

JANUARY 2007

Wed 2

As expected the 'notables' were present, among them former president Mandela and other A list celebrities, at the opening of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in the small town of Henly on Klip south of Johannesburg.

The much heralded girls only education facility, built in part with a £20m /\$40m personal donation from the American media stars \$1.5bn fortune, will educate in four years time a maximum of 450 children. According to Ms Winfrey the pupils, each one personally visited by her in their Soweto homes will become the doctors, lawyers, politicians and academics of the future. In the years to come there are also plans to build a second Academy, that caters for all, in eastern Kwa ZuluNatal province.

Sat 6

The raid by members of the Serious Fraud Office in Britain on 19/10 has caused a call to the South African authorities for information on the dealings of the financial accounts of F Hlogwane a politically connected businessman and the link between BAE System Joe Modesia and the £1.5bn contract won by it to supply Hawk jets and training aircraft in 1999.

With the aid of the polices elite Scorpions, who are working closely with their British police counterparts, evidence is being sought as to any corrupt practises involving the former defence minister who died in 2001 and the awarding of the lucrative contract.

Sun 7

As an open act of encouragement, for all South Africans to undergo an HIV test, the American media star and philanthropist Oprah Winfery has undergone the procedure. The move comes just days after the talk show host was at the opening of a Girls Academy that bears her name.

Quotes of the week, "when you educate a girl you begin to change the face of a nation." - O Winfrey on opening her school for poor South African girls near Johannesburg.

Tues 16

A former leading African National Congress MP, Tony Yegeni, was freed from prison early. Originally jailed for five years in 2003 (qv 23/3) his release comes at the behest of the president who has powers to have non violent prisoners freed.

There are conditions that the former chief whip, who was originally jailed for receiving a discounted Mercedes Benz as part of an arms deal, has to accept. From his home, of the last 12 weeks Malmesbury Prison, he will become a virtual prisoner in his family home until 2008. There is also the little matter of the 16 hours of community service to be done every month to consider.

Thurs 18

Within days of the latest action of the Serious Fraud Office (qv 6/1) their leaked documents show that the authorities can show that at least four executives of British AeroSpace; M Turner, chief executive Sir D Evens, former chairman, M Rose marketing director J Adldridge, deputy head marketing of the Farnborough site were complicit in the ongoing corruption investigation into the supply of aircraft to the Pretoria authorities.

The document, dated to 6/06, itemises a variety of secret payments, valued at £80m, to a number of South African agents. These demands were made through BAE offshore companies Red Diamond and the 'in house' HQ Marketing. The document goes on to state that in the five year period ending 2005 South African agents earned over £70m from Red Diamond. During this period there were also payments, from HQ Marketing, of £10m

Sat 20

In what some may say is retaliation for a 2005 court victory (qv 30/11), by the pressure group Treatment Action Concern against the disgraced scientist; who proposed a non medical solution in the treatment of the HIV virus proposed by Mathias Rath the Aids denialist has brought his own legal proceedings against Zackie Achmat the movements founder.

A co sponsor of the Treatment Information Group, A Brink, a barrister colleague of the nutritionist, has lodged a document with the International Court of Human Rights in the Hague which accuses this well respected, and a nominee for the Nobel Peace prize, of genocide. In the rambling document, in excess of 58 pages, there are varied descriptions of incarceration and treatments that should be forced on the heroic Z Achmat.

Sun 21

With the recent court victory won , in the high court of Botswana (qv14/12), a small number of the Kalahari Bush people have begun to return to their ancestral lands after a three year court battle with the South African conglomerate De Beers. As many as 40 members of the Gana and Gwi Bushmen are the first group of the desert living group whose ancestors have lived on the land for at least the last 20, 000 years to return.

Speaking on behalf of the diamond mining company their head of operations in Botswana, Shelia Karma, indicated that she "was certain that our diamond mining activities were nothing to do with the removal of these people from the Kalahari." One of the returnees, Roy Sesana, said that "today is the same day for us as Nelson Mandela when he won South Africa."

Tues 23

Netcare, previously allowed to run private clinics in the north west of England for cataract operations (qv), are to have their influence on the National Health service increased. Opposed by the British Medical Association are the plans to allow the company to act as intermediary between the GP and the hospital consultant.

For the patient this will change the order of consultant patient relationship. No more will the hospital carry out the GP ordered medical investigations; MRI scans, invasive X rays et al. In the future consultants will only be involved after these tests have been completed and the results seen by the patients GP.

The extreme form of tuberculosis, XDR TB (qv 6/9), is forcing the South African government to

rethink its health policy if it is ever to contain this virulent disease. The killer disease, with a 98% death rate, could authorities believe turn into a pandemic that could first sweep Africa and eventually the rest of the world

The authorities in Pretoria are considering, after consultations with its own Medical Research Council, World Health Organisation and other interested bodies, the mandatory detention of those infected. At this moment in time some 300 South Africans are known to have XDR TB.

Mon 29

A soon to be released report, from the African Union on good governance in South Africa, has given the Pretoria regime bad marks for the endemic corruption and graft that blights the economic growth of the country.

Highlighted were the high profile jail early release of a Tony Yegeni (qv 16/1) on corruption charges, relating to the acceptance of a vehicle, along with the ongoing investigation of the police commissioner J Selebie and the alleged cover up of the assassination of a mining magnate.

Concern was also noted, despite a government claim that the murder rate had fallen by 10% since 1994, at the high number of deaths, 50 per day, or 18,000 a year. Most of the rise in crime is, says the report, blamed on other countries nationals who flock south in the perceived belief that jobs are available.

In conclusion the report - to which the government will respond after official publication - calls on Pretoria to "deal systematically, deliberately and effectively." It also says that better ways to end the xenophobia must be found.

Tues 30

Much as the right to live on the land, where they had lived for generations, was contested in 2004 (qv 23/12) the right to reside is still very much a concern for the post apartheid South Africa.

The current confrontation concerns white owned farm land in KwaZulu Natal and the black villagers who lived and worked on the New Venture fruit farm. The residents of eSibhonsveni were angry at the ultimatum by the white farm manager, Ken Eva, to leave the land, where residents could prove residency since 1917, to leave the land. Despite the intervention of a mediator the mood became ugly, a shot was fired and the farm manager died.

According to Ben Cousins, director of land schemes at the University of the Western Cape, the land policy of the ANC dominated government is in chaos. "Progress is slow and there are questions about commercial farming and whether it is suitable."

Wed 31

As the president of China, Hu Jintao, begins an eight nation tour of the African continent it has been announced that China is to allow a £1.5bn/\$3bn line of credit to African countries along with additional aid and interest free loans. As an added bonus the Beijing government said that none of the new money will come with the political riders that western governments attach to their loans.

FEBRUARY 2007

Fri 2

Obituary Adelaide Tambo 18. 7. 29. - 31 1 07, Ma Tambo, as she was affectionately known throughout life, was born in the town of Vereeiging south of Johannesburg and high schooled in that cities Orlando High. Well used to police violence against the majority peoples - her grand mother had been beaten up in the home town when she was 10 years old,

Ms Tshukudu, as was, readily joined the youth wing of the ANC when she was 18 years old while training as a nurse at a Pretoria Hospital. Met Oliver Tambo (qv) who proposed marriage in 1954 and became Mrs Tambo in 1956.

Prominent in the Pass Law demonstration in 1956, when on 9/8, 20, 000 women marched on the legislative building in the city to protest at this hated document and all it became to entail. Even the arrest of her future husband - on treason charges - 3 weeks before the wedding failed to stop the ceremony.

Fleeing to London after the Sharpsville massacre she worked as a nurse to support the family as husband Oliver worked for the liberation of his home country and travelled a lot because of this.

Returned home in 1993 and alone, Oliver died in 1993 [see **Diary 26/4**] becoming a member of parliament and served for only one session.

Sat 10

Speaking at the opening of the current parliamentary session president Mbeki has announces a varied programme of legislative ideals. One of this sessions chief aims is to 'improve the lot of the ordinary South African' who suffered at the hands of white oppression.

First up are schemes, unspecified, to redistribute white owned farmland without causing the economic hardships that are ongoing across the border in Zimbabwe. There was also announcements on new initiatives on employment, public housing and social security.

The mining conglomerate De Beers has posted a 6% in full year sale to £3. 14bn/\$6.2bn on an 18% fall in pre tax profit to \$884m, due in part to a reduced supply in diamonds from Russia. However a more significant development is the moves that the firm, that began in 2005 (qv 8/11) have made in empowering their black employees and improving the well being of the majority peoples.

As is well known, in past times rough diamonds have had to be sent overseas, or at any rate across the border, for the cutting and polishing operations. With this new agreement with Pretoria the State Diamond Trader, which is to be set up within the next few months, will keep these final procedures within the countries borders. In this way, once these skills have been taught, it can be said that the company has enhanced the spirit of black empowerment that the government is encouraging.

A second move will have a more direct influence on black empowerment. The company has agreed that a merger, with the state owned Alexkor mining company. To this end De Beers has agreed to merge its Namaqualand Mine with the states operations on the west coast with a 20% 'dowry.'

Sun 11

Former president Nelson Mandela and President Thabo Mbeki led mourners at the funeral in Johannesburg of Adelaide Tambo, paying tribute to the ANC activist's fight against apartheid. 'Ma' Tambo who died last month at 77, was buried next to her husband, Oliver, who led the ANC in exile while Mr Mandela was in prison.

Tues 13

Floods in Mozambique have left 68, 000 people homeless and 280, 000 more may be forced to evacuate this week, a senior official said yesterday as refugees crowded into camps. Boats and aircraft have been used to move people from flooded regions around the Zambezi river. Conditions within these camps are made more difficult because of a shortage of clean drinking water, food and proper shelters.

The floods, sparked by rains from neighbouring Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi poured into the overflowing Cahora Bassa dam, have killed 29 people and damaged thousands of homes and schools, mainly in the central Zambezia and Sofala provinces.

Wed 14

Following Mbeki's speech to parliament (qv 10/2) a farmer in Northern Cape province has become the first white farmer ordered to sell the land back to those who are deemed its rightful owners.

Details; the owners of the farm, the South African Evangelical Lutheran Church, have sold its holding for £2.15m/ R35.5m to the 471 local families who laid claim to the land, as well as worked on it.

More than ten years after the end of apartheid over 90% of farmland is still owned by whites. The cautious delay in this contentious policy is due to, in part, to the chaotic example of a rushed policy across the countries northern border.

Thurs 15

A legal battle with its roots set in 2005 (qv 11/5), although not directly affecting the supply of generic drugs for the treatment of the HIV virus, could in time impinge on the supply of such to those infected throughout the African continent and elsewhere.

The company, Novartis the producer of the patented cancer fighting Glivec, begins the fight in the Indian city of Chennai, to prevent an unlicensed generic form of the drug being manufactured. In other words they want to protect their patent and thus make more money from those; the poor who can least afford to pay.

Fri 16

News item, writing in the medical journal, The Lancet, an academic has stated that the amount of money that is raised to fight the HIV virus is disproportionate to the effects of the virus when considered against all the other research funds needed.

According to the articles author this imbalance of funding is due to the high profile given to the virus and also the number of international 'notables' that have become associated with the fund raising efforts. - **Radio 2 14. 00** -

Sat 17

The claim, in an unreported letter* concerning the likelihood of doses of the C vitamin being effective against the HIV virus as against doses of the drug AZT and Nevirapine are questioned again. * see GDN 16/2 page 37

The claim, made by 'nutritionist' P Holford', was rubbish as being made by a man who it is claimed has spurious academic qualifications. He, and men of his ilk; Mathias Rath were behind the long held belief of the South African president that there was a dietary solution to the Aids epidemic. In praise of ATZ, after eight years of use, cutting HIV transmission, mother to baby from 25% to 8%. The follow up single dose of Nevirapine reduces maternal HIV transmission from 25% to 15%.

Seen as a worry is the forthcoming speaking tour of the country by Holford.

Mon 19

As the seriousness of the floods in Mozambique (qv 13/2) become apparent the government in Maputo has called on the international community to help in the aid effort that is being mounted.

Whilst lessons have been learned, after the 700 deaths from the flooding of 2001 the 30 deaths reported so far there are at least 90, 000 people sheltering in 33 temporary camps that have been set up by the authorities. With 285, 000 displaced persons, mainly from along the valley of the River Zambesi it is no wonder that at least 1, 000 people per day are entering these tented camps.

Tues 20

A British national, Sarah Wykes, has been arrested by the Angolan authorities on espionage charges, whilst gathering information for the charity Global Witness. Dr Wykes and her team were held in Cabinda province as they gathered information on the diamond and oil industries based there.

From the London headquarters of the charity a spokesman for Global Witness denied that the team were involved in spying. There was also a demand that those held were released. As of this moment, after one court appearance; with no legal representation, there has been no comment from the authorities in Luanda.

Thurs 23

Scientists, based in Britain, have come to the aid of the police authorities in South Africa in a move that can determine where gold - alleged to be stolen by criminal gangs such as the Zam Zam (qv 17/11) originated.

Based at the University of East Anglia in Norwich H Ueckermann told the annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Science that it was possible to break down, and measure, the chemical composition of the precious metal from different mines along the Witwatersrand Basin.

The illegal gold market within the country is big business. The mining industry estimates that between 21 and 42 tonnes of gold worth £75m is stolen annually, this is around 0.8% and 1.6% of global production

'Dr No', or to give her official title Dr M Tshablala Msimang, the countries minister of health, has been admitted to a Johannesburg hospital on 20/2. A long time proponent of a

dietary cure for the HIV/Aids infection, she herself is now suffering from a lung problem.

Mon 26

Stirrings, even by the relatively well to do Afrikaner youth with a harking back to a bygone age, could foretell political trouble it is feared by some. Always passionate about their role in apartheid South Africa emotions are once again being brought to the surface of a time even further back in history.

A folk song, De Lla Rey, lauds the part taken by General DLR against the British during the Boer War. The folk song, written and sung by Bok van Blerk a young Afrikaner, is seen by some as 'a call to arms' or at the very least a time when the Afrikaner should stop apologising for times past and a reassuring of their identity.

MARCH 2007

Thurs 1

With the concern expressed about the number of elephants roaming in the country, specially in the Kruger National Park (qv 26/2), M van Schalkwyk the minister for environmental concerns has let it be known the estimated number of animals within South Africa's borders.

According to the minister there are 20, 000 elephants living off the land. Of these 14, 000 are based in the Kruger National Park. In 2005, (qv 24/9) it was estimated that there were 12, 500 animals located within the park. For this reason the minister indicated that an elephant cull would be considered.

Mon 12

Medical researchers, working on behalf of the Wellcome Trust; at the Connaught Clinic in Harare, have noted that a number of older children who are known to have carried the Aids virus since birth have presented themselves to the clinic wanting anti retroviral medication. All previous assumptions, that from birth HIV infected people, would have passed away needs further understanding.

The soon to be published study of 32 children, aged between eight and 19 years will appear in the Journal of Clinical Infectious Diseases.

Fri 16

The controversial minister of health, Dr M T Msimang, has been diagnosed as suffering from auto immune hepatitis. This has resulted, say the medics at the Johannesburg hospital where she was admitted recently, to have serious damage to her liver.

For the time being the health ministry will have at its head the transport minister J Radebe. Thus it seems likely that the deputy minister of health, N M Routlage a well known critic of her bosses and the presidents cause of the HIV virus, will not succeeds to the top job.

As of this time Pretoria has announced a new HIV prevention strategy. This it is hoped will cut the rate of infection by 50% by 2011. The time scale was carefully thought out after lengthy consultations with 'interested bodies.' - GDN page 23 C1 -

Wed 21

Pious Ncube the Archbishop of Bulawayo has called on the South African authorities to do more to end the current situation and curb the actions of president Mugabe. One small concession, made by Pretoria as head of the United Nations security council, is to allow members to debate the issue of humanitarian issues inside the country.

The South Africans previous reluctance to allow such a debate was, according to Pretoria's ambassador to the UN, that the political and economic conditions is not a matter that threatens international peace.

Joining the political debate has been the leader of the opposition in parliament and the former Archbishop of Cape Town Desmond Tutu speak out. Mr Leon was worried that a deteriorating situation north of the River Limpopo would see the region become damaged by events. Comments from the Nobel laureate was more concerned that inaction by, one country, would bring shame on the whole continent.

Sat 24

In a long awaited diplomatic move by the government here, and not before time would be the opinion of the international community, there was a face to face meeting between with members of the opposition in Zimbabwe. All told the South African deputy foreign minister, A Pahad, had separate meetings with factions of the Movement for Democratic Change and Zimbabwe's vice president J Mujuru

The Roman Catholic bishop of Zimbabwe, P Ncube, has offered to lead? non violent street demonstrations inside the country to call on the president to resign.

Sun 25

With its position, on the United Nations Security Council (qv 21/3), it is thought that moves will be made by Pretoria to make the international body more relevant to today' s world as it seems to be working 'as the world was' and not 'as it is now.'

The thinking behind its long held belief on a no debate on Harare's human rights abuses, as well as other nations, is due to one of three possibilities. Pretoria does not want to upset China because it does, or will, do a lot of business there. Number two to force the council to face the realities of the world in 2007. Number three, a method for the country to decide whether the country is run by democrats or by the revolutionaries that won power 20 years ago.

Mon 26

With the knowledge that to accept an invitation, from the white dominated Bristol Council's celebration of that cities connection to the slave trade, would up set the black present day residents of the city, Nelson Mandela has declined an invitation.

Although not asked not to attend the former president has taken heed of the feelings of the pressure group, the Consortium of Black Groups who feel that its members are still seen, even 2000 years after the ending of slavery, as a separate group.

Even the church, where the commemoration is to take place, had links to the trade. There is a tunnel leading from the building directly to the docks where slaves were unloaded after their journey from west Africa.

MAY 2007

Sat 5

As an aside, in a critique of the links between the London law firm that acts for Nelson Mandela and the disgraced former president of Zambia, it has emerged that Westminster council has approved to site the proposed 9ft bronze representation of the former South African president in Parliament Square.

Mon 7

South Africa's opposition Democratic Alliance party has elected a new national leader. Named as Ms Zille, the mayor of Cape Town, is known to have a more conciliatory nature than the former leader Tony Leon.

Those in the know feel that, with this approach to politics, she face an uphill struggle in her attempt to build support against the overwhelming dominance of the ANC led government.

Thurs 10

As the authorities in Zimbabwe take unprecedented measures to ensure the continues production of cereal crops; see Zimbabwe Diary 2/5 South Africa will be the venue for an 'all Africa parliament debate on the current conditions of Zimbabwe.

The Pan African parliament, under the umbrella of the African Union, is to decide as to the necessity of sending a fact finding mission to investigate ways to resolve the crisis.

Thurs 31

As the HIV/Aids spending allocation, by the Bush administration; the Emergency Programme for Aids Relief, initiated in 2003, nears conclusion a new assessment of funding has been worked out.

At the demise of Pefar, in 9/08, an additional \$15bn over the following five years is to be funded to groups for their work in Sub Saharan Africa. In the eyes of the administration in Washington funds would mainly go to projects that advocate no sex before marriage or the free distribution of condoms.

JUNE 2007

Fri 1

As it is known that the world's production of carbon dioxide, a gas that some believe encourages global warming, has reached 27bn tones, it can be said that South Africa's production of 430m tons places it 11th in the world for its production rates. In the number one position is the United States which produces 5.9bn tons. Britain, at number eight, produces 580m tons.

Continuing his farewell tour British prime minister Blair is greeted, on the steps of the Nelson Foundation building in Johannesburg by the first president of a multi racial South Africa. Nelson Mandela welcomed, the soon to leave office, Blair, to the aptly named ex presidents and prime ministers club.

On his this, his first day in the country, there were visits to meet the children with HIV the infection. Later on, a visit to a Soweto radio station, the prime minister had to pass through a small anti Iraq was demonstration.

Sat 2

In the world's endeavours to cut the large amounts of CO2 that is produced (qv 1/6) the United Nations has set up a system whereby developed nations can sponsor a project in a developing nation that helps that country cut its emissions.

In South Africa there are 10 such projects. On the world stage, as of this time, 52, 593, 206 tonnes of the gas have offset. This amount is equivalent to four weeks of UK emissions.

Sun 3

As a percentage of government spending, in 2005, South Africa spent 11.1% of its Gross National Product in its health budget. In comparison the figures for Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique were 11.9%, 11.2% and 9.1% respectively.

Tues 19

Pretoria is hosting summit talks, between the regime over its northern border and there opponents in the Harare parliament. The meeting, which is the second within two months (qv 24/3) were between the justice minister and the social welfare minister representing the ruling regime. There were also two representatives from the MDC, T Biti and W Ncube who were themselves the heads of rival factions within their own party.

The South African president is expected to make a public statement well ahead of the next meeting of the Southern African Development Community.

Tues 26

Thirteen years of government by the African National Congress and its associates has seen 85% of households with access to fresh water, 61% in 1994, 71% have inside toilets attached to the sewerage system, 50% in '94. More than 4m homes have been connected to mains electricity since South Africa's first multi racial elections. Impressive as these figures may be there has

been numerous protests at the slowness of this rolled out process among township and squatter camp residents.

One such incident took place at a squatter camp on the outskirts of Pretoria in Mamelodi township. Promised an improvement into what 43 year old S Mapane calls a 'proper house,- one with a tin roof and brick sides, she and her fellow squatter camp residents attacked those who had come to demolish her home even before her 'proper home' was built. Such was the anger that the spirit of township protest from 20 years ago were seen again.

As to why this type of protest has once again come about many of the majority poor, some 40% of the countries 50m population have to exist on less than 59p/ R6 per day, it is blamed on the government policy of lack Economic Empowerment. Simply put there is more effort put on establishing a black middle class than looking after the disadvantaged.

Thurs 28

A controversial film, in the eyes of the African National Congress, refused an airing on state run television in 2006 (qv 15/6) more than once, is to be shown to an ANC sponsored conference in Durban.

The film, produced by the independent Cashdan Direko, was comprised of unflattering footage of the president acting in a way that that was the very opposite to the advice given by retiring president Mandela. In the film, which also talks to ANC stalwarts Tony Sexwale and Cyril Ramaphosa both of whom were early victims Mbeki 's purge of Mandela 's generation of political leaders.

President Mandela is seen advising his successor against a policy of abuse of power; "There is a heavy responsibility for a leader elected unopposed" he said.

According to the UN 's Family Planning Association; by 2030 South Africa's urban population will be 28.6 million. This equates to 60% of its population. By comparison in Britain 54m /90% of the people will live in the cities.

Fri 29

Twelve months on, following the confrontation of a South African fruit picker and the chairman of the British supermarket chain Tesco in 2006 (qv 8/6), Gertruda Baartman as returned to the companies annual conference to give a situation report to the board and shareholders.

Through the eyes of this single mum, living with her parents on a farm that supplies Capespan the countries largest fruit exporter, little has changed in her circumstances. Perhaps the most telling is that now the workers do not go into the orchards directly after the trees have been sprayed with the damaging to health chemicals.

JULY 2007

Mon 2

There are moves afoot, from the president himself, to split the office of president and leader of the African National Congress, before Mr Mbeki leaves office in 2009. Under the constitution a president may not serve more than two terms as president. There is no mention of staying on a leader of his political party.

This presidential thought, dropped at the end of the Durban conference (qv 28/6), was not well received by those; and their supporters who are expected to stand in the presidential election at the end of 2007. One contender, Jacob Zuma (qv), told delegates he was opposed to “two centres of power” and its party leader should be its candidate for president. Others named as candidates was Tony Sexwale a former provincial governor.

Tues 3

Leader Comment, **The struggle continues**, for the hearts and minds of the people. The recent announcement, from Thabo Mbeki (qv 2/7), is in essence him “angling for a third term or the possibility to be in a position to determine his successor.”

This successor is most likely to be Jacob Zuma despite his recent two skirmishes with the law (qv). As could be seen, outside the two courtrooms graced by the one time vice president, “a large part of Mr Zuma’s appeal [is] at the grass roots.”

This grass roots appeal “is that he does not sound westernised, progressive or modern; he is much more like the old style demagogues who have dragged so many other countries in the continent backwards. Is this the way South Africans really want to go?”

Wed 4

With the 2010 World Cup well within the minds of the authorities the release of the latest crime statistics are disturbing to some or “deeply concerned”

More than 19, 202 people died in the last 12 months. Car - hijacking was up 6% and residential robberies rose 25. 4%. Murder rates rose 2. 4%. The number of rapes fell by 5. 2%. The official line would like to have been that all crime had fallen by 10%.

Fri 6

Plans are well under for a sporting celebration of the forthcoming 89th birthday of Nelson Mandela. If all goes well more than fifty past and present international footballers show off their skills during the planned game.

The 90 Minuets for Mandela match in, Cape Town will, take place on 18/7 and raise funds for the campaign to fight the scourge of HIV/Aids. Notable players due to appear include the Brazilian Pele and thee times ‘African Player of the Year’ S Eto'o of Cameroon.

Sun 7

Cape Town, and its regions, will look vastly different if the effects of global warming are as severe as some scientists predict. One of the world's acknowledged six plant kingdoms this 900 mile area north of Cape Town holds 6, 000 species some, like the King Protea, seen nowhere else on the planet, are in danger of being lost to nature.

Forecasts, over the next 30 years, indicate that temperatures will rise in the region twice as fast here on average as globally. By the end of the 20th century scientists predict that the Karoo Desert will creep south and half the plant species will become extinct.

Crime figures (qv 4/7) from the South African Police Service: Murder 19, 202 an increase of 3%. Rape 52, 317, down 5%. Assault with intent 218, 030 down 4%. Car - jacking 13, 559 up 6%. Illegal possession of firearms and ammo 14, 354 up 6%. Drug related crime 104, 689 up 9%. Kidnapping 2, 345 up 1%

Thurs 19

As if the former president, Nelson Mandela, had not enough to think about; it is his 89th birthday today an idea, of a group of 'notables', to look into the concerns of the international community, are very much on his mind.

Given the idea, in 2001 by Sir Richard Branson, 'The Elders' have been chosen on there "almost 1, 000 years of collective experience" to tackle individual problems that concern the whole international community.

Among those successfully approached has been Bill Clinton, Desmond Tutu, Peter Gabriel, Kofi Annan, Mary Robinson and Muhammed Yunus. It is thought there first concern will be the crisis in Zimbabwe.

Fri 20

Figures, produced for the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, have revealed that 25.6% of graduates from Angola have left once they have qualified. Similarly 42% of Mozambique's have left there home country once qualified.

In praise of ... The Elders (qv 19/7). An alternative name: the political Travelling Wilburys could be given to this eclectic mix of ex political leaders, musicians, businessmen and philanthropists. As to their worth is to provide the "calm voices in international debate. International relations can quickly become hysterical: the Elders cannot hope to change the fundamentals of global politics, but wise advice can only be a help.

Sat 21

Moves are afoot, instigated by the South African high commissioner L Mabuza, to right a British wrong of 1917.

In the thick of the First World War the British drew support from the colonies. In this case the SS Meddi embarked from Cape Town with 800 African volunteers from the South Africa Native Labour Corps . As it approached the English Channel it was rammed by the SS Darrow moving at full speed, despite the thick fog. It then pulled away from the stricken ship and sailed away. At the time there was no recognition of the accident, no compensation for the bereaved families back in Cape Town or an admission of guilt from the British authorities.

At the recent ceremony at the site, just of St Catherine's Point of the Isle of Wight, a wreath of flowers went into the sea. On a more permanent basis a joint submariner examination of the site is planned and a permanent monument erected at an appropriate place.

Fri 27

In the near future five people, including the former cabinet minister A Vlok and police commissioner J van de Merwe, are to be prosecuted for failing to admit to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (qv) for their part in the failed assassination attempt of the Reverend F Chikane (qv) in 1989. As part of his defence the last minister for law and order, in a National Party government, has implicated F W de Klerk. It has already been noted that the former minister had shown attrition for his deeds with the washing of the cleric's feet in 2006.

In what will be seen, by many as an attempt to silence the critics of Zimbabwe's president, an assassination has been attempted on the former editor of the Daily News based in Harare. With the paper shut down A Mustsakani moved across the border to live in Johannesburg.

The now proprietor of ZimOnline, an independent news service was returning home 23/7 when he was ambushed by three people. The shot, that left him fighting for his life, ruptured a lung and left the bullet lodged near his heart.

Tues 31

Angered by the recent announcement that former president F W de Klerk and other notables are to be prosecuted (qv 27/7) could - in the case of the former president - face court over the failed attempt to kill a 'troublesome cleric.'

Having already agreed that the 'door on crime should be closed,' when appearing before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2003 Dirk van Eck has had a change of heart. As the same sitting of the TRC had already granted amnesty to the two members of the security forces that planted the land mine that left Mr Eck without a wife. The attack happened in 1985 close to the South African/Zimbabwe border.

The widowers campaign is supported by the predominantly white trade union Solidarity. Although the 'white' trade union has 130,000 vocal members in the scheme of things it has little real power.

AUGUST 2007

Sat 4

News item, petrol stations throughout the country are beginning to run dry as the tanker drivers strike begins to bite. - **Radio 4 23 00** -

Mon 6

Already indicted for his alleged involvement, as a leading member of the state security council along with A Vlok, in the attempted assassination of the Reverend F Chikane (qv 27/7) former president F W de Klerk is facing increased pressure to tell all he knows about the deaths of five people in 1993 (qv 9/10).

In that year, also the year that the National Party leader and Nelson Mandela received the Nobel Peace Prize, it is claimed that a 'hit squad' were sent into a house in the South African township of Umtara and killed five members of the Pan African Congress 's military wing.

Wed 8

Obituary, Holden Roberto 12. 1. 23 - 2. 8. 07 founder and leader, of a floored movement that fought for an independent Angola. The movement he founded, which at first was a grouping of the Bakongo people from the north the Union of Peoples of Northern Angola in 1956, was renamed the National Front for the Liberation of Angola [FNLA].

In the ethos of 'cold war' politics and even with a salary, of eventually - in 1962 - of \$10,000 from the UN's Security Council, the Americans saw that the West's interests were better served by its backing of the movements foreign minister Jonas Savimbi.

Fri 10

With the controversial minister of health M T Msimang back at work after a nine months out of the public eye (qv 1/12) times were looking good for her deputy, Nozizwe Routledge, who has been caught up in a move; her supporters say that gives back to president and his minister of health the initiative on the control of the HIV virus through the use of vegetables.

It is claimed that Ms Routledge was fired for travelling to Spain with her son and a government consultant at a cost of £11, 000/ R160, 000. Whilst in the country she attended an Aids conference without the permission of Mr Mbeki.

The decision of the president was condemned by all sides of the political spectrum. Spokesmen for Cosatu and the South African Communist Party and others indicated that this level of censure was a poor show of the level of support the people had for their president.

Sat 11

Speaking to a pirate radio station the sacked deputy health minister (qv 10/8) expressed the hope that the five year plan to combat the HIV virus, medically, will not be demobilised now that it could be deemed that 'alternative medicine' is once again to the fore. As to the reasons for the sacking of Ms Routledge a spokesman for the health department accused her of ministerial inattentiveness and questioned her version of events.

Mon 13

The long awaited public statement from Mr Mbeki to the next meeting of the South African Development Corporation (qv 19/6) will, if the draft is an accurate account of its contents, place much of the blame on Britain.

Citing that the British have encouraged its international, the European Union and the Commonwealth to impose various economic and travel sanctions against the regime the report says it is not surprised that the country has taken the measures it has under the circumstances.

"The most worrying thing is that the UK continues to deny its role as the principal protagonist in the Zimbabwe issue and is persisting with its activities to isolate Zimbabwe."

Another aspect of this report is the ongoing negotiations between the political parties that lie north of the Limpopo*. According to the report the two sides, Zanu and the MDC are sliding towards an agreement as to constitutional changes. This may be so. However the length of the talks are working in favour of Mugabe, as times moves on to 2008 more emphasis and interest will focus on the presidential elections. *see also Zimbabwe Diary 13/8

Tues 14

One who was at the centre of the last days of the apartheid regime, David Steward director general in the office of F W de Klerk and cabinet secretary 1992 - 1994, defends his then boss against the calls for his prosecution (qv 6/8).

The killing of the teenagers that has 'come back to haunt the former South African president,' was not part of the plan. The raid on an acknowledged safe house for the military wing of the Pan African Congress's military wing was carried out at a delicate time in the NP/ANC peace talks and was "in keeping with national and international law and cannot be compared with the extra legal activities of the apartheid hit squads". Mr Steward is now executive director of the FW de Klerk Foundation.

Wed 15

With the meeting of the South African Development Corporation twenty four hours away not only is the future of Zimbabwe on the table. More to the point, after an apparent failure to bring Zanu and the MDC to a closer political understanding, is the political direction that the Mbeki government is going.

Sceptics, in the international field; the American administration point to the way the authorities in Pretoria are concerned as to the regimes they seem to be befriending. According to a media source, J Kirchick of the New Republic Magazine, contacts have been established at intelligence minister level with the Hamas organisation. There is also public support for Iran's nuclear

programme; its defence of Sudan and Burma against US proposed sanctions and its siding with Russia and China on these and other issues.

Fri 17

Letter **H Varney former head Investigation Task Force [BM TRC?]** despite a plea for understanding from D Steward (qv 14/8) on the behaviour of his boss, the last apartheid era president of South Africa was constitutionally 'in the know' about all the workings of the state. This is so because as head of state de Klerk was also head of state security council.

“De Klerks greatest crime was not his clear knowledge and effective acquiescence in the misdeeds perpetrated by apartheid forces, but rather persistent attempts to mislead the South African nation about his own role.”

Sat 18

Minister A Vlok, and police commissioner J van der Merwe and colleagues (qv 27/7) have escaped jail. After a plea bargain lawyers for the accused were able to secure a 10 year suspended sentence for the accused. The only proviso was that minister Vlok is 'obliged to assist any further prosecutions over crimes he knows about.'

Outside the court building, in Pretoria, supporters from both sides gathered. They demanded more trials for those who failed to gain amnesty by admitting their crimes during the years of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings (qv).

Mon 20

The health minister M T Msimang away from her work, and recently returned (qv 10/8), has had a liver transplant as a result of her continuing addiction to alcohol. According to the country's Sunday Times newspaper the transplant went ahead even though the minister was still dependent on her alcohol.

The Johannesburg paper also revealed that there were outstanding questions about her honesty. Reporters have unearthed claims that the doctor, in 1976 working in Botswana as a hospital superintendent, was accused of stealing a patient's watch and items of the hospital's equipment. These new allegations come at the time when the minister is on the defensive over claims that her bodyguards smuggled drink in to her as she was hospitalised, in 2005, for a shoulder operation.

Claim and counter claim have led to calls for the minister's resignation, defended by the president, over the sacking of her deputy (qv 11/8). The leader of the Democratic Alliance, H Zille, said recently “For a long time now the health minister has been a political and moral liability ... In a properly functioning democracy, where a country's leaders are accountable to the public Dr Tshabala Msimang would have been removed from her position a long time ago.”

Tues 21

Leader Comment, **Slow road to justice** “The prosecution of Mr Vlok is best viewed in the spirit of reconciliation that was established by the commission,” rather than of being an act of malice. Despite the two main protagonists, the minister and the Reverend Chikane (qv), making public their peace with each other - washing of feet and the giving of a bible - there are still calls for justice from those who feel badly done by.

Remember the events covered by the TRC's justice hearings are 13 years in the past and "how many South Africans really have the appetite to pursue it. There is now a rising generation for whom apartheid is only a childhood memory, or something they learn in history. For those who will demand justice, it is a history with gaps that may never be filled.

Fri 24

At the end of a cabinet meeting, in Pretoria, ministers issued a statement that denied an earlier notion that somehow the British, and its international counterparts, were in any way responsible for the economic conditions in Zimbabwe (qv 13/8).

As to the outcome of the recent meeting of the South African Development Corporation meeting (qv) regional leaders decided that the conditions, economically and politically, had been 'exaggerated.'

Sun 26

The latest figures, from the Office of National Statistics show that the number of British nationals living permanently in South Africa, as off mid 2006, is 212, 000. In the same period 2000 from Britain lived there on a temporary basis. In comparison mid year emigration to the USA were 678, 000 and 7, 000 respectively.

Tues 28

With the controversial public inquiry into the positioning of the Nelson Mandela statue well in the distance the man himself will be in London' Parliament Square for the unveiling.

Before this long awaited event the former president, of the racially free South Africa, will be guest of honour at the Dorchester Hotel where he will be guest speaker at the dinner, held in his honour.

The Black Leaders Dinner is a gathering of the 'great and the good' in the black community. It is hoped that such high profile speaker will reach out to many of the disaffected black youth who are seen as not able to progress in their adult life, for whatever reason and inspire them - give them an aim in life.

Cartoon "It's not as big as Nelson's Column - its just a half Nelson."

Thurs 30

With a reminiscence of 1962, when the leader of the ANC and Oliver Tambo stood in this square that one day the two may see a statue of a black man opposite the Houses of Parliament, Nelson unveiled a 'likeness' of himself in Parliament Square.

Onlookers, about 7, 000 in number, heard this tale from the frail 89 year old. Flanked by London mayor, Ken Livingstone and prime minister Brown. The role of the former South African president was likened to that of Diana Prince of Wales s - the peoples princess. In his case he was the president of the Human race. There is also the promise of a 2008 appearance for the then 90 year old at a Live Aid style concert, akin to the 446 Aids concert (qv)

SEPTEMBER 2007

Sun 2

There is more to Nelson Mandela than the genial old man seen shaking hands with the great and the good. Here is recorder, by Paul Vallely, the prison life and times of the persecuted activist.

One tale that is told concerns a weekly event that took place whilst detained by the apartheid regime. A group of prisoners, including the leader of the African National Congress, were forced to dig a grave like structure and then ordered to descend into it. Following this the white guards would urinate on their charges. They were then ordered to fill in the 'grave.'

Years later, on the eve of his inauguration as South Africa's president, Nelson Mandela was asked who he would want as his first official guests. To the surprise of his aids the soon to be president asked for the warders from Robben Island he said. When told he did not have to do that he replied that he did not have to be president either.

Mon 3

So widespread is the criticism of the continues presence of the health minister (qv 20/8) becoming that the president has used the news pages of ANC Today, a weekly newsletter, to defend his position to keep Dr M T Msimang in her post. "In our tradition as the ANC we do not normally celebrate our hero 's and heroins publicly, such as Manto Tshablala Msimang, until they have died."

This follows, or comes after, a speech by the notable Archbishop Tutu with "too many people have died unnecessarily because of bizarre theories on high," which was seen as an oblique attack on his president and health minister. Going further the cleric indicated that those who had died in the anti apartheid struggle would be shocked at the daily 900 deaths per day due to government policy.

The academic Sir Roy Strong commenting on the recent addition to Parliament Square "This looks to me like a man on a street corner selling bananas."

Wed 5

Vodafone is in talks to buy control of its South African joint venture Vodacom in a deal that could be worth up to £5bn/\$10bn. The British mobile company owns 50% with the remaining share in the hands of the Pretoria based Telekom.

It is also possible that the MTM company, South Africa's second placed mobile operator, could enter the bidding with Britain's Vodafone company. In 11/05 the London based company upped its stake in Vodacom to 50% for £1.5bn. All the company would say yesterday was that it had "entered into discussions with Telekom.

Tues 11

In recent days the government chief economic aim, of empowering the black businessman, had two notable successes. It has been announced that the country's largest producer of petrol, diesel and coal; Sasol is to comply with the terms of the Black Economic Empowerment scheme and turn over to the black population shares in the company. This long stalled agreement follows a similar plan by the Anglo American Platinum company. The fuel firm is to hand over 10% of its shares worth £1.3bn/R17.9bn. Those mining the precious metal or other black investors would benefit to the tune of R10.9bn.

Since the inception, by the government of this positive discrimination in favour of black workers or investors, in 1994 to 2006 figures from Earnest and Young show that 1, 585 South African companies have enabled this target group to purchase a stake in the economy of their country to a value of R341. 8bn.

Thurs 27

Unnamed countries, who manufacture the condom, have been accused by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Maputo; F Chimoio of wanting to kill of the African people. Speaking the BBC the bishop said that the prophylactics were already infected with the HIV virus before they were exported to the continent.

The allegation, which comes at a time when 'alternative' cures for the Aids virus from 'notables in the Gambia and South Africa (qv) are again on the rise, hold no scientific truth. According to the medics it is impossible for the Aids virus to live inside the latex sheath for any length of time.

Fri 28

Johannesburg's satellite township Soweto has taken on the mantle of a suburb in its own right. Local businessman R Maponya has financed and the steel domed structure the 'birthplace of the modern struggle against apartheid's. Opened by Nelson Mandela the 200 stores, from locally owned saloons to a multiplex cinema costing £47m, aims to keep locally earned money within the community and not spent out of the area.

More than one million people live in Soweto; however 80% of them spend their income outside the township which means nearly £60m a year is lost locally, about 40% of Greater Johannesburg but the township accounts for less than 5% of the city's economy.

The ongoing police investigation into the links between police commissioner Jackie Selebi and a known 'Mr Big' of the criminal underworld (qv 27/11) have led the Scorpion police squad apply for an arrest warrant for the man who as well as being South Africa's number one policeman is also head of Interpol.

These events, given out by the SABC on 27/9 - as the legal paper was secured on 20/9 - came hours before the principal officer of the elite police squad, V Pikoli, was suspended from his position on 24/9 because of a 'breakdown' in his relationship with president Mbeki.

Sat 29

Questions have been asked, at the highest levels, as to why V Pikoli the head of the National Prosecution Authority; the Scorpions has been suspended in what seemed days after the issue of a warrant for the arrest of J Selebi (qv 28/9).

It has now emerged that the decision to detain the commissioner of the South African police was made nine weeks ago. The delay being due to the interference of the president, or so the media have reported.. Political opponents, the leader of the Democratic Alliance asks was the Scorpion leader's suspension direct result of his decision to move to prosecute Mr Pikoli. If so, the DA argue, then there might be a constitutional crisis in the offing.

OCTOBER 2007

Mon 1

Police Commissioner Jack Selebi, of who it was said an arrest warrant had been issued (qv 28/9), has spoken to the Sunday Times in Johannesburg. Speaking to the paper South Africa's top policeman has denied there ever was one issued. "I will never arrested. There is no such thing as a warrant. It does not exist.

Notwithstanding the success of the first Nelson Mandela 446 concert in 2003 (qv 22/10) a second concert is due to take place at the Ellis Park stadium in Johannesburg in 12/07.

Fri 5

As part of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; Ocha it can be noted that 12 of the 13 emergency aid appeals in 2007 were due to abnormalities in weather conditions that the author, Sir J Holmes a British diplomat and UN under secretary general for humanitarian affairs, reports is blaming on global warming.

Of concern to this diarist was three of these; the cyclone that came ashore in Mozambique, on 12/3 and the floods that resulted from the River Zambezi overflowing, causes the Maputo government to seek international aid for the 285, 000 affected people.

In Lesotho, on 28/7, after a severe drought cut maize output by more than half. This shortfall resulted in 53, 000 people becoming dependent on food aid.

As the 7/07 drought took hold in land locked Lesotho so Swaziland called for international aid for approximately 500, 000 people.

For the past few days the countries second largest gold mine, Eldrand Mine west of Johannesburg, which is owned by the Harmony Group (qv) has been the focus for a mine rescue. The last of 3, 200 miners were brought to the surface after powers supplies were cut to the lifting gear.

Chairman of the mining group, P Motsepe, said that the accident was not the fault of the company and that there had been an inspection of the shaft within the last seven days, as per health and safety rules. He also said that company obligations were not only to their employees but also shareholders.

With the welfare of the workers, from South Africa's third deepest mine, there only concern the National Union of Mineworkers spokesman said that union officials had highlighted there safety concerns to local management. Speaking as the man in charge for the industry, B Sonjica, the mines and minerals minister, closed the mine for six weeks for the inspector of mines Thabo Gazi to hold an investigation.

Sat 6

The on off arrest of the police commissioner J Selebi (qv 28/9) have been declared a constitutional crisis by the Democratic Alliance party. As of this time it would seem that the president has stopped the arrest of a man, who the Scorpion police department say is linked to organised crime through his association with a known criminal.

Wed 10

The Nelson Mandela Children's Foundation has withdrawn its invitation for Garry Player, a sporting 'notable' to host a fund raising golf tournament in aid of the Fund. The reason for this snub from the former president is the close business ties the former Open Champion has with the oppressive regime that rules in Burma.

The boycott call, not just of the golf tournament but also of the many business links that Player has in the country, came from the former Archbishop Tutu who as co chairman of the Free Burma campaign is keen to highlight the abuse of power of the military regime in that country.

Expressing his sorrow at the with drawl of the invitation the former professional golf champion said that he was "very disappointed" that his "integrity and support for human rights had been brought into question" over human rights in Burma. His business dealings with the country were in the past - a time when the relationships between the regime and the international community were being looked on in a favourable light.

As Leeds City Council strive to maintain links with their twinned cities of South Africa a new initiative has been inaugurated by the Leeds mayor. As a business deputation goes about its concerns in the area citizen number one from the number three city in Britain shows more concern for the environment.

Along with the mayor of Cape Town the mayor of Leeds planted a large number of trees in an effort to off set the amount of carbon burned by the aircraft that brought the delegation on the ten thousand mile trip to the tip of Africa. The growing trees will form part of a forest that the authorities in Pretoria themselves have planed in an effort to replace the carbon burned during the time the country hosts the 2012 Olympic games.

Mon 15

Following the revelations, from the Johannesburg Sunday Times (qv 20/8), the investigating reporter J Maker and the papers editor M Makhana, fear that the authorities in Cape Town are about to censure them after the papers allegations made against the health minister.

The two well respected journalists expect to be charged with theft; of Ms Msimang's medical records under Section 17 of the Theft Act. This possible prosecution even comes as the paper handed back the ministers records to the Botswana clinic and Judge M Jajibhay had ruled that there was "a pressing need " for the contents to be in the public the domain.

In the most recent edition of the paper a former editor of the now defunct This Day newspaper likened the role of president Mbeki to other potentates on the African continent. The article, by Justice Malala, accuses the president of "stepping into the worlds of Moboto Setso Seki an Robert Mugabe. Mbeki 's Stalinist leanings are fully on show."

Tues 16

With the country once again playing in the final of the Rugby Union World Cup, in Paris on 20/10, where they will face a team from England, who they have already beaten in the first round of matches, the question can be asked why is there only two non white players playing for a country that has been non racial for 15 years?

The old argument that it is not a non white man 's sport, belies the fact that the city of Port Elizabeth, and its satellites, are rich in rugby history. With only two non white, in fact coloured, squad members called to France there are moves by the authorities in Pretoria to try and remedy this matter. The government is about to rule that by the end of 2008 there must be a quota of black, coloured or Asian players, of sufficient ability to be called into the national squad.

Thurs 18

The area of North London, which in the 1960's could have been referred to as Little Anzania because of the number of anti apartheid campaigners who lived in exile there, have had a further remembrance placed in a park in Muswell Hill.

This patch of green space, close to the home of Oliver Tambo (qv), former exile, founder of the ANC and co founder of the new South Africa, is remembered by an plaque topped of with a head statue moulded by the late sculptor I Walters.

The ceremony was overseen by the justice minister, Jack Straw who was at the heart of the campaign, as president of the National Union of Students, to overthrow the National Party government of the time. Also on hand was the wife of the current president of South Africa.

Sat 20

Hours away from their second confrontation, with the England Rugby Football team, South African nationals, based in London, will begin to congregate in 'Little Johannesburg,' more commonly known as Southfield 's in south west London.

Specifically, the barbecue orientated, will purchase their biltong from the Savanna delicatessens. Those, who orientate more to the pub, will gather at the Old Garage public house.

Late news - England 6 : 15 South Africa

Tues 23

The first winner of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation Prize for good governance in Africa was presented to Joaquim Chissano the former president of Mozambique. The rewards, granted to the countries three times general election winner, is a gift of £2.5m/\$5m over ten years. Then for the rest of his life a pension of £100,000/\$20, 000 a year.

Making the presentation, at a ceremony in London, Kofi Anan the former UN secretary general, gave more details of why the former Mozambique rebel leader had won this award. In the main it was simply that he had left office well before the countries constitution said that a president must.

What was not mentioned were the facts that despite the then president being 'squeaky clean' there were allegations of his son Nyimpine being involved in the murder of the journalist Carlos Cardosa in 2000 (qv 23/11).

In praise of Joaquim Chissano from facing “a combination of problems to tax the ingenuity of the most brilliant leaders”; a comment after he became the first leader of a democratic Mozambique. He is now more fated abroad than at home, as there are persistent rumours of corruption and the fact that for the first eight years; of his 19 year rule he ran a one party state.

Despite this prize, and its first winner, can show the way to other African leaders. There is life after leadership - with an assured income - there is no need to plunder the resources, and effect the of those you rule.

Mon 29

At a meeting of heads of governments from ten African states and the leading mobile phone trade association; GSM Association it is hoped that a strategy can be worked out that will enable more and more sub Saharan Africans will have more access to this form of communication.

In Namibia there 24. 37 mobile phone subscribers per 100 of the population.

Tues 30

Only opened recently the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls, based in a town near Johannesburg (qv 2/1), where it was claimed that, the now 152 students, would receive an education second to none, is at the centre of a police investigation.

According to Ms Winfrey, speaking after reports of sexual abuse of students were revealed to the South African news site News24. com, she was ‘disappointed’ to have let students down. The comment came after the new site revealed claims that a student had been abused by one of the Academies matrons.

NOVEMBER 2007

Mon 5

For 'purely commercial reasons' the newspaper group that has in recent weeks criticised the actions of the president is subject to a potential buy out. Those wishing to purchase a stake in the group that owns the Johannesburg Sunday Times are close political allies of the president.

With a background of investigative journalism and with the papers editor and chief reporter threatened with prosecution (qv 15/10) a £530m bid has been made for Johncom. Among the financial backers are the president's political adviser, T Mafolo, foreign ministry spokesman R Mamoepa and a former chief of state protocol B Modisia.

Despite an assurance from the president's spokesman that the president did not know about the bid the prominent ANC MP, K Asmal said "it is astonishing that civil servants are able to develop time and energy for what is really a take over bid.

Tues 6

Acknowledged, now, as an Aids dissident Thabo Mbeki's reasoning is explored in a new biography. Written by renowned writer Mark Gevisser Thabo Mbeki: The Dream Deferred delves into the president's actions as he believes the president's views were shaped by an obsession with race, the legacy of colonialism and sexual shame.

As Virginia Mokgobo, aged 27, a former dormitory matron, at the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls, appears in court in Sebokeng, the named benefactor went on television to offer profuse apologies for the crimes of one of the Academies employees.

In court evidence was given that at least 6 students, and a 23 year old woman, were victims of Ms Mokgobo's sexual or violent assault. The former employee of the Academy, based on Henley on Klip was freed on bail of £220/R 3000 to appear again in court in 12/07.

Fri 9

The aspirations of Jacob Zuma, cleared rapist (qv) and one time deputy prime minister, to replace the sitting president in 2009 has been dealt a serious blow. The court of appeal has ruled that papers, seized by the police in an ongoing corruption scandal can be used to assist them in the prosecution of the ANC member of parliament.

The incriminating papers, relating to payments made to Zuma's financial adviser S Shaik and the French firm Thint Holdings in 2006 (qv 31/7) are seen as a stumbling block to the MP's accession to the leadership of the ANC as the election for a new leader is only six weeks away.

To have Mr Mbeki retain his position, but unable to stand again as president as per constitution would see the party in turmoil. Many of the MP's who are allied to the SACP and the unions are opposed to the current direction of the party which they see as moving the party away from its stated ideals and towards market orientated economic policies.

Tues 13

Following losing his seat in parliament, because of concerns about the way British Aerospace conducted its business during 2003 (qv 28/6) A Feinstein; a past member of the public accounts committee has published a book.

In After the Party it is told that the chief motivator behind the move to kill of the committee's work was the president himself. Revealed is Mbeki pressurised the auditor general to deem 'flawed' the public accounts committee 's report into the £1. 5bn BAE 's plans to supply Hawk jets to the South African air force. Feinstein also says that the president was behind the move hinder the inquiry launched by the claim that bribes were used to fund the ANC 's election campaign.

Within the books pages are the amount, and to whom alleged payments are made. It is said that the then defence minister J Modesia; now deceased was paid £713, 000 although the paperwork indicates that the payment could have reached as high as £2.5m /R 35. Other ministers besmirched, during or after the inquiry was party high flier Tony Yegenie who was jailed for four years, but released after only 4 months.

Thurs 15

As a large number of tourists are expected to trip to the region, on the back of South Africa's hosting of the 2012 World Cup (qv), Mozambique is beginning the task of improving its tourist infrastructure. There are plans to build high quality hotels, and therefore attract a more wealthy clientele than is usual at this time than the short stay back packer, to their best selling point.

The countries chief asset is its abundance of naturally roaming wild life, that is located in the Gorongosa, Maputo and extension of South Africa's Kruger National Parks. At one time, in these parks, the elephant was a rare site, a result of the 17 year civil war, now they are in abundance. In the past numbers of these beasts have been moved from across the border to repopulate the 2002 inception of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (qv 9/12).

Fri 16

According to the Centre for Global development, a Washington based think tank, three of South Africa's power plants are listed in their top 25 producers of the green house gas Carbon Dioxide. In the highest position, producing 28.6m tonnes is the power station situated in Kendal; 9th. Majuba producing 26.5m tonnes; 13th. The least producer of CO2 is the power station in Matimba; 19th.

The eighteenth largest rough diamond ever found, has been sold for £5.1m/\$4m. When ready for sale it is hoped that the polished stone will have a value of 100 carats. When first mined, in 9/07 at a facility owned by Miner Gem Diamonds at the Letseng le Terai mine in Lesotho, the stone weighed in at 493 carats. Purchased by Graff Jewellers of London, by tender in Antwerp, the high class firm paid \$21, 000 per carat, which is well over the global average price of \$81/ carat.

The kingdom of Lesotho can be expected to benefit from this sale to the tune of 30%. The overall owner of the MGD mine has only a 70% holding.

A date in history, 4. 2. 60 Mr Macmillan's speech to the South African parliament, in which he went unexpectedly went out of his way to emphasise the differences between British and South African policies in Africa, is hailed locally as a political event of significance to the Union. Mr Macmillan made a blunt admission that there were radical differences between British and Union

race policies in Africa and a declaration that Britain had faith in its own view point and proposed to stick to it. He said, "We have always tried to give South Africa our support and encouragement but ... there are aspects of our policies which make it impossible for us to do this without being false to our deep convictions about the political destinies of free men to which in our own territories we are trying to effect."

22. 3. 60 Many dead as police open fire on Africans in Sharpville - "I don't know how many we shot," said Colonel J Piernaat, the local police commander at Sharpville. "It started when hoards of natives surrounded the police station. My car was struck by a stone. If they do these thing they must learn their lesson the hard way." An official at Vereening hospital put the casualties at 66 dead and 122 injured. The first African was shot dead after the police had been stoned, The Africans retaliated, causing casualties among the police. The police then opened fire with sub - machine guns, Sten guns and rifles, and eyewitnesses said that the front ranks of the crowd fell like ninepins. The crowd then retreated, leaving there dead and wounded in the street. Mangled bodies on men, women and children lay sprawled across the roadway in the square.

Tues 20

With the death of the son of a former president of Mozambique it may never be known if it was he who ordered the killing of the investigative journalist Carlos Cardoso in 2000. Aged 37 Nyimpine Chissano may have been about to be named by Anibal dos Santos, returned to the country in 2005 (qv 9/2), who is on trial over involvement in the banking scandal.

In announcing the death of the former presidents eldest son Radio Mozambique said that he died at his home in Maputo. It gave no details of the circumstances, although state television mentioned the fact that Mr Chissano had been ill for a number of days.

Wed 21

With the acknowledged improvement on the collection of data, as to the prevalence of HIV/Aids in the Indian sub continent, UN/Aids has been able to revise down the number of people with the life threatening virus.

The last figures available, for 2005, showed that 39. 5m were infected. The latest 2006, figures now indicate that only 33. 2m would need life saving treatment.

Mon 26

The stigma surrounding HIV in Britain is similar to that in South Africa, an Ipsos Mori survey published today shows. Asked, as part of the British Red Cross 'HIV: What's the Story' campaign, found that in Britain 1 : 7 people would not be willing to remain friends with an HIV positive person. In South Africa 1 : 5 HIV + people would loose friends.

Wed 28

Following the devastating scrub land fire that broke out at the base of Table Mountain in 2006 (qv 27/1) the trial of the alleged fire starter has begun in a courthouse in Cape Town. Anthony Cooper, aged 37, is charged with culpable homicide of Britain's Janet Chesworth, 65, from the English west Midlands.

Regional elections, to elect a new leader of the African National Congress, have as predicted become a two horse race between the current holder and the alleged fraudster. Of the nine provinces of the country Mbeki won four and challenger Zuma took five.

As is well known president Mbeki will not be able to contest the 2009 presidential election for a third time. However if he remains head of the ANC he will be in a strong position to influence the appointment of the new president.

Continuing a long running project, documenting the spread of the HIV virus the small kingdom of Lesotho comes into view. N Ralefifi, 29, lives in Harom Hapi became aware of being HIV+ in 11/06. Her husband lives, and is employed in Johannesburg.. T Lebeta, 19, and living in Hakonoti with an eight week old son. Ms Lebeta is imminently expecting her second child. L Chakalane, 31, is employed as a clerk in the court building. M Metsing, 24, a Mafeteng resident works as a counsellor [HIV?] at the hospital. HIV positive since 2005. M Pahabaki, 31, mother of four children, tested only once - with a positive result. M Notsie, 29, living in Tsita's Neck with a husband living in the South African capital,

Thurs 29

Police evidence, at the trial of the Britain accused of arson on Table Mountain (qv 28/11), has heard how one of their number had to physically remove the daughter of the only fatality from the scene. There were also details given, by Superintendent J Ross, of his arrest of A Cooper and the words uttered by the man who pleads not guilty of the charges.

The latest study of the Progress in International Reading Literacy [Pirls] into the reading abilities of 215, 000 10 year old children is now known. The 2006 ranking places South Africa at the bottom of the 45 place league table.

In a comparison England were placed 19th, which was a fall from 3rd from the last time the Pirls tables were produced.

The British telecommunications company Vodafone have been forced to drop their expansion plans through its association with South Africa's Telekom partnership (qv 5/9). The abrupt end of these plans is due to the failure of talks with that companies planned links to MIT, the continents largest mobile phone operator.

DECEMBER 2007

Sat 1

Well known is the belief of president Mbeki that the HIV virus is better contained through the use of natural elements than through medicinal ones. What is not known, until now, is his involvement in his governments endorsement of the home grown South African drug Virodene. At a cost of \$6/per month this is well below, the recommended medically accepted, \$1, 600/ per month.

Such is the concern of the Democratic Alliance, the opposition is to ask a number of questions in the countries parliament. There main concern is that government cash is being used by the African National Congress to finance the production of this 'alleged' medicine.

Sun 2

World Aids Day was marked in the country, as promised (qv 1/10) by the Nelson Mandela 46664 Concert. Inside Ellis Park Stadium thousands of music fans were entertained by the likes of Peter Gabriel, Annie Lennox and Leeds born Corinne Bailey Rae. The previous 2003 concert has raised £1.4m to fight the Aids /HIV virus.

Mon 3

The future leader of the African National Congress will be decided by a delegate vote at the annual conference beginning on 16/12. If lost by Mbeki then the political system will be in an unprecedented position. There may even have to be a general election if the president loses a vote of no confidence in the parliament.

Wed 5

Very much with the recent mining disaster (qv 5/10) in mind much of the mining industry was called out on a 24 hour strike by the black dominated National Union of Mineworkers. Massed in the centre of Johannesburg thousands of mine employees heard their leaders call on mine owners to make health and safety more of an issue.

Leaders of the union, secretary general F Baleni, told those gathered that they were not asking for a wage rise, although the average monthly wage was only £250, rather that 'in this day and age' people were still dying underground. Another speaker on the platform, NUM president S Zokwana said that miners 'sold their labour not their lives'. "We demand safety in mines and we want to show the world that we are tired. Time has come for the mine owners to change."

economic fact Mining brought in, to the South African economy, £25bn/R355bn in foreign earnings.

Thurs 6

The arrested G Aglotti, detained in 2006 (qv 27/11) and an associate of the J Selebi the commissioner of police (qv), has finally appeared in court. The magistrate, J van Wyke, gave him a 10 year spell in jail after his conviction on drug charges. However in order to receive what

will be seen as a relatively light sentence Mr Aglotti has agreed give evidence in court against an international drug syndicate. In recognition of this the court has reduced, by half, the time he will spend behind bars.

Fri 7

During 2006 South Africa received £183. 2m in aid from the European Union. In comparison neighbour Angola benefited to the tune of £70m. There again this west African country supplied China with half of oil imports from the continent. This was worth \$2bn.

A 76. 41 carat diamond, cut from the monster 603 carat Lesotho Promise stone (qv 16/11) is now being viewed by prospective buyers,

Mon 10

Latest; 2006 figures from the United Nations interim report, as part of the millennium commission agenda for 2015, show; as part of its six main aims that Sub Saharan Africa have achieved the following.

Using 1990 as a base line 32%/28% children under 5, who are under weight. 48/55% have safe drinking water. 4.8m under 5's mortality rate in 2006. 17.4% of Eastern and southern African children finish primary education. In the same region, 14m are living with the HIV virus. In the region there was, in 2005, a maternal death rate /100, 000 deaths of 920.

Tues 11

In common with many countries in Africa South Africa has its fair share of illegally brewed beer on sale to the poor of the nation. Some of these beers have an alcohol/weight content of 5% or 6%. Such strength brews; 'moonshine' carry severe health dangers.

A solution has been put forward, by the drinks conglomerate Diagnose, to the Kenyan government. The brewing firm Diageo 's East African Breweries [EAB] is to produce the reactively strong Senator Keg brew. Sold at a price of 10p per 330ml the commercially brewed, and hygienically produced beer, Senator Keg is seen as the way limit the production of the health damaging 'moonshine' which so ravages the shanty towns of many African countries.

So successful has this three year project been, on lowering the number of people with drink related medical conditions that the idea of cheap, but safe booze, may be taken up by South African Brewery.

Sat 15

On the eve of the annual congress of the African National Congress it would seem that Jacob Zuma could wrest party leadership from Thabo Mbeki. The one time deputy president, sacked after being charged - and acquitted of rape - is well on his way to becoming leader of the party.

Mr Zuma, on the verge of being before the courts, facing corruption charges (qv) has gained the support of 60% of local ANC branches as well as the backing of one time challenger Tony Sexwela billionaire financier and former government minister.

The two men have exchanges robust comments and challenges as to each others suitability to

lead South Africa in the future.

As a whole the continent of Africa produces 1.04b tonnes of carbon dioxide. This amount is a 28% growth of the emissions 1995 - 2005. Also, on a personal level, each person living in South Africa produces 9.56 tonnes per person which is 423.81 tons per person. The figures for Angola are 1.74 and 20.39 respectively.

The position of South Africa, on the world scale, is 12th and Angola 80th. By comparison, the UK's figures are 8th in the emissions table producing 9.5 tonnes per person which is 577.17 per person. The average CO₂ gas production for the world is 4.37tonns/person from a total of 28,192.74 tons

Mon 17

As the 4,000 delegates to the 5 yearly ANC conference gather (qv 15/12) the sitting Mbeki faced an uncertain future as Congress leader. With more than half the delegates acknowledged Jacob Zuma the president's speech made the most of the party's successes over the last 13 years.

Still embroiled in litigation, over his involvement in claims of accepting bribes - from a French weapons manufacturer - Mr Zuma's plan to replace the president, could be derailed even at this late stage. The constitutional court, according to the South African Broadcasting Corporation, has ruled that papers linked to the payment of £285,000 /R4m (qv 9/11) can be used by the prosecution. Understandably supporters of Mr Zuma say the timing of the announcement was politically motivated.

Tues 18

Inter faction demonstrations have led to delays, and disqualified 96 voters from the Gauteng province, mainly Zuma supporters, from electing a new leader of the African National Congress at its gathering at the University of Limpopo. Although these delays do not seem to dampen the support for Jacob Zuma and the humiliation of Thabo Mbeki.

Leader Comment, **Still looking for liberation**, As the voting seems to show the rank and file of the African National Congress identify with those supporters of Zuma that 'Mbeki must go.' However with the challenger as the new party leader does South Africa want this man as leader of the country?

As a nation, who's last two presidents have "seen their country grow richer and stronger" will South Africa do so under its third? Will this choice go the way of many of the continent's choices where 'hopes and potential have been destroyed by bad leadership "of the sort Jacob Zuma appears to offer."

Wed 19

With all eligible votes counted at the ANC's congress there was a 60 : 40 split in favour of Jacob Zuma the cleared rapist and alleged receiver of corrupt payments, and former vice president of South Africa. As a sign of unity the two adversaries ascended the podium together.

With the two 'notables' having to work in tandem till the 2009 elections there are plenty of confrontational issues facing them. According to Marc Maharaj, a one time Mbeki loyalist and cabinet member, of the next 18 months "my perception is that the democratic debate inside South

Africa began to close down in the public space and the ANC, and that in a democracy where the ANC is crucial it is important that the debate is opened up. That is happening now.”

As to the influence of Jacob Zuma over the next year and a half the former transport minister indicated the new leader would decentralise political power and move it towards the people.

The very nature of the African National Congress, and its continuance in its present form, are questioned with the victory of Mr Zuma. according to the author of the recently published book Thabo Mbeki and the Battle for the Soul of the ANC, by W Gumede.

Whilst the country will remain calm, no blood on the streets, a period of political uncertainty will now ensue, heightened tension between the two at the top of the ANC. In parliament there will be no vote of no confidence in the president, although the trade unions and other Zuma factions may press for this, until the 2009 elections are due.

Thurs 20

Installed, as the new leader of the African National Congress, Jacob Zuma’s supporters, members of parliament and executive members await an indication of the way the government; or is it to be the party policy will change in the next 17 months that this government has to run?

It is thought that, as three of the six newly elected members of the ANC ’s national executive have a grounding in the trade union movement, more attention to the working and living conditions will move higher up the governments agenda than these groups were dealt with by Thabo Mbeki.

Leader of the Communist party, B Nzimande, hopes the new regime will move away from the aloof style of the president, produce more jobs and less poverty and take a tougher stance against the regime of R Mugabe and force a compromise between the two political regimes that will lead to free and fair elections in Zimbabwe.

Fri 21

The first comment, on his hopes for government policy, from the newly elected Jacob Zuma as head of the ANC (qv) concerned an assurance to the business and international communities that his leadership would maintain the status quo of the Mbeki leadership. However, with the aspirations of the majority population in mind, within the next seven years it is hoped that 30% of agricultural land will be owned by the black farmer.

As to the lessons lessons to be learned, by any ANC leader, clearly a dig at the former party leader, Mr Zuma said “if the leadership fails to solve issues, or to grasp the feelings of the membership on the issues that concern the movement and instead appears to perpetuate the problem, the membership takes over and asserts its authority.”

All these plans and admonishments came on the same day that a radio station in Johannesburg announced that the prosecution authorities are ready to lay corruption charges against the newly elected Mr Zuma.

Sat 22

The impending prosecution of the recently installed leader of the African National Congress (qv) is not, according to president Mbeki, a hypocritical move. If there were to be such a move it would follow the natural course of any prosecution of a South African resident.

Supporters, of the alleged receiver of illegal funds Jacob Zuma, say that the president is guilty of double standards when it comes to allowing the courts to decide a 'notables' future. Allies of Mr Zuma question why this prosecution will go ahead when the case against J Selebi (qv 28/9), the police commissioner, was dropped.

Sat 29

Long has been the speculation, well since 20/12 when Jacob Zuma was installed as the leader of the African National Congress, as to how soon the police would move against him in connection to the alleged corruption charges that the cleared rapist seemed destined to face.

That time has now come. A recent announcement, from the National Prosecution Service, will see Mr Zuma stand trial on 14. 8. 2008. The case will be based, with a little help from papers held on the island of Mauritius (qv 9/11), on payments made by the French arms company Thint Holdings, which were procured for the then vice president by his - the now convicted - financial adviser.

Still convinced that this move is of a political nature Zuma 's lawyer said "One cannot imagine the need for such haste, and the serving of the indictment over this Christmas period, when much of the world; commercial, legal and otherwise - is at rest."

The future of the ANC, as a single entity, is also called into question by this sudden move by the authorities. The labour elements, members of the South African Communist Party and the trade union movement will now have to consider there position.