



# ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the  
**President**

## Every one of us has a part to play in ending gender-based violence

By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**



**25** NOVEMBER marks the start of 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children. Since its inception this global campaign has drawn support from organisations and activists in more than 187 countries, including in South Africa.

Violence against women and children in our country is pervasive. Women and children are being beaten, assaulted and killed in the streets, in the workplace, at places of learning, and in their homes.

Women and children are supposed to feel most safe within the home. Yet it is within the home where the majority of the world's victims of gender-based violence

## CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT

die at the hands of men. A new report by UN Women has found that around 60% of victims of femicide in 2023 were killed in a domestic setting by someone close to them.

Intimate partner violence remains the most prevalent form of gender-based violence in South Africa. In the first South African National Gender-Based Violence Study, which was released by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) last week, a fifth of all men surveyed said they had committed sexual or physical violence against their partners.

Sexism is at the root of these crimes: the belief that men and boys are superior to women and girls. We must therefore address head-on the idea that women are the 'property' of their husbands and boyfriends, and that they can be beaten, abused and even killed at whim.

We must address the economic dimension, where men think they have the right over the bodies of their wives because they are breadwinners, or because they finance the lifestyles of their girlfriends. Many women find themselves trapped in situations of economic dependence, feeling they have to put up with abuse because the alternative is destitution.

The fight to end gender-based violence must begin with prevention.

This means, among other things, that we must address the way many men and boys are raised and the way they are socialised.

Last year, I participated in a Young Men and Boys Indaba. What struck me during this engagement is the important role of socialisation.



These young men had an inherent sense of empathy towards their female relatives and classmates, and understood that men and women have equal rights.

But at some point in their lives, they were exposed to a form of toxic masculinity in which ill-treating women is seen as macho and manly. Treating women with respect is seen as weak or 'simping'. It is deeply troubling to witness how this has taken hold among the younger generation and online.

Ending gender-based violence begins with changing the narrative. Women's rights and gender equality are non-negotiable. They are not culturally relative or open to interpretation.

Young men and boys must be educated on the importance of equality between men and women. They must appreciate the value of healthy relationships as opposed to transactional arrangements. Young men must be taught the importance of consent. We therefore applaud the many men who have come forward to sign the Pledge for South African Men to End Gender-Based Violence, either in person or online. We encourage more men to make this stand by signing the pledge and through their daily conduct towards women.

Gender-based violence thrives in a climate of silence. Women are often told by family members or religious, traditional and community leaders to go and 'work things out' with husbands who are beating them. This must stop. Other men are sometimes part of the problem. By remaining silent when they know that their friends, classmates or co-workers are abusers, they are complicit in the crime. Perpetrators of such acts should be isolated. It should be made clear that their actions are unacceptable and reported to the police.

We need to create safe spaces – whether in schools, religious settings, workplaces or police stations – where women can speak freely about experiences of abuse, and where they can find care and support.

Workplaces must strictly enforce laws against sexism in the workplace. There must be far greater consideration and accommodation of female workers when it comes to working late and to providing more security in isolated work facilities.

Just as gender-based violence affects everyone, so too we must all work together to overcome it. We need all community, civic and religious formations to form part of this effort. At this time of activism, we must mobilise businesses, trade unions, academic communities and public servants to get involved.

During this year's 16 Days of Activism let us continue to work together to make our country safer for women and children.

We must all play our part. We must all speak up and speak out. None of us must look away. ■

## FOCUS: 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

# The hidden economic burden: How GBV undermines SA's prosperity

By **DEPUTY PRESIDENT PAUL MASHATILE**

**A**S we enter the annual 16 Days of Activism Against Women and Children, thus intensifying the fight against gender-based violence (GBV), we must confront a truth we cannot afford to ignore: gender-based violence is not only a profound social injustice but a persistent obstacle to our nation's growth and prosperity.

Gender-based violence in South Africa is a devastating reality, with alarming statistics reported by Statistics South Africa (Stats-SA).

According to the most recent figures, one in three women aged 16 and older have experienced physical violence, and one in five women have suffered sexual violence. These figures paint a harrowing picture of the scale of GBV in our society, a crisis that affects millions of South Africans and undermines the foundations of our democracy and the growth of the economy.

In this regard, the 16 Days of Activism campaign plays a crucial role in raising awareness, particularly about the root causes of GBV, such as gender inequality and toxic masculinity.



### **Need for collective action**

This year's campaign, themed "30 Years of Advancing Collective Action to End Violence Against Women and Children," highlights the importance of collective action and the need for a multi-sectoral approach to combat GBV.

In South Africa, a society built on ideals of equality and justice after apartheid, the pervasiveness of GBV against women and girls reveals deep, lingering inequities that we must address if we are to realise the promise of our democracy. This violence is often framed as a human rights and social welfare issue, yet its

repercussions extend far beyond individual cases.

The economic toll it takes on our nation is equally devastating. It drains resources, disrupts productivity, and weakens the fabric of our economy. If we are to build a prosperous and equitable future, we must first confront and address the scourge of GBV in a meaningful and comprehensive way.

The cost of GBV in South Africa is staggering, with recent studies estimating the economic burden of gender-based violence to be as high as R42 billion annually.

## FOCUS: 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM



This figure highlights the fact that the impact of GBV reaches far beyond the personal suffering of survivors; it affects the economy at large, from lost productivity to strained health services and increased security costs.

When women suffer violence, they are unable to participate fully in the workforce, diminishing their economic potential and limiting the country's overall productivity. Furthermore, many women are forced to take time off from work due to injuries or trauma, leading to absenteeism and reduced effectiveness.

For the economy to grow and thrive, it needs the full participation of all its members, and gender-based violence undermines that participation, particularly for women, who make up half of the population.

In many cases, women find themselves trapped in abusive relationships due to financial dependency, unable to break free

and pursue economic opportunities. As a result, GBV not only affects the victims but deprives the economy of the full potential of half its population.

This economic impact of GBV is far-reaching, with consequences that ripple through various sectors of society. Health services, for example, are overwhelmed by the needs of survivors, many of whom require extensive medical care for physical and psychological trauma.

The roots of GBV in South Africa are deeply intertwined with the country's history of colonialism, apartheid, and entrenched patriarchy. These systems normalised violence, particularly against women, and entrenched gender-based power imbalances that continue to shape societal attitudes today. The normalisation of patriarchal values, including toxic masculinity and gender inequality, creates a fertile ground for GBV to flourish. In this context, addressing GBV in

South Africa requires more than policy reform; it requires a deep cultural shift.

### Workplace policies

There is a growing recognition of the importance of economic empowerment in addressing GBV. Economic independence can reduce women's vulnerability to violence by providing them with the means to leave abusive relationships.

Initiatives that support women's entrepreneurship, increase access to education, and promote financial literacy can go a long way in empowering women and reducing their reliance on abusive partners. Moreover, expanding access to economic opportunities for women, particularly in marginalised communities, is essential to break the cycle of poverty and violence.

Workplace policies must also be overhauled to support survivors of GBV. Providing paid leave for

## FOCUS: 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

survivors, creating workplace support programmes, and training employees to recognise and respond to GBV are critical measures that can help address the issue in the private sector.

National Strategic Plan (NSP) on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide, launched in 2020, has marked a significant step toward addressing GBV, there is still much work to be done.

The NSP, for instance, emphasises a multi-sectoral approach, calling for collaboration between government, civil society, and the private sector to combat GBV. The government's efforts to strengthen legal frameworks and services for survivors, such as the establishment of the 24-Hour Gender-Based Violence Command Centre hotline and the rollout of GBV desks in police stations, show a commitment to tackling the issue head-on.

However, these measures alone are insufficient. Addressing GBV requires systemic change across

multiple sectors, from law enforcement to healthcare and education. Government interventions must not only focus on support for victims but also on prevention. Education and community outreach are essential in changing societal attitudes toward women and girls, challenging harmful cultural practices, and promoting positive masculinity.

### **New laws to prosecute GBV**

The criminal justice system has also made progress with the introduction of new laws aimed at strengthening the prosecution of GBV cases. The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act, the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Act, and the Domestic Violence Amendment Act, which came into effect in 2022, are significant steps toward improving the legal framework for GBV cases.

These laws enhance protection for victims, make it harder for perpetrators to evade justice, and introduce harsher penalties

for offenders. The establishment of specialised sexual offences courts and the training of law enforcement officers to handle cases of GBV with sensitivity and professionalism are important steps in ensuring that victims receive the justice they deserve.

In conclusion, while progress has been made, the road to eliminating gender-based violence in South Africa is long and requires sustained commitment and action. The government's investment in GBV programmes, the development of the National Strategic Plan, and the establishment of specialised legal mechanisms are all positive steps forward.

However, achieving meaningful change requires a cultural shift that challenges ingrained attitudes, promotes gender equality, and empowers women economically. By working together, we can build a society where all individuals, regardless of gender, can live free from violence and fear, contributing fully to the nation's growth and prosperity. ■



# Veterans League urges members to lend a helping hand to stop the spread of food-borne diseases

■ By **SNUKI ZIKALALA**

**T**HE Veterans League of the ANC is alarmed and saddened by the death and sickness suffered by children eating contaminated foods. We extend our condolences to these children's families, friends, and communities.

President Cyril Ramaphosa indicated when he addressed the nation on 15th November that the reasons include poor waste management and the distribution of illegal pesticides. He made it clear that *"the investigations that have taken place do not suggest any deliberate campaign to poison children in our country" and that there is "no evidence that the problem is confined to spaza shops owned by foreign nationals only"*.

One of the pillars of the ANC VL renewal programme is for branches to reconnect with communities. Another encourages us to reassert the values of non-racialism and non-sexism, and hand in hand with this should go the values embodied in our Bill of Rights. Thus, in the face of deep concerns in communities around food-borne diseases and the role of spaza shops and foreign nationals, we should reach out to communities to provide leadership and reinforce



Constitutional values.

As members of the Veterans League, we should work with ANC branches and other structures to:

- Educate community members on the dangers of expired foods, pesticides and other risks to safe food;
- Report the illegal use of pesticides and other poisonous chemicals or substances;
- Demand local municipalities to remove illegal dumping and clean our areas regularly so that rats, flies and ants do not proliferate as well as increase the number and capacity of environmental health inspectors; and
- Working with community members to set up food gardens and with school governing bodies to arrange for health school tuck shops.

It would also be important that ANC structures and deployees

work on:

- Accelerating a supportive and fair regulatory framework for small businesses in townships and informal settlements that can be enforced;
- Defending the right to trade legally, to dignity, and to non-discrimination; and
- Build township economies, including creating opportunities and financing for young people to set up and grow small businesses in townships.

We should not be supporting those who are using the tragedy of food-borne disease to call for the closure of all foreign-owned spaza shops or that locals should own all township shops. This is a recipe for increased tensions in our communities and opens up the possibility of xenophobic attacks. ■

**Snuki Zikalala** is President of the ANC Veterans League.

# The Best and Worst of Times

■ By **FÉBÉ POTGIETER-GQUBULE**

**T**HE world is experiencing tumultuous changes, and these changes affect all regions and countries.

Extreme weather conditions have become a fact of life. To the north of South Africa, the Kariba dam, the world's largest human-made reservoir that provides hydro power to Zimbabwe and Zambia is at an all-time low due to a prolonged drought. Not too long ago, major roads leading to Durban in South Africa were closed due to heavy snows (yes, snow in Africa!).

Not least momentous are political developments. In May this year, South Africa's liberation movement, the African National Congress, lost an absolute majority for the first time in 30 years of democracy, gaining only 40% of the national vote, and chose to form a government of national unity (GNU) with nine other political parties. Next door, the Botswana Democratic Party, governing since independence from Britain in 1966, was trounced in an election which left it with a paltry four seats in parliament.

From a public health perspective, Africa weathered the COVID-19 pandemic relatively well, despite global vaccine and supplies apartheid, having formed its African Centers of Disease Control in the aftermath of the 2014-15 Ebola pandemic in parts of West Africa. However, the

social and economic impact is still being felt, with major setbacks in 2020 in the continent's progress with meeting critical goals in the African Union Agenda 2023 and the SDGs, including on poverty, access to water and sanitation, and hunger. Four years later, climate change, instability and continued global supply change challenges as a result of the wars in Ukraine and against Palestine, continue to impede movement on getting back on track to meet these developmental targets.

Given the historical link between Africa and Europe, we watch with keen interest developments to our north as well, including the welcome yet fragile signs of growth, the rise in far-right political

parties, changes in immigration policies, and of course the war in Ukraine. Europe remains amongst Africa's largest trading partners, although the continent is diversifying its trade, especially with Asia and South America. Over the last two decades, the continent through the African Union has built partnerships across the world, and this is beginning to be reflected in diversified trade and investment.

The entering into force of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is another pivotal development, and though in its infancy, we are already seeing the impact of movement towards a common market in our part of the world.



## CURRENT AFFAIRS

The re-election of President Trump came as no surprise to most Africans, given the changes confronting the USA. These not only include domestic challenges such as a fractious and divisive body politic (though some may argue given its history of slavery that this has always been the case), deteriorating infrastructure and it remains amongst the most unequal countries amongst its OECD peers. More importantly, for the first time since the 15th century, Western dominance of the world is no longer a given, as we move towards a more multipolar world.

And therein lies the mystery of what a second term of President Trump as leader of the West will mean for all of us. His election and early appointments cemented a general consolidation towards the right. Early policy pronouncements range from mass deportation of immigrants, absconding from global climate change commitments (again), warming up of the trade war with China through harsher import tariffs, and choosing which wars to end (Ukraine) and which to continue (Palestine). His policies on the more domestic front may portend a remake of US governance not seen since Roosevelt and Reagan.

The USA remains the largest economic, military and political force in the world, so when it sneezes... Firstly, it will have a major impact on negotiations underway in Baku in COP29, given that it's dubbed as the 'Financing COP', an issue critical for Africa. As we have to keep reminding the world, we contribute less than 4% of global emissions, but are disproportionately affected by climate change including food insecurity, population

displacement, and limited water supplies. Thus, more than 90% of African countries already ratified the Paris Agreement, and most countries include climate mitigation and adaptation in their national development plans. A refusal by the US to meet its financing obligations, along with a reluctant Europe, will continue to be devastating for our continent. Engagements with the USA on this issue will therefore remain pivotal.

More concerning though is escalations of conflict with China, over trade and intellectual property, over issues of control of the Indo-Pacific region, the South China Seas and Taiwan. Not only is there a potential that any one of these issues may lead to more global conflict and instability, but the expectations that all of us must then choose sides.

South Africa, since the dawn of its democracy in 1994, has tirelessly advocated for multilateralism. It has done so working with countries of the North – in the United Nations and its agencies, in institutions like the G20 and through bilateral relations. It has also been a leading voice of countries of the South through the African Union, the G77 and BRICS+, in pursuit of a more just and equitable world order.

South Africa took over the G20 Presidency from Brazil this month, and will work together with the G20 Troika over the coming two years, inclusive of the US administration who will host the G20 in 2026. This will indeed be an opportunity for close engagement with the Trump administration on key global issues.

Given its own experience of

a peaceful settlement after centuries of conflict, South Africa continues to advocate for peaceful and just resolutions of conflict, hence its position on ending the genocide in Palestine and for a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Ukraine.

The major powers of the world – new and old – should be reminded that next year will be 70 years since African and Asian countries gathered in the Bandung Conference of 1955, which led to the formation of the Non-aligned movement. At the time, given that many of us were still not free, 'political self-determination, mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality' were the guiding principles that united countries, determined not to be forced in a situation to choose between one superpower and another. The context has changed, and we now also talk about 'non-indifference' and economic self-determination. But the aspiration not to be dragged into the fights of elephants remain.

2025, South Africa also celebrates 70 years of a historic document, its Freedom Charter, which set our aspirations for international relations, namely that *"There shall be peace and friendship,"* and a commitment to work side by side. For us, this aspiration and commitment remains relevant, irrespective of who is in the White House. ■

**Fébé Potgieter-Gqubule** is Head of ANC Policy and Research, and a member of its National Executive Committee. This article was first published in the *International Politics and Society Journal, Germany* (<https://www.ipg-journal.de/regionen/afrika/artikel/auf-eigenem-weg-7940/>).





1 DECEMBER 2024

HOW WILL YOU HELP  
END HIV STIGMA?

WORLD  
AIDS  
DAY

# The Fight Against HIV/AIDS and 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children: **CONSOLIDATING OUR GAINS**

■ By **GEORGE MAGOMA**

**T**HE 1st of December is an important day in the life of the country. This day falls within the 16 Days of Violence against Women and Children, and International Aids Day. These days are preceded by the Gay Pride and International Men's Day. These are intrinsically interwoven and interrelated, needing an integrated approach and resource pooling as a way of unleashing a massive storm to curb women and child abuse, reduction of infections, homophobia, misogyny and masculinity.

As we commemorate these days, a dialogue is necessary to assess the strides made using various instruments.

With the release of crime statis-

tics on the 25th November, the picture is grim. At the end of the brutal stick of violence is women and children who suffer the brunt of rape, abuse, HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI), including child molestation which leaves psychological scars.

These 16 Days of Activism enjoin us to raise our voices, to join in the crusade to free children and women from the clutches of unbridled and wanton violence. Their bodies are permanently scarred, their souls trembling, scared at the sight of their perpetrators who freely roam the streets with impunity. Trapped in poverty and dependency, the molesters are breadwinners who hold "When we lend a hand to

those living with HIV and AIDS, we build our own humanity"-power to excommunicate, disinherit and disown their wives and children, with threats of death given their power.

A blind eye and inaction to these atrocities amounts to complicity, fuelling more harm, sinking the victims deep into hopelessness, disabling activism where it is needed most. Our voices can make a meaningful contribution to change the status quo, bringing normalcy, love, protection and care. All efforts are necessary to support existing plans and strategies.

In the *Origin of the Family, Private Property and State*, Engels teaches us that "For there all the

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

*children of brothers and sisters, without any exception, are considered brothers and sisters, and regarded as the common children not only of their mother or her sisters, or their father and his brothers, but all of the brothers and sisters of their parents without distinction.”*

What does this mean and how does it apply in our context; and how is our society configured and what is its value system? The answer is simple. No one can lay exclusive claim to children for they belong to society congenial to our family value system and our conviction that the family is the basic unit of society. In creating a society free of violence we need a reset and to re-cultivate a traditional culture that existed many years during the existence and evolution of humankind as advocated by Engels. This is a culture of community ownership, belonging, protection, empathy and activism.

This approach is buttressed by Alexandra Kollontai who in her seminal work, ***Sexual Relations and the Class Struggle*** opines that “...so repeatedly the moment inevitably arrived in which I had to shake off the chains of community with an aching heart but with a sovereign, uninfluenced will. Then I was again alone.”

We need an integrated and col-



lective approach embedded in the system of familyhood and community values of oneness. We assume leadership even in face of difficult moments which we can only overcome as a society rather than individuals.

The ANC had introduced a number of measures and interventions to address HIV/AIDS prevalence, culminating in the reduction of mother to child transmission, availability of antiretroviral (ARVs), anti-stigmatization and educational programmes. These interventions drastically reduced infection in a country once heavily battered by HIV/AIDS.

Under ***Public Health, Societies***

***and Belonging***, the Human Sciences Research Council (2024) released a report on the prevalence of HIV across provinces. The survey revealed a trend in a number of provinces with high prevalence in some and reduction in others.

The survey included men and women, youth, urban, rural and in farms. These findings represent significant progress in the fight against HIV. But more still needs to be done.

Complementary to this, the ANC advocated for the legislation and policies to address the scourge of violence against women and children through the National Strategic Plan on Gender Based Violence and Femicide. The objective of the plan is to end GBV. This plan is pillared on prevention, criminal justice, support, economic empowerment, accountability and collaboration.

The plan is a wide programme that aims to address the root causes of GBV and provide support to victims. The plan has been

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*I raise up my voice-not so I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.”*

**Malala Yousafza**

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

supported by the government, which has integrated it into government planning processes and made resources available for its implementation.

Some of the measures to prevent gender-based violence include:

- Changing attitudes and challenging gender roles and stereotypes;
- Providing information about gender-based violence, its forms, and support measures;
- Training professionals to identify, address, and respond to gender-based violence;
- Empowering those who are more likely to be at risk of violence.

In addition, the 5th administration led by the ANC government passed the National Council on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide Act. This progressive law is to provide a multi-sectoral and an inter-sectoral approach towards the implementation of the National Strategic Plan at national, provincial and local level and at community and other forums and to affirm a national commitment to building a society that is free from all forms of gender-based violence and femicide.

The ANC machinery is grinding to the hilt to build a better country devoid of gender oppression. We have travelled an arduous and gruelling path where women are still oppressed on the basis of class, race and gender.

We need to triple our efforts to eradicate patriarchy if we are to advance our strategic objective of building a true non-sexist society based on equality, freedom and justice.

On the 19th November, South Africa joined the global community to commemorate Internation-

al Men's Day under the theme **"Positive Role Models."** As the theme suggests, the day needs to be redefined, repurposed and expanded from men's health to impel men into action.

As time evolves this day could be changed to include the fight against violence. Reorientation will include self-introspection, with men assuming centrality in addressing socio-economic inequalities, emancipating women from the chains of bondage and to bridge the inequality gap, restoring their dignity as equal citizens of the earth.

Patriarchy is a heavy shell which men should shed in order to rid society of the albatross of women subjugation.

As with the HIV survey, the HSRC (The First South African National GBV Study, 1992, A Baseline Survey on Victimisation and Perpetration) paints an appalling picture of the manifestation and prevalence of GBV. The study is helpful as it indicates factors that contribute to the escalation of the scourge and necessary interventions to stem the haemorrhage that paints our country in the blood of the innocent and the defenceless.

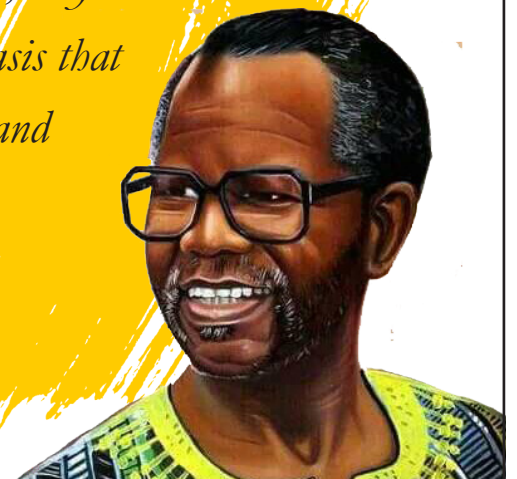
It is important that government, business, faith-based organisations and all sectors of society collaborate to arrest the malady.

WORKING TOGETHER, WE CAN DO MORE. ■



*"South Africa will never be free as long as women are not free". In fact, many activists have acknowledged that the basis on which to judge the liberation of a country is to note the extent to which women are free. This is particularly true of South Africa where the vast majority of women have been triply oppressed. That is, they have been exploited on the basis that they are black, women and workers."*

**President OR Tambo**



# Addressing New Challenges and Responding to Present Day Dynamics

■ By **VUSUMZI MBA**

**T**HE January 8th Statement of the ANC is a historical moment in the history of South Africa. History tells us that the first statement was issued by the ANC in 1972. The purpose was to outline the organisation's programme. This then became a tradition of the liberation movement.

However, the upcoming January 8th statement should be different from all other speeches delivered by the ANC in the past 30 years of democracy. It should be like the 73rd Anniversary speech of President Oliver Tambo in 1985, where the National Executive Committee declared that Black South Africans should render South Africa ungovernable. That is when the National Executive Committee declared 1985 as the year of a cadre. Tambo argued for the unity of the oppressed and called for the youth to make 1985 their year.

The 1985 January 8th Statement of the National Executive Committee thematised the call on the motto: "*participation, development and peace*". Forty years later, the context has changed. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves what a cadre is in the



current epoch and what it means to participate, develop and be at peace in the era of the Government of National Unity.

The Statement coincident with the 30th anniversary of SAC-TU, where Tambo argued that we must harness the collective strength of the working class not merely to improve the immediate economic conditions but to bring about democratic change in the country. In 31 years of democracy, we need to introspect and pose difficult questions on what we have done to improve the socio-economic conditions of

the motive forces of the National Democratic Revolution, which are black people in general and Africans in particular.

Therefore, the 2025 January 8th Statement of the National Executive Committee should find tune and align itself to the 1985 speech delivered by Oliver Tambo. It should be different from all the other speeches because 2025 commemorates the 40th anniversary of the "*Young Lions generation*."

In 1985, the then President of the ANC, President O.R Tambo,

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

made a call to South Africans, particularly the youth, to make South Africa ungovernable. He called the youth the pride of the nation and applauded the youth for standing firm in their demands, and he said, *“We can truly say that they have earned the honour of being called young lions”*. Conceivable, the ANC must converse with itself and answer why the pride of the nation today is unemployed, living in poverty and being labelled as *“amaPhara”* and *“Slay Queens”*. Can the president, on behalf of the National Executive Committee, be firm and proudly say the youth of today is the pride of the nation?

The 113th Anniversary of the African National Congress should be a platform to educate, mobilise and conscientise South Africans about where the ANC is in terms of advancing the National Democratic Revolution. The national executive committee should use the platform to account to the ANC membership as to what happened during the 2024 National government elections and own up for the crisis we are in as the progressives today. Membership of the ANC should use this as a platform of renewal in the literal sense of the word renewal. The celebrations should not be centred on the frivolity and flamboyance of those who have benefited. As these celebrations are neither an extension of the December holidays nor a platform to brag and boast to the poor about what we have acquired through the endeavours of the current government, which include affirmative action and BEE policies.

The African National Congress (ANC) January 8 statement is a significant annual address that outlines the party’s priorities and vision for the upcoming year. In



2025, the ANC should tackle new challenges and address organisational issues to remain relevant and effective. Some of the pressing challenges the ANC should focus on include:

- **Economic Growth and Job Creation:** The ANC should prioritise initiatives that stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and address the rising cost of living. Paying particular attention to the high rate of

youth unemployment.

- **Energy Crisis:** The party must prioritise resolving the energy crisis, which has impeded economic recovery and severely impacted the livelihoods of many South Africans. Small and medium enterprise (SME) owners, in particular, have been forced to close their businesses due to the ongoing energy challenges.

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

- **Crime and Corruption:** The ANC must intensify its efforts to address crime and corruption, fostering a sense of safety and trust in the nation's institutions. Prioritising the crisis of gender-based violence and the alarming murder rates is essential in the broader fight against crime.
- **Climate Change:** The party should develop and implement strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change, which has resulted in extreme weather conditions, social displacement, and food insecurity.

The ANC should focus on strengthening these efforts, as these issues are critical to restoring public confidence, developing/supporting economic recovery, enhancing safety, and the general daily lives of ordinary South Africans.

Furthermore, by remodelling the NDR and addressing its electoral decline, the ANC can reclaim its mantle as a champion of social justice and democracy in South Africa. The Importance of the ANC as a governing party is to re-establish morality and ethics within its leadership and the general membership is very crucial not only for electoral success but to ensure that society sees the ANC as a governing party and an appropriate example of conduct.

Society begins to decay with the decay in the governing party in terms of moral and ethical values. It is then important for the ANC to demonstrate that it does not tolerate corruption to set an example in the public service and society in general. This is important to ensure that you have a society anchored on proper moral and ethical values. If you have

people who are having conspicuous consumption from the proceeds of crime and corruption, this translates to society that it is amenable to steal public money and boast about it thereafter. But even if people have lawfully obtained resources, conspicuous consumption in the sea of poverty is incorrect. If you do this as a member of a governing party whose mandate and objectives are to lift people out of poverty and unemployment, you create an image of an organisation that doesn't care and is out of touch with the reality of millions of South Africans.

A critical question that faces the ANC is to reproduce itself not in a form of a corrupt and self-serving organisation but as a tribune of the people. In this context, it is important to develop the young people within the ANC within the values and the vision of the ANC and for people to understand that the acquisition of skills and knowledge must be in the quest to serve our people better at all times.

The ANC needs a youth anchored in the ANC values and vision and with the requisite skills to assist

it in achieving its objectives and attaining its vision. This means that the youth of the ANC need to acquire three skills. The first is people skills. The second is the knowledge of ANC policies, vision and skills to develop programmes to achieve these. And then lastly, technical and academic skills to ensure that the ANC can deliver on its objectives and vision. This would enable them to provide the necessary leadership required to ensure that the delivery is sustainable and provides qualitative changes in the lives of the South African people.

The ANC needs a youth anchored in the ANC values and vision and with the requisite skills to assist it in achieving its objectives and attaining its vision. This requires young members to develop three core competencies: people skills, a deep understanding of ANC policies and the ability to create effective programmes, and technical and academic expertise to support the ANC's goals. Together, these skills will empower youth to provide sustainable, quality-driven leadership that can bring about meaningful improvements in the lives of South Africans. ■



## CURRENT AFFAIRS



# IS THE TAXI INDUSTRY A LAW UNTO ITSELF OR VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND ITS CONTROL?

■ By **SEPHOKA DAVID SEKGOBELA**

**T**HE *de facto* deregulation in the late eighties led to uncontrolled growth of the taxi industry, and the industry operated on informal basis with minimal or no proper regulatory measures at all. There were many illegal operators with no permits or anything qualifying them to convey people for reward. As a result, the industry eventually slipped into anarchy as it got overtraded, and became a brooding ground for sporadic incidents of violence among warring taxi factions over the so-called lucrative routes. Taxi wars resulted in the deaths of many innocent people – taxi operators, drivers, and the commuters, as members of the taxi industry squared against one another in search of or in defense of their routes.

Although the taxi industry is playing a pivotal role in the provision of public transport

services in South Africa, it remains operating in the periphery of formal economy. However, against all odds, the industry demonstrated remarkable progress and resilience to become the dominant player in the South African public transport sector. Almost 38 per cent of the population is dependent on public transport. Of these, 65 percent use taxis, 21 percent use buses, and 14 per cent use commuter trains. This means, despite not being subsidised, taxis convey more passengers than both buses and trains combined. Average minibus taxi trip is 16 km, compared to 28 km for buses, and 20 km for trains.

Due to challenges caused by apartheid's legacy of spatial dislocation of the poor, public transport, particularly the minibus taxi industry, experienced continued growth and ageing infrastructure as a result of a

rapidly growing urban population. Given historic context of South Africa's low population densities, long travel distances, as well as modal and structural inefficiencies, taxi services remains crucial – providing decentralised, inexpensive, and more accessible public transport to the users. While rail and bus networks serve as trunk services, taxis are key feeders into those services – transporting passengers at their first and last miles, and providing them with greater access and convenience.

The taxi industry is a composite body comprising of a lot of individual operators and/or group of individuals who got together to form associations. Taxis operate unscheduled services on fixed routes that are managed by taxi associations. Taxi associations play a defensive role in protecting their turf from infringing competitors. To protect

## CURRENT AFFAIRS

their turf, they also have to deal with illegal operators plying their trade without permits, due to lack of effective law enforcement.

The industry has lately been in the limelight for wrong reasons, with taxi patrol vehicles preventing private motorists from picking up passengers at the so-called “hiking spots”. That has been widely condemned, but although their actions are not justified, and taxi operators could be perceived to be taking the law unto themselves, there are indeed underlying factors towards the unfortunate incidents that need to be considered. Those actions could be a ‘crying for help’ by the industry.

Therefore, before condemning the taxi industry for all sorts of demeanours, please spare a thought for the ailing and struggling industry. The taxi industry, once hailed as flagship for BEE, is marred by a myriad of challenges. The performance, profitability and viability of the industry is adversely affected on many fronts by internal and external factors. Some of the challenges plaguing the taxi industry include, inter alia, the following:

- **Overtraded or Saturated Market**

Transport is a demand-driven service, but the supply of taxi vehicles far outweighs the demand by passengers thereof. There are more taxi vehicles than passengers. The problem is compounded by advent of transport call, or, e-hailing services – Uber, Bolt, etc. that are dominating the market in some areas. In 2017, SANTACO estimated that there could be more than 200,000 minibus taxis in South Africa. However, the

actual figure is yet unknown, because the industry remains largely unregulated, despite efforts by the government to regulate it.

- **Lack of Access to Capital**

Access to capital is still a major problem to majority of entrepreneurs from the disadvantaged background, including members of the taxi industry.

- **Lack of Unity Within the Taxi Industry**

Unity of the taxi industry is paramount to all relevant stakeholders – the government, the users, and the taxi industry itself. A fragmented and divided taxi industry, due to conflicting views of different taxi interest groups, creates a difficult policy and legislative implementation environment for the government. Without a united industry that speaks with one voice, strategic objectives of the government, which include integration of public transport modes and empowerment of the industry through subsidies, cannot be achieved. Similarly, concerns of safety and security cannot be successfully addressed.

- **Ageing Fleet**

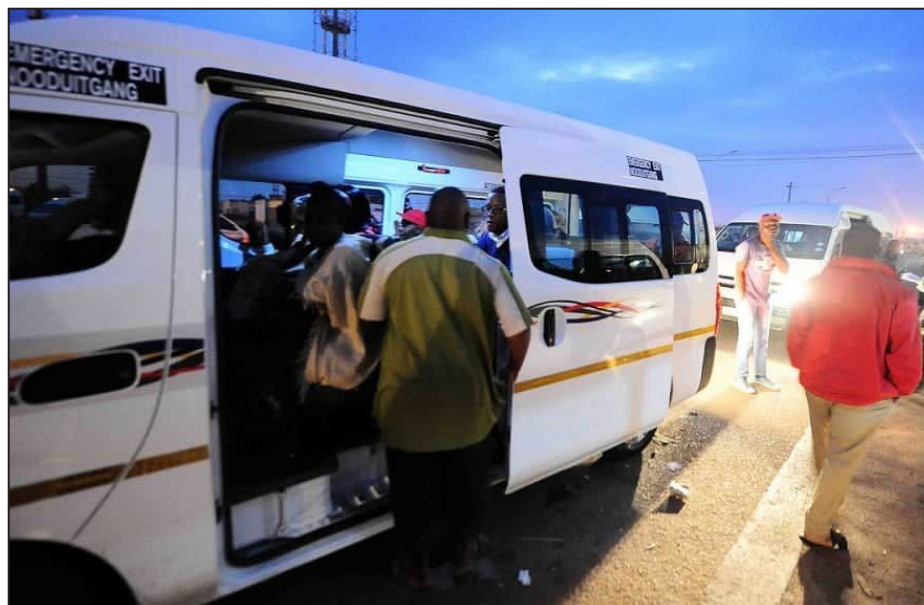
Taxi fleet is characterized by old, unreliable, and poorly maintained vehicles, which compromise safety of passengers. Hence, former President Thabo Mbeki even referred to them as “*mobile coffins*”. It is for that reason that the government initiated Taxi Recapitalisation Programme (TRP) in 2006, to address ageing fleet within the transportation system.

- **The Low Level of Skills**

The low level of skills is attributable to the bulk of social ills plaguing the industry. Majority of members of the industry do not have adequate education and/or necessary skills to run their business effectively and efficiently, and lack business acumen and economic exposure to leverage and exploit alternative business opportunities within the broader transport value chain.

- **Non-Utilization of Bulk Buying Power**

There is poor bargaining power due to composite nature of the industry and individualistic approach towards business by taxi operators. The taxi industry is still unable to accumulate its





## CURRENT AFFAIRS

sparsely situated wealth from the hands of business suppliers. It is not fully utilizing its collective muscle to negotiate for discounted rates from the suppliers, in order to maximize the economies of scale. Instead of buying products at undiscounted shelf prices, the industry could engage in bulk-buying that would allow them discounts when buying certain quantities of particular products.

- **Perceived Complex Regulatory Constraints**

Most taxi operators are generally not complying with relevant legislative requirements. Some of government policy directives and legislative instruments are perceived by the taxi industry to be hostile, and adversely affecting the day-to-day running of the industry in many fronts.

- **Lack of Subsidy for the Taxi Industry**

There is perceived unfair modal competition due to lack of subsidy for the taxi industry by the government, as buses and trains are heavily subsidised. The exclusion of, or, the probable inclusion of the taxi industry into the subsidy regime has been debated at different platforms over a long period. There are different and often conflicting views regarding the issue of taxi subsidy. However, subsidizing the taxi industry directly in its current format the same like the bus and train sectors would be practically impossible, as it would pose serious subsidy administration nightmare. The only viable option for the taxi industry to also enjoy transport subsidy is through integration of public transport system, i.e. contracted and scheduled public transport services operating on a route in accordance with timetable, and vehicles meeting certain



specifications. In any case, the intended beneficiary for public transport subsidy should always be the user, who will choose what mode to use, through integrated Electronic Management System, not necessarily public transport operators.

- **Laxity and Ineptitude of PREs**

The period taken in issuing operating licenses by the Provincial Regulatory Entities (PREs) is also problematic. There are massive backlogs dating many years back regarding processing of applications by PREs, rendering bona fide operators illegal. The turnaround period for administration process before the application is finalised, and the permit finally issued, never meet prescribed regulatory deadlines, due to the ineptitude or inefficiency of PREs in processing applications for permits. This laxity exposes members of the industry, for reasons beyond their control, to negative surveillance and targeting for unavailability of permits by law enforcement agencies.

- **Inadequate Law Enforcement**

Law enforcement is supposed to form a vital link with the control of the permits issued by PREs. However, it seems to be at its lowest ebb ever – not doing enough to protect the rights of legal taxi operators against wanton pirate operations. Law enforcement is not as effective and efficient as it should be.

There are many illegal operators who continue to operate illegally as there is no threat of law enforcement that is focused to deal with this unique industry. If law enforcement agencies were adequately doing their job, taxi operators would not be risking their own lives to defend their turf against unlawful operators. There are mushrooming hiking-spots that have become more regular, which are almost like informal ranking facilities. This is illegal, because, besides lift-clubs, which are exempted, anyone transporting people for reward should apply for a permit.

- **Inadequate Ranking Facilities Management**

Lack of adequate management of formal and informal public transport facilities and/or enforcement of by-laws by local authorities, and continuous mushrooming of illegal and informal ranking facilities continue to pose serious challenge to both the government and the taxi industry.

In conclusion, unless the taxi industry organizes itself into formal economic system, it risks the probability of self-designed dead-end in the transportation business. If the taxi industry has to escape from overtraded and unprofitable taxi market, taxi operators must venture into other business opportunities. To continue playing a crucial role within the public transport system, the industry has to become part of integrated public transport system that meets the needs of the commuting public, and be subsidised by the government, rather than engaging in illegal activities, such as imposing illegal fines to other private road users, and/or impounding private vehicles, for giving people lift. ■

## Part One

# CHRONICLE OF THE NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION

## The Beautiful Daughters of Sandino: Embracing the Age of Dedication, Selflessness and Quest For Human Freedom

■ By **AMB. PHATSE JUSTICE PIITSO**

**O**UR dream is the future world of humanity, the future of great luminaries of human struggles, whose journey of possibilities is about the very same idea, the universe rekindled by aspirations of freedom and dignity. Human societies grow when great men and women plant trees under whose shade they shall not sit, but the ubiquitous ascendancy of the beautiful daughters of Sandino continues to shape the course of the history of the world.

Our generation has come to be witness to epochal events, whose contribution to the course of the struggles for the freedom of humanity distinguished the most versatile architects of great empires through the ages. The fascinating historical account of the beautiful daughters of Sandino resonate with the enduring legacy of countless episodes of the triumph of human struggles.

In her pioneering work *'The Women and Guerrilla Movements'*,

Karen Kampwirth, the erudite Professor of political science and Latin American studies programme at Knox collage, says the following:

*"If the twentieth century was the age of revolution, then surely Latin America was the region of revolution. Over the course of that century, new revolutionary movements emerged every few years across the region, movements that promoted goals such as overthrowing dictatorships, confronting economic inequalities, and creating what Cuban revolu-*

*tionary hero Che Guevara called the 'new man'. But in fact, many of those new men were not men, thousands of them, especially in the second half of the century, were women."*

The daughters of Sandino, renowned women battalion of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, designated after the revolutionary leader, Augusto Cesar Sandino, the founding father of Nicaragua, were the caricatures of the new men, determined to create a new universe for human-



## HISTORY

ity. History applauds them for having ousted Somoza family, one of the most brutal dynastic military dictatorships, spanning decades of rule of Nicaragua with an iron fist, with the support of the Yankee imperial power, the United States of America.

For centuries the colonial Spain and US imperialism colonised Nicaragua, exploiting its natural resources and denying her native people the right to freedom, territorial integrity and independence. This was part of the Monroe doctrine, which gave the US to unilaterally interfere in the affairs of the newly independent states of Latin America.

The strategic geo-political position of Nicaragua, the wonderland of deep lakes, rivers and volcanoes, between the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans, attracted the government of the newly independent state to build a canal, the idea the US government rejected vehemently, as it was seen to be in competition with the plans to build the Panama canal. The initiative by the government to build a canal, prompted the empire to enforce military occupation on the native state.

The military occupation heralded a new era of protracted struggles by her people for sovereignty. The geo political location of the region was of strategic importance in the wake of the world growing shipping industry, consolidating the interests of the world colonial powers.

Unilateral military occupation by the US empire, violating international law and the rights of the new independent state of Nicaragua, led to widespread discontent amongst the various social, economic and political formations, leading to the intensification of the



struggles against foreign occupation and domination. The flames of revolutionary struggles became a defining feature of the long journey of the glorious people of Nicaragua.

The brutality of the US militarism instigated Augusto Sandino and his army of thirty men and women to storm the harbour, grabbing thirty rifles and six thousands ammunition from a US storage ship, launching a fierce liberation war against colonial occupation. Launching his manifesto in the mountains ranges of Nicaragua he said *"Come, morphine addicts, come and kill us in our land. But keep in mind that when this happens, the capitol building in Washington will shake with the destruction of your greatness, and our blood will redden the white doom of your famous White House, the cavern where you concoct your crimes"*.

Writing a letter of solidarity to the delegates of the Pan American conference held in 1928 in Havana Cuba, seeking sympathy from the Latin American countries to be in solidarity with the struggles of the Nicaraguan people, with profundity, he said the following:

*"When Yankees speak of the Monroe doctrine, they say 'America for the Americans. All of us born in the Americas are Americans. But the imperialists have interpreted*

*the Monroe doctrine as 'America for the Yankees', well, to save their bond souls from continuing in error, I propose the reformulation The United States of the North for the Yankees, Latin America for the Indo-Latino"*.

The US tried to force Sandino to disarm his people, accusing him of committing audacious and vicious acts of banditry, and the Commander of the US troops in Nicaragua vowing *"You will be proscribed and placed outside the law, hunted wherever you go, and repudiated everywhere, awaiting an infamous death, not that of a soldier, who fell in battle, but that of a criminal, who deserve to be shot in the back by his own followers."*

Mounting pressure from the revolutionary forces defeated the American occupation troops, forcing them to withdraw their presence from Nicaragua, and therefore declaring Sandino, amongst the rare heroes of the world, to have defeated the empire in a battlefield. He was later assassinated by the notorious Somoza family with the support of the mercenaries of the American intelligence services, ushering in a new dictatorship by the family, spanning more than six decades. ■

**Ambassador Phatse Justice Piitso** is a member of the African National Congress. He writes in his personal capacity.

## HISTORY



# REFLECTION ON ENDURING LEGACIES OF “NTWA YA MAJE A MOKGOTHU”

■ By **ERIC GABORONE**

**T**HE Langeberg Rebellion (1896–1897), known colloquially as “*Ntwa ya Maje a Mokgothu*”, occurred near Kuruman in the Northern Cape, South Africa. It was a pivotal event in the history of the region, revealing tensions between colonial authorities and indigenous communities.

A critical reflection on its legacy highlights themes of resistance, dispossession, and the erasure of indigenous voices in historical narratives.

### BACKGROUND

The rebellion was primarily led by three paramount chiefs: Kgosi – Toto of Batlharo, Kgosi Luka Jaantjie of Batlhaping, including Kgosi Galeshewe of Batlhaping peoples, who were resisting colonial encroachment on their land, autonomy, and resources. The rebellion arose from longstanding grievances against dispossession, forced labor, and discriminatory policies imposed by the Cape Colony government. The Langeberg hills became the site of organized resistance,

where indigenous fighters used their knowledge of the terrain to confront colonial forces.

### THEMES OF THE LEGACY

#### 1. Colonial Dispossession

The rebellion underscored the impact of colonial land dispossession, which disrupted indigenous livelihoods and cultural practices. The Cape government, motivated by settler expansion and economic exploitation, confiscated large

## HISTORY

tracts of land, leaving the Batlharo and Batlhaping communities with limited options for survival. This rebellion was one of the last large-scale efforts by these groups to assert their land rights, but their defeat entrenched their marginalization.

### 2. Resistance and Agency

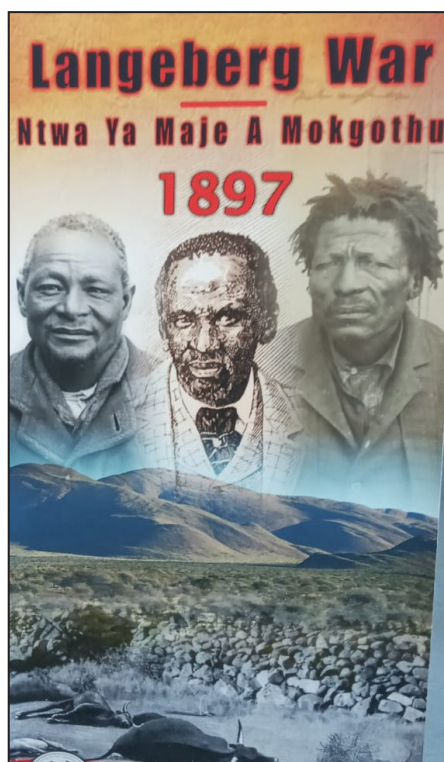
The rebellion symbolizes a moment of agency and resistance in the face of colonial oppression. The Batlharo and Batlhaping peoples demonstrated remarkable resilience and strategic military tactics. Their defiance against a well-equipped colonial army challenges the narrative of indigenous communities as passive victims of colonization.

### 3. Violence and Repression

The rebellion was brutally suppressed by colonial forces. The use of modern weaponry, including artillery, against indigenous fighters entrenched a pattern of disproportionate violence that characterized colonial responses to resistance. The harsh punishments meted out after the rebellion – executions, imprisonments, and further land confiscations – served as a grim warning to other communities resisting colonial rule.

### 4. Marginalization of Indigenous Histories

The legacy of the Langeberg Rebellion has often been overlooked or downplayed in mainstream South African history. This neglect reflects broader patterns of erasing or minimizing indigenous contributions to resistance against colonial rule. By relegating the rebellion to the margins, colonial and apartheid-era narratives failed to acknowledge the complexity



and significance of indigenous struggles.

### 5. Economic and Social Aftermath

The suppression of the rebellion led to the economic decline of the Batlharo and Batlhaping peoples. The loss of land and cattle, which were central to their economies, forced many into servitude or wage labour under exploitative conditions. This laid the groundwork for their continued marginalization in the 20th century.

### 6. Identity and Cultural Survival

Despite the devastating consequences, the rebellion remains a testament to the resilience of the Batlharo and Batlhaping peoples. It is part of a broader legacy of indigenous resistance that has inspired contemporary movements advocating for land restitution, cultural preservation, and recognition of historical injustices.

## CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE

The legacy of the Langeberg Rebellion resonates in ongoing discussions about land reform and the recognition of indigenous rights in South Africa. The rebellion highlights the historical roots of land inequality and the need to address the dispossession that continues to affect marginalized communities.

In addition, efforts to document and commemorate the rebellion, such as through oral histories and local memorials, have been instrumental in reclaiming indigenous voices and perspectives. These initiatives challenge the dominance of colonial narratives and emphasize the importance of an inclusive approach to South African history.

## CONCLUSION

The Langeberg Rebellion near Kuruman was a significant moment of resistance that has lasting implications for understanding South Africa's colonial past and its legacy of inequality.

By critically reflecting on the rebellion, we gain insights into the resilience of indigenous communities and the enduring impact of colonial dispossession. Acknowledging and preserving the memory of this rebellion is crucial for fostering a more inclusive historical narrative and addressing the historical injustices that continue to shape South African society.

***Long Live the undying spirit of Bagadimana Ntweng Long Live. ■***

*Eric Gaborone is an ANC Member of Vivian Gaetsietse Branch, John Taolo Gaetsewe Region, Northern Cape Province.*

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

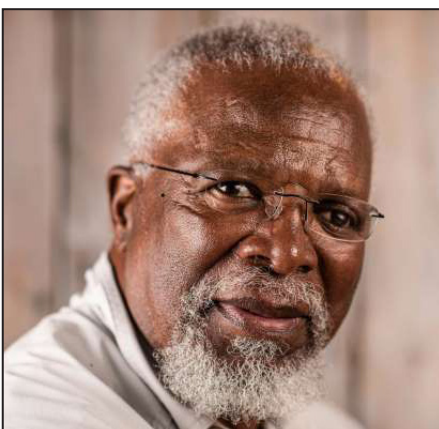
30 November – 6 December 2024

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

### 30 November 1880 News of Chief Sekhukhune's death reach London

The London Times, printed a tribute to Sekhukhune, leader of South Africa's Pedi people, whom the British were only able to conquer after some time. "We hear this morning," wrote the Times, "of the death of one of the bravest of our former enemies, the Chief Sekhukhune. The news carries us some years back to the time when the name of Sekhukhune was a name of dread, first to the Dutch and then to the English colonists of the Transvaal and Natal."

### 30 November 1943 Dr John Kani born



Iconic veteran South African actor and playwright was born in New Brighton, Gqeberha. Rising to fame for his performance in *Sizwe Banzi is Dead*, which he co-wrote with Athol Fugard, he was abducted by the security po-

lice, beaten and left for dead. Despite this, he continued to write, direct, perform and advocate for the importance of the arts.

### 30 November 1975 Republic of Dahomey changes name to Benin

Under the policies of young reformist revolutionaries, the government, by changing its name, sought to eradicate tribal divisions and influences. Benin is a politically neutral name, replacing Dahomey, which was associated with the largest ethnic group, the Fon.

### 30 November 2006 Chiliboy Ralepelle first black Springbok Captain



Rugby player, Mahlatse Chiliboy Ralepelle was born in Tzaneen on 11 September 1986. Ralepelle moved to Pretoria and attended Pretoria Boys High School, where he joined the rugby team.

He was selected for the under-15 squad in 2001 and the under-19 squad in 2004. Ralepelle made history in 2006 when he became the first Black rugby player to captain the Springboks. In 2010, his reputation was tainted when he was suspended following a drug test that proved positive. It was later discovered though that an energy drink contained a banned substance. Ralepelle was cleared.

### 1 December 1834 Slavery abolished in the Cape

On 1 December 1834, slavery came to an end in the Cape Colony, a year after the Slavery Abolition Bill of 1833 was passed by the British House of Commons and by the House of Lords. The Act still apprenticed slaves to their masters for a period of a further four years. Slave owners were compensated by the British government, which they had to collect personally in Britain. No compensation was given to slaves or their descendants, ever.

### 1 December 1875 Poet SEK Mqhayi born

Samuel Edward Krune Mqhayi (SEK Mqhayi, 1 December 1875 – 29 July 1945) Xhosa essayist, dramatist, poet, prose writer, biographer, translator, historian and member of the Xhosa Bible revision board, is born in Gqu-

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

mahashe (Victoria East). Among his poems is *Nkosi Sikelel iAfrika*, which became the basis for our national anthem. His works are regarded as instrumental in standardising the grammar of isiXhosa and preserving the language in the 20th century. Along with Tiyo Soga, he launched the newspaper *Izwi Labantu*. A youthful Nelson Mandela called him the “poet laureate of the African people.”

### 1 December 1892

#### Opening of largest natural history museum

The Transvaal Museum opens in Pretoria on this day. After 1994, its name was changed to the Ditsong National Museum of Natural History, growing to become Southern Africa’s largest natural history museum.

### 1 December 1986

#### Dr Fabian and Florence Ribeiro assassinated



The medical practitioner and political activist, Dr Fabian Defu Ribeiro, and his wife, a teacher turned businesswoman, Florence Barbara Ribeiro, were gunned down in their home on 1 December, 1986, after several attempts on their lives. It only emerged at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearing in 1997 that they were assassinated by Apartheid state agents, when

six policemen (AJM Joubert, PJ Verster, C Naude, N Robey, JJH van Jaarsveld and C Vlietstra) applied for amnesty in connection with their murder. The TRC Amnesty Committee granted amnesty to the perpetrators in 1999. Former Vlakplaas commander Jan Cronje was also granted amnesty for the role he played in the planning of the murder.

### 1 December 1985

#### COSATU launched



The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) was launched on 1 December 1985, at the height of the struggle against apartheid. As a federation, it brought together many of the unions formed after the wave of strikes at the beginning of 1973 which marked a renewal of trade union activity after a decade-long lull. COSATU’s launch was preceded by lengthy talks amongst unions, to take forward the principles of one country, one federation – one industry, one union. Unions in different sectors merged to obtain this objective, strengthening their sectoral bargaining powers, but also the overall union movement. Elijah Barayi was elected as COSATU’s first president, and Jay Naidoo as its first secretary general.

### 1 December 1987

#### Nyerere addresses ANC conference in Arusha

Julius Nyerere, president of the Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM), addressed delegates attending the African National Congress (ANC) conference in the Tanzanian city of Arusha. Nyerere called for an end to white rule in South Africa and encouraged the struggle against apartheid to continue, stating in his speech: “*Throughout these long years the struggle has been waged inside South Africa, by the people of South Africa. It has waxed and waned. There have been many setbacks, until sometimes the faint-hearted despaired and occasionally even the courageous retreated for a time into sullen resignation. But never was the flame of resistance extinguished.*”

### 1 December 1999

#### Robben Island declared UNESCO World Heritage Site



Robben Island is off the coast Cape Town and was named by Dutch explorers who encountered many seals on the island. When the Dutch colonized South African in the 17th century, the island was used to isolate people that were considered unwanted elements in colonial society. Among the first inhabitants were political leaders from the East Indies, such as Pangerau Chakra Deningrat,

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

the Asian Prince of Madura, who died on the Island in 1754, who were imprisoned on Robben Island as they protested to Dutch rule of their countries. When the British took control of South Africa, a leper colony was started on the island. Since 1961 countless member of the liberation struggle were imprisoned there, most notably Nelson Mandela, who spent eighteen years on Robben Island. Others include, Govan Mbeki, Walter Sisulu and other Rivonia trialists. Political prisoners on Robben Island during the colonial period were Sayed Abdurahman Moturu, one of Cape Town's first imams, and the Xhosa prophets, Nongqawuse and Maqana Nxele. On 1 December 1999, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), named Robben Island as a World Heritage Site.

### **1 December 2006** **First gay marriage in South Africa**

Vernon Gibbs and Tony Halls became the first same sex couple to legally wed in the country, one day after President Thabo Mbeki's government legalized gay marriage. The two are game rangers working in Riversdale, Western Cape and also animal rights activists. This made South Africa the first country on the continent and the fifth country in the world to legalize same sex marriages.

### **1 December 2019** **Most uninhabitable place on earth**

A survey of biologist and climatologist chose the Danakil Depression, located in the Danakil desert that spans Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti. The depression was made by volcanic lava trapping a

lake, which evaporated to leave toxic mineral deposits.

### **2 December 1856** **Battle of Ndondakusuka**

The Battle Ndondakusuka (aka Battle of Tugela) is fought between Cetshwayo, the eldest son of Mpande, and his younger brother, Umbolazi (Mbulazi) on the banks of Mathambo River (place of the bones) and the Tugela River. In one of the bloodiest battles fought in southern Africa – Cetshwayo triumphed.

### **2 December 1876** **Reverend Pambani Mzimba ordained**

The Reverend Pambani Jeremiah Mzimba, a Lovedale College graduate, is ordained as the first South African-trained black Presbyterian Church minister. He is remembered for his exceptional contribution to and pioneering spirit in the formation of the African independent churches and his role in the development of a new understanding of Christianity among African believers.

### **2 December 1950** **Record knockdowns set by the 'Benoni Buzzsaw'**

South African world bantam-weight boxing champion Vic

"Benoni Buzzsaw" Toweel sets a record for knockdowns in a world title fight against Englishman Danny Sullivan in Johannesburg. Sullivan is floored 14 times in 10 rounds before the fight is stopped. Toweel – described as an instinctive boxer who, at his best, flaunted incredible stamina, perfect balance and a blazing work ethic as well as the ability to throw non-stop batteries of punches without tiring – is amongst South Africa's undisputed boxing greats.

### **2 December 1977** **Police cleared of death of Steve Bantu Biko**

Steve Biko, who died at the hands of apartheid security police on September 12, 1977, is widely seen as one of the greatest martyrs of the anti-apartheid movement. He gave up studying medicine to devote himself to the struggle, and founded the Black Consciousness Movement in 1969. On 18 August 1977 Biko was detained in Grahamstown and brought to the Port Elizabeth police station. During his detention he was always kept in chains, and slept in urine-soaked blankets, often naked and cold. He was finally tortured to death on September 12. Despite the obvious and extensive trauma to the body, an inquest by the apartheid government given by Chief



**"It is better to die for an idea that will live, than to live for an idea that will die"**

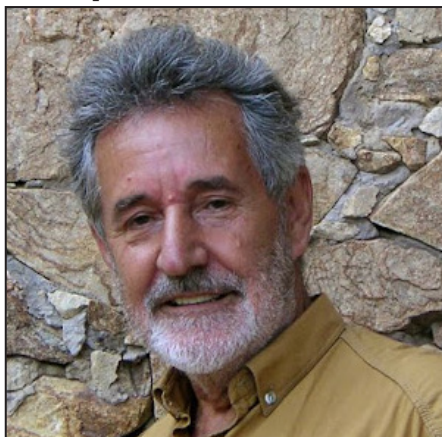
**— Steve Biko**



## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Magistrate Martinus Prins, exonerated the police of any blame in Biko's death. In 1999, South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission denied amnesty to the former security policemen involved in his custody. Despite the TRC's ruling however, no charges were ever brought against those responsible.

### 2 December 1982 Breytenbach released from prison



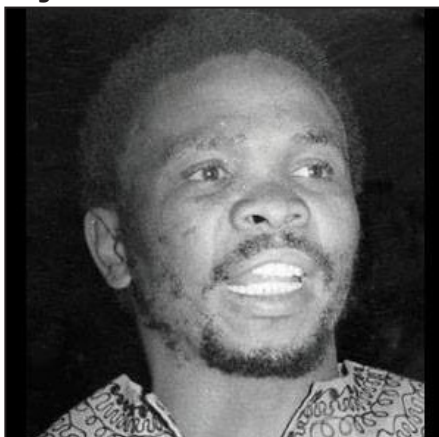
Afrikaans poet Breyten Breytenbach, brother of pioneering soldier Jan Breytenbach, is released from prison after serving seven of nine years for treason. His acclaimed works include *The True Confessions of an Albino Terrorist* and *A Season in Paradise*. Breytenbach passed away in November 2024.

### 2 December 2017 Lawyer jailed for saying girls wearing ripped jeans should be harassed

Egyptian lawyer, Mohamed Ahmed Bahnasy, known as Nabih al-Wahsh, was sentenced to three years in jail for declaring on a live TV show for girls and women wearing ripped jeans deserve to be sexually harassed and raped, calling it a "national duty." Wahsh was charged with threatening public order and se-

curity, as well as incitement to harm citizens.

### 3 December 1950 AZAPO leader Muntu Myeza born



Muntu Myeza was Secretary General of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), an affiliate of the Black Consciousness Movement. He joined the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) at the age of 22. In 1974, he was elected general secretary of SASO, and organised the Viva Frelimo Rallies in September 1974. The rallies were banned by then Justice Minister Jimmy Kruger. Still hundreds flocked to the 25-September-1974 rally, leading to the arrest of most Black People's Convention (BPC) and SASO leaders, including Myeza. Myeza died in car accident in 1990.

### 3 December 1955 Comrades Marathon legend, Bruce Fordyce born

Bruce Fordyce, legendary South African winner of the Comrades Marathon, was born in Hong Kong. His parents moved to Johannesburg in 1956 when he was 13 years old. After his first race in 1977, in which he ranked number forty-three, he improved steadily to win the Comrades eight years

in succession (1981–1988) and again in 1990. No other runner has achieved this record in the history of the Comrades Marathon race. Fordyce has completed twenty-three Comrades Marathons and was voted 64th in the 2004 Top 100 Great South Africans.

### 3 December 1959 Britain and Egypt agreed on independence for the Sudan

Britain and Egypt agreed on independence for Sudan following years of colonial rule, dating back to the 19th century. In 1823, Egyptians founded Khartoum as their headquarters and developed Sudan's trade in ivory and slaves. In the 1890s, the British decided to gain control of Sudan. Following a series of campaigns between 1896 and 1898, an Anglo-Egyptian force destroyed the power of the Mahdists, and agreements in 1899 established the condominium government of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. In 1930, the British Civil Secretary in Khartoum declared the "Southern Policy," officially stating that the north and south, because of their many cultural and religious differences, were to be governed as two separate regions. After a long civil war, South Sudan gained independence from Sudan in 2011, after an AU-led peace process and a referendum, making it Africa's youngest sovereign state.

### 3 December 1971 King Goodwill Zwelithini installed as Zulu monarch

On his return from exile, King Goodwill Zwelithini was installed as the eight monarch of the Zulu nation. He took reigns over from Prince Israel Mcwayizeni KaSol-

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



omon who acted as regent from 1968 until 1971. The traditional ceremony, which was held at Nongoma, was attended by 20 000 people. His Majesty Zwelithini passed on 21 March 2021, after 50 years as monarch.

### 4 December 1809 Earthquake hits Cape Town

On 4 December 1809, Cape Town was hit by an earthquake measuring 6.5 on the Richter scale. It is the biggest recorded earthquake to have hit the area. The quake was caused by the Milnerton fault, running across the Milnerton area, the Cape Flats and right through to the city center. In 1809 there wasn't much infrastructure for the quake to destroy, leaving only fissures on the ground. A quake of that magnitude would be devastating if it hit the area today due to increased population and infrastructure.

### 4 December 1893 AWG Champion born

Trade union leader, political activist and businessman, Allison Wessels George (Mhlongo) Champion, was born at Sans Souci Mission Station at Nonyeke, near Groutville, Stanger district in Natal. He assumed



the full-time secretary position of the Transvaal branch of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (ICU) when it relocated its headquarters from Cape Town to Johannesburg. During the term of office of J.T. Gumede, Champion became an executive member of the African National Congress (ANC).

### 4 December 1917 Afrikaans linguist HJ Terblanche born

Dr Hendrik Josephus Terblanche, compiler of several dictionaries and grammar books, was born in Aberdeen in the Eastern Cape. Dr Terblanche was a pioneer of Afrikaans technical language. He died on 23 March 1977 and shortly afterwards his autobiography, *Jare van Storm en Drang*, was published a few months later.

### 4 December 1982 National Union of Mineworkers formed

The mining sector played a critical role in the evolution of colonialism of special type, land dispossession and super exploitation, and the evolution of South Africa as a nation-state. Various ways were found, from outright violence to taxes to force black people into the mines from across



the Southern African region. After the Wiehan Commission which led to limited recognition for black trade unions, the National Union of Mine Workers was formed on 4 December 1982. For a long time, it was the largest affiliate of COSATU, until the split in the federation.

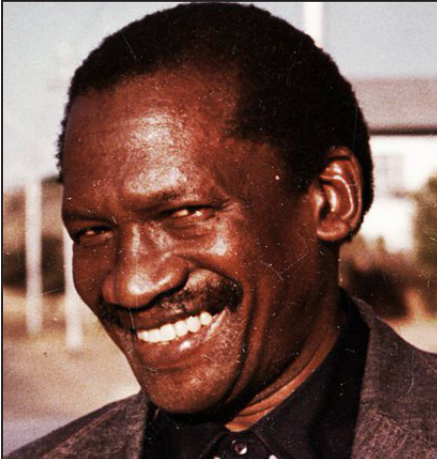
### 4 December 1996 Constitution approved by the ConCourt

The process of drafting a new Constitution for South Africa started with the CODESA negotiations, and the agreement on an Interim Constitution in 1993. Thirty-four constitutional principles were included and served as a guide to the Constitutional Assembly (CA), which was responsible for drawing up the final constitution. The writing process began in 1994, after the first democratic election. Two years later, Parliament adopted the final constitution, though it still had to be ratified by the Constitutional Court, which held its first hearing in July 1996. The draft constitution was rejected during this hearing as the judges of the court stated that it did not comply with the thirty-four principles that were decided on. Once it was revised, the final draft was accepted and approved by the Constitutional

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Court on 4 December 1996, as the supreme law in the Republic of South Africa.

### 5 December 1924 Robert Sobukwe born



Robert Sobukwe was founder of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), a freedom fighter, Youth Leaguer, teacher and a journalist. During his lifetime, he was considered to be so dangerous by the National Party government that its parliament enacted the “Sobukwe clause”, intended to authorise the arbitrary extension of Sobukwe’s imprisonment and used widely with political detainees in the decades to follow. Sobukwe was born on this day in Graaff Reinet in the Eastern Cape. After completing school he went to Fort Hare, where he joined the ANC Youth League in 1948 and became SRC president.

### 5 December 1953 The Namibian founder and editor, Gwen Lister born

Gwen Lister is a South African born Namibian Journalist, publisher and anti-apartheid activist, born in East London. After graduating at the University of Cape Town, Lister left for Namibia and joined the Windhoek Advertiser as a political Correspondent. In Namibia Lister focused on ex-

posing the atrocities of apartheid both in South Africa and Namibia. The South African government retaliated by getting the paper banned. The ban was lifted after an appeal but Lister found herself demoted as a result. She resigned from the paper and later started her own newspaper, The Namibian. Lister has received many awards for her work both as an activist and investigative journalist.

### 5 December 1956 Arrests of Congress of the People participants leading to Treason Trial

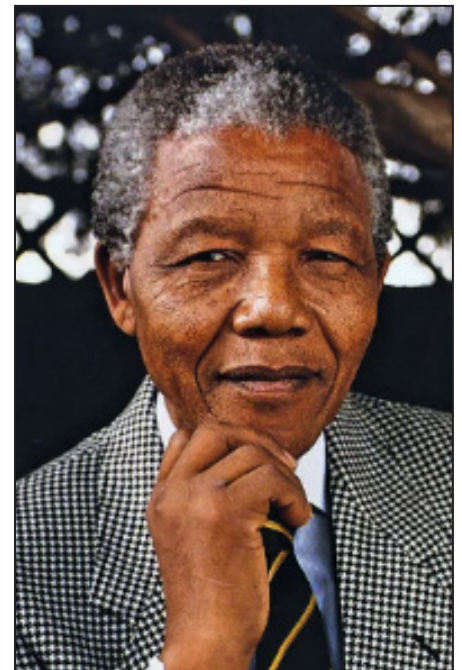
Following the highly successful multi-racial Congress of the People Conference in June 1955, the South African Police started raiding the homes and offices of those who had participated in the conference, seizing a large number of documents. Ten days later, the police had arrested 156 leaders. Among those arrested were Albert Luthuli (president of the African National Congress), Prof. Z.K. Matthews, Ida Mntwana, Yusuf Dadoo, Oliver Tambo, Bertha Mashaba (later Gxowa), Walter Sisulu, Helen Joseph, Nelson Mandela, Ruth First, Alex La Guma, Lillian Ngoyi, Ben Turok, Gert Sibande, Reggie September, Vuyisile Mini and many others, eventually charged in the infamous Treason Trial of 1956–1961.

### 5 December 1999 Ernie Els won Nedbank Golf Challenge

Ernie Els won the Nedbank Million Dollar Golf Tournament for the first time in his career on home soil since he turned pro in 1989. The Million Dollar Tournament was played at the Gary Player Country Club Golf Course in Sun City. Els finished the tour-

nament with a remarkable record win of 25-under-par 263, after rounds of 67, 66, 64 and 66. He was ranked in the top five of the official World Golf Rankings and went on to win the cup twice, in 2000 and 2002.

### 5 December 2013 President Rolihlahla Nelson Mandela passed away



South African freedom fighter, first democratic president, most famous political prisoner, international icon passed away on this day at the age of 95, after a prolonged respiratory infection. On the days following his death, millions across South Africa, Africa and the world gathered to mourn his death, and watched his memorial service and funeral.

### 6 December 1928 PAC leader Clarence Makwetu born

Clarence Mlami Makwetu, former president of the Pan Africanist Congress, is born in Hoyita, in the Cofimvaba district of the Transkei.

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

# INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

30 November – 6 December 2024

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



### 29 November

#### International day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People

The UN General Assembly in 1977 declared 29 November as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, the day in 1947 when the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution on the partitioning of Palestine. On the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, all UN member states are encouraged to continue to give the widest support and publicity to the human rights of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination. This day continues to shine the spotlight on the genocide against the Palestinian people.



### 30 November

#### International Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare

The International Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare is observed on the day that the Chemical Weapons Convention, signed in 1997 by 189 countries, came into effect. The Convention prohibits the use, development, production, stockpiling and transfer of large-scale chemical weapons. It provides opportunity to pay tribute to the victims of chemical warfare, for the elimination of the threat of chemical weapons, and ultimately promoting peace, security, and multilateralism. At the time of the signing of the Chemical Weapons Convention, *“eight countries declared chemical weapons stockpiles when they joined the CWC: Albania, India, Iraq, Libya, Syria, the United States, Russia and an anonymous state widely believed to be South Korea. Of those eight countries, Albania, South Korea, India, Iraq, Syria, Libya and Russia have completed destruction of their declared arsenals. Syria, however, may not have declared its entire stockpile. The United States had planned to complete the destruction of its chemical weapons by September 2023.”* ([www.armscontrol.org](http://www.armscontrol.org))

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

### 30 November

#### International Computer Security Day

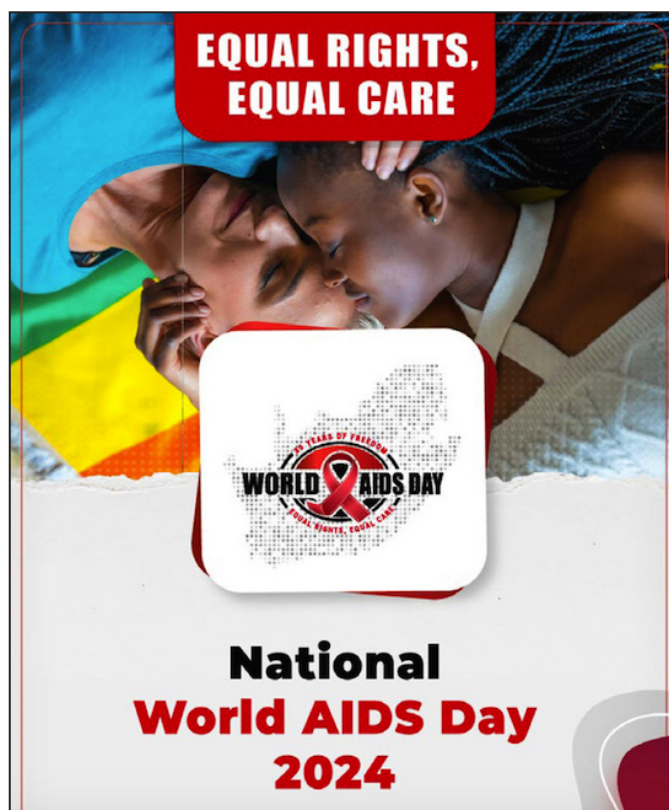
The day creates awareness on computer security issues, especially protecting personal and official information stored on computers. So on this day, check basic security of your personal computer and protect all your data from ransomware viruses, identity theft, and more. It also raises awareness of protecting your data through regular back-ups and secure storage in the cloud.

### 1 December

#### World Aids Day

World AIDS Day, observed annually on the 01st of December since 1988, serves as a reminder of the ongoing fight against HIV/AIDS and the need for global solidarity. South Africa will host the 2024 commemoration, under the theme **“Equal Rights, Equal Care”** in the Eastern Cape Province, with the objectives of:

- Raising awareness on the importance of Anti-retroviral Therapy and the benefits of early linkage to treatment, including the Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U) Campaign. Mobilising communities through outreach programmes, educational campaigns, and partnerships with local organisations to identify and link People Living with HIV to anti-retroviral treatment services.



- Enhancing accessibility to testing and treatment facilities across, especially in underserved areas.
- Strengthening referral and follow-up systems to ensure that patients remain engaged in care and treatment..

### 2 December

#### International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

International Day for the Abolition of Slavery recalls the date when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of Others (resolution 317 (IV) of 2 December 1949. The focus of this day is on eradicating contemporary forms of slavery, such as trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, the worst forms of child labour, forced marriage, and the forced recruitment of children for use in armed conflict. Today, 21 million women, men and children are trapped in slavery all over the world.

### 3 December

#### International Day of Persons with Disabilities



International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is a UN day that is celebrated every year on 3 December. The day is about promoting the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities at every level of society and development, and to raise awareness of the situation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of political, social, economic, and cultural life. WHO joins the UN in observing this day each year, reinforcing the importance of securing the rights of people with disabilities, so they can participate fully, equally and effectively in society with others, and face no barriers in all aspects of their lives. According to the WHO World Report on Disability, 15 per cent of the world's population, or more than 1 billion people, are living with disability. Of this number, it's

## THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

estimated 450 million are living with a mental or neurological condition – and two-thirds of these people will not seek professional medical help, largely due to stigma, discrimination and neglect.

### 4 December

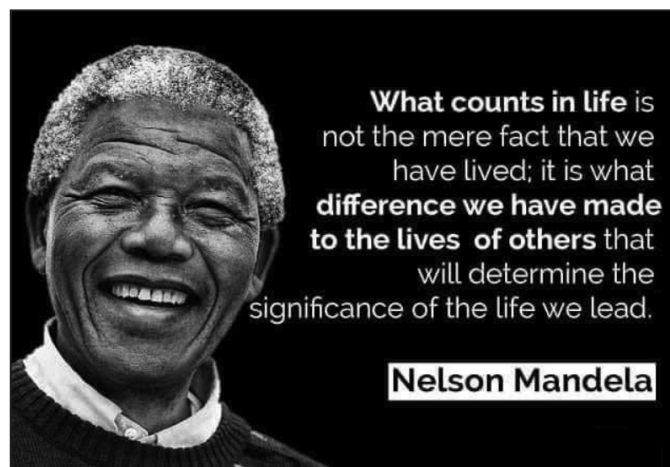
#### International Day of Banks

The day recognizes the potential of multilateral development and other international development banks in financing sustainable development and providing know-how. It is also in recognition of the vital role of the banking systems in countries across the world, contributing to the improvement of the standard of living. According to conventional economics *“the banking system plays an important role in the modern economic world. Banks collect the savings of the individuals and lend them out to business – people and manufacturers. ... Thus, the banks play an important role in the creation of new capital (or capital formation) in a country and in this way help the growth process.”* (economics-discussion.net). At the same time, multilateral and other international banks have been criticized for their role in forcing structural adjustment policies onto developing countries, and crippling national development.

### 4 December

#### International Volunteer Day for Social and Economic Development

The UN Volunteers programme coordinates International Volunteer Day on 5 December every



year to recognize and promote the tireless work, not just of UN Volunteers, but of volunteers across the globe. Every day, volunteers dedicate time and effort to ensure the inclusion of those often left behind, drive climate action and advance the Sustainable Development Goals. When people are encouraged to get involved in solving problems, the solutions are more likely to be feasible and lasting. Volunteers engage communities and build a people-centric movement to help build a better and safer future for us all.

### 5 December

#### World Soil Day

Healthy soil are important to our lives, and soil degradation threatens ecosystem, posing challenges at a global level for agricultural production, food security and sustainability in arid and semi-arid regions.

### 1-7 December

#### #ReadingAfrica Week

An annual event for all publishing companies, readers and authors who want to share their love for African literature, which takes place during the first full week of December each year.



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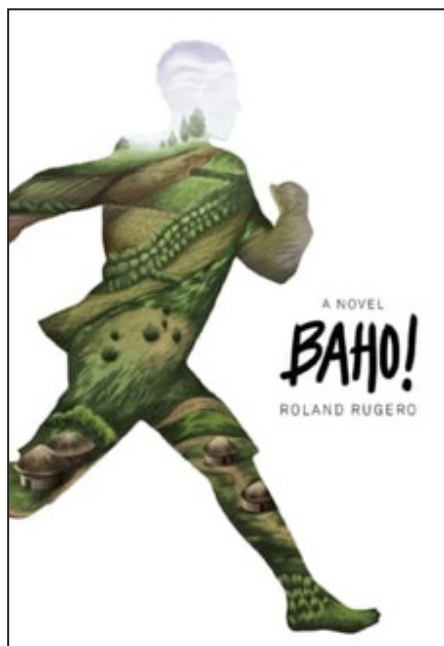
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# #READAFRICA WEEK RECOMMENDATIONS

By **THATO MOTAUNG**

1-7 December 2024 is *Read African Week* (usually the first full week of December each year) and here are some recommendations from Thato Motaung (@KhalozaBooks) on what to read during this week. The book recommendations from across the African continent are also useful as festive presents, building up children and teen bookshelves. Remember, according to DASH, each child should at least have 20 books at home, in order to build up a culture of reading! FPG



**1. 'Baho!' by Roland Rugero (Burundi):** The first fiction novel from the country to be translated into English is simply unforgettable. A young boy named Nyamugari is mute; to communicate he uses gestures and signs, which isolated him from most of society. One day an unfortunate misunderstanding occurs. He tries to ask a girl where he might find a toilet to relieve himself. She mis-

takenly interprets his gestures as sexual harassment. The community hears her cries for help and further interpret his running away as an admission of guilt. What follows is a mob chasing Nyamugari like an animal across the hills of Burundi. The blurred lines of victim and perpetrator are particularly painful as he cannot defend himself with words once captured and brutally beaten. A chilling reminder of the outcomes of vigilante justice, and the privilege of having a voice.

**2. 'Woven with Brown Thread' (ed) by Upile Chisala (Malawi):** A powerful young Black voice of poetry, Chisala is well known for her short but powerful work. In this recent publication she compiled and edited 100 poems by 25 Black and non-binary women to showcase breath-taking young voices. Do yourself a favour and read her own works of poetry in the following beautiful publications: 'soft magic', 'nectar' and 'a fire like you'.



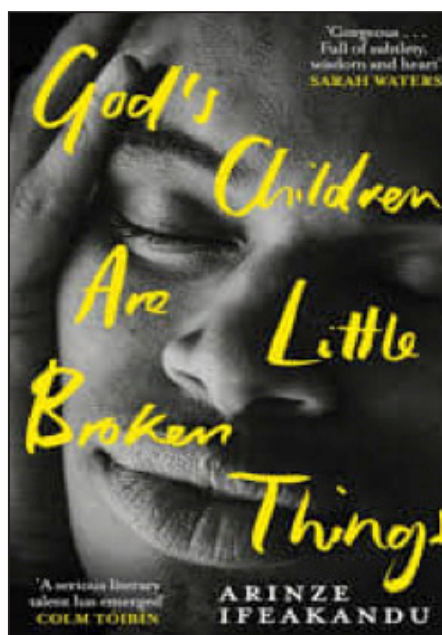
**3. 'Co-wives, Co-widows' by Adrienne Yabouza (Central African Republic):** Another first novel, this time from the Central African Republic, to be translated into English, unconventional love takes centre stage. Two witty and fiercely independent women - Ndongo Passy and Grekpoubou - are in a polygamous marriage with their husband Lidou. This is no typical

## BOOK REVIEW



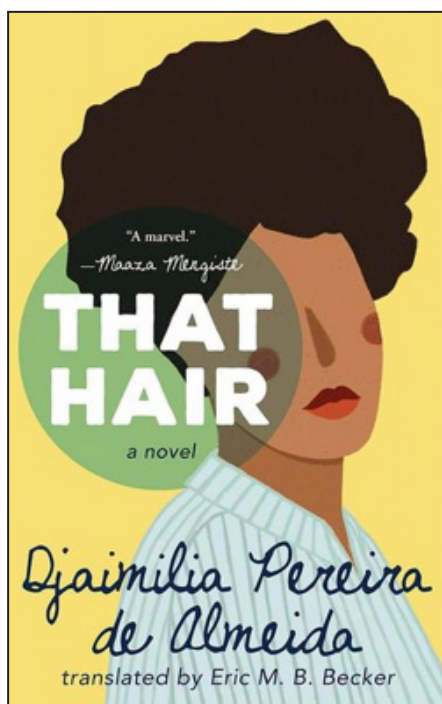
take on polygamy, there is no sinister or competitive feud between women, rather everyone is deeply fulfilled and loved. When Lidou dies unexpectedly, both widows find themselves in a battle with their late husbands' 'best friend' who slyly attempts to take all his riches and estate. Scandalous twists and turns follow, with the widows always outsmarting male privilege and power to preserve both their independence, and their beloved's memory. Unique, empowering and playful – a delightful must read.

**4. 'God's Children Are Little Broken Things' by Arinze Ifeakandu (Nigeria):** Undoubtedly a leading literary powerhouse, the talent in Nigeria is immense, but it is 28-year-old Ifeakandu whose debut short story collection on queer love and life in Nigeria that deserves the limelight today. The nine-story collection is bold, unexpected and refreshing, coming from a young voice that writes with unparalleled maturity and authenticity. The love of young men constantly under threat from rig-



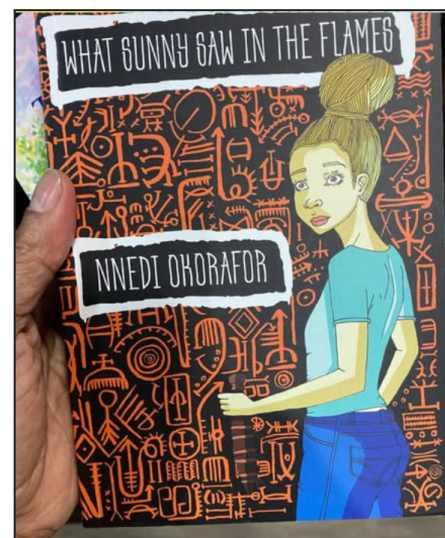
id cultural norms and stagnant minds, is beautifully honoured for its unapologetic complexity and heart. In the author's own words: *"I want this book to be really wonderful company for someone. I want this book to be something that people read and feel seen."*

**5. 'That Hair' by Djaimilia Pereira de Almeida (Angola):** *"A half-Portuguese, half-Angolan woman uses her hair to interrogate her position between*



*two cultures"* – a perfect description of the novel's essence that is very relatable to the contemporary African generation of mixed races and mixed cultures. Mila's hair leaves European salons dumbfounded as they do not know what to do with her *"rebellious hair"*, including knowledgeable salons who pull, weave, use chemicals and treatments to 'beautify'. She sees her visits to salons as demoralizing and tries to pull together a sense of self from the geopolitics that is essentially her hair. An interesting yet complex read, that at the very least keeps us questioning and challenging a globe that still seems unprepared for the long-standing, inevitable reality and voice of mixed cultures, nations and races.

**6. 'What Sunny Saw in The Flames' by Nnedi Okorafor (Nigeria):** The queen of fantasy /scifi novels does not disappoint! Centred on a 13 year old girl named Sunny, who one day has a vision of an apocalyptic future that freaks her out; she didn't know she could see into the future! Next, she finds herself recruited into the secret world of magic, spells, monsters, and the Leopard People. She and a group of kids (who also have spe-

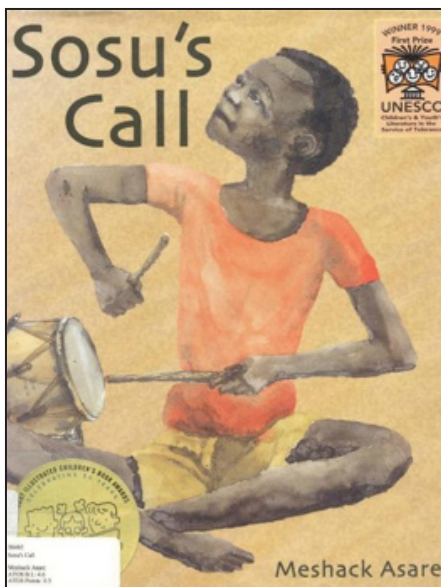




## BOOK REVIEW

cial powers), fight to bring down a criminal that is kidnapping and killing children. Despite all the excitement, it is also extremely dangerous and must be kept secret – even from her family. Super cool adventure set in Nigeria.

**7. 'Sosu's Call' by Meshack Asare (Ghana):** Sosu is a disabled boy who lives in a small village where he is either shunned or pitied. One day, when most of the village is working at the fields, the water level starts to rise alarmingly, endangering the whole village. Sosu crawls with all his might to the drum-shed to sound the alarm. The book opens children's eyes to the value in each person regardless of appearances and teaches acceptance and courage. The book won the UNESCO prize & IBBY's Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities award.

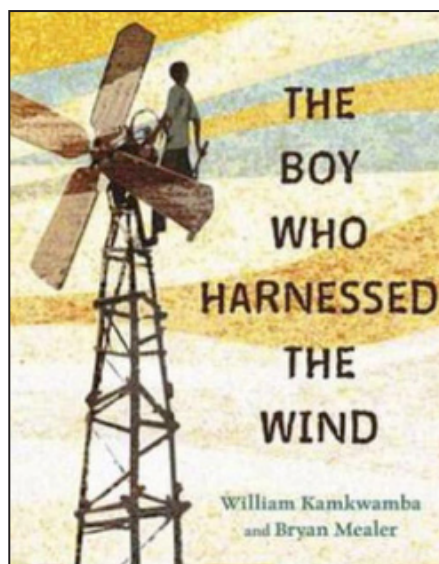


**8. 'Shadow Chasers (Book 1 & 2)' by Bontle Senne (South Africa):** I'm excited! Forget Harry Potter, here is an Afro-centric fantasy series for kids! Nom & Zithembe come from a family of 'Shadow Chasers' – it's their duty to protect people from an evil army of shadows.

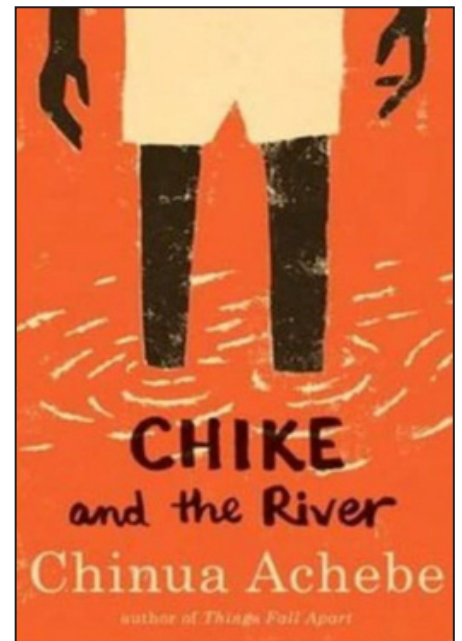


Their adventures are exciting, sometimes scary, but so much fun! 'Shadow Chasers' In Book 3 'Oyo' the powerful must be found in the dream world to retrieve the Shadow Chasers knife. In book 4 Nom and Zithembe must defeat the toughest warrior yet, the 'General'. She rules an army of monsters and must be defeated on the night of a Red Moon. Simply obsessed with this Afro-centric fantasy series!

**9. 'The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind' by William Kamkwamba (Malawi):** William's village is in a terrible drought. Desperate to help his village, the 14-year-old uses scraps to invent a windmill that can generate electricity. A moving true story, also made into a movie on Netflix!

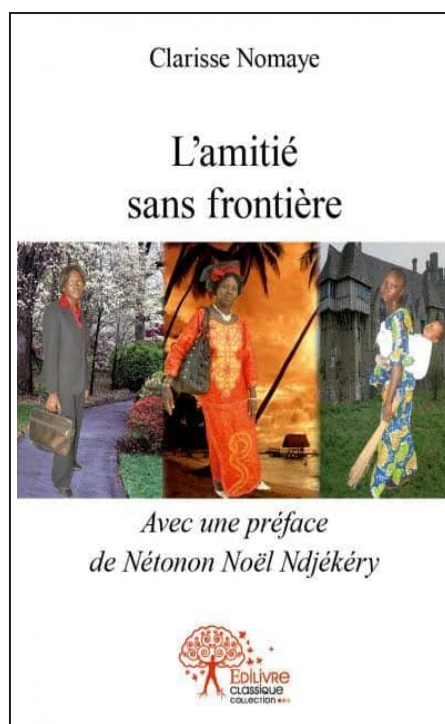


**10. 'Chike and the River' by Chinua Achebe (Nigeria):** The author of the classic 'Things Fall Apart' needs no introduction! Chike dreams of 'greener pastures' in Asaba but needs 6 pence to get there. With his friend's help he starts an adventure of new foods, people & ultimately, fears. A tale full of courage & rich in personal growth. PS: Achebe started writing for children after seeing the unrepresentative, and often racist books prescribed for his child at school!



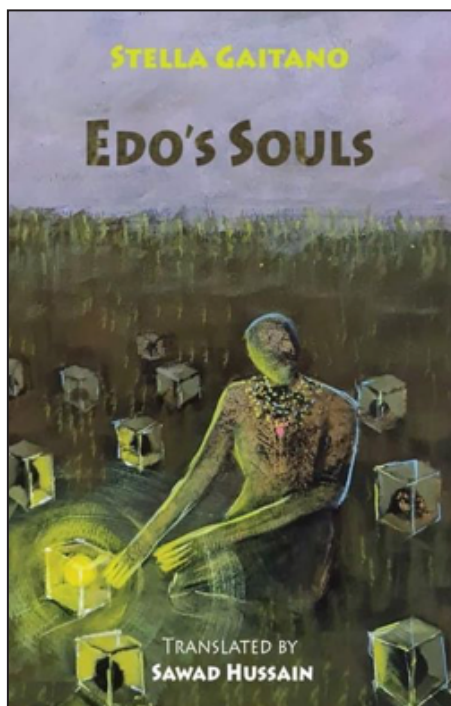
**11. 'L'amitié sans frontière' by Clarisse Nomaye (Chad):** For French speakers, this first novel by the author – titled 'Friendship without borders' – chronicles the lives of three women – Angie, Samantha and Bernadette. The first seeks a new life in the city only to become a sex worker. The second is a modern student who concedes to family advice and marries her boyfriend. And the last is born into a traditional family, destined to be wed when she turns 15. By chance, all three meet in the same neighbourhood and form a judgement-free, supportive and ultimately timeless friendship.

## BOOK REVIEW

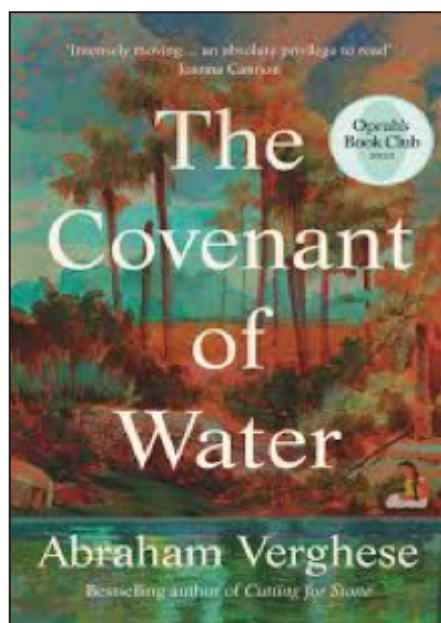


Within a still, very small literary landscape (Chad), the author uses writing to express and protect the rights of women who try to find a place for themselves in a society attempting to balance tradition and modernism.

**12. 'Eddo's Souls' by Stella Gaitano (South Sudan):** An author deeply dedicated to writing in her native Arabic tongue,



mixing classical, Juba and informal Arabic in her work. Eddo's Souls is a multi-generational tale that won the PEN Translates Award (2020), becoming the first novel from South Sudan to do so. The epic story traces generations navigating the war of independence, and ultimately facing an impossible choice: family, love or country. *"I love the Arabic language... It is the linguistic mould that I want to fill my personal stories and culture in..."* says Stella. Her first book was a collection of short stories titled 'Withered Flowers', which despite being translated into English, retained its Arabic devotion by being arranged back to front.



**13. 'The Covenant of Water' by Abraham Verghese (Ethiopia):** *"What defines a family isn't blood but the secrets they share."* It begins with an introduction to 12-year-old Mariamma on her wedding day to a 40-year-old groom, whom unbeknownst to her, has an 'affliction' in his family that spans generations. For lovers of historical fiction, here is an epic about a family plagued by a strange misfortune. Every generation someone in the fam-

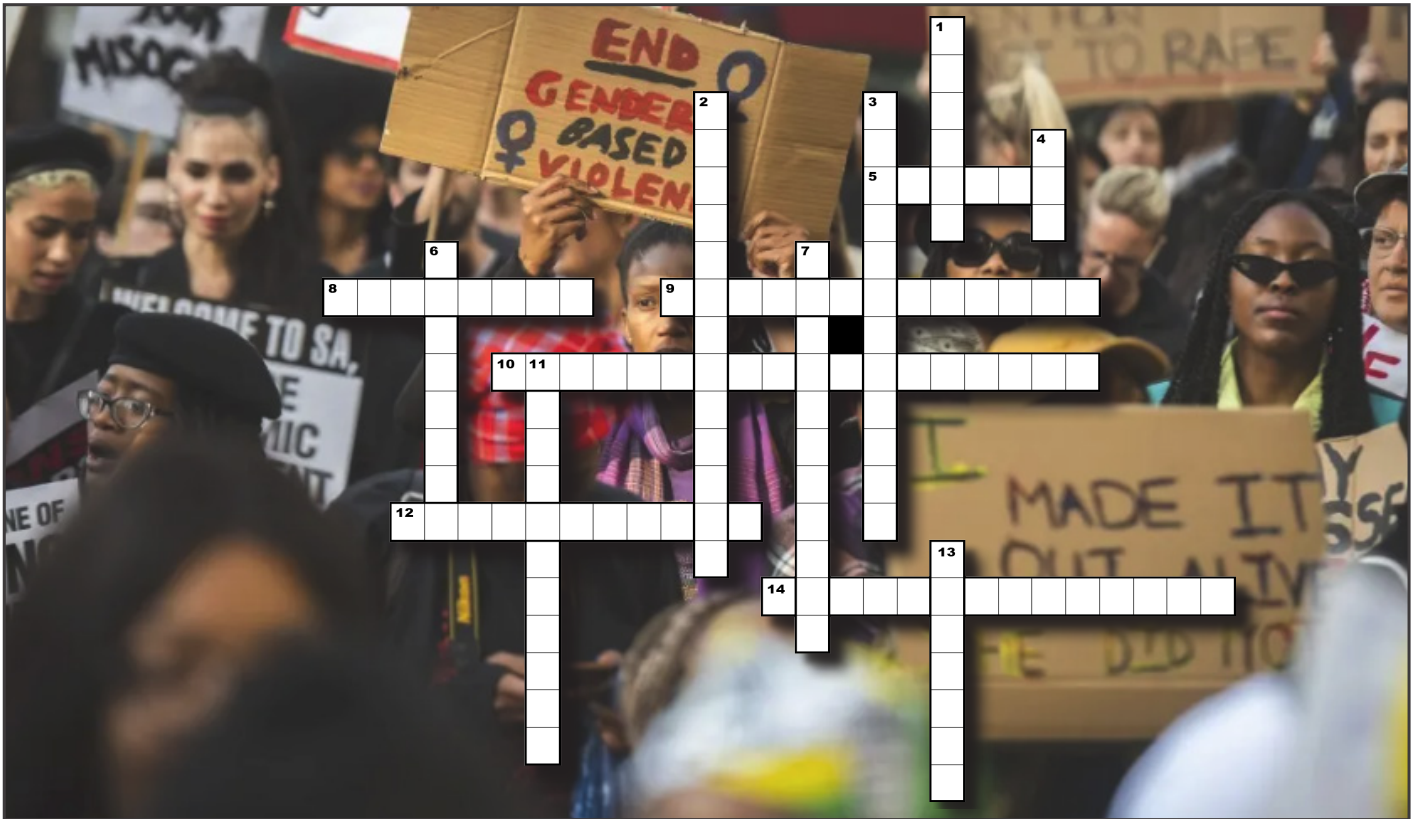
ily dies from drowning in Kerala on the coast of India. Simultaneously, we follow the experiences of Scottish physician Digby who's dedicated to medical breakthroughs with Indian doctors. Both story threads converge exquisitely to showcase a powerful tale of family, love, and sacrifice. A must-read elegant work of fiction.

**14. 'That Smell and Notes from Prison' by Sonallah Ibrahim (Egypt):** A semi-autobiographical novel that follows the life of a recently released man from prison after five years. Now under house arrest, he is restless and lost, spending his days smoking, visiting lovers, spying on neighbours and attempting to write about his traumatic ordeal. When first published in 1966 the novel was banned, with the original version only reappearing 20 years later in Egypt. As a political prisoner, he shares notes from his prison diaries, which were all just tiny pieces of paper smuggled out of prison.



# X-WORD

## #16DaysOfActivism2024 SA Survey on GBV



### ACROSS

- 5. 61% of women report experienced violence in the last ... months.
- 8. An estimated 7 310 389 women experience physical violence in their ...
- 9. Act of domestic violence.
- 10. Domestic violence include acts like ...
- 12. SA law includes acts of domestic violence.
- 14. Included by SA law as part of domestic violence.

### DOWN

- 1. Social constructed identities.
- 2. In SA law, domestic violence includes ... ..
- 3. Act of domestic violence.
- 4. 1.3 Percentage of ... experienced sexual violence.
- 6. Intentional killing of women.
- 7. Unwritten rules that regulate acceptable behaviour in a group.
- 11. Act of domestic violence.
- 13. An exercise of choice and a voluntary agreement to engage in sexual activity with another.

### WORD BANK

- |              |                 |                |                     |              |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------|
| gender       | physical abuse  | intimidation   | sexual abuse        | men          |
| social norms | lifetime        | economic abuse | psychological abuse |              |
| consent      | emotional abuse | twelve         | femicide            | sexual abuse |

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