



ANC TODAY

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Conversations with the
President



The progress we have made this year gives us **HOPE FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

By **PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA**

WE are nearing the end of another year, marked by both triumphs and struggles.

We celebrated thirty years since the birth of our democratic nation. We reflected on the considerable progress we have made in building a constitutional order anchored on freedom, equality and human rights for all.

We held our seventh successful, free and fair general elections since 1994. It was a landmark poll, with an unprecedented 70 political parties contesting. The election was a credit to the Independent Electoral Commission, which acquitted itself with distinction, the political parties who

campaigns in a spirit of respect and tolerance, and to all South Africans who exercised their right to vote.

Our democracy has evolved and matured. We have a Government of National Unity comprised of 10 political parties from across the political spectrum. They have agreed on three strategic priorities for this administration.

The first strategic priority is to grow our economy and create jobs.

The structural reforms initiated under the sixth administration are continuing to create conditions for our economy to grow and to create jobs.

The country has had over 250 days with no loadshedding. This is due to a combination of increased maintenance and generation recovery by Eskom, the addition of more capacity to the grid including from renewables, and the large-scale uptake of solar and battery energy solutions by households and businesses. The work of the National Energy Crisis Committee continues. It is working to get more power onto the grid, to expand our electricity infrastructure, to diversify the market for the benefit of consumers, and to lay the groundwork for an energy-secure future.

There has been a significant recovery of commuter rail since theft and vandalism during the

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT

Covid pandemic nearly destroyed the network. Stations have been refurbished, new state-of-the-art trains are on the tracks, and 31 out of 40 key passenger corridors are now operational. There were 40 million commuter rail passengers in the last financial year, up from 15 million passengers the previous year.

We are making progress in the recovery of freight rail and dealing with longstanding operational challenges in our ports. We are seeing improvements at the container terminals in Durban and Cape Town, as well as with infrastructure upgrades.

While unemployment levels remain extremely high, more South Africans are finding jobs.

The second strategic priority of this administration is to reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living.

Consumer inflation is at a four-year low, making essential goods like fuel and most food staples more affordable. Over the past twelve months, fuel prices have come down.

Around 60% of the national budget is dedicated towards the 'social wage'. These are the measures that reduce poverty and directly improve people's lives. In addition to the provision of grants to vulnerable groups and unemployed people, this social wage includes subsidised housing, free basic services, no-fee schools and school nutrition. Government has been able to sustain these measures even as public finances are under severe pressure.

The third strategic priority of this administration is to strengthen the capacity of the state to deliver on its mandate.



Our efforts to improve the capacity and capability of the state to deliver on basic services continue.

We have experienced moments of great national pride this year. Our sportsmen and women did us proud, including at the Olympics and Paralympics. Our nation's artists hoisted our flag high on the global stage, proving themselves to be among our most valuable exports.

The momentum we have achieved this year was marred by tragedy. The deaths of a number of children from eating contaminated foodstuffs was a great sorrow and caused deep concern. We have put a number of stringent measures in place to prevent such tragedies.

While we are making progress, we have a long way to go. The pace of economic growth is still too slow and not enough jobs are being created. Families still struggle with the high cost of living.

While there has been some improvement in the crime statistics and there have been breakthroughs in tackling crime syndicates, crime and violence is still widespread in many communities.

Disruptions in the supply of electricity and clean water is a major problem in many municipalities. Many local councils are plagued by poor governance, limited ca-

capacity and severe financial constraints. This is affecting service delivery to our people. Strengthening local government is our key priority.

These are the challenges we are grappling with. We have identified local government as a major focus in this administration. Through initiatives like the Presidential eThekweni Working Group, we are bringing all stakeholders together to solve local problems

The progress we have made this past year and during the course of the previous administration shows that we can overcome the difficulties our country faces.

As government, business, labour and civil society, we are able to achieve a great deal when work in unison to overcome our common challenges. In the new year, we will embark on a National Dialogue that will draw together all South Africans in crafting a common vision for the country.

As the host of the G20 next year, South Africa will play an important role in addressing the challenges that many countries across the world experience. We will seek common solutions that improve the lives of all our people.

Overcoming poverty and underdevelopment, creating more jobs, and addressing societal ills like gender-based violence requires that we must all play our part, where we can.

On many fronts, this year has been better than the last. We will build on these achievements in 2025.

Wherever you may be this festive season, I wish you well.

For the ANC to be renewed ANC Youth League must be integral to the struggles of the present

■ By **COLLEN TLHOLOGELO MALATJI**

THE history of the ANCYL is deeply rooted in the broader struggle for liberation in South Africa. On December 21, 1942, during its Annual Conference, the ANC resolved to establish a youth league. The resolution stated: *“This annual conference of the African National Congress authorizes the Executive to institute a Youth League of the African National Congress to include students at Fort Hare.”* This marked the beginning of a new chapter in the ANC’s history, a chapter focused on mobilizing and empowering the youth of our nation.

However, the formation of the ANCYL was not a smooth or automatic process. It was instead the result of a hard-fought struggle by a pioneering generation of comrades, including Anton Lembede, Nelson Mandela, A.P. Mda, Oliver Tambo, and Mxolisi Majombozi. These visionaries, through their courage and determination, laid the foundation for an organization that would serve as a critical pillar of the ANC’s mission.

The establishment of the ANCYL required careful planning, numer-



ous preparatory meetings, and extensive consultations with the ANC leadership. At the time, Dr. Alfred Bitini Xuma was the ANC President and played a pivotal role in supporting this initiative. Eventually, in April 1944, the ANCYL was formally launched at a meeting held at the Bantu Men’s Social Centre in Johannesburg.

The ANCYL was open to all Africans between the ages of 12 and

40 and was founded with clear objectives:

- To promote national consciousness and unity among African youth.
- To assist and reinforce the ANC in its mission to achieve freedom and justice.
- To cultivate education, culture, and moral values among African youth.

At this inaugural meeting, Anton

Lembede was elected the first President of the ANCYL, a position that solidified his role as a guiding force in its development. Lembede's vision was rooted in the belief that African youth were not merely the future leaders of South Africa but were also integral to the struggles of the present.

A Call to Action for Today's ANCYL

The ANCYL must reclaim its role as the voice of young people in South Africa. For the ANC to survive, thrive, and remain relevant, we as the ANCYL must take charge and revitalize this organization so that it resonates with the youth of this country.

The youth, who constitute the majority of South Africa's population, represent an untapped well-spring of the future we envisage. Globally, young people are at the forefront of transformative movements, and South Africa should be no exception.

As the ANCYL, we have been vocal about export quotas in the mining and metal industry. In South Africa, mining contributes 24% to the South Africa's GDP and support 1.6 million jobs in the value chain. Therefore, exploring the export quotas, our government needs to strengthen regulatory bodies such as the South African Revenue Service.

The ANCYL must adapt to the realities of the 21st century by leveraging digital technologies to recruit and engage young people. As the youth increasingly dominate the demographic makeup of South Africa, it is imperative that the ANCYL meets them where they are – online or physically.

However, recruitment must go



beyond ourselves and use different technologies to leverage on these platforms. The ANCYL must actively target young workers, environmental activists, and other progressive forces who share our dissatisfaction with class oppression and the worsening climate crisis. These are the pressing issues of our time, and the ANCYL must be at the forefront of these struggles, mobilizing young people to join the fight for a just and sustainable future.

Strengthening Alliances and collaboration

The ANCYL must also address its internal and external challenges, including strengthening the Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA). Within this alliance, special attention must be given to reinforcing ties with the South African Students Congress (SASCO), particularly in universities and colleges. The youth are the vanguard of the National Democratic Revolution, and capturing their imagination is essential to advancing our shared vision.

In the first National Executive Committee we have taken a resolution that there is no ANCYL that will contest SASCO in our campuses.

Whenever there is a SASCO, the ANCYL must support and ensure the election of SASCO.

Education remains one of the most powerful tools for social transformation. As noted in the ANC's 2000 Discussion Documents, the apartheid state used education as an instrument to deepen political and ideological oppression. In response, the ANCYL must advocate for the fundamental transformation and decolonization of our education system, ensuring it aligns with the goals of the National Democratic Revolution.

The ANCYL must work closely with COSAS and SASCO in this province, to build a unified front in universities and colleges, including in the society, ensuring that our struggle for economic freedom and social emancipation is achieved.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

The ANCYL, has a proud history of challenging South Africa's education system and we must continue to take that battle and package it in the economic transformation. Over the years, these organizations have played a crucial role in fighting for affordable and accessible education, pushing back against neoliberal policies, and advocating for the decolonization of curricula. This tradition must continue with renewed vigor and determination.

Addressing the Struggles of Our Time

In one of our recent National Executive Committee (NEC) meetings held in Johannesburg, I outlined the current struggle in three distinct phases:

The End of National Oppression

The first phase of our struggle was the fight against national oppression, culminating in the right of all South Africans to participate in the democratic process. This was a monumental achievement and laid the groundwork for the institu-

tional development we see today.

The Fight Against Class Oppression

The second phase, which we are still grappling with, involves addressing class oppression. While political freedom was achieved, economic emancipation remains elusive for the majority of South Africans. Inequality, unemployment, and poverty persist, disproportionately affecting the youth.

However, we must also revisit the Maoist era, when Deng Xiaoping argued with his comrades that their responsibility in the primary stage of socialism is to unleash the factors of production to grow the economy and grow the living standards. In this process relations of production will be relegated with a vision of building class equality.

The Marginalization of the Youth

The third phase highlights the continued marginalization of youth in South Africa. Despite making up the majority, young

people often find themselves excluded from meaningful participation in economic and political processes. This generational conflict, both within the ANC and in society at large, poses a significant threat to unity and progress.

The ANCYL must also lead efforts to transform South Africa into a national democratic society, where equality, democracy, non-racialism, non-sexism, justice, and prosperity are not merely ideals but lived realities. By working with organizations rooted in communities, we can ensure that the youth of South Africa are equipped to challenge the status quo and drive meaningful change.

Conclusion

As we move forward, let us remember the sacrifices and achievements of those who came before us. The legacy of Anton Lembede, Nelson Mandela, and countless others calls us to action. We stand on their shoulders, and it is our responsibility to carry their vision into the future.

The youth of this country deserve an ANCYL that is bold, innovative, and unapologetically committed to their well-being. Together, we can build a South Africa that truly reflects the principles of the Freedom Charter – a South Africa that belongs to all who live in it, united in their diversity.

Let us seize this moment to renew our commitment to the ideals of the ANCYL and the ANC. Let us work together to address the challenges of our time and build a brighter future for generations to come.

Collen Thologelo Malatji is ANC Youth League President.

“It is your generation that must tell people of this country that the Freedom Charter can still liberate this country.”

- ANCYL President, Cde
Collen Malatji at the
15th Gauteng Provincial Congress



How the Gauteng Province is fighting against gender-based violence and femicide

■ By **LEBOGANG MAILE**

THE 10th of December marked the end of the 16 Days of No Violence Against Women and Children – a key international moment to call for an end to violence against women and girls. The period also provided an opportunity for reflection and evaluation on the efficacy of the programmes that the Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG), private sector and civil society have undertaken to address the scourge of what has correctly been described as a pandemic.

In the GPG, our approach transcends the provision of aid to victims and survivors of GBVF by prioritising the creation of a political, social, cultural and eco-

nomie environment in which they can become empowered. This necessary aid, however, is provided through interventions such as **Ikhaya Lethemba**, a one-stop centre for women who are victims and survivors of crime and violence. The centre provides women and children with shelter for up to nine months. Psychosocial assistance is provided at the shelter, with the social work team providing individual and group counselling to victims and survivors. The shelter also provides after-school homework programmes and school holiday programmes for children who are accommodated with their mothers at the shelter. A similar intervention, known as the **Green Door Initiative**, has also been

established. The Green Door Initiative offers immediate assistance to victims and survivors of GBVF, providing them with safe places, counselling, emotional support and basic care. At these facilities, advice on opening criminal cases against perpetrators is also provided.

Other interventions aimed at providing support include the **provincial GBVF Brigades**. These are safety volunteers who are appointed to stand in the front-line in the fight against the GBVF pandemic. Through the GBVF Brigade Programme, victims of GBVF and their families receive support during legal proceedings. This includes but is not limited to support through court pick-

CURRENT AFFAIRS

ets and petitions, as well as the provision of psychosocial support. The GBVF brigades are deployed across the Gauteng Province to educate residents about GBVF and to inform victims, survivors and their families about resources that are available to them. They also conduct door-to-door campaigns, focusing on prevention and the reporting of abuse cases. Our BGVF Brigade works together with local law enforcement agencies including the South African Police Service and social workers.

In addition to the GBVF Brigade, the province has also established the **Gauteng Traffic Wardens** programme. These wardens are responsible for ensuring visible policing through regular patrols, particularly in townships, informal settlements and hostels. The wardens augment the work of law enforcement agencies and are responsible for introducing the concept of ward-based policing. This enables them to attend to GBVF incidents and to assist communities to report cases. Recognising the difficulties that victims and survivors face in the daunting task of reporting cases, the GPG established the **Floor Management Programme** that is located within police stations to limit secondary victimisation and to reduce the waiting times for people reporting cases of GBVF.

While we believe that the law has a critical role to play in dealing with the scourge of GBVF, we also recognise that there are many pitfalls in the criminal justice system, particularly in relation to crimes related to GBVF. Despite the high number of rape and other sexual crimes being reported in the country, we still have one of the lowest rates of conviction in the world. This is due, in great

part, to attrition. Attrition refers to the filtering process by which cases drop out of the criminal justice system. This appreciation has informed many interventions that the GPG has undertaken.

The provincial secretariat in the Department of Community Safety conducts regular court watches and briefs. These include monitoring and identifying shortfalls related to GBVF cases. It ensures accountability and transparency in the justice system and assists in ensuring that perpetrators receive a fair trial while the rights of GBVF victims and survivors are prioritised and protected.

In addition to this, the provincial government is using state-of-the-art technology including e-panic buttons to assist Gauteng residents and vulnerable groups in particular, to request for assistance in an event of an emergency. **CCTV cameras** have been installed across the province to assist in tracking down perpetrators who violate the rights of others through criminal acts. Helicopters, drones and patrol vehicles assist law enforcement agencies to track criminals, including suspects wanted for GBVF-related cases.

While these interventions are critical, equally important is providing women and vulnerable groups with economic opportunities that will enable them to break free from the shackles of oppression and dependency. The **Township Economic Development Act (TEDA)** also allocates funding to support women's businesses in townships. By giving women access to financial resources and business opportunities, they become less reliant on abusive partners and gain a greater sense of security. Additionally, we have

in place numerous skills development programmes that are aimed at providing women with access to training opportunities aimed at enhancing their financial independence and overall self-development and wellbeing.

The GPG has also invested significantly in the provision of the necessary infrastructure to confront the GBVF pandemic.

We are collaborating with various stakeholders, including higher learning institutions, to establish **Victim Empowerment Centres** that will provide students with support within and outside learning institutions, where the crisis is also prevalent. The province is also in the process of establishing a state-of-the-art Operational Command Centre which is centrally located in the province. This will allow the SAPS to consolidate its efforts in combating crime, while collaborating with other law enforcement agencies.

The GPG is committed to the fight against GBVF. We recognise that there is no future for a society when women, children and other vulnerable groups are on the receiving end of violence.

While there is a mountain to climb in winning this battle, we are prepared and committed to it, and we require the assistance and collaboration of communities.

Without communities and other stakeholders, this will be a losing battle. But we all know and understand that this is one battle we cannot afford to lose. Our very civilisation depends on winning it.

Lebogang Maile is the Acting Premier of Gauteng and the MEC for Finance and Economic Development.

NHI: A Constitutional Imperative for Universal Healthcare. IT IS A MUST

■ By **FAIEZ JACOBS**

THIS article responds to Dr. Karl Le Roux, DA Deputy Spokesperson on Health, whose recent criticism of the National Health Insurance (NHI) Act appeared in Business Day on 9 December 2024. The DA, which once had “50 reasons” and then “5 reasons” why the NHI would fail, has toned down its public opposition, as reported in Daily Maverick.

Among these critics, the DA has been particularly vocal, claiming that the government is engaging in “magical thinking” about funding the NHI. However, such views often reflect a lack of historical understanding of universal healthcare implementations globally and a failure to appreciate the moral imperative of equitable

healthcare.

However, beneath the surface, their arguments remain fundamentally opposed to the transformative vision of universal healthcare as outlined in South Africa’s Constitution.

The DA simply do not care for people. The DA’s insistence on maintaining the status quo, where quality healthcare is a privilege for the wealthy, is morally indefensible. Universal healthcare is a hallmark of a progressive and just society. South Africa must prioritize this moral responsibility, as have countries like the UK, Canada, Thailand, South Korea, and Taiwan, which have all successfully implemented universal healthcare systems.

Through this article, I will not only counter their claims factually and morally but also expose the real reason for their resistance: private sector profits.

The Constitutional Mandate for Universal Access to Healthcare

Section 27 of South Africa’s Constitution is unequivocal: “*Everyone has the right to have access to healthcare services, including reproductive healthcare.*” This is not a negotiable goal – it is a legal and moral obligation. Yet, 30 years into democracy, access to quality healthcare remains profoundly unequal.

While 16% of the population (about 9.6 million people) benefits from



CURRENT AFFAIRS

private healthcare, consuming over 50% of total healthcare expenditure, the remaining 84% rely on an underfunded and overburdened public system. This disparity perpetuates structural inequality, denying the majority of South Africans the dignity of quality healthcare. The NHI aims to redress this imbalance by ensuring that no one is excluded from healthcare based on their income or socio-economic status.

The NHI seeks to fulfil the promise of the Constitution by ensuring that access to healthcare is based on need, not income. It aims to dismantle the apartheid-era dual system that perpetuates inequality. This is not just about healthcare; it's about justice, redress, healing dignity, and equity.

Exposing the True Motive: Private Sector Profits

It is essential to confront the reality that much of the opposition to the NHI is driven by financial interests. The private healthcare sector in South Africa has been one of the most profitable industries over the past two decades.

Consider the following:

1. Private Hospital Groups:

- o Netcare reported profits of **R4billion** in 2023, up from **R2.9billion** in 2020.
- o Mediclinic earned annual profits of over **R3billion**, driven by high patient fees.
- o Life Healthcare saw **R2.5 billion** in profits, despite the economic downturn.

2. Medical Aid Schemes:

- o Discovery Health's medical scheme administration fees have ballooned, earning the company **R3billion annually**.

What is the NHI and how will it change the system?

The NHI is a Fund from which government will buy health care services for all of us from health care providers in the public sector and private sector. If you feel unwell, you can go to your nearest GP or clinic of your choice that has a contract with NHI and not worry about the cost of care.



NHI Benefits



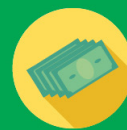
Healthcare for all



Improving Quality of Services



Reduced Burden of Disease



Financial Risk Protection



Economic Development and Growth



Integration of the Healthcare System

Will unemployed people be able to access healthcare services?

Yes, all users will be able to access health care services without paying anything at the point of care, regardless of their socioeconomic status.



- o Bonitas and Momentum Health also generate significant profits from member contributions, while limiting coverage.

3. Profit Margins:

- o Over the past 20 years, private healthcare profits have grown exponentially, often outpacing inflation and GDP growth. These profits come at the expense of affordability and accessibility for ordinary South Africans.

Countering the DA's Arguments

Claim: The NHI Is Fiscally Unsustainable

The DA's claim that the NHI will bankrupt the country is based on misrepresentations and exaggerations. Momentum claims the NHI will cost R1.3trillion, but this figure assumes a Rolls-Royce system that mirrors pri-

private healthcare for all. A closer look at international examples shows that universal healthcare systems are not only affordable but also improve overall health outcomes:

- **Thailand:** Universal coverage costs just **2.7% of GDP**, while improving life expectancy and reducing poverty.
- **South Korea:** Its phased approach to universal health, starting with industrial workers, proved fiscally sustainable and was later expanded. Its costs during its expansion phase were approximately **4.5% of GDP**.
- **Canada:** Despite initial cost concerns, its system now delivers excellent healthcare at **10% of GDP**, lower than South Africa's combined public-private expenditure.

For South Africa, based on a GDP of R7 trillion, this translates to: **R189 billion** (Thailand's model) to **R315 billion** (South Korea's model) annually.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Even with a blended per capita cost of R8,625 (weighted average of public and private expenditures), the estimated cost for NHI is **R750billion – R890billion**, far below the alarmist R1.3 trillion figure.

For South Africa, the NHI's estimated cost of R750billion to R890billion annually can be funded through progressive payroll taxes, reallocation of existing resources, and efficiency gains from bulk procurement.

Private Sector Integration:

Integrating private healthcare infrastructure into the NHI system reduces capital costs for new facilities. While private hospitals will require compensation, economies of scale and centralized procurement can save **10-15%** annually, equivalent to **R67billion – R139billion**.

Administrative Costs:

Global studies show that single-payer systems often reduce administrative overheads, costing just **3–8%** of total healthcare expenditure. For NHI, this equates to **R33 billion – R46 billion**, manageable within the existing fiscal framework. This is significantly lower than the current fragmented system.

How to Fund the NHI:

Potential and Possibilities:

Critics fail to acknowledge that universal healthcare systems worldwide rely on innovative funding mechanisms that South Africa can adopt:

- **Progressive Taxation:** A modest payroll tax of **2-3%**, coupled with employer contributions, can generate significant revenue. For example, Taiwan funds its NHI through a premi-

um equal to **5.17% of wages**, ensuring sustainability.

- **Reallocation of Existing Resources:** The current healthcare budget of **R259 billion** can be supplemented by redirecting wasteful expenditures and tackling corruption, which costs the public sector billions annually.
- **Dual Contribution Model:** A phased approach allows voluntary private insurance to coexist, enabling citizens to top up their coverage while ensuring universal baseline care.


ment ignores the fact that the NHI is designed to address these very issues:

- Centralized funding and oversight will improve accountability.
- Pooling resources will reduce disparities between urban and rural healthcare facilities.
- Bulk procurement of medicines and equipment will lower costs, benefiting both public and private sectors.

Critics conveniently ignore that many public hospitals, despite challenges, continue to save lives every day. My own 95-year-old grandmother, Amina Khan, was recently treated at a public hospital for a severe infection. For the 5 day she was hospitalised she received compassionate and effective care, despite the hospital's

Claim: The Public Healthcare System Is Too Weak


The DA points to the challenges in public hospitals as evidence that the NHI will fail. This argu-



Will NHI provide adequate cover compared to current medical scheme benefits?


Yes, NHI's benefit package will be comprehensive. Unlike most current medical schemes, NHI benefits are not confined in attempts to contain increasing prices.


Medical schemes are regulated to pay a group of chronic conditions in full, but not all diseases are included in this group - meaning patients have to pay out of pocket, while still contributing to a medical scheme.



How does the NHI affect those who are currently insured by medical schemes?

NHI will be implemented over phases over the years. Regulations will be published to address the phased implementation of the NHI Fund and of service benefits as the money is moved to the Fund. Medical schemes will be given notice on the type of services that they will no longer be able to cover.





Will NHI take the reserves of medical schemes?

No, the Fund will NOT take the accumulated reserves of medical schemes since those belong to the members and not the schemes.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

resource constraints. Her story is a reminder that the public health-care system is not broken—it is burdened. We all at some stage in our life would need accessible affordable health care. The NHI will help lift this burden.

Lessons from Global Successes

Countries that have implemented universal healthcare systems faced similar skepticism. Yet, their experiences prove that these systems can be transformative:

- **The UK:** Despite initial cost concerns, the NHS became a global benchmark for universal healthcare.
- **Taiwan:** After nearly a decade of planning, its single-payer system improved health outcomes while keeping costs low.
- **South Korea:** Its dual insurance model balances public and private contributions, offering a potential blueprint for South Africa.

If we compared ourselves to USA especially during COVID we did very well. We want a health care system that serves all the people not profits for a few. South Africa must learn from both good and bad examples. Let's have a phased, iterative approach to implementation. Start with high-need districts, refine the system based on real-world experience, and expand coverage progressively.

A Call to Courage

The ANC government must show the courage to move forward with the NHI. There will always be naysayers, but we cannot let fear of the unknown stall progress. The NHI represents an opportu-

nity to build a healthier, more equitable society.

Minister of Health Dr. Motsoaledi and his team must conduct and publish detailed cost estimates, as these will help counter misinformation and build public trust. While the Department of Health's costing efforts need refinement, international precedents demonstrate that universal healthcare is feasible with incremental implementation.

More importantly, they must begin implementation without delay. **START NOW.** Target high-need districts first to manage costs and build capacity.

Let us confront these challenges, head on – like poor management, lack of accountability, and underfunding. They are precisely why the NHI is necessary.

By centralizing funding and oversight, the NHI can:

- Improve accountability through standardized service delivery.
- Ensure equitable resource allocation across provinces and facilities.
- Address staff shortages with

better recruitment and training incentives.

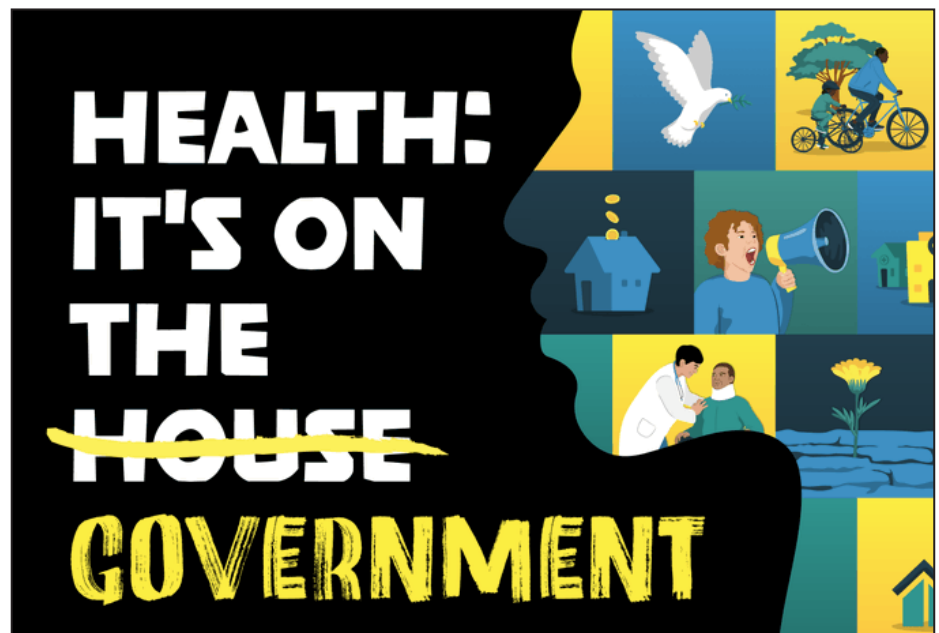
As Maya Angelou said, *“Do the best you can until you know better. Then, when you know better, do better.”* The NHI will not be perfect from day one, but with iterative learning and refinement, it can achieve its goals.

Conclusion: A Healthcare System for All

The NHI is not just a policy – it is a promise to every South African that their health and dignity matter. The DA's opposition, rooted in the protection of private sector profits, is both factually flawed and morally indefensible. The ANC must seize this moment to fulfil the constitutional mandate of universal healthcare. It is time to start, to learn, and to build a system that serves all, not just the privileged few.

Together, we can make the NHI a reality.

Faiez Jacobs is a former ANC Member of Parliament and is an advocate for equity and justice.



The GNU and the battle for the Soul of the ANC:

Some thoughts on the Ideological Contestations in the Mass Democratic Movement today

■ By **LUZUKO BUKU**



WHILE initially seen as a product of a hung national election outcome, it is becoming apparent that the Government of National Unity (GNU) is also a weapon that is used by our detractors to break the alliance and weaken not only the ANC but progressive forces in South Africa. The bickering between the leaders of the ANC, SACP and COSATU on the GNU needs to stop so that there is a deeper look at the strategic picture.

As an ANC activist, I have been keenly interested in understanding my organisation's approach to the whole concept of the GNU because we have been forced to partner with organisations whose objectives strategically differ from

ours. It is a known fact that organisations such as the Democratic Alliance (DA) have been wanting this reality where the ANC is not the majority party for many years. Perhaps an overview of the DA's historical thinking on this is essential to refresh our memories and sharpen our approach.

An Outcome that Has Been in the Works by the Opposition

As early as 2003, less than 10 years into our democracy, the Democratic Alliance (DA), through its then-leader Tony Leon, issued a call for opposition parties to unite to weaken the hold of the ANC on the government, thereby blocking the transformative programmes it had been pursuing.

Tony Leon is quoted by the Mail and Guardian then to have said, "We have reached the point where we can consider forming a coalition for change, together with like-minded parties such as the Inkatha Freedom Party, with whom we have enjoyed a successful relationship in KwaZulu-Natal."

Tony Leon details the call by first asking the question, "Are you committed to creating a real alternative to the ANC?" He further states that "Simply by mobilising the full support of the DA and the IFP in the next election, a coalition for change could govern at the provincial level in KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng and the Western Cape. At the national level, it could form a bloc that could have greater leverage over policy, and turn back the hegemony of the ANC."

The above illustration is done to show that the goal of the political parties such as the DA and the IFP has been to weaken the hold of the ANC on the State and the recent election outcomes have been a big achievement for this project. The parties that are leaders in this demonstrate that this is in essence a pushback against democratisation in South Africa.



We should not kid ourselves, the outcomes of the last elections are a victory for these forces, who have had reservations about our government. It is something that they have been working towards for many years.

GNU and Ideological Alliances in South Africa

The ANC and its leaders have admitted that the organisation has lost the elections. Two possibilities that are not mutually exclusive exist for why the ANC is finding itself in the Government of National Unity because it could have opted not to be in one. The first is that the organisation's leaders could not bear the possibility of not being in government, thus having its levers, with their abundant possibilities (whether these are for pursuing socio-economic transformation or advancing personal upward mobility).

There are also liberal political parties such as Rise Mzantsi, Action SA and others. Lastly, there are populist parties that allege

themselves to be left learning and these are parties such as the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), Mkhonto Wesizwe Party (MKP) and others. It must be said that the majority of these parties are populist parties that are all rhetoric and agitation with no ideological grounding and conviction.

While the ANC consider itself to be a force of the left, it is traditionally an all-encompassing organisation with all the strands found in the political parties represented in Parliament, hence the term the 'Broad Church'. The ANC has existed

The GNU as an Ideological Coup d'état

While it is still early days to conclude, I want to argue that the developments since the elections are an ideological Coup d'état in the body politics of South Africa. The left forces within the ANC and its alliance are being isolated, with some of them silencing them-

selves because they want to cling to state power. The SACP General Secretary, Solly Mapaila, has been a lone voice that is decrying the GNU without any indication of support from his comrades, particularly those who have been deployed in government.

The Democratic Alliance has made it clear that its aim is to work towards isolating the left in the ANC while giving power to the centre-right. So, for ideologues in the DA, this is not a party-to-party relation or multi-party coalition but a takeover of centre-right ideological forces existing in the Democratic Alliance, the ANC and in other political formations. This is therefore the continuation of the pushback project that was publicly announced by Tony Leon in 2003.

In my view therefore, the electoral loss of the ANC in the elections is not seen as a loss by some within the organisation due to the fact that their ideology and thinking align with that of certain forces in organisations such as the DA and the IFP.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Are the attacks within the Alliance Warranted?

The manifestation of this ideological onslaught on what the ANC represents is revealed by the strained relations of not only the alliance partners but also bickering within the structures of the ANC, with the relationship between Gauteng and certain members of the NEC illustrative of this.

More surprising is that the crying of the SACP on the GNU has not been ideological but has been about the key players and name-calling with the supposed defence of Cde Panyaza Lesufi being one of them. It might be possible that there is more than what meets the eye, with the possibility that the SACP is merely fighting against deployment decisions that have negatively affected some of its members when the GNU was constituted.

The possibilities that I have just outlined do not negate the fact that there is a ruling class consensus on how South Africa should be governed and this cuts across racial lines and recently, political lines. The ANC as an organisation has not organisationally taken the position to be part of this ruling block whose interests are not in keeping with the later spirit of transformation. This is the agenda that should be contested in order to protect the ANC from the stranglehold of these individuals.

What is to be done?

Progressive nationalists, the left in the movement and even those centres right-thinking people who do not subscribe to this vulgarisation of the National Democratic Revolution have a duty to rise up and defend the ANC and its revolutionary alliance.



In the same address to the Congress of the SACP, President Mandela remarked that, *"The ANC has to defend and deepen the democratic gains of our people secured in struggle. And we know that in this effort, the Communist Party will, like in the past, not be found wanting."* We are speaking about a severely weakened SACP and COSATU that do not wholly resemble the SACP that Mandela spoke about in the early 90s.

The push by the DA for the attack of the left within the Mass Democratic Movement is a well-planned attempt at not only removing left-leaning thought from within the ANC and the South African state but it is a carefully orchestrated move to isolate the ANC from its strategic allies and make it a weakened ideologically centre-right party whose mission is to defend the rich.

The attempts by the DA to affirm the centre right through isolating the left is thus meant to weaken the ANC as a revolutionary organisation, hallow it out until it is an organisation that only belongs to the members and leaders who have newly found wealth, social

status, and access to power. These are largely the individuals whose thinking has aligned with the Democratic Alliance and other conservatives in society.

Progressive thinkers should therefore monitor keenly the implementation of progressive policies such as the National Health Insurance and the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act of 2024. We should defend the ANC from a clearly crafted liberal and conservative programme that is aimed at not only destroying the ANC but wiping out all progressive thinking from the South African political system.

While the Government of National Unity (GNU) is an amorphous product of circumstances, it is a clear site of ideological contestation and progressive ideas should not be pushed to the margin but must be at its centre. We should ensure that it is not weaponised against us; our unity remains sacrosanct.

Luzuko Buku is a member of the ANC John Dube Branch (Scenery Park), Dr WB Rubusana Region in the Eastern Cape.

Clarion Call, Imagining a Youth-Centred Spaza Shop Economy

An Open Letter to the incoming ANCYL Gauteng PEC

■ By **MTHULISI SHONGWE**

COULD Spaza shops evolve into hubs of opportunity and empowerment for the South African youth? As the country fights a high unemployment rate, it should be reminded of the vast amount of wealth located in the township economy through Spaza shops. Spaza shops have been an economic lifeline for millions of people in the township, however, there has been a rise of the monopolization of spaza shops.

A youth-centered spaza shop economy should be viewed as an incubator for entrepreneurship and community development, the biggest problem is that these small shops are solely viewed as a place of commerce. A youth-centered spaza shop economy is full of untapped potential and should be viewed as a key driver of economic growth not just as mere consumers.

The Youth of South Africa are energetic, creative and technologically savvy and therefore should be at the forefront of reinventing the current spaza shop economy into an economy that will transform their lives. This will help maintain a more dynamic, resil-



ient and equitable spaza shop economy. The youth has always been ready to lead the way and should fight for that, the economy could be transformed with the integration of digital tools and other solutions which could help unearth local supply chains.

A youth-centered spaza shop economy would require rigorous fundamental change in how the business is perceived and how government supports it. Local youth entrepreneurship and inno-

vation could transform this business from a basic corner shop offering affordability and convenience to a dynamic ecosystem.

The youth must be empowered to take ownership both literally and figuratively, this means the government creating and maintaining pathways to capital and training and most importantly business mentorship meant to educate and provide support on the unique challenges of spaza shop economies. Programmes that target

CURRENT AFFAIRS

the youth could enable a 180 shift within the industry, the spaza shop industry could embrace technology, integrating banking e-commerce platforms, mobile payment systems and go as far as introducing delivery services.

During Covid-19 lockdown a businessman from Nkowankowa in Limpopo, Mpho Baloyi, started a unique business in his village. Baloyi recognized the lack of delivery methods and seized the opportunity by introducing a service that addressed the growing need for fast food and delivery services in the area. This illustrates the ingenuity of young entrepreneurs in the country, to reimagine a traditional business model and alter it to the specific needs of a village in Limpopo is highly commendable. Baloyi's ability to incorporate technology and adapt it to the needs of the village is proof that the youth is more than capable of handling the spaza shop economy.

Youth-driven enterprises that challenge conventional business practices will help stimulate local supply chains. The story of Baloyi should teach government, industry experts and policymakers that there's a potential of integrating new ideas into the informal sector. Youth innovation and entrepreneurship can serve as a catalyst to driving transformation in areas that are viewed as economically stagnant, but those in power should empower the youth to becoming key players in the spaza shop economy.

We need proactive leadership. Recently, on the issue of spaza shops selling fake foods and claiming the lives of many kids in the Gauteng townships, Ntsako Mogobe the ANCYL convener in the Gauteng province came out

to highlight the need for youth development agencies and food regulatory bodies to work with the South African youth to regulate all spaza shops and back the youth in terms of capital and coaching with the view of equipping them to take the spaza shop economy and transform it. While a lot of people labeled this sentiment by the convener as politicking, we must remember that these are the sentiments that spark a solid foundation of transformation in the country and these sentiments came from a convener who is leading a structure that was founded as a vehicle to agitate those in the mother body, the ANC and by extension of that are subsequently in positions of power to transform our economy and equip the youth of South Africa with the correct tools to having a well-functioning and regulated spaza shop economy that will serve the youth of South Africa economically.

To achieve this vision, collabora-

tion is key. Government policies must prioritize youth entrepreneurship by reducing red tape and providing financial incentives, while private sector partnerships could offer digital tools and logistical support.

By reimagining spaza shops as drivers of youth empowerment, we create opportunities to address unemployment, foster innovation, and build stronger, more resilient communities across South Africa.

The clarion call has been handed to the newly elected PEC; the youth of the country is demanding the spaza shop economy. The rot in the spaza shop economy has killed many young kids, the spaza shop economy has been rumored to be harboring drugs and many other habits that are hurting our youth. The clarion call to action has been sounded, transform the spaza shop economy into a hub of opportunity for the youth!



INPOUNDMENT OF TAXI VEHICLES BY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

■ By **SEPHOKA DAVID SEKGOBELA**

THE minibus taxi industry is one sector that some would like to hate, but many people cannot afford to do without. Challenges plaguing the taxi industry are manifold, and do not seem to be subsiding, but instead keep on compounding with time.

Incessant violent and destructive protests by irate members of the community or aggrieved parties are a common feature in the daily lives of South Africans. Not a day goes by without some sort of a protest elsewhere. Quite often protesters invoke extreme measures to attract the attention of the authorities – burning of tyres, blockading the streets and roads, including national roads like highways, destruction of property, etc. That cut across all sectors – workers in almost all economic sectors, students, service delivery protesters, truck drivers and/or freight operators, taxi drivers and/or operators, non-profit organisations or lobby groups, political organisations, etc. Law enforcement agencies are often called upon to restrain themselves, and not to deal harshly with the protesters, i.e. hard on crime, but soft on people.

However, aren't the likes supposed to be treated alike? Why are there always tensions between the taxi industry and the

authorities throughout the country? It would seem law enforcement agencies are harsh on the taxi industry than other protesters.

Taxi strikes often lead to blockading of roads, causing major traffic congestions, to the irritation and annoyance of other road users.

Strikes are indeed permissible in terms of the law, but what is not permissible is interfering with the day-to-day running of other people's lives. By blockading the roads, not many people would probably sympathize with the taxi strikers, however justifiable their reasons for strike could be. By resorting to outlawed measures in an attempts to drive the mes-

sage to the powers that be, the taxi industry is unfortunately not doing justice to itself due to already negative and misinformed perceptions, stereotyped prejudices, and narratives perpetuated by the media about the taxi industry.

Other road users may indeed regard the taxi industry as a menace on the road, but before criticizing the industry for all manner of reasons, we need to know and understand challenges plaguing the industry.

Impoundment of taxis often leads to more hostilities and strained relationship. It is the harshest form of penalty, and should be



CURRENT AFFAIRS

used sparingly by the authorities on serious transgressions by taxi operators. Punishment for road traffic offences or transgressions should be proportionate to the misdemeanour, and also not be discriminative. The impounded taxi vehicles are a source of income for many people who would have otherwise been unemployed, with their dependants starving. Taxi operators are merely trying to make a living for themselves and their families under very difficult situations. End of the month, those impounded vehicles would have to be paid for, or else, they would be repossessed by the financiers. The least that should be done is to enable them to comply with the law, so that the delinquent ones could be identified to face the wrath of the law.

Sometime in 2023, we saw the impoundment of taxi vehicles by the Western Cape government for minor road traffic transgressions, which was a gross violation of the economic rights of the taxi operators. That eventually led to a protracted strike by taxi operators in Cape Town. If impounding of taxi vehicles is good for the taxi industry, why is it not applicable to all defaulting motorists for similar road traffic offences – skipping the robot, failing to stop at the stop sign, using a cell-phone whilst driving, etc. Private motorists are issued traffic fines for road traffic offences, but taxi vehicles are being impounded for similar transgressions.

The Mayor of Cape Town even boasted on SAfm that, *“the issuing of traffic fines is not sufficient, impounding of taxi vehicles is the most appropriate”*. Why selective law enforcement? How could the taxi industry respect the law that is victimizing it, and worse,



threatening to drive it out of business?

During the Western Cape taxi strike last year, at some stage, more than 6000 taxi vehicles were impounded. By impounding taxi vehicles for minor traffic violations, City of Cape Town was simply acting ultra vires, i.e. outside the scope of its powers. The DA-led administration was abusing its power by deliberately and maliciously misrepresenting or distorting application of the law, namely the National Land Transport Act of 2009 (NLTA). City of Cape Town was not necessarily applying the law, but playing politics by impounding taxi vehicles, instead of issuing traffic fines for minor road traffic offences.

When intensified impoundment of taxis happened in the Western Cape, it was cautioned that the taxi industry need to be wary that arbitrarily impoundment of taxis in the Western Cape may set a dangerous precedent that could be repeated by other law enforcement agencies elsewhere in the country, and that could lead to serious instability and a threat to the entire economy of the country. The unsubsidised taxi industry ferries more than 64% of the passengers countrywide,

exceeding both subsidised buses and trains combined.

To earn respect of legal subjects, laws should be just and fair. It is often said that the rule of law is applicable in South Africa, but the rule of law functions better if its application is not arbitrary. Thomas Jefferson, the 3rd President of the USA, once said, *“When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes duty”*. What was taking place was not about implementation of the City of Cape Town’s by-laws, because there were no such by-laws. It was also not about implementation of the national legislation as alleged, because that would have been based on wrong interpretation of the law. There is no law that gave City of Cape Town arbitrary powers to harass members of the taxi industry.

The taxi industry has over the years been raising issues pertaining to protracted period taken in the acquisition of permits. Provincial Regulatory Entities (PREs) do not follow statutory timeframes for processing of applications for permits. Capturing applications, publication thereof in the government gazette, serving notices of objections and dates of appearances, the actual

CURRENT AFFAIRS



hearings, announcement of the outcome, etc. could take even five years in some instances.

Some of the concerns expressed by the taxi industry over the years include, but not limited to, the following:

- There are massive backlogs dating many years back with regard to the processing of applications by PREs.
- Undue delay in processing applications exposes the industry to negative surveillance by law enforcement agencies that are targeting taxi vehicles for permits. It is contended that law enforcement agencies are unfairly victimizing members of the taxi industry for reasons beyond their control.

Many taxi operators are compliant with statutory requirements for acquisition of permits, and are following all necessary procedures to be within the legal framework. The majority of them have since lodged applications for permits with PREs in all provinces. However, the waiting period for permits is indefinite, rendering them illegal operators, and susceptible to harassment by law enforcement authorities.

Authorities need to create a platform talk to members of the taxi industry, and they will listen. If authorities make them understand, they will indeed understand. It is indeed true that people should be actively involved in defining and meeting their needs. The government has to consult with the taxi industry on matters affecting the industry. Attempts or efforts

on developments that are made without active participation of relevant role-players, or, aimed at passive beneficiaries, though coupled with the best intentions, do not always achieve the intended purposes. Those developments are likely to produce negative results.

To pass the law is one thing, but to make it earn respect and obedience of the people is another. People should feel obliged to obey the law, not out of fear for punishment, but because it is the right thing to do. Respect for the law is something that should come spontaneously from the legal subjects themselves, because they believe that the law is fair and just. The government should not rely mainly on sanctions or coercion alone. Overreliance on coercion leads to hardening of attitudes by those who are adversely affected thereof.



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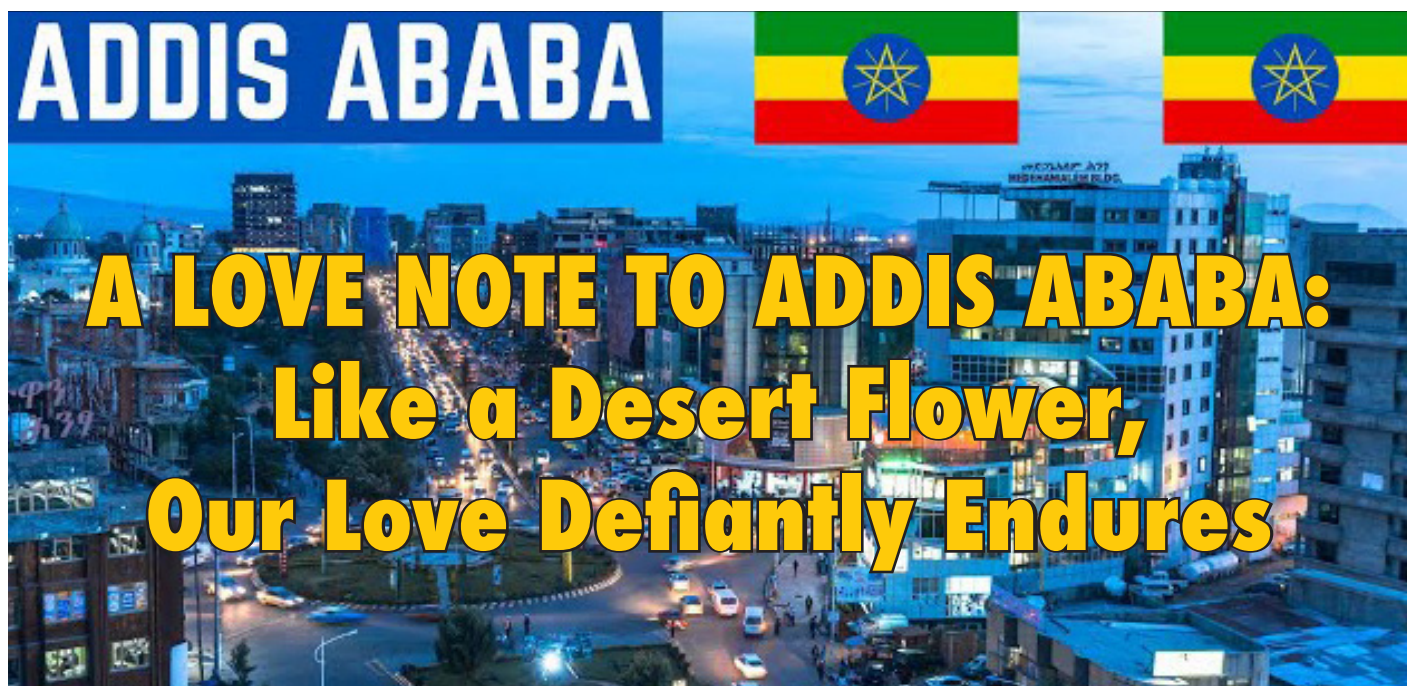
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Issued by the ANC, Chief Albert Luthuli House, HQ



■ By **BUSANI NGCAWENI**

TO Addis Ababa: like a desert flower, our love defiantly endures.

I leave you now, Addis, reluctantly and with a heavy heart; this love we share is too sweet, too obsessive, too consuming. Each time we meet, I lose my head, much like Tracy Chapman sings: lost to matters of the heart. It is very difficult to fall or restore unconditional affection for African cities these days.

But alas, O land of the yellow blossoms, duty calls. I must tear myself away from your soothing embrace, leaving behind all my alluring desires. I console myself only with hope that this separation is not final – that we shall meet again soon, and that the flame you have kindled will burn even brighter when we do.

The City of Lights: Motion and Progress

Addis Ababa stands as a defiant symbol of motion and progress.

Unlike the stasis that has gripped cities like Durban, Luanda, Mombasa and Kinshasa, this mountainous city carves its identity as a hopeful antithesis – a space where despair melts into the promise of something greater. In its every corner, Addis negotiates between the hard truths of its political past and the dream of a brighter African future. It breaks free from the shackles of the sub-city that many old urban spaces have become in both the global north and the global south.

Addis has always been a beacon. From Emperor Menelik II's founding of the city in 1886, to its resilient defiance against Mussolini's occupation, the city has long symbolised resistance, unity and self-determination. But while its streets echo with the footsteps of liberation, Addis is not entirely free from the shadows of coloniality.

Much like other major cities, its present and future are entangled

with Euro-American-Sino imaginations of modernity.

Skyscrapers rise like glass exclamation points in a narrative crafted by capital, yet there is something fiercely unique here. Unlike Cairo, a city wrestling with the artificial sterility of its “smart city” developments, or Cape Town, caught in the vice of gentrification and privilege preservation, Addis experiments boldly, refusing to be fully captured. There is grace in its evolving beauty.

A City Transformed: Renewal Amid Contradictions

The transformation of Addis is palpable. Slums are being replaced by towering buildings, a double-edged sword that cuts deep into the lives of the city's poor. Rising property prices force many to the outskirts, where transportation costs often spiral beyond their reach. Yet, amidst

CURRENT AFFAIRS

these displacements, a different kind of energy prevails – a sense of renewal that is as challenging as it is exhilarating. The Uber economy, with its demands on mobility, smart connectivity and infrastructure, adds another layer to this dynamic urban transformation, driving property values higher and reshaping the democratic dividend. After all, beauty is not cheap, and ever since its monetary value was discovered, the world became a mess – no romance without finance!

In all this, one cannot help but marvel at Addis's meticulous governance. From the airport to the mayor's office, the city exudes an air of order and purpose. Men in orange overalls sweep the streets with a quiet dignity, while wheelbarrows carry away the dust of change.

Beneath every pavement, new water pipes and fibre cables are laid, ensuring the veins of the city pulse with the lifeblood of progress. Walkways and cycle paths are under construction,

even if it means breaking and pushing back boundary walls of banks and embassies. Traffic lights and roundabouts, often overlooked in the post-colony, act as metaphors for the rhythm of Addis, a rhythm that invites you to pause, to share space, to observe.

The Eternal Allure of Addis

Yet, the true beauty of Addis lies not in its infrastructure development and expanding industrial development zone, but in its people. There is a quiet, almost divine grace in the way the city's women carry themselves. Their beauty transcends the physical, becoming a symbol of the city's charm and allure. In their presence, vows become fragile, moral temptations overwhelm, and the weary traveller's heart is forever ensnared. How else can one explain this enchantment but as a deliberate act of the divine? Truly, Addis is 'the land of origin' (as the Ethiopian Air byline goes), of beauty, of culture, of hope. The question remains in Johannesburg: *"why do abo my*

friend (Ethiopian and other East African immigrants) leave behind their (beautiful) women/sisters" – pun intended!

And what of the men? They walk these streets with an unjealous confidence, a rare quality that allows the city's spirit to flourish unhindered (you are free from that *"don't look at our women"* Lagos gaze). Together, the people of Addis form the soul of a city that celebrates its diverse and painful heritage while embracing the future.

From the spicy delights of its cuisine to the soothing indulgence of its spas, Addis offers a sensory feast that rivals the best in the world.

A Seat of Power and Unity

More than just a city, Addis is a symbol, a gracious host to the African Union and UN agencies, a hub where the continent's leaders converge to proclaim a collective future – from its founding as the OAU to date. Its history as the cradle of pan-



CURRENT AFFAIRS



Africanism is well-documented, but what sets Addis apart is its ability to balance contradictions. Regional rivalries and national interests collide here, yet the city manages to hold it all together, a delicate dance that underscores the resilience of multilateralism.

Diplomats from all corners of the world come and go, their briefcases heavy with plans for peace, neo-colonialism, anti-imperialism and development; yet their hearts are invariably softened by the city's poetic charm. Here, the words of an Inanda proverb ring true: *"The future belongs to the united."* Through Agenda 2063, there is a common determination to accelerate national and regional development resulting in jobs and prosperity for all Africans. Addis is more than just a meeting place; it is a catalyst for unity, a stage where dreams of social and economic transformation take shape.

New Seasons, New Flowers

Addis Ababa, as its name suggests, is a flower that transcends time. Its petals, vibrant and alive, tell the story of an African city that refuses to wilt. It has withstood droughts and famines, civil wars and tyranny. It defeated imperialism. In its embrace of modernity, it does not

abandon its roots. Instead, it finds ways to harmonise progress with tradition, creating a canvas that is as inspiring as it is complex.

The sun rises over Addis to illuminate more than just its streets; it lights the path to a better future for all of Africa. In its clean pavements, its magnificent streetlights, the burgeoning palm trees, its bustling traffic circles, its gentle people, and its soaring

ambitions, Addis restores faith – not just in the city itself, but in the broader African dream of a renaissance – regular power cuts notwithstanding. Like a great love affair, it challenges you, tempts you, and ultimately leaves you transformed.

And so, Addis, in this new season of growing multipolarity, you remain a New Flower – not merely in name, but in spirit.

You are a city pregnant with the promise of renewal, a city that reminds us of the beauty that lies in resilience and hope. All premature autopsies about the African city are exposed here.

You are, and forever will be, the heart of the African city, the living Carthage. Don't cry for me – Addis; the truth is, our new African modernity love affair defiantly endures.

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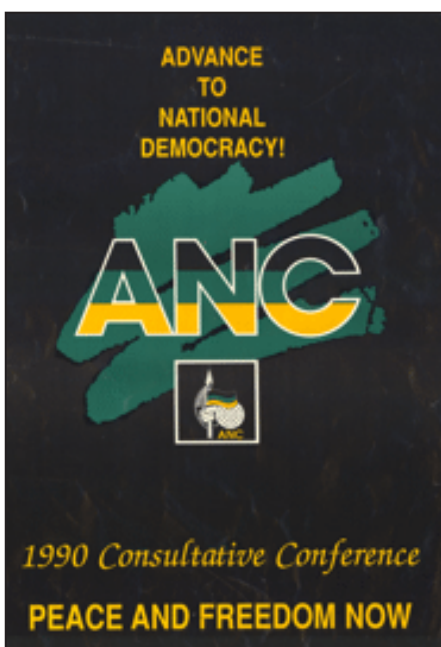
THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

14–31 December 2024

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

14–16 December 1990 First ANC Consultative Conference after three decades held



The African National Congress (ANC) held its first Consultative Conference in South Africa since its banning in 1960 from 14–16 December 1990. Nelson Mandela gave his Opening address on behalf of Comrade OR Tambo, who by then had suffered a stroke. Conference addressed the conditions for negotiations, the Third Force violence, the rebuilding of the ANC as a mass legal organisation, the building of a Patriotic Front against apartheid, and the double agenda of the apartheid regime. After the banning of the ANC, three consultative conferences were held outside the country – in Lobatse, Botswana (1962), Morogoro,

Tanzania (1969) and Kabwe, Zambia in 1985.

14 December 2011 Pan-African University launched

The African Union launched this continental initiative, one of the Agenda 2063 flagship projects, on this day in Addis Ababa. The university has branches in five African regions, specializing in different areas of strategic importance to Africa: Algeria hosts the PAU Institute for Water, Energy and Climate Sciences, KENYA the PAU Institute for Basic Science, Technology and Innovation, Nigeria the Institute for Life and Earth Sciences, Cameroon the Institute for Governance, Humanities and Social Sciences and South Africa the PAU Institute of Space Sciences.

14 December 2014 ANC fires Chief Whip for sexual harassment

The ANC's National Disciplinary Committee (NDC) responded to allegations of sexual harassment by a staff member against its Chief Whip Mbulelo Goniwe by bringing three charges: abusing his office to obtain sexual favours, bringing the ANC into disrepute and provoking divisions in the unity of the party. Goniwe was found guilty on the first two charges and was fired as the chief whip of the ANC

on 14 December 2006. He also lost his parliamentary seat and his membership of the ANC was suspended for three years. Goniwe's sacking was considered as a landmark victory for women's rights in South Africa.

15 December 1986 Ebrahim, Maseko and Dladla abducted from Swaziland

South African security forces abducted ANC activists Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim, Mandla Maseko and Simon Dladla in Swaziland and transferred them to stand trial in SA. The treatment of Ebrahim was particularly harsh, as he was taken at gunpoint and in chains from his home. They were convicted in January 1989 despite testimony by the ANC's office in London that the structure of the Organisation was such that the accused could not have committed the crimes they were charged with. Ebrahim received a 20-year sentence, while Maseko and Dladla were sentenced to 23 and 12 years respectively. Cde Ebrahim Ebrahim passed away on 6 December 2021.

15 December 1993 SA Citizenship restored to South Africans in bantustans

The Transitional Executive Council, a product of CODESA negotiations engaged on lengthy

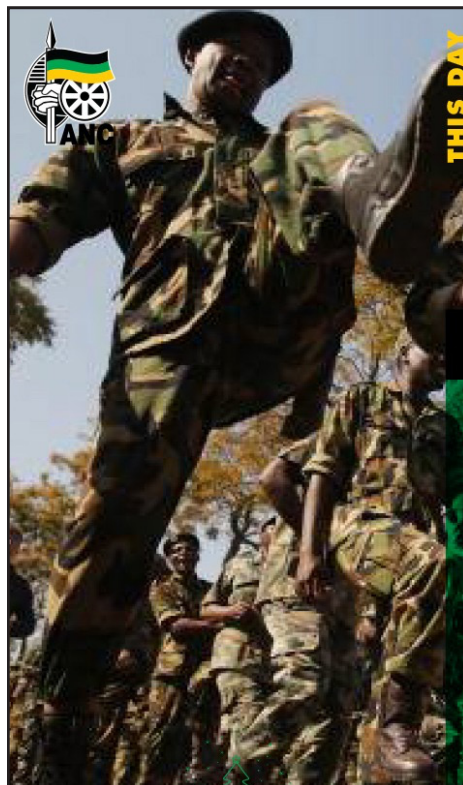
THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

deliberations around restoration of citizenship to the residents of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei, numbering about 10 million inhabitants. It was agreed in the deliberations that the restoration should be done simultaneously with the reintegration of these territories into South Africa. The formal announcement on the restoration was made by parliament on 15 December 1993, scheduled to come into effect on 1 January 1994. President of Bophuthatswana, Mr Lucas Mangope announced that his homeland would never participate in South Africa's first democratic elections scheduled, prompting the Anti Bop campaign led by the ANC Youth League and other structures.

15 December 2013 President Nelson Mandela laid to rest in Qunu



President Nelson Mandela passed away on 5 December 2013 at the age of 95, in his home in Johannesburg. His passing was greeted with outpourings of grief across the country, continent and world. His body lay in state at the Union Buildings, and a Memorial service was held at FNB Stadium. On 15 December 2013, Tata Madiba was buried in Qunu in the Eastern Cape.



CELEBRATING 63 YEARS OF THE PEOPLE'S ARMY UMKHONTO WE SIZWE

16 December 1961

On this day we remember and pay tribute to the heroic sons and daughters of our revolution. We honor these brave soldiers of our movement for their selfless contribution to the struggle for the freedom of all South Africans.

15 December 2017 Rwanda bans Shisha pipes

After a WHO study, that found that smoking the addictive tobacco shisha for one hour equals 100 cigarettes, Rwanda banned the import, sale and smoking of the pipe.

15 December 2021 African Intangible Heritage

UNESCO listed Congolese rumba music and Senegal's fish and rice dish, Thiébou Dieune on its Intangible Heritage of Humanity register.

16 December 1913 Women's Monument opened in Bloemfontein

The Women's Memorial was unveiled in Bloemfontein, at a ceremony attended by 20,000 people from all over the country. The monument commemorated the 26 251 women and children who died during the Anglo-Boer War 2, mainly in British concentration camps.

16 December 1943 African Claims adopted at ANC Conference

At the annual conference of the African National Congress (ANC) held in Bloemfontein, the document the African's Claim in South Africa, presented by a committee appointed by ANC president Dr A.B. Xuma, was unanimously adopted. The committee was mandated to study the Atlantic Charter and draft a Bill of Rights.

16 December 1961 Umkhonto we Sizwe launches its first acts of Sabotage

On this date, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the military wing of the African National Congress (ANC) announced its existence by launching its first acts of sabotage. During the evening of 16 December 1961, five bombs were detonated in Port Elizabeth, with other actions in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town and Durban. The MK High Command selected targets for the start of the mili-

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

tary confrontation and insurgency, with primary targets being power stations and government buildings. Umkhonto we Sizwe engaged in the armed struggle, under the political leadership of the ANC, until the suspension of armed action in 1990 and its integration into the SANDF after 1994.

16 December 1995

Orlando Pirates won the African Champions Cup

Orlando Pirates won the Second Leg of the 1995 African Champions Cup (ACC) Final against ASEC Mimosas with a score of 1 – 0. With this victory, Pirates became the first football club south of the equator to win the ACC at first attempt. The match was later awarded the Kick Off Magazine's Game of the Decade Award.

16 December 1998

Gugu Dlamini, AIDS activist killed by men in her community



On 16 December 1998, Gugu Dlamini, a young woman from KwaMashu, KZN dedicated to raising awareness around HIV/AIDS and fighting against discrimination, was killed. Being HIV positive herself, Dlamini believed that in order to overcome the stigma of the virus and educate people across all social spheres, we had to talk openly about the disease. On World AIDS Day,

December 1, 1998, Dlamini disclosed her HIV status on television and on a Zulu-language radio station. Her public disclosure was met with anger from members of her hometown, who believed she had brought shame to their community. Subsequent to her announcement Dlamini is reported to have been threatened by her neighbours. These threats manifested into violence when, on 16 December 1998, she was stoned and stabbed to death by a group of men from her community. Since her gruesome death, Dlamini's name continues to be used in the fight against the stigmatization of HIV infected persons and HIV denialism.

17 December 1949

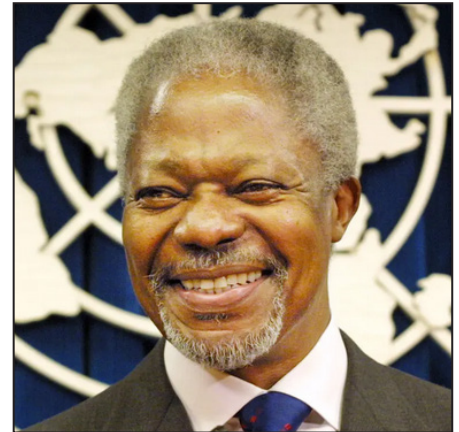
ANC Conference adopts Defiance Programme of Action

The adoption of a Programme of Action by the African National Congress (ANC) at the December conference marked one of the most important turning points in the history of the struggle. The ANC Youth League initiated and lobbied for the Programme of Action, to transform the ANC into a militant liberation movement, which embarked on mass action, involving civil disobedience, strikes, boycotts and other forms of non-violent resistance. In 1952, the young guard in the ANC, led by Walter Sisulu, Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela, in alliance with the South African Indian Congresses, the Congress of Trade Unions and the Coloured Peoples' Congress, led the first Defiance Campaign.

17 December 1996

Kofi Annan appointed as UN Secretary General

Ghanaian citizen, Kofi Annan,



was appointed as the seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) replacing outgoing Boutros Boutros Ghali from Egypt, whose term of office had expired. Annan assumed his duties on 1 January 1997 and served two terms as UNSG until 31 December 2006. A UN staffer since 1962, he was the first UN member of staff elected to this position. Highlights of his tenure include the UN reforms, the fight against HIV/AIDS, and the Global Compact. He was succeeded by Ban Ki Moon. In 2001, Kofi Annan and the UN were joint recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize.

17 December 2010

Tunisian youth sets himself on fire, sparks Arab Spring

Mohamed Bouazizi, a 26-year old street vendor, left school early to help earn a living for his family, selling fruits on the street. He was continually harassed by the police, and shortly before the incident had his scales confiscated and his cart turned over by a government official. Mohamed went to the governor's office to try and get his tools of trade back, but the officials refused to let him in. He returned the next day, doused with petrol and set himself alight. Bystanders tried to help, but he sustained 90% burns and passed away from his

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

injuries. This spurred the Tunisian revolution, and the broader Arab Spring from 2010 through to 2012, against uncaring and authoritarian regimes. This affected Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria and Bahrain; with protests in Algeria, Morocco, Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, and the Sudan.

18 December 1949 Steve Bantu Biko is born



Biko was born on this day in King William's Town in the Eastern Cape, and went on to inspire the hope for freedom among millions in South Africa and across Africa. Founder of the South African Student's Organisation (SASO), and a leading ideologue and leader of the Black Consciousness Movement, he was banned and detained several times by the apartheid authorities, until he was killed by the police whilst in detention on 12 September 1977.

18 December 1965 John "Shoes" Moshoeu born

South African and international soccer player John Moshoeu was born in Diepkloof, Soweto. One of the most successful footballers, his nickname came from his dribbling skills as an attacking midfielder. He started his football career at Giant Blackpool, and went on to play for Kaizer Chiefs, AmaZulu and Fenerbahçe, Tur-

key. He made his debut for Bafana Bafana 1993 against Botswana, was influential in the team that won the 1996 Africa Cup of Nations and went onto represent the country in six other international tournaments, including the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France. Shoes Moshoeu passed on in 2015, after a long battle with stomach cancer.

19 December 1997 Sugarboy Malinga wins World Boxing Title, again



Tulane Sugarboy Malinga, South African super middleweight, won the World Boxing Council (WBC) title for the second time in his career. Malinga became the first South African to win a WBC belt by beating Nigel Benn in 1996.

19 December 1989 Zimbabwe political parties merge

Two rival political organisations in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), led by Joshua Nkomo, and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), led initially by the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole and later by Robert Gabriel Mugabe, merged following consensus reached in 1987 to form a new political party called the Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF).

19 December 1943 Father of Ethiopian Jazz

Mulatu Astatke is an Ethiopian musician and arranger considered as the father of Ethio-Jazz, which combines Ethiopian music with jazz and Latin music. Mulatu led his band while playing the vibraphone and conga drums, instruments that he introduced into Ethiopian popular music, as well as other percussion instruments, keyboards, and organs. The unique sound of Ethio-jazz finds its roots in a culture with over 3,000 years of independence.

19 December 1969 Uganda Prime Minister Milton Obote shot

Apollo Milton Obote was a Ugandan socialist political leader who led the country to independence in 1962. He became prime minister of Uganda and later president. In 1969, an attempt on his life was made when he was shot at while attending a UPC conference in Kampala. Angered and paranoid after the attempted assassination, he banned all opposition parties. His government was overthrown in 1971 and was succeeded by Idi Amin. Obote died of kidney failure in 2005.

20 December 1948 Abdulrazak Gurnah born

The Tanzanian author Abdulrazak Gurnah was born on this day in Zanzibar. Gurnah won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2021, for his books, which speaks to the themes of exile, colonialism and post-colonial experiences.

20 December 1965 Arthur Elias Letele, medical doctor and ANC activist passed on

Arthur Elias Letele was born in

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY



Lesotho in 1916, but grew up in Ladybrand in the Free State. He finished high school in Eastern Cape, studied medicine and started a practice in Lovedale in 1947. While at medical school, Letele joined the ANC Youth League, and the ANC when he moved to Kimberley in 1948. He participated in the 1950s Defiance Campaign, leading to his first arrest. Another arrest in 1952 led to a 9-month sentence, after which he was banned from leaving Kimberley until August 1953. Letele was elected to the ANC Executive Committee, was part of the Congress of the People Campaign and was an accused in the 1956 Treason Trial. After the Sharpeville Massacre, Letele was arrested for a third time, and upon his release, given 30 days to leave South Africa. He returned to Lesotho in 1961 and continued his involvement with the ANC in exile. After suffering from an incurable disease for years, Letele committed suicide on 20 December 1965. The South African Institute of Health Care Matters was named in his honor in 2003.

20 December 1991 **Discovery of 5000 year-old fleet of Nile ships**

On 20 December 1991 (some sources say 21 December) archaeologists discovered a 5000 years old fleet of ships near the

Nile in Abydos, Egypt. The 12 large wooden boats were believed to be the first royal ships, possibly belonging to the second dynasty Pharaoh, Khasekhemwy. However, other archeologists believed that the boats might have been built by an earlier Pharaoh, Djer, of the first dynasty. It was concluded that the boats were used for burial of royals. The boats boasted very advanced design for their era and were built to withstand rough seas.

20 December 1991 **CODESA starts**

The Convention for a Democratic South Africa starts the process of negotiations in Kempton Park with a range of political parties represented, to dismantle apartheid and usher in a democratic South Africa.

20 December 1997 **Yanok Yai born**

South Sudanese fashion model Anok Yai was born on this day in Cairo. She is the second black model after Naomi Campbell to open a Prada show. When discovered, she was a 19-year old student studying biochemistry, got her picture taken and shared on Instagram, and the rest was history.

20 December 2012 **Rwanda Minister of Planning Convicted of Genocide**

Augustin Ndirabatware was sentenced to 35 years in prison by a UN war crimes court after convicted of genocide. At the time of the 1994 Rwanda genocide, Ndirabatware was Minister of Planning, a Doctor of Economics and Professor at the National University of Rwanda, and former

General Director of the Minister of Mines and Artisanat. Gisenyi Ndirabatware was charged with conspiracy to commit genocide, through a plan to exterminate the Tutsi civilian population, instigation of ethnic violence, training.

21 December 1949 **Sankara born**



Thomas Sankara (1949-1978), Pan African, freedom fighter, revolutionary and President of Burkina Faso, was born on this day in Yako. Amongst his famous quotes were: *"You cannot carry out fundamental change without a certain amount of madness."*

21 December 1967 **Louis Washkansky dies**

54-year old dentist Louis Washkansky, recipient of the first successful human heart transplant in the world, died in Cape Town, 18 days after receiving the heart of Denise Darvall. The heart transplant operation was performed by Dr. Christiaan Barnard at Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town on 3 December 1963. Washkansky died of pneumonia brought on by a weakened immune system. Heart transplants have become routine procedures since then.

22 December 1959 **Dusi Canoe Marathon starts**

The Dusi Canoe Marathon started on 22 December 1951, when

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

8 individuals canoed from Alexandra Park in Pietermaritzburg, through the Umsindusi, the Valley of a Thousand Hills and the Umgeni to Durban. Ian Player was the only one who reached the final destination in 6 days, 8 hours and 15 minutes. He published the book *Men, Rivers and Canoes* in 1964. The Dusi Canoe Marathon is one of the most iconic canoe races in the world, attracting between 1 600 and 2 000 paddlers each year.

22 December 1963

ZANU-PF founded

The Zimbabwe National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) is founded, as a political and military liberation alliance between ZAPU led by Joshua Nkomo and ZANU led by Robert Mugabe. Though with ideological differences, it presented a formidable assault against white and British rule in Zimbabwe, and became the governing party in 1980.

22 December 1989

Somalian peace activist Ilwad Elman born

Ilwad Elman was born on this day in Mogadishu. Her father, a peace activist was assassinated and she was sent to Canada to stay with family. She returned to Somalia in the midst of the country's civil war to work with her mother in a social welfare foundation, and has since involved in co-founding a rape crisis centre and other social initiatives.

23 December 1938

Ancient Coelethant found in East London

Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer, a museum curator in East London, had an arrangement with fishermen Captain Hendrick

Goosen that she could examine all catches from his trawler for her museum. On 23 December 1938, she saw an unknown specimen amongst the fish. Back at the museum, going through her reference books, she notice that it looked like the prehistoric coelacanth, a fish that had been swimming in the seas 400 million years ago, and believed to have been extinct for some 70 million years. This was confirmed by other scientists.

23 December 1980

Four black newspapers banned



Four black newspapers, Post Transvaal, Saturday Post, Sunday Post and the Sowetan, were banned, on the same day that an 8-week strike of black journalists ends. Six days later, in the Rand Supreme Court, Justice Coetzee, refused to lift the banning order on the newspapers. The security police also served the president and vice-president of trade union Media Workers of South Africa with 3 year banning orders.

23 December 1897

Helen Martins, the Owl Lady born

Helen Elizabeth Martins has put the quaint Karoo village of Nieu Bethesda on the map with her eccentric Owl House, with its ex-

traordinary creatures of wire, cement, and cut glass. It included owls, camels, wise men, women, and children walking on the road to Mecca. She was born on this day in Nieu Bethesda, the youngest of six children and lived there when she died on 8 August 1976. Nieu Bethesda remains a key tourist attraction.

23 December 2002

Tatamkhulu Afrika, poet and activist died

Tatamkhulu Africa was born in Egypt as Mohamed Faud Nasif on 7 December 1920. His parents relocated to South Africa in 1923 where they died from the Asia flu leaving him orphaned at the age of two. He was given to a Methodist couple who renamed him John Charlton. In 1938, his adoptive parents informed him that he was adopted and not white. John Charlton published his novel *Broken Earth* (1940) at the age of 17. After the end of World War II, he went to live in Namibia where he was taken in by an Afrikaans family, renamed Jouza Joubert. In Namibia he worked as copper miner, barman, shop assistant, auditors' clerk and as a jazz drummer. In 1964, Jouza Joubert embraced Islam and changed his name to Ismail Joubert before settling in District Six. When District Six was destroyed in 1967, Joubert launched a militant Muslim organisation, Al Jihaad. Ismail Joubert and other Al Jihaad members joined uMkhonto weSizwe early 1980s. Joubert was arrested and charged with Terrorism in 1987, spent some time in prison and then banned for 5 years and forbidden to write. During his time in MK he was given the name Tatamkhulu Afrika (Grandfather Afrika), a name that he adopted as his official name. He wrote and published eight poetry volumes

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

and four prose works, winning a number of awards. He donated a large portion of his income to establish an Islamic centre and a creche in. Tatamkhulu Afrika passed on 23 December 2002 in a road accident.

24 Decembers Birthdays:

Actress and author **Anna Neethling Pohl** was born in 1906 on this day and so was Rivonia trialist and Isithwalandwe Seaparankoe, **Wilton Mkwayi** in 1923, famous Sowetan business icon, **Richard Maponya** in 1926 and **Stephen Appiah**, Ghanian footballer born in 1980.

25 December 1992

Helen Joseph passed on



Helen Joseph was an anti-apartheid leader, a FEDSAW founding member, one of the four women that led the 1956 women's march to the Union Buildings, Treason Trialist and a patron of the United Democratic Front formed in 1983. She was arrested several times for her involvement in political activities. She died at the age of 87 years.

25 December birthdays:

Anwar Al-Sadat, former Egyptian President born (1919); **Christmas Tinto**, trade unionist, civic and ANC leader and West-

ern Cape UDF President (1925); and **Aziz Pahad**, former ANC NEC member and Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister born in 1940.

26 December 2004

Tsunami kills hundreds of thousands

Early on 26 December 2004, a magnitude 9.3 earthquake struck near Sumatra, Indonesia. The earthquake deformed the ocean floor, causing a tsunami wave. The tsunami caused tremendous devastation in several countries and killed hundreds of thousands of people. Measured in lives lost, it is amongst the ten worst earthquakes in recorded history, and the single worst tsunami in history. Countries affected in terms of citizens who lost their lives, including many tourists, were Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Madagascar, Maldives, Myanmar, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand and many European countries.

27 December 1900

Astley John Hilary Goodwin, first professional archeologist, founder of the South African Archaeological Society, was born on 2 December 1900. He died in 1959.

29 December 1981

Winnie Mandela served with yet another banning order
Winnie Mandela was banned for another five years and continued to be banished and restricted to the small Orange Free State town of Brandfort.

30 December 1875

Adam Kok III killed in accident

Adam Kok III, founder and chief

of Griqualand East, was killed in an accident. The Cape Colonial government unilaterally annexed Griqualand East in 1874 deposing Kok of his duties as chief. He is revered by the Griqua people of the present day as the greatest of the Kok chiefs.

30 December 1969

IMF to buy gold from SA

The International Monetary Fund announces that it will purchase gold from South Africa, subject to conditions.

31 December 1930

Dorothy Nyembe born

Dorothy Nomzansi Nyembe was born on the 31st of December 1931 near Dundee in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Her mother, Leeya Basolise Nyembe was the daughter of Chief Ngedee Shezi. Dorothy attended mission schools until Standard Nine, and at the age of fifteen gave birth to her only child and few years later. She joined the African National Congress (ANC) in 1952, participating as a volunteer in the Defiance Campaign in Durban and was imprisoned briefly on two occasions. In 1954 she participated in the establishment of the ANC Women's League in Cato Manor and becoming Chairperson of the "Two Sticks" Branch Committee. She was one of the leaders against the removals from Cato Manor in 1956, and also one of the leaders of boycotts of the government controlled beer hall. The beer halls were perceived to destroy traditional beer brewing, the only viable source of income for women in the townships. In the same year, Dorothy was elected as Vice-President of the Durban ANC Women's League and a leading member of the Federation of South African Women



(FEDSAW). On the 9th of August 1956, she led the Natal contingent of women to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the introduction of passes for women. In December of that same year she was one of the 156 people arrested and charged with high treason, but the charges against her and sixty others were dropped on 18 December 1957, she resumed her political work, was elected to the ANC's National Executive Committee with Lilian Ngoyi in December 1958. In the same year, she was elected President of the ANC Women's League in Natal, and was active in the potato boycott in 1959. During the 1960 post-Sharpeville state of emergency she spent five months in detention. In 1961, Dorothy was recruited into Umkhonto we Sizwe and worked closely with the likes of Chief Albert Luthuli, Moses Mabhida, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo. In 1962 with the ANC banned, Dorothy became President of the Natal Rural Areas Committee where she participated in the organisation of anti-government demonstrations by rural women, including their refusal to fill cattle dips. The campaign became known as the Natal Women's Revolt. In 1963, Dorothy was ar-

rested and charged with furthering the aims of the banned ANC and she was sentenced to three years' imprisonment. Following her release in 1966 Dorothy was served with a five-year banning order restricting her to the magisterial district of Durban, however she carried on with her underground activities. In 1968 she was detained with ten others and charged on five counts under the Suppression of Communism Act. In January 1969 she was found guilty of harbouring members of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), the military wing of the ANC, and was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment which she served in Barberton, Kroonstad, Potchefstroom, and Pretoria Central prisons. South Africa's longest-serving woman political prisoner, she endured conditions often worse than those for incarcerated African men. She was released on 23 March 1984, and became active in the Natal Organisation of Women (NOW), a community organisation fighting against rent increases, transport costs, poor education and lack of child care facilities. Dorothy was awarded the Soviet Union's greatest awards, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) **People's Friendship Award**. In 1992 she was awarded

the **Chief Albert Luthuli prize** for her commitment and dedication to the liberation struggle. In 1994 after the first democratic elections, she was one of the pioneer Members of the National Assembly and one of the founding mothers and fathers of the South African democratic constitution. Mam Dorothy passed away on 17 December 1998.

31 December 1932 Mapungubwe re-discovered

The ancient city of Mapungubwe ('Hill of the Jackal') is an Iron Age archaeological site in the Limpopo, on the border between South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana. Mapungubwe was the centre of the largest known kingdom in Africa, a sophisticated trading center from around 1200 to 1300 AD, trading gold and ivory with China, India and Egypt. The site was 'discovered' on 31 December 1932, when a local informant, Mowena, led farmer van Graan to the Mapungubwe Hill. The University of Pretoria archeologists excavated the site, but for decades until 1994 suppressed all knowledge of the city, because it defied the apartheid colonial version of history. Mapungubwe was declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in July 2003.

31 December 1959 Last of Sophiatown residents removed

Forced removals from Sophiatown had started in 1955. On this day, in 1959 the last residents are moved. In 1963 the demolition of the houses started, as the area was reassigned to White residents and renamed Triomf by the apartheid government.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DAYS

14–31 December 2024

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

14 December

Day of African Sport

Sport plays an important role in the continent, contributing to health, entertainment, national cohesion and the economy. Africans play an important role in global sport, with over 100 African footballers playing in premier leagues in Europe, Asia and South America; Kenyans and Ethiopian athletes dominate long distance track events, but also other athletic codes. Reggie Walker, a South African sprinter, was the first African to win an Olympic gold for the 100 meters in 1908. According to the African Reporter, Football, Rugby, Running (Athletics), Cricket and Basketball are amongst the top five sports in the continent. More and more women's teams and athletes are making their mark, although the gender pay gap between male and female athletes across sports remains huge.

17 December

International Day to end Violence against Sex workers



First celebrated in 2003, the day calls attention to hate crimes committed against sex workers and to highlight the social stigma and discrimination that contribute to violence against sex workers. The day was inaugurated by Dr Annie Sprinkle and started by the Sex Workers Outreach Project USA.

18 December

International Migrants Day



Migration has been part of the experience of humanity since time immemorial, as Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General said: “throughout human history, migration has been a courageous expression of the individual’s will to overcome adversity and to live a better life.” The commemoration coincides with the adoption on 18 December 1990, of the UN International Convention for the Protection of all Migrant Workers and their Families”. South Africa has a long history of migration (forced and voluntary), from colonialism and the arrival of the Dutch, British and others of European descent, slaves from Angola, Madagascar and Malaysia, the Mfecane, Chinese and Indians indentured labour, migrant labour for the mines from Southern Africa, to the current post 1994 waves of migration.

18 December

Arabic Language day

There are about 274 million Arabic speakers in the world, and is an official language in over 26 countries. In recognition of the importance of the language, in 1973, the UN General Assembly adopted Arabic as one of its six official languages. Arabic is also widely spoken in the African continent, especially north and east Africa, and is also one of the African Union official languages.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

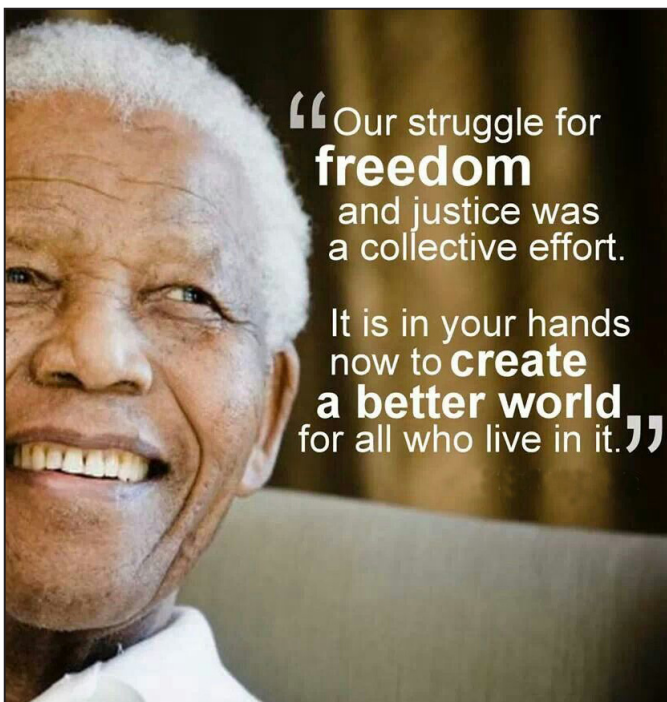
19 December UN Day for South-South Cooperation



South-South cooperation is a manifestation of cooperation and solidarity among peoples and countries, to work towards ending the unequal and unjust global economic and political system, that continues to advantage countries of the North, allowing them to continue to exploit developing countries to their advantage. The cooperation is expressed in various multilateral forums and South Africa continues to play an important role in promoting and fighting for South-South cooperation and solidarity.

20 December International Human Solidarity Day

Solidarity is identified in the Millennium Declaration as one of the fundamental values of international relations in the 21st Century, wherein those, who either suffer or benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most, in the context of a highly unjust and exploitative world order.

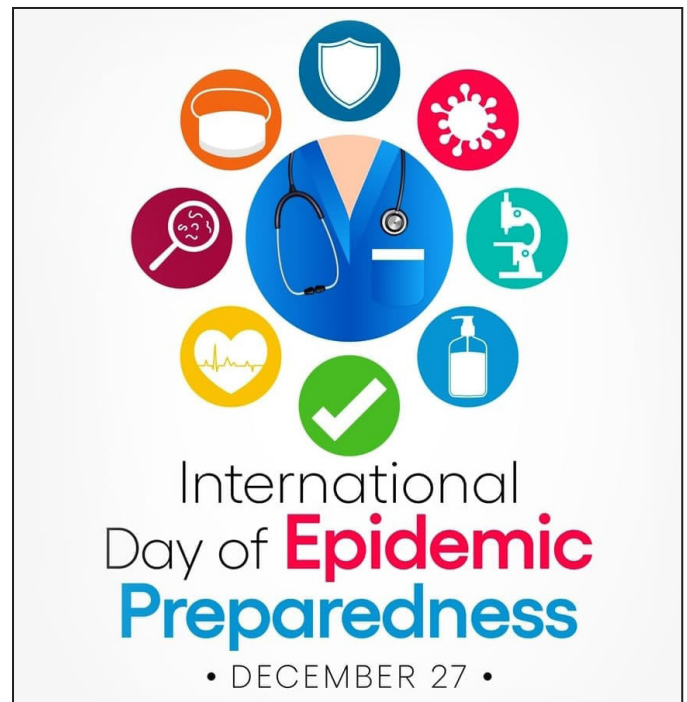


Consequently, in the context of globalization and the challenge of growing inequality, strengthening of international solidarity (and social justice) is indispensable.

24 December Christmas Book Flood Day

This day has its origin in Iceland, where friends and family members exchange books and read together.

27 December International Day of Epidemic Preparedness



Truly global pandemics are once in a century occurrence, like the COVID-19 pandemic and the Spanish Flu of 1918, which affect countries across the world. But, there are also more localized epidemics and pandemics, like SARS, Ebola or the Bubonic Plague. An epidemic is defined as the rapid spread of an infectious disease to a large number of people within a short space of a time. If it spread to a number of countries, it is called a pandemic. Epidemics have been recorded in human history for as far back as 1200 BC in Babylon. The UN uses this day to focus attention on the importance of public health preparedness and coordination and for the One Health approach – the “*integration of human health, animal health and plant health, as well as environmental and other relevant sectors.*”