

KEY RESEARCH IN FIGHT AGAINST AIDS

Scientist awarded by those he helps

Leanne Jansen

THE African Union has honoured Durban scientist Professor Salim Abdool Karim with the \$100 000 (R1.1 million) Kwame Nkrumah Award for his research on HIV prevention and treatment on the continent.

The award was presented to Abdool Karim in Addis Ababa at the weekend by AU Commission chairwoman Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

In the past year, Abdool Karim has received the Royal Society of South Africa's most senior honour, the John W Herschel Medal, and an honorary degree in medicine from UCT.

However, the Kwame Nkrumah Award is particularly special to the director of the Centre for Aids Programme of Research in South Africa (Caprisa), at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. It was acknowledgement from the beneficiaries of his work, rather than from fellow scientists.

"The biggest impact our research has had is in Africa. The problems of TB and HIV co-infection, and of HIV in young women – all of those challenges are the factors driving the spread of HIV, and the deaths from HIV in Africa. What we do is focused on finding solutions to the biggest problems in



Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe; Cameroon winner of the Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation award, Professor Timoleon Crepin Kofane, second left; and African Union Commission chairwoman Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, far right; with Professor Salim Abdool Karim as he receives the Kwame Nkrumah Award for Earth and Life Sciences at the African Union buildings in Addis Ababa, at the weekend.

the HIV epidemic," said Abdool Karim.

Half of the award money will go to the Medical Research Council, and the other half will be invested in Caprisa.

The interest will be used by both organisations to bring prominent scientists from around the world to deliver

lectures in South Africa.

"This award recognises the importance of science and the contributions of scientific innovation in the path to a healthier Africa," said Abdool Karim.

Distinguished local scientist Professor Jerry Coovadia said Abdool Karim was not

only an internationally renowned figure, but had a track record of fighting for the rights of the dispossessed and impoverished in South Africa.

Last year, a team of South African and US scientists led by Abdool Karim discovered how to clone potent antibodies in the blood of a rural Kwa-

Zulu-Natal woman, which were able to kill HIV.

Abdool Karim is also a newly appointed member to the editorial board of the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine – and the first scientist from Africa to hold this position.

Several of the more than 300

journal articles that he has published have been in the New England Journal of Medicine. He is also a member of the editorial board of HIV and Infectious Diseases, Aids Reviews and Aids Research and Human Retroviruses, and of the global advisory board of The Lancet – HIV. **PP6**

Mugabe on gays and breast-feeding

Peter Fabricius Foreign Editor

ADDIS ABABA: Not even gay men can suckle babies. This was one of the profound observations of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe as he finished chairing the AU summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at the weekend.

Mugabe, who turns 91 this month, was controversially elected to chair the AU for this year at the start of the summit on Friday. This prompted concern that having him at the helm would damage the union's relations with the West.

Mugabe remains under a travel ban in the European Union, the US and elsewhere and so questions have been asked about whether or not he will be able to represent the AU at important summits, such as those of the G8 and G20.

Mugabe dismissed those concerns at a press conference on Saturday night after the summit, saying: "I don't know what the West will do or say. It's not my business. My business is to ensure that the decisions we have arrived at here are implemented."

"They all have to do with the development of Africa."

Mugabe said it was up to the West to continue with sanctions against himself and Zimbabwe or not, but that Europe "seems to be coming forth". He

described how a group of French business people had met him in Harare before the summit to discuss investing in Zimbabwe.

"If Europe comes forward in the spirit to co-operate, not in the spirit to control our ways, they will be very welcome."

The AU commission chairwoman, Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, who was with him, was asked to comment on Mugabe's remark to a journalist earlier in the summit that it was impossible for women to be on a par with men.

She at first declined, saying Mugabe was there to speak for himself. He said Zimbabwe had been working for equal work and equal pay for women. It had women cabinet ministers, farmers and pilots.

But total parity was not possible, he suggested, "because we are different biologically... some things women can do, men cannot do... you can't suckle babies, can you? Not even the gay ones can."

Dlamini Zuma then said that in her experience Mugabe had always been supportive of women's empowerment in Zimbabwe and beyond.

She did not know the context of Mugabe's earlier remarks about women, but as he had just explained it he was correct. "We perform different biological functions and that's fine."

No closure over De Kock killing

Solly Maphumulo

THE Family of Japie Maponya, who was murdered by the apartheid government's security branch, said yesterday: "We cannot forgive anyone until we have found his remains."

The family spokesman and the victim's younger brother, Itumeleng Maponya, was reacting to the release of Eugene de Kock, commander of the Vlakplaas police hit squad.

He said they could not question the granting of parole to the apartheid era killer.

"We are just focusing on finding his remains so that we can bury him properly."

Japie, a security guard, was abducted in Krugersdorp in 1985 by Vlakplaas operatives, who had launched a search for his brother, Odirile, who was an Umkhonto we Sizwe operative responsible for bombings in Pretoria and the Vaal region.

In 1988, Odirile was accidentally killed in Pretoria by a bomb that exploded prematurely in his hands. He was buried as a pauper in an unmarked



DE KOCK

grave in Mamelodi cemetery. The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) is still trying to locate Odirile's body.

Justice and Correctional Services Minister Michael Masutha granted De Kock parole on Friday.

De Kock was found guilty of six murders and other heinous crimes, and sentenced to life plus 212 years in prison.

Itumeleng said: "The chairperson of the parole board contacted me last week. He wanted to know how the family feel about De Kock. He wanted to know if we have forgiven him. "He never asked me about

Japie. The interest is around De Kock. We feel that we were not accommodated."

De Kock had been granted parole, but the chapter had not been closed because his brother's remains had not been handed over to the family, he added.

Masutha said De Kock's victims' families had not been consulted by the parole board on whether he should be released.

De Kock told the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's amnesty committee that Japie was tortured and interrogated for about 45 minutes about his brother. The next day, he took Maponya to a place near the border with Swaziland to be killed. He was shot by an officer, and De Kock hit him twice over the head with a spade.

De Kock told the TRC that the original plan had been to bury Japie, but this could not be done because the ground was too hard. Japie's clothes and handcuffs were removed to destroy the evidence, and his body was buried under debris.

Zuma wants probe finalised

Babaloo Ndenze

PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma wants the inquiry into the fitness of National Director of Public Prosecutions Mxolisi Nxasana to be speedily resolved, even though he has not released the terms of reference for the probe.

It has been more than six months since Zuma announced the inquiry into Nxasana's fitness to hold office. Announcing the inquiry in July, Zuma said he had done so under section 12 of the National Prosecuting Authority Act and after careful consideration.

"President Jacob Zuma is proceeding with the inquiry into the fitness of the National Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Mxolisi Nxasana, to hold office and has requested that such an inquiry should proceed expeditiously in order to resolve such a matter, which is no doubt of paramount public interest," said Presidency spokesman Mac Maharaj. The inquiry was prompted

by the State Security Agency's not granting him security clearance because of a murder charge against him several years ago. Nxasana was eventually acquitted of the murder after it was found to have been in self-defence.

DA justice spokeswoman and former NPA prosecutor Glynnis Breytenbach said the party believed that Nxasana's attempts to reinstate charges of murder, kidnap-ping and defeating the ends of justice against former crime intelligence head Richard Mdluli had put his job on the line.

"It is no secret that Mdluli is a close ally of Zuma and was deployed to crime intelligence to protect the president from accountability," Breytenbach said.

"Mr Nxasana might indeed be a fit and proper person to hold the office, but he is now being pushed out because he is trying to assert his independence," she said.

Breytenbach said that a full six months later, Zuma had not announced the terms of refer-

ence to guide this inquiry into Nxasana, despite several written requests by the DA for the information.

"The timing of this announcement is deeply suspicious, given the recent clampdown on critical institutions. It is clear that President Zuma is determined to diminish every independent institution that attempts to investigate misconduct at the very top. It is not hard to join the dots," said Breytenbach.

She was referring to the turmoil facing state institutions like the SA Revenue Service and the Hawks, whose head, Anwa Dramat, is under fire from Police Minister Nathi Nhleko.

Nxasana said last year that there was no rift between him and Zuma and again denied being offered a R5 million golden handshake to quit.

Nxasana said instead that the inquiry into his fitness to hold office would determine his future.

Maharaj could not be reached yesterday.

'NPA must reveal why it decided to probe Selebi'

Peter Fabricius Foreign Editor

ADDIS ABABA: Former president Thabo Mbeki said yesterday that the first question the National Prosecuting Authority would need to answer in its review of the Jackie Selebi case would be "why they thought it was necessary to open an inquiry in the first place".

Mbeki was speaking after presenting the report of the high-level panel he chaired into the illicit outflow of capital from Africa. He was responding to journalists' questions about his statement at former national police commissioner's funeral on Saturday in which he alleged that the prosecution of Selebi was political.

Mbeki said yesterday it was a good idea that the NPA itself had decided to review Selebi's case.

"I think it is really important that they do the work they have to do properly, honestly



MBEKI

and thoroughly. And I think they will find that not everything is as it seemed... I don't know whether they as an NPA will issue a public report or whatever... But it would be really important to hear what they have to say... the very first question is, why did they think it was necessary to open an inquiry in the first place and what they have found."

Mbeki vowed that he would one day reveal the truth about the Selebi case, because of "a lot of nonsense that was said about many things."

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Proposed Problem Buildings By-Law, 2015

Notice is hereby given that eThekweni Municipal Council is intending to enact, by way of resolution in terms of Section 12 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, No. 32 of 2000, the Problem Buildings By-Law, 2015.

The proposed By-Law is available for viewing on the City Hall notice board and on the Municipality's website at www.durban.gov.za. Any person wishing to comment or make representations on the proposed By-Law may do so, in writing, within 30 days of publication of this notice, to the Office of the City Manager, City Hall, Dr Pixley ka-Isaka Seme Street (formerly West Street), Durban, 4000 from 08:00 - 16:00. Alternatively, comments may be emailed to lulama.miya@durban.gov.za

Any person who cannot write may come to the City Hall during office hours where a staff member of the Municipality will assist the person in transcribing his or her comments or representations.

Mr Sibusiso Sithole
City Manager

FOR THE RECORD

IN AN article on Friday, January 30, The Mercury reported on concern raised by the auditor-general about eThekweni municipality facing bad debt amounting to R2.01 billion. The municipality has pointed out that this debt is not written off and there are policies and processes in place to pursue outstanding debt, which are vigorously followed.

● The Mercury welcomes comments and suggestions, or complaints about errors that warrant correction. These can be e-mailed to mercnews@inl.co.za.

Zuma calls cabinet talks

Babaloo Ndenze Political Bureau

PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma will convene a cabinet meeting in Pretoria this week in preparation for his State of the Nation address.

The Presidency is also inviting the public's inputs and suggestions through social media, on issues people consider important for their "well-being" and those of their communities that should be included in the speech in Parliament on February 12.

Presidency spokesman Mac Maharaj said: "The State of the Nation address will be delivered under the theme "Together We Move South Africa For-

ward", which is government's core message until 2019, promoting collaboration by all South Africans in building a united, non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous South Africa. The State of the Nation address will outline progress made in the past year, the outstanding work that still needs to be done and the priorities of the 2015/2016 financial year." He said as part of the preparations, Zuma would convene the cabinet meeting.

"The cabinet lekgotla follows the lekgotla of the governing party, the ANC, which sets the scene for government each year based on the organisation's annual January 8 anniversary statement," he said.

Hold on to petrol savings

Nicolette Dirk

WHILE motorists enjoy a sixth consecutive petrol price drop since August, they have been warned not to spend their savings but use the money to reduce debt.

This time last year consumers were reeling with the news of a R2.20 per litre increase in the petrol price that pushed it up to R13.60 per litre.

Motorists can breathe a temporary sigh of relief with the Department of Energy's announcement that petrol will decrease by 93 cents a litre at midnight tomorrow. Diesel (both) would decrease by R1.02 a litre.

The decrease, according to

economist Kevin Lings, is the lowest petrol price since September 2011.

"The latest reduction in the fuel price is due to the lower international oil price. In fact, on its own, the oil price would have resulted in the petrol price falling by 96c per litre in February 2015," said Lings.

With a 30% dip in the petrol cost since last year, a South African motorist who paid R2 176 for 160 litres of petrol in a month last year, would now pay R1 649.60.

DebtBusters chief operations officer Benay Sager advised consumers to be cautious. The cost of electricity was scheduled to rise by almost 13% midyear.

INVITATION FOR INTERESTED PARTIES TO SUBMIT OBJECTIONS:
NOTICE AND COMMENT ON PROPERTIES OWNED BY TRANSNET NATIONAL PORTS AUTHORITY IN THE PORT OF DURBAN

TRANSNET NATIONAL PORTS AUTHORITY: PORT OF DURBAN

In terms of Section 11 of the National Ports Act (No. 12 of 2005) the main functions of the National Ports Authority (the "Authority") is to own, manage, control and administer ports to ensure their efficient and economic functioning and in doing so the Authority must control land use within ports, and has the power to lease land under such conditions as the Authority may determine. The Authority intends to enter into a short-term lease agreement in respect of item 2 and 3, extending the existing lease agreements in respect of item 1 and a land substitution in respect of item 4 below:-

ENTITY	PROPERTY DESCRIPTION
1. Vopak Terminal Durban (Pty) Ltd	Lease of land in Trinidad and Patrol Road at Fynnland
2. Engen Petroleum Ltd	Land adjacent Portion 111 of Kings Flats No. 16344
3. PatCon Building & Civil Contractors	Lease of land in Iran Road at Fynnland
4. Vopak/Bidfreight Port Operations	Land substitution

A plan of the area proposed to be leased is open for inspection at office number 241, Ocean Terminal between 09h00 and 15h00 hours Monday to Friday. The contact person is Darryl Ritson on (031) 361 8710.

Should you have any objections to the proposed extensions/new lease agreements, kindly lodge your objections in writing by 10h00 on 9 February 2015 with the above contact person.

For more information regarding this process please contact:
Mr Darryl Ritson
Tel: (031) 361 8710
Fax: (031) 361 8854
E-mail: darryl.ritson@transnet.net

DEBT DEBT DEBT
SENATOR COUNSELLORS
www.senatorcounsellors.co.za

Many honest responsible citizens under debt counselling, pay their monthly contributions as agreed with their counsellors without fault only to succumb to the realisation that their debt is increasing month on month! **DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!!** Contact your creditors directly and confirm this for yourself.

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In fact, we can arrange for up to **80%** of your debt to be written off.

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Contact our **HEAD OFFICE** on **012-654-0107** or email fin@senatorcounsellors.co.za they will assign you a specialised counsellor within the group in **DURBAN, NATAL NORTH COAST, NATAL SOUTH COAST and ZULULAND.**