's been a massive part of it... What happens in leagues, you can't control. From a Proteas perspective, we back him fully going into a ... tournament like the T20 World Cup. As a coach, I back him 100%. Simple as that." **DM168**

Reading Bavuma's cold stats, making sense of why he was overlooked at the auction is even more perplexing. In 25 T20Is, Bavuma averages 26.76 at a strike rate of 120.6. In T20 cricket those are good numbers

Roger Federer brought beauty, grace and lots of magic to tennis

London has been a sad place for the past week. Britons laid Queen Elizabeth II to rest on Monday, 19 September and this weekend, at London's O2 Arena, Swiss great Roger Federer will play his last professional tennis matches – as a doubles partner to Rafa Nadal in the Laver Cup.

The retirement of a professional athlete is hardly comparable to the death of a monarch but, in sporting terms, Federer's retirement from tennis feels like a bereavement.

It's the natural cycle of a sporting journey. No athlete can stay on top indefinitely, and they certainly cannot play at the highest level forever.

Federer has certainly gone on longer, with more sustained success, than any player before. But even graceful, seemingly ageless Federer could not fight off Father Time.

He turned 41 in August and had played competitively until he was 39. The last 18 months, though, have been spent largely on the sidelines due to three knee surgeries. In reality Federer, the top tennis player, was probably finished when he exited Wimbledon at the quarterfinal stage in 2021.

That defeat, against rising Pole Hubert Hurkacz, ended with Federer losing the third set 6-0 on his beloved Centre Court at Wimbledon. Luckily it's a match that will only be a footnote in the otherwise storied career of a man who made the world a better place, simply by wielding a tennis racquet.

In many ways it's sad that Federer could not go out on his terms. That he could not have one last hurrah at SW19, where he won eight of his 20 singles Grand Slam titles. Instead, his retirement has arrived after the better part of two years spent on physios' beds and not courts around the world.

Injuries that hadn't plagued Federer for most of his 20-year career between 1998 and 2018, ironically, had the final say.

For a man and a player who was so elegant and light on his feet, who hardly ever seemed to perspire (you can imagine his mother saying, "only horses sweat, Roger") and who flowed across a tennis court like human mercury, to be cut down by something as mundane as a knee problem, seemed cruel.

Not that Federer wants, or needs, sympathy. His was an astounding body of work that yielded 103 professional singles titles, 20 Grand Slams, an Olympic gold medal and career earnings on and off the court of close to \$1-billion. He'll cope. But will tennis?

Never be another like him

Of course tennis will cope. It's not like Federer is the first superstar to retire. Rod Laver, Billie Jean King, Martina Navratilova, Bjorn Borg, Steffi Graf, John McEnroe, Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi and Serena Williams came and went, and tennis survived and even thrived.

But there has never been someone quite as universally adored as Federer. There has not

Federer could transport us to where we felt we were watching something divine. It couldn't be explained through normal human virtues. By **Craig Ray**

been one negative comment from a fellow professional and pretty much every message has been of praise, love and respect.

It's quite a staggering achievement in a sport that is gladiatorial by nature, pitting two players in direct battle with each other.

Novak Djokovic, one of tennis's "big three", who himself has 21 Grand Slam singles titles, was in London for the Laver Cup this week. Djokovic and Federer have been

rivals, and their relationship is not especially close off the court. But the respect from the Serb towards Federer was instructive.

"Roger's impact on the game has been tremendous, the way he was playing, his style, effortless, just perfect for an eye of a tennis coach, player or just a tennis fan," Djokovic told reporters in London.

"He has left a huge legacy that will live for a very long time."

Joy to the world

Although it might never be measurable, there is little doubt that not many other people in their chosen fields have brought more joy to fans. Federer's play was more performance art than sport. He played shots of such beauty, they seemed to defy physics and drew involuntary gasps from crowds.

He was a winner of course, which people love, but he was much more than that. There is winning and then there is winning, and occasionally losing, with style and panache.

His racquet was magical and his movement light and balanced. Despite his slight frame, his power was remarkable and little could pierce his armour-plated mentality.

Fluent in at least four languages and conversant in several others, Federer was never involved in anything remotely resembling a scandal. Always polite in public and extremely generous with his time and money towards charitable causes, he was the model ambassador for his sport.

If artificial intelligence had crafted the perfect tennis player it couldn't have done better than Federer. That's not to say Federer wasn't – or isn't – ruthless, because you don't win more than 100 singles titles without a killer instinct. But he was never a jerk.

Being nice, while being extremely successful is an increasingly undervalued trait, which the Swiss master managed to balance.

The sport Federer began playing at professional level in 1998 is very different from the sport he played until last year, yet he managed to stay on top by adapting and evolving.

Racquets, playing surfaces, ball tracking and string technology have all evolved in the 21st century, along with constant improvements in nutrition and sports science.

The amount of analysis a player can glean from technology lays bare every opponent's weakness, yet Federer, until his knee injury problems, had never been knocked off the top for a sustained period. He just grew gracefully with the changes.

He seemed light on his feet and easy on his body. It's a massive simplification obviously, but Federer sustained far fewer injuries because he won the genetic lottery. And then he maximised those gifts.

A Federer performance could transport the observer to a state where we felt we were watching something divine. It couldn't be explained through normal human virtues.

"When my love of tennis started, I was a ball kid in my hometown of Basel. I used to watch the players with a sense of wonder. They were like giants and I began to dream.

"My dreams led me to work harder and I started to believe in myself. I want to thank you all from the bottom of my heart. To everyone around the world who helped the dreams of a young Swiss ball kid come true.

"Finally, to the game of tennis: I love you and will never leave you." **DM168**



This combination of photographs shows Roger Federer lifting the trophy in the 20 Grand Slam tournaments he won during his career. Federer announced his resignation from professional tennis on 15 September.

Photo: EPA-EFE

Federer's record

103 titles – second in Open Era to Jimmy Connors's 109
1,251 wins – second in Open Era to Connors's 1,274
65 consecutive wins on grass (2003-2008)

41 consecutive wins (2006-2007)
24-final win streak (2003-2005)
24 consecutive wins vs top 10 (2003-2005)
17 consecutive finals (2005-2006)



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