

THE FRONT PAGE

Making headlines this morning, President Jacob Zuma's apology to the nation for his latest sexual indiscretion appeared in danger of backfiring yesterday, as analysts and political opponents dismissed it as contrived and lacking substance; and parents of an eight-month-old boy have been charged with assault and intent to do grievous bodily harm after the child was found to have over 10 fractures, burns and wounds.

NEWS REVIEWS

THE DAY IN SHORT

Making the news today: President Jacob Zuma's sex life is likely to come under the spotlight as his party's top brass meet in Cape Town today, just days before the State of the Nation speech on Thursday. The nation's address will also commemorate the release of Nelson Mandela 20 years ago. Congress of the People's (COPE's) interim leadership decided at a weekend strategy to hold the conference at the earliest possible date, before the end of May, rather than in mid-December. On the Soccer World Cup, FIFA announced that ticket sales so far were impressive, despite earlier reports that they were moving slowly.

NEWS REVIEWS

POLITICAL NEWS

COPE's Shilowa under attack

The decision by Congress of the People (COPE) interim leadership to hold the party's elective conference in May has been seen as victory by supporters of COPE Deputy President Mbazhima Shilowa, especially its youth wing. The party's congress national committee decided at a weekend strategy and planning meeting to hold the conference at the earliest possible date, before the end of May, rather than in mid-December. Meanwhile, Shilowa's detractors in the party have accused him of a lacklustre performance as an MP. A copy of COPE's records of parliamentary questions asked by each MP, showed Shilowa in his almost 10 months in Parliament as the party's chief whip, as having posed no question to ministers.

STAR; BUSINESS DAY; THE TIMES; PRETORIA NEWS; THE CITIZEN

ANCyl reveals mines nationalisation plan

ANC Youth League (ANCyl) spokesperson Floyd Shivambu on Sunday explained the organisation's detailed perspective on the nationalisation of mines in a weekend newspaper. In an opinion piece published in City Press, Shivambu said the ANCyl's conceptualisation of the nationalisation of mines is that it should result in the "democratic government's ownership and control of mining activities, including exploration, extraction, production, processing, trading and beneficiation of mineral resources in South Africa". According to Shivambu, nationalisation entails the following: it should be accompanied by a thorough transformation of State-owned enterprises; it can assume various forms - it can be 100% public ownership, or 51% or more owned by the state, or established through partnership arrangements with the private sector; it will involve expropriation with or without compensation; and it is not meant to bail out indebted mining corporations.

MININGMX.COM

Shivambu off the hook for Cronin comment

African National Congress Youth League (ANCyl) spokesperson Floyd Shivambu has escaped censure by the Young Communist League (YCL) for calling Deputy Transport Minister Jeremy Cronin a racist. The YCL ended its legoktla in Pietermaritzburg yesterday without taking a position against Shivambu, also a YCL committee member, who reportedly made the comment during a debate at the conference.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

YCL wants a rightful place in tripartite alliance

The Young Communists League (YCL) believes the tripartite alliance partners are equal and refuses to be pushed into the back seat. YCL National Secretary Buti Manamela said while the alliance was led by African National Congress (ANC), the communists also played an important role. He says despite being labelled "greedy yellow communists" who wants to take over the ruling party, the South African Communist Party (SACP) and its allies still see the alliance as an integral part of its existence.

CITIZEN (Second Edition); THE TIMES

SAFETY & SECURITY NEWS

Hijacked identities are fuelling spending spree

Identity theft has increased phenomenally in South Africa, reaching such a level that a major retailer is thinking about installing photo-recognition or fingerprint scanner in its stores. Johan Kok, Chief Operation Officer of JD Group, said identify theft had become much more sophisticated in the past five years. Their group is part of the South African fraud prevention service, and they see between 5 and 6-million cases of fraud a month. He said it was impossible to quantify the fraud. Some customers who had realised this was happening, were now saying their identity documents had been stolen in order to get out of paying for purchase.

STAR

Arms deal details consigned to dark

The murky details of South Africa's multimillion-rand arms deal are unlikely to ever come to light after weapons-maker BAE Systems last week cut a deal with UK and US officials to plead guilty and pay fines on some charges in exchange for the dropping of probes on others. Europe's biggest weapons-maker pleaded guilty to gross control failures in its international operations and was slapped with a £30 million fine by the British Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and an additional fine of \$400 million by the US Justice Department on Friday.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

LABOUR & UNION NEWS

Solidarity wraps up negotiations at Palabora

The trade union Solidarity secured a wage increase of 9% during negotiations with the country's largest copper mine, Palabora Mining, last week. "The wage negotiations were extremely successful and Solidarity members will be receiving a wage increase that is close to 3% above the current level of inflation," explains Solidarity spokesperson Jaco Kleynhans. "This yearlong agreement was reached with the company this week and will be signed shortly." According to Kleynhans, there is renewed optimism in the mining industry and producers are prepared to pay a premium to retain scarce and critical skills. Apart from the 9% wage increase, which will come into effect as of 1 March, an increase in the employees' housing subsidy was also agreed on.

NEWS REVIEWS; BUSINESS DAY (National)

Manyi leads delegation to Zim

The Director-General of the Labour Department, Jimmy Manyi, will lead a South African delegation to the African Regional Labour Administration Centre (Arlac) in Zimbabwe this week, his department said on Thursday. Spokesperson Page Boikanyo said Manyi would represent Labour Minister Membanthisi Mdladlana who is unable to attend the 36th session due to the forthcoming State of the Nation address. The five-day session scheduled to start today would be attended by labour ministers from several African states. Items on the agenda included expert views on the role of labour administration and inspections in the implementation of the global jobs pact that seeks to narrow the unemployment gap.

NEWS24.COM - NEWS 24

Gold Fields talking of six-day work week

Gold Fields is unlikely to improve efficiency by moving to a six-day working week because the productivity of miners will wane as fatigue sets in, Royal Bank of Canada Capital Markets said. "I don't think a six-day work week will work," RBC mining analyst Leon Esterhuizen said. "The fact is, this is a very bad working environment and people that do it really need two days off." Gold Fields said it had started talks with labour unions about a longer working week to help make up production lost due to the Christmas and Easter holidays, and due to safety and other stoppages. The firm said in a statement that it aimed to improve efficiency and avoid possible retrenchments. Worker fatigue may not be a major concern. Gold Fields spokesperson Julian Gwillim pointed out that under the proposed plan, miners would work five shifts fewer per 14 weeks than under the current model, but would earn the same.

CITIZEN, Citi Business

ABI strikers may give up demands for job security

Strikers at South Africa's biggest cold drink bottler, Amalgamated Beverage Industries (ABI), say they are prepared to give up their demands for higher wages provided their jobs are safe. The Food and Allied Workers Union (Fawu) said on Friday that guaranteed job security was its biggest concern. Fawu General Secretary Katishi Masemola said on Friday, "I, and our lawyers, are working on a legally sound agreement, particularly on job security (guaranteed return to work, specially of permanent casuals) and nonvictimisation of all on the strike". He said that if this were agreed to by ABI, the union "will...report back to our members again and encourage them to accept a settlement, despite the lack of improvement on the wage increment. We hope ABI agrees to this."

BUSINESS DAY (National)

NEWS BRIEF

SANParks offers 40% discount

South African National Parks (SANParks) are offering a 40% discount to anyone using their new online booking system for visits to parks in December. The offer applies to selected camps in six national parks in South Africa, including the Kruger National Park. "We chose these parks to boost their occupancy because not all of them are famous," said the General Manager of Public Relations, Media and Stakeholder Relations at SANParks, Reynold Thakuli. The parks are the Golden Gate Highlands national park in the Free State with one camp; the Kruger National Park in Mpumalanga and Limpopo with nine camps; the Mapungubwe national park in Limpopo with three camps; the Marakele national park in Limpopo with one camp; the Mokala national park in the Northern Cape with one camp, and the Ai-Ais Richtersveld national park in the Northern Cape with five camps.

NEWS24.COM - NEWS 24

Civil servants continues to receive govt contracts

Acting KwaZulu-Natal Director General Roger Govender said that public servants in KZN whose companies received government contracts were likely to continue receiving such contracts until a directive was issued by the Public Service and Administration Department. He was responding to a performance audit of the provincial government by the auditor-general, which discovered that KZN had the highest number of public servants benefiting from government contracts. It has emerged that companies that belong to civil servants had earned more than R135 million from the KZN government between April 2005 and March 2007.

MERCURY

Project to rescue rare bird launched

The Midlands is to host part of a unique conservation project that aims to bring a rare crane species back from the edge of extinction. A programme to raise critically endangered Wattled Cranes was launched yesterday in Nottingham Road. Jeanne Marie Pittman, Project Co-ordinator of the Wattled Crane Recovery Programme, launched its reintroduction project which includes an isolation-rearing facility and roosting pens at the Bill Barnes Crane and Oribi Nature Reserve.

WITNESS

Mthatha-Joburg flights resume

SA Airlink flights between Mthatha and Johannesburg were back on schedule after faulty beacons were repaired at the Eastern Cape airport, the provincial government said on Friday. "Two service providers, SIA Solutions and Excellec Systems, have been working around the clock to fix the landing system at Mthatha Airport, with the main challenge being to get some outstanding spares due to the fact that the airport's system is too old as it dates back to the 1970s," spokesperson Ncedo Kumbaca said.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Championship abandoned

The KwaZulu-Natal Senior and Junior Surf Lifesaving Championships being held at Amanzimtoti Main Beach were abandoned yesterday after a shark was spotted close to the competition area. Derek Fourie, spokesperson for the championships' organisers, said that the shark had been seen twice on Saturday. Former professional lifesaver Marvie Sheehan, of Durban, said that to his knowledge, this was the first case of a surf lifesaving championship being abandoned in KZN because of a shark sighting.

MERCURY

Winemaking in Joburg bears fruit

Johannesburg has registered its first wine-production plant, and it is in full production mode. The farm by Linbro Park, only makes red wines, but use some white wine for blends. The wines are called JHB wines and should be available for sale in three months.

STAR

Huge blitz to recover traffic fines

Richards Bay traffic official have issued out a warning to motorists with outstanding traffic fines, that they will come collect the money straight from their homes. The warning was issued by uMhlathuze Traffic Chief Paul Oliver after the City and Province began a huge blitz to recover outstanding traffic fines. Oliver's warning comes after a huge roadblock last week saw 342 vehicles stopped in what will become a weekly project aimed at catching fine defaulters. The first combined City Traffic and Department of Transport initiative netted outstanding fines worth R31 000 and saw 66 old summonses reissued for this area.

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

SA set to ship relief to Haiti

Much needed relief aimed at alleviating the suffering of over 1.5 -million people in quake-ravaged Haiti is to be shipped from South Africa within the next few weeks. Gift of the Givers' founder Dr Imtiaz Sooliman announced in excess of 500 tons of relief will be sent via commercial shipping liner to Haiti as part of the "third phase" of the organisations relief response. The generosity of South Africans has resulted in over R8 million in cash being donated to the Haiti relief response appeal.

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Mandela to mark 20 years of freedom

Former president Nelson Mandela will attend an event at Groot Drakenstein Prison on Thursday to commemorate his release from jail 20 years ago, Deputy Police Minister Fikile Mbalula said on Friday. President Jacob Zuma will speak at the event outside the prison, formerly known as Victor Vester, Mbalula said. The event would be attended by African National Congress veterans Ahmed Kathrada and Denis Goldberg, and Mandela's wife, Graca Machel.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

HEALTH NEWS

Western Cape College of Nursing students return

Nearly 70 students who were evicted from the Western Cape College of Nursing after violent protests are set to return to the college on 15 February. The Western Cape Department of Health has warned that it will use stringent measures. Students will now have to sign a binding declaration before they are re-admitted.

CAPE ARGUS (City Late)

Backlog in laboratory testing results

An extreme staff shortage is crippling the province's forensic chemistry laboratory and resulting in backlogs of up to five years. The huge backlog means suspected criminals are kept behind bars for as long as two years while samples to be used in their trial, await testing. Annetjie Schillack, Deputy Director of the Forensic Chemistry Laboratory in Woodstock, the Health Department's only such laboratory in Cape Town, said a lack of experienced staff, low salaries and poor working conditions all contributed to the facility's poor functioning.

CAPE TIMES

Pharmacies want government medicine

Private pharmacies are appealing to government to permit state medication to be dispensed at all pharmacies. Drew Horner, Chief Executive of the pharmacy association, United South African Pharmacies (Usap), believes the long queues at state hospitals and clinics could be a thing of the past if the Department of Health enters into a co-operation agreement with the private sector in terms of which private pharmacies can also dispense government medication. The problem of supplying chronic and acute medicines can be alleviated - both now and when a national health insurance system (NHI) is launched. The best solution would be for patients using government's health facilities to fetch their medication from their nearest pharmacy, rather than having to travel kilometres to the nearest hospital or clinic where they wait in long queues, he says.

FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK

Eastern Cape Health: Treasury steps in

The troubled Eastern Cape Health Department is to get help from the National Treasury in sorting out its financial management, the department said on Friday. Spokesperson Sizwe Kupelo said the Treasury had agreed to send a technical assistance team, which would arrive in Bisho next week for a preliminary meeting. The department revealed earlier this week that it was R1.8 billion in the red, and said it had suspended all outstanding occupation specific dispensation payments, and payments to creditors. Kupelo said the decision to send the team followed a visit to Pretoria last week by the recently-appointed head of the department, Siva Pillay.

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Agents ordered to stop selling Simply Slim

Agents of Simply Slim have been ordered to stop selling the weight-loss product after the Medicines Control Council (MCC) suspended its sales. The order comes after the MCC issued a directive for the product's recall after certain batches revealed that the product contained sibutramine - a schedule 5 substance which may only be prescribed by a doctor. In order for a product to contain the substance, it must be registered as a medicine, and it may be sold only on a doctor's prescription. Sibutramine, an appetite suppressant, is taken to treat obesity. "Simply Slim is a weight loss product that is not registered as a medicine by the MCC as it is being promoted and sold as a complementary herbal weight-loss product," said Health Department Spokesperson Fidel Radebe.

STAR; BUSINESS DAY (National)

Treasury aid health department

The troubled Eastern Cape Health Department was to get help from the Treasury in sorting out its financial management, the department said on Friday. Spokesperson Sizwe Kupelo said the Treasury had agreed to send a technical assistance team, which would arrive in Bisho this week for preliminary meeting. The department revealed last week that it was R1.8 billion in the red.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

PROVINCIAL NEWS

Cape Town issues shark warning

The City of Cape Town has issued a shark warning for several popular beaches on the False Bay coast. It said on Friday there had been "high shark activity" on that stretch of coast, especially at Fish Hoek, St James and Muizenberg beaches. This was probably the result of the presence in the bay of a number of seals and schools of yellowtail. If shark warnings were sounded, bathers should leave the water immediately and not return to it until the shark spotters had indicated it was safe to do so. People should also swim in groups, and make sure other people could see them.

NEWS24.COM - NEWS 24

Officials tightlipped on Cwele's return

Officials of the Hibiscus Coast Municipality would not reveal whether Sheryl Cwele, the Director of Health and Community Services, would return to work today following her release on R100 000 bail on Friday. Hibiscus Coast Mayor Nolwazi Shusha said that she was uncertain whether Cwele, who faces drug-dealing charges, would return to work. She added that she did not attend to administrative issues.

MERCURY

The City will review its designated fireworks sites

The City of Cape Town is to review its designated fireworks sites as some of the areas are no longer safe. Mayoral committee member for safety and security, JP Smith said that while the city's community fire-safety bylaw banned the use without council approval, it would be impossible to enforce a blanket ban.

CAPE TIMES

uMgungundlovu seeks new landfill site

The uMgungundlovu District Municipality is seeking a new landfill site for Hayfields and Sobantu. The district municipality has appointed Jeffares & Green (J&G) to probe a suitable location for a new regional landfill site within the uMgungundlovu boundaries. Solid Waste Specialist Stuart Gower-Jackson, said that the project to find a new landfill site is at the stage where public involvement and participation is needed.

WITNESS

Mercury sludge in dumping pits

It has been found that toxic mercury sludge had remained in the government dumping pits outside Durban for the past 20 years - unfenced, uncovered and with no protective lining to stop the poison seeping into the earth. Majority of the waste is thought to have been produced by a textile factory previously owned by the Tongaat-Hulett group, while the waste site falls under the direct control of the Water and Environmental Affairs Department. Gareth Morgan, Democratic Alliance (DA) spokesperson on Environmental Affairs, said that government needs to urgently intervene in the situation.

MERCURY

Rabbit culling on Robben Island

Marksmen are shooting about 80 rabbits a night in Robben Island's most drastic culling programme to date. The meat is being given to welfare organisations and will soon be in restaurants across the city. Sharpshooters on the programme estimate that over 6 000 rabbits have already been culled.

CAPE ARGUS (City Late)

Umgungundlovu obtains clean audit record

The Umgungundlovu District Municipality has managed to obtain a clean audit record for the second year in a row. The Auditor-General's office noted the dramatic improvement within the municipality, pointing out this clean bill came barely two days after the municipality had received a disclaimer in the 2006/07 financial year. The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the Democratic Alliance (DA) welcomed the news of the unqualified audit report.

WITNESS

Commission of inquiry established

A commission of inquiry has been set up to probe allegations of maladministration, fraud and corruption uncovered by a forensic investigation into the Umngeni Municipality. KwaZulu-Natal Local Government MEC Nomusa Dube said that the commission would "soon start its work" and would need to conduct it out speedily. The need for a commission came about last year, after a conflict between forensic and internal investigations into the municipality's financial affairs.

MERCURY

GOVERNMENT BRIEF

Zuma's son speaks out

President Jacob Zuma's children are "content" to share their father with "twenty or more" siblings, his son Duduzane said on Friday. "We as a family are content with the polygamous nature of our household," he said in a statement. "We are content to have twenty siblings of more". Duduzane said his father had his children's blessing to add to the brood if he so wished, adding, "It is my father's right within the context of his culture to have as many children as he wishes". He said as a "citizen" his father had a right to "practice his culture". He said many of the Zuma children were adults who could help raise the younger ones. Duduzane said his father's care for children extended beyond his biological brood.

NEWS24.COM - NEWS 24

President's sex life under spotlight

President Jacob Zuma's sex life is likely to come under the spotlight as his party's top brass meet in Cape Town today, just days before the State of the Nation speech on Thursday. An African National Congress (ANC) national executive member said, that the party's leadership was likely to demand answers after Zuma acknowledged fathering the infant of soccer boss Irvin Khoza's daughter Sonono. After initial attempts to defuse the row by insisting this was a private matter between the president and the child's mother, the ANC and the Presidency did a U-turn, and Zuma issued a formal apology to the nation on Saturday. The apology came after a public outcry in which South Africans were largely united in condemning the President.

The times reports that the sex issue has also resulted in the President now being asked to serve only one term in office as head of state.

STAR; PRETORIA NEWS

Petrol stations warned

This year, the Department of Energy will begin visiting filling stations to check that their petrol prices are being correctly advertised each week. Should this be found not to be the case, the filling stations concerned could be summarily closed down. This is the first time since the Petroleum Products Amendment Act came into force in 2003 that the department's officials will police filling stations. Another condition with which filling stations must comply is to ensure that pumps are properly labelled. One of the problems the department is experiencing is the finalising of old licence applications. To date 15 135 applications have been received, but some 3 000 still need to be processed.

FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK

KZN gov't's focus

The KwaZulu-Natal government's focus for this year would be on education, health, land reform, fraud and corruption. These issues were identified during the African National Congress's (ANC's) annual provincial legkotla, which occurred at the Fern Hill Hotel in the Midlands over the weekend. KZN Premier and ANC Provincial Chairperson Zweli Mkhize said that the meeting had studied the extent of the party's successes in the province and indicated its weaknesses while suggesting ways to improve its performance.

MERCURY

Lekgotla of ANC leaders in KZN

A plan that will see members of the African National Congress (ANC) actively working in communities was adopted at a two-day lekgotla of ANC leaders in KwaZulu-Natal. ANC KZN Chairperson Zweli Mkhize said that the plan is two-pronged as it will see party members actively ensuring that government programmes are being implemented while the other was aimed at consolidating the structures of the ANC and ensuring that the organisation works at branch level. Mkhize added that the lekgotla had deepened the unity among party members, the leagues and alliance partners.

WITNESS

Traffic agency faces mismanagement probe

The Department of Transport has given the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) until today to set up its own payroll system. The department said the order to the corporation, which has been in existence since 1995, was unrelated to revelations late last week that the agency, which co-ordinates the planning, regulation and facilitation of traffic matters, had failed to transfer more than R200 million in fees it owed the department since October.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

'It wasn't FW who freed Madiba'

It was the intensity of the armed struggle, and not a decision by former president FW de Klerk, that led to Nelson Mandela's release 20 years ago, President Jacob Zuma said yesterday. The President said this while addressing an African National Congress (ANC) Boland region meeting in Paarl. He said that among the things he would be likely to talk about on 11 February, the anniversary of the release and day of his State of the Nation address, was what it took for Mandela to come out of prison.

STAR; CITIZEN (Second Edition); PRETORIA NEWS, BUSINESS DAY

Zuma's last chance to behave himself

African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) leader Kenneth Meshoe says that it is President Jacob "Zuma's last chance to behave himself". At the same time, Democratic Alliance leader Hellen Zille warned: "The South African Public will not be so forgiving next time around." According to Meshoe, Zuma apology about fathering a child by Sonono Khoza was insincere as it had come about due to pressure from the African National Congress (ANC) and public. It is clear, he pointed out; Zuma has a "sex problem" and should "seek professional counselling". Not everybody was as harsh on Zuma, both the ANC and Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) welcomed and accepted Zuma's apology.

STAR; CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Probe into wasteful expenditure slammed

The Ministerial Task Team that's supposed to probe questions regarding wasteful expenditure has been slammed as a waste of time. Last year, the African National Congress (ANC) established the task team after coming under heavy criticism over the luxury cars bought by ministers, totalling millions of rands. Democratic Alliance shadow Minister of Public Service and Administration Anchen Dreyer, said the team has thus far only produced an interim report. Dreyer said this is despite the fact that, when asked in November last year about the deadline for the production of the report, Minister of Public Service and Administration, Richard Baloyi was quoted as saying: "It will have to be soon".

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

ANC denies influencing Zuma

The African National Congress (ANC) yesterday said it does not discuss presidential pardons with President Jacob Zuma. "The ANC doesn't inform the president's decision," said ANC spokesperson Jackson Mthembu. "Many issues are the president's prerogatives. We try to separate these matters from any ANC discussion so that we don't influence the president on any matter." The comment follows a newspaper report that new legal grounds were considered for the release of the newspaper that "selective prosecution" would be cited as grounds for pardon.

BUSINESS DAY (National); THE CITIZEN (Second Edition)

BUSINESS BRIEF

In Business news today, the number of cases handled by the labour dispute mediator has risen by 6% or 7 498 cases in the 2008/09 financial year, according to Tokiso Review on dispute settlement. In the 2007/08 financial year the CCMA handled 132 868 cases, which increased to 140 366 in the 2008/09 financial year, according to the review. Tokiso added that the CCMA was projecting 158 000 cases for the 2009/10 year, a 13% increase from the previous financial year. Illovo Sugar aims to spend about R6 billion on its African expansion over the next five years in a bid to increase the group's annual sugar production from 1.7-million tons to between 2.5-million tons and 2.7-million tons. MTN will cut its interconnection charges on 1 March regardless of whether it receives the approval of Icasa to do so, its acting Chief Corporate Services Officer, Robert Madzonga, said on Friday.

NEWS REVIEWS

CCMA feels the heat of increasing dispute cases

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BUSINESS REPORT (National)

Natural medicines take lead in industry

The sales of complementary alternative medicines are growing at a faster rate than traditional or prescribed medicines in pharmacies, according to key players in the industry. Health care retailer Clicks, as well as homoeopathic and natural medicines brands, Natura and Vital Health Foods, said at the weekend that sales of multivitamins and homoeopathic medicines in pharmacies and health stores were ahead of the growth rate for overall health categories. Complementary alternative or natural medicines including herbal remedies are seen as alternatives to generic medicines generally prescribed by medical doctors. According to Natura Chief Operating Officer Cris Dillon the natural medicines industry grew between 10% and 15% last year and is currently worth R4 billion.

BUSINESS REPORT (National)

Premium on price as beer wars intensify

Castle Lite is winning the battle of South Africa's premium beer wars, with Amstel a close second. Nielsen figures show that Castle Lite has just over 30% of the premium beer market in SA, with Amstel holding 28.5%. Premium beer accounts for about 20% of SA's beer market. According to Nielsen, the value of the market for the past 12 months ending November 2009 was R4.9 billion. Premium beer is a hotly contested arena not only because much of the growth in beer resides in this segment, but because of the fierce competition between SA's two major players. Brandhouse beverages, a three-way joint venture owned by Diageo, Heineken and Namibia Breweries, is the biggest seller of premium beer, with 56% of the segment through Amstel, Heineken and Windhoek and 11.1% of the total beer market at the end of November, according to Nielsen.

TIMES, THE Business Times

Telkom Voice over WiMax here soon

Telkom was the first company in South Africa to launch a commercial WiMax service in June 2007. This service was however never planned as a standalone product, but is rather used as an 'ADSL substitute' in areas where users can not get ADSL services. Every ADSL customer also effectively purchases an analogue phone service from Telkom, giving them immediate voice services with their broadband services. This is however not the case with WiMax, where subscribers only get 512 Kbps internet access with the service. This is however set to change as Telkom is close to launching a 'voice-over-WiMax' service. According to Telkom Wholesale's Mike Vos, the company has been working on a voice over broadband (VoBB) product for a long time, and they are set to launch a VoIP service for WiMax customers within the next two months.

mybroadband.co.za

Grains in SA

Maize in SA, Africa's largest producer of the grain, advanced as the rand weakened against the dollar, making imports more expensive for local millers. White maize for March delivery, the most active contract, gained R13, or 1.1%, to close at R1 202 a ton, taking its weekly advance to 2.4% on the South African Futures Exchange. Yellow maize for July delivery rose R11, or 0.9%, to R1 267 a ton. Wheat for March delivery increase R10, or 0.5%, to R2 125 a ton.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

BANKING BRIEF

In Banking news this morning, policy-makers were considering whether to maintain stimulus measures as the South African economy had not been as affected by the global recession as other countries, central bank Deputy Governor Xolile Guma said yesterday; and figures due this week may send encouraging signals on the state of South Africa's economic recovery, although jobs data tomorrow may strike a sour note. Looking at business, rumours are again doing the rounds that Old Mutual could soon announce the sale of all or part of its 54% stake in Nedbank; and Nedbank may face lengthy legal proceedings defending claims by Pinnacle Point shareholders that the bank was responsible for their single-stock futures losses.

NEWS REVIEWS

SA stimulus measures could be maintained

Policy-makers were considering whether to maintain stimulus measures as the South African economy had not been as affected by the global recession as other countries, central bank Deputy Governor Xolile Guma said in Australia yesterday. He is among global policy-makers visiting Sydney this week to attend a symposium organised by the Reserve Bank of Australia to celebrate its 50th anniversary. "Certainly in South Africa, we've been taking a look at it, because we were not affected as seriously as other people, said Guma." The country's economy grew 0.9% in the three months to September last year amid a manufacturing rebound, after shrinking in the previous three quarters. *BUSINESS REPORT (Star) ; BUSINESS DAY (National)*

Economist calls for wider inflation target

South Africa's inflation target needs to be reviewed, said Annabel Bishop, an economist at Investec. She said that targeting the recalculated CPI instead of CPIX has increased the structural nature of consumer inflation, but it is believed to be a better reflection of inflation due to the changes in the economy. "A change to the inflation target band is required, preferably to a band of 3% to 8% with a midpoint of 5.5%, bearing in mind the impact on unemployment," she said. "Such a change would also allow a lowering of SA's relatively high interest rates, and reduce the attractiveness of the carry trade in SA, hence curb the negative effect of further rand strength on exports". *BUSINESS DAY (National)*

Interest rate hikes likely

Goolam Ballim, Standard Bank Chief Economist, said in his address at Durban's Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre recently, that the anticipated gradual upswing in the economy over the next couple of years is likely to indicate the end of interest rates cut and could lead to the Reserve Bank increasing rates in the second half of this year and early in 2011. Ballim said that South Africa's recovery from the global recession would be a slow process with economic growth of 2.6% anticipated for this year. Ballim added that the bank feels Eskom's application for a 35% electricity tariff hike would not be given the thumbs up by the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (Nersa). *DAILY NEWS (Deadline)*

Some positive signals on the horizon

Figures due this week may send encouraging signals on the state of South Africa's economic recovery, although jobs data tomorrow may strike a sour note. Factory output is likely to have risen in December for the first time since September 2008, lifted mainly by demand for exports. Those figures are due on Thursday. However, a labour force survey from Statistics SA tomorrow may carry more weight, with the final estimate of job losses over last year likely to rise above 1-million. On the other hand, the data may also show that the rapid pace of job shedding in the economy slowed in the fourth quarter of last year. *BUSINESS DAY (National)*

Old Mutual to sell Nedbank stake?

Rumours are again doing the rounds that Old Mutual could soon announce the sale of all or part of its 54% stake in Nedbank. In a recent note to clients, analysts at Standard Securities said the fallout of the financial market meltdown has put pressure on financial services conglomerates, like Old Mutual, to break down into simpler and less complex operations. "In the growing context of the disaggregation of global financial services conglomerates, we believe that Old Mutual may well look to sell part or all of its current stake in Nedbank," Standard Securities said. Old Mutual declined to comment on the note, saying it was in a closed period ahead of its results reporting and hence could not comment on market speculation. *FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK*

Basel proposals to have big impact

Some financial services sector proposals issued for consultation by the Basel Committee in December could have a significant effect on South African banks - if implemented - Errol Kruger, Registrar of Banks, said yesterday. "My initial feeling is that proposals regarding liquidity might have a bigger impact than proposals on capital," Kruger said. Kevin Lings, the economist at Stanlib, said the reason for this was that the bulk of bank deposits in South Africa were short term, while in other countries were of longer term. Liquidity refers to the volume of transactions and the proposals are aimed at ensuring that banks maintain an adequate level of high-quality assets that can be converted into cash. *BUSINESS REPORT (Star)*

Nedbank fights single-stock futures claim

Nedbank may face lengthy legal proceedings defending claims by Pinnacle Point shareholders that the bank was responsible for their single-stock futures losses. Nedbank said on Friday that a summons had been served on it and on five other entities on 28 January, by parties who became shareholders in Pinnacle Point in November 2008. "These parties appear to be controlled inter alia by Dave Mostert, Mervyn King and Ivor Stratford. The plaintiffs and other parties swapped their interests in various companies for shares in Acc-Ross Holdings around November 2008. Acc Ross subsequently changes its name to Pinnacle Point Group," Nedbank said. *BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets*

Absa's profit dip likely to meet forecast

Absa Group is expected to report headline earnings per share (HEPS) tomorrow in the middle of the 25%-35% decline it forecasts in a trading statement, analysts said on Friday. The group said in its recent trading statement for the financial year to end 31 December that it expected earnings per share (EPS) to be 35%-45% lower. The difference between the HEPS and EPS was largely due to impairments from the investments acquired through the single-stock future débâcle late in 2008. *BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets*

Retail property 'can only improve'

Weak Christmas sales have not dampened analysts' enthusiasm for the retail property sector in the medium term. They believe that although the sector will remain under pressure in the short term, shopping centres will in time deliver better yields than industrial property and offices. During an economic recovery retail property has always been inclined to perform better than the other sub-segments of the commercial property sector. This, however, applies only to dominant shopping centres, which have proved defensive in the economic downturn. A new research report from Old Mutual Investment Group Property Investments (Omigipi), which owns the Gateway Theatre of Shopping in Umhlanga and Menlyn Park in Pretoria, among others, shows that sales turnover for December last year remained unchanged in nominal terms. *FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK*

SPORTING HIGHLIGHTS

Hashim Amla's 253 not out in the first innings of the first Test against India yesterday is a lesson in the art silencing detractors using no words at all, but doing it on the field of play. Having endured a difficult introduction to international cricket in India in 2004, Amla has clearly put a great degree of work into his game since then to become the player he currently is. He has ironed out the problems with his technique and has developed remarkable levels of concentration which enable him to bat for long periods and in difficult situations. He has now established himself as a mainstay at No 3 in the Proteas batting line-up, silencing those who thought he was not the right man for the job, and, most impressively, has done it all with his bat. Not once has Amla spoken up, or voiced his anger about the criticism directed his way. He made his name silently and humbly and with class. *News Reviews*

Saru confirm contracts

The South African Rugby Union (Saru) yesterday confirmed the names of 19 players who have agreed to Springbok contracts for 2010. They are: Andries Bekker, Bakkies Botha, Heinrich Brussow, Schalk Burger, Bismarck du Plessis, Fourie du Preez, Jaque Fourie, Bryan Habana, Adrian Jacobs, Tendai Mtawarira, Victor Matfield, Wynand Olivier, Ruan Pienaar, JP Pietersen, Danie Rossouw, John Smit, Juan Smith, Morne Steyn and Pierre Spies. Additionally, 10 players have agreed to contracts through the end of the 2011 Rugby World Cup. They are: Bakkies Botha, Schalk Burger, Fourie du Preez, Jaque Fouie, Bryan Habana, Victor Matfield, JP Pietersen, John Smit, Juan Smith and Pierre Spies. *STAR, Sport*

Amla scores 253 to put Proteas in command

Hashim Amla scored 253 not out as South Africa declared their first innings on 558/6 in the first Test against India in Nagpur yesterday. Amla shared in a record 340-run partnership with Jacques Kallis - who made 173 - for the third wicket, a record for any South African partnership against India. In reply, India reached 25/0 at the close of the second day's play. *STAR, Sport*

Absa Premiership title race whittled down to two

The race for the Absa Premiership title has effectively been whittled down to two teams after frontrunners SuperSport United and Mamelodi Sundowns both won this weekend and a couple of hopefuls dropped points. Leaders SuperSport beat Free State Stars 2-0 on Saturday, while second-placed Sundowns defeated Ajax Cape Town 1-0 yesterday. Santos' slim title hopes all but disappeared following a 1-0 defeat to Platinum Stars on Saturday, while both Orlando Pirates and Kaizer Chiefs drew against relegation-threatened teams. In other matches, Bloemfontein Celtic drew 1-1 with Moroka Swallows and AmaZulu and Mpumalanga Black Aces drew 0-0.

STAR, Sport

Lopez wins SA Open

Spaniard Feliciano Lopez defeated Frenchman Stephane Robert 7-5, 6-1 to win the South African Tennis Open yesterday and clinch the second ATP Tour title of his career. In the doubles final, Rohan Bopanna of India and Aisam-Ul-Haq Qureshi of Pakistan defeated Karol Beck of Ukraine and Herel Levy of Israel.

STAR, Sport

INDICATORS

Rand - Dollar \$	7.6958	(-0.0788)
Rand - Sterling £	12.0332	(-0.0227)
Rand - Euro €	10.5248	(-0.0217)
JSE Allshare	25793.0	(-525.30)
Gold	1058.0	(-25.25)
Platinum	1475.0	(-74.00)
Brent Crude Oil	71.7	(-0.40)

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

WEATHER

Bloemfontein	17	(30)
Cape Town	17	(23)
Durban	24	(32)
East London	18	(27)
Johannesburg	17	(31)
Kimberley	18	(33)
Mafikeng	16	(29)
Nelspruit	19	(30)
Pietermaritzburg	21	(35)
Polokwane	17	(27)
Port Elizabeth	18	(28)
Pretoria	17	(33)