

JANUARY 2012

Sun 1

Well known is the plight of the rhino (qv 5/11) and in the Kruger National Park a special troop of military have been drafted in to patrol the 400km border with Mozambique. Despite their roll being to prevent the species being poached 244 of the total number of the endangered species were killed within the parks boundaries

As president Zuma prepares to celebrate the 100 year of the African National Congress (qv 21/12) it would seem, through his words spoken during a national television broadcast, that they were the only group fighting the apartheid system.

No mention was made of the Pan African Congress, the anti apartheid movement that broke away from the Congress in 1959, and organised the pass book protest that led to the Sharpsville massacre in 1960. To many in the international community this death of innocent women and children was the wake up call that the world needed and thus began the campaign that eventually toppled the system in 1994.

Throughout South Africa there are no effusive memorials to other campaign leaders; Robert Sobukwe, the PAC founder or Steve Biko the founder of the Black Consciousness Movement only that of Nelson Mandela who has statues bridges or theatres named after him.

A second grouping written out of the history are the religious leaders. Noted cleric, and former Archbishop of Cape Town (qv), who was in the audience during the presidents speech , that it was the clerics who were able to motivate anything up to thirty thousand township residents to join protest marches throughout the nation.

Another bone of contention, noted by deputy president K Motlanthe, was no celebration of the 1910 Union of South Africa. Although the power was ceded, by the British, to the Afrikaner, not to remember was wrong.

Tues 3

Radio report, black students, at Johannesburg University, when asked whether such a protest movement that forced the 1994 changes would be feasible in these troubled times – the alleges excesses of the ANC – the answer was No. Today' s youth are more concerned with becoming middle class and making money.

The American beverage conglomerate, Coca Cola, have denied allegations from pro democracy campaigners, that monies earned by the kingdom of Swaziland are being siphoned of by King Mswatti the Third, through the taxes the company pays for its sugar concentration plant sited there.

Such are the concerns of the Swaziland Solidarity Network, that part of the 40% that Coca Cola 's monies make up the kingdoms GDP find their way into the monarch's

personal fortune, they have travelled to the companies headquarters in Atlanta to call for the company to withdraw. In their defence the company say they cannot be responsible for how the money they hand to the government is spent.

With only a short history, the first shop was opened in 2002, of eating fish and chips the South Africans love of biltong is facing a stiff challenge. With a variety of outlets throughout the nation now the most common is The Old Fashion Fish and Chip Company franchise. The first outlet, in Elma Park suburb, was set up by the de Sousa family. Priced a between £2 - £3 per portion.

As of now the franchise of 300 outlets is valued R250m / £20m. By 2014 it is hoped that new outlets will be opened in Britain.

Sat 7

As the main celebration, connected to the 100 years of the African National Congress are held, this writer postulates that there is little in common between the 'then' organisation and the one that appears to be so divided as of this moment

While in the beginning Congress was able to marshal world opinion against the apartheid regime and even those internal organisations. In other words it was able to 'create a broad alliance that spanned the ideological spectrum from shop keepers to communists.'

First elements of diverting itself of the movements original ideals was the 2007 election of president Zuma, who as an ethnic Zulu gained almost 100% support from the KwaZulu region.

In the writers opinion the party has become complacent and runs the risk, eventually, of going the same way as other government; born out of liberation movements, that has befallen others on the African continent.

Leader Comment **Unhappy birthday** as of one time a movement that was “even greater than its greatest leader.” Now; “offers a lesson in human frailty. This is a high tragedy. But the ANC is not about to splinter or be voted out. There is still another chapter to be written and its high time for the ANC's many remaining idealists to start writing it.”

Sun 8

history note – **1952** During the past seven days 'Britain abstained today when the overwhelming majority of the United Nations backed India and Pakistan in opposition to South Africa's racist segregation policy.' **Observer report on the UN calling on South Africa to suspend implementation of its Group Areas Act.**

Mon 9

All was well, as the great and the good gathered in Bloemfontein, to celebrate this day in 1912 that saw the birth of the continent's oldest liberation movement. On a platform set up in the Free State stadium president Zuma addressed the crowd alongside Thabo Mbeki one who had gone before who now presented a 'century flame' to the man he deposed in 2008. Hung around the stage were portraits of the eleven previous presidents of the African National Congress.

It was also noted that Nelson Mandela was not in attendance due to the frailty of his health.

The books have been written, the cinema seats filled now is the time to make a television series, over six hours, of the life of Nelson Mandela up till the time of his taking the role of president in 1994.

The biopic, costing £13m /\$20, with the working title Madiba; his Xhosa clan name, will delve into his relationships he had with his mother and the impact she had on his development. It will be co produced by the former president's grandson Kweku Mandela along with the British production team that were behind such films as The Damned United and The Queen.

Wed 11

Tragedy occurred as a mother died, outside the gates of Johannesburg University, as parents and would be students queued up to apply for the few remaining places after obtaining their final year school exam results.

All told the university had 7, 000 applications from 'late comers', who were hoping for the 800 remaining places in the last 24 hours. Such happenings; the late applications are not uncommon as many students, from the townships have no access to on line application.

Critics, of the African National Congress government, contend that similar events will happen again unless the government makes an effort to so come to terms with inadequacy of the country's education system

Thurs 12

As if it's not enough that the African National Congress, is facing its critics as to the poor standards of the education system (qv 11/1) , now the hosting of diplomatic functions has been questioned.

A media outlet, Volksblad, tells a tale of events that surrounded the celebrations connected with the celebration of 100 years of Congress. As world leaders gathered in Bloemfontein the logistics of the Pretoria authorities were called into question. In one case it is said that the Uganda president had to send out for extra food. It is not stated whether this was 'extras' or hospitality, on the part of the government was lacking.

In response a spokesman noted that no complaints had been received and post celebration talks, between presidents Zuma and Museveni went ahead without a hitch.

The link between the city of Leeds continues as township children, outside Cape Town benefit from the efforts of the charity; Balls for Poverty. Making a return visit J Sargison aged 37 arrives in the town on 31/3 along with footballs for the children. While the main aim of the visit is to check on the progress of the 500 local soccer coaches he has trained during eight previous trips.

If the township youths, were not active in sport, crime would not be in such its current state according to the Cape Town police chief. In recent times statements, from him, have said that the rate of youth crime has fallen 40% when the charity is working in the area.

Sat 14

'Conceived' in 2006 (qv 22/8) The Oprah Winfrey Learning Academy, based in Henley – on Klip outside Johannesburg, has reached a milestone in its development recently After five years of study the first intake of students have graduated.

These talented township students, seventy five who enrolled in 2007, seventy two sat the final exam. All received a one hundred percent pass rate with 188 distinctions. These pupils are now bound for the best universities in the country as well as overseas.

Despite early setbacks, criminal activities by the the academies house keeper, the American television talk show host, is keen to extend her philanthropy to other deprived countries.

Sat 21

News report, the Market Street Theatre based in Johannesburg has reappraised one of its anti apartheid offerings written at the hight of the 'the struggle.' Blood on the Border is a play about the lives of white conscripts sent to the South African/ Angolon border to do battle with ANC and Swapo guerillas in the mid 1980's.

The plays theme's, bullying of those unwilling to fight in a war, in the eyes of the conscripts, that is unwinnable in now an study text on the English Literature degree course an one of the countries leading universities.

Sun 22

An scientific expedition to Mozambique, led by Professor B Branch of the Port Elizabeth Museum, has enabled the scientific world to enter another species into its 'book of life'. The cross border journey was inspired by Google photos of the the countries Mulanje Mountain region.

Close study of the images noticed that in among the forest area was an unusual chameleon species. After verification,the South African academic named this new to

nature species after Dr J Bayliss of the regions conservation trust. Thus Nadzikambis baylissi has become known.

Mon 23

Noted, in the recently published auto biography of Peter Hain is the wording used by the then president of South Africa Nelson Mandela, concerning the military action both countries were about to launch in 2003 (qv 31/1).

“Mandela phoned more angry than I have ever known him, and almost breathing fire down the line. 'A big mistake Peter, a very big mistake. It is wrong. Why is Tony doing this after all his support for Africa. This will cause huge damage internationally.’”

Fri 27

Analysis, by the Kenyan office of Portland Communications, indicates that throughout the African continent in 2011 in excess of eleven million tweets were made by those use their Twitter account. Of that number 5, 030, 226 emanated from the mobile phone uses of South Africa.

In other southern Africa countries, of concern to this diarist, Namibians Twittered 12, 384; Angola's were 14, 620.

Sat 28

The former hospital based cardiologist, Dr W Basson, who was cleared of charges connected with the 'dirty tricks' department of the National Party government as the fought to those opposed to apartheid before 2002 (qv 12/4) has lost a legal battle of his own.

Cleared, of the majority of the charges prior to this date, he has now to face the ethics committee of his professional body in Cape Town. Now working in private practice he faces losing his licence to practice for the time spent, between 1981 to 1993 working on mortar weapons that fired tear gas and the use of tranquilisers in kidnapping enemies of the state.

Sun 29

In the town of Kroonstad in the Free State J Ntuka and his family lived and the twenty six year old has ambitions to make the big time in football. This was at a time when the employment prospects for the youth of post apartheid South Africa are poor.

According to Z Vavi, general secretary of the Congress of South African Trade Unions, one in three persons of work age; including half of black people aged 15 – 24 are jobless. This should be of great concern to the government.

As for his ambitions having prospered locally after attending at the Johannesburg based national school of excellence. While the team were on tour in Northern Ireland at the age of seventeen he was head hunted by the coach of Chelsea FC.

Deemed not up to the required standard, even as he was earning £5, 000 a month; which enabled him to move with his wife and child to a plush house in a Johannesburg suburb, a move to a Belgium team was arranged.

The dramatic death, in 2007, of his parents within quick succession, changed his outlook on life. In 2009, with a wife and child he returned to the country where he obtained a place on the books of the Kaiser Chiefs; the team that the exulted Lucas Radabe of Leeds United fame. He then moved to SuperSports United his second domestic club.

Even playing for one of the countries top teams things started to go wrong; he began missing training drinking. It was during such a social event that his life ended on 25/1 he was stabbed to death in Kroonstad.

As the police have to solve a great number of this type of crime, in 2011 there were 15, 940 recorded mostly of poor blacks.

Two South African palaeontologists, R Reitze and Professor D Evens, and their team have pushed back the time line; as far as 100 million years, as time that the dinosaurs roamed the earth. The team has uncovered a cluster of eggs, laid down in the early Jurassic period rock formations.

The eggs belong to the Massopondylus mother and indications are that the chicks, which hatched from eggs 6 – 7 cm in length, stayed with the mother at the nesting site until they had doubled in size.

Tues 31

It now seems that the African Union, the great hope for the continent, will see Jean Ping serve a second term as chairman after an election upset as delegates voted in the \$200m headquarters; donated by the Chinese.

The challenger for the post, Nkosana D Zuma, the South African interior minister withdrew after failing to win the needed two thirds of the delegates votes. Even the incumbent, Gabon' s former foreign minister failed, by 36 votes, to capture the requisite votes. This was said to be as a result of a demand that the Pretoria favourite 's supporters did not cast their vote in his favour.

FEBRUARY 2012

Thurs 2

A court in Cape Town has sentenced four men to eighteen years for the murder that rights activists say was carried out because the victim was a lesbian. They were sentenced on 31/1 for the attack on Zoliswa Nkonyana aged 19.

The Commission for Gender Equality said the four's conviction, for the 2006 killing, would act as a lesson to perpetrators of homophobic violence.

Sat 4

As of this date it is known that 443 rhinos were killed in South Africa in 2011 a somewhat increase on that detailed on 5/11. Recent reports say that four persons were jailed for 25 years for poaching of this endangered species.

Wed 8

Glencore, the company whose chief executive is Ivan Glansberg (qv 20/5), is on the verge of a merger with the Extrata company. This will put the new company in control of much of the world's diminishing sources of precious metals.

In his adoptive country this new conglomerate company controls 70% Shanduka coal which owns five mines which supplies coal both for domestic and European consumption.

Elsewhere within the country it has a stake in companies producing chrome and the coking coal substitute char. One of the coking plants, Wonderkop, produces some of the world's lowest cost ferro chrome products.

Cartoon Wealth extraction; the Glencore way

Sat 11

De Beers saw profits rise, in 2011, 50% and its trading division say sales up 27%; its second highest, to £4bn/ \$6.5bn. . Rough diamond prices rose 29% from 2010. Pre tax profits; 48% to \$1.27bn. Even so seven miners died during the year as compared to one employee in 2010.

Allegations of price fixing, brought in the United States in the 190's, are close to being brought to an end. It has been agreed that the company will pay out \$294m in compensation.

One who was there, at the 1993 Convention for a Democratic South Africa talks as a note taker, has words on the treatment of Julius Malema; the youth league president who was expelled from the African National Congress in 2010.

The writer notes that his rise to power came about as Jacob Zuma battled to oust Thabo Mbeki from the presidential role after Nelson Mandela retired. Also it is in recent times that the sitting South African president has ousted one who stood against the divided party that is the Congress.

Even so; at the celebrations of the 100 years of the ruling party (qv 9/1) in Bloemfontein the sacked youth leader was among the honoured guest seats and received a massive crowd recognition it would have been noted that even if he has disappeared for now he has shown future pretenders in the ANC a way of acquiring power in the future. - **J Steinberg** -

Sun 12

News report, the Reserve Bank of South Africa has announced that from the end of the year new Rand notes will be issued. Their new design will incorporate the figure of Nelson Mandela at the time his succession to the presidency of the newly multi racial country in 1994.

Fri 17

Controversy, in the countries arts field, is not new and the latest 'first' is likely to add to it. From the rural heartland of KwaZulu province came as a seventeen old to Johannesburg, Thandi Sibisi now aged twenty five.

Here achievement; to become the first black women to own a major art gallery. There has been other high achievers from outside the normal; white, dominated arts world. There is now the National Gallery in Cape Town that has a non white director since 2010 (qv 2/9).

In 2003 Gallery Momo, the first wholly black owned art gallery opened in Johannesburg where black artists M Sibande and N Hlobo can exhibit their works while at the same time enhancing their world wide reputations.

Sun 19

A white commando killed while trying to sabotage a vital railway line in Mozambique was an Ulster man serving in the South African army. Evidence of his identity provides proof of the 'secret war' South Africa is waging against neighbouring black states. - **The Observer's Africa correspondent reports on the growing evidence that the apartheid government was interfering in the civil matters of other African countries.** -

Sat 25

The long talked about cinematic film of the self penned Long Walk to Freedom, the auto biography of Nelson Mandela has settled on the British actor Idris Elba to take the principal role.

News report, the ninety three year old former president of South Africa Nelson Mandela has been released from hospital after a re occurrence of an ongoing medical problem. The 1994 election winner was released from a medical facility within a Pretoria military base after travelling from his ancestral home in the Transvaal.

Sun 26

With the outflow of detail about the medical condition of the countries first black president, Nelson Mandela, being released the ANC dominated government was aiming to stem the criticism that was made after a similar incident in 2011 (qv 28/2). The ensuing 'non disclosure' to the media led to speculation that the inevitable; that one deemed as 'father of the nation' has passed away.

As to the handling this time round criticisms also abound. There are rumours that grandson, Mandela Mandela, alleged to be a bigamist by the police, may have to answer questions in court as to whether he has sold the media tights to his grandfathers funeral to the highest bidder.

Anthony Sampson, author and journalist, from 1954 to his death in 2004 (qv 21/12), a man who has known the great and the good in the apartheid era his deposited, all 200 boxes in the Bodleian Library; part of Oxford University.

Mon 27

Out of hospital, and back at his home, in the Johannesburg suburb of Houghton, the former presidents spokesman Mac Maharaj, has given details of his time in hospital. During the former president stay the medics performed a laparoscopy, which did not indicate anything seriously wrong.

history note **1881** Boer farmers defeated the British at the battle of Majuba.

Tues 28

News report, interviewed was one who was there at the time, in 2009 (qv 10/9), when the bodies of the Pebco Three were discovered buried in a septic tank on a farm used by those defending the apartheid government.

It was also told that this special government unit had investigated 400 plus cases of identifying the remains of those killed in trying to end the apartheid regime. As of this time it has only been possible for the team to give closure to about 150 families.

MARCH 2012

Sun 4

The South African jazz trumpeter and anti apartheid activist, Hugh Masekela, reflects on that time and a country without Nelson Mandela. Describing his time as a young person growing up he noted that “millions of tricks against the establishment were already in place.” He noted that the establishment worked harder to keep 'on top' of those who they wished to control.

On being offered the position of honorary white; 'highly insulting, right ought of the Marx Brothers. “The apartheid people were actors and they had to act their part in their beliefs every day. He has no power to forgive the whites. Its very hard to become reconciled with your oppressor, when the 'masses' were making their wealth without it being spread down to the masses.

As to the benefits of the eighteen years of an ANC government; there never was any government that has lived up to is expectations. Corruption is everywhere.

Despite his past deeds Nelson Mandela is a human being “who became, who he became because of the people of South Africa.”

Wed 7

Attempts are being made to restart work, after troubled times in 2009 – to 2011, at the Magwa tea farm in the Eastern Cape. The 4, 450 acre/ 1, 800 hectare plantation has been in existence for 33 years and 20 years ago won a trophy from France for producing the best tea in the world.

Trouble ensued three years ago when management introduced different working practices for the 1, 200 permanent and 2, 300 seasonal workers. Tea picking weights had to increase from 200k to 250k for the same pay, This was not on said officials of the Food and Allied Workers Union.

As of this time a pickers wage can be as little a R1, 000, when the farmworkers minimum is R1,376/£91 per month. Picking weights are now 253 kg. An on sight mechanic, V Jikwayo aged 51, says he earns R1, 250; not enough to feed and educate his five children.

To reach this state the workers went on strike; the management fled under threats of violence. Only recently has the farm come back in production. Only at harvest time will be known if production can resume.

Sun 11

Much as it is now accepted that, as of 2011, it became anthropological fact that human life was known on the African continent earlier than previously accepted (qv 14/10), other discoveries are only now coming to light.

Investigations of early man's adornments of their cave homes of southern France; Chauvet and Lascaux as well as others in Spain indicate the early language skills of Cro – Magon Man.

Observations, in the European and Blombos cave system outside Cape Town, on the Indian Ocean shore line, show a form of 'symbol.' According to lead researcher, G von Petzinger of the University of Victoria British Columbia the symbols provide clear evidence of the way our ancestors moved from representing simple ideas; hunting of the wild animals, to the more idealistic representation of concepts.

Tues 13

Julius Malema (qv) one time leader of the African National Congress 's youth league, has pleader to be allowed to retain his membership after his expulsion on 30/8.

Speaking, in a television broadcast recently the thirty one year old said party membership was “my life” after he joined at the age of nine. “Please leave me with a card because the imagination of being outside the ANC, is too scary. I Love the ANC, I don't have anything except the ANC.”

Sat 17

Knowing that the American singer songwriter Paul Simon broke the African National Congress's cultural boycott, as he performed in the apartheid state of twenty five years ago, it seems that time is a great healer.

With the date 15/7 defined as the date that he, along with many others who performed on his 1989 'Gracelands' album; the result of the 1987 concert will be re enacted in Hyde Park in London.

Despite the breach of the cultural boycott of South Africa; an agreement signed in 1985 (qv 30/11) by Artists Against Apartheid, the founder Dali Tambo noted that he forgave the artist despite going against the wishes of the apartheid movement an the United Nations.

Tues 20

As with all previous depictions of the life of Nelson Mandela in the forthcoming biopic (qv 9/1) will not be played by a native South Africa. Two possibilities have been as to why have been put forward; those living on the tip of the African continent are not naturally tall of stature. An alternative is that home grown, and more mature actors, do not have the experience, as they isolated by many years of the international cultural boycott during the apartheid struggle.

The row erupted, in the Sunday City Press newspaper, between Moonyeenn Lee; casting director for the adaptation of Long Walk to Freedom and the president of the Creative Workers Union of South Africa; Mabutho K Sithole.

It is not as though black actors have not played the countries first multi racial president. Recently S M Ka – Ncube won a regional theatre award for his portrayal in the drama 'Rivonia Trial.'

Sun 25

While the HIV Aids virus is being well treated; in the realm of preventing untimely death, persons suffering with tuberculosis at the same time are more than likely to become one of the increasing number who die from the combined diseases.

Taking the picture, of these twin killers, in the Unbuntu clinic in Khayelitsha township outside Cape Town, throws the countries struggle into perspective. Most of those who present themselves for treatment are the women; men are far less likely to. Of those that do; they struggle to maintain the drug regime, fifteen tablets per day, that is needed to fight the infection. Also when they move way into the rural areas medicines are not that readily available.

In response the Pretoria government has launched a national strategic plan based on zero TB Aids infections and similar tolerance rates for deaths and HIV discrimination rates.

However, despite this the long established Global Fund for the treatment of Aids and Malaria who, at its zenith, provided £30m / \$47m for such treatments has only allowed \$14.5m for the South African health system in 2012.

Tues 27

Figures released by Amnesty International indicate that in 2011 1,923 people from 63 countries were sentenced to death. One each from Botswana and the Kingdom of Swaziland suffered the ultimate penalty.

As the push for more of a democratic kingdom engulf Swaziland the monarch, in the guise of the Senate plan to introduce measures to halt such challenges. With a bill going through the legislative to end the connections to the Facebook and Twitter accounts of its nationals.

Although only 1.2m accounts are found in the kingdom there was, according to senator T Msane, there was much activism that threatened the king' s reputation. "There must be a law that can take them to task."

Wed 28

The 'basket case' that was Mozambique, in the period from the civil war post the exit of the Portuguese, is almost certainly coming to an end. The country, like much of the

continent is on the verge of economically outshining much of Europe in the coming years.

Even in 2011 economic growth hit 7.1%, whereas in the last three months the growth rose to 8.1%. There is every indication, after the potential of a recent gas field and just in production coal field being fully developed.

Three of the worlds largest oil exploration firms, Shell BP and Total are fighting for a 20% share after the gas field, off the countries northern coast, which analysts estimate to be worth \$200bn - \$400bn over the next forty years.

The coalfield, located near the capital of Tete province, is being developed by the Brazilian mining company Vale. Since development began in 9/11 22m tonnes has been exported. It is said that coal deposits, un mined, stand at 23bn tonnes.

With financial help from the social media site, of £782, 000 /\$1.25m, Google has enabled the Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory to place 1, 900 documents and photos on line for immediate perusal.

At at the launch the statesman' s grand daughter Ndileka stated that to allow a global viewing of the run up to a multi racial nation was not a breach of the privacy of one of the main participants of the 'struggle'.

In her view the global observers have only known Madiba as a political person. A viewing of his personal papers will show him “as a man with aunts and uncles and other family members.”

Fri 30

News item, the High Court in London has ordered that the extradition of S Dewwani (qv), wanted by the authorities in South Africa on the allegation of ordering the murder of his wife, be postponed. Their decision was made as he continues to suffer from post traumatic stress disorder.

Sat 31

Although noted that the extradition of Shiran Dewani has at this time been stopped in the high court (qv 30/3) two senior judges indicated that it would be “unjust and oppressive”to send him for trial until he had recovered from post traumatic stress. They also noted that it was plainly in the interests of justice that he did stand trial.

As a parliamentary considers, line by line, the Protection of Information act (qv 22/11) the hostility towards intended purpose grows. Although the thoughts of Nelson Mandela are not known at this time; the thoughts one of those who move within his circle has become clear.

His friend, and one time lawyer George Bizos warned that the legislation would have a chilling effect on those who would wish to expose the wrongdoings who may face up to 25 years in jail for revealing the corrupt practices of others.

APRIL 2012

Tues 3

Long thought of being fact, that the association of early man and fire was dated to 8000, 000 year ago after a discovery in Israel, has been turned on its head by recent findings in the Northern Cape.

First detailed in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Science by a team of scientists, led by F Berna of Boston University, points to the man/fire association being made one million years ago.

These, disputed, findings; ashes were made at the end of the 30 metre long Wonderwerk cave. It is the view that these found ash deposits could not have transferred themselves into such a position by any other method than by early man.

The outlook for women, who have HIV infected babies is grim. Mpho Mbhele has joined a United Nations global plan to eradicate the disease in children by 2015. Now working with Doctor M Besser, a Harvard trained obstetrician who emigrated to work at Cape Town University.

In these early times, 1999, he noted how difficult it was for women and their babies to receive proper care. In time his mothers2mothers scheme was launched. In essence women, who had given birth to HIV infected babies and were given the appropriate medical care became the mentors or other pregnant women in a similar situation.

Such was the life of M Mbhele, who lost her daughter aged 11 months to the disease, and in 2003 she herself now works as a mentor at the Ikhwezi Clinic Somerset West near Cape Town.

Despite there not being a scientific study on the effectiveness of mothers2mothers attempts to cut mother to baby virus transmission the British Medical Journal has noted, locally the seem impressive. Clinic managers note that in the 12 months before the programme started 150 babies tested HIV+. In the next 12 months only 4 were diagnosed.

Tues 3

News item, in the first three months of 2012 it is said that 160 rhinos have been killed for their ivory throughout the country.

Wed 4

News report, eighteen years of an ANC government and there are claims that the growth of the economy has not reached its full potential. It is said that despite being seen as an 'emerging nation'; hence it being part of the BRINK group of nations conditions for its people are not as expected.

Sat 7

A number of students from Leeds City College, who are all studying Animal Health Welfare and Wildlife Management have been chosen to travel to South Africa for some hands on experience.

While the seven students will be based at the Moholoholo Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre. They will be involved in releasing animals back into the wild and visit a cheetah breeding research centre as well as learning how to deal with snake bites and other injuries.

Tues 10

As is well known the life of an openly gay person in some countries on the African continent is dangerous the recent election of a Namibian national will bring the subject to the fore again.

In the Mr Gay World contest twenty five year old W Hamutenya took the world title in a contest in Johannesburg. Not having an early easy life; at the age of 16, when he came out to his father, the police were called and then dad took him to a hospital for psychiatric treatment. The family are now reconciled and went with him to the airport.

Of his new notoriety ultimately he hopes that the government in Windhoek, will repeal the 1927 sodomy law, and become only the second country on the continent to legalise gay marriage.

Thurs 12

Noted as a country where the taking of motor vehicles by force; car jacking is endemic one victim turned to the electronic age to aid its recovery.

Travelling through Johannesburg, in his Golf, the victim was stopped and the driver was bundled into the vehicles boot. From there he was able, with the use of his mobile phone firstly alert the girl friend who then via the use of Twitter spread the word to be on the look out for the stolen car. It was eventually located in the town of Ventersburg.

Demonstrations are planned in the kingdom of Swaziland on the 39th anniversary of the accession of the monarch Mswathi the Third and will also highlight feelings of those opposed to his authoritarian rule.

This is not the first time that such protests have been made. In 2011 (qv 14) such protests were brutally put down by the police and security forces. One who was detained, pro democracy activist M Dlamini aged 22 felt the full force of the law. Rough treatment inside a police van over 5 hours and depositing at a far away police station and kept in a cell and suffered bouts of torture before facing court.

Charged with possessing explosives and sentenced 32 months in jail he was returned to his multi occupancy cell, 68 people and only two toilets, for which he still feels

traumatised. After 10 months he was released after paying a £4, 000 fine; a kingdoms record.

The problems of the HIV virus, 63% of the kingdoms population are infected, is still ongoing despite government campaigns to educate preventative measures. One campaign, funded by the Americans; Presidents Emergency Plan for Aids Relief is having some success. Whilst adult males are fully against circumcision, its not a tradition in this location, mother, who bring their children for he procedure note a success rate.

Wed 18

With the release of a number of government papers it has been learned that Bechuanaland; now known as Botswana, was to be used to test a virulent poison gas.

The plan, put forward by the Ministry of Aircraft Production in 1943, for 'practical trials' was centred on a 10 square mile location that was free of people. The request was made to the embassy in Pretoria to seek out a "chemical experimental area. Proposed was an area of the Makarikari region; which were deemed on insufficient size. A second area; a large salt pan, the Makgadikade Pan to the north of the colony was offered.

In the end, after officials indicated that all the correspondence had been destroyed, an area south of Lake Nata was "deemed suitable." However, in 11/43 the trials were postponed "due to the proximity of the rainy season."

Thurs 19

As a representative of miners, formerly employed by the Anglo American mining company; now named Anglo America South Africa, D S Thakamakau has travelled to the companies annual meeting in London to claim compensation for the tuberculosis while working in the companies gold mines during the years of apartheid.

His plea, on behalf of 1, 200 fellow miners and fellow sufferers, is being handled by the London solicitors Leigh Day, in a case that will be heard in the high court once a second judicial decision is made. The mining conglomerate disputes the claim and has challenged the miners right to bring such a class action; firstly the company does not have any stake in the mines at this time. Also the company, AASA headquarters are in South Africa. The legal ruling is expected on 9/5.

Already eighteen former miners, suffering from silicosis, have gone down the legal route in South Africa. As of this time 3 have already died before developing tuberculosis.

Fri 20

With the police announcing that in 2011 that there were 16, 000 murders and approximately 66, 000 sexual offences the latest such crime has caused more than the usual condemnation.

What was most most chilling was that the 17 year old female victim was severely disabled and had a mental age of a five year old. The five people charged with the crime in a Johannesburg court, after the release mobile phone images, released on YouTube on 21/3, of the crime.

Also on trial, it could be argued, were the residents of Soweto knew that the teenager had been missing for three weeks prior to the attack and that for her 'going missing' had happened before.

Widespread condemnation, from politicians; the woman 's league of the ANC demanded “When does it become acceptable among a group of peers to rape a girl and laugh about it. It just makes one sick to the stomach.”

Sat 21

Polygamy, inherent in the Zulu nation, has caught the president Jacob Zuma yet again. In a private ceremony the South African political leader has made his long term girl friend, Bongi Ngema wife number four.

The private ceremony too place took place at his rural home in Natal. All his existing wives witnessed the marriage vows being taken. The recent Ms Ngema, mother of his seven year old child, is an activist and an information technology worker.

Wed 25

More defined has it become that the economic fortunes of Mozambique (qv 28/3), and its relationship with Anglo Dutch firm Shell. It would seem that oil/gas drilling company, working off the coast in the Rovuma Off Shore Area 1 Gas block is the Maputo governments preferred bidder to extract 30tn cubic feet of natural gas from under the Indian Ocean.

To gain this 'favoured' status the company will have to fight off stiff competition from Gail India and the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation both of whom made matching bids to the Mozambique authorities.

Mon 30

Obituary Cosmas Desmond 19. 11. 35 – 30. 4. 2012 Brought up in a London Catholic family of 11 children. The, by then, Catholic priest was firstly educated at the local council school before training for the priesthood at St Mary's Friary East Bergholt Suffolk.

Sent to, as now Natal province “to convert the heathen hoards” through the Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Maria Lady Ratschitz mission outside Ladysmith. The fight against apartheid began when he discovered that the Afrikaner government was moving the local black population as part of the policy of creating Bantustans for 'surplus people.

As he travelled the province noting the hardships of the local populations and their privations; no water, jobs, poor housing and infertile land. Notes were taken and in 1970 taken to the Christian Institution. The outcome; the publication of *The Discarded People*, seen as a seminal work of the lives of the majority population in the republic.

Neither church or state were happy when the book was published in 1971 by Penguin. Pretoria 's retribution was swift the cleric became a 'banned person' under the Suppression of Communism Act. Despite this move the book was instrumental in the 1973 formation of the United Nations Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid which pushed the idea of isolating the apartheid regime from the international community.

The government in Pretoria, in retaliation, kept the priest under house arrest in Johannesburg until 1975. Now free to live openly in a divided nation but because of continued death threats, and little help from the police , he left for London.

Back home he became the director of the British branch of the human rights organisation Amnesty International. Policy differences, between full and voluntary staff led to him being sacked within 18 months.

Returned, after an invitation to do so by Nelson Mandela, in 1991 and stood as a PAC candidate in 1994 and lost. Took a post, editor of the Children First charity in Durban.

MAY 2012

Thurs 3

Once a centre to ferment the long running apartheid struggle, and in the not to distant past, the base for the Soweto Strings, the township on the edge of Johannesburg is to have its own theatre. Built, at a cost of R150m / £12m, with a design likened to that of a building designed by the American architect F Gehry 's, it will accommodate 630 people in its three auditoriums.

The cities director of arts culture and heritage, S Stacks, sees the building as a huge centre piece for a suburb which already has a large shopping mall, conference centre, multiplex and hotel. Already lined up is a wine festival and an inaugural Soweto fashion week.

The theatres first play production will be a musical celebrating the life of Hugh Masakela; trumpeter and anti apartheid activist.

Tues 15

With the rise and rise of the numbers of Chinese, working on Beijing sponsored economic projects, one of the counties leading newspapers is to be published on the continent.

The state run China Daily is to be published, in English, in Kenya and Johannesburg. Its news gathering organisation will consist of a bureau chief and two staff. Much of the papers content will also rely on the work of freelancers. For the launch issue it is said that staff from Beijing to work stories.

As to the papers orientation it is said that the paper will focus on South African business news and according to the papers deputy chief editor, Gao Anming, "it will aim to introduce China to the world and present news with a Chinese angle.

Almost one million Chinese people now living and working on the African continent and bilateral trade having risen from £6.67bn / \$10. 6bn in 2000 \$160bn in 2011 says the countries state media.

Thurs 17

The scourge of child malnutrition, on the African continent, is no where better exposed than in Mozambique. One example; the two children of Olinda Nova who live in Mahache village in Gaza province. Most of their meals are based on the root of a tree. As of this time the 'tree root soup' which are mashed wood shavings boiled in salty water is all the family can look forward to in this drought stricken province.

Such a diet, for the countries under five' s', some 44% of the child population result in them suffering mental health problems.

Such is the continuing problem that once again the leaders of the G8 nations are to consider an American 'alliance initiative' to end child hunger in a number of sub Saharan African countries. The six nation plan, including Mozambique, will see public and private spending \$1bn over ten years on ways to improve a countries agricultural development.

This is not the first time a similar project has been started. At a similar summit, in 2009, a sum of \$6bn was pledged for food security and agricultural initiatives by the G8 members. However by 7/11 only 22% of the total had been allotted to projects.

Fri 18

New item,, South African president, Jacob Zuma, has taken exception to a painting exhibited in one of the countries galleries. Whilst it is a portrait of himself the artist has left his genitals exposed.

In defence of the artist the cartoonist, Zapiro a prize winner in 2009 (qv 6/9), interprets the image as a comment on the presidents attitude to women in comparison to the status of women in South Africa.

Tues 22

On the eve of president Zuma 's court, case surrounding an art gallery exhibit (qv 18/5), title and location of the 1. 85m tall 'The Spear' hanging on the wall of the Goodmn Gallery in Johannesburg.

After its untimely exposure the president, in court, will claim that the artist; Brett Murry violates his dignity and brings the office of the president into disrepute. To the public the more pertinent question is 'what is art' ? Much is made of the fact that the artist is white and the depiction of a black man, in this fashion, is almost as bad as calling him a kaffir.

Despite the row according to the Sunday Times the painting has been sold to a German buyer at a cost of R136, 000 / £10, 345.

News item, not only does the artist B Murry have to worry about an impending court case; on 24/5 defending his depiction of the president, now he has to explain to the paintings buyer any signs of damage on the canvas.

As of this time two persons were apprehended in the Johannesburg gallery by security guards minuets after they had vandalised the canvas with red and black paint.

Wed 23

Sentence has been passed on the two black farmworkers, C Mahlangu aged 29 and P Ndlovu 18 who were accused of the murder of Eugene Terreblanche in 2010 (qv 5/4). Although both were charged with his murder only the elder man was convicted of his killing. Then only aged 17 P Nlovu was convicted of housebreaking.

Fri 25

As the high court begins its hearing into the Jacob Zuma claims about the effects of the gallery exhibit (qv 18/5) the ruling ANC have also allied themselves with the presidents legal case. The governments complaint is that the exposure of the genitalia and not the pose of the depicted president; likened to that of a Stalinist figure is what is offensive.

The presidents lawyer, Geina Malindi, was grilled by the three judges, on all aspects of the case as he argued the case that they should hear the opinions of 'the people' and not just the those, usually middle class, who frequented art galleries. In his opinion the painting would reinforce, in some peoples minds; the white population, all that was bad with the black majority.

Other comments made; from the Congress 's general secretary Gwede Mantashe, "That picture is racist. It is disrespectful. It is crude and rude." The newspaper columnist M Makhanya noted that the president "had done more to provide fodder for racist stereotypes than any other black South African."

News item, South Africa, along with Australia, has been chosen to co host the Square Kilometre Array telescope. *authors note* the decision has been awaited since 2010 (qv 5/9).

Sat 26

It would seem that the award of the SKA to both South Africa and Australia will allow astronomers to study the formation of the first stars and galaxies after the 'big bang'. The lions share of the project, 70%, will be seen to benefit all the nine African countries that are in partnership in this \$1.bn project.

Hard on the heels of the row about the Zuma/genitalia painting the government has called on the people to boycott the City Press newspaper until it removes the painting from its web site. Such a move was condemned by the South African National Editors organisation.

Tues 29

Despite the ANC government 's call on the readers and advertisers of the City Press newspaper (qv 26/5) the owners had the last laugh when the paper sold all its copies. Even so the Zuma/genitalia picture has been removed from the company web site.

Explaining the move the papers editor said the offending picture had gone "out of care and fear." The opposition Democratic Party condemned the U turn as self censorship, noting how the apartheid government "bullied critics."

Wed 30

The inside story, by one who has visited before, of the death E Terreblanche the former leader of the Afrikaner 's struggle to defend the apartheid way of life.

JUNE 2012

Mon 4

As Sky, the part Murdoch owned television station, prepares to broadcast a programme about noted South African theatre director; et al Athol Fugard the life and times of the man; the highs and lows of the troubled theatre scene that was the apartheid state are examined by a noted critic of the theatre.

Tues 5

One effort to stem the number of under 5 's in Mozambique who suffer from malnutrition (qv 17/ 5) is being tackled by the women of Matimbine an area of low landed semi desert of the coastal region.

With the help of the War on Want the 33 strong Wapsala Collective provide a working alternative, through public and international funding and away from the private sector investment preferred by the G8 members.

The only limits that the members of the Collective find, for the local sale of their various and nutritional, produce; tomato or banana jam, pickled vegetables, juiced tangerine and mango and the staple of the region dried cassava, is cash.

In the regions only hospital, Guija in Gaza province which is run by only one medical doctor, it is noted by E Arnaldo that 80% of his child patients, as are their teenage mothers, are malnourished.

News item a decade after the end of the civil war in Angola is under scrutiny. Notwithstanding the wealthy that the exploitation of the £45bn oil fields found of the coast, and the influx of young; unemployed from former colonialist Portugal, plight of the ordinary citizen has not improved greatly..

Thurs 7

As the protection of state information bill, termed the secrecy bill by those it would most severely affect; journalists wends its way through the committee stages 'notables', of the fight against the apartheid regime are coming to the fore and speaking out against this draconian piece of legislation.

The writer JM Coetzee; a Nobel laureate and twice winner of the Booker prize “ The legislation is transparently intended to make it difficult for pesky investigative journalists , and generally to save incompetent or corrupt bureaucrats from being embarrasses.” A second laureate, Nardine Gordimer notes “it is quite obvious why this bill has come about – the government had no attempt to hide the truth that its intention is to aid the cover up of corruption.

One of the most severe cases of corruption exposed in the recent past, the ANC governments procurement of military hardware would not have come to light if such a practice happened if this law had come into effect.

In 2007 Andrew Feinstein, himself an ANC member of parliament published a book (qv 9/11) which detailed the behind the scenes details that has one person jailed and a ministers political future put under the spotlight.

Leader Comment Zuma builds a firewall of secrecy with the onslaught of condemnation the bill is encountering “the ANC has backed off a bit. It has improved protection for whistleblowers on one clause” however there will be no move to allow a public interest defence over prosecutions dealing with espionage of 'hostile activities.'

“South Africa is still a vibrant democracy with the freest press in the continent ... the civil society alliance Right2Know acknowledge the revisions to which the law has been subject. The sword may be sheathed in its final form but the real question is still how Jacob Zuma will wield it.”

It would be a bad day if the president went for a regime where “loyalty trumps leadership ... he would be wiser to heed the warnings of his country 's many remaining democrats.”

Mon 11

Deservedly, says Aubrey Lodewyk; who portrays South Africa 's first black president does Nelson Mandela deserve to have parts of his life depicted in an opera, that three episodes of his life are hight lighted in Cape Town Opera 's 'Mandela Trilogy' being performed in London within the next four weeks.

As one of the performers, to bring to the stage ; the village boys Xhosa right of passage ceremony in the rural Traskei area, his non agreement to an arranged marriage and his departure for the countries capital – Act 1 -

Now 1955 the action moves to to Sophiatown and a politically charged meeting where residents are fighting the governments plans of forced relocation. Mandela is also shown deeply troubled as he decides compliance or struggle against the apartheid regime.

Now 1964 – 1990; beginning with his end of trial speech before being jailed for life, then his release in 1990.

Thurs 14

Despite being a well qualified women Mangwashi V Phiyega, just appointed as head of the national police force, has not been welcomed by fellow officers into a post where to clean up the police forces image will be here first priority.

With a background in corporate and diploma of social work from the University of Wales and other academic qualifications there is a hard road ahead, not just tackling crime; where there are on average 43 murders per day, but countering the opinion of the police union that having no first hand knowledge of police work will alienate her from rank and file officers.

The head of the South African Police Union, Oscar Skommere, indicated “We are of the opinion that the president would have learnt that non police officers have not made good police commissioners.”

The comment was backed up by Johan Burger a former high ranking police officer; now an academic at the Institute of Security Studies notes that women, in general, in the force are spread among the upper echelons and to bring in an outsider gives the wrong message. “It 's humiliating ... and shows no confidence for those who have risen through the ranks.”

Angola is one of four countries, along with Tanzania, Ghana and Kenya, to benefit from the new air passenger service which will be launched by the founder of the Easy Jet airline.

Known as Fastjet, the company, has invested in a company; Rubicon to the tune of 5%, which has purchased the aviation arm of the Lonhro conglomerate which has a wide interest in business of Africa.

The companies aim is to use the Lonrho Aviation 's support network throughout the region which as a potential passenger market of 12.8m. As for aircraft used Fastjet would seek to use Boeing 737 's or Airbus A319 's when it begins flying.

Tues 26

As the final stages, for the London based 2012 Olympic Games, are being completed it has become known that the Kingdom of Lesotho 's nineteen strong national team will firstly travel to Wrexham, north Wales, before the Games begin in 31 days time.

Such are the costs of this last minuet training camp that it would not have been possible without the £25, 000 grant, offered to all competing squads which has been made by the London Organising committee of the Olympic Games.

The landlocked squad are to be housed in the student accommodation of the University of North Wales and for 14 days have use of the facilities of the Queenway sports ground in the middle of a city housing estate.

Fri 29

News item, discussion as to whether the ANC had run out of ideas as a government. At the same time as it is consumed by internal squabbles.

JULY 2012

Sun 1

Tales told of the exploits, of London recruited students, to give a boost to the flagging ANC campaign to overthrow the apartheid regime at a time when the liberationists were at a low ebb.

With the jailing of Nelson Mandela and his co co defendants, after the Rivoena trial, ways and means needed to be found to motivate the masses who were living under the repressive National Party government.

The exploits of the white, university educated students from London latched onto an idea of Ronnie Kasrils who master minded a series of high profile escapades that brought the struggle onto the city streets of the cities Pretoria and Johannesburg.

Described in the book, London Recruits; edited by K Keable and D Walsh, was a mass leafleting campaign that saw pro ANC pamphlets reign down onto the mainly white population of South Africa.

The thinking behind the leaflet bombs was that the couriers from London would have less trouble smuggling them past customs; in false bottomed suitcases than a non white traveller. Once inside the country their release, from empty vehicles or left on the pavement bicycles via a small explosive device, was easily managed.

Not all couriers were successful; one was arrested as he was wearing an Young Communist badge in his passport photo. Others were caught, jailed or beaten. One was able to escape from jail half way through his sentence.

Wed 4

One of former president Nelson Mandela 's daughters, Nenani M Dlamini; who until her divorce from a member of the royal Swazi household, is to become Pretoria 's ambassador to Argentina. Bilateral trade has reached \$1.3bn a year.

Surprisingly, following research by Oxford University and funding; £160, 000, the way South African women achieve financial independence is down to selling cosmetics door to door. In the three year study, by Professor Linda Scott helped women lift impoverished women out of poverty.

According to the countries Trade Unions black women earn on average R1, 200 /£94 per month whereas white females earn R9, 600 a month. Their menfolk would, on average, take home a salary of R19, 000.

The survey covered 300 black cosmetic saleswomen and 77 of their customers along with interviews of Avon management.

Reviews of a missed Imagine: Paul Simon 's Graceland BBC programme note that the American singer, despite getting along with his fellow artists on the disputed 1986 record, still showed disrespect for the majority of the black people he came in contact with.

News item, along with the 2010 role of Olympic ambassador Hector Pistorus (qv 24/11) has won a place on his countries Olympic Games athletic squad. His challenges will be run in the 400m event. Also he will be a member of the 4 x 4 400m event.

Thurs 5

As well as he expectations, of the countries Olympic Committee, Hector Pistorus (qv 4/7) is also to defend the three gold medals; 100m 200m 400m he won at the Para Olympic Games in Beijing 2008.

Already in 2012 he has won races, where he has ran faster; 45.3 seconds twice in the last 12 months.

Sat 7

The Pretoria government has approved the sale of the Oppenheimer shares in the De Beers diamond conglomerate; Anglo American. The cost; \$5. 1bn/ £3. 25bn. Such an acquisition now allows the go ahead to formally offer the Botswana government a pro rata share of the 40% of sold shares.

Such a move would mean that the world 's top diamond producing company would see its 15% interest in De Beers rise to 25%. If not the South African conglomerate would 85% of De Beers.

While the final details are not 'set in stone'; Botswana has 30 days to make its intentions known.

Sun 8

Now known the future of Zenini M Dlamini (qv 4/7) and could be said to be following her father into politics others in the family acknowledge that public service is not the way for them.

One shining example is Maki Mandela who was the former first born; to his first wife Evelyn Mase. At the age of 58 she is the founder of the House of Mandela wine label. Her thoughts on women in business; “women are nowhere in terms of the economy. We will know this country is truly transformed when a significant population of black people really actively participate in the economy. Right now we' re not there yet.”

Other members of the academics family; Tukwini 37, works with her mother. Her brother, Kweku, is a film maker involved in the mini series being produced of the life of his grandfather.

Wed 11

History note, as is well known South Africa was, in 1964, banned from participating in the Olympic Games. It has now been said that the 62 member squad, which included seven non white competitors, would have been allowed to compete in Tokyo if the apartheid state made a public renunciation of its discrimination. This it failed to do and therefore was not allowed to participate until 1992 when all apartheid laws were lifted.

The rumbles of discontent, within and without the ANC, continue. The former 'Mother of the Nation' has set down her disgust at the way the government has treated, and continues to do so, her former husband Nelson Mandela.

The South African member of parliament Madikizela Mandela had detailed snubs that have occurred in the recent past. The most recent, the unavailability of a seat at the ongoing celebrations of the ANC's anniversary, in Limpopo province.

At this same celebration supporters of the former youth leader Julius Malema; an exile from the party, were demonstrating in song against the country's president. Eight people were arrested by the police.

A common thread between Winnie Mandela and the one time Congress's youth leader is that they both disagree with the way the Zuma led government is running the country.

Much like Angola's acceptance of native animal species, from Zimbabwe in 2000 (qv 13/11) Namibia is to send 150 native southern African animals to Cuba. This sending of elephant, leopards, lions and other animals has angered the conservation organisation SPCA.

Dubbed Noah's Ark Two, the deal was agreed between the two governments in 2009 after the visit of R Castro to the west African country.

Fri 13

The contents of the email, written by Winnie Mandela (qv 11/7) has been supportive of the comments made. Grand daughter Swati Dlamini's echoed her comments that the current echelons of the ANC were disrespecting the greater Mandela family. Such was their anger they both stayed away from the president's centenary lecture on Nelson Mandela.

However one of the Mandela offspring, grand daughter; the eldest Ndileka, did not only attend the celebration in Limpopo province but spoke at the gathering. Such a move offended the ex wife of the former president.

During the 10/7 ceremony one anti Zuma protester, among the many who were protesting, a 68 year old man died after inhaling pepper spray.

Sat 14

Under their national coach, Chaplin Mpome aged 55, will oversee a total of five Lesotho athletes at to the London Olympic Games (qv 26/6). Short of race experience will be Tsepo Ramonene aged 21; who up to now has only raced once before where he managed the qualifying time of 2. 16. 36. A second marathon runner, Jobo Khatoane aged 20. While Ramonene trains among the high altitude, 1, 800, of much of the kingdom, Durban is the favoured training ground of Mamorallo Tjoka aged 27 who will participate in the women 's event and is seen as the countries best hope.

A swimmer Masempe Theko aged 25 will compete in the 50m free style. There was a memory lapse when asked her personal best. The Kingdom 's solo sprint athlete Mosito Lehata aged 23, has many advantages over his fellows. With a full time position as a teacher, the son of a government minister lives in Mauritius, is well versed in the in the modern world

Tues 17

At the second time of asking (qv 31/1) South Africa 's home affairs minister Nkosazana D Zuma, has been appointed as the head of the African Union. At the 15/7 summit in Ethiopia 's capital Addis Ababa she; a former wife of Jacob Zuma this time found the required votes to defeat the incumbent J Ping of Gabon.

With his 63 former wife outside the politics of South Africa its president now feels more secure in an attempt at a second term as president.

Wed 18

The three G4S employees, detailed to accompany failed Angolon asylum seeker, Jimmi Mubenga, back to Luanda, will not be prosecuted after he died before the plane had left Heathrow Airport.

Given that the evidence was not conclusive; that the charge of gross negligence could be proved as eye witness' s could not say that the forty six year old was "held in a severely splintered position" - bent over with his head either on or below his knees and his diaphragm severely restricted a senior crown advocate G Hart of the special crimes unit ended the hopes of the family.

A smuggled complete works of W Shakespeare, smuggled on to the island prison that held Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners in 1970's South Africa, will go on show in London's British Museum.

The Robben Island bible, as it became known, was brought in by anti apartheid campaigner Sonny Venkatrathnam, asked the political inmates to anoint their favourite passages. The jailed leader of the ANC chose a speech from Julius Caesar; "Towards die many times before their deaths./ The valiant never taste of death but once." It is signed NRD Mandela 16. 12. 77.

Thurs 19

The children of Batsogile primary school on Soweto were; on Nelson Mandela 's 94th birthday were recipients of a pair of new shoes.

Letters [1] **F Webber, vice chair Institute of Race Relations** anger at the CPS 's reasoning for non prosecutions over the death of Angolon asylum seeker J Mubenga. Their reasoning 'poor physiological condition' ... adrenaline rush and 'agitated state' gives other murderers excuses if their victims fight back.

[2] **M Pinner Nick Wood London** you would expect “conflicting witness accounts” to be part of any trial. The trial would be the way to settle the conflicting elements.

[3] **P Goodall Weston Longville Norfolk** the seemingly Crown Prosecution Services policy of only proceeding to trial if conviction is guaranteed.

Fri 20

News item, experts have revealed that a new source of fresh water has been located in Namibia. It is said that the amount located is enough to to keep the north supplied with water for 400 years.

During the three yearly Forum on China – Africa Cooperation held in Beijing, with South Africa 's president and many other leaders from the continent present, China's leader Hu Jintao pledged to double the Continents credit line from the level since the last Forum. He made light of western concerns that their funding for Africa was little more than an attempt to bolster dictators.

President Zuma indicated that trade with China jumped from £6.5bn/ \$10bn in 2000 to \$166.3bn in 2011.

Thurs 26

During the whole history of the modern Olympic Games, from 1896, the number of medals won by South Africa is 70; 24 silver and 26 bronze. Using the same statistics Mozambique won 2 medals and Namibia 4.

Fri 27

The last president, of apartheid South Africa, F W de Klerk, has spoken out about apparent use of the race card when comparing the 'reconciliation' of the present time and that achieved, by Nelson Mandela, with that which was achieved during his one term administration.

“Since his retirement there ' been an exponential moving away from the emphasis which he has put on inclusiveness and reconciliation and the exemplary example he has been to all of us with regard to reconciliation.”

Further expanding his ideas the former president notes a comment from the present holder of this office. In a recent speech it was noted the president Zuma has said, to the recent annual ANC gathering “The economic power relations of the apartheid era have in the main remained in tact in the hands of white males as it always has.”

A recent World Bank report showed that the country 's 10% account for 58% of its income, while the bottom 10% account for 0. 5%.

Those opposed to the autocratic rule of King Maswattit the Third of Swaziland have been angered, yet again, by his sending of three of his wives on a visit to the gambling centre of America; Las Vegas.

1

2The 66 strong party, according to the kingdom 's opposition group, Swaziland Solidarity Network, will stay in 10 villas each costing R20, 000 / £1, 573 per night. All round condemnation also came from Vincent Dlamini of the National Public Service and Allied Workers Union who noted that the royal family “once again showed utter disdain for the people of Swaziland.”

Long has the last president of a non racial South Africa been forecasting, on CNN television in 5/12, that his beloved country is going the way of many of former colonies on the African continent.

His mindset that South Africa will become badly governed, corrupt, a place of famine which will lead to all out war is incorrect. A country that has had three free and fairly elected presidents in the last 18 years is not about to falter as a country whose whole obsession is the survival of a white minority privilege.

Mon 30

Radio report, The high court, in Namibia, begins to hear a case that could have a wide impact on pregnant HIV positive women throughout southern Africa. The case is being brought after two such women were forced to have caesarian births.

Their legal team, based in South Africa, contest that to have such a procedure forced on the two breaches elements of the woman 's rights.

Tues 31

Long have tourists to the Kruger National Park hunted for the animals that roam 2m hectares in search of a decent sight line, at first to kill and then latterly to photograph them. As of now, with the help of the internet search engine Google, an the initiative of a Johannesburg school boy , location of 336 tree types, 49 fish species 34 amphibians, 114 reptiles, 507 bird species and 147 mammal types are flashed up on computer screens etc.

The high court in Windhoek, Namibia, has upheld the claims of three women that they had been sterilised without their informed consent (qv 30/7). However the court rejected the women 's claims that the procedure had been carried out because they were HIV+ ve.

AUGUST 2012

Wed 1

Without the presence of Shrien Dewani in court over the call by the authorities in South Africa to have him extradited for the murder of his wife his lawyer, Clare Montgomery acknowledged that his diagnosed post traumatic stress disorder (qv 30/3) had improved. However it was felt that a period of time was needed to speed a final recovery.

The magistrate, H Riddle, adjourned any decision until 18/9 and by that time a psychiatrist, employed by the Pretoria government will make his own examination of the murder suspect.

Egged on by his children a notable apartheid era drummer has returned to school 44 years after leaving his education behind. As is school year ended Siphon 'Hotstix' Mbusa aged 60 and living in Soweto, gained passes in seven subjects. These ranged from English to school matriculation in Sesuto; a Bantu language.

On the whole South Africa 's education system is in a mess. Less than half students pass end of education exams, 80% of state schools are 'dysfunctional' 1, 700 have no water supply 15, 000 no library. The education minister of Limpopo province is under pressure to resign as provincial schools lack text books.

Fri 3

As of this time the countries Olympic squad, competing in east London, have won three metals in total and stands 10th in the league table of medal winners. Already they are ahead of the number gained in Beijing; a solitary Silver. Even better all this time are for being winners in the lightweight men 's four, 100m and 200m butterfly.

One of the four participants rowers, Sizwe Ndlova aged 31, a former police reservist in the Pretoria Flying Squad, told how at school, around 1997, his head teacher had spotted his potential and took him training at 5am. Then school and more training after lessons were over.

By comparison, Team GB has 15 medals and stands 5th out of 41 countries have gained metal ware.

Mon 6

Double amputee, Oscar Pistorius, has not added any of the four medals; 3 Gold and 1 Silver that South Africa has won in the London Olympics. In his heat on the 400m, on 3/8, he ran 45. 44. In the semi final his time was 46. 54 seconds. The race winner, K James of Grenada, had a time of 44 . 59 seconds.

Tues 7

As an old friend, Hilary Clinton, drops in to lunch with Nelson Mandela 's recent 94th birthday along with wife Graca Machel differences were noted. As the diner guests moved into dining room in Qunu; the former presidents ancestral home, he himself stayed seated along with his medical attendants, in his now permanent residence.

Thurs 9

With S Dewani still fighting extradition (qv 1/8) over the murder of his wife Annie in 2010 (qv 15/11) a second South African national Mziwamadoda Qwabe has been convicted of her killing after a plea bargain.

The judge, Justice J Hlope sentenced the Guguletu resident to 25 years in jail and concurrent five year terms for assault with a firearm and the theft, of the victims diamond bracelet, and other items to the value of R90, 000 /£7, 000.

The state allowed the plea bargain after the M Qwabe admitted the kidnap with co accused X Mnengi and Z Tonga in the presence of the Welsh care home owner.

Fri 10

The recent remarks by the last apartheid president, F W de Klerk (qv 27/7) are still a subject for discussion. The latest; in defence, from the executive director of the former presidents Foundation, who reiterates that never did his boss ask ask for privileges for the minority ethnic group that were not available to all the peoples of South Africa.

Is the basis of the criticism, from the political writer J Malala; along with many whites, “do not have the moral and historic standing to participate in debates on national policy?”

Mon 13

With the Olympic Games ended the final medal total of the South African team is six. There were three Golds, one Bronze and two Silver. This places the country in 24th position out of the 204 competing nations.

Botswana, in 69th position, on the same scale won one silver medal.

Tues 14

As with Mziwamadoda Qwabe (qv 9/8) Xolie Mngeni will appear in the Western Cape high court charged with shooting; killing the Swedish born Annie Dewani in 2010.

The ruling, by Judge Robert Henney, comes after a study of medical evidence pointing to the alleged killer suffering from a brain tumour.

The prosecution will call 16 witnesses and is expected to last till the end of 9/12.

Wed 15

Violence, which began about 14 days ago, at the Marikana platinum mine outside the city of Rustenberg sixty miles outside Johannesburg, has caused the death of nine people and a number of police injuries and the closure of the mine shafts at the world's third largest mine.

Company owners, Lonmin's share price dropped 5% in London and 4.39% on the Johannesburg stock exchange. Among the dead were two police officers as they tried to police an inter union rivalry between the long standing National Union of Mine workers and the newer, and more militant, Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union. The dispute centred on a wage claim that would bring earnings to R12,000 / £976 per month. and a wage claim that would bring earnings to R12,000 / £976 per month.

Dissatisfaction, with the politics of the NUM; their slavish support for the ANC government and little interest in working for the benefit of its members is another reason for the dispute.

As of this time all similar mines in the area are now closed, except for safety measures, putting an end to the 12% platinum produced every year by the country

An attack, by unknown assailants, which left 3 dead and 20 injured, led to a six week shut down occurred in 1/12 at the Impala Platinum Mine. According to Cosatu the attack was an example of inter union fighting as a means to a political end.

Thurs 16

On day one of state against X Mngeni (qv 14/8) in the Cape Town high court the alleged killer of the recently married Annie Dewani denied the charges; kidnap, robbery, illegal possession of a weapon and its ammunition as well as the murder of the honeymooning woman.

Sitting before Judge R Henny the twenty five year old will be defended by Qalisile Dayimani and prosecuted by Shreen Riley in Court number 2 of the coastal town. Prosecution witness number one was an unnamed hotel receptionist who told of a conversation with, already convicted, Zola Tonga to find a 'hit man' as there was a "gentleman who wanted this lady killed." Although not a South African he was here in the country and had made such arrangements previously recently.

Now it has come to light that a reporter on the South African City Press had linked the 10/07 death of GP P Raghavjee from the Eastern Cape in 2010. The police dismissed the report at the time even though the sixty nine year old was a friend of the Dewani family.

News item, having deemed the dispute between two unions at the Marikana platinum mine (qv 15/8) a public order dispute, the police were ordered to clear the crowd from outside the mine. As the police moved in shots were fired, by both police and strikers, and people died.

News item, as the death toll outside the Marikana mine is said to stand at 18 a Cosatu official notes that this is not the only outbreak of inter union rivalry in recent times (qv 15/8). Also the transport industrial unions have been in conflict. In an effort to coordinate a unified policy a meeting of heads of affiliated unions has been called.

Fri 17

The scene outside the Marikana platinum mine, in which police confronted striking miners was described, by member of the press, as a scene from the worst days of the apartheid era.

As described the police were confronted by a crowd of 3, 000 striking workers who were armed with pistols, machetes and sticks before firing on the police as they tried to deploy barbed wire and water cannon to disperse the crowd. As they advanced along the rocky outcrop an order was given to fire. Three minutes later at least 18 people were dead.

Reacting to the deaths president Zuma condemned the deaths but made no mention of the police actions. The mine 's British owners, Lonmin saw the share price fall 7% in London. Also management confirmed that an ultimatum, return to work or face the sack, had been issued to the strikers.

Sat 18

As the wife; Bothnasthi Nosi searches for husband Jali, a striking platinum miner Marikana, missing after police opened fire on the advancing crowd (qv 17/8) the police official death toll was put at thirty four as well as 78 injured in the three minute police fusillade of rifle and shotgun fire outside the Lonmin owned mine.

President Zuma has ordered an independent inquiry into the circumstances that some people have likened to the Sharpsville Massacre, by the countries Institute of Race Relations, that heralded the international condemnation of the apartheid government.

A youth league spokesman has called for the mining industry to be nationalised as a way of the industry redressing “the injustices of the past and the poverty of our people” in the past.

The mine owners, while opening a help line for the relatives of those missing, saw the company share price fall to 635p in London. On the Johannesburg stock exchange the share price was at a nine year low.

Cartoon The price of a platinum ring; Is it worth it?

The shootings at Lomin 's mine, on the board of which is Cyril Ramaphosa; a demigod of the apartheid struggle of the 1980 's, exposes the weakness at the heart of the nations society.

With a one time membership of the NUM of 360, 000 and years and one time the stalwart union of Cosatu, an impression of too close an association with the mine owners; the Chamber of Mines was formed.

As the nation became dissatisfied with with the government splits became apparent within the union movement. Thus was formed the the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union who encouraged the underground rock drillers to demand a pay rise to R 12, 500 from R4, 000. Such an enticement say membership of the NUM fall 66% to 49% of the workforce.

To add insult to injury the NUM secretary Frans Baleni was awarded a 40% pay increase in 2011.

Sun 19

As grieving miners wives and demonstrators continued to gather outside the Marikana mine the crowd were addressed by the former leader of the ANC youth wing Julius Malema. The main tenure of his speech was that the masses had moved away from those they supported the whole of the last eighteen years of multi racial government. He called for the resignation of Jacob Zuma.

In essence it seems that, according to a research fellow A Matshiqui of the Helen Suzman Foundation, the present leadership has become too 'cosy' with western governments and forgetting the sub standard living conditions of its supporters.

Mon 20

News item, price per ounce of platinum; £1, 100 per troy ounce.

As the ultimatum from the British owners of the Marikana mine comes into force there is no sign that the 3, 000 rock drill operators are willing to return to work at the Rustenburg mine. As one of the strikers says “expecting us to go back is like an insult” as many of Z Mbewu 's are in prison or hospital.

A reading of the three main mining house annual reports indicate that;

M H	annual production / oz	employees	share price fall %
Anglo A	2.5m	58, 541	24
Impala	1.84m	57, 000	22
Lomin	0.7m	35, 000	38

This hit, on the British firms only South African mining endeavour, have seen its half yearly profits fall by 90%. This can be blamed on the fall in the price for platinum. At the end of 3/12 Lomin had \$356m net debt which was \$60m up from the same period in 2011.

Tues 21

According to mine management 30% of its 28,000 workforce have returned to work and those that continue to work have been given an extra 24 hours to consider their position.

The magistrate court 's in the nearby town of Rustenburg will begin the legal processing of the 259 miners who are charged with various offences; murder, robbery, public violence and attempted murder outside the Marikana platinum mine on 16/8.

Lonmin share price 610p. As a result of the strike the price per ounce of platinum has risen by 5.5% to \$1,470/oz in the past seven days.

News item, as in time past, in the pre 1994 regime, the intervention of the clerics has eased a tense situation. With their involvement the South African Council of Churches has brought the two sides of the Lonmin platinum miners strike together. After meetings mine management has agreed to lift the return to work or face the sack ultimatum made to the rock driller operators.

Wed 22

As mine management, at the Marikana platinum mine, contemplate the dispute continuing for 6 – 8 more weeks as industry analysts, London management are expected to ask its shareholders for extra financial support put at \$0.7m - \$1bn. Overall; to this date company shares have lost 44% in their value during 2012.

At the end of trading, 21/8 share value rose 2.4% to 624p.

Thurs 23

Never on to shy away from controversial remarks the president has once again spoken out. This time, on the SABC 3 television channel. Speaking of the role of the women in South African society he noted that it is “not right” for women to be single and children are important to give them “extra training.”

Not unnaturally, these seemingly demeaning remarks, have landed president Jacob Zuma in trouble with the gender equality organisations. The Gender Links NGO, through its chief of operations, K Rama, said “It raises serious questions about his commitment to equality.

Those accused of the murder of the right wing Afrikaner Eugene Terreblanche in 2010 (qv 5/4) have had sentence passed on them by presiding Judge J Horn. At the end of the trial, in the Ventersdorp court house C Mahlangue; who had already pleaded guilty was sent to jail for life. His co accused, P Ndlovu: aged 15 at the time, and therefore a minor, would have spent 2 years in jail. However having spent that time in detention was freed.

Outside the court there were two factions of supporters; 100 toi toi 'ing black supporters of the two former farm workers. They were shadowed by 20 white

protesters, with a puppet adorned with a hangman 's noose, and calling for death of the elder man.

Details have emerged of the Marikana mine management meeting and the strikers which was mediated by clerics from the South African Council of Churches. According to Bishop J Sekoa, who chaired the meeting, was that management gave those in dispute a fair hearing and listen to their complaints. In response management called the talks “a private discussion how to get employees back to work.

As well as his TV time Jacob Zuma has had time to indicate to the strikers that he will speak to Lomin management about the strikers wage demands.

Two more platinum mines; Royal Bafokeng where 500 workers have stopped work and Anglo American Platinum; 80% owned Anglo American where workers have listed grievances, to add the countries economic worries.

Fri 24

As South Africa possibly prepares for its best, or second best grape harvest, there is the possibility of a trade war with Britain in the coming year. The dispute, with the large supermarkets; Tesco and Sainsbury, rests on environmental concerns versus South African jobs.

In recent times from 2008 the bulk of the wine exported was sent overseas in bulk tankers; 45% and 55% was labelled and bottled in its country of origin. Most recently 56% was bulk sent and only 44% was pre packed. The trade was worth, in 2011, £75m / R993m.

The authorities in Pretoria are preparing to hit back with a trade embargo on the importation of whisky from Scotland. Sales in 2011 were R1. 7bn / £129m.

Seven hundred South Africans are employed in the packaging and labelling process.

As the nation came together for a memorial day, for those killed at the Marikana mine dispute, president Zuma indicated that the ceremony should be for all those who have been victims of violence in the country “mourn and promote a violence free society.”

There was also a separate ceremony, with a similar intention, held by members of the Association Mineworkers and Construction Union; the chief protagonists at the Rustenburg mine.

After loosing his herd a four year old hippo strayed onto land used by the Montate Conservation Lodge, and fell into the 2.5m deep swimming pool. After being stuck there since 21/8 a crane was brought in which extracted him. As the herd has left him behind the 4 year old will now be located to another animal sanctuary.

Further trials and successes of those who fought against apartheid during the 'forgotten period' (qv 1/7)

Sat 25

The 'lost rhino' (qv 24/8), now known as Solly, lost his will to live as the stress of the lifting out of his temporary swimming pool home caused him die. Despite their being more profound news stories, countrywide, on the eNews Channel Africa this was the headline news story.

Letter, **N Kotschy Linton Cambridgeshire** noted the UK predilection to bottle wines 'on site' over the past year. He notes that the taste was "awful."

Sun 26

The actions of the president in the recent past, in all his actions concerning the police massacre and its aftermath at the Mariana platinum mine, has in some peoples opinion harmed his chances of serving a second term as the countries president.

In their eyes, and verbalised in an editorial in the Sunday Times wrote "Being a leader comes with a responsibility and in this case the president, or his advisers, failed to read the mood. Zuma 's absence from the crime scene gave others space."

Listing these mistakes; slow return from a regional summit in Mozambique, talking with journalist at a game lodge owned by mine management rather than with striking miners, as well as all his reported indiscretions during his term in office.

Author S Booysen: The African National Congress and the Regeneration of Political Power, notes that added together the president in now seen as a weak man. The next party congress will be make or break time as to his future. As yet unknown is the stance of deputy president, Kgalemaa Motlanthe; an an already proven, he stood in as president after Thabo Mbeki left the post, making a good job of interim president.

Summoning up the thoughts of those who have never lived under the apartheid regime brings a themed response from **A Kaka 24** noted that nothing has changed for the young even after Nelson Mandela left "who benefited back then?" **P Mirelli 23** pre and post Mandela "the ANC has lost its vision." **M Seoposengwe 23** dos 'nt think the ANC speak the language of the people. **S Ngxowa 22** "Today 's ANC is more like a brand ... someone has to be accountable." **M M Sobetwa 23** "the ANC are a very confusing party. They 've a massive membership a lot of division."

The next election is the first one that will see people vote who have lived their entire lives free from the yolk of oppression from the white minority. The country has 40% of its under 30 's unemployed; 18 – 24 years declined 20% since 2008. People are of the opinion; 83% urban dwellers, corruption has become a way of life. The popularity of the Democratic Alliance 1% 1994 to 23% at the last local elections and party leader Tony Leons is more popular that the countries president.

Through the Desmond Tutu Foundation, and his Tutu vehicles, rural populations are being tested for the TB and HIV diseases that are crippling the health of many of the countries nationals. Once inside these brightly coloured Tutu Vans onlookers are

unaware what the client is being tested for. For the patient the danger of being stigmatised, if found to be carrying the Aids virus is avoided.

Mon 27

News item, the African National Congress 's national executive committee meets today to discuss the government, and more importantly Jacob Zuma 's, response to the recent police massacre at the Lomin owned platinum mine.

News item, despite being the nominated day of the return to work at the Lomin owned platinum mine management indicated that only 13% of strikers entered the area. To do this they had to face the anger of those who refused.

Wed 29

A noted man of principal, and Nobel peace prize winner in 1984, the former Archbishop of Cape Town Desmond Tutu has refused to attend the Discovery Investment Leadership Summit in Johannesburg on principal.

Having, in the recent past, condemned the actions of China; in regard to the cleric's invitation to the exiled leader of Tibet and argued with former president Mbeki, it is the actions of the former British prime minister Tony Blair that have angered the cleric.

The view of the former clerical anti apartheid campaigner is that "Mr Blair 's decision to support the Unites State 's military invasion of Iraq, on the basis of unproven allegations of the existence of weapons of mass destruction was morally indefensibly."

A spokesman for the former prime minister said "sorry" but noted that the two had recently attended a memorial to those that dies after Saddam 's use of chemical weapons.

Lomin site management issues; as management agrees to meet with representatives of those who return to work figures indicate that only 8% of the miners had returned to work, from a high of 27% nine days ago. By 27/8 this had fallen to 13%. This limited return to work had seen losses of 2, 500 ounces of platinum a day. The share price stood at £6. 30/oz.

Thurs 30

Hard on the heels of the condemnation of the actions of president Zuma following the massacre of striking Lomin miners, The ANC have called a delegate conference in 12/12 where there is the likelihood that he could be voted out of office. Actions such as this may also see the party loose the forthcoming general election.

Such plans are already being made. It has been noted that the Democratic Party have had strategy talks with the newly formed, in 2008 (qv 17/12) Congress of the Peoples Deputies.

Wed 31

Having already attended an Olympic Games in east, London Hector Pistorius the South African double amputee athlete (qv 4/7), will now be one of the 62 members of the countries Paralympic team. Regionally; Angola will send a team of 4; 2 male and 2 female, Namibia 5, Botswana, Mozambique, Lesotho 1 and Zimbabwe 2.

With the use of an apartheid era law the prosecuting authority are to charge the 270 detained, following the police massacre of striking platinum miners outside the Lonmin mine (qv 16/8), with murder.

As the president of Angola faces re election, after 33 years in power, there is still a vast difference between the 'haves and have nots.' while one section of the population can afford to purchase high powered motor vehicles; Porches valued at £100, 000 the other exist on as little as \$2 per day.

As in many countries on the African continent the countries chief trading partner is China; £15.6bn in 2010. Ongoing rebuilding/ improvements after the civil war involve 43, 000 to 300, 000 Chinese national in the last ten years.

The impact of Beijing is no more felt than in the new city of Kilamba, built in the last three years 18 miles outside Luanda at a cost of £2bn. New residents, who began moving away from the crowded, and badly maintained infrastructure of the capital in 10/11 are willing to pay £80, 000 / \$125, 000 for a three bedroom flat or a 5 bedroom for \$200, 000. All are cheaper than a purchase in Luanda.

With 500 residents and 2, 200 dwellings allocated civil servants are allowed to rent 3 bed flats for \$603 per month; this option was only made available after pressure was put on the authorities.

Living expenses for a Lunada resident Elis Isacs, director Open Society Initiative Southern Africa, Rent \$2, 000 - \$3, 000, \$500 water, \$400 - \$500 electricity generation.

The coming general election MPLA; campaign highlights the governments achievements; 2, 700km of railways, 148 new railway stations, 10 renovated airports, 400 new bridges and 6, 500km of new roads.

Government claims poverty down, from 68% in '02 to 39% in '09. Life expectancy has risen from 42 – 52 years

It is noted that the payment for this continuing Chinese involvement in the country is the oil revenue that makes Angola prosperous. However Beijing is only paying \$60 a barrel; a sum well below the accepted international price.

SEPTEMBER 2012

Sat 1

As the poor showing continues, of returning workers to the Marikana platinum mine; 5. 7% by 31/8, unrest has broken out in the gold mining industry. The fourth largest gold mine; KDC outside Johannesburg, owned by Gold Fields has seen 12, 000 of its employees on “unlawful and unprotected” strike. Thus the company share value fell 2.8%.

Sun 2

Archbishop Tutu, who stayed away from a Johannesburg conference as the former British prime minister Tony Blair (qv 29/); paid R2m / £150, 000, was due to attend expanded on his objections as to why he should be charged with war crimes. Accusing him of acting like a playground bully.

The anti apartheid campaigner also questioned why many leaders on the African continent were targeted for their crimes; Mugabe being one of 16 individuals being 'wanted' men when the British politician was responsible for the thousands of deaths in Iraq . By implication the deaths of those involved in the Syrian crisis could well be laid at his door.

Oscar Pistorius, who competes in the T43/44 200m and 400m track events at the Paralympics performed well at his 200m heat coming first with a time of 21. 20 seconds; a world record.

With an effort to stall, stop, the invasion of Iraq Desmond Tutu contacted the then US national security advisor Condleezza Rice urging her to allow those seeking alleged weapons of mass destruction more time. In reply she said the president could not possibly delay as there was too much of a risk.

Mon 3

In Oscar Pistorius 's T44 200m final managed to secure a silver medal; gold was won by a Brazilian in 21. 45. The expected winner crossed the line 0. 7 seconds behind C Oliveria.

The result was immediately challenged on the grounds that the leg blades used by the winning athlete were too long and broke the regulations that the South African double amputee had to prove to the IPC did not give him an unfair advantage when competing; see SA DVD 15 14.8. 12.

As the funerals, and burials, of those killed outside the Lomin platinum mine began the acting director national of prosecutions Nomgcobo Jiba. Such an announcement

was made amid rising opposition to police methods. Any subsequent charges will only be laid once a full investigation has been completed.

With 73% of the vote counted in the Angolon general election the ruling MPLA have secured another five years in office. Thus giving the president Eduardo dos Santos an assured 38 years as head of the government that he led through a civil war with the colonial Portuguese.

Unita, the largest opposition party doubled its vote, to 18% and a new political party CASA – CE gained 4.6% from an electorate which both parties claimed were not able to cast their votes 'freely and fairly.' Head of the observer mission dismissed such claims.

Tues 4

As was noted in 2011 (qv 20/9) much of the poached ivory taken from the Kruger National Park, ends up in Vietnam. To date 192 have been detained following an increase in park security measures.

As those miners detained after the police massacre at the Lomin platinum mine were being released from custody (qv 3/9) strike action at a second gold mine erupted. Facing rubber bullets and tear gas 60 miners Gold Mine One at Modder East outside Johannesburg began protesting at the sacking of 200 of their colleagues.

Police, called to the site, at 6 30am to clear the entrance blockade, told the protesters their action was illegal. Despite this warning the protesters remained. In response the authorities opened fire; action that left five people in hospital.

Wed 5

Speaking as the 'moral consciousness' of the country, Desmond Tutu; speaking at the launch of the memoirs of a fellow anti apartheid activist, beseeched the authorities responsible for the mine massacre outside Rustenberg to rein in their greed. With a cry of "Can 't you allow us elders to go to our graves with a smile knowing that this is a good country? Because truly it is a good country."

Unnerving the Cape Town audience, here to note the experiences of M Lapsley through his book Redeeming the Past, the former cleric likened recent occurrences to those employed by the various apartheid governments prior to 1994.

Thurs 6

As the disruption to the mining industry continues 3,000 striking employees at the Karee mine complex marched through the streets of Marikana as talks between the two sides through the fence that surrounds site.

Negotiations, brokered by two Methodist ministers, and seven striking miners spoke to mine management. The outcome, according to S Mapapani aged 36, was a demand that the mine be closed within the next 24 hours or miners who reported for work,

only 4.2% on 4/9, would be in danger of losing their lives from their striking colleges.

Fri 7

Despite great hopes in the T44 100m Oscar Pistorious was only able to manage fourth place. However his team mate Arnur Fourie crossed the finish line in the Bronze medal position in a time of 11.08 seconds. The gold medal went to a British athlete J Peacock in a time of 10.90.

Overall the nation has won 21 medals overall; 5 gold, 7 silver and 9 bronze, thus placing South Africa in 20th position in the 25 quoted positions.

Fri 21

The British Liberal Democratic Party has sought the assistance of Rian Coetzee; the strategist behind the Democratic Alliance's successes in recent provincial and general elections in the country.

Aged thirty nine, and a friend of the chief of staff of party leader Nick Clegg, his successes in having the DA taking control of the Western Cape, in 2009, and raising the national party support from a low of 1.73% in 1994 to 16.6% at the time of that year's general election.

The move, onto the British political scene, according to the South African Independent Online, has not gone down well with Helen Zille and other Democratic Alliance members.

Sat 22

The 'bad boy' of South African politics, Julius Malema (qv), has incurred the wrath of the authorities once again. This time his crime, according to the Hawks detective unit his crime is one of corruption; through his Ratanang Family Trust and its holdings in One Point Engineering that has made millions of rand from government tenders in the country's most northern province.

Expecting to be arrested, after a presidential press conference on 18/9 the former leader of the ANC youth league will present himself at the court building in Polokwane Limpopo province within the next seven days.

His high profile, since his expulsion from the government party and his acknowledged wealth; he lives in the Sanderton suburb of Johannesburg, and his appeal as a champion of the people; stirring speech to the striking Marikaner miners, does not sit well with his apparent wealth.

Tues 25

Outside the port city of Durban the residents of Kennedy Road were attempting to have the shanty town 's facilities improved by the ANC government from as far back as 2009.

Unhappy at the activities, of the local radical political movement AbahlalibaseMjondolo the long time government sent in the heavies to trash the home of the movements president and homes of other members of the rights group. Along with the attack on S 'Bu Zikode two residents died as a result of the violence.

At the centre of the dispute, as at so many disputes in South Africa, is the ownership of land by the majority population. In all of the country around 10% of the people live in shanty towns. In Kennedy Road ten years ago there were only six toilets for its six thousand residents.

By 2005 the ANC government had promised residents new land for housing until this same land was sold to a developer. Much anger ensued. Demonstrations were held. In 2007the government agreed to talk. The AbM negotiators, chosen after long and arduous discussions led to 28 being nominated by residents. Which in the end, after endless toing and frowning between neighbourhood panels led to a settlement.

In the end 7 new settlements were agreed even as AbM negotiate for more; it is as Zikode "living communism.

Wed 26

News item, the former leader of the ANC 's youth league Julius Malema has appeared in court (qv 22/9) charged with corruption. The prosecution will claim that he and his associates benefited from the awarding of business contracts placed by the government.

Thurs 27

News item, while the strike at the Marikana platinum mine has ended, with an award of a 22.5% wage increase, strikes involving 25, 000 underground workers has spread throughout the industry.

Despite the seemingly end of the mining dispute at the British owned Marikana mine, other miners, working for other companies are just as disillusioned with the underground conditions, and pay offered by other companies.

Details from Mbusi Mokwane aged 33, a rock driller from the Blyvooruitzich mine near Cartonville in Gauteng province indicate just as harsh conditions as those found in the dispute free mine outside Rustenburg.

The majority of his monthly salary, \$4,000 / £300, is sent home to his wife three children who live the village of Mquanduli in the Eastern Cape where his mother also relies on his wage. He can only return home at Easter and Christmas.

The living conditions in the mining hostel are minimal; a shared room, uninspiring meals and an indifferent management. Recently a demand of a wage rise, to R12, 500; the same as the Marikana miners. A mood of confrontation and a strike throughout the whole industry is the general opinion of M Mbokanwe and room mate Vuyisa Maqundweni aged 26.

Mining facts in the past year 123 deaths in the mining industry have been recorded. The latest, reported by Anglo Gold Ashanti, when an employee was killed in a mud rush after working for the company for 33 years Miners are six times more likely to contract tuberculosis than other nationals.

Returned Marikana miners had a 22% wage rise bringing their salary up to £900 per month. The chief executive of Anglo American, C Carroll, out of action after falling from her race horse, saw her annual pay rise by 38% on the previous year. A supplement, from a part time BP position, £85, 000 and other positions; £77, 000 as non executive chairman of Anglo American Platinum.

Lonmin boss I Farmer £1.2m. Much anger among the workforce as Cyril Ramaphosa a former National Union of Mineworkers Union chairman and now a business tycoon £61, 000 and Lonmin non executive director.

Strike action is now affecting Anglo Gold Ashanti after it closed its Kopanang mine and sacked the majority of its 5, 000 workers. The company chief executive M Cutifani was paid £1.6m in 2011.

OCTOBER 2012

Fri 5

News item, as the work of Desmond Tutu was celebrated; the former Archbishop has just been awarded one million pounds by the M Ibrahim Foundation, instituted in 2006 (qv 26/10) the Sudanese national had a warning for the ANC led government.

The multi millionaire felt that the pre 1994 aims of the government had been lost over the intervening 18 years and changes were needed. This was evident as present day South Africa is beset with its greatest challenge, the struggle of the miners to gain the remuneration fitting for the dangers of the mining industry.

News item, all 12, 000 miners employed at Anglo American platinum mines have been sacked. According to the company they lost their jobs as they did not attend disciplinary hearings.

With the return to work, after a four day strike by members of the National Union of Metal Workers, at the Durban Toyota plant spokesman M Nugumbane indicated that not only employees in the mining sector unhappy at conditions inside the country. The company employees returned to work after a 5. 4% pay rise.

Sat 6

News item, voiced concerns of the residents of Limpopo province in the north of the country. One comment, unhappy at the lack of school text books saw one student indicate that she would be willing to fight for better education facilities.

The two weeks of unofficial strike, by miners employed by Anglo American Platinum, has cost the company 39, 000 ounces of the precious metal as the company closed 4 of the five mine shafts outside the town of Rustenburg at a cost of £51m.

Not withstanding the Toyota workers strike; which lost the production of 2, 000 vehicles (qv 5/10) other industries are feeling the anger of their workforce as they scramble for an increased wage in line with the recent 22% rise accepted by Lomin 's underground workers. One such, Shell tanker delivery drivers, who have been on dispute for 2 weeks. Thus meaning that the 26, 000 drivers boycotted deliveries.

Share price of AAP fall by 13% since the trouble began. At the close on 5/10 share price was down 1.5p at £18. 12. Even with its dispute settled Lomin shares have fallen 27% since 8/12.

Tues 9

With the recent building/ renovations at the Jacob Zuma homestead in Nakandla priced, in 2010 (qv 5/10) it has now emerged that the true cost is put at R238m / £16, 62m public anger has led to official actions.

Although past presidents have been entitled to state finances such a present subsidy has seen several official complaints to Thuli Madonsela, the nations public prosecutor. Another bone of contention are the presidents plans to spend R1bn /£70m of public money developing a new town 3.2Km from his private home in KwaZulu Natal province.

Such actions, by an already unpopular leader, indicates to some; A Matshiqi of the H Suzman Foundation that the president has taken on the mantel of other leaders on the continent who the West label as despots.

Thurs 11

News item, notwithstanding the countries economic problems; a possible 100, 000 workers prepared, or are, on strike the British business minister Vince Cable is making a visit. Acknowledging South Africa' s problems the Liberal Democrat MP is not there to give advice to the authorities.

Coming to trial, in Canada, is Aubrey Levin a one time major in the South African Defence Force; with the soubriquet of Dr Shock. The now lecturer at the University of Calgary 's medical school was named by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for “gross human rights abuses” as he endeavoured to cure conscripts of homosexuality during the 1970's and 80's.

Fri 12

Whether morally offended or not by The Spear; a painting hanging in the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg (qv 18/5) president Zuma has been overruled by the appeal section of the Film and Publication Board.

Allowing the painting to be shown, after the FPB at first acquiesced on the grounds of the genital exposure, spokesman Prince M Ndamase, indicated that the original verdict was to reject the argument that the painting was offensive to African culture.

The tribunals verdict that the decision was made to protect the male dignity when in fact that there was no evidence that the “painting had been harmful to children.”

Sat 13

Gesture's, as to the preferred candidate to head the ANC, in the coming election are aligned to the world of football and the act of bodily cleansing. Roll of hands as if wanting a football substitute to take to the field or the cupped hands of a shower head are all symbols in evidence at a book launch.

As the authorised biography of Kgalema Motlanthe was launched at Johannesburg 's Witwatersrand University such signs were much in evidence. As the only credible challenger to oust the president from his leadership role; he is the Congress 's deputy president after all. The symbolism; a reference to the need for a substitute and a comment of an the Zuma claim about sex with an HIV positive women in 2006 (qv 8/5).

Sun 14

Police and miners have once again clashed around the mining town of Rustenburg as the ongoing wildcat strikes in the mining industry continue to disrupt this sector of the economy.

Armed with petrol bombs; the authorities responded with rubber bullets, the 1, 000 protesters marched towards the mining sites. At the same time sacked miners, from the Impala Platinum Mine marched to the companies headquarters in Johannesburg to vent their anger.

Tues 16

News item, apartheid era activist and musician returns to education at the behest of his children.

Wed 17

News item, as the disruptions grow among workers in the mining sector concerns about the effects on the South African economy increase. Within the last few days the countries credit rating has been downgraded.

Fri 19

With as many as 80, 000 employees in the mining sector in dispute with their employees president Zuma made his first real intervention into a crisis that caused the credit rating company Standard and Poor to downgrade the countries economic prospects.

Five hours of meetings, chaired by the leader of the ANC, saw the president call on employers, both of the public and private sector, to take no pay rise over the next 12 months.

Specifics of the mining disruption; days after returning to work the Marikana miners 4, 000 employees stayed away from 'various shafts' at the Rustenburg mine. Gold Fields, the fourth largest gold producer saw its Beatrix mine return to production after its 9, 000 workers heeded the employers demand that they return to work or be sacked. This fate may await its 11, 000 employees at the KDC West mine outside Carletonville who still are on strike.

Sat 20

News item, an art exhibition at a gallery in Johannesburg, by one who at one time was strongly involved in the liberation struggle. Post 1994 he also was encouraged to return to education by his children. The paintings on show depict life on the cities residents.

Sun 21

As of this date 455 rhino 's have been killed in 2012; of that number 272 were killed within the Kruger National Park. These facts were released as as south African born photographer Brent Stirton has been named as the Veolia Environmental Wildlife Photographer of the year.

His subject; a Vietnamese women pounds rhino horn recently purchased from a dealer for thousands of dollars. It is expected that the women' s general health will improve.

Tues 23

Since the ANC made Thabo Mbeki an offer in 2008 (qv 19/12) the countries second black president has led a quiet life outside the spotlight. However with the ongoing unrest in the mining and other sectors of the economy comments have been made on the governance of the country.

Without naming the present incumbent as the cause of the countries troubles he did express a “troubled feeling of great unease that our beloved motherland is loosing its sense of direction where will our nation be tomorrow. “ not unnaturally supporters of Jacob Zuma showed disdain over these remarks.

Evidence, to the judicial inquiry into the mass killings at the Marikana mine owned by Lonmin in 8/12, shows that although 34 miners were killed by the police no force members were injured. Of the dead miners; 14 were shot in the back which puts to shame the claim that the police only fired in self defence.

Mine management at Anglo Gold Ashanti, the world 's number three gold producer, has ordered its striking miners to return to work or face the sack. Anglo American Platinum; largest platinum producer has delayed its 5/ '10 sacking instructions 's at its Union and Amandelult mines where 20, 050 workers face dismissal as reinstatement discussions were taking place.

Thurs 25

As the commission of inquiry into the Lonmin mining killings opened (qv 23/10) led with the lawyer representing the injured miners, D Mpofu, detailing police actions the actions of an apartheid era icon comes into question.

Laid before the commission are E mails sent between the police, mine management and a Lonmin board member; Cyril Ramaphosa a former head of the National Union of Mineworkers, hours before the shooting began. From the former national executive council of the ANC comrade came warnings to the police to 'come down hard' on the strikers.

An academic, A Habib, from Johannesburg University, cites these recent events by the Congress stalwart as the corruption of the former, and by implication, the many members of the liberation movement who have abandoned their principals once the possibility of wealth and enhances status has been achieved.

As to the possibility that the Lonmin board member could return to the political fold, as vice president of the ANC, Siphiso Gqalala a miner notes that if such a thing happens they will be voting for someone who was the cause of the tragedy "I am so angry."

A comment from the Congress 's youth league spokeswoman Khusela S Kwane "The criminal acts he spoke of were the legitimate calls of workers demanding a decent wage comrade Cyril has blood on his hands."

Sat 27

News item, the management at Anglo American Platinum rescinded their 25/10 decision and reinstated the 12, 050 employees as they return to work by 31/10.

Mon 29

Known as a person quick to embrace the legal profession if he feels his honour has been besmirched president Zuma has this time reversed that decision.

Rather than upsetting art a Sunday Times cartoon; published at the time the president was accused of rape in 2005 (qv 22/11), by the renowned cartoonist Zapiro; see a 2009 example on 6/9. With re election, in 12/12, in the offing taking an anti freedom of speech stance; the cartoon shows the president's supporters holding down 'lady justice' with an unzipped fly.

As of this time it was thought that to seek R5m /£360, 000 would provide those who oppose the stifling of free speech ammunition to deem the government bullies.

Tues 30

The Johannesburg suburb of Alexandria is overrun by a rat infestation. Moves, by the city council have angered the animal lovers there in. With the help of the mobile phone company 8ta residents will be offered a new phone; an idea put forward by the PR company Lifeline for a supplied cage returned with 60 of the rodents captured.

Wed 31

As is known already the mobile phone penetration in Namibia, in 2007 (qv 29/10). In South Africa penetration is 59. 4m in a country with a population of five and a half million; so says GSM Association 's Africa Mobile Observatory.

NOVEMBER 2012

Sat 3

The plight of a little known minority, those South Africans born with a genetic defect that causes a lack of skin pigment; about 4, 000 in total have found a new high profile person to bring this medical abnormality to the fore.

The unlikely champion 23 year old Thando Hopa; a qualified legal prosecutor was picked off the streets of Johannesburg by fashion designer G J Coetzee.

To be born with this genetic defect on the African continent, especially in the eastern parts is not easy sufferers are seen as somehow different. Tanzania has the worst record of abuse. A group, advocacy group Same Sun, says that between 2006 – 2012 73 people were killed.

Wed 7

As the Farlam commission, the inquiry set up following the deaths of striking miners at the Lonmin platinum mine, continues disturbing evidence emerges. It would seem that weapons were placed by some of the dead after press photographs had already shown that there were non there just after the killing ended.

The press photos taken on the afternoon of 16/8, showing no weapons, were taken by G Marrinovich a Pulitzer prize winner and verified by the scene of crime officer It was evening photo 's, with weapons, than now appear as part of the police case that they were provoked into firing on the advancing strikers.

Veteran lawyer George Bizos (qv), friend of Nelson Mandela and acting on behalf of the injured and detained miners, wants high ranking officers to appear before the commission to determine if permission had been given to move the traditional weapons; the panga was the weapon photographed, from where they were found.

Sat 10

As company Lonmin seek to find a way out of financial difficulties, resulting from the 8/12 work force disruption, management have rejected a take over bid from from majority shareholder Xtrata (qv 8/2) which owns 24.5% of the in difficulty platinum mine.

This is the second time management have rejected an offer from Xtrata, a first approach was made 2011 as the British owned company £511m / \$817m from investors to cut heavy borrowing.

Thurs 15

Enterprising Andries M van de Merwe, living in the Mpumalanga provincial town of Middleburg and a school drop out at the age of 16 has upset the Google empire based in the USA. It has just come to the notice of the American company that the now 23 year old who set up his website in 2011.

According the American lawyers the name the name chosen; Doogle would imply to the site 's uses that it was somehow linked to it. In his own defence van de Mere said that the name chosen, that allows the out of work to upload their CV 's and search for jobs was chosen as 'it was the first name that came into his head.

Fri 16

The anthropological importance of the continent has long been known, the latest understandings add to those seen in 2011 (qv 14/11); the fining of stone tipped spears adds a little more knowledge to man's evolutionary history.

Research conducted by Jayne Wilkins, an archaeologist from the University of Toronto and here team have brought an understanding that links the humans last ancestor of modern humans and Neanderthals; Homo heidelbergensis and all to a period of 500, 000 years ago.

Found in the Kathu Pan region of the Northern Cape were stone tipped spears which showed, under the microscope, much damage to the tip. This is precisely where damage would have occurred rather than along the edges if the stones had been used only as scrapers. The findings were published in current edition of the journal Science.

Mon 19

The first ever female bishop of Swaziland, Ellin Wamukoya aged 61, was consecrated on 17/11. Among the congregation was the archbishop of Cape Town Thabo Makoba who is also the head of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

Tues 20

At the end of the trial of the third man; Xolie Mnengi aged 25, of killing the recently married Anni Dewani, the judges found him guilty along with the two other nationals that have come before the court in recent times (qv 9/8).

The South African police await the decision of the London court as to the fitness to stand trial of Shiren Dewani as he has been diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder and will appear in a London court within the next four weeks to be, as Mr Justice Ousely noted sent back to South Africa "as soon as he is fit."

In the Cape Town court trial High court judge, R Henney, read out the 60 page judgement that found him guilty of all charges; pulling the trigger of the weapon that killed the recent bride; murder and illegal possession of a firearm and ammunition.

Week ending 8/12

A report on the BBC's World News said that the the third person convicted of killing Annie Dewani, Xoilie Mnengi (qv 20/11) must be jailed for life for his part in the death.

DECEMBER 2012

Sat 8

Just come to light, after an investigation by the countries Mail and Guardian newspaper, are more details concerning the events that led up to the sacking of Jacob Zuma in 2005 (qv 16/6) following accusations of corruption levelled against the then deputy president and the measures taken to prevent the ANC being in a position that could harm its political reputation.

The five hundred page report, by the accounts firm KMPG, said that Jacob Zuma 's debts; then of a value of R1m / £80, 000, were paid by the recently stepped down former president Nelson Mandela.

The opposition party called on president Zuma to stand down as it notes that the debts of the president, may lead to allegations that his administration is open to receiving cash from businesses that want favourable policies adopted.

Sun 9

News item, the countries first black president, Nelson Mandela aged 94, has been moved to a Pretoria hospital for unspecified medical tests. So rushed was the decision made that family members were not consulted.

Tues 11

Helped, in part by private finance, Britain 's overseas aid policy has been criticised by the War on Want charity. Managed by Emerging Africa Infrastructure Fund based on the island of Mauritius is one such scheme.

Part of the £459m managed from the Indian Ocean island is the Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor managed by executive director Emerson Zhou from an office in Mozambique 's capital Maputo.

The aim of the project is to build a relationship between the small farmer and the multi national company such as SAB Miller or the World Food Programme. Opponents of the scheme; the Mozambique National Peasants Union warn of the power of big business an the expense of the local consumer.

As of this time 585 rhinos have been killed in the country.

News item, it is now known that Nelson Mandela has been hospitalised as a result of a lung infection, similar if not the same as the cause of his stay in hospital in 2011.

Fri 14

A wide ranging interview with South Africa 's president Jacob Zuma, soon facing re election as the head of the government party. A wide range of topics were covered from the Lonmin mine killings to the vandalism inspired by his portrait; "Nobody expected Marikana" referring to the police killings "But you can 't fail to appreciate that Marikana happened in a democratic country. If it was during apartheid there were many on a daily basis and there was nothing that anyone could do."

In the presidents opinion his enhanced portrait; The Spear "was rather vulgar ... I think the population did express itself at that time ... some white people thought that it was not helpful to deal with race issues in this country."

With unemployment at 36.2%; a 'ticking time bomb' says Bishop J Seoka of the South African Council of Churches and anger from the mines to the wine lands into the townships the disadvantaged well aware what a revolution can achieve. The brother of Thabo Mbeki Moelets Mbeki predicts that the year 2020 is the danger year for unrest to surface.

With three days to go before Jacob Zuma faces his biggest test the 4, 400 delegates who will have a vote gather Mangaung a challenger has come forward; Kgalema Motlanthe the sitting vice president. With its 100 years of history the movement has come back to its place of birth.

As of this time ANC branch vote, hands up only, country wide shows support for the present incumbent from 2, 521 branches with the vice president support in 863

Obituary A Chaskalson 21. 11. 31 – 1. 12. 2012 born in Johannesburg to a company director father and a Jewish charity fund raising mother he attended a Hilton College Natal boarding school before entering the University of the Witwatersrand; excellent sports player, before emerging with a law degree.

Two sides to his law practice; corporate clients and the fight for justice for the dispossessed black majority. Such was he a success that during 1963 – 1964 he worked for the defence team of the Nelson Mandela and the Rivoena Trialists.

Out of private practice in 1978 his calling took him to become the first head of the Legal Resources Centre where an association with S Ketteridge; the well known human rights lawyer was formed. With abounded logic there was ample experience to ensure that the apartheid government had a tough fight to take away from the majority the little bit of legal protection that the existing law allowed them.

With the instigation of the countries first multi national government President Mandela asked his friend to become the head of the countries Constitutional Court; after his experience in setting up such in the recently independent Namibia in 1989.

Remaining at the top of the legal system and presiding at the opening of the new court buildings, in 2005, at the Old Fort in Cape Town, honoured as Chief Justice of the

Supreme Court and in retirement as president of the International Commission of Jurists. Overseas teaching post ; Columbia University USA.

Sun 16

Nine days after being rushed to a hospital in Pretoria, where treatment for a lung infection has been treated, doctors have removed a number of gall stones from Nelson Mandela 's kidneys.

Throughout his hospitalisation there has been journalistic criticism about the detail given out by the government authorities about the health of the former president.

Mon 17

President Zuma takes centre stage, at the opening of the 53rd annual congress of the African National Congress, and leads thousands of delegates in Zulu praise songs and tribal dancing. Delegates, for many of them are of the Zulu nation, signalled; with two raised fingers, his re election for a second term in office.

Tues 18

Arrested on 16/12 where four white South African 's, who deny, were intent on placing a bomb at the sight of the annual meeting of the ANC. All four were aged between 40 to 50 years and came from throughout the country; Bloemfontein, Gauteng and Limpopo provinces. The police spokesman said other arrests were likely.

An active right wing Afrikaner grouping, the Federal Freedom Party who are fighting for self determination for the Afrikaner majority, said that two of those charged were thought to be party members.

Wed 19

Days into the annual conference of the African National Congress the delegates have once again chosen Jacob Zuma for the top position. Votes cast; K Motlanthe 991 : 2, 983 J Zuma. Thus securing the now president a pivotal position in the countries politics till 2019.

More of a surprise was was the choice of the vice president, which the incumbent forfeit after failing to unseat his boss. From nowhere, back on to the political field, came Cyril Ramaphosa. The 'struggle veteran' who left the Mandela government to become a businessman may face a potential conflict of interest between politics and business as he becomes drawn into government.

Thurs 20

With the knowledge that new evidence brings Winnie Mandela is to be questioned about the disappearance of two of the former members of the Winnie Mandela Football Club which acted, in 1988, for the then wife of Nelson Mandela as a protection squad.

The new investigation will be carried out by a cold case unit of the national prosecution authority's missing persons task team. The missing boys, Lolo Sono and Sibiniso Shabalala, were last seen in Soweto, according to Mrs Mandela's evidence in 1999 (qv 26/9).

At the time of the Truth Commission hearings in 1997, one of the boys' fathers, Nicodemus Sono told how he had seen Lolo and Mrs Mandela in the same van with 'puffy eyes'. He was told the boy was attacked because he was a police spy who needed to be dealt with. Speaking later to Winnie Mandela he was told that the boy had been dropped off.

The authorities have taken DNA evidence from members of both families as possible burial sights are still being investigated.

Fri 21

News item, according to himself the first vice presidential initiative that Cyril Ramaphosa will instigate is one that will inquire whether his business interests conflict with his political role.

Also it is the belief of F W de Klerk, the last white president of the apartheid era, that the democratic ideal is instilled so deeply that there is no possibility that South Africa will go the way of Zimbabwe under Mugabe.

The influence of Julius Malema, the head of the ANC's youth wing; recently expelled from Congress, is over. So is any thoughts of nationalising the mines.

Mon 24

● Long known, for its investment in all aspects of various countries on the African continent, China is now reported to have invested; during the period 2007 – 2011 £467m in the health policy of a number of countries.

What has come to light is the fact that many of the pharmaceutical products supplied to hospital and local pharmacies are copies of the desired product.

Wed 26

Hospitalised, since 8/12, doctors are 'happy with the progress made by Nelson Mandela as he recovers from a lung infection and the removal of gall stones. Visited by president Zuma the newly re-elected Congress leader was pleased to hear his clan name being called out; a real sign of being bright and alert.

So serious is the plight of the rhino; it is now known that the official toll of 650 poaching deaths is way off the whole death toll, that something has to be done.

Co founder of Zululand rhino reserve in the province, C Vivier, has obtained permission from the American military to deploy drone aircraft in the skies on the lookout for poachers.

With its own problems with white rhino poaching, with a death toll approaching; 400 as of this time Kruger National Park has been chosen for a trial run. In the near future the US built Arcturus T – 20 with a wingspan of 17 feet and fly 16 hours; non stop at 15, 000 feet will be flying, night and day, over the vast parks 2m hectares.

The cost, for each of the 30 drones; ten for Kruger and the rest for other game parks that at at risk of loosing the white rhino, £184, 445 / \$300, 000 thus a total of £5. 53m / \$9m over the two year project.

An appeal, for funding, has gone out to the American and British government. The scheme is welcomed by officials of the South African national Parks department.

News item, doctors treating Nelson Mandela, in a unnamed Pretoria hospital, have decided that as his recovery is going so well that he can leave hospital and continue any treatments under the care of medics at his Johannesburg home.