

Pensioners in march over social grant 'peanuts'

Sandiso Phaliso

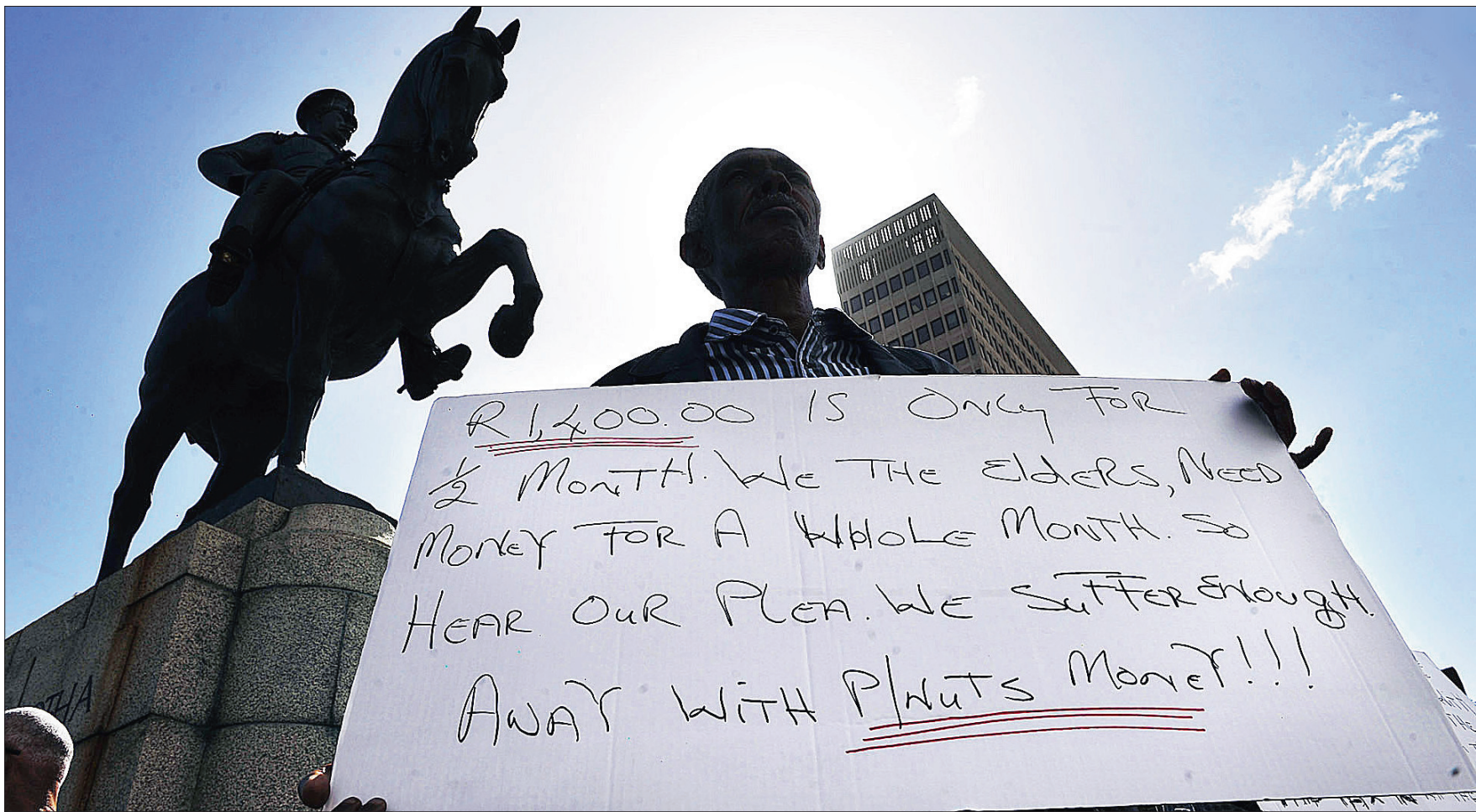
THE R1 410-a-month state pension should be doubled, because for many pensioners, the money lasts only a few days.

This was the view of about 100 pensioners who marched to Parliament yesterday to hand over a memorandum, demanding that the old-age pension be increased. The pensioners came from communities across Cape Town.

Lavender Hill pensioner Mogamad Rashid Hansen, 75, said he and other pensioners had organised themselves to have the march because they were not happy with the money they were receiving from the government.

He said rent, water and electricity had to be paid with the money, and that little was left for food after the bills had been paid. "The money they give us is peanuts."

Another pensioner, Ruwayda Daniels, said the monthly pension she received was spent in one week because she had a big family and great-grand-



'WE WANT MORE': Pensioners marched to Parliament yesterday to demand that the government increase their monthly pensions. Picture: COURTNEY AFRICA

children to support.

She said prices for food increased this month and she could no longer survive with the little money she was paid.

"When we were young, we worked for this government, and now they are giving us little money, whereas they are

getting fat cakes in Parliament," said Daniels.

After waiting at the gates of Parliament for just over an hour, the pensioners' memorandum was handed to social development portfolio committee chairwoman Rosemary

Capa, who apologised that the

minister could not receive the memorandum personally as she was abroad.

"We promise nothing, but we will respond in two weeks' time," said Capa.

South African Social Security Agency provincial spokeswoman Shivani Wahab said

the government's recent increase in social grants "was in line with projected inflation and will be reviewed in October".

The social grants were increased annually, she said.

Wahab revealed pensions and disability grants had

increased by R60 this year.

"The provision of social assistance is a constitutional imperative and the main purpose of social grants is to combat poverty, especially among the most vulnerable members of society," said Wahab.

VIROLOGIST WHO FOUND HIV WILL RESEARCH AIDS

Nobel winner coup for SA

Leanne Jansen

IN A coup for South Africa, Nobel Laureate Françoise Barré-Sinoussi has accepted a seat on the scientific advisory board of the Centre of the Aids Programme of Research in SA (Caprisa). The French virologist, who discovered HIV in 1983, will through Caprisa play an active role in guiding Aids research in South Africa.

Caprisa, based at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), brings together scientists from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases and the universities of the Western Cape, Cape Town and Columbia.

The announcement of Barré-Sinoussi's appointment was made yesterday at a meeting of the Caprisa science advisory board in Ballito. It was attended by Department of Science and Technology (DST)

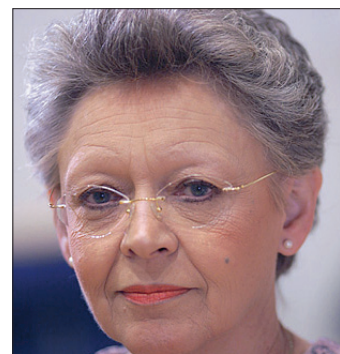
Minister Naledi Pandor, UNAids deputy executive director Luiz Loures, US ambassador-at-large Deborah Birx, and National Research Foundation (NRF) acting chief executive Beverley Dameron.

Barré-Sinoussi said yesterday she had taken a keen interest in the "world class" research undertaken by Caprisa over the last few years.

Professor Salim Abdool Karim, director of Caprisa, said Barré-Sinoussi's involvement would enable SA to make even bigger contributions to global HIV research.

"Great discoveries in science require fearless leaders who persevere against the odds. We are very fortunate to have Professor Barré-Sinoussi, who is one such fearless leader, to advise Caprisa on its future plans," said Abdool Karim.

Two further announcements made yesterday were



BARRÉ-SINOUSSE

the establishment of a R2 million fund to host distinguished international scientists in SA, and the establishment of the country's 15th centre of research excellence at UKZN.

The lectureship fund for eminent visiting scientists is an initiative of the Medical Research Council, and Abdool Karim and his wife Professor

Quarraisha Abdool Karim.

The Abdool Karims donated R1m towards the fund, using the money Quarraisha received when she was honoured with the 2014 TWAS-Lenovo Science Prize from the World Academy of Sciences and the money Salim received for his Kwame Nkrumah Award from the AU.

Medical Research Council president Professor Glenda Gray said the lectureship fund would build links between local researchers and top international scientists.

The Hoosen Coovadia lectureship series, and the Mervyn Sussner and Zena Stein lectureship series, have been named after three scientists who were mentors to the Abdool Karims.

"Professors Hoosen (Jerry) Coovadia, Mervyn Sussner, and Zena Stein are world-renowned South African scientists who

are being acknowledged with these lectureships for their significant contributions to medical research in diseases affecting the poor and vulnerable in Africa," Gray said.

Before announcing the new DST-NRF centre of excellence in HIV prevention, Pandor spoke of the gains which had been made in fighting the HIV epidemic, and praised Abdool Karim for his leadership of Caprisa and previously of the Medical Research Council.

Pandor was pleased that SA was providing affordable testing and counselling services, that 2.6 million people were able to access ARV treatment, and that Caprisa would be embarking on more "exciting" work over the next five years.

However, she was concerned that the humanities and social sciences were seemingly absent in combating HIV.

Medupi's workers in limbo

LEPHALALE: Disgruntled workers at Eskom's Medupi power station in Lephalale, Limpopo, were waiting on feedback from unions yesterday following a meeting with Eskom's contractors.

At least 1 700 workers were issued with suspension notices after taking part in an illegal strike last month. They had grievances over bonuses and accommodation.

The workers held protests outside the premises last week, demanding to be allowed back to work.

National Union of Metalworkers of SA (Numsa) spokesman Castro Ngobese said consultations between unions and employers continued.

Medupi has been marred by construction delays.

Four held after dagga laboratory discovery

Sandiso Phaliso

FOUR people were arrested in connection with the alleged cultivation of dagga as city law enforcement officers raided a suspected drug house in Lavender Hill yesterday.

Mayco member for safety and security JP Smith said officers fired rubber bullets and forced their way in after people refused them entry and set several pitbulls on them.

Inside the house they found a makeshift dagga laboratory and a yet to be determined amount of cash.

Smith added that the suspects stashed some tik in a sewerage pipe outside the house and tried to mask the smell with dog excrement to keep officers from searching the pipe.

The raid was part of a metro police and city law enforcement integrated operation in Lavender Hill and Ottery. The operation also focused on potential problem buildings as well as illegal spaza shops.

Smith said similar operations in Hanover Park and Manenberg had yielded positive results and had strengthened public confidence as residents were now coming forward with information about criminal activities.

sandiso.phaliso@inl.co.za

Delay in digital migration process 'a bullet that could've been dodged'

Craig Dodds

A FURTHER hold-up in the digital migration process – already years behind schedule – is "a bullet that could have been dodged" if there had been proper consultation on the policy changes announced by Communications Minister Faith Muthambi last month.

Civil society and interested parties agreed yesterday with e.tv's claim in its court challenge to the policy that Muthambi had failed to consult them.

The fact that the changes had been made "pursuant to a process that was not procedurally fair" is one of the grounds on which e.tv is basing its challenge, according to its founding affidavit, lodged in the Pretoria High Court.

Lara Kantor, e.tv group executive for regulatory strategy, argued in the affidavit that while Muthambi's predecessor, Yunus Carrim, had invited public comment on amendments he proposed to make to the policy, these had never been implemented.

Instead, Muthambi gazetted her own, directly opposite, changes last month, critically specifying that the 5 million government sponsored set-top boxes to be distributed to the poor would not be able to receive an encrypted signal.

Kantor argued that while Muthambi had acknowledged in public that she had an obligation to consult and claimed to have done so widely, e.tv

“Spending a few months to make sure we get it right is worth fighting for”

pay-TV broadcaster Multi-choice binding the public broadcaster to oppose encryption had frustrated the public consultation process, and the consequence was the likelihood of another delay in digital migration.

This was "a bullet that could easily have been dodged", Phamodi said.

William Bird, director of Media Monitoring Africa, welcomed e.tv's challenge, saying while it might lead to a further delay, "spending a few more months to make sure we get something that is going to be in the broadest public interest, and not necessarily in the interest of a limited group, is something worth fighting for".

In her affidavit, Kantor also argued Muthambi had overstepped her powers in prescribing that government set-top boxes would not be able to receive encrypted signals.

Given that there are an estimated 8 million households that rely on a terrestrial television signal (those who don't subscribe to satellite services like DSTv) for all their TV entertainment, this would cut e.tv or any other would-be free-to-air broadcaster off from 60 percent of the terrestrial television market and 35 percent of the total television market of an estimated 13 million households.

Muthambi's spokesman, Ayanda Hollow, said the department had yet to study the application and would issue a statement when it had.

STOVES

Retail price R54 999
R49 999
Stainless Steel 110CM, 7 gas burners, 3 electric ovens

Retail price R24 999
R19 999
Stainless Steel 90CM, 6 burners, double thermo-ventilated oven
Also in White, Cream and Stainless Steel

Retail price R21 499
R17 999
Stainless Steel 90CM, 5 burners, double thermo-ventilated oven
Also Stainless Steel, Cream and Burgundy

Retail price R16 999
R13 999
Stainless Steel 90CM, 4 burners, 2 electric plates double thermo-ventilated oven

FREE PIZZA STONE AND PADDLE
to the first 10 customers to purchase a stove

VALUED AT R2 300

WHILE STOCKS LAST. T&C's APPLY

WASHING MACHINE

Retail price R8 299
R6 999
• 8Kg • 1 200 rpm spin
• Quick wash 14min. • Silver

FREE 1.5l ARIEL LIQUID

DISHWASHER

Retail price R6 499
R5 499
• 12 place setting
• 27min. quick wash • Silver
Also available in white - R4 999

FREE FINISH TABLETS

TUMBLE DRYER

Retail price R8 299
R6 999
• 8kg • Condenser dryer
• Stainless Steel drum • Silver

Follow us on Facebook for new stock and specials

WAKEFORDS

HOMESTORE

138 main road fish hoek 021 782 6013 www.wakefords.com

briefs

Minister warns land invaders

THE government would not hesitate to act against people who invaded land illegally, Defence Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula said yesterday.

"We do not condone illegal invasion of land whatsoever," said Mapisa-Nqakula, chairwoman of the government's Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) cluster.

"The JCPS will not stand by and watch while these acts of illegal land invasions continue in our country."

In the past few weeks, police have had to intervene in several land invasions around the country.

E Cape woman, 53, shot dead

A woman was shot dead in Ngingwana, near Dutywa, Eastern Cape police said yesterday.

Captain Jackson Manatha said Nonobce Geilitshane, 53, was shot dead by an unknown gunman.

Manatha said the gunman first met Geilitshane's two granddaughters, but before the girls could tell the man where their granny was, she came out of the house as the dogs were barking. "The suspect fired some shots, hitting her in the upper body. She was rushed to the local clinic but was declared dead on arrival."

'When a man loves a woman' soul singer Percy Sledge dies



PERCY SLEDGE

US soul singer Percy Sledge, famed for his song *When a Man Loves a Woman*, has died at the age of 74, the BBC reported yesterday.

Steve Green, from talent agency Artists International Management Inc, confirmed to the BBC that he died at his home in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, yesterday.

"He was one of my first acts. He was a terrific person and you don't find that in this business very often," said Green. "He was truly a standout."

Sledge had surgery for liver cancer in January last year but soon resumed touring.

Two injured as bakkie overturns

Two men were injured after their bakkie and trailer overturned on the N3 in Balgowen in Pietermaritzburg, yesterday, ER24 reported.

Paramedics discovered that both the injured men had been sitting on the back of the bakkie and were ejected when the vehicle overturned. One of the men had sustained moderate injuries, including to his head and legs, while the other sustained minor injuries.

It is believed the driver lost control of the vehicle while towing the trailer. He and another man escaped without injury.

Police network nabs five suspects

Five men were arrested for illegal possession of firearms and ammunition and possession of suspected stolen property in Potchefstroom yesterday, North West police said.

Police spokesperson Colonel Sabata Mokgwabone said the Potchefstroom Visible Policing, Flying Squad and Kroonstad Crime Intelligence arrested the men in Ikageng Extension 7.

"The suspects, aged between 30 and 40, were arrested for illegal possession of firearms and ammunition and possession of suspected stolen properties. Kroonstad police alerted their counterparts in Potchefstroom about the suspects."

CAPE TIMES more than just a newspaper

Facebook: www.facebook.com/capetimes
Twitter: @CapeTimesSA
Mobi: www.m.capetimes.co.za

Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/capetimes
Web: www.capetimes.co.za
YouTube: www.youtube.com/capetimesSA