

THE FRONT PAGE

Making headlines this morning, Transnet warned yesterday that the State would have to provide greater policy and regulatory certainty if it was to complete its five-year infrastructure investment programme of R93.4 billion; and President Jacob Zuma has confirmed that he is in a relationship with Sonono Khoza, the daughter of soccer boss Irvin Khoza, and that he is the father of her four-month-old child.

NEWS REVIEWS

THE DAY IN SHORT

In the news today: President Jacob Zuma yesterday finally acknowledged the public outcry over his private life, admitting for the first time to fathering a child with soccer boss Irvin Khoza's daughter. Glenn Agliotti, the convicted drug dealer and former friend of Jackie Selebi, was yesterday granted a reduction in his bail to help pay his legal fees. Too many school teachers cannot pass the tests their pupils sit, the Basic Education Department said yesterday. Two bodies have been found in the wreckage of a Cessna helicopter, which crashed in the Magaliesberg mountains in the Boekenhoutskloof area yesterday.

NEWS REVIEWS

POLITICAL NEWS

DA rejects call for apology in row over pardons

A coalition of civil society organisations yesterday called on the Democratic Alliance (DA) to "formally apologise" for its role in "denying victims a voice" in applications for presidential pardons for politically motivated crimes. This followed an article in the Sunday Times by the DA's Dene Smuts, which criticised the 2007 "special dispensation" to deal with pardon applications for politically motivated crimes.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

SACP plays down mines nationalisation document

The South African Communist Party (SACP) has played down the African National Congress Youth League's (ANCYL's) mines nationalisation document, warning that the manner in which the debate is handled could divide the tripartite alliance and discredit major structural transformation in the country. Writing in the SACP newsletter, Umsebenzi, Deputy General Secretary Jeremy Cronin warned against treating nationalisation as a standalone issue and as a rhetorical badge for radicalism. Rather, "any progressive call for nationalisation needs to be a coherent and do-able part of an overall democratic programme". Cronin said the discussion around the transformation of the mining sector needed to account for the broader challenge of putting SA on a new job-creating path. It also needed to focus on the role of a transforming mining sector in the government's emerging industry policy.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Speculation on KaMagwaza-Msibi's replacement

There is speculation in the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) that its deputy national spokesperson, Thulasizwe Buthelezi, will replace national Chairperson Zanele kaMagwaza-Msibi as the mayor of Zululand. This comes after the IFP national council affirmed last week that KaMagwaza-Msibi is to be redeployed to the KwaZulu-Natal legislature. IFP National Organiser, Albert Mncwango, said that it has not yet been decided on who will replace KaMagwaza-Msibi.

WITNESS (Pietermaritzburg)

ANC welcomes document on nationalisation

The African National Congress (ANC) yesterday welcomed the discussion document by the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) on the nationalisation of mines. This followed a heated debate on the issue between the ANCYL and Mining Minister Susan Shabangu. The ruling party said it would engage with the youth league "through proper ANC structures" and then express its opinion. The debate has become increasingly heated after accusations by the league against Shabangu.

BUSINESS REPORT (Star)

IFP pardons suit heard

The Constitutional Court will today hear the Inkatha Freedom Party's (IFP) lawsuit against President Jacob Zuma for a six-year delay in dealing with 384 presidential pardons. The applicants are seeking a declaratory order that the President has failed to diligently consider and decide on their applications for presidential pardon. They also want the court to order the President to consider and decide their application within a month of the court's order. The court bid comes after the Constitutional Court ruled last September that the President - and not the Justice Minister - should be held accountable for the delay.

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Young reds 'will not tolerate' ANC attacks

The Young Communist League (YCL) will not stand by while its members serving within the African National Congress (ANC) are attacked. This is a message of the league's Secretary, Buti Manamela ahead of the YCL's national lekgotla in KwaZulu-Natal at the weekend. He said Communist Party leaders in ANC organisation were "under attack" from within the ranks of the ruling party and the YCL was no longer prepared to tolerate this. He said this only days after the ANCYL publicly confirmed that it would launch a campaign to have ANC Secretary General Gwede Mantashe, who is also SACP Chairperson, replaced by Deputy Police Minister Fikile Mbalula at the next ANC national conference, in 2012.

THE TIMES

SAFETY & SECURITY NEWS

Ndoni dismisses Cup security concerns

Nelson Mandela Bay Safety and Security Portfolio Councillor Bicks Ndoni has dismissed concerns about the safety of visitors travelling to South Africa for the 2010 World Cup as "opportunistic". Speaking at the start of Monday's meeting, Ndoni said it had been suggested initially that SA would not be able to complete the stadiums on time, then that it would not have sufficient accommodation. He said, "We addressed that and it is now crime." He called it "opportunistic" to suggest that there were "gangs roaming the streets" and that people needed to wear protective clothing. Mandela Bay had hosted major events, he said, the most recent being the match between the British and Irish Lions and the Southern Kings. "We did not have a single complaint," he said.

THEHERALD.CO.ZA - THE HERALD

SANDF ready for 2010 World Cup

Defence Minister Lindiwe Sisulu says the defence force is ready to protect the country should any situation threatening the 2010 World Cup arise. Sisulu says the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) will ensure that the country hosts a successful and safe tournament. She was speaking at the SA Air Force's (SAAF's) 90th anniversary at Swartkop Airfield in Pretoria on Friday. Over 500 guests attended the celebration. More than 40 SAAF aircraft were displayed during a flypast and aerial demonstrations. Four fully-armed Gripen Jet fighters were unveiled for the first time to the public before spectators were treated to a simulation on how the SAAF would respond to an aircraft or bus hijacking situation. The defence force - both land and air - worked with the police to show how they would defuse the situation should it happen during the World Cup.

SOWETAN.CO.ZA

Four special night courts for the 2010 World Cup

Four special night courts will operate in Cape Town during the World Cup to deal with crimes related to the soccer extravaganza. The courtrooms at the Bellville and Khayelitsha magistrate's courts and two courtrooms at Cape Town Regional Court will be open from 19:45 until 23:00. Justice Department spokesperson Tlali Tlali said the intention of the special courts was to avoid burdening the existing court rolls with tournament cases.

CAPE ARGUS (City Late)

Badul challenges dismissal in court

Former Mountain Rise Police Station Commissioner Hariram Badul, who has been charged with fraud and theft, has told his lawyers to challenge his dismissal from the police force just two days before his official retirement date on 31 January. His attorney, Petrus Coetzee, said that they will challenge the legality of Badul's sacking in court as Badul has not yet been convicted of any of the criminal charges he faces, nor has a disciplinary inquiry into his alleged conduct been finalised. At present, Badul is recovering at the St Anne's Hospital from heart surgery, which he underwent during December soon after his arrest in connection with charges of fraud and theft amounting to R467 000.

WITNESS (Pietermaritzburg)

Agliotti's bail reduced for legal fees

Glenn Agliotti, the convicted drug dealer and former friend of Jackie Selebi, was yesterday granted a reduction in his bail to help pay his legal fees. Agliotti also heard that his trial, where he stands accused of the murder of mining boss Brett Kebble, would start in the South Gauteng High Court on 26 July. The prosecution and defence agreed at a pre-trial conference on Tuesday that it would be in the interest of justice to wait for the finalisation of the trial of former police chief Jackie Selebi. Agliotti is a state's witness in Selebi's corruption case, which resumes on 1 March.

CITIZEN (Second Edition); THE TIMES, STAR

Kebbles seek 'closure' as murder trial postponed

Guy Kebble said the family had been waiting for more than four years for his brother's killers to be brought to book and are unhappy with the delay in proceedings. Kebble said his family is going to fight tooth and nail to get closure on this murder trial. He is the brother of slain mining magnate Brett Kebble. He was speaking after the murder trial of Glenn Agliotti was postponed in the South Gauteng High Court.

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Cwele, NIA still silent

State Security Minister Siyabonga Cwele may be estranged from his wife, but security experts still feel it is time for government to break the silence over her arrest. Unconfirmed reports have indicated that the minister and his wife, Sheryl Cwele, are no longer living together and that she moved out of their Port Shepstone home. Sheryl Cwele is applying for bail tomorrow, after spending the past week behind bars. The Hawks arrested Cwele on suspicion of recruiting young women as drug mules last Friday, and the stony silence from her husband and National Intelligence Agency (NIA) is now entering its seventh day.

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Sisulu to explain poor management

Defence Minister Lindiwe Sisulu is to be summoned to Parliament to explain why acting Defence Secretary Tsepe Motumi is still employed in her ministry after admitting that he had "failed" the department. Motumi, the department Accounting Officer, yesterday admitted to Parliament's standing committee on public accounts that he had "failed" to do his job. Sisulu will also have to answer questions relating to poor management in the defence force, which has led the Auditor-General to giving the department a qualified report, and has cost the ailing defence department millions of rands in wasteful expenditure.

THE TIMES

LABOUR & UNION NEWS

Inspections for security sector

Department of Labour inspectors would conduct countrywide inspections in the security industry next week, the department said yesterday. Spokesperson Page Boikanyo said the inspections were to ensure compliance with all labour laws, ranging from occupational health and safety to the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. The campaign would start on Monday and was expected to end on Friday.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

NEWS BRIEF

Resolution of Tshwane Metro, ASA court matter

Tshwane Metropolitan Council lodged an urgent application for review of the Advertising Standards Authority's (ASA's) decision on 15 November 2006, which found against the claim "City of Tshwane, Africa's leading capital city". However, on 1 February 2010, the council decided to withdraw its application. The Northern Gauteng High Court ordered the Metro Council to pay ASA's legal costs on an attorney and client scale, as well as the cost for 2 February 2010, as the Council reserved this date for a hearing. The reason for the decision to award attorney and client cost is because the court felt that the Council disregarded courts procedures.

NEWS REVIEWS

'SA deserves a pat on the back'

South Africa deserves a pat on the back for delivering on its commitment to make the 2010 World Cup a truly African event. This is according to Football Association of Zambia Media Officer Eric Mwanza, who was speaking after the Gauteng Future Champions international Under-17 tournament. Zambia were represented by K Stars, who are owned by the foundation of FAZ President and 2010 FIFA World Cup Ambassador Kalusha Bwalya. For the record, Chinese team Shandong Luneng won the tournament by beating France's Paris Saint-Germain on penalties at Rand Stadium on Saturday. "We appreciate the fact that South Africa are roping in other Africans to be part of the preparations for the World Cup," Mwanza said.

SOWETAN (Late Final), Sport

Why top Denel execs quit

Denel admitted yesterday that disagreement over R338 million deal with a European aircraft maker was the main reason for the sudden departure last month of Denel Saab Aerostructures CEO Lana Kingly and chief financial officer Sasha Methola. The facts about the resignation were revealed by Denel Chief Executive Talib Sadik at a briefing on Denel's annual report to Parliament's watchdog public accounts committee (Scopa). Sadik revealed that the proposed five-year contract with August Westland to make A109 helicopter for African clients was rejected not only by Denel Saab Aerostructures (DSA) board, but also by that of Armscor, as the state arms procurement entity. Sadik said the DSA board's reasoning was that it posed "technical challenges", although the company already manufactures parts for that helicopter model.

CITIZEN (Second Edition); BUSINESS REPORT (National)

HEALTH NEWS

Overcrowding at mortuary addressed

KwaZulu-Natal Premier Zweli Mkhize described the overcrowding situation at Durban's Magwaza Maphalala Street state mortuary as "unacceptable". Mkhize called for all the bodies at the facility to be disposed of by next week and for disciplinary processes to be immediately implemented against those responsible for the situation. The KZN Health Department cited unclaimed bodies as one of the causes of overcrowding at mortuaries.

MERCURY (Durban)

State to reconsider Aids drugs tendering

The government will review the multibillion-rand antiretroviral (ARV) drugs tender process in order to have flexibility and market-related prices during the tender cycle. As part of the effort to secure competitive prices, the government would use an agreement with the Clinton Foundation to negotiate better prices for the Aids drugs, the Department of Health said yesterday. This is after the Democratic Alliance (DA) recently claimed the old tender process cost the country 30% more because the bulk of the drugs were bought from local firms. Anban Pillay, the cluster Manager for pharmaceutical and planning in the Department of Health, said changes to the procurement process would still be discussed with the Treasury. The current R4.1 billion tender will end in May and a new two-year tender will be issued soon thereafter.

BUSINESS REPORT (National)

PROVINCIAL NEWS

Consumers urged to be water wise

In a recent notice to consumers, eThekweni Water and Sanitation (EWS) informed users that the current average daily water demand in our city is exceeding the current available sustainable supply. This means that Durbanites are likely to face water shortages and restrictions within the next three to five years, if corrective action is not taken. "Water is precious and consumers are currently paying approximately R9.09 for 1 000 litres of water that is delivered to their home or workplace. This is ridiculously cheap when compared to the price of a cool drink or petrol at roughly the same price for just one litre. Consumers must start adopting a way of life that ensures the responsible use of water instead of taking it for granted..." says EWS Head, Neil Macleod.

NEWS REVIEWS

Stolen plaque valued at R60 000 has been found

The City of Cape Town yesterday said that a stolen plaque valued at R60 000 has been found at a scrap metal dealer. The head of the city's metal and theft unit, Neil Arendse, said the Maria de la Quellerie plaque, erected 60 years ago, was stolen from the Heerengracht central island at the Hans Strijdom intersection. A 65-year-old Maitland scrap dealer had been arrested for buying stolen goods and police confiscated the plaque, which had been sawn into 12 pieces.

CAPE TIMES

Traders want answers on trading during the World Cup

A City of Cape Town official had to endure harsh words from informal traders after the city moved them to the Grand Parade. The traders were moved from the station taxi deck but had not been told whether there would be space for their stalls. Natasha Nicker was surrounded by 50 people demanding space to erect their stalls. The Grand Parade will be one of the major fan parks during the World Cup and only a limited number of people will be allowed to trade there.

CAPE TIMES

Blue flag back on Clifton Fourth Beach

The blue flag is flying again on the internationally-renowned Clifton Fourth Beach. The beach's blue flag status was temporarily removed two weeks ago after complaints were made about graffiti refuse collection and a discoloured mirror. The City of Cape Town's director of sport, recreation and amenities said that the flag was lowered for two days while these issues were dealt with.

CAPE TIMES

Municipalities water treatment works problems

It emerged in Parliament's public hearings on service delivery yesterday that the Msunduzi, Sisonke and Umgungundlovu municipalities had problems with their water treatment works. It was revealed in the hearings that the effects of years of insufficient infrastructure maintenance, poor management and serious skills shortages in local governments were responsible for the problems. The eThekweni Metro, on the other hand, has received a Blue Drop Certification - meaning its water is of excellent quality, and a Green Drop Certification - meaning that their waste water treatment works are in excellent order.

WITNESS (Pietermaritzburg)

Oudtshoorn Municipality has opened a fraud case

The Oudtshoorn Municipality has opened a fraud case against one of its officials after discovering that R297 000 had been embezzled. Last week a routine expenditure check had uncovered payments to non-existent companies. Oudtshoorn executive mayor, Alderlady Diane de Jager, said it was enlightening to know that the discovery emanated from more stringent financial policies implemented in the last few months.

CAPE ARGUS (City Late)

Application on Simon's Town's structural plan

An application has been submitted to the City of Cape Town to amend Simon's Town's structural plan, paving the way for further residential development in the nature area of Glencairn. This despite a decision last year by the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEAP) refusing an application from the same developer. The closing date for comments on the application is 8 March.

CAPE TIMES

Carlisle spends time at the spot where a man fell

Western Cape Transport MEC Robin Carlisle said that he believes that erecting more signs and replacing the guard rails at the Chapman's Peak lookout point will not stop people from climbing down the mountain. Carlisle spent time yesterday at the spot where Jonathan Erasmus fell to his death. He said that putting up warning sign can make them feel better but it has no effect on human behaviour.

CAPE TIMES

Traffic problems on Cape Town's major roads

Traffic on one of Cape Town's major roads was backed up for nearly two hours on Tuesday after a tipper truck got stuck beneath a bridge. The truck was travelling northwards on the Black River Parkway. It was trapped after its driver apparently failed to lower the vehicle's tipper before he tried to drive under the bridge. Motorists driving towards the bridge were greeted by the bizarre sight of the truck standing on its back wheels. Meanwhile, an oil spill on Table Bay Boulevard on the N1 resulted in the closure of the outbound lane for six hours. The incident occurred when a drill hit an oil pipe which caused the substance to spill across the road. City of Cape Town Disaster management spokesperson Wilfred Solomons said a drill was immediately shut down.

CAPE ARGUS (City Late)

Employees ignore order from MEC

Employees of the corporate services section of the Public Works Department in Langalibalele Street ignored an order by KwaZulu-Natal Human Settlements and Public Works MEC Maggie Govender to return to work yesterday. They said that they will only return to work once the MEC has addressed their concerns. The employees held a protest on Tuesday over the condition of their offices. Govender said that from inspections of their offices, she has decided to cancel the lease agreement and relocate them, which will take about six weeks.

WITNESS (Pietermaritzburg)

Ndlovu resigns

Sizakele Ndlovu, Deputy Mayor of the uMngeni Municipality, yesterday handed in her resignation after she was found guilty of fraud. In November last year, the Pietermaritzburg Regional Court discovered that Ndlovu was guilty of having fraudulently acquired a reconstruction and development programme (RDP) house. Ndlovu will remain as an ordinary councillor despite her removal as deputy mayor.

WITNESS (Pietermaritzburg)

City gets warned not to get involved in N2 housing

The City of Cape Town's chief financial officer Mike Richardson has urged the council to be extremely cautious about committing to any further involvement in the controversial housing project. He said that the city should walk away from the N2 Gateway project if national government does not commit funds to finish the document. The city is firm and said that it will not allocate resources to the province's business plan for the first phase but will consider future phases.

CAPE TIMES

Residents concerned over tent town

Residents in Durban's northern suburbs have expressed concern that a tent town, reportedly to accommodate thousands of football fans travelling to Durban for the World Cup on the cheap, will bring crime, vagrants and health hazards. A report that Northlands Primary School, among other schools in Durban North, will host 3 000 campers has resulted in some locals expressing concern about noise, crime and health risks. Haden Searles, Chairperson of the Durban North and Umhlanga Community Policing Forum, said that he, in conjunction with police representatives and community members, will meet the school to get clarity.

MERCURY (Durban)

Cwele's position questioned

Sheryl Cwele's position in the Hibiscus Coast Municipality has been questioned during an internal audit. Cwele, wife of State Security Minister Siyabonga Cwele, had submitted her application for the position of director of health and community services in the municipality more than a month after applications had closed and all her documents submitted were not certified yet she was given the position. Dave Snashall, a Democratic Alliance (DA) councillor in the municipality, said that he believed political pressure had played a role in her appointment. Municipal Manager S'bu Mkhize could not disclose what action had been taken to verify if proper processes had been followed in Cwele's appointment.

MERCURY (Durban)

EDUCATION NEWS

UCT professor honoured

Professor Irwin Brown of the Department of Information Systems at the University of Cape Town (UCT) has received honour from the Association for Information Systems (AIS) for his volunteer work in assisting the University of Addis Ababa to develop research capacity in a bid to keep IS talent in Africa. Head of IS, Professor Jean-Paul van Belle, welcomed the recognition as it showed that the department was committed to developing UCT's Afropolitan strategy of building capacity in Africa. Professor Brown, who is rated as an established researcher by the National Research Foundation, is a member of AIS, whose global goal is to increase the number of professionals in the discipline.

NEWS REVIEWS

Political campaigning in schools to be banned?

If Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga's proposed amendments to the South African Schools Act are promulgated, political campaigning on public school premises during school hours could soon be banned. The deadline for comment on the Basic Education Laws Amendment Bill, gazetted in early December, is Tuesday, said Basic Education Department spokesperson Hope Mokgathe. The Democratic Alliance (DA) last week said that African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) President Julius Malema had disrupted a school day to make political statements at several North West schools.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

DUT applies for court interdict

The water crisis at the Durban University of Technology's (DUT's) Indumiso campus has prompted the university's management to apply for a court interdict to force the Msunduzi Municipality to restore the water. The campus has shared one water account with the neighbouring Further Education and Training College (FET) and Sukuma High School in Imbali from the time the premises was used as a nursing college. Msunduzi Mayor Zanele Hlatshwayo said that the parties have made no moves to settle the account of R14 million. However, both the DUT and the Education Department said that efforts to have the matter resolved have been unsuccessful.

WITNESS (Pietermaritzburg)

CPUT's dean of business dismissed

Cape Peninsula University of Technology's (CPUT's) dean of the faculty of business, Mohammed Bayat says he will challenge his dismissal. Bayat was suspended in September last year in connection with his alleged fraudulent awarding of a Master's degree in Tourism and Hospitality to one of South Africa's consul-generals based abroad. A disciplinary hearing was held and he was officially dismissed yesterday.

CAPE TIMES

Minister expresses concern at MUT violence

Higher Education Minister Blade Nzimande has expressed concern about Tuesday's outbreak of violence at the Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT). Three policemen sustained injuries when students threw stones at them, about 17 students were injured when police fired rubber bullets and five police vehicles were damaged. Nzimande slammed the destruction of property and the injuries.

DAILY NEWS (Deadline)

MUT students resume protests

Registration ground to a halt at Umlazi's Mangosuthu University of Technology (MUT) yesterday as a protest by students entered its second day. The students had protested over fee increases and other issues. The students' representative council declined to negotiate further with the management unless students arrested in a clash with police on Tuesday were released. The police will remain at the university to ensure that there are no further incidents of violence.

MERCURY (Durban)

Too many teachers 'below par'

Too many school teachers cannot pass the tests their pupils sit, the Basic Education Department said yesterday. There are also serious problems with teachers' commitment to their tasks, according to a document tabled by the department's acting Director-General, Bobby Soobrayan, at a briefing for members of Parliament's portfolio committee. Soobray said that while progress had been made on the issue of qualifications of teachers in general, it was quality of teaching that needed to be fixed.

CITIZEN (Second Edition); STAR

GOVERNMENT BRIEF

New RAF a step closer

The long-awaited draft policy on restructuring of the Road Accident Fund (RAF) on a no-fault basis will be published by the Department of Transport next Friday, writes Linda Ensor. The draft policy - which has large implications for the legal and health professions - was tabled in Parliament yesterday. The new Road Accident Benefit Scheme will have defined benefits and rules that will apply universally to all road accident victims, regardless of fault.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Top defence team sent packing by irate MPs

A top-level delegation of the Department of Defence was sent packing by Parliament's public accounts committee (Scopa) yesterday when frustrated MPs of all parties finally gave up trying to get proper answers to their questions. Scopa, Parliament's financial watchdog committee, was interrogating acting Secretary for Defence Tsepe Motumi about the department again getting a qualified audit report, particularly on its management of fixed and immovable assets.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Sasco against Shabangu's comments

The South African Student's Congress (Sasco) has come out against Mining Minister Susan Shabangu for "declaring war" by rubbishing calls for the nationalisation of mines. "Nationalisation, whether Shabangu like it or not, will occur within our lifetime and surely within hers, unless she will die young," said Sasco President Mbulele Mandlana. Shabangu finds herself on the wrong side of the influential African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) and other structures affiliated to the ruling party for saying that "nationalisation of mines will not occur in her lifetime". "She is behaving in a very ill-disciplined manner", Mandlana told The Citizen.

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Zuma confirms relationship and baby

President Jacob Zuma has finally broken his silence on his latest extra-marital affair - but still hasn't said whether or not he is married to the mother of his latest child. Zuma yesterday finally acknowledged the public outcry over his private life, admitting for the first time to fathering a child with soccer boss Irvin Khoza's daughter. "I confirm that I have a relationship and a baby with Ms Sonono Khoza". Zuma took to the media to task for revealing the identity of the child. Zuma also scoffed at a claim he was harming the country and government's fight against the HIV/Aids pandemic.

CITIZEN (Second Edition); THE TIMES; STAR; BUSINESS DAY

Roads Agency raises R1bn at auction

The South African National Roads Agency in its first auction this year raised R1 billion under its domestic medium-term note programme carrying a full guarantee from the government by tapping into its two bonds worth maturities in 2020 and 2034. Overall bids received during the auction totalled R1.85 billion.

BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets

BUSINESS BRIEF

In Business news today, the Global Brands Group is leading an investigations into Shanghai Fashion Plastic Products and Gifts, the Chinese factory that has been criticised for making the official World Cup mascot, Zakumi, under poor working conditions. Communications Minister Siphwe Nyanda yesterday reiterated his respect for the independence of Icasa after it rejected plans for a mobile interconnection rate cut that he negotiated in November. Pioneer Foods, maker of Sasko and Duens bread, was yesterday slapped with fines totalling R195 million - almost a third of its headline earnings last year - for price-fixing and conspiring to share bread markets with rivals. Department of Labour inspectors would conduct countrywide inspections in the security industry next week, the department said yesterday.

NEWS REVIEWS

Namibian ruling may influence SA labour broking

A recent landmark ruling handed down by the Namibian Supreme Court, finding a total ban on labour broking unconstitutional, might have a far-reaching effect on the industry in South Africa, a labour law expert said yesterday. Anastasia Vatalidis, a Director in the employment law department at Werksmans, said, "The importance of the Namibian Supreme Court decision cannot be overlooked, as a similar ban on labour broking in SA could be subject to a similar challenge in the courts, given that the constitution similarly protects the right to carry on a trade or business." Vatalidis said provided the legislators had regard to the ruling, it was unlikely that SA would see an outright ban on labour broking.

BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets

Pioneer fined for bid to slice up bread market

Pioneer Foods, maker of Sasko and Duens bread, was yesterday slapped with fines totalling R195 million - almost a third of its headline earnings last year - for price-fixing and conspiring to share bread markets with rivals. The fine, equal to 10% of Sasko's bread turnover in eight provinces, plus 9.5% of its turnover in the Western Cape, is the highest fine in percentage terms the Competition Tribunal has imposed. By value, it is second only to the R205 million fine levied against Sasol's chemical division last May.

BUSINESS DAY (National); BUSINESS REPORT (National); TIMES, THE Business Times; CITIZEN, Citi Business; STAR

Telkom turns up enterprise heat

Telkom has appointed ICT veteran Dr Brian Armstrong to take up the company's senior managing executive role in the enterprise space. With fixed-line subscriptions on the downturn and geographic number portability about to be introduced, Telkom needs to focus its attention on keeping the corporate customer base in hand. Last week, the company's rival, Neotel, announced that geographic number portability was on track and ready to roll in the next few months. Industry watchers have questioned whether the number portability for fixed-line will be effective, considering the failure of the mobile version. However, Neotel will be driving hard for enterprise and large business customers when the porting of numbers becomes available, and Telkom must turn up the competition to hold onto its business clients, with its consumer voice business dwindling.

ITWEB.CO.ZA

Mboweni appointed at Nampak

The former governor of the SA Reserve Bank, Tito Mboweni, has been appointed as the chairperson of the packaging group Nampak. Mboweni will replace Trevor Evans, who announced in October that he would step down as chairperson and director. At a meeting on Wednesday, the board unanimously resolved to appoint Mboweni as chairperson with effect from June, the company said in a statement.

Business Day (Companies & Markets) reports that the appointment was one of several steps taken in response to concerns raised by major shareholders at last year's AGM about the long service and lack of broad-based representativity on the board of directors, as well as the company's profit performance.

FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK; BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets; BUSINESS DAY (National); BUSINESS REPORT (National); TIMES, THE Business Times; CITIZEN, Citi Business

Minister defends Icasa

Communications Minister Sipiwe Nyanda yesterday reiterated his respect for the independence of the Independent Communications Authority of SA (Icasa) after it rejected plans for a mobile interconnection rate cut that he negotiated in November. Icasa this week said that the proposal put to it by cellphone operators, which would have seen a cut in the interconnection charge from R1.25 a minute to 89c a minute, would have obliged it not to review termination rates until 1 March 2013.

BUSINESS DAY (National); TIMES, THE Business Times

Nyanda wants low rate sooner

The Minister of Communications, Sipiwe Nyanda, yesterday criticised MTN, Cell C and Vodacom's proposal to decrease the interconnection rate over a three-year period in a process described as a glide path, saying that this would take too long and was unfair to consumers. Last year, Nyanda agreed with the operators to reduce the interconnection rate from R1.25 a minute to 89c during peak period. The Independent Communication's Authority of SA (Icasa) this week refused to approve the proposed rate of 89c.

BUSINESS REPORT (National)

BANKING BRIEF

In Banking news this morning, investor confidence jumped in South Africa during the financial quarter of last year, buoyed mainly by improved global risk appetite and a pick-up in offshore economies, a survey showed yesterday; and an innocuous press release from Standard Bank Securities may be the start of truly visible competition in the South African banking sector. There was a focus on property and housing showing that as consumers struggle to shrug off the effects of the recession, latest property price figures show households need an income of more than R25 000 per month to afford the average South African home; and the South African listed property sector is facing an even tougher year than last year because it will not expand as fast as the general economy's growth.

NEWS REVIEWS

SA economy 'bouncing back'

There is a definite possibility that South Africa's growth rate could be close to 5% this year and even improve to 6% in 2011, according to Dr Roelof Botha, economic adviser at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). Botha said that economic recovery would gain momentum in the second half of this year, and it would be V-shaped. The country has grown at a rate of 5% and more for four years, he explained. The growth phase had then been interrupted by the global economic crisis and consequent recession. However, the recession was not South Africa's fault and the country was now back on the road to growth much more quickly than many people realise. He pointed out that government was doing its part with capital expenditure on infrastructure projects, and the private sector was increasing its production capacity.

FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK

Eastern Cape sets up R50 million fund

The Eastern Cape Economic Development Department said yesterday that it had established a R50 million fund, the Imvaba Eastern Cape Provincial Co-operative Development Fund, for the development of co-operatives in the province. MEC Mcebisi Jonas had identified enterprise and rural development as one of seven areas on which his department would focus.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Recovery will falter without new jobs, Ramos warns

The global economy was in for a "very difficult time", and while the US and European Union (EU) were showing signs of recovery, there were questions about the sustainability of growth over the longer terms, Absa Group CEO Maria Ramos said yesterday. In a speech at Absa's offices in Johannesburg, Ramos said that unless economic recovery created jobs, "I just can't see how you can create sustainability". Unemployment would create "massive problems down the line from a global point of view" and some at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos last week had referred to it as the biggest risk facing the world. Joblessness in South Africa, though the country came out of recession late last year, a little after many developed countries started recovering from the global crisis. And unemployment is on the rise globally as well.

BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets

Investor confidence is on the rise in SA

Investor confidence jumped in South Africa during the financial quarter of last year, buoyed mainly by improved global risk appetite and a pick-up in offshore economies, a survey showed yesterday. The investor confidence index (ICI), produced by research house ETM and retirement fund Maxim, rocketed by 32.3 points to 94.6 - a rise of 52% compared with the same quarter of 2008. That was the highest level for the ICI since the third quarter of 2007, before the global financial crisis struck.

BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets

Local equity funds attract inflows for first time

Domestic equity funds last year attracted net inflows for the first time in five years, the Association for Savings and Investment (Asisa) said yesterday. Because most local investors were not exposed to equities for the greater part of the past five years, they would have missed out on the solid five-year performance of equity funds, with general equity fund returning an average 16.2% for five years to 31 December, while the average five-year return for money market funds was 8.8% a year, said Asisa Deputy-CEO Peter Dempsey. Domestic equity funds attracted R10.8 billion of net inflows last year, while in 2006, 2007 and 2008 they recorded net outflows, with money market funds, asset allocation and fixed interest funds the firm favourites.

BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets

Credit growth expected to surge

Credit growth would start improving off a low base this year as consumers responded to lower interest rates and banks gradually eased requirements, an economist said yesterday. However, Dennis Dykes, the chief economist at Nedbank, said demand for company loans would remain relatively weak given the downturn in private sector investment that was to be expected at this stage of the economic cycle. "Private sector credit will probably rise by about 5% over the year," Dykes said. He added, "This will be mainly in consumer credit, and within that, mortgage advances and other asset-backed finance. However, the low base in 2009 will also provide some support".

BUSINESS REPORT (National)

Banking competition heats up

An innocuous press release from Standard Bank Securities may be the start of truly visible competition in the South African banking sector. Last week the retail stockbrokerage advised its clients it was reducing the minimum trading fee to R50, effectively making it the cheapest product on the market. Simon Brown, head of education at Standard Bank Online Share Trading, told Fin24.com the bank intends to be aggressive in 2010 in terms of gaining market share, and price is one of the areas where it intends to compete. "This reduction is the fourth in five years. We believe that anybody with an ambition to save or invest should have direct access to the markets," he said. Make no mistake, the banks remain super profitable.

FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK

Home ownership a pricey dream

As consumers struggle to shrug off the effects of the recession, latest property price figures show households need an income of more than R25 000 per month to afford the average South African home. According to the FNB House Price Index for January, released last week, the present average price of a house dropped slightly to R764 912. A consumer who applies for a 100% home loan will have an instalment of R7 636 per month, at an interest charge of 10.5% over a 20-year period. In line with government regulation, this instalment is not allowed to be over 30% of a household's monthly income, so to afford the average-priced house in South Africa, a household needs an income of R25 455 per month. The median house price is a tad less expensive, according to Standard Bank's property report released on Tuesday. The report showed a 2.9% drop year-on-year to R545 000 for January 2010.

FINANCIAL TIMES (London)

Listed property facing even tougher year

The South African listed property sector is facing an even tougher year than last year because it will not expand as fast as the general economy's growth, an expert said yesterday. The sector is, however, expected to grow 6% this year, raising a distribution yield of 9.5%. Last year it grew 8%. In its property outlook for this year, securities research group Macquarie First South yesterday upgraded the property sector to overweight. In its property outlook for this year, securities research group Macquarie First South yesterday upgraded the property sector to overweight. Macquarie analyst Leon Allison said the upgrade of the sector was not due to its forecasting exciting returns in the next 12 months.

BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets

SPORTING HIGHLIGHTS

The Proteas completed their preparation for the first Test against India starting on Saturday with an impressive all-round performance in their two-day tour match against an Indian Board President's XI yesterday. Following the tumultuous events of last week, which saw the resignation of Mickey Arthur as coach and the sacking of the selection panel, a sold performance is exactly what South Africa needed to boost their confidence. And that confidence will come in handy against the No 1 ranked Test team in the world, who are firing and will be tough to beat in their own back yard. This task is, however, not impossible - which the Proteas have already proven by winning a Test series in India. South Africa have all the pieces in place to duplicate that achievement, and will be mindful of the added motivation of being able to return to the top of the rankings if they win both Tests.

News Reviews

Zakumi maker probed

The Global Brands Group (GBG) has launched an ethical and social compliance probe into the Chinese company making the World Cup mascot, Zakumi.

"GBG has taken steps to contract Interted (the world's largest independent testing, inspection and certification organisation) to conduct an immediate ethical and social compliance audit and inspection of this facility," the company said yesterday. It has been reported that the dreadlocked leopard, Zakumi, was being manufactured in China, where workers are reportedly paid only R23 a day.

STAR

Muller joins Ulster

Springbok and Sharks lock Johann Muller is to join Ulster at the end of this year's Super 14, the Irish club announced yesterday. The 29-year-old has agreed to a two-year contract and will join up with the Belfast-based club when the Sharks' involvement in the Super 14 comes to an end.

STAR, Sport

Proteas' practice match ends in a draw

The two-day warm-up match between South Africa and a BCCI President's XI at Nagpur finished in a draw yesterday as the Proteas amassed 354 in reply to the home team's 318. Jacques Kallis and Hashim Amla spent substantial time in the middle and made 63 and 72 respectively before retiring to other players the chance to bat. Ashwell Prince and JP Duminy also chipped in with valuable contributions of 42 and 39 respectively.

CITIZEN (Second Edition), Sport

Pirates out of the running following draw

Orlando Pirates' slim hopes of making a run at the Absa Premiership title disappeared last night following 0-0 against SuperSport United at Orlando Stadium.

STAR, Sport

Van der Merwe crashes out of SA Open

Izak van der Merwe was eliminated from the South African Tennis Open following a 7-6, 6-41 defeat to Frenchman Stephane Robert yesterday. Van der Merwe's defeat means Raven Klaasen is the only South African remaining in the draw. In another match, Spaniard Feliciano Lopez beat Slovakian Blaz Kavcic 6-2, 7-6 to advance to the quarterfinals.

THE TIMES

INDICATORS

Rand - Dollar \$	7.4720	(-0.0220)
Rand - Sterling £	11.9283	(-0.0284)
Rand - Euro €	10.4205	(-0.0270)
JSE Allshare	26926.5	(+114.21)
Gold	1115.3	(+4.25)
Platinum	1578.0	(+23.00)
Brent Crude Oil	76.5	(+0.45)

The figures quoted are from the close of business yesterday, along with any movement, either up or down, from the previous day.

WEATHER

Bloemfontein	14	(28)
Cape Town	16	(27)
Durban	22	(25)
East London	16	(24)
Johannesburg	16	(27)
Kimberley	13	(29)
Mafikeng	15	(30)
Nelspruit	20	(28)
Pietermaritzburg	20	(27)
Polokwane	17	(28)
Port Elizabeth	14	(23)
Pretoria	18	(28)