

THE FRONT PAGE

President Jacob Zuma's State of the Nation address made headlines this morning. Zuma last night promised South Africans that this year would see action from his government, with public servants - from Cabinet ministers to teachers - bound by detailed agreements on what they must deliver, and by when. However, the political damage inflicted on Zuma in the past two weeks was plain to see as he delivered a decidedly lacklustre and largely empty State of the Nation speech in Parliament.

NEWS REVIEWS

THE DAY IN SHORT

In the news today: President Jacob Zuma promised South Africans that this year would see action from his government as he delivered his second State of the Nation address. However, opposition parties expressed disappointment at Zuma's address with one party calling it shallow. Yesterday also marked 20th anniversary of the release of Nelson Mandela from prison. The day was marked by dozens of the country's most powerful African National Congress (ANC) leaders march out of the gates at Drakenstein Prison, reincarnating the walk to freedom by Nelson Mandela 20 years ago. Sheryl Cwele, wife of State Security Minister, will today for the first time appear in the Pietermaritzburg High Court with alleged Nigerian drug lord Frank Nabolisa. Both face three charges.

NEWS REVIEWS

2010 STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

State of the Nation Address

The Business Day contained a feature on the State of the Nation Address with the following headlines, "Zuma sticks to state's five top priorities"; "No grand rhetoric, no detail either"; "Making SA safer gets just six lines in address"; "Disappointing 'laundry list' covers well-worn turf"; "Letdown at Zuma speech."

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Zuma dashes expectations with uninspired address

The political damage inflicted on President Jacob Zuma in the past two weeks was plain to see last night as he delivered a decidedly lacklustre and largely empty State of the Nation speech in Parliament. Instead of spelling out how South Africa was going to confront the economic crisis, and providing a vision of the way forward, Zuma stuck to banalities on the economy, drawing on the 20th anniversary of former president Nelson Mandela's release from prison for much of his speech. He largely failed to tackle vexed policy issues under contention in the ruling party, such as the future of inflation-targeting, the role of the Reserve Bank and the issue of nationalisation.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Laughter at reference to Khoza

President Jacob Zuma last night mentioned by name the father of Sonono Khoza, the woman he impregnated last year, drawing laughter from some in Parliament. Zuma thanked Irvin Khoza, the Chairperson of the Local Organising Committee for his work on the FIFA World Cup. Khoza's daughter last year gave birth to Zuma's twentieth child. Zuma was last week forced to apologise after news broke of the child born out of wedlock. Zuma, perhaps in a bid to diffuse the current outcry over his many wives and children, last night elected to share the red carpet with only one of his three wives, his first wife, Sizakele Khumalo.

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Promises of action from 'Mr Delivery'

President Jacob Zuma promised accelerated government delivery and new focus on industrial policy to spur growth and job creation yesterday as he delivered his second State of the Nation address. "This year, 2010 shall be a year of action. Government must work faster, harder and smarter," Zuma said in the speech to Parliament coinciding with the 20th anniversary of former president Nelson Mandela's release from prison. Zuma reiterated his administration's ambitions to get down to business on bettering education and health care, fighting crime and focusing on rural development, as well as his plans to hold his ministers to strict performance targets. Zuma revisited his promise made last May to create half a million job opportunities and contradicted the widely-held view that government had failed make good on it. Zuma stressed that these were not "jobs in the mainstream economy".

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Making SA safer gets just six lines in address

Despite frequent declarations that his administration would be tough on crime, President Jacob Zuma yesterday failed to indicate what additional measures would be taken to win the fight against crime. Zuma devoted a scant six lines of his speech to the theme of making life safer for "everyone in SA". He said that hijacking, business and house robberies, as well as contact crimes such as murder, rape and assault had been "identified" as top priorities. The South African Police Service has for at least two years reported an alarming rise in these crimes, which rank among those people fear most. However, Zuma had no new ideas on the issue.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

NP leader hailed and blamed

Contrary to radical statements made by the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) in the Western Cape yesterday, President Jacob Zuma last night followed in the footsteps of Nelson Mandela and preached the gospel of reconciliation. Delivering his State of the Nation address in Parliament, Zuma humbly acknowledged the contribution made by the leadership of National Party towards the release of Nelson Mandela from prison 20 years ago - even mentioning the "Groot Krokgedil". "It was he (former President PW Botha) who initiated the discussion about the possible release of political prisoners," Zuma said. The President's statements were however a far cry from comments by ANCYL President Julius Malema who said racism, unemployment and the housing shortage were all the legacy of former president FW De Klerk.

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

'Shallow' address disappoints

Opposition parties last night expressed disappointment at President Jacob Zuma's address. African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) leader Reverend Kenneth Meshoe said he found the speech shallow, while Freedom Front Plus leader Pieter Mulder said the speech contained vague promises. He added that government's proposals on crime were also vague. Democratic Alliance (DA) leader Helen Zille said Zuma's speech was short on details and substance. The Independent Democrats (ID) said it was disappointed at the lack of details on economic policy. The DA was particularly critical of Zuma's claim on job creation. In his address Zuma said that government had created 480 000 jobs but stressed that it was not mainstream jobs but created to give training opportunities and experience. In a blunt response, United Democratic Movement leader Bantu Holomisa said: "Those are palace statistics."

CITIZEN (Second Edition); STAR

Zuma criticised on proposal on wage subsidy

President Jacob Zuma grabbed prime time last night to promise that: "This year, 2010 shall be a year of action." But his proposal for a wage subsidy for companies that take on more employees, got a firm thumbs down from labour federation the Cosatu, usually one of his strongest supporters. Cosatu General Secretary Zwelizima Vavi said he was disappointed that Zuma was directing financial support for housing and jobs to employers and banks, rather than to workers. The Democratic Alliance (DA) leader in Parliament Athol Trollip said the wage subsidy idea was borrowed from his party. Zuma dodged the controversies of his administration, saying nothing about the public criticism of his latest love child, but the row within the ruling alliance over nationalisation of mines or the possibility of presidential pardon for Shabir Shaik or for apartheid killer Eugene De Kock.

THE TIMES

POLITICAL NEWS

'De Klerk is no hero'

Former president FW de Klerk is "not a hero" of South Africa's struggle against apartheid, and must "never be celebrated", ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema told party supporters in Paarl last night. His co-speaker at a rally in Paarl last night, Deputy Police Minister Fikile Mbalula, echoed Malema's words and described the Democratic Alliance-led Western Cape as "racist and fascist". Malema and Mbalula, who is also a former Youth League president, were addressing a rally in Mbekweni before yesterday's celebrations at the town's Drakenstein Prison to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Nelson Mandela's release. Malema told hundreds of cheering supporters: "De Klerk is not a hero of our struggle. He must never be celebrated."

IOL.CO.ZA; EWN.CO.ZA

SAFETY & SECURITY NEWS

W.Cape taxi violence has NTA on edge

The National Taxi Alliance (NTA) fears a further upsurge in violence among feuding taxi groups in Vrygrond, officials said on Wednesday. A taxi driver was shot dead and two other people wounded in the south Peninsula earlier this week. This brings to four the number of shootings reported there in recent weeks. Rival taxi groups have been at odds over routes for some time.

EWN.CO.ZA

Mncwango released on bail

A top Nongoma Municipal official, Sanelisiwe Mncwango, wife of Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) National Organiser Albert Mncwango, was yesterday released on R2 000 bail in the Nongoma Magistrate's Court, where she had appeared for fraud and corruption charges. Mncwango, who is the director of community services, was apprehended early this week with five other municipal officials on charges related to the alleged disappearance of municipal funds. KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Nomusa Dube, welcomed the probe and the arrests.

MERCURY

Cops on hit list

Durban policemen tasked with having to arrest the hitmen responsible for taxi-related murders, are being targeted by killers-for-hire. An internal memo from Durban's Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU) has warned certain policemen that criminal elements in the taxi industry have compiled a list of those who are to be killed. National Police Commissioner Bheki Cele said that while they deemed the threat seriously, the hit list should not intimidate policemen, as threats were part of the job.

DAILY NEWS (Deadline)

Cwele and Nabolisa to appear in court

Sheryl Cwele, wife of State Security Minister, will today for the first time appear in the Pietermaritzburg High Court with alleged Nigerian drug lord Frank Nabolisa. Both face three charges of dealing or conspiring to deal in drugs and are accused of recruiting Charmaine Moss and Tessa Beetge as "mules". A source close to the investigation refused to speculate on whether or not the state would plea bargain with either Cwele or Nabolisa, saying that it would be up to them to make the approach.

MERCURY; THE TIMES; STAR; CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Badul refused bail

Hariram Badul, the former Station Commissioner of the Mountain Rise Police Station, who faces fraud and theft charges amounting to R1 million, was yesterday refused bail in the Pietermaritzburg Magistrate's Court. Magistrate Chris van Vuuren believed Badul could influence or intimidate state witnesses as there was evidence that he had done so previously. Petrus Coetzee, Badul's Attorney, said that they would appeal Van Vuuren's decision.

MERCURY

Barbie trial finally reaching conclusion

The end is in sight for the marathon trial of Cezanne Visser, with the state and the defence expected to deliver their final arguments regarding sentencing to the Pretoria High Court today. Acting Judge Chris Eksteen yesterday indicated that he might not be ready to sentence Visser today. It is expected that the defence will call on the court to impose a non-custodial sentence on the 32-year-old blonde, dubbed Advocate Barbie, while it is expected that the state will ask for a jail sentence.

STAR

LABOUR & UNION NEWS

Best year yet for agricultural companies- Solidarity

Although the agricultural companies currently involved in wage negotiations in the Grain Bargaining Council had the best year yet, the employees have to be satisfied with only crumbs, the trade union Solidarity said yesterday. This comes after GWK, Senwes, OVK, NWK, Suidwes and VKB-NTK only offered a 5% increase in the second round of wage negotiations that continued this week. According to Solidarity spokesperson Jaco Kleynhans, employers in the sector showed strong profits in the past financial year and the time has come for companies to invest more in their employees. Solidarity is currently demanding a wage increase of 13% at GWK, Senwes, OVK, NWK, Suidwes and VKB-NTK. In addition, Solidarity is demanding that a housing allowance be paid to employees. At the moment, employees do not receive any housing allowance.

NEWS REVIEWS

Solidarity objects to Harmony's underground food ban

Solidarity has declared a dispute with the Chamber of Mines, after Harmony Gold banned workers from taking food underground at one of its operations. A clause in the wage agreement reached with Harmony last year allowed workers to take 500g of food and 2 litres of non-alcoholic liquid underground, Paul Mardon, a Solidarity official, said yesterday. Harmony's decision, which affected the Shepong mine outside Odendaalsrus, posed "serious health risks". The ban was intended to prevent workers from taking food to illegal miners. Workers were still allowed to take water underground. The union maintained that the firm had not negotiated with it before making the decision.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Teachers insist on strike option

The Democratic Alliance's (DA's) call for teaching to be declared an essential service, thus banning teachers from striking, was misinformed and short-sighted, teachers' trade unions said yesterday. The DA was undeterred and was to submit its application to the Essential Service Committee today, DA Basic Education spokesperson Junita Kloppers-Lourens said yesterday.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

NEWS BRIEF

BRT fares won't increase during World Cup

Prices for the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system will not increase during the 2010 World Cup, according to Johannesburg's transport executive director. Addressing a round-table meeting with reporters on Wednesday, Lisa Seftel said they are planning to transport 20 000 spectators to both Ellis Park and Soccer City when the World Cup commences. With 17 000 people already using the BRT on a daily basis, Seftel said they have already employed 75 bus drivers to improve their services. "A total of 100 drivers are still in training and we are planning to employ 100 more drivers in May. The city has planned to employ 275 drivers," she said. The city's Member of Mayoral Committee (MMC) responsible for transport, Rehana Moosajee, said BRT will be ready to transport football fans for the soccer spectacle. "We are planning to transport 20 000 spectators to both Ellis Park and Soccer City on match days and we are convinced that we will be able to move spectators speedily and safely to the stadia as well as after the match," she said.

SA2010.GOV.ZA

Mandela should be proud - Vavi

Nelson Mandela could be proud of what South Africa had become two decades after his release from jail, Cosatu General Secretary Zwelinzima Vavi said on Thursday. He was speaking to journalists at Drakenstein Prison outside Paarl, where the African National Congress is hosting a morning of celebrations to mark the 20th anniversary of Mandela's freedom. "I think he should be proud generally about the progress that the country has made," Vavi said. He added, "We are a respected democracy. We have had four rounds of national elections and local elections, largely peaceful. We have a Constitution celebrated everywhere else in the world as one of the best that humankind can dream of".

NEWS24.COM - NEWS 24

Crocodile caught

A crocodile suspected of attacking a woman in the uMhlathuze River on Sunday was caught yesterday morning. Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (EKZNW) staff said that the 2.5m crocodile had been caught in the Cekeni area, where Ntombifuthi Mhlongo had been attacked while crossing the river. The trap was set to catch the crocodile following her attack. EKZNW spokesperson Jeff Gaisford said that the crocodile was taken to the Crocodile Centre at St Lucia, where it would stay until a decision was made on where it could be safely released.

MERCURY

Tambo helped free Madiba - Ramaphosa

Former African National Congress (ANC) general-secretary Cyril Ramaphosa says the role played by late former party president Oliver Tambo in Mandela's release should not be ignored. Ramaphosa says Tambo was the only member who recognised the value of Madiba during the dark days of apartheid. Ramaphosa says "from his efforts Oliver Tambo was able to ensure that citizens of the world were demanding that Nelson Mandela should be freed."

5fm NEWS @ 09:00

Dolphin Beach Hotel on fire

Cape Town fire services managed to extinguish a fire that broke out yesterday at the upmarket Dolphin Beach Hotel. The fire broke out in a restaurant section of the hotel in the morning. The cause of the fire has not yet been established, and no people were evacuated from the hotel.

SAfm NEWS @ 12:00

Standing ovation greets Nelson Mandela

"Nelson Mandela, Nelson Mandela - there is none like you!" was a song used to welcome former president and struggle veteran Nelson Mandela in Parliament yesterday. As Mandela took his seat the revered elder statesman was given a standing ovation by parliamentarians.

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

Stripper boss fined 'R20 000 for assaults'

Stripper king Lolly Jackson must pay a R20 000 fine or spend two years in jail after pleading guilty to shooting a former employee with rubber bullets, and other charges. Half of his sentence was suspended for five years. Jackson will go to jail if convicted of assault again. On Wednesday, Jackson entered into a plea agreement with a Randburg Magistrate's Court prosecutor and pleaded guilty to three counts of assaults involving former employees dating back to 2007. In September, he had denied the allegations before the same court after handing himself over at the Santon police station, where he was detained for eight hours.

THE TIMES

2010 'criminal' referred for psychiatric exam

One of the men arrested for threatening in an e-news report to "rob and kill" tourists during the 2010 FIFA World Cup failed to convince a Johannesburg magistrate yesterday that he was mentally fit to stand trial. Evans Tsi Radebe, who told the court he had been diagnosed with schizophrenia, and who uses variations of his name, told the court that he "refuses to go" to the Sterkfontein mental hospital for psychiatric assessment. Despite Radebe's plea to be given his medication and "good nutrition" in prison while awaiting trial, magistrate Albertus Roux said "it was in everyone's best interests" that Radebe be referred to the hospital, west of Johannesburg, for examination.

TIMES, THE (First Edition)

Inspector in trouble for damaging Mbeki's plane

A South African aviation inspector has landed himself in hot water after he climbed aboard Thabo Mbeki's charter plane in Khartoum without permission and "forced and broke" the door on his way out. A relief aircraft was sent from South Africa, with an engineer aboard, to repair Mbeki's plane, which was chartered from the SA Air Force. The incident reportedly interrupted the former president's African Union mission in North Africa, where he is chairing the AU High Level Implementation Panel on Sudan and visiting other North African leaders. According to SA Civil Aviation Authority, the inspector was in Sudan auditing companies mandate by the CAA to maintain South African planes, and he was inspecting all locally registered aircraft as well.

STAR

HEALTH NEWS

Gauteng to introduce new protocol on HIV treatment

The Gauteng Health and Social Development say they are ready to implement a new HIV/Aids treatment protocol in April. The new protocol states that antiretroviral treatment should be provided to all patients co-infected with TB and HIV and if their CD4 count is 350 or less. Treatment should also be provided to pregnant women with CD4 count of 350 or less.

5pm NEWS @ 09:00

Measles outbreak increases in the Western Cape

The number of measles cases in the Western Cape has increased dramatically and now stands at 447. According to the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD), there were at least 82 newly confirmed laboratory cases in the province by Tuesday. MEC Theuns Botha says his administration is handling the measles issue as it is not an epidemic but an outbreak.

CAPE ARGUS (City Late)

PROVINCIAL NEWS

Ebhayi to use Bucs in 2010 drive

The Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality will use the match between Orlando Pirates and Botswana's Gaborone United to promote the 2010 World Cup in Port Elizabeth's townships. This was announced at a media briefing in Port Elizabeth yesterday by Putco Mafani of the municipality's marketing, communications and events directorate. Pirates and United will be in the Eastern Cape for the African Champions League return match at the Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium on 28 February.

SOWETAN (Late Final), Sport

Joburg road upgrades on track

The road infrastructure in Johannesburg will be ready for the 2010 World Cup. That is according to the Johannesburg Roads Agency (JRA) which, on Wednesday, addressed concerns over the major construction projects that are still under way on most of the city's highways. The JRA said that apart from the highway upgrades, over R30 million is being used to fix potholes, trenches, traffic signals and sidewalks. Part of the highway-upgrading projects are directly linked to the Gautrain which is nearing completion.

PROJECT2010.CO.ZA

Political parties object to new rules

Political parties have objected to proposed new rules at Durban City council, saying they will hamper access to information, transparency and debate. In a report on the proposed amendments to the rules of order are changes in the ways political parties can ask for information from City Hall on often controversial and sensitive matters. Political parties said that they were prepared to take legal action, as the new rules meant they would not be able to question officials on issues important to ratepayers.

DAILY NEWS (Deadline)

MEC welcomes occasion

KwaZulu-Natal Finance MEC Ina Cronje, in her address in Durban on Wednesday, welcomed a historic occasion that marked the establishment of close relationships between Muslim business and young entrepreneurs under the Young Business Society banner. Cronje was representing MEC for Economic Development and Tourism (DEDT) Michael Mabuyakhulu, who was invited to witness the signing of a memorandum of understanding between President of Young Business Society, Phumlani Mfeka, and President of Minara Chamber of Commerce, Solly Suleman. At the ceremony, awards were presented to the national Public Enterprises Department, DEDT, KZN Health Department and the eThekweni Municipality, for their role in the economic development and support of the two organisations.

WITNESS

Griquas unhappy with name change

The issue of whether the name of Kokstad should be altered has been placed on the agenda and is creating tension between the local municipality and the Griqua tribe. The Greater Kokstad Municipality has called on local communities and councillors to participate in a meeting today to discuss the naming of the town. However, a representative of the Griqua tribe said that the issue is not a priority and a change will not be allowed.

WITNESS

Opposition parties slam request

A request to allocate more than R200 000 of council funds towards next week's match between Orlando Pirates and Maritzburg United was slammed by some opposition parties during yesterday's sitting of the council's executive committee (Exco). Democratic Alliance (DA) Councillor Bill Lambert said that he is concerned that if the budget is approved, more requests like this will be received in the future. African National Congress (ANC) Councillor Patrick Moon expressed surprise that Exco is debating something that was already budgeted for.

WITNESS

MEC Lennit Max asked to be put on special leave

Western Cape Community Safety MEC Lennit Max has been asked to be put on special leave with full pay after a tabloid newspaper published damning allegations that he demanded sexual favours from a former police station clerk. Max said that the allegations are baseless and without fact. He said that it is difficult for him to give his full attention to his portfolio at this time.

CAPE TIMES

Water and electricity theft in city

Evidence of large-scale water and electricity theft within Pietermaritzburg is starting to emerge as the Msunduzi Municipality disconnected several more buildings yesterday. The municipality is conducting a major swoop on debtors who owe money on their electricity and water accounts. From Monday the team will engage on a major disconnection crackdown on municipal debt defaulters.

WITNESS

CPT's house crow infestation being eradicated

Eradication of Cape Town's house crow infestation is slowly making progress, with the R7 million project well into its third month. Louis Stafford, the city's invasive alien species co-ordinator said the multimillion rand project was a seven-year project. The city is currently finding satellite roots, monitoring nest sites and monitoring the number of crows.

CAPE ARGUS (City Late)

Medical waste could be dumped in Durban

Thousands of tons of rotting medical waste may end up being dumped at a Durban landfill site after Gauteng environmental officials declined to handle the waste. Plans are underway to dump the waste at a general waste dump in KwaZulu-Natal to save on the cost of incineration or dumping at high-hazard waste sites in Gauteng and the Cape. Democratic Alliance (DA) Environment spokesperson Gareth Morgan, objected to the proposal on the basis that bio-hazardous waste should be treated with great care.

MERCURY

Pond to be filled with rubble

Decades of model boating history at Durban's Blue Lagoon is set to conclude shortly, when eThekweni council bulldozers fill the landmark pond with rubble. The council believes the pond, which the municipality constructed and paid for 65 years ago, has become "a significant health and safety risk" and occupies too much space in the parkland surrounding the lagoon. Members of the Durban Model Radio Club, who have been using the pond since 1945, said that they have been given no choice in the matter and no suitable alternative venues.

MERCURY

Council want help

Johannesburg mayor Amos Masondo has asked local companies to come forward if they can assist with the pothole problem. City Manager Mavela Dlamini said those wanting to make a contribution would be most welcome, but was quick to warn that it must be genuine assistance. Democratic Alliance leader Victor Penning said it was a good idea, but blasted city council for its lack of accountability. "It's a slap in the face that city council hiked the rates by 34 percent. Business and commercial property owners pay the hike but are now expected to assist the organisation that overcharged them."

CITIZEN (Second Edition)

EDUCATION NEWS

Schools close amid protests

Barely a month after schools in Durban opened for this year, two were shut down yesterday amid protests over a lack of resources, overcrowding and the poor condition of school buildings. Lessons came to a standstill at Duduzani Primary School and Makhapha Combined School. Parents at Duduzani Primary have promised to keep the school closed until they were instructed that the facility would be rebuilt. KwaZulu-Natal Education Department spokesperson, Mbali Thusi, said that a tender to reconstruct Duduzani Primary had been awarded and construction would begin soon.

MERCURY

60 children still not in school

Almost a month after the start of the new school year about 60 children still have not been placed in school. This was confirmed by Paddy Atwell, spokesperson for the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) who said that they are still assisting the parents of the affected children.

CAPE ARGUS (City Late)

UCT union members and academics in talks

Members of the University of Cape Town (UCT) academics union are set to continue talks with university management about pay increases in a bid to prevent a strike by frustrated staff. Union members and management, including vice chancellor Max Price have been locked in talks for much of this week over what academics should be paid this year. The union demanded 13 percent for professor and 12 percent for non-professors.

CAPE TIMES

Western Cape College of Nursing to re-open on Monday

The Western Cape College of Nursing will re-open its doors on Monday after students went on strike and clashed with police during protests. The college was closed down and students who were living in residences were evicted two weeks ago. The Health Department said that management is committed to a positive process of consultation so that the outstanding matters can come to a satisfactory conclusion for all parties involved.

CAPE TIMES

GOVERNMENT BRIEF

Zuma encourages African leaders to attend WC

President Jacob Zuma has called on all African leaders to come to South Africa during the 2010 World Cup. He made his call at Tuinhuis in Parliament while welcoming seven new African ambassadors. Ghana's Higher Commissioner Lee Ocran, Ivory Coast's Zogoe Brice Abie and Sri Lankan High Commissioner Wije Singh were among diplomats welcomed by the President. Zuma said he was confident that their stay in the country would strengthen political and economic relations. The President said that Africa's prosperity and development depended on the support of other countries. He added that the importance of healthy relations between these nations is crucial for the continent. According to the presidency, SA has the second-highest number of ambassadors in the world. It follows the US.

SABCNEWS.COM

Zuma should 'get real' about jobs

President Jacob Zuma should tackle SA's biggest challenge, that of unemployment. He should also make it clear that government itself can't create jobs. According to political commentator Siphoo Seepe, there is a popular misconception that the state can directly contribute to employment. Seepe said government can only develop an environment in which businesses can contribute to job creation. "The sooner government stops pretending it can create jobs, the sooner the country can move on and talk about how to create a job-creating environment," said Seepe, who heads up the South African Institute of Race Relations.

FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK

Govt, mining firms acting on acid drainage

Mining companies and the Department of Water Affairs - as part of a government task team on mine closure and water management - had agreed to co-operate to fight acid mine drainage, the department said yesterday. Acid mine drainage was affecting the Witwatersrand gold fields area and had harmed the Vaal and the Crocodile river systems, the department said.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Zuma misses Madiba celebrations

Dozens of the country's most powerful African National Congress (ANC) leaders marched out of the gates at Drakenstein Prison today, reincarnating the walk to freedom by Nelson Mandela 20 years ago. The walk was part of a full day of ANC celebrations of the historic day and among the most senior in attendance were Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe, Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) leader Zwelinzima Vavi, ANC Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe and a host of Cabinet ministers and other ANC leaders. A crowd of several thousand ANC supporters were disappointed, however, at the non-appearance of the two most senior figures expected - President Jacob Zuma and Winnie Madikizela Mandela, who had not arrived by midday. Cabinet ministers Trevor Manuel and Cyril Ramaphosa spoke outside the gates of their roles as part of Mandela's "reception committee".

NEWS24.COM - NEWS 24; SAFM NEWS EXTRA @ 12

BUSINESS BRIEF

In Business news today, factory output surged unexpectedly in December, adding to evidence that the economy's second-biggest sector pumped up overall growth late last year. Manufacturing production was 3.2% higher than the previous December's - the first annual rise in 14 months - after falling 4.6% in November. Transnet is considering legal action against Satawu, which has fired a barrage of allegations of racism and corporate governance transgressions against the parastatal. Recovery has come slower than expected for Country Bird Holdings. The upturn has yet to take hold, as it reported a 15% decline in operating profit to R82.4 million for the six months to December, even as revenue rose 14%. The World Cup and a consumer recovery will drive a "strong" rebound in South African media and internet companies' earnings in 2011 and 2012, according to a RMB Morgan Stanley Research analyst.

NEWS REVIEWS

Surprise late surge suggests factory rebound

Factory output surged unexpectedly in December, adding to evidence that the economy's second-biggest sector pumped up overall growth late last year. Manufacturing production was 3.2% higher than the previous December's - the first annual rise in 14 months - after falling 4.6% in November, Statistics SA said yesterday. Forecasts from Reuters were for a modest 0.9% rise. "It's certainly a huge surprise, and means that economic growth in the fourth quarter may be stronger than we expected," Nomura International economist Peter Attard Montalto said. Export demand, particularly from Asia, and restocking by local companies drive the gains in factory output, in the face of weak domestic demand.

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

Sactwu plans Cup sweatshops

The South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union (Sactwu) wants the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), FIFA and the South African Football Association to ensure more World Cup merchandise is made in SA. "We are very concerned that World Cup products, such as the Zakumi mascot, are being manufactured in sweatshops where workers reportedly earn R23 a day and have no rights," Sactwu General Secretary Andre Kriel said yesterday. "We are concerned that South African workers will not benefit from this World Cup".

BUSINESS DAY (National)

Satawu allegations of racism bother Transnet

Transnet is considering legal action against the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (Satawu), which this week fired a barrage of allegations of racism and corporate governance transgressions against the parastatal. Spokesperson John Dlodlu yesterday confirmed receipt of "a racist, defamatory and inflammatory email which appears designed to undermine the integrity of some colleagues by making sweeping allegations against them". Satawu, in a letter sent this week to acting Group Chief Executive Chris Wells, demanded that the board of directors be dissolved immediately because it had allegedly undermined efforts to transform the company together with a "minority cluster" of senior personnel. The union claimed that at least 70% of critical senior positions at Transnet Rail Engineering (TRE) were given to Indian managers at the expense of African managers.

BUSINESS REPORT (National)

New businesses face chaos

On Wednesday the Companies and Intellectual Property Registration Office (Cipro) admitted that it did not have the capacity to handle the large number of applications for new close corporations and companies. Hundreds of people were seen standing in queues at Cipro's office in Pretoria, hoping to register businesses. Until a business received official documents from Cipro, it cannot open a bank account, receive a VAT number or do business in the formal economy. Acting Cipro head Renier du Toit, who is standing in for Keith Sendwe - who has been absent from the office for a "couple of weeks" owing to poor health - acknowledged that Cipro's existing systems are not adequate to handle the volume of transactions. He said that some of the problems would be resolved when a comprehensive new enterprise content management (ECM) system becomes fully operational.

FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK

Afgri sells Western Cape debtors book

JSE-listed Afgri has sold its Western Cape debtors book for more than R371 million to a Stellenbosch-based financial and business solutions firm as the agricultural group rushes to present shareholders with a leaner structure when it presents its interim results later this month. CEO Chris Venter has been on an aggressive asset disposal programme to sell noncore and unprofitable assets after a strategic decision made more than a year ago to refocus Afgri on the grain business.

BUSINESS DAY (National), Companies & Markets

World Cup will lift media earnings - analysts

The World Cup and a consumer recovery will drive a "strong" rebound in South African media and internet companies' earnings in 2011 and 2012, according to RMB Morgan Stanley Research analyst Pihlelo Matjekana. "We believe 2010 will be a tough earnings year for the media sector as advertising revenues continue to decline," Matjekana wrote in a research note dated yesterday. The World Cup, to be held in June and July would spur a recovery "in fiscal 2011, when we expect earnings growth to average 30%," with a further 28% increase in fiscal 2012, said Matjekana.

BUSINESS REPORT (National); CITIZEN, Citi Business

BANKING BRIEF

In Banking news this morning, the South African Revenue Service (SARS) may force some dividend income unit trusts to shut down. This is according to Investec Asset Management deputy MD Thabo Khojane, who told journalists on Wednesday that SARS could act soon on the issue; and the government is expected to toughen up enforcement measures and penalties in a bid to collect more revenue from taxpayers for the new financial year. On the business front, Santam, a short-term insurance company, said full-year earnings would be up to 60% higher owing to an absence of large scale industrial claims in late 2009; and Blue Financial Services found its South African operations one of its biggest challenges due to poor local repayment culture, Chief Executive Dave van Niekerk said yesterday.

NEWS REVIEWS

SARS may close down unit trusts

The South African Revenue Service (SARS) may force some dividend income unit trusts to shut down. This is according to Investec Asset Management deputy MD Thabo Khojane, who told journalists on Wednesday that SARS could act soon on the issue. The Financial Services Board (FSB) issued a circular in January, informing asset management groups of the investigation and warning portfolio managers to prepare exit strategies should some funds be closed down. "There are structures using covert instruments to convert interest income into dividend income," said Patrick Ward, the FSB's head of collective investments. Unlike interest income, dividend income is not taxed by SARS. Dividend income unit trusts hold about R54 billion in assets.

FIN24.CO.ZA - FINWEEK

Trade activity showing signs of recovery

Employment conditions in the trade environment deteriorated last month, according to a trade conditions survey by the SA Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Sacci). The employment sub-index fell to 41 from 47 in December, but the employment prospects index, which measures the outlook over the next six months, remained at 55 points in January. A reading above 50 is positive. Other forward looking sub-indices were also positive, including sales volumes at 76 and new orders at 72. Sacci economist Richard Downing said the World Cup could be having a temporary positive influence on all activities, but it was unclear whether it could be sustained.

BUSINESS REPORT (Star)

SARS to get tough on tax collection

The government is expected to toughen up enforcement measures and penalties in a bid to collect more revenue from taxpayers for the new financial year. Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan estimated in October that tax revenue for the year that end on 28 February would be about R70.3 billion less than the February budget forecast - 10.7% lower than the R659.3 billion projected. The South African Revenue Service (SARS) is under significant pressure to collect the revenue it had forecast and was expected to take an even tougher stance with taxpayers to prevent abuse of the system, warned tax analysts from Deloitte at a pre-budget briefing yesterday.

BUSINESS DAY (National)

SA market is Blue's weak spot

Blue Financial Services found its South African operations one of its biggest challenges due to poor local repayment culture, Chief Executive Dave van Niekerk said yesterday. Van Niekerk said that the pressure on the financial performance of the company in the past financial year stemmed from its South African operations. As Blue's acquisition of Credit U, the AltX-listed microlender formerly known as Kagisano, came to a conclusion last year, the global economic crisis hit and funding disappeared from the markets. Blue acquired Credit U for R278 million.

BUSINESS REPORT (Star)

SPORTING HIGHLIGHTS

Mamelodi Sundowns can ensure an exciting finish to the Absa Premiership season if they beat Santos in a make or break clash on Sunday. After a slow start to the season, the Brazilians have developed into two-time defending Premier Soccer League champions SuperSport United's only genuine contenders for the title. With the Soweto giants faltering, there was a danger that SuperSport would run away with the league, but Sundowns did not allow that to happen. They signalled their intentions when they beat their Pretoria rivals to close the gap on them and can draw level if they collect three points on Sunday. In the broader scheme of things, a close title race is also good for Bafana Bafana in the run-in to the World Cup. This is due to the fact that top players will shine when it matters most, and will most likely catch the eye of the national selectors.

News Reviews

Burger to captain Stormers

Schalk Burger was confirmed as Stormers captain for tomorrow's Super 14 opener against the Lions in Johannesburg after being given the green light to play yesterday. Fellow flank Francois Louw was also cleared to play as coach Allister Coetzee named a star-studded line-up containing six Springboks for the clash.

CITIZEN (Second Edition), Sport

Muir names team for opener

Lions coach Dick Muir named 19-year-old Wandile Mjekevu on the left wing for tomorrow's Super 14 opener against the Stormers in Johannesburg. Mjekevu was one of Muir's surprise inclusions, along with the selection of Hannes Franklin at hooker, Tonderai Chavhanga at right wing and Carlos Spencer at flyhalf. In the front row, Ross Geldenhuys starts ahead of the injured Kevin Buys at tighthead prop, while Jonathan Mokuena starts at No 8 ahead of Todd Clever.

CITIZEN (Second Edition), Sport

Sundowns face crucial clash against Santos

Mamelodi Sundowns' Absa Premiership title hopes will be on the line when they play Santos in a make or break clash on Sunday. Failure to secure maximum points would almost guarantee SuperSport United their third successive Premier Soccer League title, while a win would draw them level with the champions on points and games.

THE TIMES

Black Caps complete 3-0 sweep of Bangladesh

New Zealand beat Bangladesh by three wickets in the third and final one-day international in Christchurch yesterday to complete a 3-0 series sweep. Chasing the tourists' 241/9 for victory, the hosts reached the target in the 45th over.

STAR, Sport

INDICATORS

Rand - Dollar \$	7.6516	(+0.0694)
Rand - Sterling £	11.9327	(+0.0989)
Rand - Euro €	10.4345	(+0.1309)
JSE Allshare	26350.6	(-8.57)
Gold	1076.2	(-1.75)
Platinum	1511.0	(unch)
Brent Crude Oil	72.8	(+0.27)

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

WEATHER

Bloemfontein	18	(32)
Cape Town	16	(23)
Durban	23	(32)
East London	18	(30)
Johannesburg	16	(30)
Kimberley	18	(35)
Mafikeng	18	(34)
Nelspruit	19	(31)
Pietermaritzburg	21	(37)
Polokwane	16	(31)
Port Elizabeth	17	(26)
Pretoria	19	(32)