

UBUNTU NEWSFLASH



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WEEKLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

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SA-EU SUMMIT A “WATERSHED” MOMENT FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT RELATIONS

The eighth South Africa-European Union (EU) Summit held in Cape Town last week was a “watershed” moment for trade and investment relations between South Africa and the regional bloc.

This is according to President Cyril Ramaphosa, who reflected on the summit in his weekly newsletter on Monday, 17 March 2025.

“As a bloc, the European Union (EU) is one of South Africa’s largest trading partners and the source of much investment in our country. Our economic ties with European countries go back to colonial times. Since the advent of democracy 30 years ago, we have steadily been growing the volume and value of trade.

“This summit will be remembered as a watershed moment in the development of our trade and investment relations. While expanding our traditional areas of cooperation, we are now focused on working together to develop the industries of the future,” the President said.

He stated that South Africa and the EU agreed to work together towards a Clean Trade and Investment Partnership.



“This partnership will support the development of value chains that are more environmentally sustainable. It will make South Africa and the EU more competitive in a low-carbon global economy by improving conditions for investment in the extraction and local beneficiation of rare minerals, renewable energy, low-carbon hydrogen and clean technology.

“This partnership will improve cooperation between South Africa and the EU on some of the regulatory issues that constrain greater levels of trade. This work should enable South African companies to export products like sustainable fuel and electric and hybrid vehicles to the EU,” he said.

A key outcome of the SA-EU Summit was an announcement of a €4.7 billion (approximately R90 billion) investment package aimed at supporting investment projects in the country.

According to the President, the package will “include grants and loans from European financial institutions and businesses”.

“Among other things, this investment will be used to build South Africa’s vaccine production capacity and boost local pharmaceutical value chains.

“The package will also support South Africa’s just energy transition through the development of critical raw minerals and low carbon hydrogen. In addition to investments in transport and digital infrastructure, the package will provide resources for skills development,” President Ramaphosa said.

On the global stage

The summit also reaffirmed the “unwavering commitment of South Africa and the EU to multilateralism, the consistent application of international law and the centrality of the United Nations Charter”.

“We agreed that a collective effort was needed by all countries to overcome global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, rising inequality and conflict.

“The EU shares South Africa’s view that the UN Security Council needs to be reformed so that it is more inclusive, efficient and democratic. In its composition and actions, the Security Council needs to better reflect the realities of today’s world. We also agreed to strengthen efforts to safeguard and advance human rights across the world,” he said.

Furthermore, the EU expressed its support for South Africa’s G20 Presidency this year and welcomed the country’s “focus on forging partnerships between G20 members and other African countries”.

The President said the two parties agreed that collective global effort is needed to overcome current global challenges.

“We share similar views on how to navigate these difficult times, by standing together to uphold the principles of the UN Charter, to adhere to international law and to strengthen the institutions of global cooperation.

“Above all, we are committed to the mutual well-being and development of the peoples of South Africa and all the member states of the European Union. We have a shared vision of the future, and we are determined to work together to achieve it,” President Ramaphosa concluded. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

DEPUTY PRESIDENT MASHATILE ARRIVES IN JAPAN FOR A WORKING VISIT

Deputy President Paul Mashatile arrived at Narita International Airport in Tokyo, Japan, on Sunday, 16 March 2025, for a Working Visit aimed at strengthening the cooperation between South Africa and Japan in areas of mutual interest.



According to The Presidency, the two countries have strong diplomatic relations, particularly in trade, investment, education, and science and technology.

“Japan is one of South Africa’s major economic partners with a sizeable investment in the South African economy, and potential for increased investment exists,” the statement read.

During the Working Visit, the Deputy President and his delegation will engage with the business community in Japan to enhance economic relations. They will focus on key areas such as manufacturing and machinery, mining and mineral beneficiation, energy cooperation, the automotive industry, and improving market access for South Africa’s agricultural products.

The Deputy President and his delegation visited the Isuzu Fujisawa Plant in Japan on Monday, 17 March 2025. Isuzu is a multinational corporation that produces commercial vehicles, diesel engines, and automotive parts, and it has a significant presence in South Africa.

During this visit, the Deputy President met with Dr Akihiko Tanaka, the President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). JICA is a government agency that is actively involved in various development projects in South Africa.

On Tuesday, 18 March 2025, the Deputy President and his delegation had a breakfast meeting with the Japan-African Union Parliamentary Friendship League, which aims to promote economic cooperation and trade between Japan and African countries.

In addition, the Deputy President paid a courtesy visit to Prime Minister Ishiba Shigeru of Japan and visited the Meiji Jingu Shinto Shrine.

The Deputy President delivered a keynote address at the United Nations University, focusing on the theme *South Africa’s G20 Presidency: Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability—a Conversation with Japan*.

On Wednesday, 19 March 2025, the Deputy President and his team participated in roundtable discussions hosted by the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) and the Japan Organisation for Metals and Energy Security (JOGMEC).

The Deputy President also hosted South African rugby players based in Japan at the South African official residence.

The Deputy President was supported by several officials, including the Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Tandi Moraka; the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, Gayton McKenzie; the Minister of Higher Education, Dr Nobuhle Nkabane; the Minister of Agriculture, John

SOUTH AFRICA FOCUSES ON IMPROVING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES

Deputy President Paul Mashatile says South Africa is working on stabilising relations with the United States of America (USA), given the long-standing ties between the two nations.



Addressing the seventh BizNews Conference (BNC#7) at the Hermanus Municipal Auditorium in the Western Cape last week, the Deputy President said this partnership is also significant to South Africa's economic development goals.

The BizNews Conference is an annual event focused on investment, business, and political issues.

The Deputy President emphasised the need for collaborative efforts in light of recent cuts to key health funding programmes, such as the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). PEPFAR was established by former President George W. Bush in 2003 and continued under various administrations.

"The withdrawal of PEPFAR funding highlights the urgent need for South Africa to further strengthen its own interventions to reach the most vulnerable and access health services and support," Deputy President Mashatile said.

He said the opportunity showed the importance of bolstering the country's own healthcare interventions and ensuring the delivery of health services without heavy reliance on external assistance.

"In this regard, we have been investing heavily in healthcare reform and responding to the dual epidemics of HIV, AIDS, and TB. The Department of Health has put measures in place to ensure that patients receiving TB and HIV treatment are not affected and do not default," said the Deputy President.

The Deputy President encouraged stakeholders to unite and support government in promoting South Africa's interests in the United States of America (USA), including through mechanisms such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

"The loss of AGOA benefits would have the most devastating effect on South African farmers and agriculture workers. AGOA is presently providing support to South Africa's agriculture and manufacturing sectors, which is expected to generate around US\$21 billion in trade with the USA.

"Therefore, our position is that South Africa should maintain strong bilateral relations with the USA. Most importantly, as a country, we are committed to improving mutually beneficial trade, political, and diplomatic relations with the USA," he said.

Diversifying export markets and growing the economy

The country's second-in-command stated that South Africa should push for diversified export markets, citing ongoing engagement with global powers such as China, Russia, India, and various European countries.

In addition, Deputy President Mashatile highlighted the importance of intra-African trade and financial cooperation through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). According to the Deputy President, the AfCFTA is a crucial step toward reducing dependency on volatile global markets.

The Deputy President believes that South Africa's wealth of natural resources, including significant agricultural potential, is positioned as an attraction for investment.

He said government is committed to removing blockages to economic growth, lifting economic expansion to above 3% in the medium-term, and creating a cycle of investment, growth and jobs.

He outlined government's plans to focus on improving productivity and innovating skills development through the National Digital and Future Skills Strategy as part of a broader vision for a knowledge-based economy.

Furthermore, he said the newly approved Reconceptualised Human Resource Development Strategy outlines priority goals aimed at enhancing early education outcomes, increasing youth employability, and ensuring that higher education aligns with market demands.

FATF grey list

The Deputy President said South Africa is making steady progress in efforts to be removed from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list.

"Through new legislation, we have strengthened our ability to prevent money laundering and fraud and secure South Africa's removal from the grey list of the FATF."

He said the country has addressed 20 of the 22 action items relating to combatting money laundering and terrorist financing.

"These improvements are essential not only to remove ourselves from the grey list but also to strengthen the battle against crime and corruption, which is crucial for the betterment of all South Africans.

"We will continue to resolve both remaining action items by June, towards our removal from the grey list by October 2025," he said.

Moreover, the Deputy President committed that South Africa would use its Group of Twenty (G20) Presidency to place Africa's development at the top of the agenda. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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SOUTH AFRICA CONDEMNS ISRAELI AIRSTRIKES ON GAZA, BREACHING THE TWO-MONTH CEASEFIRE

South Africa condemns the massive Israeli airstrikes launched across Gaza on Tuesday, 18 March 2025, which have killed over 350 Palestinians. These deadly airstrikes emerge after a failure to implement the second stage of the peace agreement by Israel and despite ongoing negotiations to ensure that the ceasefire holds.

The fatal attacks were reportedly greenlighted by the Israeli leadership more than a week ago, which again raises concerns about the commitment to a permanent ceasefire as envisaged in the ceasefire plan brokered by the United States of America, Egypt, and Qatar. According to the Palestinian Health Ministry, many of those killed were children and several victims remain under the rubble.

The airstrikes were concentrated on heavily built-up neighbourhoods, makeshift schools and residential buildings where people have been sheltering, which is again a blatant violation of international law, including international humanitarian law.

South Africa is gravely concerned by the military onslaught and the fact that millions of people in Gaza are facing severe food and water shortages as Israel continues to block aid and cut off energy supplies to the strip. Israel, which has enforced a total blockade of Gaza, has now issued new forced displacement orders for several areas.



The provisional orders issued by the International Court of Justice oblige Israel to take all measures within its power to prevent acts of genocide, ensure humanitarian assistance reaches Gaza, and preserve evidence related to alleged genocide.

The United Nations’ Humanitarian Coordinator for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Muhannad Hadi, has urged that the ceasefire in Gaza be immediately reinstated and called the waves of airstrikes across the Gaza Strip since the early hours of the morning “unconscionable.”

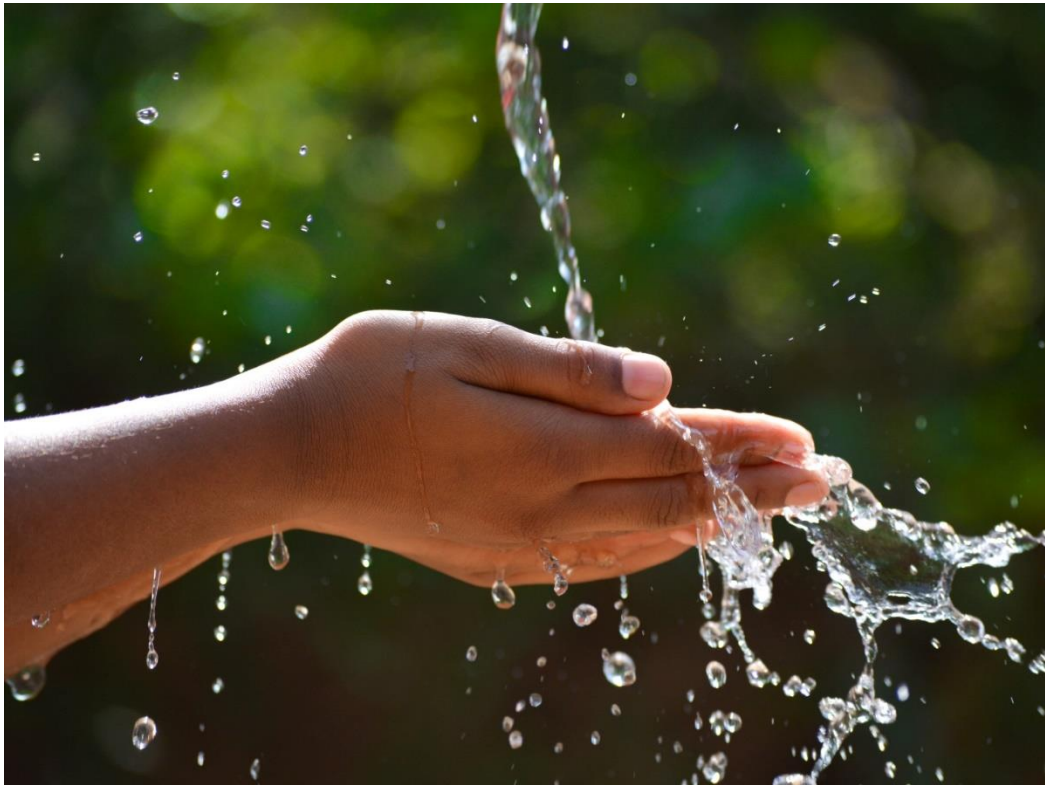
South Africa also condemns the four targeted Israeli military strikes launched against southern Syria overnight, which killed at least two and wounded 19 others on the outskirts of the southern Syrian province of Deraa.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Israel targeted a military site previously used by former President Bashar al-Assad’s forces but which is now used by the army of Syria’s transitional government. Israel’s airstrikes and previous statements that it does not want any Syrian military presence in the south of Syria are a violation of Syria’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. – Source: www.dircogov.za

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SOUTH AFRICA, DUTCH COLLABORATES TO IMPROVE WATER MANAGEMENT

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), together with the Dutch Water Authorities, have held a Blue Deal Steering Committee meeting, focusing on the Blue Deal South Africa Programme, which aims to improve water management and access to clean water in South Africa.



According to the department, the meeting, held in Pretoria on Friday, 14 March 2025, aimed at enabling an environment for future Blue Deal partnerships, discussing lessons learnt from the various projects, and providing strategic direction to address key bottlenecks.

“This Blue Deal Programme is a collaboration between the Republic of South Africa and the Government of the Netherlands to support water management by exchanging knowledge and experiences, assisting national, regional, and local organisations, and cooperating with key stakeholders. The Blue Deal South Africa Programme will specifically contribute to clean and sufficient water,” the department said in a statement.

During the meeting, the two parties discussed the Crocodile River Revitalisation Action Plan and its adoption and the Theewaterskloof Project Non-Sewer Sanitation pilot project.

“The Crocodile River faces threats of pollution from agriculture, industry, and municipalities. The performance of the wastewater treatment plants in the area is inadequate. The challenge is to improve the operation of the municipal wastewater management systems to ensure better water quality in the river.

“The objective of the Theewaterskloof project is to reduce pollution by improving sanitation and solid waste management through innovative solutions, such as non-sewered sanitation and harnessing the circular economy.

“General discussions covered the status of ongoing projects, a recap of 2024 Blue Deal activities, the outlook for the 2025 projects, and developments regarding international collaborations,” the department said.

DWS Director of International Relations, Albert Mmbidi, said, “Today was an important day in the history of the Blue Deal programme. As a team, we managed to review the progress that the project has already made and the challenges, and we proposed solutions to the issues raised.

“We are confident that out of the solutions we have proposed, the programme will be able to run efficiently and strengthen the relationship between the two countries,” Mmbidi said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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WELL WISHES FOR FORMER MINISTER PANDOR AS SHE TAKES UP NEW ACADEMIC ROLE

Higher Education and Training Minister, Dr Nobuhle Nkabane, has congratulated former Cabinet Minister, Dr Naledi Pandor, on her recent appointment as an Honorary Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria (UP).

Minister Nkabane said this achievement is a fitting recognition of Dr Pandor's extensive contributions to the South African higher education sector, having served admirably as the Minister of Education; Science and Technology; Higher Education and Training; and more recently, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO).

Minister Nkabane noted Dr Pandor's significant contribution to reconfiguring the South African higher education landscape in the post-apartheid era by ensuring that the restructuring of the higher education sector serves South Africans, irrespective of race, gender, and other forms of exclusion.

The Minister also noted Dr Pandor's visionary leadership and a pivotal role she played in transforming the South African higher education system, promoting social justice and equality through progressive policies.

"South Africa has positioned itself at the forefront of science, technology, and innovation, thanks to the solid foundation laid by Dr Pandor. Her unwavering commitment to building an inclusive and coordinated higher education sector is commendable," Minister Nkabane said in a statement on Monday, 17 March 2025.



She said the University of Pretoria had made an excellent and befitting appointment, highlighting that Dr Pandor's knowledge and passion for transformation will "undoubtedly enrich the university and the broader higher education community."

"Her academic achievements, including her doctoral research on transformation in the South African higher education context, reflect her deep commitment to shaping a progressive and inclusive sector."

Minister Nkabane further expressed her personal admiration for Dr Pandor, saying, "It is an honour to stand on the shoulders of giants like Dr Pandor, whose mentorship and guidance continue to inspire me."

"I consider her a mentor, mother, and a constant source of wisdom as we navigate the challenges facing our higher education system. Her contribution to the sector is invaluable, and I wish her every success in this exciting new chapter.

"The Department of Higher Education and Training wishes Dr Pandor well in her new role and looks forward to the positive impact she will continue to make within the higher education space," Minister Nkabane said.

Contribution to development

Meanwhile, University Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Francis Petersen, said Dr Pandor joins UP's Centre for the Advancement of Sustainable Higher Education Futures, where she will contribute without remuneration to research, as well as student and staff development.

Speaking at a recent event held at UP's Hatfield campus to welcome Dr Pandor, Prof. Petersen said that Dr Pandor is a leader whose impact on education, policy, and innovation, and whose unwavering commitment to advancing higher education and sustainable development aligns perfectly with the mission of the centre.

"It is truly a privilege to have someone of her calibre joining our academic network in this esteemed role."

Prof. Petersen highlighted that Dr Pandor's appointment followed an external peer-review process and was vetted by the Senior Appointments Committee of the UP Senate. The university's Registrar issued a formal note confirming that Professor Pandor is permitted to use the title of "Professor."

Dr Pandor received a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Education from UP in 2019, after completing her doctoral thesis, titled *The Contested Meaning of Transformation in Higher Education in Post-apartheid South Africa*.

“Her passion for education stems from her background as a teacher and a lifelong curiosity about the field. Through her research, Prof Pandor explored the vast and rewarding landscape in education, while acquiring academic and research skills,” the Vice-Chancellor said.

He added that the honorary professorship was a testament, not only to her academic abilities and remarkable contributions to transformation, but also to her excellence as a leader with strong ethical values.

“Balancing the responsibilities of a Cabinet Minister and PhD student was no easy task. She meticulously planned her schedule and dedicated every available moment outside work and politics to her studies, even reducing her public engagements. Despite the challenges, she remained committed to her academic goals,” Prof. Petersen said. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

SOUTH AFRICA SUCCESSFULLY HOSTS KEY G20 WORKING GROUPS AND TASK FORCE MEETINGS

As part of its Group of Twenty (G20) presidency, South Africa has successfully hosted a series of high-level G20 Working Groups and Task Force meetings during this month, focusing on global challenges such as corruption, food security, disaster risk reduction, agriculture, and tourism.

The first Anti-Corruption Working Group Meeting, held in Cape Town from 3 to 5 March 2025, focused on mechanisms to enhance the implementation of legal instruments to fight corruption. Cabinet said in a statement that this meeting was an opportunity for participants to establish the agenda and lay the groundwork for future discussions, encouraging dialogue and collaboration to strengthen anti-corruption strategies.



“During this meeting, participants discussed and agreed on these several key priorities which are strengthening public sector integrity; increasing asset recovery efficiency; inclusive participation; and whistle-blower protection,” Cabinet said.

Agriculture Working Group

The First Agriculture Working Group Meeting, held virtually on 3 and 4 March, discussed critical issues that affect agricultural stakeholders worldwide and agreed on priorities for the year ahead.

The group established four key priorities:

- Promoting inclusive market participation and food security;
- Empowering youth and women in agrifood systems;
- Fostering innovation and technology transfer; and
- Building climate resilience for sustainable agriculture.

Tourism Working Group

On 5 March, the First Tourism Working Group Meeting, also held virtually, deliberated on how tourism can be used to change people’s lives, communities and the world.

The group also identified four focus areas for the year ahead, namely:

- Leveraging people-centred artificial intelligence (AI) and innovation to support travel and tourism start-ups and SMMEs,
- Enhancing tourism financing and investment to promote equality and sustainability,
- Improving air connectivity for seamless travel, and
- Boosting resilience for inclusive, sustainable tourism development.

Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group

The First Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group Meeting also held virtually on 5 March, discussed the acceleration of early warnings for all initiatives, which is a key global target set by the United Nations and reinforced the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

“South Africa sees this meeting as a key international forum to drive the agenda of a shared responsibility to build resilience, strengthen our cooperation, and drive meaningful action that is needed to prevent an escalation or exacerbation of risk,” Cabinet said.

Key priorities included:

- addressing Inequalities and Reducing Vulnerabilities
- Global Coverage of Early Warning Systems
- Disaster Resilient Infrastructure
- Financing for Disaster Risk Reduction
- Disaster Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction; and
- Ecosystems-Based Approaches for DRR/Nature-Based Solutions.
- Food Security Task Force

The First Task Force Meeting on Food Security, held virtually on 5 March, discussed policies and programmes to improve food security.

“Participants agreed to build a stronger, fairer, and more sustainable food system. They also committed to address key challenges like trade barriers, funding for food production, and the impact of climate change on food supply chains,” Cabinet said.

Some of the priorities outcomes discussed are the following:

- Food security policies
- Stable food prices
- Clear regulations & standards
- G20 Action Plan for Food Security; and
- Ministerial approval & implementation

G20 Outreach Programme

On 7 March 2025, the G20 Outreach Programme was held at the University of Venda in Thohoyandou to encourage public engagement in South Africa’s G20 presidency.

Citizens were urged to welcome international delegates, promote South Africa’s cultural heritage, and share positive narratives about the country.

“The gathering was used to encourage the people of this country to get involved in welcoming our guests to the country as we continue to host meetings in various parts of the country and to promote their culture and heritage. South Africans were also encouraged to tell a good story about their country,” Cabinet said.

The following G20 Working Groups and Task Forces meetings are scheduled to take place until the end of March 2025:

- First Task Force Meeting: Inclusive Economic Growth, Industrialisation, Employment, and Reduce Inequality: 17 March 2025, Virtual.
- First Trade and Investment Working Group Meeting: 18-20 March 2025, Virtual.
- Second Health Working Group: 26-28 March 2025, Durban.
- First Climate and Environment Sustainability Working Group Meeting: 25-28 March 2025, Virtual.

For more information on these various G20 meetings and their outcomes can be accessed on www.g20.org OR www.g20.org.za. – Source: SAnews.gov.za

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CAPE TOWN TOURISM CRUISING THIS MARCH WITH 24 SHIP CALLS

Cape Town Cruise Terminal is experiencing a bumper 2024/25 season, with 76 ship calls scheduled so far for the period ending June. This is up from 67 last season. Cruise Cape Town, powered by Wesgro, says 24 of these ship calls are scheduled for March alone.



This will help bring thousands of visitors to the region, providing a welcome boost for tourism and businesses. During the 2023/24 season, cruise tourism contributed R1.32 billion to the regional economy, up from R1.2 billion in the previous period. The total expenditure generated by vessels and passengers reached R1.5 billion, surpassing the R1.4 billion recorded the year before.

March has traditionally been a key month for cruise tourism, with Cape Town's late-summer weather making it a popular stop on international cruise routes. Many ships also reposition between hemispheres during this time, making Cape Town an attractive destination for operators and travellers alike.

"The growth in cruise arrivals this March highlights Cape Town's growing reputation as a must-visit destination," said Wrenelle Stander, CEO of Wesgro, the tourism, trade, and investment promotion agency for Cape Town and the Western Cape. "Beyond the immediate tourism boost, the industry has positive ripple effects, from tour operators and transport services to restaurants, hotels and retailers."

With more ships in port, the city is preparing for increased activity in and around the terminal. Alderman James Vos, Mayoral Committee Member for Economic Growth at the City of Cape Town, added: "Cape Town offers an exceptional experience for cruise passengers, and the March arrivals will not only create a buzz in the city but will also provide a major boost to our economy, as for every 36 cruise passenger arrivals, one job is created."

"The City is taking proactive traffic management steps, together with our partners, to manage this increase in arrivals," added Vos.

The V&A Waterfront, which operates the Cape Town Cruise Terminal, has designated transport options for cruise passengers and enhanced security measures. There will also be increased traffic marshals on days where high volumes are expected. – Source: www.bizcommunity.com

CAPE TOWN CARNIVAL WOWS THE MOTHER CITY CROWDS

The streets of Green Point reverberated with excitement as the Cape Town Carnival kicked off its 15th edition this past weekend, captivating both locals and visitors alike.



WATCH THE VIDEO

With the powerful rumble of Harley Davidson motorcycles announcing the parade's start, the Mother City witnessed an electrifying display of creativity and culture, showcasing the very best of its diverse community, *Cape {town} Etc* reports.

As thousands gathered along the Fan Walk, they were greeted with a stunning array of performances from a wide array of participants, including the City of Cape Town firefighters, DHL Stormers rugby players, esteemed local artists and passionate community groups hailing from various corners of the region.

This year's spectacle revolved around the theme of WowZA!, which aimed to capture the bold, vibrant energy synonymous with Cape Town and South Africa.

"We are privileged to provide a platform for Cape Town's community artists, allowing them to share their brilliance with the thousands of Carnival-goers who bring this event to life," reflected Jay Douwes, CEO of the Cape Town Carnival.

The carnival serves as a vibrant showcase for musicians, performers, and artisans who have worked diligently throughout the year to contribute to its success.

From belly dancers to brass bands, rollerbladers to traditional dancers, and even dragons and drum majorettes, the parade offered something for everyone. Behind the scenes, skilled artisans dedicated countless hours to design and construct fantastical floats that accompanied the performers in this colourful procession.

Captivated fans cheered on players from the DHL Stormers as they showcased their customary *Taking the Cape by Storm* float down Somerset Street, dancing enthusiastically to the rhythm of distinctly South African music.

According to Rachel Jafta, Chairperson of the Cape Town Carnival Trust, the event has blossomed into a uniquely South African highlight within the city's cultural calendar over its 15-year journey.

"What makes the Cape Town Carnival so special is how it has evolved into a truly South African spectacle, reflected in its music, dance, and breathtaking floats."

"This year's parade, centred around the theme of WowZA!, showcased Cape Town's most iconic elements, and the joy it brought was evident on every face present," Jafta stated.

A remarkable addition to this year's event was Brazilian guest Erika Januza, also known as the "Queen of the Drums" from the Rio Carnival, who brought an international flair to the celebrations.

The floats not only commemorated local pride but also embraced a universal theme of creativity and community, underscored by powerful performances from notable South African artists.

YoungstaCPT electrified the crowd atop his Gatsby float, while hip hop sensation Bravo Le Roux joined the parade for his inaugural appearance, alongside Paxton Fielies, a shining star from Cape Town.

MMC for Safety and Security JP Smith, who participated in the parade, highlighted the carnival's pivotal role in fostering unity among the city's diverse residents.

"Aside from creating jobs, boosting the economy and being one of the eight signature events in our city, what the Cape Town Carnival does best is social cohesion."

"It reminds us that Capetonians are one and that there is more that unites us than sets us apart," Smith commented.

Adding to the sentiments, Hennie Myburgh, station manager of Kfm 94.5, expressed his pride in the longstanding partnership with the event.

"It's amazing to see Cape Town come together to celebrate this incredibly joyous night. We are proud to be part of it." – Source: www.capetownetc.com

SOUTH AFRICA'S NARRATIVE THERAPIST NOMINATED FOR WOMEN CHANGING THE WORLD AWARDS

South Africa's world-renowned narrative therapist and psychosocial specialist, Ncazelo Mlilo, has been nominated in the prestigious Women Changing the World Awards.

The awards, according to a statement by the psychosocial organisation, Phola, are like the Grammy Awards for recognising women across the world who are doing incredible work, making a positive difference in various industries and areas, including business, sustainability, leadership, health, education, product development, innovation, and technology.

Mlilo, who is based in Johannesburg, has been selected for two categories, the People's Choice Award for Non-Profit and Social Enterprise and the Women in Therapy and Counselling Services Award.

This recognition celebrates the groundbreaking work in mental health, her development of Afrocentric, culturally sensitive narrative-based methodologies, and her dedication to empowering communities worldwide.

The awards ceremony will take place during a summit in London, in the United Kingdom, on 2 and 3 April 2025.

Mlilo has over 25 years' experience in trauma counselling. She has worked with children, youth, women, families, and communities to address the effects of HIV, AIDS, gender-based violence (GBV), poverty, conflict, and other hardships.

Mlilo co-created the Tree of Life (ToL) Methodology, currently used in over 60 countries, including the United States of America, Brazil, Australia, Canada, Iran, India, Germany, Japan, Sweden, and across Africa.

She has developed other methodologies like COURAGE, the Narratives in the Suitcase Project, and O.U.T.R.R.A.G.E.D. for GBV prevention.

Mlilo trains over 1 000 mental health practitioners worldwide every year, with her work reaching an estimated 100 000 people annually.

She is also a prominent keynote speaker at international conferences, including the Trust's Collective Narrative Practices Conference held in 2024 in Australia, the Narrative Therapy Centre Conference, where she spoke about the Narratives in the Suitcase, held in Australia in 2023, among others.

As a result, her work is the intervention of choice in these global institutions, like the Dulwich Centre Foundation in Australia and NHS Foundation Trust in the United Kingdom. – Source: SAnews.gov.za



BRAND SOUTH AFRICA CONGRATULATES DR PATRICE MOTSEPE ON HIS RE-ELECTION AS CAF PRESIDENT

Brand South Africa proudly congratulates South African visionary businessman Dr Patrice Motsepe on his re-election as President of the Confédération Africaine de Football (CAF) at the 14th CAF Extraordinary General Assembly in Cairo, Egypt. His unopposed victory reflects the confidence in his leadership and the significant progress African football has made under his guidance.



Since taking office in March 2021, Dr Motsepe has led CAF's transformation, making African football more competitive and self-sustaining. His first term saw historic milestones, including CAF's financial turnaround, with the 2023 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) generating a record US\$72 million profit—18 times higher than the previous edition. Infrastructure development has also advanced, reducing the number of countries without suitable stadiums from 36 to 12.

Dr Motsepe has emphasised his commitment to building on these successes to further position African football on the global stage. His leadership has driven growth across multiple spheres, a journey documented in a special publication, *The Growth and Success of African Football Continues*.

As he embarks on his second term, Brand South Africa celebrates Dr Motsepe's achievements and his vision for African football's future. His leadership continues to inspire progress, ensuring Africa's place as a powerhouse in the global game. – Source: brandsouthafrica.com

ANGELA YEUNG TAKES ON EVEREST TO UPLIFT SURVIVORS OF GBV

Angela Yeung is no stranger to scaling new heights, both in mountaineering and in her mission to create real change. The Brand South Africa ambassador, entrepreneur, and founder of the Impilo Collection Foundation has set her sights on Mount Everest's formidable North Side, preparing for a climb that is about far more than personal achievement.

Her goal? To collect 8 849 bras, one for every metre of Everest's elevation, to restore dignity to survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) in South Africa.



“Climbing Everest is a monumental challenge, but it pales in comparison to the daily battles faced by survivors of GBV,” says Yeung. “Each bra we collect symbolises a message of solidarity: You are seen, valued, and deserving of dignity.”

South Africa's GBV crisis has been described as the country's “second pandemic,” with statistics revealing a woman is murdered every four hours, and over 12 000 rape cases reported in just three months. A number that experts believe is vastly underreported. For many survivors, something as simple as a bra represents dignity, comfort, and a step towards reclaiming independence. A reality that led to the creation of the EmpowerHer Programme. Through this initiative, Yeung is using her Everest expedition to raise awareness and, more importantly, to take action.

“For me, a climb is not just a climb; it is a mirror of the struggles we face as human beings,” says Yeung. “Like the tenacity needed to conquer Everest's North Side, a route known for its extreme challenges, survivors of GBV summon immense courage every day to rebuild their lives. The mountain reminds us of this, and the bras will too.”

Yeung is no stranger to high-altitude endurance. Her past climbs have been physical, mental, and symbolic battles, each tied to her advocacy work.

- November 2022: She summited Island Peak (6,165m), mirroring her collection of 6,165 bras displayed at Constitution Hill.
- September 2023: She became the first South African to reach the TRUE summit of Mount Manaslu (8,163m), despite sustaining a foot injury during her descent.
- October 2024: She conquered Ama Dablam (6,812m) in Nepal, proving her unwavering commitment to her cause.

Everest awaits. April to June 2025 will see her take on the world's highest peak in a mission of endurance, solidarity, and impact.

“This is not just my climb; it's every single South African's climb. Together, we can transform Everest into a beacon of hope,” ends Yeung. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

FOURTEEN SOUTH AFRICAN ENTREPRENEURS WIN PRESTIGIOUS FORTY UNDER 40 AFRICA AWARDS

Fourteen inspiring South Africans are making waves in the entrepreneurial world, and their respective fields are shining at the recent Forty Under 40 Africa Awards.

Recognised on the African business stage for being trailblazers in their fields of aviation, health, governance and technology, to name but a few, these inspiring South African entrepreneurs won top honours at the Forty Under 40 Africa Awards held in Egypt recently.

The Forty Under Africa 40 2025 honorary awards winners included Nicola Vermooten of Accessed NPC, which specialises in child development, and Zama Winnie Mbali Ngcobo of WMN Attorneys Inc., which specialises in law.



The category winners who put our country on the map were Amanda Buyiswa Nyumkunkwa Kandawire of Fly Like a Girl (Aviation), Tyrin Naidoo of City of Johannesburg (Governance and Government Agencies), Kerri-Lee Taylor of Kiko Vitals (Health), Darren Meltz of Secret Eats (Hospitality), Kudakwashe Maradzika of Lincoln Green Media (Journalism TV), Lucia Dramat of Lucia Dramat (Journalism Radio), Sharai Zinyemba of Apex Procurement Specialists Pty Ltd (Logistics), Eugene Nagel of ChilliPix (Media), Gift Mdlalose of Music Business Academy Southern Africa (Music and Entertainment), Nishaan Kishore of The Infinity Charm Foundation (Philanthropy & Charity), Jamie Thurston Wyngaard of Loop (Innovation) and Marius Brits of 360 Administration and Systems (Technology).

Each winner undoubtedly deserves their awards and is a powerhouse in their own right, pushing boundaries with innovative ideas and being bold enough to bring them to life for the greater benefit of society.

These businessmen and women's recent achievements are a testament to South African business innovation and leadership, showcasing how local entrepreneurs are setting new standards in their various fields while competing on an international level. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

NARA SMITH AND TYLA PUT SOUTH AFRICAN PAP ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

Pap isn't just food. It's heritage, it's home, and now, thanks to Nara Smith and Tyla, it's going global.



Pap, also known as mielie meal porridge, is a staple in many South African households. Made from maize meal, it can be soft and smooth or firm and crumbly, often paired with chakalaka, stews, or a good old-fashioned braai. It's more than just a dish; it's comfort, culture, and home on a plate.

Now, thanks to the power of social media, pap has found its way onto millions of screens worldwide, this time, through the hands of Nara Smith.



Who is Nara Smith?

If you've scrolled through TikTok, you've probably come across Nara Smith's beautifully aesthetic, old-school cooking videos. With over 11.5 million followers, she's gained a massive fanbase by making everything from scratch. Think homemade fast food, pastries, and now, South African pap.

Nara's roots run deep in Mzansi. She was born in Bloemfontein to a South African mom and a German dad. When she was just three months old, her family moved to Frankfurt, Germany, where she grew up until she turned 18. So, while she's been living abroad for most of her life, there's a little bit of South Africa running through everything she does. And now, that connection is making waves in the kitchen.

In her latest video, Nara took to the kitchen to prepare pap, sharing the experience with her followers. Her take on the dish has sparked conversations around South African food culture, showing just how far a simple plate of pap can go in connecting people across continents.

Just a month before Nara's video, South African music sensation Tyla had her own viral pap moment. In a special episode of Vogue's *Cooking with Stars*, she casually pulled a bag of maize meal out of her handbag and made pap and boerewors.

From TikTok to Vogue, from Nara to Tyla, pap is having a moment, and it's absolutely beautiful to see. It's more than just food; it's culture, nostalgia, and a delicious piece of South Africa making its way across the world. – Source: www.goodthingsguy.com

TEAM SA COMMENDED FOR PERFORMANCE AT 2025 SPECIAL OLYMPICS WORLD WINTER GAMES

The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities has congratulated the Special Olympics South Africa (SOSA) athletes for their outstanding performance at the 2025 Special Olympics World Winter Games in Turin, Italy.



This comes after team South Africa brought home one gold medal, three silver medals, and two bronze medals.

The athletes Bianca Basson, Frankfort Mokabo, Naledi Hlalele, and Tyrell Sykes competed in figure skating, while Shane Bentley and Shirnel Swarts competed in short track speed skating.

They received a hero's welcome at OR International Airport during their return home on Monday, 17 March 2025, with their medals around their necks.

The department commended the athletes for their resilience, dedication, and true spirit of sportsmanship on the international stage.

"The Department of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities [DWYPD] recognises the critical role that sports play in empowering persons with disabilities and fostering social cohesion. The achievements of our athletes serve as an inspiration to the youth of our country, proving that with determination and opportunity, greatness can be achieved," the department said on Tuesday, 18 March 2025.

The DWYPD also called on South Africans to join in celebrating their achievements and to continue supporting inclusive sporting initiatives.

"Let us recognise and honour these champions who have made our nation proud on the global stage. The success of the Special Olympics team underscores the urgent call for South Africans to foster an inclusive society that will embrace sports as a vehicle to drive societal change."

African Bank Group Chief Transformation and Sustainability Officer, Edna Sathekga-Montse, also commended the team's accomplishments. African Bank was among the SOSA 2025 National Team's sponsors.

"As a long-standing partner of Special Olympics South Africa, we are incredibly proud of our athletes' accomplishments. Their victories embody the spirit of courage and determination.

“We are honoured to play a role in their journey towards excellence. Through continued investment in initiatives like SOSA, we reinforce our commitment to transformation, inclusivity, and sustainable empowerment,” Montse said.

The Winter Olympic Games brought together more than 1 500 athletes for the games that were held from 8 to 15 March 2025. – Source: SAnews.gov.za



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