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Conversations with the
President



THE PEOPLE EXPECT THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY TO SUCCEED

■ By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

ON Wednesday last week, the leaders of the parties that form the Government of National Unity (GNU) met to reflect on how the GNU is working.

Three months have passed since 10 parties represented in Parliament signed a Statement of Intent committing themselves to work together in Government and Parliament to advance the country's interests.

The parties agreed to certain fundamental principles, including to respect the Constitution and the rule of law and to promote accountability, transparency, integrity and good governance.

The parties also agreed on a

common minimum programme that would form the basis of the work of the GNU. At its first Cabinet Lekgotla in mid-July, Ministers and Deputy Ministers drawn from the GNU partners, together with Directors-General and other officials, developed priority actions to give effect to the minimum programme.

Since these priority actions were outlined in the Opening of Parliament Address on 18 July 2024, Ministers and Deputy Ministers have been hard at work to implement the tasks assigned to them.

For a few Ministers and Deputy Ministers, being in the Executive is a new experience and for some it has been quite an ad-

justment. But with the support of their departments, they have all hit the ground running. Across all parties, Ministers and Deputy Ministers are making headway in confronting the challenges the country faces.

What is significant – and most welcome – is that the members of the Executive have undertaken their work as part of a Cabinet collective. Although they are drawn from different parties, they have pursued the common GNU programme. They have worked in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration as Cabinet colleagues to serve the interests of the South African people.

They have each understood their role in advancing the three

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strategic priorities of the 7th democratic administration. The priorities are clear – a commitment to drive inclusive growth and job creation. A clear focus to reduce poverty and to tackle the high cost of living. A resolve to build a capable, ethical and developmental state.

Ministers and deputy ministers have been focused not on the interests of their respective parties, but on the common mandate they have received to build and develop the country.

There was general agreement among the party leaders last week that the GNU has made a good start. They believe that the GNU is working well and that everyone is playing a constructive role.

As party leaders, we nevertheless recognise that the parties in the GNU represent a range of political and ideological perspectives. There are issues on which we disagree and there will be times when differences between the parties will become more apparent.

A case in point has been the debate around the Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Bill, which I signed into law last week. Even as the leaders were meeting last week, some parties in the GNU were publicly urging me not to sign the Bill, while others were saying that I should sign the Bill.

The Constitution is quite clear on the responsibilities of the President with respect to signing legislation. Once a Bill has been passed by Parliament, the President must either assent to the Bill or, if they have reservations about its constitutionality, refer it

back to Parliament. Since, after considering all the various submissions, I had no such reservations about the BELA Bill, the Constitution obliged me to assent to it.

However, even as I signed the Bill, I noted that some of the parties in the GNU said they wanted to engage each other on parts of the bill dealing with issues of school admissions and language.

To give the parties time to discuss these issues, I said we would delay implementation of the Act in order for parties to engage and come up with proposals, if any, on the relevant clauses.

In taking this approach, we are seeking to establish a culture of openness and dialogue among the GNU parties. We are also drawing on a long history in South Africa of engagement among parties on matters on

which they seem far apart.

As times, agreement can be reached when matters come to a head at the last minute enabling all parties to focus on finding solutions and discovering that there is more that unites them than what separates them.

We cannot guarantee that the parties that have requested timeout to engage will reach agreement on every difficult issue. But we need to make every effort to find common ground.

Following the meeting of party leaders last week, I am even more convinced that the GNU is essential for the growth and development of the country.

I am convinced that the GNU will not only survive, but that it will thrive.

South Africans expect the GNU to succeed, and we will not let them down.



President Cyril Ramaphosa and Deputy President Paul Mashatile with leaders of political parties who are members of the GNU.

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THE DOORS OF LEARNING SHALL BE OPEN TO ALL

EXPLAINING THE BELA ACT

THIRTY YEARS into our democracy, the ANC remains committed to opening the doors of learning to all. A recent report on the 2022 General Household Survey Focus on Schooling noted that:

In recent decades, the basic education sector in South Africa has made significant progress towards transformation along six internationally acknowledged dimensions: access, redress, equity, quality, efficiency and inclusivity. There is now near-universal access to schooling as measured, for instance, by

the attendance rate amongst learners of the compulsory school-going age (7 to 15-year-olds), which has been above 98% ever since about 2009. (DBE, 2024:p7)

At the same time, severe challenges remain to address the infrastructure backlog of schools, both old and new; the quality of education and education outcomes; and drop-out from schools.

Schooling in the country to date has been governed by the South African Schools Act of 1996

(SASA), and more than a decade ago, the education ministry started a process of review of these laws, as we face new challenges, the world is fast-changing and our population continues to grow.

The Basic Education Laws Amendment Act (BELA Act) therefore amends the SASA, by strengthening certain provisions and introducing new elements, so as to ensure quality, equity and relevant education for all.

The BELA Act should be seen in conjunction with other initiatives to improve schooling, including

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policies and programmes on curriculum reforms, infrastructure in schools, provision of scholar transport and school nutrition, teacher development and training, and so forth.

without completing Matric, impacting on their economic and further learning opportunities.

ry bodies, through which parents, teachers, learners and community members can ensure that the school runs effectively, in the interest of the school community, especially learners.

INVEST IN PEOPLE KEY PROVISIONS OF THE BELA ACT

Tackling School attendance and drop-out

- Clause 3 of BELA deals with enhanced monitoring of school attendance by educators, principals and the school governing body. If a learner displays regular absenteeism, someone in the school, including their class teacher/teachers assistants should pick this up and make follow-up with the parents or guardians.
- Misconduct in schools is addressed in clause 9, which clarifies what constitutes an act of serious misconduct by learners.
- There was also an attempt to raise the compulsory school age from 15 to 18, since these are the years when most teenagers drop out of school

Improved accountability of SGBs

- SGBs remain key participato-
- BELA seeks to improve SGB

POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE BELA BILL

STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE WITH SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES (SGBS)

- **Response:** SGBs remain important forums for parents, teachers, learners and communities to ensure schools function effectively. BELA introduces provincial oversight to monitor and support SGBs, including transparency with regards school finances and oversight on admissions and language policies.
- **Positive Outcome:** The reforms ensure transparency and accountability in how SGBs function, preventing elite capture or exclusionary practices. This guarantees that parents and communities still have a say in school governance but within a framework that supports equitable education for all students.

Issued by the ANC, Chief Albert Luthe's House, 112

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members' accountability, enabling the Head Of Department to investigate school financial records, and intervene where SGBs are failing to act in the best interest of learners and the school.

Regulating home schooling

- Because education is compulsory, the state has to ensure that even those who are home schooled, receive quality education. Clause 37 places the obligation on parents who choose to home school their kids, to register and provide quality education, without undermining their choices.
- Home school children should have the same opportunities through education to access post school education and the economy.

POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE BELA BILL

ENSURING QUALITY IN HOMESCHOOLING

- **Response:** The new regulations on homeschooling are designed to ensure that homeschooled learners receive the same quality of education as those in public schools. The oversight of curriculum and assessments is necessary to maintain national standards, ensuring that homeschooled children are not left behind academically.
- **Positive Outcome:** This approach ensures that homeschooled children meet the same educational benchmarks as other learners, while still allowing parents to exercise educational choice. It enhances the accountability and quality of homeschooling, ensuring that children can transition smoothly into higher education or the workforce.

Issued by the ANC, Chief Albert Luthe House, HQ

Language and Admission Policies

- South Africa has twelve (12) official languages, and these languages have equal status. Furthermore, mother tongue education is critical to the educational achievements and progression of learners.
- BELA outlines the processes of how SGBs arrive at Language and Admission policies for their school, and the oversight role by provincial depart-

ments. SGBs are required to submit these policies through the provincial education head of department, who must then approve.

- It ensures proactive measures to promote access to all schools, promote fairness in admission policies and access to mother tongue instruction, with clearly spelled out and enforceable obligations on both SGBs and the department.
- BELA also makes provision

for the management of undocumented learners to ensure such learners are assisted.

Compulsory Early Childhood Education

- The ANC's Manifestos (2019 and 2024) emphasize the importance of early childhood development to education outcomes for learners, and have introduced Grade R. At the moment, close to 97% of 6 year olds are receiving ECD.
- BELA now extends the compulsory school ages from 6-15 years, with the introduction of compulsory Grade R for all 6 year olds. This therefore places the obligation on the state to progressively ensure that there are adequate plans and budgets for ECD infrastructure, educators and learning materials, especially in rural areas.

WHY THE BELA ACT...

The Basic Education Laws Amendment Act (BELA Act) amends the South African Schools Act of 1996, by strengthening certain provisions and introducing new elements, so as to ensure quality, equity and relevant education for all.

REST IN PEACE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT OF THE PEOPLE

Eulogy by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the special official funeral of Mr Pravin Gordhan Inkosi Albert Luthuli Convention Centre, Ethekekini

19 SEPTEMBER 2024

The poet Rabindranath Tagore said:

‘We come nearest to the great when we are great in humility.’

Today we bid farewell to a humble servant of the people, Pravin Jamnadas Gordhan.

For all his achievements, despite his immense contribution to this country, Pravin was at all times a humble human being and activist.

It was his humility as a person and as a leader that made him great.

It was his unwavering belief that a political activist must serve no other cause than the cause of freedom that made PG exceptional.

It is that which makes great all true servant leaders.

Leaders who accept the responsibility to lead with humility, com-



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mitment and courage. They are leaders who also submit themselves to being led.

These are leaders who speak up when they must, but who also listen to the voices of our people attentively.

These are leaders who are magnanimous in victory and gracious in defeat.

Such leaders are people who stand up for what is right even at great personal cost to themselves.

Pravin Gordhan joined the struggle at a young age.

He became active in the Natal Indian Congress and the South African Communist Party.

The origins of his activism, in student and civic politics, was to define his political perspective and attitude.

Even as a Member of Parliament, even as a Minister, at his essence PG remained a grassroots

activist.

He was one of those rare people who knew the cost of struggle.

His activism earned him arrests, beatings and detention.

He knew the perils of underground work.

As an operative of Operation Vula, he was interrogated, tortured and thrown into solitary confinement.

Yet, whenever called upon, he stepped forward to serve.

Pravin Gordhan is remembered as a key figure in the formation of the United Democratic Front.

He is remembered as a leader in the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress, his political home.

Pravin became known as a seasoned negotiator and astute tactician.

He played an important role in

our country's peaceful transition to democracy.

He was one of the architects of our democratic constitution.

As a pharmacist, as a dedicated revolutionary, he may not have seemed the best choice to lead the South African Revenue Service.

Yet, his intelligence, his enterprise and his diligence made him the perfect person to build one of the most important and effective institutions of our young democracy.

It was these attributes that made him the right person to be appointed Minister of Finance at a time of great difficulty for the South African and the global economy.

In every task that he was given, in every portfolio he occupied, he was methodical and industrious.

He understood the value of the work he was given.

He understood that efficient rev-



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enue collection was essential for the fundamental transformation of our society.

He understood that careful management of public finances was vital for the education of our children and the health of our population.

He knew that if the lives of the poor were ever to be improved, municipalities needed to work – and to work well.

He knew that if unemployed South Africans were to find work, the country's trains needed to run and its ports needed to function.

He knew that its power stations needed to produce enough electricity to drive a thriving economy.

Always an activist, he did the work that needed to be done.

And as an activist, he stood firm on principle.

During one of the most painful chapters in our democratic history, as the state was being looted by the powerful and connected, he chose to resist.

Using all means at his disposal, he worked to thwart the capture of the state.

Drawing on his substantial moral stature, he refused to be silenced.

He was prepared to confront those who had once been his comrades, whom he had once looked up to as his leaders, but who had abandoned the cause of the people.

As many others looked away, his revolutionary consciousness demanded no less of him than that

he speaks out.

For him, it was no different to when he joined the struggle against apartheid.

It was a choice between what was right and what was wrong.

It was a choice between standing with the people or standing against the people.

There was never any doubt where Pravin Gordhan would stand.

What gave him strength and encouragement was that he was not alone.

Among his comrades, among activists, among civic leaders, among public servants, among broader society, was a growing movement against state capture.

In ways that history has yet to fully record, he played a pivotal role in giving form and effect to that movement.

This earned him the ire of the enablers of state capture.

It earned him the wrath of those more interested in political expediency than in undoing the great damage that state capture had done.

Pravin endured vicious personal attacks.

They were dishonest, condescending and patronising.

Many were racist, directed at one of the country's foremost champions of non-racialism

These attacks did nothing to diminish Pravin's standing among South Africans.

Instead, they exposed the moral bankruptcy of those who chose to target him and his family.

It was shameful then, and it remains shameful now.

Let it never be that in the robust festival of ideas and vibrant public space that is a hallmark of our democratic order, we stoop to slander and invective.

Let it never be that in trying to portray ourselves as the liberators that we come to sound like the oppressor.

It takes a person of true mettle to withstand such an onslaught.

Pravin Gordhan was such a person.

I had the privilege of working alongside him for many years – during the struggle against apartheid, at Codesa and in the Constitutional Assembly, in the ANC and in government.

I will remember him fondly for his collaborative spirit.

I will remember him for his tact, especially when we disagreed.

I will remember him standing firm on principle.

I will miss his incisive contributions in Cabinet and other meetings.

I will miss our many discussions over many hours, and the telephone conversations late into the night.

I valued his frankness and forthrightness.

I respected his opinions. And I appreciate that he always afford-

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ed me the same courtesy.

He was my comrade and my colleague, but he was also a friend.

There are a great many lessons we can draw from his life and from his political activism.

The most fitting tribute we can pay to him is to reflect on our own actions.

To consider what we can and should each do to serve our country.

To reflect on what it means to be an activist.

To consider if we are prepared to weather the great storms that so often confront acts of courage and integrity.

These are the issues upon which we must indeed all reflect as we bid farewell to this great son of the soil.

It is in times of difficulty that moral courage is valued most.

It is at times of renewal and re-

building that activism is most needed

As we strive to rebuild our country, as the Government of National Unity, we will rely on men and women of integrity, honour and courage to support us, to hold us to account, and to help shepherd in a new era for South Africa and its people.

Pravin Gordhan's spear has fallen. Let us together pick it up.

To the Gordhan family, the nation shares in your sorrow at the loss of a husband, a father and a brother.

It is not lost on any of us that his dedication to our country demanded great personal sacrifice from you.

To the friends and compatriots of our departed comrade, be comforted in the knowledge that his legacy continues to guide our every effort to build a free, just and equal South Africa.

I leave you with these words, once more from Rabindranath

Tagore.

“Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.
Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.
Give me the strength never to disown the poor or bend my knees before insolent might.
Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.
And give me the strength to surrender my strength to thy will with love.”

Comrade Pravin, you were all of these things.

Yours was a life fruitful in service.

You bore your sorrows with strength.

You stood for the poor and never disowned them.

You would not bend your knee before injustice.

You would not bend your knee before those who were stealing from the poor.

Where many tried to bring you low with their insults, your feet remained firmly on the high ground.

And now you have surrendered your strength to the will of the Creator.

You were a much admired, much respected and much loved comrade, colleague, leader and friend.

Hamba kahle, Mkhonto.

Om Shanti, Om Shanti, Om Shanti.

Rest in peace, good and faithful servant of the people.

FUNERAL ORATION OF COMRADE PRAVIN GORDHAN

■ By **ANC SECRETARY GENERAL COMRADE FIKILE MBALULA**



Over the past few days, our movement and the people of all nationalities throughout the country have been immersed in boundless sorrow at the passing of Comrade Pravin Gordhan.

On behalf of our movement, we have come to convey our heartfelt condolences to the untimely departure of one of our own.

I stand here with both a bleeding heart and a trembling voice as I

engage in efforts to bid farewell to a man who made a meaningful contribution to the lives of our people.

We have come to mourn and pay tribute to a revolutionary, a potent weapon at the hands of all peace-loving South Africans, a great son of our vast expanse.

We are gathered here today in memory of our dear friend, patriot and revolutionary, Comrade PG.

Death has taken away from us a genuinely warm individual, more importantly a loving husband and father.

Death has deprived so many others, including us all, of a good friend.

Death has once again taken away from us the precious life of a vibrant and seasoned revolutionary, a frontline fighter of our democracy.

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Death has robbed us of an all-round revolutionary and a selfless servant of the people who connected different dots in pursuit of a better life for our people.

While we mourn the loss of such a dear friend and comrade, we pay tribute and celebrate a life that was well lived.

A life committed to the cause of freedom to expand the frontiers of a better life to all our people.

This morning, we all here to celebrate Comrade Pravin Gordhan's rich life that touched the masses of our people.

Not many leave behind a legacy of such dedication and accomplishment.

In looking through the pages of his life, it is not surprising that very early he knew what he wanted to be, to be of service to the people, to help them overcome their moments of burden and despair.

At the very tender age, he chose a path to be associated with a mass movement for the liberation of our people leaving.

He made a remarkable impact and led a resistance against apartheid maneuvers in the Natal Indian Congress.

Comrade PG and many of his ilk, swelled the ranks of the United Democratic Front and led a fierce charge on the Pretoria regime.

He carved out a path from which there was no turning back.

A path where there would be no compromise.

A path where there only remained two choices, submit or fight, freedom or death.

Yet today, a gentle heart of a giant has abruptly ceased to beat!

A rare jewel has fallen from the crown!

A glossy foliage rose of the Gordhan's family has been pruned before it's season.

Fellow mourners,

Your pain is our pain!
Your loss is our loss!

This morning, we are gathered here to bid farewell to a shepherded who stayed close to his flock even at a point of personal harm, a quintessential son and an ambassador for good governance.

This morning, a shepherd of our collective hopes, dreams and aspirations is no more.

As mourners, we are here in bright sunshine to bow our heads and dip our banners in a deep moment of reflection, how would our lives be without you comrade PG.

Death the mighty hunter, has struck down in the witching hours of life, in the vigour of health, in a sudden and most heart-rending manner, Comrade PG has abruptly succumbed to its strike!

He lived an immense life of courage devoted to the advancement of his fellow citizens in this country.

PG was remarkable for his perseverance and firmness of purpose.

Even in the face adversity, he led a resolute charge against corruption and state capture.

Some among us today may differ with your opinions and find fault with your judgement, but not with your integrity, for when you took your position after a mature deliberation, you kept it.



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Today, those who are unceasing trying very hard to find fault with your good fight against corruption, are ironically the same beneficiaries of the state capture.

Indeed the beneficiaries of graft, greed and state capture will never give up without a fight.

The death of such a brave and charismatic servant leaves us a huge task as to how to honour such a precious soul.

How can the dead truly be dead when their undying spirit lives in the hearts of those of us who are left behind?

PG leaves us just at the time when his contribution was needed in building a truly democratic, free, united, non racial, non sexist and a prosperous country.

We of the ANC, share your grief at his passing and we extend our deepest condolences to you all.

We have come to remember and honour a revolutionary who gave his youthful life to the liberation but also to remember and cherish him as a generous friend, a selfless servant of the people.

He planted his feet in our society as strongly as that great baobab tree.

In a period spanning four decades of his career, his contribution along with his publicised personal life, made him a national treasure.

Comrade PG, in bidding farewell to you, we have come to tell you how deeply heartbroken your death has left us.

Your untimely death has wrapped us in a heavy mantle of sorrow and anguish.

Your death leaves an indelible imprint on our lives.

With you, there died a part of each and every one of us.

We are bereaved of a valuable and much valued citizen whose absence will be difficult to fill with equal attributes.

Comrade PG has departed from us forever.

But his name and reputation, deeds of merit, thoughts, and outstanding qualities will go down in history and remain immortal in the hearts of the people for generations to come.

Your personal and professional biography as described by your friends and colleagues, paints the portrait of an exceptional human being.

It is the story of a deeply devoted family man, a beloved son, a dear husband, a cherished father and a grandfather, a treasured brother, and a dutiful uncle and relative to many.

That PG was a humble man who loved simplicity is well known.

That he was a good and great man is an acknowledged fact.

That he cherished truth and fairness is not in doubt.

That same commitment to the service of others was the defining mark of his life.

In remembering you Comrade PG, we will recall the very many little things that you did, that define you as a philanthropist and humanitarian.

The biography we will write in our

hearts and engrave on our minds will tell the story of man of courage.

It will speak to us of a courageous and indomitable fighter and humanitarian.

It will paint a picture of a person of loyalty to his cause, his principles, his peers, and all his people.

It will inform all that cares to listen, that PG was human because he could laugh and cry.

Today We are poorer without you.

Today and right now, as we close the chapter of grief, we will surely open a new page of conviction that indeed your life was not in vain.

You were a genuine compatriot to all of us, beautiful, elegant, dignified, strong, and indeed you spoke authority with the gentleness of the breeze.

Your untimely departure marks the closure of yet another page in the history of our pursuit for a National Democratic Society.

It marks a life ceased and a selfless service ended!

You can shed tears that PG is gone, or you can smile because he has lived!

You can close your eyes and pray that he'll come back, or you can open your eyes and see all the legacy he left!

Your heart can be empty because you can't see him, or you can be happy for tomorrow because of his yesterdays.

You can remember him and only that he's gone, or you can cher-



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ish his memory and let it live on!

You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back or you can do what he would want, smile, open your eyes, love and forge ahead.

He was a generous, loving, supportive and unselfish man who always put other people before himself.

In him, our people found a reason to hope, the courage to dream, and a man to emulate.

As a family man, he was devoted, loving, and beloved.

As a revolutionary, he was loyal and true.

As a citizen, he was patriotic and selfless.

As a relative, he was pleasant and always ready to lend help to those who needed his patriotic help.

Through his decorum and grace, he endeared himself to many.

Thank you for your strength, and for your courage!

Thank you for inculcating in us that tenacity and resoluteness are not just mere attributes to take for granted.

Thank you for showing us that it is possible to overcome the darkest of days by shining your light on ourselves and onto others.

As we look back over time, we find ourselves wondering, did we remember to thank you enough and celebrate you whilst you lived?

For all you have done for our

country, for all the times you were by the side of the people with people, to help and support them?

If we have forgotten to show our gratitude enough for all the things you did, we are thanking you now. And we are hoping you knew all along, how much you meant to us.

Guided and energised by the lessons your taught us, we will meet the challenges ahead and we will prevail.

We will write your deeds in our hearts, and we shall tell them to the young, to those yet to be born, that once in our lives we were gifted with the life of a luminary, a great example of decency, a man whose life was built on conscience and decorum.

To his mourning family, we pray for the protection and benevolence of our Almighty God who knowest all things and seest all things.

To his friends and relatives, we ask for condolence from the source of all things and all beings.

May the almighty God grant him eternal rest and give his family the fortitude to bear the loss of their beloved.

That was PG we all know, inspirational, generous with his time and always willing to guide and mentor those who sought his wise counsel.

Let us emulate his venerable character and fight for a fair and inclusive society where we honour and respect the living and the dead.

His durable principles and inexhaustible reservoir of compassion, forgiveness, patience and sense of justice allowed him to shun the murky waters of greed and self enrichment.

What was most endearing was that comrade PG could disagree without being disagreeable.

We have lost more than a hero of the Liberation Struggle, more than a revolutionary.

We have lost a man who epitomises the core ideals that make us the nation we are today.

His dedication to and the love for the ANC even when his health was deteriorating was remarkable.

An appropriate way to honour him is through purposeful actions to improve the challenges we face as a nation.

Let us emulate his exemplary character and fight tooth and nail to banish from our society, the counter revolutionary practises afflicting our movement.

Comrade Minister, you lived your life at the service of humanity with commendable distinction.

Your place is in the pantheon of giants.

Go well Comrade PG.

Go well my beloved brother!

May your beautiful soul rest in eternal peace.

May the flame of your memory burn in our hearts forever.

Amandla!

Message of Support

By COSATU President Comrade Zingiswa Losi at the Funeral of Comrade Pravin Gordhan

We pay tribute to a proud son of the nation, a stalwart of the liberation struggle. Whilst we mourn with the Gordhan family, we celebrate a life in service of the people.

Life is a journey of choices, comrade PG from his days as a student activist was clear that his life would be dedicated not only to his community in Durban, but the entire nation. Every waking moment was at the disposal of the liberation movement. Our people will continue to be the beneficiaries of his relentless commitments.

PG could have led a comfortable life; he chose liberation. When confronted by detention and torture that today's peace time heroes cannot imagine, he did not waiver.

When asked to serve, he proved a formidable organiser for the ANC, SACP and the real Umkhonto we Sizwe. He helped craft the progressive Constitution that compelled the state

to uplift the poor in pursuit of a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa.

He was amongst the first to serve in the democratic Parliament where ideas not slogans were debated and solutions in favour of the working-class set in law.

PG's most enduring legacy is the world class SARS he helped build. It is this SARS that has been the corner stone of the entire transformation agenda that sees 60% of the state budget invested in working class communities.

Now there's 27 million receiving social relief, free basic education with meals, NSFAS funding thousands of tertiary students, more than 4 million RDP homes, subsidised public transport, the rolling out of water and electricity to millions; that is Cde PG's legacy.

PG was not dogmatic. When the world was hit by the 2008 global economic crisis, he helped lead a bold stimulus package to sta-

bilise the economy, saving millions of jobs.

None imagined the decade of corruption. When some entrusted to lead chose to betray the nation, comrade PG stood up and defied the forces of state capture.

In his final chapter, he once again accepted the call to serve, helping lead Eskom, SAA, Transnet and other SOEs from the precipice of implosion. Today, the economy is freed from the most difficult chapter of load shedding, and SAA is once more flying.

PG was not perfect. None of us are but no sober person can doubt the integrity, courage and commitment that guided PG. He did not seek popularity; he sought to defend the Constitution and serve the people.

When some said the state's developmental role must be abandoned, PG defended it. When workers feared for their jobs in our SOEs, PG was available to find solutions.

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With PG you knew where you stood. He spoke his heart. He pushed all of us to do more and do better. Just as he pushed himself.

To the Gordhan family, thank you for sharing your son, husband, father and uncle with the liberation movement and the nation. We are grateful to have walked this journey with such a distinguished veteran as PG.

The nation is forever indebted for his service.

Hamba kahle Mkhonto, qawe lama qawe!

Amandla!

Organise, Conscientise and Mobilise. Make Democracy Deliver!

Speech delivered by Cde Mac Maharaj at the Funeral of Cde Pravin Gordhan



I would like to begin with two simple messages:

The President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa: thank you for unhesitatingly according Pravin Gordhan an official State funeral.

You read history correctly and appreciate the relevance of the model that PG is, even in present day South Africa: incorruptible and driven by the goal of a South African nation at peace with itself.

To his wife and comrade-in-

arms Vanitha, his daughters Anisha and Priyasha and the larger Gordhan and Raju families: take solace from the outpouring of tributes from within South Africa and the international community. Take comfort from the knowledge that Pravin became larger-than-life because you

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stood by him, suffered with him, and gave him strength. You made it possible for him to write himself into what happened in our country, and what happens as SA journeys into the future.

This is the occasion to recognise some hard truths:

Without the exposures by the media and the fight-back mounted by Pravin and his formidable team at Treasury – his deputy Mcebisi Jonas, Lungisa Fuz-

ile, and Ismail Momoniat, and at SARS Ivan Pillay, Pete Richer and Van Loggenberg – without them, our beloved country could have become a banana republic governed by an autocratic regime adorned with the fig-leaf of a hollowed out democracy.

The corrupt hurled everything against PG: Neither the actions of the captured Public Protector, SARS, SAPS, the NPA, and the power of the Presidency to concoct fake intelligence to rubbish

a person's identity; neither that, nor the abuse showered on him shook him: Pravin remained steadfast.

He found himself in a lonely place in the fight-back against State Capture: within the ANC and the Alliance a few, like Derek Hanekom, stood up; some, who shared this concern, stayed silent; others found free rein to defend the indefensible.

Such an unenviable place is not unknown in humankind's march to freedom. It inspired the Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, to write that.

For my part and yours, we comply, we share our hopes and winters;
and we have been wounded not only by mortal enemies
but by mortal friends; that seemed all the more bitter...

But that did not deter Pravin. For he was a man of steel forged in the furnace of struggle against a lawless system whose world was defined by the colour of one's skin.

Torture in detention was one element in that furnace. Recalling his tortures in detention by one of his torturers, PG said:

"I was quite determined that I wouldn't tell him a damn thing, he could do what he liked. Those were moments when you had to decide: you either give in to his crap or you take an at-



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itude which says you can do what you like. And if it's the end of me, well, that's bad luck, it's the end of me."

The public had a glimpse of his fearlessness on TV during an incident in Parliament. PG was at the podium. A group of those who believe that their red tin-hats made them powerful, rushed the platform.

As parliamentary security sought to intercept them, PG stared them down, and urged the security: "Let them touch me". He knew that if the tin-hats did that, not only would they have totally discredited themselves, but that there was fair chance that in democratic SA they may well have found themselves in orange uniforms for violating the sanctity of Parliament.

Putting his life on the line was not a theoretical or abstract notion for PG.

What he called 'the end of me' is something he lived with daily. In early 1989, while hunted by the SB, he received a message from a trusted comrade, Dr Zuzi Hamed, that a member of the SB wanted to meet him.

Was this a trap to arrest PG or was the cop wanting to share information with us?

Our efforts to infiltrate the SB were paying off through the work of Moe Shaik and his in-

telligence unit. We decided that PG should keep the appointment. The hunted would become the hunters.

PG unhesitatingly agreed. But he had one request. Could we provide him with a Makarov pistol. He was determined that, if it was a trap, he would not go down without a fight. We denied him his request: we told him that an armed team would be unobtrusively positioned around the venue – the home of Dr Zuzi and Prof Jerry Coovadia – to frustrate any attempt by the SB to arrest him.

I share this incident today because that was Pravin: fearful of a trap, but fearless in putting his life on the line.

I say this with the full knowledge that PG was a human being vested with weaknesses and frailties, like all of us.

Let there be debate about his actions, but let's ensure that this is based on facts, on evidence. We need that if our democracy is to flourish. Vigorous debate was the lifeblood of the ANC during the liberation struggle. It is also the essence of democracy.

By 1970 it seemed that repression had silenced the people; that it was too hazardous to attempt to mobilise the masses.

The late Mewa Ramgobin initiated the revival of the Natal Indian Congress, which had been immobilised, but remained

unbanned. The strikes in Durban-Pinetown in 1973 and the Soweto student uprising of 1976 widened that space.

Soon the funerals of activists and leaders in the struggle became a rallying point to mobilise people. The slogan captured the moment: Don't Mourn! Mobilise!

PG refined it to cultivate grassroots mobilisation with the concept: Organise, Conscientise, Mobilise.

I recall this concept because we are still grappling with bringing to book those involved in State Capture and with the challenge of rooting out corruption in both the public and private sectors.

In order to succeed in removing this huge obstacle to creating a better life for all imbued with the spirit that we are one people, building one nation, we need, as Pravin would have it: that the ANC puts its house in order and renders itself fit for purpose; that state institutions are capacitated; that the media continue to shine their searchlight, and that civil society flourishes and continues to enforce accountability and participatory democracy.


Organise, Conscientise and Mobilise. Make Democracy Deliver!

Hamba kahle, comrade Pravin! Hamba kahle, Qhawe la maQhawe!

Tribute to the late Comrade Pravin Gordhan

■ By **Sibongile Besani - ANC NEC Member**



 N behalf of the National Executive Committee of the ANC, let me express and pass words of our deepest condolences and sympathies to the family, Mama Vanitha Raju, the daughters Anisha and Priyasha and the broader family and friends.

We dip our revolutionary banner to salute a veteran of our organisation and our movement, for we know his contribution to the liberation struggle and his sterling work in deepening our democracy. We have no iota of shame to declare comrade Pravin Gordhan as a revolutionary par excellence.

It is indeed true that this is a great loss to the family, and equally this movement has been robbed of a cadre and revolutionary activist of note. No amount of words can express the pain of this loss and its effect.

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The youth has been robbed of a fearless mentor whose wisdom would empower and enrich those willing to learn. His generation and fellow veterans have also been robbed of moments of reminiscing in joy the days gone by. There is no doubt that the broader liberation movement has been robbed of a cadre with attributes, skills and expertise that are needed in these trying moments.

This moment begs us to reflect in earnest about a man that this organisation knows so well. It

begs us to inform ourselves about moments we are facing today. It is a moment that summons us to intensify the renewal of our movement. We make these exhortations because they define and characterise Comrade PG.

Let me hasten to reflect on some incidents of few days ago by inviting Victor Hugo, a French writer of centuries ago on similar occasion in memory of another prolific writer, Voltaire. He says:

“On his death-bed he had, on the one hand, the acclaim of contemporaries and of posterity; on the other, that triumph of hooting and of hate which the implacable past bestows, upon those who have combatted it. He was more than a man; he was an age. He had exercised a function and fulfilled a mission. He had been evidently chosen for the work which he had done by the Supreme Will, which manifests itself as visibly in the laws of destiny as in the laws of nature”



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Comrade PG is a congress man who defied death when he was still young and energetic. He refused to succumb to the chains of repression. He allowed his mind to transcend the windowless walls of prison.

Therefore, he was not defined by the challenges he overcame but by what he did for humanity to thrive. Infact, the death-defying character only explains his resolve to apply his skills and expertise to better the lives of our people. The struggle refined and sharpened comrade PG. Consequently, he excelled in every assignment of his deployment.

He re-tooled the South African Revenue Services to unprecedented levels. As a true cadre of our movement, he was unflinching in learning and thus gained the requisite technical skills, which are rare to many of us today. This made him a knowledgeable public servant with a deep sense of clarity of the South African vision for the future.

Comrade Pravin was a public servant who understood the Freedom Charter beyond political rhetoric. He displayed his aversion for slogans through performing excellently in areas that demanded technical administrative prowess.

Clearly, he paid attention to detail to a point of being pedantic;

he was clinical and meticulous in executing his assignments as a bureaucrat. Through his excellent performance, the cadre policy of the ANC resonated and did not earn a badge of negativity.

As the Finance Minister, he enabled the democratic state to navigate testing situations thoughtfully and with ingenuity. In local government, he left no stone unturned to assert injunctions that sought to turn municipalities for the better. The era of 'Back to basics' cemented his abilities and capabilities.

He was a persistent character who never got tired to think. He displayed this character when he was assigned and deployed as Minister in the Public Enterprises. Many of these entities were mired in and marred by corruption.

Comrade Pravin was addicted to finding innovative ways to overcome challenges. As a revolutionary activist, Pravin Gordhan's heart and soul were always at the right place at the right time; to always serve the people of this country unreservedly.

Personally, I had many brief but robust moments with him, especially in the line of duty. He always struck me as a very responsive Minister and never avoided issues brought to his

attention. In his assertiveness he was also capable of melting into humility to younger souls like me.

His assurances to resolve challenges reminded me of one write who said: "That smile is wisdom ... It disquiets the oppressor, and it reassures the oppressed."

As a political activist, a bureaucrat and politician in various ministries, Comrade PG remained a strong and close friend of excellence. This is consistency, one of the defining characteristics of an activist, a cadre and revolutionary professional.

It is a well-known fact that at a personal level, comrade PG was equally a resolute person. His measured tone and cadence were unrelenting in articulating his strong views and beliefs.

His unassuming character made him a student of life to the end because he left nothing to chance. His intellectual temperament was always in tune. Therefore, his aversion for mediocrity and laziness pitted him against fakes and under-achievers.

Another defining attribute of people addicted to excellence is intolerance to banal approaches to issues. These achievers are intolerant to lack of dedication



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and commitment to the task at hand. Yes, they can be difficult in that sense.

This also came out in comrade Pravin's interactions with many of us. This is an attribute that is often mischaracterized as arrogance, especially to those without courage and self-introspect.

We unapologetically declare that comrade Pravin Gordhan was excellence personified!

In spite of and despite all these authentic accolades, comrade PG was neither perfect nor a saint. He was a human being to the fullest. However, in his imperfections, he carried himself with dignity and always as a loyal member of the ANC.

He understood the essence and substance of the ANC's oath, which stated that as member of the organisation he will defend its unity, integrity and principles.

In addition, he had internalized the ANC's oath, which states that a member should combat any disruption to the organisation. His stance against corruption and state capture was extraordinarily unwavering. His intolerance for poor governance and corruption is at the heart of some of the toxic commentary that we saw on social media the last few days.

Comrade PG called us to join

the dots because he knew the stubbornness and sophistication of perpetrators of malfeasance.

At this point let me borrow what President Tambo said at the occasion of receiving Jawaharlal Nehru Award on behalf of Nelson Mandela who was still in prison in 1979. He said the following about Madiba:

"For more than 18 years he has travelled and appeared nowhere, his voice remained unheard and his views unexpressed. In that time, momentous world events have occurred sufficient to put into complete oblivion anyone not involved in the current of development."

For the purpose of this occasion let me hasten to say that for a lifetime Pravin Gordhan will travel and appear nowhere. As the ANC ventures into a new era, we dare not forget what PG and his generation fought for. In his honour, let us immortalize comrade Pravin through a true renewal of the ANC.

Let us rebuild the ANC through activists who have clarity of what it means to serve the people of this country and the continent. Activists who are built and produced by the struggles of the people. The ANC of activists will be the one that feels the pulse of the society at every turn.

Let us rebuild the ANC that will combat this pervasive tendency of acquiring positions at all costs. A tendency that manipulates organisational processes. A tendency that manipulates the youth through money for support.

Younger leaders like me and many others should embrace political apprenticeship, which is mentoring in the course of shaping the future for this country. This political apprenticeship is not a journey to stardom and celebrity status.

It is about appreciating that the present is an account of our history and indelible experience of sacrifice. The present is constructed on the shoulders of giants. To understand and internalize is the step in the right direction.

Therefore, to mock and ridicule the experienced and their wisdom is a path of mediocrity and a foundation of mediocrity.

Renewal of the ANC should rid us all of a practice that despises political mentoring. The know-it-all amongst some of us can only produce political orphans.

As we immortalize comrade Pravin Gordhan, let us not allow the ANC to become a political orphanage.

In immortalizing Comrade

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Pravin Gordhan, let us rebuild an ANC that has leaders who immerse themselves with substance to the service of others. I mean leaders with leadership. Leadership is not a position; it is behavior and conduct. This conduct is about visionary leadership.

If we do so we will avert the dangers of what one scholar called Roberto Mungabeira Unger calls Routine without Reason.

Let us renew and rebuild the ANC that has integrity to inspire every young person and patri-

ot who have skills to take this country forward. We should be an exemplary ANC whose prestige is undoubted.

In this regard we cannot be found wanting on issues of ethical leadership. We should remember that ethical leadership is behavior that is premised on principles.

The sun has set on the life of a true activist who served his country with distinction, we should not fear the nightmares that accompanies the dark night. Rather we should be in-

spired that the first rays of the coming tomorrow will propel us into a better day.

Comrade Pravin Gordhan is entering the realm of being our worthy ancestor.

Lala ngoxolo.

Long Live the spirit of Comrade PG!

****Sibongile Besani is a member of the ANC NEC and NWC of the ANC.***

Lessons I learnt from Pravin Gordhan

Former activist and cabinet minister will be remembered for his attention to detail and strategy

■ By **Yacoob Abba Omar**

Pravin Gordhan had an indelible effect on just about anyone he met. I was fortunate to have worked closely with him and other comrades in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

I have carried through the rest of my life many of the lessons we learnt working in several campaigns. A classic example is when activists in KwaZulu-Natal ran successful house visits and pamphleteering campaigns under the noses of the security police.

We would plan such campaigns in minutest detail — press-gang-ing printing presses, mobilising cars and volunteers and securing refreshments. The night before our forays into an area we pored over maps obtained through the Durban municipality and set out the precise routes a carload of activists would follow, jump out and drop leaflets at each home and then retreat

for a debriefing before the police had got wind of what we were up to.

Years later in exile, when I was being trained in the art of insurrection by the ANC's Soviet allies in Moscow, this experience helped me plot and plan the execution of insurrections, a simulation exercise where we applied all the lessons we had learnt. I was able to use maps to work out which units of the enemy's armed forces needed to be infiltrated, and how and where these units were to be deployed in the name of the revolution.

So impressed were my Soviet instructors that on more than one occasion they asked whether I had been through the course before! I pointed out I was merely applying the lessons learnt in Durban townships.

Given the work he has done in the underground structures of the ANC, Gordhan (or PG)

was undoubtedly a master at subterfuge, which he brought to bear in what we refer to as the above-ground activities. In 1984 I joined a few leaders such as Billy Nair in the campaign to discredit the latest attempt by the apartheid system to court the Indian and coloured communities, this time through the tricameral parliament.

Indian and coloured representatives would be junior partners in an elaborate scheme to split them from the solidarity being shown with the African majority and to dilute anti-apartheid activities.

For months the campaign was run from the Grey Street (now appropriately called Yusuf Dadoo Street, after the former SACP and SA Indian Congress leader) law offices of a senior leader of the Natal Indian Congress. We spent much energy working with journalists to ensure we got the appropriate



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coverage for our campaign. One of my favourite activities was drafting letters to the editor, which we would then pass on to other activists to send in their own name. That was long before social media became a thing.

However, the day before the elections on August 28 1984 some of us were instructed to report for duty at a different set of offices — those of advocate Zak Yacoob — while the rest were deployed as part of the ground troops. From there we were able to receive reports from activists in the various parts of the province.

By midmorning we knew the campaign to boycott the elections had been so successful we could issue leaflets proclaiming “0% turnout” at the various bus ranks taking workers home that afternoon. I did spare a thought for the poor security police sods sitting outside the Grey Street offices for hours before they realised they were in the wrong place.

Action and communication

By then I had come to appreciate the emphasis PG placed on the relationship between concrete action and communications. One of the earliest tracts he shared with me was a copy of an article by Lê Duẩn (April 7 1907-July 10 1986) a Vietnamese communist politician. One of his memorable lines was “the revolutionary method is to apply an offensive strategy and

know how to win step by step”. Lê Duẩn distinguished between the “political slogan”, which was more strategic, and “action slogans”, which would be used to mobilise communities on immediate issues.

In our context, the taking of issues such as housing or fighting against rental increases in council homes were linked with the broader struggle captured in the United Democratic Front slogan “UDF Unites, Apartheid Divides”, which stood the test of time.

As a member of the national executive of the Azanian Student Organisation from 1981 to 1983 under the leadership of Joe Phaahla and Tiego Moseneke, we were able to apply this approach to the tertiary education sector, pushing student leaders on the various campuses to take up the issues faced.

Some from the left of the political spectrum felt this approach was too modest, and did not aim to shake up the apartheid system at its foundations. History has proven us right because these campaigns and the organisational structures they engendered laid the basis for the more political campaigns under the umbrella of the United Democratic Front, the Release Mandela Campaign and increasingly militant action.

This cross-sector, cross-generation, cross-class mobilisation celebrated its pinnacle when

the process towards a democratic SA was firmly laid with the unbanning of various organisations, the release of leaders and the return of the exiled, the holding of the 1994 elections and 1996 adoption of the democratic constitution.

Since PG’s passing many have commented on him as a strategist, and understanding the balance of forces was a favourite opening of brainstorming sessions when we were strategising. This required appreciating what was called the dialectical relations between the different forces impacting on a situation.

Inspired by the Marxian approach to locate strategic questions in their reality — and not just some ideological or intellectual wish — such in-depth analysis inevitably led to a clear line of march, including the tactics to be used, which PG was unsparing in implementing.

He would be the first to admit the vital role played by many other comrades he worked with closely, some deceased, some who maintained close relations, others a healthy distance and some who downright differed with him. That plethora of reactions is to be expected from a person who was so multi-dimensional and multi-layered, so focused and committed.

• **Abba Omar is director of operations at the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection**

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A Call to Action for Local Government Accountability and Transformation

■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

THE recent Auditor-General's (AG) report on the state of South African municipalities paints a deeply concerning picture of local government dysfunction, raising critical questions about governance, service delivery, and financial management across the country.

With only 13% of municipalities achieving clean audits in the 2022/23 financial year, the report highlights widespread challenges that demand urgent intervention from us as the African National Congress (ANC) collective, given that we remain the leader of society and the governing party in most of these municipalities.

At the heart of this issue is the ongoing failure of many municipalities to comply with key legislation, compliance, the poor quality of financial reporting, and the prevalence of fruitless and wasteful expenditure. These factors have contributed to a stagnation in audit outcomes, with little improvement despite repeated warnings from the AG's office and the historic and consistent support and intervention mechanisms provided by both provin-



cial and national governments like SALGA, COGTA, Treasury, MISA, GTAC, DBSA and private consultants. Why are our public servants like Mayors, Councillors and municipal officials like Municipal Managers and CFO not held accountable for this dismal performance? Why is the Audit and Management Action plans not being implemented repeatedly? Where is the Oversight? Where

does the Buck Stop? It is clear that the ANC must act decisively to turn the tide on this entrenched culture of mismanagement, corruption, and inefficiency.

The Reality of the AG's Findings

The AG's 2022/23 findings reveal that while some municipalities have shown progress, many con-

* Download the Auditor-General's (AG) report on the state of South African municipalities here:

https://static.pmg.org.za/240827mfma_report_2022_23_final.pdf

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continue to regress. Of the 257 municipalities, only 34 municipalities achieved clean audits, while 36 municipalities regressed in their audit outcomes. A further 43% of municipalities received unqualified opinions with findings, indicating that while their financial statements may be technically accurate, they continue to fail in terms of performance reporting and compliance with legislation. Moreover, 86% of municipalities were flagged for material compliance findings, showing a clear deterioration in governance standards at the local level. Fruitless and wasteful expenditure rose significantly, increasing from R4.89-billion in 2021/22 to R7.41-billion in 2022/23.

The use of consultants, which cost municipalities millions and the country billions, has often failed to yield the desired improvements in financial management. Despite the extensive reliance on external support, many municipalities still cannot produce credible financial statements, with 10 municipalities failing to submit them on time. Moreover, local governments are hemorrhaging revenue due to poor billing systems, leading to water and electricity losses that compound their financial instability.

We need to give special and urgent attention to Metro as only 1 Metro received a clean audit as they provide municipal services to 46% of the country's households and manage 58% of the local government budget.

According to the Auditor-General Tsakani Maluleke: *"A clean audit is not always an indicator of good service delivery and does not always correlate directly to the lived experience of all the communities in a municipal area. However, a*

Image of the cover of our 2016 Local Government Elections manifesto



clean audit positions a municipality to transparently communicate to communities about whether and when their needs will be met through accurate records, which also enable the different role players in the accountability ecosystem to make informed decisions".

The ANC cannot ignore these findings. While our party has historically committed to improving local governance and delivering services to the people, the AG's report lays bare the shortcomings of this commitment in practice. As a movement, we must confront the uncomfortable truth: political instability, incompetence, and unethical behaviour among some of our own in local government are undermining the ANC's ability to deliver on its mandate and restore people's trust and confidence in ANC.

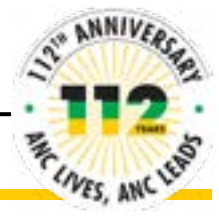
Lessons from the Chinese Communist Party (CPC)

One of the key areas where the ANC can draw valuable lessons is from the governance model of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC). The CPC has demonstrated an ability to root

out inefficiencies, corruption, and underperformance within its ranks, often through decisive interventions and a clear system of accountability. The CPC's approach to governance is rooted in a commitment to service delivery and development, with a focus on outcomes and the well-being of the people.

When CPC officials fail to govern properly or meet performance standards, they are quickly removed from their positions. The party operates with a clear mandate: incompetence and corruption will not be tolerated. This swift action, combined with continuous training, political education, and the development of a professional civil service, has allowed the CPC to maintain a high level of discipline and effectiveness within its ranks.

For the ANC, the lessons are clear. We must act decisively to remove those who fail to deliver services, mismanage public funds, or engage in corrupt practices. It is no longer enough to provide political support to those who are undermining the credibility of our local governments. The ANC must prioritize competence,



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integrity, and a genuine commitment to serving the people.

Turning the Tide: What Must Be Done?

The ANC must go beyond the rhetoric now and embark on a bold implantable turnaround strategy to address the issues highlighted by the AG concretely, structurally and systematically. This requires both immediate interventions and long-term structural reforms. The following steps are crucial:

1. **Implement Consequence Management:** As outlined in the AG's findings and supported by research on turnaround strategies, consequence management is essential for accountability. Municipal officials who are responsible for irregular, fruitless, and wasteful expenditure must be held accountable. This includes disciplinary actions, recovery of lost funds, and in cases of criminal misconduct, referral to law enforcement.
2. **Strengthen Internal Controls and Governance Structures:** Internal control deficiencies have been a recurring issue in many municipalities. The ANC must push for the implementation of robust governance frameworks that ensure compliance with legislation and improve financial management. Municipal audit committees, risk management teams, and internal audit functions must be capacitated and given the authority to act decisively when problems are identified.
3. **End the Over-reliance on Consultants:** While consultants can provide valuable expertise, the current over-reliance on them has not yielded the necessary improvements. Municipalities must invest in building internal capacity, hir-

ing skilled and qualified staff who can manage financial reporting and compliance without the need for expensive external assistance.

4. **Professionalize Local Government:** The ANC must champion the professionalization of local government. This includes ensuring that key positions, such as municipal managers and CFOs, are filled by qualified, competent individuals. The professionalization of local government is not only about skills but also about instilling a culture of ethical leadership and service.
5. **Revenue Management and Infrastructure Investment:** The financial viability of municipalities depends on their ability to manage revenue effectively. This includes improving billing systems, reducing water and electricity losses, and ensuring that revenue is collected efficiently. At the same time, investment in infrastructure, particularly in historically underdeveloped areas, must be prioritized to ensure that municipalities can deliver basic services.
6. **Political Stability and Ethical Leadership:** The AG's report points to political instability as a significant factor contributing to poor audit outcomes. The ANC must ensure that local governments are led by individuals who are not only politically solid, technically competent but also committed to ethical leadership. Political interference in the administration must be minimized, and coalition politics should not be allowed to undermine service delivery.

A Call to Action

The ANC has always prided itself

on being a movement of the people, for the people. Yet, the failures in many of our municipalities threaten to erode the public's trust in the ANC's ability to govern effectively. The time for platitudes and half-measures is over. As ANC members and leaders, we must show the political will to root out corruption, incompetence, and self-serving behaviour within our ranks. We must become impatient with those who do not care about service delivery or the needs of our people. We as the ANC must ensure performance, accountability, transparency and institutional integrity in local government. We as the ANC need to leave a legacy of improved governance and delivery. Our people and communities deserve better.

This turnaround will not be easy, but it is necessary. If we are to restore faith in local government, we must act now. Let this be a call to action for every ANC member and leader to rise to the occasion, to demand more from our comrades, and to work tirelessly to ensure that our municipalities are once again engines of service delivery and development.

The ANC's legacy depends on it. In the words of the great Oliver Tambo, *"It is our responsibility to break down the barriers of division and create a country where there will be neither whites nor blacks, just South Africans, free and united in diversity."* Let us take this responsibility seriously, starting with our local governments. Let us talk less and do more! Together, we CAN and MUST rebuild, renew and restore trust in our beloved movement the African National Congress.

Faiez Jacobs is an ANC Member and former ANC WC Provincial Secretary.

Unmasking the Hypocrisy and Zionist Apologism: A Response to Tony Leon

■ By **Mdumiseni Ntuli**

In his article published on News24 on September 4th, titled “Ubuntu in Question: South Africa’s Silence on Sudan and Ethiopia’s Crises,” Tony Leon mounts a deeply flawed and disingenuous feeble attempt to deflect attention from Israel’s continuing atrocities against the Palestinian people. He uses the suffering of Africans in Sudan and Ethiopia as a convenient distraction, while trying to delegitimise South Africa’s principled stand against Israel’s apartheid regime. Leon’s critique of South Africa’s foreign policy, his selective outrage and misleading comparisons, are by all accounts nothing more than a veiled defence of Zionist ideology.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not a recent or trivial matter; it’s one of the most enduring and symbolically charged conflicts in modern history. The fact cannot be overstated, that to



understand the true nature of the Israel-Palestine conflict, we must look beyond the shallow and selective narratives presented by the likes of Leon. The conflict is rooted in decades of systematic dispossession, colonisation, and oppression of the Palestinian people by the Israeli state. What Leon conveniently

omits from his narrative is Israel’s role in fostering the very dynamics it and others now condemn.

Some people say the roots of this conflict trace back to the early 19th century, while others trace it to the 20th century, to the collapse of the Ottoman

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Empire and the subsequent British mandate over Palestine. The conflict dramatically escalated in 1948 with the establishment of the State of Israel and the resulting displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, known as the Nakba or “catastrophe.” This mass displacement remains a lived experience of many Palestinians and a key source of ongoing grievance and resistance.

Israel’s occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip following the 1967 Six-Day War marked a significant turning point. The occupation has been characterised by illegal settlements, land seizures, the destruction of Palestinian homes, and a regime of checkpoints and restrictions that stifle Palestinian daily life. These actions have been repeatedly condemned by the United Nations and numerous human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, to deafening silence from the likes of Tony Leon and his ilk.

Another crucial aspect of this conflict, which Zionist conveniently omit to mention, is Israel’s historical role in the rise of Hamas. In the late 1980s, the Israeli government deliberately supported and funded Hamas as part of a strategy to weaken the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the globally recognised legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This divide-and-conquer tactic

was intended to fracture Palestinian resistance and strengthen Israel’s control over the occupied territories.

These arty maneuvers should always be viewed through the lens of Israel’s own historical strategy of perpetuating conflict to maintain internal and external support. In his book titled, “The Struggle for Peace in the Middle East”, the late former Egyptian Foreign Minister, Mahmoud Riad once made this profound observation:

“Israel needed war, not only in fulfilment of its central dream of expansion but, more so, to maintain the integrity and cohesiveness of the young State and the continued loyalty and support of the diaspora Jews. Once again the image of beleaguered Israel, fighting for its survival as a haven for persecuted Jews, had to be projected; a favourable world public opinion had to be created.”

Riad perfectly captures Israel’s long-standing approach to its security and foreign policy. The image of Israel as a small, embattled state under existential threat has been carefully cultivated, both to justify its expansionist policies and to secure international support, particularly from its diaspora and guilt-ridden Western governments. This is the narrative that Leon and the broader Zionist lobby perpetuate across the world, despite its distortion of reality. Thus, Israel’s manipulation of Palestinian factions did not just

create political divisions but fueled the very militancy to which it now claims to be a victim. However, as is often repeated, the reality is that the occupation itself, a violent and illegal act of land theft and suppression, is the primary source of instability and will forever invite resistance from those being systematically oppressed.

The violence between Israel and Palestinian resistance groups, including Hamas, cannot be understood in isolation from the broader context of Israeli occupation. To cast Hamas and Palestinian resistance movements as the primary cause of violence is to ignore a fundamental but uncomfortable truth.

Leon’s attempt to draw a false parallel between South Africa’s foreign policy on Israel-Palestine and its stance on Sudan and Ethiopia is not only cynical but intellectually and morally dishonest. He accuses South Africa of selective empathy, implying that the ANC led government’s focus on Gaza somehow neglects African crises. This is a gross distortion of the facts.

South Africa is deeply involved in efforts to mediate conflicts in Sudan and Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, South Africa played a crucial role in facilitating peace talks between the Ethiopian government and the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF), culminating in a peace agreement signed in Pretoria on November 2, 2022. We remain a key play-



er in monitoring the ceasefire through our participation in the African Union Monitoring, Verification, and Compliance Mission (MVCM) stationed in the Tigray since December 2022.

Similarly, in both Sudan and South Sudan, we continue to be engaged in diplomatic efforts to build and support sustainable peace and stability.

To suggest that South Africa is silent or inactive on these issues is not just misleading; it is a deliberate falsehood, and serves only to distract from what has always been Leon's real agenda and a defining feature of his politics: defending Israel's apartheid regime and delegitimising our principled stance against it. If Leon were genuinely concerned about African lives, he would acknowledge the efforts South Africa is making.

Leon's real agenda becomes even clearer when one considers his defence of Israel's actions as consistent with his broader political history. As a leader of Democratic Party (predecessor of the DA) during the early years of transition from apartheid, Leon "fought back" against progressive reforms, especially efforts to redress the legacies of colonialism and Apartheid. His current stance of Israel, an Apartheid State, is no surprise. It is a continuation of his long-standing practice of protecting and advancing sys-

tems built to promote and maintain power through divisions and oppression.

By invoking the writings of Bret Stephens, a known right-wing journalist and apologist for Zionism, Leon further exposes the ideological roots of his argument. Stephens, like Leon, has long defended Israel's actions while downplaying or ignoring its human rights abuses.

South Africa's stance on Palestine is rooted in our own history of resistance against apartheid, colonialism, and oppression. In a 1943 document titled, *The Africans' Claims*, the ANC called for an establishment of a "... peace which will afford to all peoples and races the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford the assurance that all men [and women] in all lands shall live out their lives in freedom from fear, want and oppression."

Our foreign policy is guided by principles of justice, human dignity, and solidarity with oppressed peoples everywhere in the world. Our commitment to the Palestinian cause is not an anomaly in this regard.

The parallels between Israel's treatment of Palestinians and South Africa's colonial and Apartheid regimes are clear to anyone familiar with both struggles.

South Africa's diplomatic engagements on the African continent, from Sudan, South Sudan to Ethiopia to the DRC to Burundi to the promotion of the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement, are evidence of our consistent efforts to promote peace, stability and development on the continent. Leon's attempt to undermine this work by presenting South Africa as indifferent to African suffering is not only patently deceitful but insulting. His objective to weaken his own country's moral authority on the international stage in order to protect Israel from accountability for its crimes, speaks volumes about him.

Tough luck! South Africa will not be swayed by such tactics; instead, our steadfast commitment to justice, equality, and human rights is strengthened, whether in Palestine, Western Sahara, Sudan, Ethiopia, or anywhere else.

What ought to be in question is not South Africa's criticism of Israel's actions, but why figures like Tony Leon continues to defend an apartheid state in the face of overwhelming evidence of its crimes.

**Ntuli is the Chief Whip of the ANC in the National Assembly, a member of the ANC National Executive Committee and its National Working Committee. He writes in his personal capacity.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

21 – 27 September 2024

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

21 September 1989

Thousands join second Defiance campaign

6 September 1989 witnessed the election of the last all-white election in South Africa, taking place under a State of Emergency which had been in force for over 3 years. The State of Emergency prohibited freedom of speech, assembly and association, with arbitrary mass detentions and a covert culture of assassinations and disappearances. In opposition to the all-white elections, the Mass Democratic Movement embarked on a defiance campaign launched at the beginning of August 1989. The campaign gathered momentum and spread across the country embracing a wide range of issues. On 21 September 1989, a protest of almost 2000 students was held by the End Conscription Campaign (ECC). On the same day, a consumer boycott and overtime ban was launched, some 10 000 protesters marched in Durban and more than 5 000 in Outshoorn in the Cape.

21 September 1994

RDP White Paper

Government releases its White Paper on the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

22 September 1828

King Shaka Zulu killed



Shaka kaSenzangakhona (1787-1828), Zulu monarch and founder of the Zulu empire, was murdered by his bodyguard, Mbopha, and his two half-brothers Dingane and Mhlangana after a relatively brief period as king of the Zulu people, from 1816. His death came a year after his mother's passing.

22 September 2008

Parliament convenes on resignation of President Thabo Mbeki

President Thabo Mbeki resigned as president of the Republic South Africa on Sunday 21 September 2008. Parliament convened on Monday 22 September and accepted his resignation. The African National Congress also tabled a motion notifying the National



Assembly on the resignation of Mbeki, and 25 September 2008 was put forward as the date on which the resignation of the president would become effective.

23 September 1941.

Judge Navi Pillay is born

Navanethem (Navi) Pillay, served as United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights, and was born on 23 September 1941 in Clairwood, Durban. She went to the University of Natal where she graduated with a BA (1963) and LLB (1965), and also joined the Unity Movement. After articles in Durban, she became the first woman to open her own law practice in KZN in 1967, providing legal defense for political activists, representing Phyllis Naidoo in her first case. In 1971, she represented 10 members of the Unity Movement charged under the Terrorism Act. In 1973,

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

she fought and won the right for political prisoners to have access to legal counsel, and later defended BCM members Saths Cooper and Strini Moodley. In 1982, she obtained a Master of Law and in 1988 a Doctorate of Juridical Science from Harvard University. Pillay joined the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in 1995, serving as its Judge President from 1999 for two four-year terms. Since 2003, she served as judge on the International Criminal Court. Pillay is co-founder of the South African Advice Desk for Abused Women and was appointed the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on 28 July 2008.

23 September 1963.

First Lake Kariba earthquake

A 6.1 Richter scale occurred on the human-made lake, Lake Kariba, the first of five up to 2021, caused by the massive weight of the water, with the lake built on an area with a history of seismic activity.

23 September 2019.

Jazz veteran Dorothy Masuka passed on



Dorothy Masuka was born on 23 September 1935 in Zimbabwe, to a Zambian father and KZN mother. Masuka is known for her contribution to jazz in South Africa and the entire world. Masuka's talent was discovered when she was singing at a school concert at St. Thomas Catholic Boarding School in Johannesburg. At the age of sixteen she signed up at Troubadour Records. During her teenage years, she released about 30 singles and most of them achieved hit status, including her famous song 'Hamba Nontsokolo'. In 1961 Masuka wrote a song to pay tribute to Patrice Lumumba of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). She continued to release more songs until one of her songs about apartheid laws was banned. She then went into exile where she spent time in Malawi and Tanzania. While in exile, she campaigned for the liberation of people through music. At the time of her death, Dorothy Masuka was based in Yeoville, Johannesburg. She died at her home, surrounded by her children and grandchildren, after suffering from hypertension.

23 September 2021.

National Theatre of Somalia re-opens

The National Theatre in Mogadishu opened with film screening attended by thousands. The theatre was destroyed by Islamic militants during the civil war, was restored and again destroyed a second time in 2012 with a suicide bombing.

24 September 1938.

Nigerian Central banker Sanusi born

The Governor of Nigeria's Central bank (1999-2004) appointed by President Obasanjo, Joseph Oladele Sanusi was born in Ondo state, known for stabilizing and steering the country's banking system.

24 September 1957.

Sibongile Khumalo born on this day

On this day Sibongile Khumalo was born in Orlando, Soweto. She was one of the most recognized jazz, classical music, opera and traditional music artists in South Africa. She was launched into the limelight in 1993 when she won the Standard Bank Young Artist Award at the Grahamstown Festival. Born into a music family, she studied music and performed at several honoured occasions, including Nelson Mandela's 75th birthday and the 1994 Inauguration. Khumalo received the national Order of Ikhamanga in Silver. The 'First Lady of Song' passed away at age 63 on 28 January 2021.

24 September 2008.

Motlanthe elected as President



THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Following the resignation of President Thabo Mbeki, the National Assembly elected Cde Kgalema Motlanthe as the third President of the Republic of South Africa, a position he served in until the elections in 2009.

24 September 2020

Ethiopia starts Bridges programme for Youth employment

Ethiopia started the programme to create 600,000 jobs for young people (80% female), as well as 15,000 small businesses over a period of five years. The programme seeks to train 300,000 young people at Ethiopia's seven industrial parks.

25 September 1974

Viva Frelimo Rallies in SA



The achievement of independence in Mozambique inspired the Black People's Convention (BPC) and the South African Students' Organisation (SASO), to organise a 'Viva Frelimo' rally. If Portuguese colonialism could be defeated in Mozambique, so could settler-colonialism in South Africa. The idea was conceived

by the SASO president at the time, Muntu Myeza. These rallies were the only national campaigns to be staged by SASO and it accelerated tension between SASO and the South African government. On the day of the rallies people turned up in large numbers in Durban and Turfloop. Police arrests followed and many BCM/BPC/SASO leaders were arrested, like Absolom Zitulele Cindi, Sathasivan Cooper, Rubin Hare, Sulayman Ahmed Ismail, Mosioua Gerard Patrick Lekota, Maitsho Nchaube, Aubrey Mokoape, Sivalingam Moodley, Strinivasa Rajoo Moodley, Justice Edward Lindane, Muntu Myeza, Pandelani Jeremiah Nefolovhodwe, Nkwenkwe Vincent Nkomo, Gilbert Kaborane, Kaunda Sedibe, and Sadeque Variava. They were subsequently charged under the Terrorism Act, after months in detention.

25 September 1977

Steve Bantu Biko Buried



After his killing by the apartheid regime in detention on 12 September 1977, and attempts to hide what happened, Biko's funeral was the first big political funeral in South Africa since the 1960s. As bus-loads of mourners neared Biko's burial town (King William's Town), they passed Black youths standing solemnly along the road with their clenched fists raised. Prominent white liberals, such as MP Helen Suzman, attended. So did the black American diplomat, Donald McHenry and other international dignitaries. At the funeral, 20 000 people marched and sang freedom songs. For five hours, speakers eulogised Biko. The Reverend Xundu, the Transkei Anglican priest, who presided over the funeral, appealed to God to take sides with the oppressed to overthrow the system.

26 September 1936

Winnie Madikizela Mandela born

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, an icon of the liberation struggle, was born in Bizana, Pondoland. Madikizela-Mandela was a staunch opponent of the apartheid government. She was jailed, harassed and eventually banished to Brandfort whilst her husband was in prison. Her militancy and empathy with the oppressed earned her a title of "mother of the nation". Madikizela-Mandela played a role in the founding of the Black Women's Federation and the Black Parents' Association; was a member of Umkhonto weSizwe and of the ANC NEC, and a Member of Parliament until her passing on 2 April 2018.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



26 September 1916

**Mary Smith, Ichthyologist
born**



On 26 September 1916 artist and ichthyologist, Margaret Mary Smith, was born in Indwe in the Eastern Cape. Ichthyology is the branch of zoology that deals with the study of fishes. Margaret Mary Smith illustrated the book 'Sea fishes of Southern Africa' by Prof. J.L.B. Smith, which is regarded as one of the most comprehensive books on fishes in the world.

26 September 1950

SASOL registered

The history of Sasol began in 1927 when a White Paper was tabled in Parliament to investigate the establishment of a South African oil-from-coal industry. It was realised then that, because South Africa did not have crude oil reserves, the country's balance of payments had to be protected against increasing crude oil imports. After many years of research

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

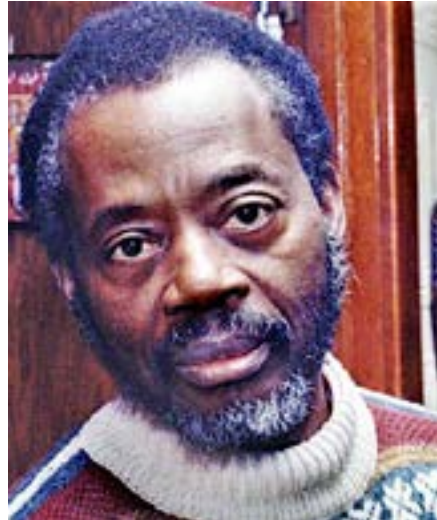
and international negotiations, Die Suid Afrikaanse Steenkool, Olie en Gaskorporasie (the South African Coal Oil and Gas Corporation) was formed and registered on 26 September 1950. The company has developed world-leading technology for the conversion of low grade coal into value-added synfuels and chemicals. Today, its operational footprint extends to more than 20 countries and they export to over 100. Sasol is one of the top five publicly listed companies in South Africa and is listed on the JSE and the NYSE.

26 September 2002 Senegalese ferry disaster



The world's worst civilian ship disaster took place when the Senegalese ferry, Le Jolla, capsized in a storm off Gambia. Officially, 1836 lives were lost (compared to 1500 when the Titanic sank in 1912). Only 65 people survived the disaster. Nearly half of the victims were from the town of Ziguinchor, Senegal, including 150 secondary school pupils from the town.

27 September 1939 Sociologist and liberation theologian Jean-Marc Ela born



Cameroonian sociologist and theologian who articulated the Christian foundation for African liberation theology was born in Ebolowa.

27 September 1961 Imam Haron killed in detention



Imam Haron was born on the 8th February 1924 in Claremont, Cape Town. He was influenced by the various progressive political trends in

South Africa and internationally. He was influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood, the Teachers' League of SA, the NEUM and progressive trade unionists such as Ray Alexander. He established the Claremont Muslim Youth Association. When he was appointed Imam of Stegman mosque he initiated the tradition of getting progressive speakers to address his congregation. This tradition persists still today. He was the editor of Muslim News (from 1960 to 1966). He maintained contact with Alex La Guma, Robert Sobukwe and others. He spoke out when others were silent. He urged his constituency to support the 1960 anti-pass marches; he spoke out in favour of workers on strike and of struggles against the apartheid regime. He was arrested by Spyker van Wyk, tortured for 123 days and died on 27th September 1969. No one was brought to book for his brutal murder. In 2014, Imam Haron was awarded the National Order of Luthuli for his "exceptional contribution to raising awareness of political injustices". The family has decided to apply to reopen the inquest into his murder.

27 September 1961 Khaled Al Khamissi born

The Egyptian writer and columnist was born on this day in Cairo. His hitherto three critically acclaimed novels have been translated in over 25 languages. Al Khamissi founded Doum, an institution for critical thinking, as well as story-telling and literary festivals.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

27 September 1965

**Dr Margaret Campbell,
Africana collector passed**

on

Margaret Roach “Killie” Campbell was born in Mount Edgecombe, KZN on 9 September 1881. She was educated at St. Anne’s Diocesan College in Natal and St. Leonard’s School in Scotland, where she developed a profound interest in history. Campbell was well known for her private collection of Africana, which is made up of items specific to

Natal and the Zulu people. She collected manuscripts, books, photographs and maps over her lifetime, and encouraged both settlers and Zulu families to write their family stories, in order to preserve local history. Her collection of historical artefacts has allowed for much research, and she was awarded honorary degrees from the University of Natal and the University of the Witwatersrand for her contribution to historical preservation. She died in

Durban on 27 September 1965, and her collection was donated posthumously to the university.

27 September 1987

**Africa’s rapid transit
system opens**

The first section of the Cairo rapid transit system opens, connecting the suburb of Helwan with the Ramses Square. Cairo Metro is Africa’s first fully-fledged rapid urban transit system.

COMMEMORATING

THE LIFE AND

ACTIVISM

OF

CDE PRAVIN

GORDHAN

SUNDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 2024

14H00

JOHANNESBURG CITY HALL

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

21 – 27 September 2024

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



21 September

International Day of Peace

In a world with rising geopolitical tensions and protracted conflicts, there has never been a better time to remember how the UN General Assembly came together in 1999 to lay out the values needed for a culture of peace. These include: respect for life, human rights and fundamental freedoms; the promotion of non-violence through education, dialogue and cooperation; commitment to peaceful settlement of conflicts; and adherence to freedom, justice, democracy, tolerance, solidarity, cooperation, pluralism, cultural diversity, dialogue and understanding at all levels of society and among nations.

21 September

World Alzheimer Day

World Alzheimer's Day is a global effort to raise awareness and challenge the stigma around Alzheimer's disease and other dementia. More than 55 million mainly older persons across the world are affected by this terrible disease. Symptoms include

memory loss that disrupt daily lives, challenges to plan and solve problems, difficulties in completing familiar tasks, confusion with time and place and new problems with words in writing or speaking.

21 September

Bibliodiversity Day

Bibliodiversity is diversity applied to the world of books. Echoing biodiversity, it refers to the critical diversity of products (books, scripts, eBooks, apps, and oral literature) made available to readers. Bibliodiversity is a complex, self-sustaining system of storytelling, writing, publishing, and other kinds of production of oral and written literature. It also importantly refers to diversity of voices and languages in the world of books. "Historically marginalised voices—those of people of colour, the LGBTQ+ community, individuals with disabilities, and various ethnic and cultural groups—have often been sidelined. The consequence is a limited perspective that fails to capture the richness and complexity of the human experience." (Anjita Ganguly, Exceller Books)

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

23 September

International Sign Languages Day

According to the World Federation of the Deaf, there are more than 70 million deaf people worldwide. More than 80% of them live in developing countries. Collectively, they use more than 300 different sign languages. Sign languages are fully fledged natural languages, structurally distinct from the spoken languages. There is also an international sign language, which is used by deaf people in international meetings and informally when travelling and socializing. It is considered a pidgin form of sign language that is not as complex as natural sign languages and has a limited lexicon. In 2023, sign language was recognized as the 12th South African official language.

24 September

World Bollywood Day

Initially, "Bollywood" referred to the Hindi culture, art, and film industry from Bombay, India. However, it usually encompasses the whole South Asian film culture. After India won its independence from the British, cinema gained broad recognition, especially after creating the Film and Television Institute of India and India's first International Film Festival, which popularized Bollywood. The date, September 24th, commemorates the release of "Raja Harishchandra" in 1913, widely considered the first full-length Indian feature film. Bollywood produces around 1000 films each year, double that of Hollywood in the US.

24 September

Heritage Day

Heritage Day on 24 September recognises and celebrates the cultural wealth of our nation. South Africans celebrate the day by remembering the cultural heritage of the many cultures that make up the population of South Africa, celebrating unity in diversity. 24 September used to be named Shaka Day, the anniversary of the death of King Shaka.

26 September

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

The elimination of nuclear weapons is amongst the oldest goals of the United Nations. It is one of its first global resolutions adopted in 1946 and every UN Secretary General has actively pursued this goal. However, according to the UN, there are still over 13,000 nuclear weapons in the world, with well-funded plans by nuclear countries to advance

investment in nuclear weapons. South Africa is the only country that voluntarily gave up its nuclear weapons and programme, making the African continent a nuclear-weapon free zone.

26 September

World Environmental Health Day

Environmental health day focuses attention on the impact of the environment we live in, and the damage we continue to do to our environment on human health. Environmental health issues include polluted air, water and lack of sanitation, amongst other issues. The fight against climate change is a key part of promoting environmental health, as the impact of climate change – extreme weather conditions, water shortages, loss of biodiversity and so forth – already has a devastating impact on our lives. Environmental health is a national, provincial and local competency, and through the district development model, these spheres of government must cooperate to address environmental issues impacting on public health.

26 September

World Maritime Day

The theme for 2024 is Navigating the future: safety first! The focus is on maritime safety, together with protecting the environment of our oceans and seas. International shipping transports more than 80 per cent of global trade to peoples and communities all over the world. Shipping is the most efficient and cost-effective method of international transportation for most goods; it provides a dependable, low-cost means of transporting goods globally, facilitating commerce and trade. Shipping contributes about 3% of global emissions, about the same as airlines. In 2010 at a summit in Kampala, Uganda, the African Union Summit adopted the revised Maritime Transport Charter, aimed at greater cooperation on issues of safety, environmental protection, preventing illegal and overfishing and maritime security.

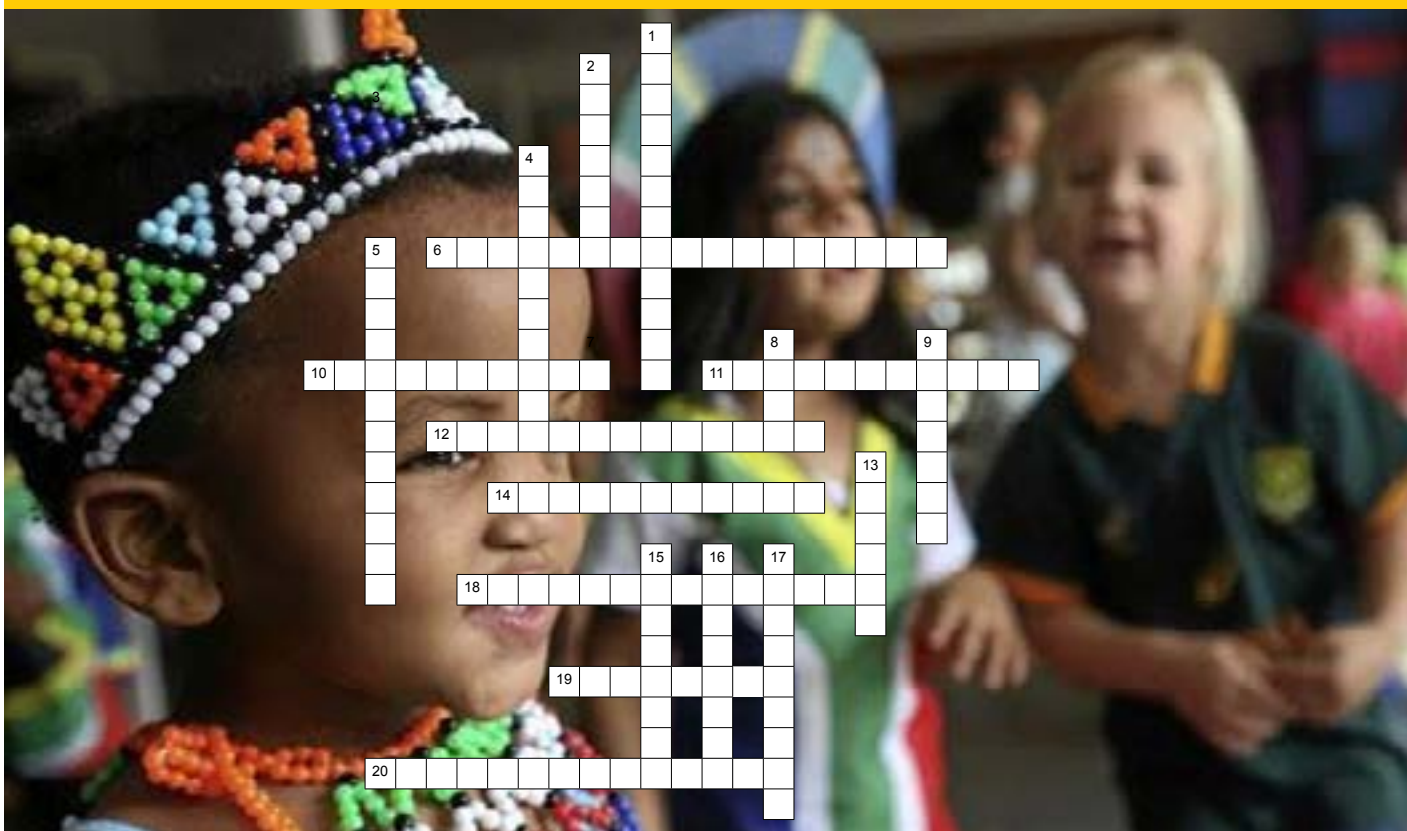
27 September

World Tourism Day

Tourism plays an important role not only in the pleasure and learning for those who travel, but also towards the global and national economy. In 2024, about 1.5 billion international tourists are expected to travel to various destinations; tourism will constitute 10.6% of global GDP, with an expected year on year growth of 17%. In South Africa, tourism accounted for 8.2% of our GDP, expected to rise to 8.8% this year.

X-WORD

Heritage Day, 2024



Across

- 3. Most translated African work, *The Upright Revolution: Or Why Humans Walk Upright* author
- 6. Queen of AfroPop (1964-2004)
- 10. 1997 hit song by Queen of AfroPop
- 11. SASL has its own... structure independent of any spoken/written language
- 12. Nobel Peace Laureate (1961) and ANC President
- 14. First African to receive Nobel Prize for Literature (1986)
- 18. Bold large-scale contemporary paintings that reference her Ndebele heritage.
- 19. Popular music style originated in South Africa during the 1990s
- 20. Celebrated photographer, visual artist, feminist and queer activist

Down

- 1. Music genre of legendary Ladysmith Black Mambazo
- 2. Hugh Masekela song about migrant labour
- 4. Least spoken of South Africa's official languages
- 5. Became our 12th Official language in 2023
- 7. Received Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine (1951)
- 8. South African Sign Language
- 9. 1959 South African jazz musical hit
- 13. Language spoken most often in South African households, 24.4% (15.13 million)
- 15. MDU aka TRP credited for discovering this SA sound taking the world by storm
- 16. Most translated SA book, by JR Tolkien
- 17. Music form 1890s and 1920s, linked to keyboard style

WORD BANK

Sign language
isiZulu
isiNdebele
grammatical
SASL

The Hobbit
Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o
Max Theiler
Albert Luthuli
Wole Soyinka

kwaito
Brenda Fassie
Vulindlela
Marabi
Isicathamiya

Stimela
Amapiano
King Kong
Zanele Muholi
Esther Mahlangu

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