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WEEKLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

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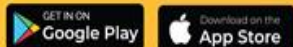
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CITIZENS MAKE THEIR MARK IN THE 2024 ELECTIONS

Election Day 2024 in South Africa drew to a close late on 29 May 2024. Citizens who were still in line at 9pm were served by the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).



In some areas – particularly metropolitan hubs – long, snaking queues of voters could be seen, with millions of South Africans making their way to voting stations to exercise their hard won right to vote.

In a media briefing on Wednesday evening, Chief Electoral Officer Sy Mamabolo, said the commission had put in place plans to service those areas with more speed.

“Part of the measures that we implemented...was to call on the counting officers, who were due to join later. But we called them earlier to assist with dealing with the queues,” Mamabolo said.

He explained the process that will now unfold as counting commences.

“Ballots are counted at the voting station where they are cast. Party agents and independent candidate agents and observers will monitor the entire counting process as well as the results compilation.

“Sealed ballot boxes will be opened and emptied in front of everybody at the voting station, and each ballot is then unfolded face down and checked for the Electoral Commission’s security stamp. All valid ballot papers are grouped according to their colours representing the different tiers of the election.

“The ballots will then be sorted into piles according to votes for each party or candidate. They will [then] be packed into bundles of 100 until a count is confirmed in respect of a party or candidates. Then results slips are completed by the Presiding Officer and party agents as well as agents representing independents will be expected to counter sign the results slips to confirm the correctness of the count attributed to their party or to their candidate,” he said.

From there, the slip will be taken to the Commission’s local office.

“At the local office of the IEC where the local party structures will be present, it will first be scanned into the results system to create an image of that result. It will then be available for political parties that are [at the Results Operations Centre].

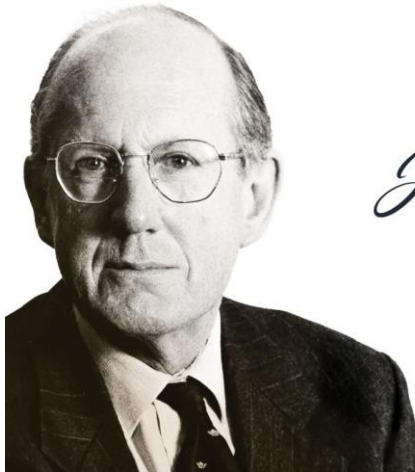
“After that, it will be captured... and after capturing then it will be audited. Once the captured result is audited and there are no exceptions related to that result, you will begin to see the votes reflecting on the leader board [at the Results Operations Centre],” he said.

Mamabolo explained that results may take longer to filter through than in the past because ballot papers are now three instead of two. Counting is expected to commence at each voting station as soon as the last voter has been served. – Source: SAnews.gov.za



PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA MOURNS THE PASSING OF RETIRED CONSTITUTIONAL COURT JUSTICE LOURENS "LAURIE" ACKERMANN

President Cyril Ramaphosa has been saddened by the passing of retired Constitutional Court Justice Lourens Wepener "Laurie" Ackermann, aged 90.



President Ramaphosa offers his deep condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of the late Justice Ackermann, who served on the apex court from 1994 to 2004, having been appointed by President Nelson Mandela.

President Ramaphosa said: "Justice Ackermann served the cause of human rights and the dismantling of apartheid with bravery and a distinctive legal intellect while serving as a judge during the apartheid era.

"His rejection of apartheid and its supporting institutions, including Parliament at that time, inevitably brought him into conflict with a system that

pretended that the courts were independent.

"This conflict forced Judge Ackermann to resign, until he was reinstated on the Bench during our transition and was elevated to the inaugural Constitutional Court where he crafted jurisprudence that centred on the rights and dignity of historically disadvantaged individuals and communities.

"We will remember him for standing up against the apartheid state from within its very judicial vestiges and we are indebted to him, after 30 years of freedom, for his contribution to the judicial outlook and characteristics of the democratic and united South Africa.

"May his soul rest in peace." – Source: www.gov.za

PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE LATE FORMER MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT JAMES SELFE

President Cyril Ramaphosa offers his condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of the former parliamentary veteran and former Chairperson of the Democratic Alliance Federal Council, James Selfe, who passed away on 21 May 2024 at the age of 68.

President Ramaphosa said: "As a long-serving Member of Parliament, James Selfe performed his democratic duty from the opposition benches with rigour and respect for his political adversaries.

"As a member of the Portfolio Committee on Justice and Correctional Services, he had an unshakable determination that we should rid our country of crime and make it safer for all of us.

"His passionate, dignified articulation and practice of liberalism enriched our engagement across party lines and he will be remembered for many valuable contributions to our legislative reforms." – Source: www.gov.za



SOUTH AFRICA WELCOMES ICJ RULING ON ISRAEL ACTION IN RAFAH

South Africa has welcomed the order handed down by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on Friday, 24 May 2024, by 13 votes to two, ordering Israel to immediately halt its military operation.



According to The Presidency, the court ordered Israel to halt any other actions in Rafah “which may inflict on the Palestinian group in Gaza conditions of life that could bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part”.

“The court further ordered Israel to maintain open the Rafah crossing for unhindered provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian assistance and to take effective measures to ensure the unimpeded access to the Gaza Strip of any commission of inquiry, fact-finding mission, or other investigative body mandated by competent organs of the United Nations to investigate allegations of genocide.

“In terms of the court order, Israel has to submit a report to the court on all measures taken to give effect to this order within one month,” said The Presidency in a statement.

Earlier this month, South Africa had approached the ICJ seeking an order, according to the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), “for the protection of the Palestinian people in Gaza from grave and irreparable violations of their rights under the Genocide Convention, as a result of Israel’s ongoing military assault on Rafah”.

The conflict between Israel and Hamas escalated on 7 October 2023 when Hamas launched a surprise attack on Israel and Israel’s retaliatory bombardment on Palestine, particularly in Gaza.

The Presidency said Palestinians continue to die of starvation, many of them children, and hundreds of thousands are at imminent threat of death because a deliberate decision has been taken by Israel to starve Palestinians by denying them food.

“The court, whose powers are tied to the provisions of the Genocide Convention and cannot be exercised against ‘mere’ war crimes or human rights violations, has done what it considers it can do to ensure the survival of the Palestinian people in Gaza as a group and their protection from further harm.

“South Africa remains concerned that the United Nations (UN) Security Council has so far not succeeded in stopping the human suffering,” said The Presidency.

President Ramaphosa said South Africa called on all state parties to observe the precepts of international law, which obliged them to reconsider their relations with Israel following the court findings.

“Under international law, Israel is obliged to implement the court’s order, as well as the previous orders of 26 January (as reaffirmed by the court on 16 February) and 28 March. Similarly, under international law, the prohibition on genocide is a peremptory norm from which no derogation is permitted, for any reason whatsoever.”

Furthermore, the President expressed South Africa's "grave concern" for relief efforts unable to reach Gaza.

"We are gravely concerned that Israel has restricted necessary levels of aid from entering Gaza and has systematically targeted aid and aid infrastructure within Gaza.

"This case is thus focussed on the ordinary Palestinians in Gaza who are now facing their seventh month of suffering through collective punishment for something for which they have no individual responsibility," President Ramaphosa said.

Meanwhile, Director-General of DIRCO, Zane Dangor, said South Africa welcomed the "groundbreaking" court ruling which he added is a "de facto calling for a ceasefire" in the area.

"This order is groundbreaking as it is the first time that explicit mention is made for Israel to halt its military action in any area of Gaza, this time specifically in Rafah. While legally the court cannot use the term ceasefire...this is de facto calling for a ceasefire. It is ordering the major party in this conflict to end its belligerent action against the people of Palestine.

"This is a groundbreaking decision by the court. The court has also ordered Israel to ensure that it allows access to investigators appointed by competent orders of the UN [United Nations] to investigate actions that would be tantamount to genocide in the whole of Gaza.

"This is important because it allows for independent researchers to go into areas that journalists have been prohibited from; in fact journalists have been killed. It allows those of us engaging in the legal action to have independent verified UN experts doing a lot of the investigations.

"We hope that the UN Security Council takes note of this. We will be approaching the UN Security Council with this order so that they can affect this part of it," Dangor said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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ESCALATING CONFLICT AND DIRE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION OF "GRAVE CONCERN"



South Africa has expressed its "grave concern" over the escalating armed conflict in Sudan, which has reportedly claimed thousands of lives, destroyed infrastructure and displaced millions of people.

Conflict in Sudan has been ongoing for more than a year.

"We express our grave concern at the outbreak of major fighting in El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur and the plight faced by many civilians, especially women and children. The reported use of heavy artillery by the fighting parties in populated places continues to place the lives of civilians in danger.

"In this regard, we wish to cite the warning by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, during his recent address to the United Nations (UN) Security Council, that 'intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population and wilfully impeding humanitarian relief for civilians in need may constitute war crimes'.

"The attacks against El Fasher came amidst the Human Rights Watch Report, which detailed cases of gross human rights abuses in Sudan, including ethnically motivated killings and gender-based violence," The Presidency said in a statement.

South Africa urged those engaged in the conflict to "respect international law, including international humanitarian law, protect civilians, especially women and children, and not hamper in any manner the distribution of humanitarian assistance as well as the provision of medical support".

“There is a need to urgently put an end to impunity in this senseless conflict. The dire human rights situation arising from the ongoing conflict cannot be ignored, nor can the role of relevant multilateral and regional bodies and initiatives.

“South Africa pledges its full support to the efforts of the UN Secretary-General’s Personal Envoy to Sudan, Ramtane Lamamra, the African Union and Intergovernmental Authority on Development to promote a peaceful end to the conflict through mediation and dialogue,” the statement said.

Furthermore, the statement repeated calls for a ceasefire in the area and for talks between the warring parties to resume.

“South Africa stands in solidarity with the innocent people of Sudan, who have been subjected to untold suffering since the outbreak of hostilities on 15 April 2023, with the main protagonists to the conflict being the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces.

“South Africa reiterates its call for the immediate end to the conflict and the resumption of genuine and sincere talks to bring an end to the human suffering that the people of Sudan have endured for a long time,” the statement said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

A TOPS AFRICAN TOURISM INDEX

South Africa has been ranked the highest in the African region on the 2024 Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) by the World Economic Forum.



“We are extremely pleased with this ranking as it affirms our commitment and work to elevate the significance and contribution of the tourism sector in South Africa,” Minister of Tourism Patricia de Lille said on Thursday, 23 May 2024.

South Africa was ranked 55 among 119 countries and emerged as the leading country in the rankings for the African continent in the second edition of an index by the World Economic Forum.

The report, which was released earlier this week, revealed that South Africa is home to the largest Travel and Tourism Economy in Africa. It measures the set of factors and policies that enable the sustainable and resilient development of the travel and tourism sector, which in turn contributes to the development of a country.

In 2023, South Africa welcomed close to 8.5 million international visitors, of which 6.4 million

were from the African continent. This represents a significant increase of 48.9% compared to 2022 arrivals.

During the first quarter of 2024 – January to March – South Africa welcomed 2.4 million visitors from the rest of the world. This represents a notable 15.4% increase when compared with the same period in 2023.

“The tourism sector has achieved robust growth over the past year and this is due to closer partnerships and collaborations with the private sector to grow tourism to its full potential,” Minister de Lille said.

In the 2024 Index, South Africa moved up seven places compared to its previous ranking and scored high for price competitiveness, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) readiness, natural resources and travel and tourism socio-economic impact.

“We are delighted by the growth and our mission remains to exponentially grow arrival numbers and the overall performance of the tourism sector. The sector already makes a significant contribution to South Africa’s gross domestic product and job creation efforts but there is still so much more to be done.

“We have been working closer with the private sector and we are bearing fruit. I want to acknowledge and thank the tourism private sector stakeholders for all their hard work and collaborating with government to grow this exciting and important sector. The South African tourism

sector's greatest asset is our people and we will continue working to grow tourism's contribution to the prosperity of people and the planet," the Minister said. –Source: SAnews.gov.za

MINISTER NZIMANDE UNVEILS INAUGURAL NUCLEAR MEDICINE RESEARCH FACILITY IN PRETORIA

Pretoria has inaugurated the Nuclear Medicine Research Infrastructure (NuMeRI), the first facility of its kind in Africa. It includes a cyclotron for isotope production in radiation therapy.



The NuMeRI will provide consolidated expertise in nuclear technologies in medicine and biosciences, creating significant research, development and innovation capacity in South Africa and will assist in the treatment of cancer and other diseases.

Situated next to the Steve Biko Academic Hospital in Pretoria, NuMeRI is set to advance drug development and clinical research and provide cutting-edge diagnostics and treatment in relation to cancer, tuberculosis (TB) and other major diseases that are burdening public health.

Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Blade Nzimande, who opened the facility, told guests the world-class facility is a product of South Africa's long-standing cooperation with the European Union (EU) that dates back to 2012.

Under this agreement, the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) collaborated with the EU to develop the first South African Research Infrastructure Roadmap (SARIR) for the country.

"The mobilisation of innovation and technology to address the disease burden and the need to provide quality health care to all South Africans is a key priority of my department's Decadal Plan on Science, Technology and Innovation," said the Minister, adding that the NuMeRI was an important pillar in this effort.

The NuMeRI is a one-stop-shop medical imaging facility dedicated to drug development and imaging-based clinical research. It is open to all researchers who will benefit from imaging in their product development.

Nuclear medicine uses small amounts of radioactive material combined with a carrier molecule in the body to see how organs or tissue are functioning to diagnose diseases more easily. It then selectively targets and treats the diseased area in the body with molecular precision, sparing healthy adjacent cells.

"It will assist in taking bio-innovations further down the value chain from radiolabelling to preclinical testing. It will also contribute to good manufacturing practices and clinical trials," he explained.

In addition, the NuMeRI's capabilities will contribute to the precision-medicine approach and targeted personalised therapies being developed in South Africa.

Governance

To ensure efficient governance and management, the two partners, the University of Pretoria (UP) and Steve Biko Academic Hospital, agreed to the establishment of a NuMeRI not-for-profit company (NPC).

The UP Health Faculty, as well as iThemba Labs and the Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa (Necsa), are major partners in this initiative, which has also received praise from the global community.

The first phase of NuMeRI, established and hosted at Necsa for three years, was made possible by an investment of close to R150 million between 2016 and 2019. The second phase of implementation at Steve Biko Academic Hospital started in the 2020/21 financial year with an investment of approximately R390 million since 2020 by the DSI.

Meanwhile, the UP also received an additional R85 million for the NuMeRI building.

Human resource

According to Minister Nzimande, it is anticipated that this infrastructure will triple the current clinical PhDs and increase six-fold the number of basic science PhDs.

To date, 20 masters and 15 PhD students have completed their studies, with a further 17 master's degrees and 22 PhD students finishing their studies.

Meanwhile, the NuMeRI's research activities advance the objectives and priorities of the National Department of Health, strengthening the nuclear-medicine capacity in South Africa and beyond its borders in Africa.

It also enhances South African research in medicinal chemistry, expediting the development of drugs to address national priority diseases such as cancer and TB, enabling new pharmaceuticals to reach the market sooner, and giving South African pharmaceutical development a competitive edge with global equivalents.

The research will be mainly in oncology and will cover other communicable and non-communicable diseases.

"The opening of this facility represents yet another important milestone in the development of scientific infrastructure for our country and this is embodied in the fact that the NuMeRI is the first of its kind on the African continent." – Source: www.bizcommunity.com

INNOCENT MASUKU STUNS ON *BRITAIN'S GOT TALENT*



Innocent Masuku, a 33-year-old South African operatic tenor living in London, has once again captivated hearts worldwide with his extraordinary performance on "Britain's Got Talent".

Born in Secunda, Mpumalanga, Masuku first enchanted audiences as Crabman in a production of *Porgy and Bess* set in Argentina. Since then, his career has been on a meteoric rise, with accolades such as a Merit Award in the 2019 SAMRO competition, the Drake Calleja Trust Award, The Oppenheimer International Scholarship and The Countess of Munster Musical Trust Study Award under his belt.

Currently gracing the stage as Count Almaviva in the English National Opera's *Barber of Seville*, Masuku's talent is undeniable.

His debut on *Britain's Got Talent* earned him a unanimous four "yes" votes, setting the stage for even greater success. His latest performance on the show, an emotional rendition of Hans Zimmer's *Now We Are Free* from the 1998 film *Gladiator*, has not only garnered millions of views but also moved the audience and judges to a standing ovation.

The judges' praises were unanimous and effusive, with one declaring Masuku as "the one to beat in this competition". Simon Cowell, known for his critical eye, was particularly impressed. "He was very good when he first auditioned," Cowell remarked, "but he is in credibly talented and deserves this opportunity."

Masuku's journey is a great South African story of hope and inspiration, showing that dreams can indeed come true with talent, hard work, and dedication. As he continues to enchant audiences, both in the United Kingdom and around the world, there's no doubt that Innocent Masuku's star will only continue to rise. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

THREE SOUTH AFRICAN BEACHES MAKE THE WORLD'S 100 BEST LIST

Three South African beaches (Boulders, Bloubergstrand and the Cliftons) have washed up brilliantly onto the world's Top 100 Beaches List.



Announced and curated by the Golden Beach Award 2024, Boulders Beach, Bloubergstrand and Clifton beaches ticked all the right boxes to earn their spots among the very best of the best when it comes to beaches.

Based on criteria of classic beauty, natural diversity, community and cultural significance, among other factors as determined by the insight of travel experts and influencers, the Western Cape's beach treasures successfully claimed their own places on the list.

Boulders Beach (which was also announced as one of the World's 50 Best Beaches last month) rolled in at second under French Polynesia's Bora Bora and was praised for its heritage as a "bustling metropolis for African Penguins" above and

beyond being a picturesque pleasure.

In place 33, Bloubergstrand stands proudly as not just an epic beach based on beauty alone, but also for its epic significance as the end point for the Cadiz Freedom Swim from Robben Island, a symbol of the journey to South Africa's freedom.

The Cliftons (First, Second, Third and Fourth) were awarded together at place number 68, where they were given the traveller's nod of approval for a variety of winning factors. From Fourth Beach's Blue Flag status to the vibrant community Second Beach attracts, all the Cliftons have something to offer beyond gorgeous, tempered waters and sugar-like sand. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

SOUTH AFRICAN BRANDY WINS WORLD'S BEST BRANDY FOR A SECOND YEAR

A South African brandy has got the country celebrating once again after it was named the World's Best Wine Brandy for a second consecutive year at the 2024 World Drinks Awards.

Van Ryn's 15-year-old Potstill Brandy has been awarded the World's Best Wine Brandy yet again, beating fierce competition from France, Spain and Australia.

Other South African brands also put their best drinks forward, earning spots in the silver and bronze categories; including Klipdrift and Richelieu, as well as KVV VS Brandy, who also claimed gold in the aged four-five years cohort.

What are the World Drinks Awards?

Each year, the World Drinks Awards aim to celebrate the very best in the global drinks industry, with the World Brandy Awards category recognising the finest brandies from around the world, tasting each entry blind and scoring the brandies according to nose, palate, finish, balance, character, complexity and overall quality.



For Van Ryn's, this win marks the fourth time in five years that the brand has been awarded this title. In 2020, their 12-Year-Old Potstill Brandy achieved the same title, followed by their 20-Year-Old Potstill Brandy in 2022, and most recently, their 15-Year-Old Potstill Brandy award in 2023 and 2024.

What is wine brandy?

Wine Brandy is made from distilled wine and matured in French oak barrels. The Van Ryn's Potstill Brandy range is made using the same specialised production methods used for the production of Cognac. The name Cognac, however, is reserved only for brandies made in southwest France.

The panel of international judges praised the winning brandy as "a graceful liquid with notes of liquorice and toffee and the thick creaminess of clotted cream. Stone fruit on the palate, as well as a drizzle of golden syrup and some residual tannic fruit."

Master Blender Marlene Bester says achieving the World's Best title twice in a row is definitely a highlight for the team. "Year-on-year our brandies receive the World's Best accolades, showcasing our commitment to innovation, quality and the art of crafting exceptional brandy, building on our reputation as one of the world's leading fine brandy houses."

Marlene adds that the secret ingredient is time.

"We allow our brandies the luxury of maturation for several years, quietly developing their complex layers of flavours during their slumber. Although we lose approximately 3% of volume per year to the Angel's Share, the result is an incredibly smooth brandy that rewards in character and quality." – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

SOUTH AFRICAN ACTOR DAVIN BEIERSDORF SHINES AT CANNES FESTIVAL AHEAD OF FILM DEBUT

South African model and rising star Davin Beiersdorf (19) made a splash at the Cannes Film Festival this week, showcasing his talent and ambition on the international stage ahead of his film debut on Amazon Prime.



Beiersdorf, raised in the coastal town of Langebaan in the Western Cape by his Jordanian mother and German father, has a unique cultural background that shines through in his artistic endeavours.

"Coming from a small town in South Africa, I never thought I'd be walking the same red carpet many successful actors have walked. It's a testament to the power of dreams and hard work. I can't wait for you all to see the film *I Hate Pirates*, expressed Beiersdorf

From a young age, Beiersdorf displayed a passion for the arts, particularly excelling in piano under the tutelage of Marietjie Steenkamp. Both Steenkamp and his

supportive parents are credited with nurturing his early artistic inclinations. However, Beiersdorf's journey wasn't without hurdles. Breaking into the South African modelling and acting scene proved challenging, prompting him to take the bold step of pursuing his dreams internationally in the United States.

This leap of faith proved pivotal. Beiersdorf landed a role in the upcoming Amazon Prime film *I Hate Pirates*, set for release early next year. This significant break marks the beginning of what promises to be a remarkable career.

Beiersdorf's presence at the Cannes Film Festival 2024 provided a valuable opportunity to network with industry veterans and rising talents alike. He embraced the experience with the same enthusiasm and dedication that had fuelled his journey from the start.

Beiersdorf's unwavering commitment to his craft, coupled with his resilience in the face of obstacles, has positioned him for success. With a promising film debut on the horizon and a growing presence in the international film community, his story serves as an inspiration to aspiring South African talents. Beiersdorf himself has expressed his deep pride in his South African roots.

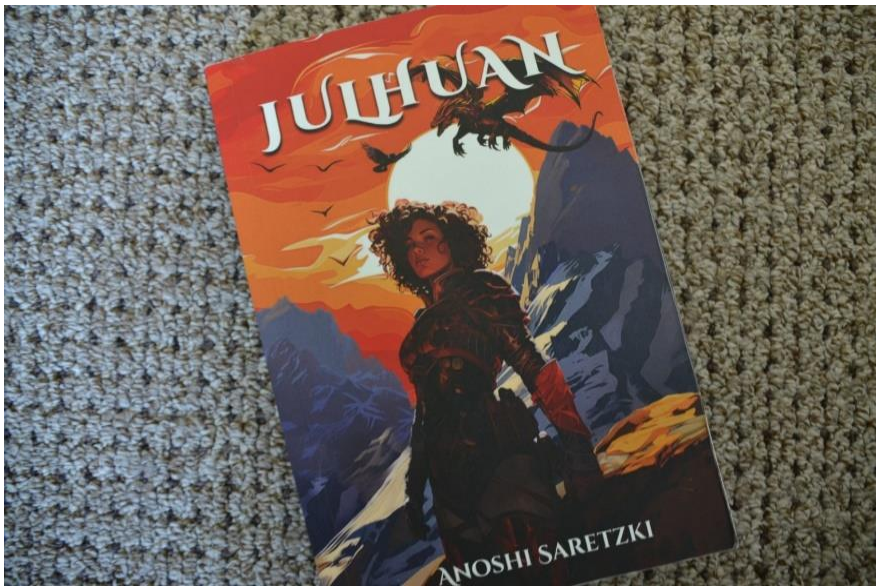
About *I Hate Pirates*

I Hate Pirates is a horror film written by Manny Mijares. The story centres around a group of friends who explore an abandoned chateau, unleashing supernatural forces tied to one teenager's notorious pirate ancestor.

Themes of friendship, trust, and paranormal danger intertwine with classic coming-of-age experiences: teenage rebellion, yearning for independence and the allure of adventure. - Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

NEW YOUNG ADULT FICTION NOVEL SEES DRAGONS AND BATTLES IN THE DRAKENSBURG

The Drakensberg has become the backdrop of new Young Adult fiction, in which epic battles unfold and dragons spread their wings.



Anyone who has been blessed to drive through the Drakensberg on a winter's day to see the clouds rolling over the snow-capped mountain range can attest to how magical it feels. Debut author Anoshi Saretzki put that magical feeling onto paper in the form of a new Fantasy novel for young adults. *Julhuan* is about teen Zanna who is feeling lost in her own life. Bring in epic battles and several dragons, Zanna's journey is a coming-of-age tale about a young woman trying to find herself.

Zanna's journey to finding her bravest, most confident self was so relatable, even if one no longer falls into the "young adult" fiction category. The debut novel highlights real-life battles and the battles we fight within ourselves to feel worthy in life, to have confidence in our abilities and to escape the mental demons that try to break us down.

Anoshi Saretzki used her passion for the area, where she spent many family holidays and her background in Industrial Psychology to create the world of *Julhuan*, a hidden city up in the Drakensberg mountains. The fantasy novel has some great lessons about family, friendship and being determined to overcome one's fears.

About *Julhuan*

Ever since Zanna can remember, she's been tormented by a recurring nightmare, which has only served to complicate her life. Determined to escape its clutches, she embarks on a multi-day hike into the expanse of the Drakensberg mountains, accompanied by her best friend, Seb.

Their trek through the increasingly treacherous terrain unveils a series of peculiar phenomena. Little do they know that these strange occurrences will ultimately lead them to the Julhuasi, an ancient, hidden tribe blessed with magical powers and protected by dragons who have coexisted with them in *Julhuan* for millennia.

As Zanna delves deeper into this new world, she discovers that her true identity is far more extraordinary than she could have ever imagined. Her nightmares, previously deemed simply as bad dreams, now hold very real implications for her and the Julhuasi. As a sworn enemy relentless in her pursuit, Zanna must tap into her inner strength and self-belief. Only then will she be able to face the impending battle that has shadowed her existence since her birth. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

SOUTH AFRICAN GRAMMY AWARD WINNER PAYS HOMAGE TO HIS MUSICAL ROOTS

Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Ndumiso Manana revisited his alma mater, Drakensberg Boys Choir School, to honour the foundational musical education he received there, which significantly shaped his successful career.

Ndumiso Manana, South Africa's Grammy-award-winning singer-songwriter, visited his alma mater, Drakensberg Boys Choir School (DBCS) and paid homage to his musical roots nurtured there during his five years of attendance and as a member of its world-renowned boys choir. South African musician Manana's musical journey started when he was a choir boy at Drakensberg Boys Choir School, also known as Drakies. Eswatini-born Ndumiso Manana joined Drakies in Grade 4 and attended until Grade 9 in 2008.

Manana won a Grammy for his writing work on Burna Boy's song *Time Flies*, which featured on the 2020 record *Twice as Tall*. Manana was also part of the project's Global Music Album Grammy win in 2021. In 2021, the talented singer and songwriter also released a song, *I can't believe I get to call you mine* as a wedding gift to his wife, Vuyi Manana.

In a recent media interview, Manana said of his time at Drakies: "Joining Drakensberg Boys Choir School was probably the most influential moment that took me on this path in music because my parents and family aren't really musical."



However, Manana holds music education and Drakies and thereafter in very high regard because it has significantly impacted his musical art and balanced approach to life.

He was quoted in the media saying, “I always tell people that I give all credit to the education and learning that I received over my life, especially in music.”

DBCS Executive Head Dave Cato states: “It was an enormous privilege for the school (DBCS) to welcome home the Grammy award-winning singer-songwriter and Drakie Old Boy from the class of 2008. It is fantastic to see how our alumni go from strength to strength, applying the principles that are at the heart of Drakie-life, including the high work ethic, education focus and pursuing musical excellence.”

In his humble, self-effacing manner, Manna portrayed the essence of the Drakie core values while interacting with staff and boys during his visit.

The school’s Academic Head, Erika Linde, remembers him as a polite, well-liked Drakie boy who earned the respect of his peers. Manana was a standout chorister with a stellar profile as a soloist during his tenure in the choir.

“Manana’s inspirational visit will remain a distinct highlight for our staff and boys,” concluded Vaughan van Zyl, DBCS Artistic Director. He noted that the school is very proud of how anchored Manana pursues his clear artistic vision.

“Diversity in one’s repertoire is always important. Manana strives for a unique style that transcends genres in his repertoire, using the best of various styles to bring world-class music to his audiences,” concludes Van Zyl. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com



SOUTH AFRICA’S BEER NAMED BEST IN AFRICA GOING AGAINST 270 OTHER BEERS

The African Beer Cup saw 270 beers from 16 African countries compete to win coveted awards. A local South African beer was named the best in Africa.

The competition has a stringent judging process, with all beers judged twice. Winning a medal is extremely prestigious, with a maximum of three medals awarded per category. Only beers reaching certain threshold scores are eligible for medals.

A team of highly experienced and prestigious judges from around the world evaluated the beers over the course of three days in Cape Town earlier this month. The judges awarded 62 medals across 32 categories, including the new African Grains category.

Golden, hoppy brews came from all across Africa, including Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles and Tanzania.

“In line with many other major competitions, we use the American Beer Judge Certification Programme guidelines in our judging process,” says Competition Director and Co-Founder Lucy Come.

“However, the beer scene across Africa has developed beyond following global beer trends and we’re now setting some trends of our own. This year, to reflect what is happening in craft beer around the continent, we introduced a new category to showcase beers that are using traditional African brewing grains, including sorghum, millet and fonio.”

The African Beer Cup was founded to celebrate all the good things happening within the craft industry throughout Africa and as the competition has grown, it has done so alongside the industry.

“The craft beer industry in Africa is still in its infant stages and the fact that the African Beer Cup has grown to 16 participating countries with 15 awards going to breweries outside of South Africa is testament to the fact that we can expect a lot of growth on our continent and will see a lot of exciting beers coming from the rest of Africa in the future,” says African Beer Cup partner and financial manager Romina Gaggero-Delicio.



The Best Beer in Africa

Soul Barrel Brewery, a microbrewery based in the Cape Winelands, officially makes the best beer in Africa. The brewery, which specialises in barrel-aged beers and beers featuring South African ingredients, won the top spot in the 2024 African Beer Cup and the biggest beer competition on the continent. Soul Barrel is the only brewery to win the accolade twice, also taking the top spot in the 2022 competition.

The winning beer, Ale of Origin, exemplifies Soul Barrel's brewing philosophy. The beer uses all South African ingredients, including local malt and wheat, hops from the Western Cape, Simonsberg mountain water and natural, wild yeast that floats in on the wind.

"Ale of Origin was brewed according to the world-renowned and fiercely traditional Belgian Lambic methods: raw wheat, aged hops and spontaneous fermentation, and is the only beer in South Africa brewed in this way," says Soul Barrel founder and brewmaster Nick Smith.

"The African Beer Cup is the most competitive, intense beer competition on the continent, with some of the best judges in the world. Winning with a beer that features local yeast and grain is a major achievement for South African beer. We believe in South African agriculture and this is just the start of what we can accomplish with local ingredients."

The winner of the African Grains category was awarded the African Celebration Award, sponsored by the Beer Association of South Africa (BASA). This year's winner was Johannesburg-based Swagga Brewery for their Sorghum Ale, an unhopped beer using 100% South African sorghum, described as "a modern brewer's take on the classic sorghum beer, fermented with English Ale yeast".

Another Soul Barrel beer, Wild African Soul, took the silver medal in the African Grains category, while Botswana-based Okavango Craft Brewery took the bronze for their Delta Lager, which uses 59% millet from farmers in northern Botswana. Medals also went to breweries from Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles and Tanzania.

"BASA not only values the African Beer Cup as a mark of quality and excellence, but also as an annual reminder of the huge potential African beers have when it comes to tourism. Our continent's beers are world-class and offer taste experiences to all types of visitors," – Charlene Louw, CEO of the Beer Association of South Africa – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

SPRING BOTS AIM TO HAVE ROBOTICS RECOGNISED AS A SPORT IN SOUTH AFRICA



Team Spring Bots South Africa is taking robotics to the future youth. The robotics team was established in 2018 and now represents South Africa on the international stage of all things STEM.

The team's core mission is to provide equal access to education, skills, and knowledge centred on STEM—the acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

Their latest goal is to have robotics officially recognised as a sport in South Africa.

"We are currently campaigning to have robotics recognised an official sport in South Africa, and we need the nation's help to achieve this goal. We are spearheading a campaign to have robotics declared as an official sport in South Africa, and we are seeking the support of esteemed companies, schools, and businesses as well as individuals to achieve this goal.

Robotics is not only a rapidly growing field but also an educational and engaging activity that combines elements of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)."

Declaring robotics as a sport will:

- encourage broader participation in STEM fields
- foster innovation and critical thinking among young people
- provide new opportunities for students to engage in team-based, competitive activities
- promote inclusivity and equal opportunities in education and sports.

“Globally, only two countries have declared robotics a sport. We believe South Africa can be the third, setting a precedent for innovation and forward-thinking in education and extracurricular activities. This initiative is part of a global campaign led by FIRST Global, and we are committed to doing our part.

In addition to advocating for the recognition of robotics as a sport, we are also working on establishing 100 new robotics teams across South Africa within the next year. To accomplish this ambitious goal, we need the support and commitment of our community” – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

A FIRST LOOK AT TEAM SOUTH AFRICA'S OLYMPIC KIT

With less than 100 days to go until the 2024 Paris Olympics, South Africans all over the country are already cracking their necks and practising their cheers for the athletes who will represent Mzansi at the world's most iconic sporting event. As if officially announcing the first squad of local athletes who will be bringing all the heat to Paris wasn't exciting enough, we now have a first glance at what our Olympic and Paralympic legends will be wearing as their Olympic kit.



The South African Sports Confederation, Olympic and Paralympic Committee (SASCOC) have teamed up with Mr Price Sport to create the Olympic kit, as revealed a little earlier this week.

Launched at the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site, inklings as to what the kit might look like were evident in the natural surrounds, as much of the kit is inspired by local landmarks, our flora and fauna and of course, our green and gold blood.

There, the kits made their official debut apt for daily wear as well as technical gear.

All the items were made in KwaZulu-Natal and the same design theme will also be showcased in the opening ceremony outfits. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

IMPRESSIVE SHARKS SEAL HISTORIC CHALLENGE CUP WIN

With their forwards leading the charge, the Hollywoodbets Sharks delivered an impressive and physical performance to become the first South African team to taste success in Europe with a 36-22 victory over Gloucester in the EPCR Challenge Cup final in London on Friday, 24 May 2024.

The Durbanites were under pressure early in the game, with a yellow card in the sixth minute to Aphelele Fassi (fullback) putting them on the back foot, but they excellently negated the Gloucester challenge and then



switched gears to take control of the game in the 20 minutes before and after half-time.

The Hollywoodbets Sharks led by 16-3 at the break, with Siya Masuku (flyhalf) faultless off the tee with three penalty goals added to his conversion of Phepsi Buthelezi's superb try in the 25th minute, in which he broke three tackles before selling a beautiful dummy to race over the tryline for the opening five-pointer of the match.

Masuku added two more penalty goals early in the second half before two tries in quick succession, by Fassi and Makazole Mapimpi (wing), from a pin-point cross-kick by his flyhalf, between the 55th and 60th minutes which all but sealed the deal for the Hollywoodbets Sharks.

Both tries were converted by Masuku, who finished the game having kicked eight from nine off the tee for a personal contribution of 21 points.

But the Sharks flyhalf could not have done that if it wasn't for his pack's dominant performance. Although their lineout wasn't perfect, the KwaZulu-Natalians smashed their English opponents in the scrum, with the Springbok front row of Ox Nche, Bongi Mbonambi and Vincent Kock - the Player of the Match - laying the foundation.

Gloucester hit back with two tries in the final five minutes to give their points tally a boost, but apart from the opening 15 minutes or so, they were never really in the game.

In the end, the KwaZulu-Natalians had marginally more possession and territory, both teams' stats for successful lineouts and tackles were the same and they scored three tries apiece, but where the Hollywoodbets Sharks got 100% for their scrums, Gloucester only won 56% of theirs, and that was the difference.

With this victory, the team from Durban not only made history but also booked their spot in the Investec Champions Cup for next season. – Source: www.sarugby.co.za

A RECORD-BREAKING THROW AND A MEDAL SHOW FOR SOUTH AFRICAN PARA-ATHLETES

Simone Kruger made a record-breaking throw at the World Para Athletics Championships held in Japan, adding another reason for South Africa to be proud alongside all the medals our athletes earned.

Simone Kruger banked another world title thanks to a record-breaking throw (38.82m) in the Women's Discus F38 event, in which she also won gold. A serious title defender, the record she broke was none other than her own.



Her gold brought South Africa's gold tally up to two, with Mpumelelo Mhlongo having earned the first gold for South Africa at Worlds for his epic men's T44 100m event (which he finished in 11.36 seconds).

All in all, South Africa concluded the Para Athletics World Championships with six medals, including silver from Puseletso Michael Mabote for the men's 100m T63 and the bronze claimers:

- Collen Mahlalela (men's 400m T47)
- Louzanne Coetzee (women's 1500m T11)
- Lizel Gouws (women's 400m T37)

A massive round of applause for our athletes who have just turned up the excitement on what we can expect from the upcoming 2024 Paralympics. – Source: www.goodthingguys.com

