



PRESIDENT ZUMA CONVEYS CONDOLENCES TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC) ON THE PASSING OF ÉTIENNE TSHISEKEDI

President Zuma said the people of South Africa shared the loss of the Congolese people and stood with them in this time of grief and mourning.



The South African Government has learnt with sadness about the passing of Étienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba, the leader of the Union for Democracy and Social Progress Party in the DRC.

President Jacob Zuma has, on behalf of the Government and the people of South Africa, conveyed a message of condolences to the family of Mr Tshisekedi, the Government and the people of the DRC following the passing on of the iconic opposition leader.

President Zuma recalled that Étienne Tshisekedi, who died aged 84 and whose political career took off with the DRC's independence in 1960, was a constant figure in the country's public life for decades.

The President Zuma noted that the late Mr Tshisekedi would be remembered for the key role he played in the political landscape of the DRC.

PRESIDENT ZUMA EXTENDS CONDOLENCES FOLLOWING THE PASSING OF JOOST VAN DER WESTHUIZEN

“South Africa has lost a legend and one of the best rugby players that the country has ever produced. On behalf of the Government and the people of South Africa, our heartfelt condolences to Mr van der Westhuizen’s family. May his soul rest in peace,” said President Zuma.



President Jacob Zuma has expressed deep sadness and extended his heartfelt condolences on the passing of South African rugby legend and former Springbok captain, Joost van der Westhuizen, who passed away on 6 February following a long battle with motor neuron disease.

Van der Westhuizen was diagnosed with motor neuron disease in 2011. The former Springbok scrumhalf passed away at the age of 45. He played 89 tests for the Springboks between 1993 and 2003. The President has also thanked the nation for keeping Mr van der Westhuizen in their thoughts and prayers during his illness.

The Minister of Sport and Recreation, Fikile Mbalula, said: "The passing of Joost is a sad chapter in South African sporting history. His contribution to our national rugby team was immense. He leaves behind a generation of athletes who aspire for his legendary sportsmanship. We draw lessons from his fighting spirit in both the field playing for our national team and against motor neuron disease. South Africa is poorer without this great giant and warrior of South African rugby. I send my sincere condolences to his family, his friends and to the entire sport fraternity." Minister Mbalula said.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA HOSTS CUBAN VICE PRESIDENT FOR BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS

Vice President Mesa was on a Working Visit to South Africa, which included paying a courtesy call on President Jacob Zuma and visiting Cuban doctors currently working in one of Gauteng's hospitals.



Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa hosted his Cuban counterpart, Vice President of the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba, Salvador Valdes Mesa, for bilateral political, economic and trade discussions in Pretoria on 1 February.

Cuba has become an established strategic partner for South Africa in the Latin American region and in multilateral fora. The past 22 years of diplomatic relations have experienced a robust and constructive interaction at both bilateral and multilateral level. Both countries enjoy strong support from each other in multilateral fora. In this regard, South Africa has consistently voted for the lifting of the United States-imposed economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba.

During President Zuma's State Visit to Cuba from 6 to 8 December 2010, the President announced that South Africa would offer Cuba an Economic Assistance Package of R350 million to assist with agricultural development projects as well as the reconstruction of infrastructure following the damage by hurricanes in 2008.

Deputy President Ramaphosa undertook a successful Working Visit to Cuba, hosted by First Deputy President, Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, from 22 to 26 October 2015. Fruitful discussions with various Cuban interlocutors, including with President Raul Castro, underlined the strategic bilateral political and economic relations between the two countries.

To, date the two countries have signed over 30 bilateral agreements comprising vast areas of cooperation in education, defence, science and technology, agriculture, health services, infrastructure development, housing, water and sanitation, health cooperation, human settlements, technical exchange, water resource management and water supply and public works technical assistance.

Under the auspices of the 2012 agreement, 2 903 South African students, including the 80 students on the scholarship programme, are currently receiving medical training in Cuba. So far, 520 South Africans from disadvantaged backgrounds have graduated as medical doctors, providing much-needed primary healthcare services to their local communities. Thirty-four Cuban engineers are currently working in South Africa under the auspices of the South Africa-Cuba Agreement on Cooperation in the fields of Water Resource Management and Water Supply, signed on 9 September 2013.

South Africa and Lebanon have committed to advance each other's common interests, while unleashing mutual economic opportunities.



This emerged after bilateral consultations between the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, and her Lebanese counterpart, Gebran Bassil, in Pretoria on 3 February.

“We used our discussions to identify and strengthen areas of potential cooperation between our countries, particularly with regard to increased trade, tourism and investment relations and possible joint action between South Africa and Lebanon,” Minister Nkoana-Mashabane told a media briefing after the talks.

As such, the two countries are working on finalising several agreements and memoranda of understanding in various fields, including trade and economy, air services, tourism, judicial services, and the abolishment of the diplomatic visas agreement.

These, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane said, would build on the already cordial diplomatic relations that were characterised by the sizeable community of South Africans of Lebanese origin.

Officials estimate that there are over 30 000 South Africans of Lebanese origin, who are active in the South African economy in many sectors such as communications, farming, cement production as well as property development and construction.

“We have so many similarities, like our belief in freedom [and] promotion of peace, and that is an advantage for us to build on.

“Our diversities are also one of the landmark characteristics we share,” Minister Bassil said.

The bilateral talks also touched on peace and security matters, including the Middle East Peace Process, which both sides support.

“We both support the two-state solution. We support the inalienable right of Palestinians to a sovereign homeland, and are strongly opposed to the continued settlement expansion being pursued by the Government of Israel,” Minister Nkoana-Mashabane said.

Minister Bassil called for tolerance, saying “it is what the world needs in the face of terrorism”. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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MINISTER NKOANA-MASHABANE CONDUCTS FRUITFUL BILATERAL TALKS WITH INDONESIAN COUNTERPART

Minister Marsudi was on a Working Visit to South Africa in her capacity as Indonesia's Presidential Special Envoy on the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and was accompanied by a business delegation with the aim of strengthening economic cooperation with their South African counterparts.



The Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, on Monday, 6 February 2017, received Retno Marsudi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, for bilateral talks in Cape Town.

The two ministers discussed the upcoming IORA Leaders' Summit scheduled for 7 March 2017 in Jakarta. Indonesia's President, Joko Widodo, will be hosting the IORA Leaders' Summit to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of IORA's existence and to hand over the chairship of IORA to South Africa.

South Africa and Indonesia are both founding members of the IORA, which comprises 21 coastal states of the Indian Ocean. Indonesia served as Vice Chair of IORA from 2013 to 2015 and is the current Chair. South Africa served as Vice Chair from 2015 to early 2017. South Africa will serve as Chair from 2017 to 2019.

In this regard, Minister Nkoana-Mashabane indicated that South Africa would host the next IORA Council of Ministers Meeting in Durban later this year.

The two ministers discussed the need to reinvigorate bilateral cooperation between the two countries and agreed that South Africa would host the Second South Africa-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting this year on a mutually agreed date. A State Visit by President Jacob Zuma to Indonesia and by President Widodo to South Africa was also proposed for 2017.

While in Cape Town, Minister Marsudi also paid a courtesy call on President Zuma to personally convey an invitation from President Widodo to President Zuma to participate in the upcoming First IORA Leaders' Summit in Jakarta.

South Africa and Indonesia enjoy cordial relations. The current bilateral mechanisms that allow both countries to optimise the existing cooperation are the Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation and the Joint Trade Committee, signed in 2004 and 2006, respectively.

Indonesia presents a significant potential market for South African products. In 2015, the total volume of bilateral trade between South Africa and Indonesia was R11,7 billion with R2,8 billion exports from South Africa and R8,9 billion imports from Indonesia. South Africa's major exports to Indonesia include chemical wood pulp, ferrous waste, iron ore, aluminium, fruit and mechanical appliances.

On the multilateral front, South Africa and Indonesia are active members of the G20, the Non-Aligned Movement and the G77 plus China, and work together closely in promoting the ideals of South-South cooperation.

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DEPUTY MINISTER LANDERS LEADS SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION TO JOINT EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF SADC MINISTERS

It was expected that the Joint Extra-Ordinary Meeting would consider, among others, the implementation modalities of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Law Enforcement and Anti-Poaching (LEAP) Strategy and deliberate on the proposal to operationalise a Wildlife Enforcement Network of Southern Africa Secretariat.



The Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Luwellyn Landers, led a South African delegation to the Joint Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the SADC Ministers responsible for Environment and Natural Resources, and of the Ministerial Committee of the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation, on 3 February 2017 in Ezulwini, in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

Deputy Minister Landers was accompanied by senior officials from the departments of environmental affairs and international relations and cooperation.

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MINISTER PANDOR WINS 2016 AAAS SCIENCE DIPLOMACY AWARD

Minister Pandor has served as a Member of Parliament since 1994.



Minister Naledi Pandor, who has used science and technology to support development in South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, has been chosen by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) to receive the 2016 Award for Science Diplomacy.

Pandor has been the Minister of Science and Technology for the Republic of South Africa since 2014, and previously held the role from 2009 to 2012. She has also served as a Member of Parliament since 1994 and a member of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress since 2002.

A teacher by training, Pandor has also served as South Africa's Minister of Education from 2004 to 2009. She was honored by AAAS not only for integrating science in policy-making within her own country, but also for her advocacy for young scientists and women scientists by supporting initiatives that encourage international collaboration for both groups.

"Science not only enables us to more decisively respond to major societal challenges," Minister Pandor said, "but also plays a critical part in helping to foster international partnership, friendship and solidarity". She explained that the role of science diplomacy was more important than ever, and said she was humbled and honoured to receive this award.

"Under her leadership, South Africa has made numerous contributions to building science structures in organisations such as the African Union and the Southern African Development Community, strengthening the science granting councils of other African countries and expanding the role of the Global Research Council," wrote Tom Wang, AAAS' Chief International Officer and Director of the Centre for Science Diplomacy, in a letter to the AAAS Board of Directors.

Minister Pandor promoted and expanded the South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI). The programme, established in 2006, is designed to attract and retain excellence in research and innovation at South African public universities through the establishment of research chairs at the institutions. In 2015, Minister Pandor announced 20 new research chairs designated for women applicants, and the percentage of women in SARChI chairs has increased from 23% to 39%.

She also helped to initiate and host Science Forum South Africa in 2015. The event was the first of its kind on the continent, and drew over 1 300 participants in its first year. The forum aims to provide a platform for debate on the role of science, technology and innovation in society, as well as to promote international science partnerships.

The award will be bestowed upon Minister Pandor during the 183rd AAAS Annual Meeting in Boston, Mass, from 16 to 20 February 2017.

INCENTIVE SCHEME CREATES OVER 30 000 JOBS

Over 30 000 jobs have been created by the Business Process Services (BPS) Incentive Scheme, the Department of Trade and Industry (dti) said recently.

The objective of the BPS scheme is to create employment opportunities, particularly for the young people of South Africa, through servicing offshore activities.

"To achieve this, we have created more than 30 000 jobs by supporting 43 companies through the BPS at a cost of almost R1 billion. About 86% of the jobs are for the youth," said the dti's Chief Operating Officer for Incentives Administration, Susan Mangole.

Briefing members of the Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry, Mangole said the jobs had been created since the scheme's inception in 2011.

The Portfolio Committee visited one of the beneficiaries of the scheme, Conduent, a company which is based in Sandton, Johannesburg. The Parliamentary Committee was on a two-day oversight visit to companies that had received funding from the dti.

Addressing Members of Parliament at the company's premises, Conduent's Senior General Manager, Jim Beatie, said his company was grateful for the support provided by the department.

Conduent, one of the largest business process services companies in the world, was funded by the dti for more than R10 million in a project that would create 1 600 jobs over a five-year period.

Mangole said the BPS industry, which had been identified by government through the Industrial Policy Action Plan as one of the country's key job drivers, had been growing at an average of 26% annually since 2011.

Internationally, South Africa is recognised as a leading offshore destination for business process services with its highly competitive costs, deep domain skills, English-speaking talent and world-class infrastructure.

In November 2016, South Africa won the Offshoring Destination of the Year Award from the Global Sourcing Association in London. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

ESKOM'S INGULA UNIT 3 COMES INTO COMMERCIAL OPERATION

Unit 3 of Eskom's Ingula Pumped Storage Scheme has been brought into commercial operation, adding 333 MW to the electricity grid.



This now means that all four units that make up the plant, which is located on the cross-border of the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal, are now commercial and produce a total of 1 332 MW.

The commercial operation of Unit 3 completes the Ingula Pumped Storage Scheme Project, further strengthening security of power supply to South African homes and businesses.

“These units are now part of Eskom’s peaking fleet of power stations. Ingula can respond to demand increases on the national grid within two-and-a-half minutes,” said Eskom recently.

Commercial operation is when the construction and optimisation of the unit are complete and the operator, Eskom Generation Division in this case, takes over the plant and runs it on a commercial basis.

Ingula Unit 3 was resynchronised to the grid in October 2016 post repairs based on an incident during the optimisation process.

“I am thrilled that we are on track to deliver all new build projects online timeously. This achievement would not have been possible without the hard-working team at Ingula and strong executive leadership in Eskom,” said the utility’s Interim Group Chief Executive, Matshela Koko.

Construction of the plant began in 2005. Ingula is Africa’s newest and largest pumped storage scheme and the 14th-largest pumped storage scheme in the world. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

“SA AGULHAS II” RETURNS FROM ANTARCTICA

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) welcomed back the SA Agulhas II, as she returned from Antarctica on Wednesday, 8 February 2017, at the East Pier Quay, V&A Waterfront, Cape Town.



Aboard the vessel were the South African National Antarctic Expedition expedition team, DEA's supporting team, members from the National Department of Public Works, as well as scientists and researchers from various tertiary institutions.

Furthermore, the department's scientists from the research section also returned after having successfully developed a long-term monitoring programme to use seabirds as bio indicators of ecosystem change in western Droning Maud Land, Antarctica.

DREAM COME TRUE FOR WITS STUDENTS WORKING AS INTERNS AT BOEING IN AMERICA

Two students from the University of the Witwatersrand have joined an elite group of international interns at the world's largest aerospace company.

Witsies Mbalenhle Sekautu and Keegan Moore are serving their internship at Boeing, the world's largest aerospace company and leading manufacturer of commercial jetliners and defence, space and security systems.

Sekautu holds a Masters in Strategic Marketing while Moore recently completed his Honours degree in Industrial Engineering.

The pair began their six-month internship in January and joined an elite group of international students getting comprehensive experience at the company's facilities in the United States (USA), the university said in a statement.

The International Business Internship Programme (IBIP) provides students with valuable exposure to the latest technological and business advances and thinking in a variety of disciplines relating to business operations, finance, marketing, strategy and the aviation industry.

Sekautu says she learnt of the IBIP through her Programme Manager at the Wits Business School and seized the opportunity.



With a keen interest to understand consumer behaviour, she is excited to be learning from product marketers, analysts and strategists who will give her invaluable experience for her chosen career path.

“I am confident that this experience will add to my continued personal growth through acquainting myself with a diverse group of potential lifelong friends and mentors, people I can continue to draw advice and inspiration from as I navigate my way through life beyond this internship.”

For Moore working at Boeing was his childhood dream.

“I have wanted to work for Boeing since I was about 11 years old, when I was utterly inspired by the Boeing 777-300 ER.” An aspiring entrepreneur, Moore also wants to use the internship as an opportunity to learn about other cultures and business styles around the globe.

“One of my goals is to start my own company someday, I cannot think of a better place to gain experience about the vast complexities and challenges I may someday face,” he says.

Boeing Managing Director for Sub-Saharan Africa and Director of Commercial Airplane Sales for Africa, Joao Miguel Santos, wished them well on their internship.

“The students will be provided with US-based work experience that will prove extremely valuable when they return and invest their new skills to the benefit of South Africa.”

SAA CELEBRATES 83 YEARS

South African Airways (SAA), which is one of the oldest airlines in existence, this month celebrates 83 years of air-transport services.

“This month, South African Airways (SAA), which was formed in February 1934, marks 83 years of service to the South African people and to the world,” the national carrier said recently.

When it was launched, the carrier had only 40 staff members and a handful of aircraft. In its first year of operation, SAA serviced only 3 000 passengers. Over the years, the airline has evolved to where it now transports over nine million passengers and 114 000 tonnes of freight per year.



“SAA connects South Africa to all of its major trade and tourism partners and, in doing so, supports 34 000 jobs within the country and contributes R9,2 billion, which is approximately 0,3% of the national gross domestic product every year,” SAA spokesperson, Tlali Tlali, said.

“We are the longest-serving network carrier in Africa with a proven track record. Our route network gives more people greater access to air travel than ever before, and the world-class customer experience we offer has ensured that we remain an airline of choice for so many travellers.”

Through its affiliation with Star Alliance, which is the world’s largest international airline network, SAA provides its customers with access to 1 300 airports in 190 countries.

With a fleet of 57 aircraft, SAA is also one of the leading carriers in Africa, serving 74 destinations in partnership with SA Express, Airlink and SAA’s low-cost carrier, Mango. The partnership serves the entire continent and nine intercontinental routes.

“SAA is a globally ranked 4-star airline and continues to deliver excellent products and service. The airline wins numerous awards every year and boasts being awarded the best airline in Africa for 14 consecutive years.” – Source: SANews.gov.za

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AFRICA AIR TRAVEL ON THE RISE, SHOWING MASSIVE 7,4% GROWTH



The African continent's airlines have reported their best performance since 2012, with passenger demand up 7,4%.

This is according to the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) full-year global passenger traffic results for 2016 – which also showed a particularly strong performance was reported for December with an 8,8% rise in demand outstripping 6,6% capacity growth.

IATA data says growth in the region is underpinned by strong demand on routes to/from the Middle East and Asia – as capacity exactly matched demand across the region, resulting in an average 67,7% load factor percentage of capacity taken up by revenue-generating passengers.

"Air travel was a good news story in 2016. Connectivity increased with the establishment of more than 700 new routes. And a \$44 fall in average return fares helped to make air travel even more accessible.

As a result, a record 3,7 billion passengers flew safely to their destination. Demand for air travel is still expanding," says Alexandre de Juniac, IATA's Director-General and CEO.

"The challenge for governments is to work with the industry to meet that demand with infrastructure that can accommodate the growth, regulation that facilitates growth and taxes that don't choke growth. If we can achieve that, there is plenty of potential for a safe, secure and sustainable aviation industry to create more jobs and increase prosperity."

Overall, 2016 was another strong year for air travel demand, as capacity rose 6,2% compared to 2015, pushing the load factor up 0,1 percentage points to a record full-year average high of 80,5%. – Source: Traveller24

WHAT'S BEHIND UPINGTON AIRPORT'S 235% HOLIDAY SURGE?

Over the past summer holidays, the whole of South Africa saw a bumper season where overall tourist stats in the country point to a 3,78% increase recorded if compared to the same time last year.

While most tourists attractions saw a steady growth curve, one wildcard destination rocked the Department of Home Affairs' charts during the announcement of the number of travellers who moved through South Africa's ports between the period of 9 December 2016 and 14 January 2017.

Of all the airports and land-based ports of entry surveyed, Upington International Airport shot out with a 235% increase in arrivals for the 2016/17 holiday period.

The airport which saw the second-biggest increase in activity was Pilanesberg International Airport, with an increase of 68% over the holidays.

According to Tebogo Velembu, marketing and communications manager for the Northern Cape Tourism Authority, the 235% increase in arrivals at the airport can be ascribed to a few interesting factors.



Apart from regular tourists and locals visiting family members in the area, "there was also a significant number of Germans flying to Upington" to do tests and preparations for the upcoming Bloodhound world-record attempt.

The Northern Cape has been selected as the perfect place on Earth to host the Bloodhound supersonic car in October this year.

At the moment, engineers and mechanics are doing testing and preparing Hakskeenpan ahead of the attempt to break the current world land speed record.

After that, the car will go back to Britain for improvement and fine-tuning, returning to the Kalahari in October 2018, when they will attempt to break the 1 000 miles per hour mark, a speed that is faster than a bullet from a gun.

Apart from the international visitors drawn to the Northern Cape by the Bloodhound, the national parks in the Northern Cape could also confirm the surge at the airport as it welcomed more than 20 000 international tourists, tourists from other provinces and local tourists during the recent festive season.

"The international tourists and tourists from other provinces were mostly overnight guests while the local visitors made use of the day-visitor facilities in the respective parks," Nadia Lemmetuis, Communication Manager, told Traveller24. And, she says, the uprise in tourism might continue for some time still. "Due to the recent rains and the subsequent green landscapes, we anticipate that Augrabies Falls and Mokala will continue to see an influx of tourists between late January and March."

Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, Mokala National Park, Augrabies Falls National Park and Namaqua National Park all recorded more visitors than the same period last year, despite the scarcity of water and deteriorated field conditions.

Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park even reported an occupancy rate of between 90% and 100% at any given time, Lemmetuis says. – Source: Traveller24

TWO OCEANS AQUARIUM NAMED SA'S THIRD HERITAGE ENVIRONMENTAL STAR

The classification is awarded to participants in the Heritage Programme who have maintained Platinum status for five consecutive years and have shown continued improvement in their sustainability efforts.



Cape Town's Two Oceans Aquarium has been awarded the prestigious Diamond status by the Heritage Environmental Rating Programme, becoming only the third establishment to achieve such status in South Africa.

Along with Two Oceans Aquarium, the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway and Tsogo Sun's Drakensberg Sun Resort, are the only two other Diamond status properties in South Africa, which received their honours in 2015 and 2013, respectively.

According to Two Oceans Aquarium CEO, Michael Farquhar, the new status cements the aquarium's aim to advocate sustainability.

"We are on a sustainability journey and this award is an affirmation that we are on the right track, not that we have reached the end. There is just no time to sit back and polish our diamond," he says.

The Two Oceans Aquarium aims to raise awareness of environmental issues and promote conservation. This is in line with its vision of abundant and healthy oceans and its mission to inspire support for their future well-being.

Through its environmental charter, which includes aspects of legislation, resource usage and communication, the aquarium clearly outlines its sustainability goals.

Two Oceans Aquarium Communications and Sustainability Manager, Helen Lockhart, also says with the sustainability journey, it has been "extremely gratifying and inspiring to see the shift in people's attitudes and behaviour over the years and to see sustainability move from being on the fringe of the business to now being a core focus area". – Source: Traveller24

CNN LISTS LA TÊTE AS ONE OF 2017'S TOP NEW RESTAURANTS

In a recent article, CNN deemed Cape Town's La Tête restaurant on Bree St as one of the "best new restaurants for 2017". The article rounded up the top new restaurants openings around the world in places as far flung as Switzerland, New York, Japan, Los Angeles, Mexico and New Zealand.



The entry for La Tête in the CCN article went as follows: ““Brothers Giles and James Edwards are behind this new French bistro which is all about nose-to-tail eating.

“Situated in Cape Town's increasingly popular Bree Street restaurant landscape, part of their goal is to get diners to embrace otherwise unfamiliar parts of the animal.

“It's no surprise that Giles worked for years with the godfather of nose-to-tail chefs, Fergus Henderson, at London's peerless St John restaurant.

“The menu changes daily but will include plates such as crispy pig tails.”

CNN lists La Tête as one of 2017's top new restaurants

Giles Edwards, Chef Patron at La Tête, commented; “It's great to get such recognition so early on from a media organisation with CNN's reach and influence. We've already had international visitors flocking in, and going away happy and satisfied with what we do. Our style of cooking seems to have hit the spot.” – Source: www.bizcommunity.com

PEARL THUSI, TREVOR NOAH AND WAYDE VAN NIEKERK NOMINATED FOR A KIDS' CHOICE AWARD

Some of Africa's favourite stars will go head to head for the chance to walk away with a Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Award this year.

Nominated in the "Favourite African Star" category of the international award show are Yemi Alade, Funke Akindele Bello, Lupita Nyong'o, as well as South African favourites, Trevor Noah, Pearl Thusi and Wayde van Niekerk.

Our African stars will be in good company alongside fellow nominees Ben Affleck, Henry Cavill, Daya, Chris Evans, Idris Elba and Megan Fox, to name a few.



To vote for your "favourite African Star" use the hashtag #KCAAfricanStar along with the hashtag for your chosen nominee on Twitter @NickAfrica, or post the hashtag on Facebook.

Hosted by WWE Superstar, John Cena, Nickelodeon's 2017 Kids' Choice Awards takes place on Saturday, 11 March, at USC's Galen Centre in Los Angeles and premieres simultaneously on Nickelodeon (DStv channel 305) and NickToons (DStv channel 308) at 15:40 CAT on Wednesday, 15 March. – Source: www.channel24.co.za

TREVOR NOAH IS GOING TO PRESENT A NAACP AWARD

Local comedian Trevor Noah is presenting a NAACP Image Award on Saturday, 11 February, at the Pasadena Civic Centre in Los Angeles.



48TH NAACP IMAGE AWARDS

LIVE SATURDAY FEB 11



The author has also been nominated for two NAACP Image awards for his book *Born a Crime*.

The NAACP Image Awards are an American event celebrating exemplary works by, for, and relevant people of colour and individuals or groups who promote diversity in the arts. – Source: www.channel24.co.za

WINNIE DOCUMENTARY WINS BIG AT SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

A documentary about Winnie Madikizela-Mandela has scooped an award at the Sundance Film Festival.

French director Pascale Lamche walked away victorious at the prestigious Sundance Film Festival, where she won the Best Director Award for her film about political stalwart Winnie Madikizela-Mandela.

In a statement released by Lamche, she dedicated the award to those "who know history was not made by great men".

Winnie, which made its world premiere at the festival in Utah, is said to give fans a side of Madikizela-Mandela's life story that hasn't been told before.

"We are thrilled that the documentary has been recognised at one of the most important film festivals in the world. It's particularly significant because the documentary uncovers an alternative narrative of Winnie Mandela to the mainstream media's version," said co-producer of the film, Steven Markovitz.

The documentary has been co-produced by Paris-based production company Pumpnickel Films, Amsterdam-based Submarine, and Cape Town-based production company Big World Cinema and IV Films in Finland. – Source: www.timeslive.co.za



“VAYA” IS GOING TO BERLIN

South African film “Vaya” is set to fly the South African flag high when it is screened at the prestigious 67th Berlin International Film Festival in Germany.



The film weaves together the stories of three strangers bound together by a shared destiny. It is the latest local film to be featured at the festival and follows *Shepherds and Butchers*, which screened there last year.

Vaya is directed by award-winning Akin Omotoso and stars Mary Twala, Zimkhitha Nyoka, Sihle Xaba and Warren Masemola.

The film's producer and writer, Robbie Thorpe, said he and Omotoso would fly to Berlin to introduce the film. He said it was an honour to represent the country on the global stage.

"To be selected for the Berlin Film Festival is a great honour.

"The festival is, in terms of the business

of films, in the top four or five film festivals in the world. It brings together some of the world's most important players in the film industry. So, for our film to be shown on such a prestigious platform is humbling."

The film, which took eight years to make, premiered at the Toronto Film Festival in September last year. Thorpe said he was pleased with the reception it received there and was hoping to have similar success in Berlin.

"The film got an incredible response at the Toronto Film Festival. We had three sold-out screenings in massive cinemas and our director Akin was signed by a Hollywood agency because they had seen the film. We hope that a similar audience will enjoy the film this time," Thorpe said.

The festival will also feature South African director John Trengove's film *The Wound*, which last month made its world premiere at the Sundance Film Festival in Utah, in the United States.

The Berlin Film Festival will run from 9 to 19 February. Vaya is expected to be released to local cinemas later this year. – Source: www.timeslive.co.za

CLASSIC SOUTH AFRICAN ACTION FILM RETURNS TO THE BIG SCREEN

“Joe Bullet”, a South African film made in 1971, had a limited re-release on big screens in Johannesburg and Cape Town this past January with more planned for the rest of the year.

In 1971, Ken Gampu starred as Joe Bullet, a no-nonsense real South African movie hero.

The film is the story of a local soccer team caught in the web of the criminal underworld. It features a strong black South African action hero, something almost unheard-of in the South African film industry during apartheid. It had an all-black cast, including singer Abigail Kubeka and Ken Gampu as Joe Bullet.

A digitally restored *Joe Bullet* has recently been shown at The Bioscope Independent Cinema in Johannesburg and in The Company's Garden in Cape Town. It was restored by Gravel Road Distribution, supervised by the film's original producer, Tonie van der Merwe. The showings proved to be a great success, with more screenings planned across South Africa for the rest of the year, as well as a possible DVD and digital release available soon, the company says.



Originally banned by the apartheid government, and then later unbanned but never released commercially, *Joe Bullet* has a very South African feel and setting.

Local filmmakers Van der Merwe and Louis de Witt specialised in making films for black South African audiences. The company's aim was to tell South African stories using film, and developing black South African actors and technical expertise at a time when most film production was dominated by white South Africans.

The producers made more than 400 films, specialising in human drama stories and action films that did not upset the government too much. The films proved popular among black audiences eager to see stories and characters that they could identify with.

However, due to the positive portrayal of a black hero in *Joe Bullet*, the film was their most controversial film. Apartheid government censors cut short the film's potential to entertain the masses.

Van der Merwe received an African Movie Academy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2015 for his contribution to the South African film industry, and helping launch the careers of many of the country's prominent black actors and crew workers, all in the face of apartheid government interference.

Joe Bullet himself, Gampu, went on to act in local films and television series. He also had an impressive international film career during the 1980s, starring alongside some of Hollywood's best, including Sharon Stone (in *King Solomon's Mines*), Richard Burton and Roger Moore (in *The Wild Geese*). Gampu also starred in one of South Africa's most popular cinematic exports, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. He died in 2003. – Source: www.brandsouthafrica.com

BLITZBOKS THRASH ENGLAND TO CLAIM SYDNEY SEVENS

The Blitzboks on Sunday, 6 February, won the HSBC Sydney Sevens tournament, beating England 29-14 in the final, played at Allianz Stadium in Sydney.



This win, their third in the 2016/17 HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series, also extended their lead in the overall series, with the Blitzboks (85) now 17 points in front of England (68), with Fiji (64) and New Zealand (56) further back.

The victory is also the second in as many weeks, after the Blitzboks bagged the HSBC Wellington Sevens a week before.

They won the opening tournament of the current series, in Dubai, back in December last year.

Philip Snyman, Seabelo Senatla and Justin Geduld all scored first-half tries, with Branco du Preez adding two conversions to give South Africa a commanding 19-0 lead at the break.

A second try by Geduld, soon after the restart, pushed the South Africans to a 24-0 lead and although Tim Mitchell scored a converted try for England, they were playing catch-up rugby.

Stephan Dippenaar, who joined the playing squad in place of injured Werner Kok, sealed a memorable couple of days for him with a fine try and at 29-7, the match was out of reach for England.

They did score a last-minute try through Dan Norton, but time ran out for England, who won the HSBC Cape Town Sevens tournament in December.

Senatla, the leading try-scorer in the series, was for the second week in a row named HSBC Player of the Final.

The winger, who bagged nine tries in Sydney and 32 in the series, praised his team mates.

"It is incredible. The guys are just magicians, hats off to them, I am just the finisher of the moves. It is bitter sweet, we play here with family so it is a pity to be leaving the family but it's a new challenge I am excited for," said Senatla, who now links up with the DHL Stormers for Vodacom Super Rugby duties. – Source: www.sport24.co.za

CRICKET SOUTH AFRICA CONGRATULATES PROTEAS ON ODI SERIES WIN

Cricket South Africa (CSA) has congratulated the Proteas on taking a 3-0 winning lead over Sri Lanka in the five-match ODI series. The Proteas won their third match in a row when they won the Pink Day ODI at the Wanderers Stadium by seven wickets on Saturday, 4 February.

It also represents the 12th consecutive ODI the Proteas have won on home soil following their 3-2 come from behind series win against England, their one-off victory over Ireland and their 5-0 whitewash of Australia.

"Congratulations to our Proteas on another convincing victory," commented CSA Chief Executive, Haroon Lorgat.

"The winning run over the past eight months has been very impressive and augurs well as the team looks ahead to some tough time away from home encounters.

"Our leadership team headed by coach Russell Domingo, captain AB de Villiers and stand-in captain Faf du Plessis deserve full credit as do every other member of our playing squad and management team.

"Congratulations also to Faf for reaching 100 ODI caps and it would have been special to achieve this milestone in front of a full house at the Wanderers." – Source: Cricket.co.za



BITTERSWEET END FOR SOUTH AFRICA IN DAVIS CUP

The South African Davis Cup team had a bittersweet end to their Davis Cup tie against Estonia at the Irene Country Club in Pretoria on Sunday, 5 February.

In a dead rubber final day's play, South Africa won and lost a reverse singles, giving them an overall 4-1 victory over Estonia in their Euro/Africa Group 2 first round tie.

Raven Klaasen and Ruan Roelofse won the tie for the hosts on Saturday by clinching the doubles rubber in four sets.

On Friday, both South African singles players, Lloyd Harris and Nik Scholtz, won their respective rubbers.

In the opening reverse singles on Sunday, Harris beat Estonian junior Mattias Siimar 7-5 6-3 in 1 hour 27 minutes to give his country a 4-0 lead.

Siimar replaced injured Estonian No 1 Jurgen Zopp, who on Friday collapsed on court in his rubber against Scholtz with a lower abdominal injury.

Estonia then salvaged some pride by winning the final rubber.

Their number two, Vladimir Ivanov, beat birthday boy, Nik Scholtz 7-6 (3) 6-3 to give the visitors their only point of the weekend.

"It was an unbelievable weekend for tennis in South Africa," said SA captain Marcos Ondruska.

"We had world-class tennis on display and Estonia gave their all and were very competitive. My team played well and I am proud of them. The crowds were fantastic throughout." – Source: www.sport24.co.za

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