

PublicSector

MANAGER

Dr Mike Masiapato

leading the
safeguarding
of South African
borders

Permits to boost

cannabis farming
in KwaZulu-Natal

Fight corruption

through responsible
whistleblowing



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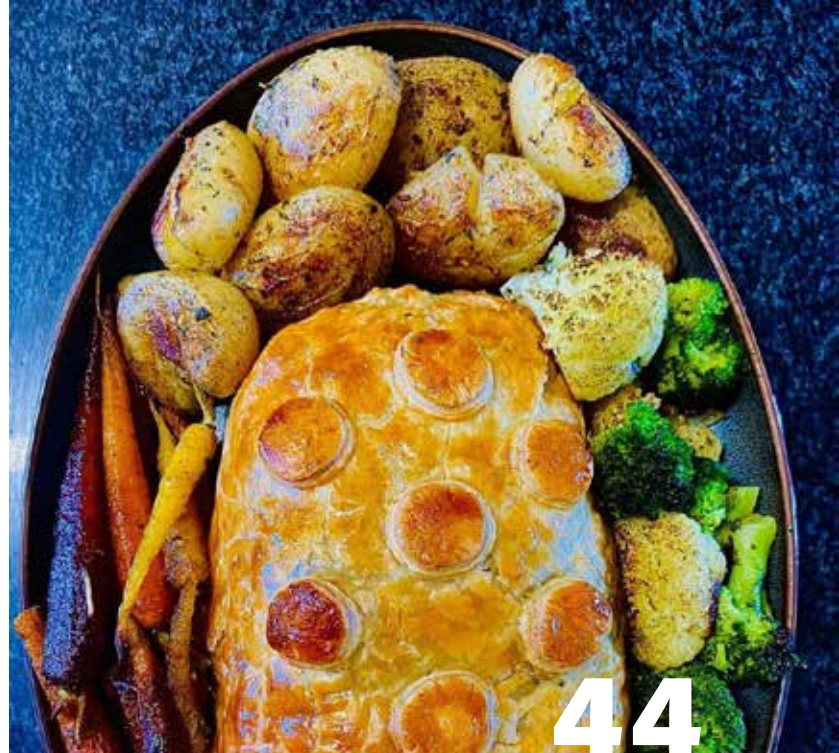
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Strengthening unity and social cohesion in a healing nation

Following the record-breaking fourth Rugby World Cup title win by the Springboks, South Africa's national men's rugby team, President Cyril Ramaphosa declared 15 December 2023 a public holiday to celebrate the team's momentous achievement. It is fitting that this celebratory holiday occurs during Reconciliation Month and a day before Reconciliation Day, which is dedicated to fostering reconciliation and strengthen unity in the country.

The theme for 2023 Reconciliation Month is "Strengthening Unity and Social Cohesion in a Healing Nation". This theme acknowledges South Africa's continuing journey of healing from past injustices and overcoming current challenges. The theme also underscores the important role of Department of Sport, Arts and Culture in fostering national unity and social cohesion. South Africa's



creatives, cultural practitioners, and athletes play an important role in uniting the country and sharing with the world the

essence of South Africa as a country that values unity and social cohesion. This has been clear to see in 2023, in what

has been a significant year for South African sport, arts and culture.

The year began with the Proteas Women's national cricket team reaching the Women's Cricket T20 World Cup for the first time on home soil and has been heightened by the Springboks' record-breaking Rugby World Cup victory. South Africa has also hosted several mega-events such as the Netball World Cup and the World Rowing Regatta. Also, Banyana Banyana made the country proud by reaching the FIFA Women's World Cup Round of 16, the first time a senior South African national football team – men or women – progressed from the FIFA World Cup group stages. The Proteas Men's national cricket also made the nation proud by reaching the semifinals of the 2023 Men's Cricket World Cup.

It has also been an event-



ful year on the creative and artistic front. South African amputee dancer, Musa Motha brought judges and crowds to tears with breakthrough performances in the Britain's Got Talent competition. Opera singer Pretty Yende continued to raise the country's flag high on the world's operatic stages and performed at the coronation of the United Kingdom's King Charles III. South Africa's Amapiano musicians have taken the genre to even greater heights internationally. Musicians Zakes Bantwini, Wouter Kellerman and Nomcebo Zikode won a Grammy Award this year, while Trevor Noah, Tyla, Just 6 and Musa Keys all received nominations for the

2024 Grammy Awards. Grammy Award-winning DJ and producer Black Coffee also made history when he performed at Madison Square Gardens in New York, becoming the first South African DJ or producer to achieve such a feat. Dr John Kani, who has received countless awards, was the fifth recipient of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture's Van Toeka Af Living Legends series, and received further recognition internationally this year.

South Africa's creative artists and athletes inspire and unite communities, giving expression to a winning nation. We have seen this in the way creative artists incorporate the country's diverse cultures in their

craft, and how South Africans and international audiences embrace and celebrate our diverse culture and creative talent. Our athletes also inspire unity with their excellence and unity. The most vivid example is that of the Springboks, who not only show how far South African sport has come in being representative of the country's diverse population, but also enjoy great support across all backgrounds and generations in the country.

Government has been working hard to deepen the role of sport, arts, and culture to build national unity and to foster social cohesion in communities. One of the priorities has been to develop sport at grassroots

level through the building of multipurpose sports facilities in rural and township schools and staging summer and winter school sport festivals. This year, we also convened a national school sport indaba to unify country's school sport sector and establish a blueprint for school sport. Our community art centres also provide a space for communities to practice and showcase their creative art talent.

As we mark Reconciliation Month, let us continue to remember how far we have come as a country to unite in our rich diversity. Let us continue to use sport and the creative sector to strengthen unity and social cohesion. I call on all sport federations, clubs and community art centres to take sports and the arts to communities.

The late former President Nelson Mandela said that sport unites people in ways little else can. Madiba would be proud to see the impact of sport and arts in building unity in the country. As South Africa continues its healing journey, let us use sport and the creative arts to help us on this journey to build the united and cohesive South Africa we desire. This momentum is especially important as we enter 30 years since the dawn of South Africa's democracy. ○

Wishing you happy holidays

It is that time of the year again – the end of the year, and for many the festive or holiday season. Most of us have worked hard to serve the people of South Africa. As we wind down on our projects, let us use the opportunity to take stock of the year that has been, to re-evaluate our goals – both personally and professionally, rejuvenate our minds and bodies, and reassess our plans for the year to come.

The year 2023 has had its fair share of challenges. It is a year that we, as public servants and as citizens alike, have had to embrace change, buckle down and adapt to the economic and environmental changes. One of the challenges we faced as the Public Service is the freezing of vacant positions, which has created a need for us to find ways of doing more with less.

As we adjust to this reality, we need to ensure that it does not affect service delivery by finding ways to work smarter. With the world moving digital and with technology at our disposal, we need to equip ourselves with digital skills. This will not only ensure that we move with the times but also help us achieve more



Nomonde Mnukwa,
Acting GCIS
Director-General.

with less and improve service delivery.

As leaders in the public sector, we need to create clear digital strategies for our teams. We should build on the experiences we gained during the COVID-19 pandemic, and other challenges and programmes.

The period pushed us to adopt new methods of working, prioritising technology – from online workflows and virtual meetings to pioneering effective and efficient remote and hybrid work models. This has forced us as a public workforce to be resilient and use tools such as new and digital media to not only achieve our individual mandates but to

also serve our citizens better.

As we embrace digital transformation, we should also remember that not all South Africans have access to digital platforms while some face challenges of high data costs. Our approach should ensure that no one is left behind. We should use available statistics to ensure that our strategies are viable.

According to Statistics SA's *General Household Survey 2022*, more than three quarters of South African households (75.3%) are connected to the Internet, with over 69.9% of users nationally accessing the Internet via their mobile phones, and 61.1% users accessing the Internet in rural areas. Mobile phones are also recorded as being the most preferred and used method of accessing information and new media and this number is expected to increase. The future of Internet usage in South Africa projects growth and mobile dominance.

We are also privileged to have sources where we can draw information and knowledge. In September 2023, the South African Association of Public Administration and Management held its 22 Annual conference to foster dialogue around key issues such as economic transformation, social inclusion, digitalisation, climate change adaptation, regional integration, governance reforms and public

service delivery.

Held under the theme; "Repositioning African Governments in the Changing Global Order and Disorder," the conference highlighted the need for proactive leadership, innovative policies, effective governance structures and sustainable development approaches within African nations.

I wish you happy holidays. Let it be a good time spent with family, loved ones and reaching out to those who are not privileged to have families or means to make ends meet. Enjoy the rest and come back rejuvenated and ready to offer excellent service to the people of South Africa. For those who will be travelling, please ensure that you are well rested, your vehicles are safe and roadworthy, avoid speeding and do not drink and drive.

To those who feel isolated during this season, please remember there is always help. The South African Depression and Anxiety Group (<https://www.sadag.org/>) has 24-hour toll-free helplines.

Helpline numbers:



PUBLIC NOTICE

DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT: WASTE ACT, 2008 (ACT NO. 59 OF 2008)

DETERMINATION OF THE LICENSING AUTHORITY FOR THE DIFFERENT CLASSES OF LANDFILLS

The Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Ms Barbara Dallas Creecy, hereby, gives notice of her publication of a Government Notice in the Government Gazette, indicating the licensing authority for the different classes of landfills in terms of sections 43(1)(a) and 43(3) of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008).

Section 43(1)(a) of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008) (NEM: WA) stipulates that the national Minister responsible for the environment is the licensing authority in the instances where the waste management activity involves the establishment, operation, cessation or decommissioning of a facility at which hazardous waste has been or is to be stored, treated or disposed of, unless otherwise indicated by that Minister by notice in the Government Gazette.

Section 43(3) of NEM: WA makes provision that the Minister and Members of the Executive Council (MECs) of the provincial Departments responsible for the environment (Waste Management) in the provinces, may agree that an application or applications for waste management licenses regarding any waste management activity of which the Minister has been identified as the licensing authority, may be dealt with by the MEC, and similarly any waste management activity of which the MEC has been identified as the licensing authority may be dealt with by the Minister.

The intention of this Notice therefore is to inform the public of the agreements reached between the Minister and the affected MECs, and to clearly indicate who the licensing authority is in specific instances.

The Licensing authorities are as follows:

- a. The licensing authority for the disposal of type 1 wastes (hazardous waste), to a class A landfill is the Minister.
- b. The licensing authority for the disposal of type 2 wastes (low hazardous waste), to a class B landfill is the Member of the Executive Council responsible for the environment (waste management) in the province.
- c. The licensing authority for the disposal of type 3 wastes or type 4 wastes (general waste), to a class C or D landfills, is the Member of the Executive Council responsible for the environment (waste management) in the province.

Any enquiries in connection with the notice can be directed to Ms Mishelle Govender at 082 652 8410, by e-mail to: migovender@dffe.gov.za

For communications and media enquires kindly contact:

Mr. Peter Mbelengwa at Tel: (012) 399 8842 email: PMbelengwa@dffe.gov.za

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA





Safeguarding South African borders

The sweltering temperatures had little to do with the fever pitch atmosphere that engulfed the Musina Show Grounds, Limpopo, when President Cyril Ramaphosa lifted the veil on the newly established Border Management Authority (BMA) in October 2023.

Ululations and chants permeated South Africa's residual air that began to camouflage with that of neighbouring Zimbabwe about 17 km away.

The event was a culmination of an exceptionally beavering 24 months for one man – Dr Mike Masiapato. He is the first Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Commissioner of the BMA, an entity of the Department of Home Affairs (DHA).

With over 20 years' experience in the Public Service, Masiapato is



a veteran bureaucrat.

Despite being content with his role as executive manager: monitoring and evaluation at the Financial Intelligence Centre, he swiftly rolled up his sleeves and reported for duty when President Cyril Ramaphosa appointed him as BMA Commissioner in November 2021.

The development was the zenith of the President assenting the BMA Bill in 2020.

Speaking to *Public Sector Manager* magazine, the Commissioner said the creation of the BMA allows the country to have a structure with an exclusive mandate of implementing border laws.

"The intention for that is to make sure that we are able to protect the republic from several challenges; and one of those is the movement of illegal people into the republic," he explained.

He added that the authority has to protect the country from illicit goods, saying these compromise and threaten the country's efforts for economic development and stability.

He said the country is moving from only having "civilians that are deployed to the ports to do an administrative function. That has been our biggest shortfall.

"This is about creating law enforcers who are supposed to get to the ports and make sure that the laws of the republic

are implemented in the manner they are supposed to be implemented. That on its own begins to sanitise the port environment, but more importantly, enable the country to protect its national security".

The BMA – the country's third law enforcement agency – is a single, integrated and efficient authority established to manage and secure the borders of South Africa. It replaces the multi-agency approach that included the departments of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development; Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment; Health; and DHA; the South African National Defence Force; the South African Police Service (SAPS); and the South African Revenue Service. The functions of these departments at the borders were allocated to the BMA.

As a result, the DHA no longer operates at the ports of entry.

"They are just at the head office and they will also have an inspectorate working inside the country," explained the Commissioner.

The agency has gone from a one-man operation, in Masiapato in November 2021, to a fully-fledged agency in its own right. Reflecting, the CEO bares his soul on the emotional scars the journey has inflicted on him.

Mammoth task

During the period, the BMA had



to absorb affected staff from the departments that were operating from the ports of entry.

"We made them exit the departments' employ and be in the employ of the BMA. That on its own created an integrated BMA platform with a single command, platform and control because each port now has a commander and that particular commander is accountable across all functions, including the function of access control, which is currently done by members of the SAPS," he said.

From 1 April 2022 until 31 March 2023, the staff members were incubated within the DHA.

That incubation was to ensure staff integration and allow for the recruitment of additional employees to capacitate the agency.

"While the recruitment was

seamless, the integration proved a strenuous exercise," Masiapato stressed.

"The first thing that we had to do as part of the process was to identify the functions that the President had to move through Section 97 (of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996) from those departments into the BMA," he said.

After this, the BMA established work streams that had to facilitate administrative activities. These were in the areas of human resources, finance, legal and infrastructure.

"That process included the auditing of the land, the physical infrastructure that must be moved from the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure to the BMA. When all of this had been done, we had to put together a determination »



document that must be signed by the (DHA) Director-General, the Chief Financial Officer and, ultimately, the Minister.

"Once all four Ministers (from affected departments) had signed the determination document, we had to go the Minister of Public Service and Administration to agree with the determination and be able to give what is called the Ministerial Determination on Public Administration – meaning, they are agreeing to moving people outside of the Public Service," he explained.

When these processes were concluded, the Minister of Finance was brought into the fold to shift budgets from the respective departments to the BMA.

"All in all, they moved R1.3 billion in operational expenditure and for the compensation of employees," he added.

The BMA is currently in a transitional period and is expected to be fully operational by 1 April 2024.

The task was so hard that, Masiapato last went on leave when he was still working for the FIC.

"The work is, unfortunately, 24/7 – that includes weekends. It is very hectic.

"I came as the Commissioner – one employee. I had to then get the two commissioners – one for operations and the other for corporate. It meant I had to literally drive the entire process."

That, he said, included having to engage all unions in the Public Service Bargaining Council.

"I had to lead the delegation to engage on labour relations. How people's benefits are going to be protected; how we are going to handle the benefits that some people had in the Public Service. I had to make sure that they are all convinced. I had to travel throughout the country on a roadshow to meet all of the staff, and they are scattered across 72 ports of entry.

"I had to drive all of that work and tell them about the transition. The the act of removing employees from the Persal system also presented its own set of complexities."

About 1 800 employees were moved from the four departments to form the agency. This figure was complemented by the recruitment of 221 border

guards in 2022.

"That is very much little – numbers-wise – to address the issue of porous borders, as it is called. What we then had to do was to bring in an additional 400 border guards. As we speak they are at college (Road Traffic Management Corporation)," he said.

The agency is bracing itself for a busy festive season as thousands of travellers pass through the country's borders for holidays.

Since June 2022, the BMA has intercepted 139 stolen vehicles and 35 000 people attempting to enter the country with no documents. Another 95 000 were denied entry due to expired passports, visas, among others. ○



SOCIALLY COHESIVE NATION

"Our goal as South Africans should be to promote inclusive nation-building and social cohesion"

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Do the right thing, end corruption



On 9 December 2023, South Africa joined the world in commemorating International Anti-Corruption Day, to raise awareness on corruption – a global concern that affects both rich and poor countries.

One of the ways citizens can

help in the fight against corruption is reporting corrupt elements to law enforcement agencies.

Sefura Matlala, a Senior Manager for Market Data Analytics at the Special Investigating Unit (SIU), encourages citizens to

practice responsible whistleblowing to avoid putting their lives in danger.

“If people do not report corruption responsibly, they are putting their own lives in danger. When you report corruption and you start talking about it to your

friends, you do not know who they will share that information with and you may end up being victimised,” she explained.

She added that reporting corruption responsibly means doing it anonymously. “When they [citizens] come to the SIU, they can trust that we will protect their identities and they need to come with documentary information to support their allegations. The SIU will then do its work,” said Matlala.

The SIU is an independent body that is empowered to “firstly, investigate serious malpractices or maladministration in connection with the administration of state institutions, state assets and public money as well as any conduct which may seriously harm the interest of the public and, secondly, institute and conduct civil proceedings in any court of law or Special Tribunal for, amongst others, the recovery of losses suffered by the State and the prevention of further losses”.

The SIU recovers and prevents financial losses to the State caused by acts of corruption, fraud and maladministration. In line with the SIU and Special Tribunals Act, 1996 (Act 74 of 1996), the SIU refers any evidence pointing to criminal conduct it uncovers to the National Prosecuting Authority for further

action. The SIU also refers evidence of misconduct to employers and regulatory bodies. Further, the SIU makes recommendations for entities and their directors/members that are found to have been involved in impropriety in State contracts to be “blacklisted” by being placed on National Treasury’s database of Restricted Suppliers.

Matlala’s career is carved through information management over the past 15 years, after obtaining a Bachelor of Information Science Degree and an Honours Degree in Information Science from the University of Limpopo.

Matlala also holds a three-year Multimedia Diploma in Information Design from the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA). She went further to obtain a Master’s Degree in Knowledge Management with Multimedia from the Multimedia University of Malaysia, as well as a Master’s Degree in Business Administration with MANCOSA.

She launched her career as an Intern at the South African Broadcasting Corporation. She also worked as an assistant lecturer for Information Design at NEMISA for a year and was later appointed as a Knowledge Management Coordinator at the same institution.

Afterwards, Matlala grabbed an opportunity to work as the knowledge and research manager for the Eastern Cape Appropriate Technology Unit (ECATU). She also worked part-time as a Knowledge Management Specialist at Intrahealth (funded by the United States Agency for International Development), and returned to the ECATU when her contract ended.

Upon return to ECATU, she was appointed acting Chief Executive Officer and she was tasked with the responsibility of migrating the entity into the Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform.

In 2014, Matlala joined the SIU as a Knowledge Management Specialist, a position she held until she was appointed into her current job in September 2022.

She is the first to hold a Senior Manager for Market Data Analytics at the organisation because this is a fairly new position that was introduced after the SIU went through an organisational development process, where it decided to introduce a new value chain which places a premium on the implementation of preventative measures to prevent and combat of corruption in the country.

She is now tasked with the responsibility of developing and implementing a data analytics strategy for the market data analytics unit, to ensure that there is capacity, tools and resources for the unit to function optimally. In terms of capacity, she is supposed to lead a team of ten and positions are in the process of being advertised across different financial years.

Fighting corruption through data analytics

“Previously, investigations were conducted using a reactive approach; after the money was misappropriated. With the new approach, we are going to use market data analytics to help prevent corruption from recurring,” she explained.

Matlala and her team use historic data from previous investigations to predict the future. Basically, they identify what went wrong, how it happened and why, so that it can be prevented from recurring.

“We use predictive modeling, most importantly, as a strategy to advise government on mechanisms it can employ to prevent corruption from recurring through strategic decision-making processes based on trends, insights and recommendations that we present.

We identify enablers of corruption, including information from previous investigations, and identify who (not a person but a position) was responsible for all that,” she added.

Her job requires her to access and collect data from various stakeholders, especially in the public sector in order to gain insights.

“It is exciting because the strategy of our organisation requires us to conduct data-driven investigations, and our sub-unit is in the best position to enable that,” she said.

“I was given a clean slate. If anything fails, I will be responsible because I did not inherit the work from anyone. With the assistance of our ICT unit, and other stakeholders I am laying a firm foundation for the organisation regarding the functioning of the new unit, and this is a highlight of my career,” she explained.

Strides made in the fight against corruption

One of government’s priorities as we approach the 30 years of democracy is fighting corruption. Speaking at the National Dialogue on Anti-corruption in November 2023, President Cyril Ramaphosa described corruption as one of the country’s ➤



Image: Unsplash Jesus Monro-Lazcano

"greatest failings".

"Corruption has wounded our democracy and shaken people's faith in our institutions. If corruption is not arrested, the greatest damage will not be in the funds stolen, the jobs lost or the services not delivered. The greatest damage will be to the belief in democracy itself.

"It is, therefore, our shared responsibility, as we celebrate 30 years of democracy, to build a society in which corruption has no place," the President said in his keynote address.

The SIU is one of the bodies that government created to address the challenge. Over 26 years since its establishment, the SIU has positioned itself as the pre-eminent forensic investigation and civil litigation agency in the country. The agency has made great strides to combat corruption and

recover the monies in recent years.

According to the SIU Trends and Analysis Performance Report released in April 2023, the agency received and processed a total of 235 proclamations between 1998 and 2023, with 31% of them at national government level, 34% at provincial government, 28% at local government and 8% in State-owned Entities.

Between October 2018 and March 2023, a total of 5 147 whistleblower allegations were referred to the SIU. Matlala said there is an upward trend in whistleblower referrals received.

The report also shows top five allegations, including 24% pertaining to procurement irregularities, 16% of nepotism or cronyism, 11% maladministration, 10% bribery or fraud and 10% contract, tender or irregularities.

With regard to civil litigation achievements between 1998 and 2023, the report shows that a lot of money has been recovered:

- Value of actual cash and assets recovered: R4.864 billion.
- Value of contracts, administrative decisions or actions set aside or deemed invalid: R25.236 billion.
- Value of potential losses prevented: R27.333 billion.

This is also attributed to the Special Tribunal that opened its doors in 2019, and it has increased the rate of recoveries.

"Combating corruption is everybody's responsibility. It is not only the President's or government's responsibility," said Matlala.

The SIU also seconded Matlala as a Secretariat of the National Anti-Corruption Advisory

Council (NACAC) – a council that advises the President on matters related to fighting corruption, in line with the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2020 - 2030. Among other areas of focus, the Council will advise the President on effective implementation of the anti-corruption strategy by government, civil society and the private sector. ○

You can contact the
SIU on its Hotline:

0800 037 7744

Email: info@siu.org.za

Website: www.siu.org.za

Twitter/X: @RSASIU

Facebook: Special
Investigation

Unit - South Africa

Instagram: @rsasiu



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“Let us continue to work towards a society free from racial, social, economic and class barriers”

#ReconciliationDay2023 #StrengtheningSocialCohesion

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Young academic

formulating viable use for wastewater

In her pursuit to contribute to the country's efforts towards providing access to clean and safe water to rural communities, upcoming chemical engineer, Nomthandazo Precious Sibiya, is putting a positive spin to the phrase "plumbing new depths".

Having grown up in Emanamazini, on the outskirts of eThekweni Municipality, it is a

challenge she is all too familiar with.

In August 2023, the post-doctoral fellow from the Durban University of Technology (DUT) was granted the Research Excellence Award for Next Generation Researchers at the National Research Foundation (NRF) awards in Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal. The awards honours prolific

scientists behind some of the outstanding research done at South Africa's higher education institutions.

The ratings-based awards are centred on a peer review system that looks at the research impact of the nominee over a sustained period of time. The nominees for the special awards also go through an independent peer

evaluation structured on a set of criteria.

The 29-year-old's research focuses on the removal of heavy metals from wastewater using hybridised absorbents.

"South African companies produce over 40 million metric tonnes of wastewater annually, threatening the environment and human health. A treatment

solution for removing heavy metals from wastewater is through absorption, however, recovering these absorbents is challenging. Thus, magnetising agro-waste absorbents for the removal of heavy metals will present a unique solution for treating wastewater for reuse, while mitigating zero waste,” said the NRF in a statement.

It noted that Sibiya’s research findings will aid water, the mining industry and agricultural stakeholders in evaluating the economic viability of adsorption technology.

The NRF provides funding to postgraduate students to address skills shortages in the fields of science, engineering, technology, humanities and social sciences by increasing the possibility of retaining suitably qualified young scientists, thereby increasing the pool of researchers and knowledge workers in the National System of Innovation. This award recognises outstanding academic performance by final-year doctoral students.

Despite being a first year PhD student, Sibiya got the nod. She says it was a proud moment for her to receive the award in her first year of study.

“It was a bit of a surprise. My supervisor mentioned that they would be putting my name forward and I told them that I do

not think I meet the criteria. So I was quite surprised when I was chosen,” she said.

Sibiya says her research topic was influenced by the fact that chemicals being used to treat water are not suitable for the environment and humans.

“So finding new ways of treating water – like waste treatment and other sources- could be key.”

Carried by the momentum of being a top achiever when she matriculated with flying colours from Siphumelele Comprehensive High School in 2012, she pursued a National Diploma in Chemical Engineering at DUT.

“Coming from a disadvantaged background and being raised by grandparents, you become determined to go out there and become a better person. Sometimes finances stop you from achieving your goals.

“I did not even have money for the CAO (Central Applications Office) to apply to study at the different institutions in KwaZulu-Natal. My teachers at school helped me with that because they could see my potential,” she said.

This was a due benefit for being the school’s top performing pupil and obtaining a bachelor’s pass – with four distinctions.

Being the first person from her family to go to university, Sibiya says she barely had any career guidance, which let her to choose the field of engineering purely for money at the time.

Upon enrolling at the DUT, she was awarded a bursary by Eskom. After completing her undergraduate she worked for the power utility, between 2016 and 2017.

“They had to let us go and I

came back to Durban to do my BTech (bachelor of technology), which I obtained with a distinction,” she explained.

Shuddered by the prospects of being unemployed, she decided to further her studies.

“It was during this period that I developed this passion for chemical engineering,” she said.

She obtained both her BTech and Master of Engineering degrees cum laude and is currently enrolled for her PhD at the DUT. She also has international research experience as an Erasmus exchange candidate at the University of Valladolid, Spain. She has authored six peer reviewed journal articles and presented at five conferences.

Her research energies are dedicated to finding solutions for the water-scarcity problem that, in the main, affects rural communities. ○



NHI: equal access to quality healthcare



As South Africa approaches 30 years of democracy, public servants like Professor Nicholas Crisp – Deputy Director-General (DDG) for the National Health Insurance (NHI) at the National Department of Health (NDoH) – should be celebrated for their dedication to serve South Africans.

A trained medical doctor and public health specialist, Crisp has had an interesting professional journey over the last four decades. His immense contribution in shaping the country's public health system was recently recognised when he recently received the Public Health Innovation and Lifetime Achievement Award from the Public Health Association of South Africa. The award honours an individual for a lifetime of commitment to public health.

In the last 40 years, Crisp has done tremendously well as a medical doctor, medical consultant and public health specialist.

His wealth of experience



Image: DCSStudio, on Freepik

include working as Regional Director for the NDoH in Polokwane, Limpopo, working as a management consultant, helping to set up the then Limpopo Department of Health and Welfare and subsequently becoming head of department.

He was also part of the team that set up the National Health Laboratory Service, all while also doing some work in Nigeria to help set up the National Agency for the Control of AIDS. Crisp also worked as a public health specialist in other African countries, including Ghana, Tanzania, Lesotho, Namibia and Botswana.

Crisp was also involved in setting up the National Forensic Pathology Services as well as the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority.

When COVID-19 hit South Africa, he was helping the NDoH to draft a plan to implement the NHI as a consultant. He ended up helping with the COVID-19 response, the vaccination programme, and when the DDG post was advertised, he applied and got the job in 2021.

When former Health Minister Zweli Mkhize and the then Director-General (DG) left the department, Crisp was appointed Acting DG.

"I just happened to be at the right place at the right time," he said modestly.

In his current position, Crisp is tasked to ensure that the NHI is implemented, and that everybody understands what the health insurance is all about.

"My job is to take the NHI Bill, which will soon become

an Act, and ensure that it is implemented. We need the NHI because poor people also get sick, in fact they get more sick than rich people, and just because they are poor does not mean they should get bad healthcare," he added.

The NHI is a health financing system that is designed to pool funds to provide access to quality affordable personal health services for all South Africans based on their health needs, irrespective of their socioeconomic status.

It seeks to realise universal health coverage for all South Africans and ensuring that services are delivered closest to where people live or work.

Should the NHI not be implemented or be delayed any further, Crisp worries that the

already burdened public health sector will bleed even more.

He notes that one of biggest challenges faced by the country is that the public health system is currently designed to give power to the provinces to run the health services, because they get their budgets through the equitable share, but the money that the public health sector gets collectively is only able to pay for approximately R5 000 per citizen per year.

Meanwhile, Crisp said, about R27 000 is spent on one person per year in the private health sector, and the sector is more independent, autonomous and unruly because it has no proper regulations.

"Part of the problem of the lack of regulation of pricing is because there was a »

court case some years ago that prevented the department (NDoH) from regulating the prices. So, it has become difficult to manage,” he explained.

He says he finds it unrealistic for people to expect to have the same kind of environment or several specialists and healthcare workers in both sectors while the public health sector only spends 1/5 of the money.

“About 2/3 of all the medical specialists in the country work in the private sector, but they only look after 15% of the population [who currently afford to pay],” he said.

Now more than ever, he believes the NDoH should get most of the population to access the much-needed specialised care.

“We are trying to have one benefit package that we are all entitled to and not nine provincial packages plus 308 private healthcare packages that currently exist. Once the NHI is implemented, it will not matter whether you are a public or private healthcare worker. The services that you deliver to a patient (regardless of their income or social status) should be the same,” he explained.

He raised concern over the fact that the country’s healthcare system is more specialised and hospital-orientated, when in fact it should be designed to

prevent diseases.

“We should be investing more on community healthcare workers and nursing staff who work in communities so that when a resident has a minor problem, we are able to deal with it immediately and not wait for their condition to be bad and be sent to the hospital,” he added.

NHI progress

For the NHI to be implemented, there must be an Act or a statutory legal mandate.

“Currently, the country has the National Health Act, 2003 (Act 61 of 2003) and the Medical Schemes Act, 1998 (Act 131 of 1998) and neither of them allows us to do what we want to do. We need a new piece of legislation to fill that gap,” he explained.

In 2019, the NHI Bill was tabled in Parliament but the country was hit by COVID-19 pandemic, causing a delay to the process.

In June 2023, the National Assembly voted in favour of the Bill. It was then sent to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), and to the provincial legislatures for distribution and for public hearings to take place.

“We have participated in presentations in each province, and in about 60 public hearings that ended in October. The depart-

ment [NDoH] recently submitted the last written responses for comments and hearings to the NCOP, and the provinces must give a mandate on what they are voting for, and if they vote in favour of the Bill, the President will then sign it into law, clause by clause,” explained Crisp.

He added that the Bill consists of two phases, including the 2023 – 2026 period

in which mechanisms must be put in place for the NHI to be implemented. The second phase, 2026 – 2028 will be for the actual implementation.

For such government projects to succeed, Crisp urges public servants to serve the public and dedicate themselves to the work they get paid for with public money, and not tolerate even the smallest form of fraud or corruption. ○



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2023 Road Safety Festive Season Campaign


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 National Department of Transport

Our plan to tackle climate action must leave no-one behind



We recently returned from the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai, known as COP28, where important decisions taken so far will affect the future of our planet.

The discussions at COP28 have significant implications for our country and people. The impact of climate change is a measurable reality in South Africa, with poor, rural communities in particular bearing the brunt.

While in Dubai, I visited the South Africa pavilion, where I was shown a striking artwork called the Umlibo tapestry. It was made by a group of rural women from Hamburg in the Eastern Cape. Woven in the tapestry are images that tell a story of the impact of climate change on rural coastal communities in the province struggling with extreme weather patterns, declining fish stocks and constrained livelihoods.

The Umlibo tapestry communicates the urgent and personal impact of climate change on one particular community.

There are hundreds, thousands and millions more communities, in South Africa, on the African continent and across the Global South who are being negatively affected by climate-change induced extreme weather.

A central part of South Africa's response to this crisis is the Just Energy Transition (JET) Investment Plan 2023-2027, which outlines the actions we need to take and the investments that we need to make to meet our climate targets.

The plan, which we announced at COP27 last year, outlines the path towards reducing the carbon emissions of our energy sector, which is the largest contributor towards South Africa's total greenhouse gas emissions.

The plan focuses on investment in electricity infrastructure, new energy vehicles, green hydrogen, skills development and municipal electricity distribution.

It emphasises that this transition must be underpinned by engagement and in partnership with workers, communities, business and civil society. Importantly, the plan also includes interventions to support affected communities, notably in Mpumalanga, where most of our country's coal-fired power

stations are located.

The overriding message we took to COP28 is that our climate commitments will be implemented in a manner that both addresses our current energy crisis and strengthens our efforts to reduce poverty and unemployment.

Our JET Implementation Plan, therefore, focuses on expanding investment in transmission networks, investment in new energy vehicles and harnessing the potential of the green hydrogen economy.

Decarbonising our energy sector has become even more urgent in the face of carbon border taxes and other measures being taken by developed economies in the name of fighting climate change. These measures are going to hurt many countries with developing economies, making their exports less competitive and making them bear the economic burden of climate action. It is for these reasons that the South African delegation to COP28 spoke out against these unilateral actions.

As a country, we already have sustainable, measurable and science-driven programmes in place to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. These include a successful

renewable energy procurement programme, biodiversity and conservation management, air quality management, as well as successful natural resource management programmes such as Working on Fire, Working for the Coast and Working for Water.

But if we are to implement these and the other actions outlined in the JET Investment Plan we – like all other developing economies – will require massive financial support from those countries whose development has been the primary cause of climate change. The countries that have contributed most to global warming must support those countries that now bear the brunt of its effects.

South Africa expressed its concern that developed economies are still not meeting their obligations to support developing countries with the finance, technology and capacity building needed for effective climate actions. The funding that has been channelled through entities like the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund has been negligible.

The operationalisation at COP28 of a fund to help vulnerable countries with loss and damage caused by climate

change is a step in the right direction, but it will need substantial funding if it is to fulfil its purpose.

For the transition to lower carbon economies to be just, affected communities cannot live on promises. Workers and communities currently dependent on coal and other fossil fuel industries need viable alternative livelihoods.

As a country in the midst of an energy crisis, we were clear at COP28 that the pace of our just energy transition will be guided by our developmental priorities. Our JET Implementation Plan makes it clear that we can take effective action against climate change while pursuing energy security for all our people.

Even as we confront several challenges, we are clear about the path we must take to tackle climate change and protect our country from its effects.

In pursuing a measured, realistic and sustainable transition towards a low-carbon economy and society, our foremost priority is that we secure the future of all South Africans and that we leave no-one behind.○

***The President's message
was first published
4 December 2023.***

Be South Africa's tourism ambassador

As the festive season approaches, South Africans will be packing their bags to various holiday destinations for a well-deserved rest after a year of hard work.

The good thing is that South Africa has a lot of wonderful tourist attractions and establishments that you can explore while supporting and helping local businesses grow.

Tourism Minister Patricia de Lille has called on all South Africans to be tourism ambassadors for the country.

"We must advertise and share our experiences at the many diverse tourism offerings, especially in the age where social media is so widely used, and by sharing our experiences, we help to market the country as a destination to people all over the world through what we share online," she said during the launch of Tourism Month in September 2023.

Her department's role is to provide for the development and promotion of sustainable tourism for the benefit of the



country, its residents and its visitors; to provide for the continued existence of the South African Tourism Board; to provide for the establishment of the Tourism Grading Council and to regulate the tourist guide profession.

The Department of Tourism is further mandated to enhance the tourism sector's contribution to national priorities such as creating a conducive atmosphere for the private sector to grow the economy and create jobs.

"There is an abundance of beautiful things to see and amazing things to do in South Africa. We do not always have



to venture to other parts of the world when we have it all here. We only need to make the bookings and get out there to explore and enjoy all the wonders South Africa has to offer," Minister de Lille said.

Growing the economy and creating jobs

According to Statistics South Africa, the travel and tourism sector contributed nearly 3.2% to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2021, surpassing agriculture, utilities, and construction.

It further states that there

were close to 1.8 million jobs in the travel and tourism sector in South Africa in 2021. This was an increase of 1.9% compared to the previous year when the contribution of the sector was around 1.6 million jobs.

"Every time we undertake local travel we are supporting South African businesses and helping them to put food on the table and create jobs. The more we support them, the quicker they can expand, contribute more to the economy and create more jobs for our people," Minister de Lille said.

The Minister added that domestic travel between

January and March of 2023 saw overnight trips exceed pre-COVID-19 levels as well as 2022 levels by 41%. Between January and March 2023, overnight domestic spend was also up 24.4% compared to the same period in 2022.

The expenditure from holiday trips in the first three months of 2023 was R9.5 billion compared to R7.9 billion in 2022. The total number of nights spent away from home reached 27.9 million and this was a 32.9% increase over the same period.

She added that domestic holiday trips from January to March 2023 were up by 40.5% compared to 2022 to reach 2.4 million. Between January and March 2023, day trips grew by 26.9% to reach 44.7 million. The top three provinces visited were Gauteng, Limpopo and the Eastern Cape.

Increase in tourist arrivals

After the COVID-19 pandemic's negative impact on the tourism sector through lockdowns and travel restrictions locally and abroad, the Minister is impressed that the sector now exhibits strong recovery with the first half of 2023 recording more than four million tourist arrivals to South Africa.

"This is a significant increase from the 2.3 million tourist arrivals between January and

June 2022. The total number of tourist arrivals to South Africa between January and June 2023 showed a sizable 78.2% surge in the first half of 2023 when compared to the same period in 2022. There has also been a substantial increase across all regions in the same period," she added.

Although the current growth demonstrates signs of recovery, the Minister said the country was still operating at 80% of its pre-pandemic capacity as August 2023. This is because in 2019, South Africa welcomed more than 5 million tourists between January and June.

Minister de Lille noted that the largest share of tourist arrivals still come from the African continent. A total of 3 083 583 tourists that arrived in South Africa between January and June 2023 came from the rest of the continent.

This is a 79.9% increase when compared to the same period last year when South Africa

welcomed 1 714 501 visitors from this region. To elaborate, Africa land arrivals increased by a significant 81.6% while Africa air recorded a growth of 44.5% between January to June this year when compared to the same period last year.

"We are pleased with the number of visitors that our country continues to receive from the rest of the African continent. Africa remains a key source market for us, and we are committed to collaborating as a tourism sector to ensure we welcome visitors from this region and that we cater for their needs and preferences," she said.

Between January and June 2023, the Australasia region (which comprises Australia, New Zealand and some neighbouring islands in the Pacific Ocean) recorded an increase of 141% with 50 882 visitors coming from this region compared to 21 108 arrivals in the same period last year.

The Asia region almost doubled its figures with 99.5% growth, from 47 912 to 95 596 visitors.

Europe, the largest source of visitors outside Africa, also experienced solid growth of 66.8% from 356 352 to 594 388 visitors compared to the same period in 2022.

North America, Central and South America, and the Middle East also demonstrated strong growth trends with rates of 70.6%, 74.4%, and 75.8% respectively.

"These robust figures showcase South Africa's charm and attractiveness as well as the work that we are doing in marketing South Africa as a tourist destination of choice," the Minister said.

Through various tourism marketing strategies, South Africa continues to invite travellers worldwide to explore its diverse landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and unique wildlife and wide open spaces. ○



Creating social value through public-private partnership



A serene late-morning sunrise gently caresses the faded early August coastal winter breeze as a Ministry in The Presidency contingent descends

on developments pledged at the South Africa Investment Conference (SAIC).

The placid setting is a disguise for the faded hammering and

mixed cement permeating the air set to greet the delegation led by Deputy Ministers Kenneth Moring and Nomasonto Motaung. The setting is the R800 million

Serenity Hills Eco-estate on Old Izotsha Road, in the Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality, in KwaZulu-Natal. On the same day, the two Deputy Ministers made a

stopover at the R500 million Renishaw Coastal Precinct project in Umdoni Municipality.

The Serenity Hills Eco-estate project in Margate, is meant to attract foreign investment while uplifting local communities in the mid-South Coast. It has been included in the South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan after being honoured by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the 5th SAIC in April 2023.

It features 25 amenities and includes a 15 to 20 bed hotel, 600 one to four-bedroomed residential units, and a small step-down healthcare facility. Construction of infrastructure has commenced and first occupancy is expected in November 2023.

The Renishaw Coastal Precinct is a 1 300-hectares mixed-use development on the KwaZulu-Natal mid-South Coast. It is considered one of the country's biggest developments underway.

The precinct is a mixed use property development (residential, educational, medical, resort, commercial, retail and light industrial projects.) With five nodes planned to be developed, construction has commenced for nodes one and three. The first three nodes entail residential housing, hospital, school, shopping center and filling station developments

The developments are among

157 commitments made at previous SAIC instalments in response to President Ramaphosa's ambitious 2018 drive to attract R1.2 trillion in investments over five years. By 2023, pledges exceeded the target by 26%.

Public-private sector partnership

Speaking to *Public Sector Manager* magazine, Deputy Minister Morolong said the event was significant as it "showcased the tangible work that has been done by government working with the private sector. In the first instance, you know that five years ago, the President commenced a journey to attract investment in infrastructure development, to invest in the growth of the economy, to really see investment in all facets of growth."

He added that the two projects are an indicative barometer of the strides made through the successive SAIC.

"This has been a really huge opportunity for us to interface with the tangibles, which are a consequence of commitments that were made at the investment conference."

On Renishaw, Morolong described the development as "quite an advanced project". Morolong revealed that the project, which is in its sixth phase has also created opportunities for local people.

"We have also had some elements of community upliftment, where there has been a transition from employment to self-employment for a number of individuals that were involved," said the Deputy Minister.

He added that the success of the projects is a good example of what can be achieved through public-private sector partnership.

"This is an indicative barometer of what government can achieve working together with the private sector to grow the economy and to ensure that South Africa realises its full potential".

Investment pledges made at the SAIC have over the years ranged from various sectors.

"One of the key projects that have been achieved as a result of the SAIC is the undersea fibre cables installations, which exemplifies the kind of work that government wants to do.

"We can also indicate that these projects have ranged from solar plants, power plants, to the building of factories, the installation of optic fibre, to the adaptation of new technologies. There have been great strides made and more is yet to come".

District Development model

Beyond this, he elaborated, government was proud to have illustrated that the ideals of the

much-vaunted District Development Model (DDM) were being realised.

"We have assembled different municipalities as a demonstration of the DDM approach. We represent the national government there is that coordination from all spheres of government. From the DDM point of view, there is synergy with respect to planning and implementation. We hope it goes beyond that and affect budgeting".

"Of the 152 investment announcements made previously, 45 projects have already been completed, while a further 57 projects are currently under construction. These investments have resulted in new factories, call centres, solar power plants, undersea fibre optic cables, expansion of production lines and the adoption of new technologies," said the Deputy Minister.

Propelled by the success of the SAIC, President Ramaphosa, in April, set a R2 trillion target for South Africa to achieve over the next five years.

The investments have significantly contributed to the country's national goals of socio-economic development to create sustainable jobs, and reduce poverty and inequality. These investments have also contributed to a substantial increase in local production and encouraged efforts to buy local. ○

Mashatile launches

SA Chapter of the Global Alliance to End AIDS in Children by 2030



Deputy President Paul Mashatile has officially launched the South African Chapter of the Global Alliance to End AIDS in Children by 2030, led by his wife, Humile Mashatile.

"We are concerned with HIV treatment gaps in children. Children living with HIV aged 15 years and below are left behind in the global HIV response when compared to the general population," he said.

The country's second-in-command was speaking at the official commemoration of World AIDS Day as Chairperson of the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) at the Mandeni Local Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal.

He described World Aids

Day as an opportunity to strengthen unity to fight against HIV, support those living with HIV, and remember those who succumbed to AIDS-related illnesses.

Globally, he said only 52% of children who are living with HIV are on life-saving treatment, compared to 76% of the adult population.

According to the Deputy President, this results in children accounting for 15% of AIDS-related deaths on an annual basis despite the fact that 4% of people living with HIV are children.

Meanwhile, he said stigma, discrimination, punitive laws and policies, violence, and gender inequalities in Eastern and Southern Africa remain



some of the barriers that hinder access to treatment, care, and support for women, girls, and children.

"Unfortunately, South Africa has the largest population of children living with HIV in the world, and as of June 2023, our treatment coverage for children is alarmingly low, coming in at 67%."

He said the data raises concerns and emphasises the urgent need for increased efforts and resources to guarantee that every child who is HIV-positive receives the care and treatment they require.

In response to this challenge, government is working with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS,

by coordinating United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organisation.

The other partners include the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the Global Fund, together with civil society, in establishing the Global Alliance to end AIDS in Children by 2030.

"The proclamation was first made at the 24th International AIDS Conference in Canada in 2022. South Africa was among the first 12 countries to join this alliance. As the South African Government, we are determined to fulfil our commitment to end AIDS in children," he stressed.

This, according to the Deputy President, could be achieved

by strengthening case finding among HIV-exposed infants and children and scaling up the initial HIV regimen to pregnant and breastfeeding women as per the revised clinical guidelines.

Meanwhile, government aims to also boost regular retesting of pregnant and breastfeeding women, increasing access to social protection programmes and addressing gender-based violence and femicide, sexual assault, and abuse of infants, children, adolescents, and women.

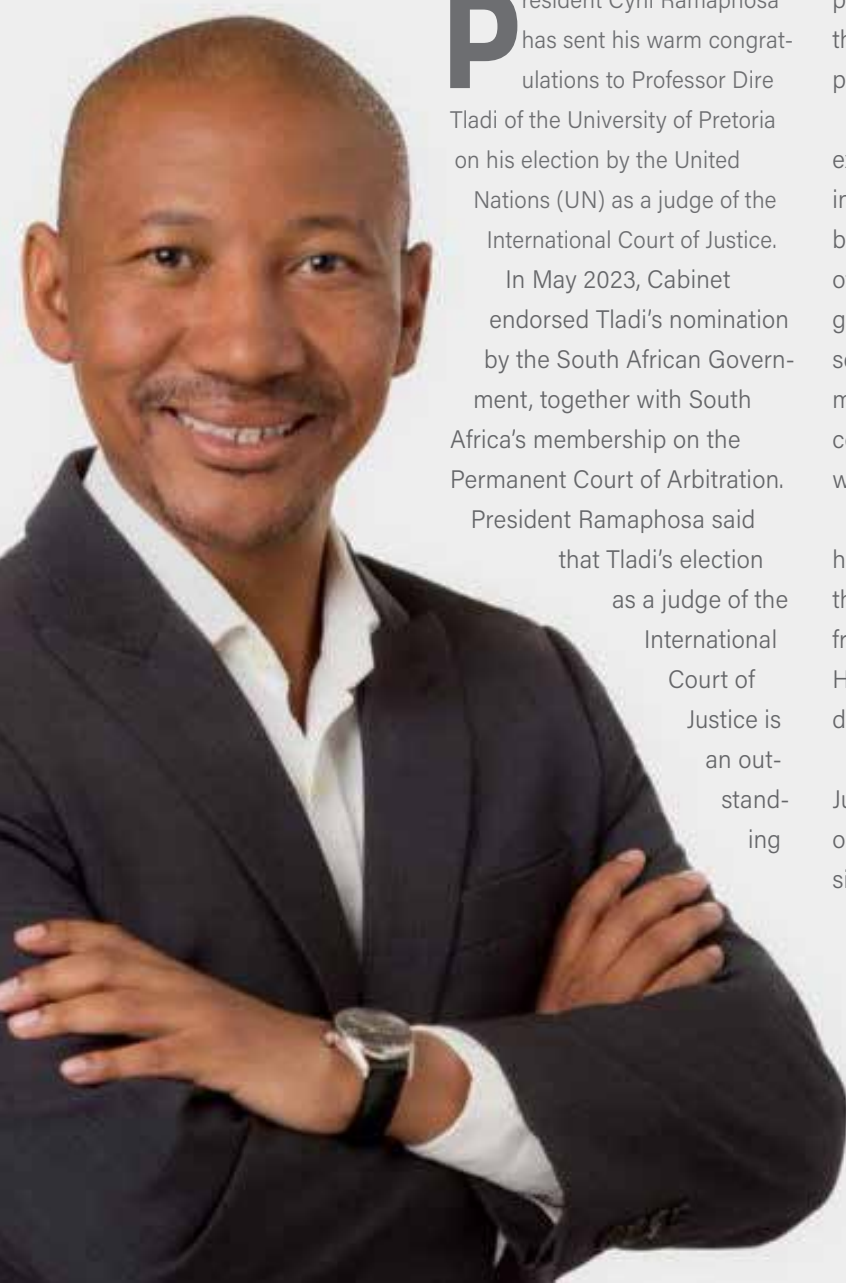
Government will also work around the clock to scale up advocacy for the enforcement of laws and the administration of justice.

"Collectively, we should strive to ensure universal access to treatment, eliminate mother-to-child transmission, and confront prevailing prejudice and discrimination to foster a society that accepts and supports all individuals living with HIV, including our children.

"Together, we have the power to end the epidemic of HIV and AIDS," he added. – [SANews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)



Prof Tladi flies SA flag high at International Court of Justice



President Cyril Ramaphosa has sent his warm congratulations to Professor Dire Tladi of the University of Pretoria on his election by the United Nations (UN) as a judge of the International Court of Justice.

In May 2023, Cabinet endorsed Tladi's nomination by the South African Government, together with South Africa's membership on the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

President Ramaphosa said that Tladi's election as a judge of the International Court of Justice is an outstanding

personal achievement in which the nation shares with great pride.

"We appreciate the confidence expressed by the United Nations in Prof Tladi's capabilities. He becomes the newest member of a fraternity of South Africans globally, who are in positions of service to the international community and making important contributions to the better world we seek to build.

"We wish Prof Tladi well as he prepares to contribute to the Court and its jurisprudence from the Palace of Peace in The Hague, Netherlands," the President said in a statement.

The International Court of Justice is the principal judicial organ of the UN and one of the six principal bodies of the UN.

The court's role is to settle, in accordance with international law, legal disputes submitted to it by states and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by authorised UN organs and

specialised agencies.

The Court comprises of 15 judges who are elected for terms of office of nine years by the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.

Tladi is a leading international law scholar whose accomplishments span different areas of the field, including academic, government service, diplomatic and practice.

He is Professor of International Law at the University of Pretoria and serves as President of the South African Branch of the International Law Association and Executive Member of the International Law Association.

He has served as Chair of the International Law Commission, an organ of the UN generally regarded as a feeder body for the International Court of Justice.

He was previously, a legal adviser of the South African Mission in New York and special adviser to South African Ministers of International Relations. ○

– [SAnews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)



SOCIALLY COHESIVE NATION

"Celebrating how far we have come in building a cohesive and united society"

[#ReconciliationMonth2023](#) [#StrengtheningSocialCohesion](#)

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**LEAVE NO
ONE BEHIND**



AGSA elected UNESCO's auditors



The Auditor-General of South Africa (AGSA) has been elected as the external auditor of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for the 2024 – 2029 term. After a rigorous bidding process, UNESCO announced South Africa's supreme audit institution (SAI) as its new auditors.

Auditor-General Tsakani Maluleke has welcomed the news saying, "As the national audit office, we are delighted at this international endorsement of our capabilities and the quality of our auditing. This is good news for our country and demonstrates that we are a global force to be reckoned with. It also recognises the hard work of the more than 3 700 AGSA

employees. We dedicate this celebration to all the citizens of our country".

UNESCO is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN) that aims to promote world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, science and culture. It has over 190 member states and 12 associate members, as well as partners in the non-governmental, intergovernmental and private sectors.

Over the years, the AGSA has built an international reputation as an SAI with solid auditing and governance systems. In 2021, the World Bank ranked the audit office as one of two national audit offices in the world (the other being Sey-

chelles) that have complete independence to carry out their audit mandates in their respective countries.

"I extend words of appreciation and special thanks to our government, especially the departments of International Relations and Cooperation and Basic Education for showing confidence in the national audit office's capabilities and supporting us through the process," says Maluleke.

As UNESCO's external auditors, the AGSA's responsibilities will include issuing a report on the financial statements and relevant schedules of the UN agency, its institutes and related functions.

Maluleke says her team is ready to take on this new as-

signment. "We will diligently carry our country's flag in promoting the auditing profession".

She adds that UNESCO will obtain "maximum benefit from our integrated approach that combines financial audit with compliance and performance of the institution".

#TeamAGSA will provide insights into critical education aspects that contribute to improving the quality of teaching and learning skills development. It will assess how effectively, efficiently and economically UNESCO donor funding is used; deliver improved root cause analysis of the detailed findings; and offer better, more impactful recommendation that will lead to more effective corrective actions. ○



SOCIALLY COHESIVE NATION

"Reconciliation is also about each person taking the responsibility to fight racism, discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance in the country"

[#ReconciliationMonth2023](#) [#StrengtheningSocialCohesion](#)

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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**LEAVE NO
ONE BEHIND**



Use of consultants in the public sector and the need for review



South Africa is faced with tough fiscal choices under an economic environment characterised by high inflation, subpar economic growth and, currently, with the ugliest record of income inequality and youth unemployment numbers. Some argue that we are on the edge of a precipice and these difficult choices cannot be deferred any further. A clear low-hanging fruit is improving public sector spending efficiencies without compromising the quality of the delivery of basic services such as health, sanitation, education and roads infrastructure.

A key area of interest is optimisation of spending on consultant fees. It is no secret that our public service is heavily reliant on consultants for the delivery of critical public goods and services. According to National Treasury consolidated fi-

nancial statements for 31 March 2022, over R15 billion was spent on consultants, contractors, and outsourced services in the 2021/22 financial year. This figure is a conservative aggregate considering that services relating to capital projects, training, travel, repairs and maintenance which are usually outsourced, are not included. These costs are increasing at above inflation without any tangible value-add that accrue to the public.

The use of consultants by government is driven by several factors, including budget constraints, vacancies in key positions and lack of qualified personnel responsible for critical areas. Consultants are meant to supplement these shortcomings by bringing in expertise and specialised knowledge, flexible additional resources, efficiencies and costs savings,

while transferring the capabilities, knowledge and building internal capacity. However, this rarely occurs as this relationship has been characterised by costly, low quality service delivery outcomes with increased dependency on consultants. All this to the detriment of the public institution mandated to deliver goods or services and ultimately, the citizens.

In its general reports the Auditor-General of South Africa has consistently raised concerns regarding the effective use of consultants, which include inadequate documentation, ineffective contract management, poor project management that results in goods or services delivered at poor quality or not delivered at all. The main root cause being, public officials that are not qualified or capable to deliver on the

critical responsibilities assigned to them, and they continue with zero consequences.

As part of the Professionalisation of the Public Service, a skills and competency audit is critical to identify areas where there are capacity challenges and areas for development. The question must always be asked, and answered, as to why a service has to be outsourced if there is currently an incumbent employed to fulfil those duties. This includes an objective review and scrutiny of the needs assessment done to motivate for the need to use an expert. Public sector would perhaps need to radically shift the manner in which contracting for expert use is governed. This must include robust performance management, consequence management for transgressions and

waste of resources to promote responsibility and accountability for public officials involved. This could be coupled with a focused talent management strategy to develop and capacitate the talented, motivated and dedicated civil servants.

Indeed, there are no sacred cows. There is no need to remind anyone of the involvement of big firms implicated in the Zondo State Capture Commission. Even 'post' state capture, public sector Chiefs Financial Officers continue to experience instances of overpriced goods and services, poor quality work, lack of good faith in contracting with hidden terms and conditions that inflate costs significantly above budget and manipulation of outcomes to guarantee future dependency.

All these factors combined have a significant influence on the poor service delivery we see today and further erode public trust and confidence in government.

Recommendations

National Treasury issued a practice note to guide the appointment of consultants a few years ago, however this has not had the desired impact as discussed above and may need to be reviewed. Recommendations to improve the use of consultants from the public sector perspective include:

- having clearly defined project goals and needs assessment approved at a more accountable level of delegation;
- open, competitive and

centralised (for big value contracts) procurement and contract management;

- effective testimonial-based evaluation of bidding consultants on their expertise prior to appointment;
- clearly defined performance metrics;
- retainer fees for knowledge transfer with stringent conditions; and
- regarding the relationship with consultants, a memorandum of understanding between respective industry bodies and the public sector must be established. It must emphasise the need for principled and honest contracting that elevates provision of sustainable public services as a common goal for all parties to the contract.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that South Africa is facing several significant challenges that require tough choices to be made. Addressing this includes a focus on efficient spending to ensure value for money and the review of the business relationship between the public sector and its consultants. Given the capacity challenges faced by public institutions, with robust performance management for non-performing officials, use of consultants will remain integral to government's resource planning and delivery of basic services. However, the business interaction with consultants must be principled, fair, in good faith and in the public interest to ensure public goods and services are provided optimally. ○



Permits to change the lives of farmers

A group of farmers have dispelled the myth that government initiatives seldom have an impact on the lives of ordinary, real people.

Recently, 664 hemp and cannabis farmers, who are on the KwaZulu-Natal Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) database, received permits which grants them authorisation to cultivate, store and transport content with a Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) of not more than 0.2%.

THC is the major psychoactive component and one of the 113 cannabinoids recognised in cannabis.

What does the handing over of the permits mean you ask? It means that the permits, handed over at a provincial Cannabis Expo and Conference, held at Okhahlamba Sports Complex in Bergville, will enable the farmers to have access to cutting edge technology through an analytical lab based at Cedara in uMgungundlovu District Municipality, near Pietermaritzburg.

To grow the local sector, the MECs of the provincial departments of Agriculture and Rural Development and Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA) invited captains of industry, including experts, academics, *Amakhosi* and local growers to a two-day expo and conference to share ideas that will grow the sector to its full potential.

Held under the theme: "One love, one heart," the event provided a platform for local cannabis and hemp farmers, and others with an interest in the sector to engage with business and academia.

Among the issues under discussion were that of regulations, registration, production, agro processing and exports.

Local businesses that will be providing services to permit recipients were granted R300 000 each. Services include processing, erecting tunnels and providing lab equipment, packaging, testing, and finding a market for the farmers.

Masterplan

The first citizen of the province, Premier Nomusa Dube-Ncube said the expo and conference will be etched in the minds of the people, as the starting point of a "new era for the cannabis sector in the province."

Dube-Ncube noted that many milestones had been achieved through the KZN Cannabis Masterplan.





"Through DARD, we have set aside an amount of R47 million for cannabis research. We have allocated R10 million to assist farmers in cannabis production and hemp permit application.

"We have facilitated an investment commitment of R120 million and we have participated in the Cannabis and Hemp Phakisa Action Lab in order to secure much-needed policy coherence and to ensure closer collaboration amongst government entities," she explained.

This is a pilot projects targeting commercial growers are ongoing, and the province has supported several investment leads, which were in the process

of rolling out district-based capacity building programmes under the umbrella of the proposed KZN Cannabis Association.

Reaping the rewards

EDTEA MEC Siboniso Duma said the expo had been a success and that the work by both EDTEA and DARD was just beginning.

"We want our farmers to be the champions of the cannabis sector and we want them to be able to speak for themselves. We are giving them an assignment to come closer to us because what we have started together, will change people's lives," Duma said.

Meanwhile, DARD MEC Super Zuma said the province has worked steadfastly and the time to unlock the province's prosperity through the hemp and cannabis sector, had now arrived.

"We have ensured a smooth process for our hemp permit holders and we covered all their costs. We are winning the fight to alleviate poverty and unemployment and we are extremely proud of the ongoing collaborative work that continues behind the scenes, and I must say all our collaborative efforts have yielded fruit," Zuma said.

Permit recipient from the Umzinyathi District Municipality, Sphelele Shezi, said this was the

beginning of great things for her small business of hair products, noting that the success of the products relies on hemp seed oil.

"I applied for my permit in July because I want to start extracting oil to use in our hairspray.

We also manufacture shea butter which will soon be hemp infused.

"This permit will allow my business to grow and I have a vision of owning a manufacturing plant which will open up job opportunities," Shezi said.

The owner of Old Grey Distillery, which manufactures cannabis infused beverages in Johannesburg, Derek Collard said his business received great exposure at the expo. ➤



"The expo has been superb. We started our business when cannabis became legal and we started experimenting with different cannabis infused gin flavours. We have met incredible contacts that we will be supplying. There are business opportunities as well as local growers that we could potentially partner with," Collard said.

Nonhlanhla Qhoboshiyane, a hemp and cannabis farmer from Durban, who was introduced to the plants after falling ill, said she was grateful for the opportunity to be part of the informative expo.

"My interest started in 2016 when my husband and I were diagnosed with cancer. We used hemp oil and we would make cannabis leaf tea to help with the pain.

"These plants are from the

Lord, created to bring about economic recovery in South Africa, there should be no stigma attached to them. The rural economy will grow because of hemp and cannabis," she said.

Investment

In his 2023 State of the Nation Address (SoNA), President Cyril Ramaphosa reiterated government's commitment made in 2022 to unlock investment in the hemp and cannabis sector.

During the Phakisa Action Lab gathering held in June 2023, the President said the cannabis and hemp sector is one of 14 priority sectors that have been defined in government's Country Investment Strategy as holding significant potential to secure investment, job creation and support for sustainable rural livelihoods, in recognition of people's rights.

Participants at the Action Lab collectively agreed on the regulatory reforms required to better enable the development of the hemp and cannabis sector.

The reforms will unlock the potential of cannabis in African traditional medicine; pharmaceutical and complementary medicines; and multiple industrial applications.

The regulatory reforms agreed to include reviewing the schedules to the Medicines and Substances Act, 1965 (Act 101 of 1965) to further enable cannabis grown for non-medicinal uses, including industrial purposes.

The Phakisa Action Lab further resolved to explore mechanisms to fast-track the removal of cannabis from the Drugs and Drug Trafficking Act, 1992 (Act 140 of 1992).

This will be a historic achieve-

ment through which the cultivation of non-medicinal cannabis will be legal under the terms and conditions of the Plant Improvement Act, 1976 (Act 53 of 1976).

The development of the hemp and cannabis industry has so far seen the issuing of 83 cannabis licences, four manufacturing licences and 30 research permits by the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority since 2022.

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has also issued 371 hemp permits, enabling significant investment, employment creation, the application of technology, intellectual property development and exports to highly competitive global markets.

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TIA signs MoU with Milk SA to drive innovation in the dairy sector



South Africa has one of the most efficient and competitive dairy industries in the world whilst operating in a free market environment, unlike most of its international trade com-

petitors, which are supported with government interventions.

The number of milk farms and processors of dairy products continues to decline, especially since deregulation in 1997,

but the industry succeeds to increasingly provide sufficient unprocessed milk and dairy products of a high standard to consumers.

Milk South Africa (Milk SA)

is the overarching body of the local dairy industry, with its members being the Milk Producers' Organisation and the SA Milk Processors' Organisation. Projects under its manage-



ment are funded by statutory levies and include quality and safety, transformation, skills and knowledge development, research and development (R&D), industry information and consumer education.

In its role as an industry builder, the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA), an entity of the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), has signed a strategic collaboration agreement with Milk SA. Milk SA was established with the strategic intent to improve the competitiveness of the South African dairy industry, broaden the market for South African dairy products and empower existing black dairy entrepreneurs in the South African dairy industry to broaden the market.

The cluster model is TIA's approach for assessing value chains and stimulating the

development of activities and interventions to facilitate sector or industry-level engagements through a cross-cutting approach. This approach is intended to address systemic weaknesses that hamper innovation and commercialisation beyond just the provision of funding to individual projects. In this collaboration, Milk SA will amongst others be the implementing partner for the current Dairy Genomics Programme or Cluster of TIA.

"We are delighted to have reached this milestone and we look forward to the contributions by TIA and Milk SA towards the prosperity of the South African dairy industry. The signing of this collaboration agreement is the culmination of years of negotiation and underscores the realisation that partnerships are central to the achievement of the develop-

mental goals of South Africa.

"This historic moment of the signature of an MoU between TIA and Milk SA has also ensured a meeting of minds regarding further support to the transformation agenda of Milk SA and TIA. As we pursue diversity, equity, and inclusion, we envisage a dairy industry in which the participation of women is commonplace, and in which all opportunities within the value chain are opened for participation," said Dr Vuyisile Phehane, Executive: Bioeconomy at TIA.

Milk SA regards the relationship with TIA as of high importance in supporting the R&D programme of the dairy sector. Technology development and innovation in a competitive environment where profit margins are small is crucial and therefore, we anticipate that this relationship should

provide increased opportunities to achieve such innovation and at the same time maintain sustainability," said Dr Heinz Meissner, R&D Programme Manager at Milk SA.

This collaboration is a good example of a public-private partnership that would contribute to economic growth and a competitive industry, leading to improved quality of life for South Africans.

As a strategic high-impact programme, the model of cluster creation and management supports the DSI's Decadal Plan and the implementation of the 2019 White Paper on Science Technology and Innovation. The Decadal Plan guides on modalities for the State's intervention towards rescuing industries in decline, amongst other interventions defined in the Agricultural and Agro-processing Masterplan. ○

Summer holidays must-haves



The festive season is upon us and we have got the ultimate Summer essential guide for you, to beat the heat, relax and unwind and make the most of your holidays.

Whether you are headed home for the holidays, or to the coast,

our summer season must-haves are guaranteed to keep you cool and looking great this holiday.

Grab your sunnies

Find the perfect frame for your face and up your eye-wear game with the perfect pair of sunglasses. Opt for a brand that pro-

motes ultraviolet light protection. So don on those shades, and stay protected this Summer.

Do not forget your SPF

Wearing sunscreen daily whether you are out and about in the sun or relaxing indoors does

wonders for your skin. Not only does it protect from the harmful rays of the sun, it also prevents ageing, so go on, protect your sun zone on your face, neck arms and legs.

- SPF30 cream Clinique: **R500.**
- Eucerin Sun Sens Gel: **R255,** Dischem.



Hats off to you

From the fedora and wide-brimmed straw to the dome or bucket, hats are the ultimate statement while on holiday. Straw hats are best for the beach, bucket hats for the streets and everything in between to make your statement this Summer.

- Men's Panama or Bucket Hats: **R249**, Woolworths.
- Ladies sun hats: **R169**, Edgars.



- EverySun SPF50 Suncscreen Lotion: **R143**, Clicks.

The colourful crossbody

The crossbody bag trend is all the rage this Summer with fun and colourful interchangeable

straps. Large enough to carry your essential items, it adds the perfect pop to any outfit. Change up your style this summer with the Crossbody.

- Typo: **R299**.
- Country Road: **R899**.
- Refinery: **R250**.

**prices correct at the time of publishing*
 *The Edit Desk is a team of content creators and communication specialists. You can contact the team on email: jay@theeditdesk.co or follow them on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn: [@theeditdesk.co](https://www.instagram.com/theeditdesk.co)

A hearty Beef Wellington

recipe for the holiday season

The holiday season is upon us and this is the time most of us spend with families reflecting on the year past, catching up, simply having good vibes and recharg-

ing for the new year. On special days like Christmas, food will always be that glue that sticks us together.

In this edition I am sharing my Beef Wellington recipe

served with broiled vegetables with you.

Enjoy this meal with a crisp cold glass of Chardonnay Pinot Noir, perfect for these hot summer days.

Beef Wellington recipe

Ingredients:

- Puff pastry.
- Beef fillet 600g (may upsize if serving a bigger crowd).
- Fresh thyme.
- 1 large onion (finely chopped).
- Salt and pepper.
- Dijon mustard.
- Mushrooms (finely chopped).
- Garlic.
- Butter.
- Olive oil.
- White wine (1/4 cup).
- Crepes.
- 1 large egg.

Method:

- Season beef fillet with pepper and thyme and sear in a hot pan, put aside and let cool.
- Add butter to the pan and sauté the finely chopped onion and mushrooms till cooked. Season with salt and pepper.
- Add garlic and fresh thyme and further sauté till fragrant.
- Add white wine and cook till reduced. The mushrooms should have a paste resemblance at this stage. The duxelles done, put aside and let cool.

Rolling the beef:

- Lay the crepes on a cling wrap. Spread the duxelles on the crepes, wide enough to





Method:

- Add butter to the pan and sauté onion till translucent.
- Add fresh a few sprigs of thyme and continue to sauté till nicely fragrant.
- Add the wine and stock. Let this simmer till it reduces to half, add some sugar to taste. If sauce is a bit runny, add a block of butter alternatively add about a teaspoon of corn-starch. ○

cover the entire beef.

- Rub some dijon mustard on the beef fillet, thyme leaves, black pepper and a sprinkle of salt.
- Place the beef on the duxelles covered crepes roll tightly and tie the cling film on both ends, this should have a log shape at this stage.
- Put aside and chill.
- While the beef is taking shape, dust a surface with flour and roll out the puff pastry to the desired thickness. Careful not to roll too thin.
- Remove cling film from the beef log and cover with the rolled out puff pastry.
- Pinch the ends and cut excess puff pastry (this excess pastry can be used to decorate the Wellington).
- Brush the Wellington with the egg, this will help glaze and give it that golden brown colour when cooking.

- Place the Wellington in an oven preheated at 180 °C. Cook for 25 minutes for a medium rare, or longer for preferred doneness.

The side vegetables:

- Broccoli.
- Cauliflower.
- Baby carrots.
- Baby potatoes (boiled till soft, then slightly crushed).

Method:

- Cook vegetables per batch in salted boiling water, one minute for the broccoli and one minute for the cauliflower, two minutes for the baby carrots then transfer into a bowl with iced water to cool them down and to avoid overcooking.
- Once all vegetables have cooled down, remove from cold water and place on a colander to remove excess water.
- Lay the vegetables into a

roasting pan. Drizzle melted garlic butter on the vegetables and toss well to coat. Season with salt and pepper, sprinkle some thyme leaves over.

- Place in a preheated oven (200 °C) on grill setting. Cook till golden brown on top. This should take about 10 minutes.

You can make some red wine to go with the meat.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups red wine (you can use Merlot).
- 1 large onion roughly chopped.
- Thyme.
- Vegetable stock 1/2 cup.
- 1/4 cup sugar.
- Tablespoon of butter.



*Originally from Excelsior in the Free State, Lelimo is a Sous-Chef at one of the high-end restaurant in Cape Town. Although he has a full time job, he also does private functions from time to time when required. You can check out some of his work on Instagram: @molelekiskitchen.

A Blissful Escape:

celebrate special occasions in Zanzibar



Looking for a beautiful getaway to celebrate a special occasion? Look no further; travel blogger, Nondumiso Radebe, shares interesting aspects about her 40th birthday celebrations in Zanzibar.

As I approached the milestone of turning 40, I wanted to embark on a journey that would not only mark this auspicious occasion but also create unforgettable memories. After much contemplation, I set my sights on the exotic island of Zanzibar; a hidden gem off the coast of Tanzania. Known for its pristine beaches, vibrant culture and rich history, Zanzibar seemed like the

perfect destination to celebrate my birthday in style.

Day 1: Arrival in paradise

We arrived in Zanzibar in the afternoon, with just enough time to see the sun setting. The scenic drive to our hotel in Michamvi Pingwe was troubled by unkempt gravel roads, with a spattering of deep potholes,

which our driver kept swerving in order to avoid an accident. As we arrived at the resort, we were greeted by Swahili drummers. After checking into our luxurious beachfront resort, we immediately headed for the restaurant. Le Mersenne Resort is renowned for its opulent accommodations. The blend of traditional Swahili décor and modern amenities provided a comfortable and

luxurious retreat for my entire party. However, their overall service was disappointing, from its restaurant staff, cleaning service and desk service.

Day 2: The party

Having a destination party is far more terrifying than keeping it in your home country. All the planning was done through hotel contacts, social media posts that friends had shared, or posts that I had stumbled upon. I only met my vendors on the day of the event. Everything in Zanzibar is "Hakuna Matata". I learnt this because the majority of my vendors – decor company, the DJ and the photographer arrived late. I would recommend that you get yourself a friend from that country – the vendors that were recommended by my friend from Tanzania were the most reliable, whilst the ones I found on social media, in my case, the photographer; turned out to be a scammer.

The Le Mersenne Resort allowed us to have beachfront lunch on their pier, complete



with sumptuous feast, and waitresses who ensured our glasses were always full.

Day 3: Blue Safari adventure

No trip to Zanzibar would be complete without the Blue Safari experience. It offers a chance to explore the beautiful marine life and untouched natural beauty of Zanzibar's surrounding islands. We fluttered from one island to another, and from one swimming area to another on a precariously looking boat locally known as a Dhow. We also indulged in some

snorkelling and lazy swimming in the warm crystal-clear waters of the Indian Ocean; discovering vibrant coral reefs, and encountering colourful marine life including tropical fish and turtles.

This part was not my mother's favourite; as jumping in and out of the Dhow seemed challenging for her. However, I admire her spirit of adventure as it propelled her to persevere and not miss any part the experience. Her being part of all the adventures we embarked on in Zanzibar made the week so much more memorable.

Day 4: Exploring Stone Town

With Zanzibar being part of an archipelago, we could not resist the temptation to explore its neighbouring islands. We hopped on a boat and set off to Prison Island, famous for its giant tortoises. The gentle giants welcomed our arrival, allowing us to feed and interact with them. To immerse ourselves in Zanzibar's intriguing history, we embarked on a guided tour of Stone Town, the island's United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Heritage Site. The narrow, winding streets transported us back in time as we meandered through the ancient buildings, bustling markets and vibrant alleys. The scent of exotic spices filled the air, a reminder of Zanzibar's prominent role in the spice trade. We ended the day with a delicious authentic dinner, which was hosted by our tour guide and his wife,

where we indulged in the island's culinary delights.

Celebrating my 40th birthday in Zanzibar was an extraordinary experience that surpassed all expectations. From the pristine beaches to the rich culture and wildlife encounters, Zanzibar is a destination that truly offers something for everyone. As I bid farewell to this enchanting island, I carried with me not only cherished memories but also a renewed sense of appreciation for life's remarkable moments. ○



*Radebe is a travel blogger, who is passionate about exploring new destinations and sharing her experiences with others. Through captivating stories, stunning photographs, and practical tips, she aims to inspire fellow adventurers and help them plan their own unforgettable journeys. You can follow her adventures and stay up-to-date with her latest travel recommendations by following her on Instagram @n_radebe and at www.bentontravel.co.za