From the Editor’s desk

SANDF spreading its generosity on Armed Forces Day

Letters to the Editor

President Ramaphosa presides over his maiden Armed Forces Day Parade

The commemoration of the sinking of SS Mendi on Armed Forces Day

President Ramaphosa graces the SANDF Inter-faith Church Service

The SANDF leaves a lasting legacy in Kimberley

Fan Park – a hub of activity and knowledge

Thousands thrilled by the military capability demonstration

Jazz legend Jonas Gwangwa joins military bands in honour of Nelson Mandela

A grand afternoon of music and the spirit of UBUNTU

SANDF bands pave the way for Armed Forces Day

Golf Day raised funds for the SANDF Education Trust

South Africa and Nigeria focus on peace and stability of the continent

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Although all possible care is taken with articles, the editorial staff cannot accept any responsibility for lost articles and photographs.

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SA African Soldier

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A Rooivalk helicopter launching rockets to provide cover and support to the forces on the ground during the capability demonstration. (Photo by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole)

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This month’s edition of SA Soldier features all the highlights of the recently held Armed Forces Day in Kimberley. The SA Soldier Editorial Team spoke to some spectators regarding their views on the week-long celebrations:

“I was blown away by the opening ceremony and events at the Fan Park, the aerobatic flying display, bikers, dogs and paratroopers jumping out of an aircraft. I was also caught by surprise seeing the different uniforms of the SA Air Force and the SA Navy - very impressive. We are only used to the SA Army uniform” – Mr Devron Tilling, Kimberley.

“Thank you for bringing it to Kimberley. The Fan Park was excellent. Job well done!” – Mr Kobus van Bosch, Kimberley.

“For such an event to be brought to Kimberley was worth it. It’s really not something we see every day. It is truly magnificent. Through the week-long celebrations of Armed Forces Day we got to see all the Services of our military. The SANDF instilled and planted a seed of interest in young people of the broader Northern Cape aspiring to join the SANDF” – Ms Elmarie Brydenbach, Jan Kempdorp.

“I am thrilled by the close-up views of the military hardware. Men and women showing off their prowess to defend our country through static display, simulated attack and rescue missions” – Ms Vanessa Joubert, Colville (Kimberley).

“The event exposed the learners to many career opportunities available in the SANDF. Throughout the week, learners ranging from Grade 10 to 12 came to the career exhibitions and watched demonstrations and static displays. After witnessing their burning desire, I am certain many of them will join the military once they complete their schooling” – Mr Allan Fortuin, Bergsig (Springbok).

“I am excited to be part of the event. I always thought that being a soldier meant carrying big bags and guns fighting wars. I have experienced the non-combative side of our defence force that highlighted the available opportunities such as fire-fighting, military bands, animal care, occupational health and safety and environmental management” – Ms Olerato Leruele, Vergenoeg (Kimberley).

“In Kimberley we have a problem of social ills, substance abuse and teenage pregnancy among young people. Some even dropped-out of school. We are thankful to the SANDF for bringing an event of this magnitude to our area. As a parent, I say this is a new dawn: we are experiencing something that has never been experienced in Kimberley. It is a new hope for our children and a big wake-up call for the youth to celebrate the opportunities that the SANDF are bringing to them. Thumbs up!” – Ms Francis Taylor, Colville (Kimberley).

“The SANDF is passionate about skills development. Young people should believe that in spite of their circumstances, they have the ability to rise above their circumstances and contribute positively towards the development of their community and the growth of our country” – Lt Gregory Kleinveld, Engineer Terrain Intelligence Regiment (SA Army Engineer Formation).

“Fantastic event: we have visited the Fan Park four times already. Everything was well organised. The events started on time and everything was spectacular. Our children’s minds were blown away by the variety of careers in the SANDF, some of which we were completely unaware. I have never felt prouder to be a South African. To our soldiers, we salute you!” – Ms Marina Pelsel, Kimberley.

“What I like and appreciate about the concert is that it has made our learners aware of the Services within the SANDF. As a creative arts teacher I have seen potential learners who would like to venture into music, so I strongly think this day was actually dedicated to them. The reason I am saying this is because most learners only saw the SANDF as soldiers protecting our country and carrying guns every day. This day has opened their eyes; they now have adequate knowledge of a variety of careers one can actually choose within the SANDF. I so wish that Armed Forces Day could come again to Kimberley next year or in future to teach our learners and community about the Services within the SANDF” – Mr Gordow Matika, a teacher at Green Point High School.

“Armed Forces Day was a wonderful experience. This was a reminder how blessed we are. May our heavenly Father protect our soldiers. Thank you for sharing the moments with us - it is truly appreciated. You got our attention indeed. The SANDF Rocks! Stay blessed” – Ms Lesego Cordelia Seshuane, Kimberley.

“As soldiers through Armed Forces Day celebrations, we are inspiring our youth to take advantage of opportunities that are available and that they have something to give to our country. We motivate them to choose subjects that are relevant to various career choices in the SANDF, such as Mathematics and Science” – Cpl Jivea Hannie, Logistic Division Internal Services

“It was fantastic! - An experience of a lifetime. I enjoyed it every day. Thank you for choosing Kimberley. Feeling blessed that I had the chance to witness such an amazing event” – Mr Ashton Shunese, Kimberley.

Hope you enjoyed experiencing the events in Kimberley – the 2018 Armed Forces Day.

Nelda Pienaar
Editor SA Soldier
The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) celebrated Armed Forces Day in Kimberley on 21 February 2018. This year’s event was dedicated to the legacy and memory of the first Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, the late Mr Nelson Mandela.

The SANDF utilised the platform to enhance and promote the image of the SANDF, and create awareness in the community and to inform the public about the structure, organisation, roles, functions and career opportunities, as well as to expose them to the functioning of the SANDF.

In an effort to echo the sentiments of the “BE THE LEGACY” Campaign of the centenary celebration of Mr Nelson Mandela and to become Madiba Change Makers, the SA Air Force and its partners played their part by living the legacy of Tata Madiba and as a Force that cares donated groceries, fruits and vegetables to Seochoareng Old Age Home in Galeshewe, Kimberley, on 22 February 2018. The SANDF strived to follow Madiba’s example of what it means to truly give back to our communities and our nation.

The decision to donate the items was done by Col Tony Cloete from the SA Air Force and his team after realising that there was still much food left after the soldiers who participated in the Armed Forces Day celebrations had left the city to return to their respective units. Col Cloete said that they had to buy and prepare food for thousands of soldiers who participated in the event on a daily basis.

Col Cloete said: “After the event was done, we saw that there was still so much unused food left which would get spoiled if we did not make a plan with it. The majority of the soldiers had already left and our initial thought was to give the food to a crèche or after care centre. We were told about the old age home by one of the local business owners whom we supported over the period of the event.”

A deliberate decision was taken during the event to buy all supplies from local businesses in the city said Col Cloete. They especially focused on small businesses and not the bigger franchises. They bought fruit and vegetables from the hawkers on the street. These businesses did not have a great amount of supplies and therefore the SANDF could support more than one business each day. He further said that the owners were left speechless when they told them about the quantity of supplies they required, as they would sell all their supplies to them within minutes.

In addition Col Cloete said that part of the aim of the Armed Forces Day was to leave a legacy behind for those who hosted the military and to make a difference in the lives of the people.

Col Cloete said: “We were received with warmth and respect. We did not just want to take away from the city and leave nothing behind.

“The hearts of our soldiers were touched when some of the elderly people at Seochoareng Old Age Home wept when they received the donation. We spent a lot of money in supporting local businesses to feed our soldiers during the event. This was just a small contribution we made to the economy of the city.”

The SANDF recognises the important role that senior citizens play in our families and communities, they have worked hard in their youth building this country and continuing to shape its future. How we treat older people is therefore an indication of who we are as a society. If we treat them poorly, then we are doing a disservice to the founding father of our democracy, Mr Nelson Mandela, who said a society that does not value its older people denies its roots and endangers its future.
THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY

What is the meaning of family? Why is family so important? There are so many understandings, knowledge about family and everyone has their own version of the term family. Regardless of the different definitions of family it has an impact on each person as an individual.

The first perception that is formulated in your head when we speak of family is the typical father, mother, son or daughter. Then it is stretched out to the aunts, uncles, cousins, grandma and grandpa. You are born into a family and have no say in choosing your own family. Family are such a special bond between people because you can share in all the joy and sadness together. To laugh alone does not come close to the laughter of a group of people in the same mood of excitement and giggling.

Towards the end of each year we await the beginning of a new year with such anticipation! Everyone makes New Year’s resolutions and is so motivated to start with the new goals that they set for themselves. However these goals are not always reached at the end of the following year as the individual lost motivation and inspiration along the way. The road becomes too difficult, rocky, shaking and the end goal become vague until there is no more vision insight.

So where does family come in with the losing of visions? Yes, family does play a part in personal visions. Our older generation such as our aunts, uncles, etc are older for a reason. They have experience of life and had to learn a few lessons on the hard way. They became wiser and they do regret making some wrong choices and wish they can undo it, but now they can only advise those that still embark on life. So do listen when you are getting good advice that speaks of wisdom into your life. It is also evident that youngsters that finish school always come to the point in their life that they must make decisions about their future. Therefore it is so important to have the support of family to assist you in making the right the decisions because it will determine your future.

A person can only give good advice when he or she experienced it for themselves already. Family also can be friends because on your road you will meet people that can be closer than your own flesh and blood. In this instance it is also so important to choose the right friends in your life; friends that will correct you when you are going into the wrong direction. We are created to be part of a family whether blood related or not blood related. Relationships are important for God and we should treasure it and if there are relationships that are broken we should restore it. Life is too precious to waste it on invaluable things and people.

Capt Chrisandy Sieglaar, email 📧

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SILENT?

How can we be silent when there is so much that needs to be said? Yet we stay silent for we give our voices to those who do not have one. Take a moment to reflect on what is going on around you.

You will only then realise what is true. There is a mystery to all of this silent treatment that we get from time to time, but what is the meaning of it all? So one speaks what is on one’s mind, but do not think twice before saying it. Each day begins with silence as we say our daily prayer to sit in silence and have a moment with God.

Before we have to do something we have to be silent and think what we want to do and what we need to say. Take five minutes of your day wherever you are at the moment and sit in silence and think about everything that is surrounding you and what it means to you. Sometimes silence is the best, because they say silence is golden, yet it is so true because it is the only thing that stops us from saying what is real and what is fake. So how do you define silence? Gnr Anna Francina Erank, School of Artillery, Potchefstroom 📧

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SA SOLDIER welcomes letters to the Editor. Short letters are more likely to be published, and all letters may be edited for reasons of style, accuracy or space limitations. Letters should preferably be typewritten. All letters must include the writer’s full name, address and home telephone number. The opinions expressed in letters are not necessarily the views of the Department of Defence/ SA National Defence Force. The volume of letters we receive make individual acknowledgement impossible. Please send your letters to: The Editor, SA SOLDIER Letters, Private Bag X158, Pretoria, 0001. Letters may also be faxed to (012) 355-6399 or sent via email to sasoldier@mil.za. We would like to hear your comments or ideas, particularly about matters concerning the Department of Defence. Regrettably, anonymous letters cannot be published - Editor.

BEST SPORTSWOMAN DOES RACE WALKING

Maj Ronel Viljoen, the Best Sportswoman of Area Military Health Unit Gauteng. (Photo by Dr Karin Cruywagen)

The Best Sportswoman of Area Military Health Unit Gauteng, Maj Ronel Viljoen (Chief Oral Hygienist at Defence Headquarters Dental Department) was recently announced by the Officer Commanding Area Military Health Unit Gauteng, Col Darryl Ndlovu, at the awards ceremony of the unit in the Madiba Hall. Maj Viljoen participates in competitive race walking, and is also a member of the Pretoria Military Cycling Club. 📧
HIP! HIP! HOORAY!

These exact words echoed from the people attending the 11-year-birthday celebration of Training Command held at the Peace Mission Training Centre in Thaba Tshwane on 5 February 2018. The event was also attended by representatives from Sanlam and Old Mutual who contributed financially to some elements of the SANDF.

Training Command was established in 1999 as Joint Training Formation and was later renamed Training Command on 31 January 2007. Subsequently Directorate Policy and Doctrine and Directorate Systems Integrity were moved into the structure of Chief Directorate Human Resource Development. Training Command was situated at Armscor Building until it was relocated to Kasteel Park, Buren Building, in Pretoria in November 2007.

Training Command has an important role in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) as it commands the following units: SA Naval Defence College, SA Naval War College, Military Academy, SANDF COLET, Personnel Service School, Civic Education Centre of Excellence, Centre for Conflict Simulation, Peace Mission Training Centre, Warrant Officers Academic, and the Centre for Competence Development Training.

According to Maj Gen Lawrence Mbatha, General Officer Commanding Training Command, the 2015 Defence Review gives guidelines to Training Command in terms of transforming and directing resources. Maj Gen Mbatha said there is a long future for Training Command since the training of officers remains relevant in the SANDF and it is properly aligned with the Department of Higher Education in making sure that all the courses offered within the Formation are credited.

Maj Gen Mbatha said: “We are not training people just for the sake of graduating, but what we do is to prepare officers to be knowledge masters to advise at strategic and tactical levels. Knowledge gained here goes a long way in preparing officers to play a key role in influencing decisions in the Department of Defence.” He added that graduates who assume new positions in their respective units have the ability to put management systems in place to enable them and their entire units to operate professionally.

He said: “Challenges show the existence of growth in any organisation. The constant support from superiors of Services has not only enabled us to crush any obstacles in our way but it has also acted as a spring board in achieving our core mandate of training and producing the best professional soldiers for the SANDF and the Department of Defence”.

Representatives of some sponsors such as Sanlam and Old Mutual were also in attendance. Mr Cebisa Mahlukwana, the Manager of Business Development at Old Mutual, said their relationship with the SANDF started on the golf course. He said Old Mutual started by sponsoring the Chief Air Force Golf Day, and the relationship spread further to other units of the SANDF, including the Training Formation. The relationship with Training Formation was attributed largely to Maj Angelo Adams and led to Old Mutual sponsoring into Exercise TRANS ENDURO, Maj Gen Mbatha’s prize project.

He said Old Mutual will collaborate with the SANDF to conduct a tour of the country via Exercise TRANS ENDURO starting in Qunu. “The reason we chose Qunu is to celebrate the centenary of Tata Madiba. And from there we will go to every town in the country.”

According to Mr Mahlukwana, Old Mutual’s involvement with the SANDF has seen them contribute over R300 000 so far, with a yearly 10% increase.

When asked why Old Mutual chose to sponsor some sections of the SANDF, Mr Makhulwana said: “We have clients scattered across all the clusters and units of the SANDF, and they form a large percentage of our overall client base. Therefore we saw it fitting to plough back into one of the most important Departments in the Republic”.

He concluded by ratifying the prospect of a long-term financial relationship between Old Mutual and the SANDF.
SCHOOL OF TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE PRESENTS THE FIRST CORPORATE COMMUNICATION COURSE SINCE 1997

Twenty two members reported for the first Corporate Communication Course which started at the School of Tactical Intelligence in Potchefstroom at the end of 2017. The Course was opened by Brig Gen Mafi Mgobozi, Director Defence Corporate Communication, who encouraged the learners to improve their knowledge.

This group consisted of members from the SA Army, the SA Navy and the SA Military Health Service from the rank of Private to Major. Most of the Candidate Officers were part of the 2015 Military Skills Development System (MSDS) intake.

The last Communication Course was presented in 1997. In the early 2000’s an investigation was done on the establishment of a corps for the Corporate Communication members and the requirement for training was identified. In 2015 the SA Army Intelligence Formation was instructed to develop the Corporate Communication Course. Four in-post training sessions were presented at the School of Tactical Intelligence and 1 Tactical Intelligence Regiment in 2016.

The first draft of the Corporate Communication Curriculum was compiled with the support of qualified instructors of the School of Tactical Intelligence in November 2016 and approved in June 2017.

All the presentations and the handbook were compiled by Maj Merle Meyer and the training plan and assessments were completed with the support of Maj Werner Joubert, who was also appointed as the Course Leader. Maj Meyer was the facilitator of the course and guest speakers included members from Defence Corporate Communication and Joint Operations. Ms Cheryl Botha, the English sub editor of the Potch Herald and its sister newspapers gave valuable tips on how the media expects to be treated by the military.

The course consisted of six modules, introduction to corporate communication, internal and external communication, media liaison, corporate communication in support to operations and the coordination of the corporate communication function.

This course included practical exercises on presentation skills, writing of media releases, check lists, the arrangement of various functions and corporate communication submissions. The students were also briefed by Lt Col Uys van der Westhuizen on the arrangements for the Military Skills Competition and were given the opportunity to visit the participants during the competition.

The group of learners did very well on the course, but they also admitted that the course was tough and that they had to study very hard. The top student, CO Mzuvukile Madondile from Army Support Base Western Cape, received 100% for three of his assessments. The second top student was CO Boipelo Kolokoto of Army Support Base Limpopo and third was Cpl Kamogelo Tleane from the SA Military Health Service Headquarters.

The next course will be presented from 22 January 2018 and its Curriculum will be developed soon.

Maj Merle Meyer, email

NORTH WEST SIGNAL UNIT CHANGE OF COMMAND PARADE

North West Signal Unit in Potchefstroom officially bid farewell to the outgoing Officer Commanding, Maj Sydney Mpho Mosweu and welcomed Capt Clive Kock, the incoming Officer Commanding.

In his speech during the Change of Command parade which was held at Eerstevesting in Potchefstroom on 24 November 2017, Maj Sydney Mpho Mosweu thanked the members of the unit for showing commitment during his tour of duty in the Unit. He praised the unit for living its mission of maintaining a culture of commitment and providing a professional signal support that enhances the satisfaction of the clients within the allocated budget. He also highlighted the successes the unit achieved during his turn as the Officer Commanding.

Amongst those he mentioned the successful signal support to Op Corona in the area of responsibility and progress made in establishing a communication link between J Tac HQ NW and its Botswana counterparts.

Maj Mosweu assured the incoming Officer Commanding that he is taking over a healthy unit with the most disciplined and dedicated members who are always willing to serve with pride. He concluded his speech by thanking Officers Commanding of the Units in North West Province for cooperating with him when rendering signal support to their units.

Amongst the guests who witnessed this prestigious event were Brig Gen Mokete Petrus Shashape, Director Divisional Staff CMIS Division and Col Evelyn Masekela, the Officer Commanding 2 Signal Regiment. Cpl Paula Nyaku, Sustainment Clerk NW Signal Unit, email
**BELIEF IN YOURSELF**

It all starts with one person and that is you. You have to believe in yourself that you are capable of doing anything that you put your mind to. Don’t give up, because in the end you will regret it.

Life will throw curve balls in your way and you’ll try to dodge them in any way you can, but I say go straight at them and give your best. You might hear people say that you can’t do this, but show them what you are made of and shut the voices in your head out. Do what you can and make the best of it.

To believe is to have hope. Hope in the things that seem impossible in the eyes of men. One can easily be distracted with things that are not of significance to us. Everything that leads to success begins at a point which seems impossible, but it is possible as one starts to take risks with the hope of it being successful.

Hope produces joy, peace, kindness and love which plays an important role in our lives. The anchor of hope is the power of God working in us that leads to joyful, peaceful and hopeful lives.

**NCO’S PRAYER**

I have been where you fear to be
I have seen what you fear to see
I have done what you fear to do
All these things I have done for you

I am the person you lean upon
The one you cast your scorn upon
The one you bring troubles to
All these things I’ve been for you

The one you ask to stand apart
The one you feel should have no heart
The one you call in camo
But I’m a person, just like you

And through the years I’ve come to
See
That I am not always what you ask of
Me
Then do you think that you can be
All these things you ask of me.

Cpl W.M. Maraka, Wonderboom

Do not compare your life to others

My fellow soldiers, debts usually start piling up in our organisation. Our expenses are higher than our income, buying clothes with credit, cars and expensive accommodations. Each of these situations requires us to pay out money.

When the expenses are higher than what you earn you might be compelled to borrow. There are situations where a person wants something and you want it so bad that, if necessary, you want to take out a loan, borrow any so-called “quick money” to buy whatever it is that you want.

This can become a habit because eventually you will borrow from someone else to pay off the first creditor and another person to pay the second creditor and so on. This is what is called bad payer. It affects your potential and your debts are likely to keep getting bigger and bigger until finally the debt collector has to consider debt consolidation.

Once you start one situation that covered the money to consolidate your debt, you will find that most of the time you do not have any money left at all.

We must learn to escape this situation. You might be right to repay in monthly instalments but use your salary instead of borrowing or lending. Because when you receive your salary you will be left with no money in your pocket.

Many of us are trying to get out of this, but change your lifestyle first of being a borrower. It is a warning to those who borrow, remember, “The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender”. I salute you! S Sgt Neo Samuel Monyamane, Area Military Health Unit Limpopo

**DO NOT COMPARE YOUR LIFE TO OTHERS**

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**REFLECTION BY BRIG GEN MAGXWALISA**

Thembi, I am in Mozambique so it is with a heavy heart that I greet you goodbye. Daughter of Africa, daughter of the soil, when someone of your calibre leaves us, it hurts tremendously. The hurting is more profound, because you have left us before you have had the pleasure of enjoying your pension, you so eagerly awaited. You often spoke about it and told us your plans.

When you were sick, I believed that you were going to pull through and triumph over your illness. I recall one of my visits to you in hospital. I sang for you, Ntombi zomkhonto ziyalwa, you opened your eyes and smiled, and your sister Nkole said: “look, she is smiling” and Capt Nzimande said “Wow! Ezakini lezo, you are laughing Colonel”. You know that I do not pray Thembi, but for you I prayed, because I wanted you to get well so that you could get on with life and enjoy your pension you worked so hard for. My prayer was short and simple and I would pray before I slept, while I was driving and wherever I was. I would say: “BRA GOD, please, u Thembi aka phile, amen”. This was my short prayer for my sister.

Thanks Mamncane Caroline, Thanks Ankele Solly, Thanks Bhuti John (Mr Blay) for your unwavering support. You made certain that you were by her side every day. Mr Blay, you did not say much, but your facial expression said it all. She knows, wherever she is, that you never gave up on her.

Thank you members of Chief Directorate Transformation Management, Col Venter, Lt Col Hartslief and Anisha, for your support to the family, ngiyabonga. Thank you Sisi Thandi Seete and Thandi Mashoala.

Hamba kahle Mkhonto, Hamba kahle sosha labantu, Hambal ka Thembi. Julinda Klaas (Brig Gen Magxwalisa), Pretoria

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Artillery, Potchefstroom

**SA Soldier**
The people of Kimberley in the Northern Cape were left enchanted as the National Ceremonial Guard (NCG) Band marched before their eyes to start off the parade on the morning of 21 February 2018 during the Armed Forces Day at the Cenotaph World War Monument.

This day was proclaimed to observe and commemorate the lives of the members of the SA Native Labour Corps contingent who died when a troopship, SS Mendi, sank in the English Channel in 1917, and for those who subsequently died in service of their country and for the serving men and women in uniform.

The Cenotaph in Kimberley itself carries significant history as a memorial to 400 of Kimberley men who died in the Great War (World War I) between 1914 and 1918. It is said to have been unveiled by four mothers, each of whom had lost either sons or a husband during the war.

The Commander-in-Chief of the SA National Defence Force, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, said it is a day on which South Africa remembers the bravery of soldiers prepared to fight in a war that was not theirs. He said: “This day has become a day that allows us to remember all men and women who have paid the ultimate price in defence of freedom, peace and
A drive past during the Armed Forces Day 2018 parade. (Photo by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole)

The fly past conducted by Gripen fighter jets during 2018 Armed Forces Day parade held in Kimberley. (L Cpl Jonathan Mogano)

The President felt the 2018 edition of the Armed Forces Day celebrations had a special meaning as it occurred in the year when South Africa commemorates the centenary year of our icon and first Commander-in-Chief, President Nelson Mandela. He said President Mandela oversaw the formation of the SANDF as a force that upholds the Constitution of the Republic in defence of all its people and left behind a disciplined SANDF that protects the country’s territorial integrity and supports peace and justice. It reminds us that blood was spilled by many of our people to guarantee us our freedom and dignity. It is a reminder that honourable and courageous men and women continue to put their lives on the line to secure our peace and defend our Constitution.”
President Ramaphosa took stock of the efforts made by the SANDF to alleviate unemployment, particularly in the SA Navy. He said: “Through Operation PHAKISA, the SANDF aims to enhance ship-building. During this year the SANDF will lead the rejuvenation of the Naval Dockyard in Simon’s Town. It will commence with the building of patrol and survey vessels for the SA Navy to rejuvenate the national ship building industry. This project will create 570 high technical jobs and 4 500 indirect jobs over the next five years.”

Underway is also Operation THUSANO which is a departmental initiative with the Cuban Armed Forces that involves the maintenance and repairing of the SANDF operational vehicle fleet. From its inception in 2015 over 4 000 vehicles have been repaired and several workshops at SANDF units revived. The President said a total of 446 South Africans are apprentices and a further 395 have qualified as technicians through transfer of practical knowledge by the Cubans.

The President intends to hit the ground running as he assured to prioritise engagement with the Department of Defence. Mr Ramaphosa said: “As I mentioned in the State of the Nation Address, I will soon be visiting the leadership and management of our national departments to see how well we can work together to accelerate the imperatives of service delivery, training and job creation.

“You are opening incredible opportunities for young people in both the public and private sectors. South Africa’s defence technology is globally sought after. Much of our technological capability shows that we are well positioned, through our armed forces, to participate in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This has established our defence sector as an important contributor to innovation in our economy.”

President Ramaphosa said the defence industry is a sector where young people can exercise not just their physical capabilities, but their creativity and exercise skills across a broad range of endeavours.
The commemoration of the sinking of the SS Mendi

By AB Samuel Ramonyai
Photos by L Cpl Paul Mpangala

The President of the Republic of South Africa and the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, the Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, laid a wreath on Armed Forces Day 2018 in Kimberley in honour of the members of the fifth Battalion of the SA Native Labour Corps (SANLC) who perished when their troopship, the SS Mendi, was accidently rammed by a passing ship, the SS Daro, in thick fog on 21 February 1917.

The sinking of the SS Mendi has been described as one of South Africa’s greatest maritime disasters. The SS Mendi sank off St Catherine’s Point off the Isle of Wight. On board were 805 black privates, 22 white officers and 33 crewmen. Altogether 607 black troops, nine white officers and all 33 crewmen died in the icy waters of the English Channel.

In remembering the fallen heroes of the SS Mendi, President Ramaphosa added that most men who died were volunteers who came to assist the United Kingdom’s war effort. They died as committed South African soldiers who knew that going to war meant they faced the possibility of never returning home. We are proud of them.

President Ramaphosa and the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, the Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, gives a bow in front of the Cenotaph War Memorial after laying a wreath in remembrance of those who perished during the sinking of the SS Mendi.

The President of the Republic of South Africa and the Commander-in-Chief of the SANF, the Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, gives a bow in front of the Cenotaph War Memorial after laying a wreath in remembrance of those who perished during the sinking of the SS Mendi.

The Cenotaph War Memorial in Kimberley was unveiled on 15 July 1928.
President Ramaphosa graces the SANDF Inter-faith Church Service

By AB Samuel Ramonyai and Ms Beauty Pinga
Photos by L Cpl Paul Mpangala

The Chaplain General of the SANDF, Brig Gen (Rev) Andrew Jamangile, together with other Chaplains fed soldiers’ souls with the Word of God during the Inter-Faith Church Service held at the Mittah Seperepere Convention Centre in Kimberley ahead of Armed Forces Day.

The church service included a candle lighting ceremony that was performed by Col (Rev) Zolani Makalema. The Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), Gen Solly Shoke, collaborated with Brig Gen (Rev) Jamangile in the unveiling of the Armed Forces Day Tower of Remembrance.

The Commander-in-Chief of the SA National Defence Force, the President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, delivering his key note address, said the purpose of this church service was to commemorate the fallen heroes from the sinking of the troopship, the SS Mendi, in the English Channel in 1917. It is also in honour of all South Africans who made the supreme sacrifice for their country in all wars and conflicts on the home front or faraway lands on peace missions.

Representatives from other faith groups expressed their gratitude and admiration to the SANDF and its leaders.

Pastor Moulana Adam Feltman from the Northern Cape Ulama Council (NCUC) said: "As we celebrate this day, for many of us it brings back tears and sadness to our lives. Words cannot express our grievances though it happened many years back, but the wounds are still fresh. We celebrate the men and women that made sure that you and I are here today. To all the men and women in uniform, take pride in what you are doing in our country. We are honoured to have you all serving us with so much dignity."

He added: “I would personally like to thank you so much for your boldness. We sleep peacefully knowing that our country is being protected and well-guarded. Your work is not insufficient and we might not tell you how much we appreciate your dedication and braveness, but we really do. We honour your selfless courage and respect your humbleness.”

In his sermon, the Chaplain General encouraged soldiers that they were chosen from the foundations of the earth to perform a calling of this nature. He said as they are chosen by God, they are not only meant to benefit His Kingdom but they are also treasured as earthly vessels.

Above all, Brig Gen (Rev) Jamangile said God pre-destined everything, it is God who ordained soldiers to protect our country and therefore they should have a heart that resists discouragement.
The SANDF leaves a lasting legacy in Kimberley

During the Armed Forces Day celebrations held in Kimberley recently, the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), through its Legacy Project, donated educational supplies to Retlameleng Special School in West End and !Xunkwesa Combined School in Platfontein, Kimberley. These items will be useful in enhancing education. Retlameleng Special School received eight whiteboards, eight data projectors, eight laptops and eight e-beams.

This equipment will assist in providing better quality education through visual aids to learners who are deaf, autistic and visually impaired. The SANDF also gave the school a facelift by painting and cleaning the premises. !Xunkwesa Combined School received a fully-fledged computer laboratory and 100 school shoes. The SA Navy also donated the sanitary towels to the school.

The primary purpose of the Legacy Project is to espouse SANDF social responsibility and interaction between the SANDF and the community with which it comes into contact. It is about telling people that the SANDF is for the people and therefore is compassionate towards South African citizens, regardless of age, race, colour or creed.

Speaking to the guests and the learners, the Chief of Staff of the SANDF, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, who represented the Minister of Defence and Military Veterans said that he was honoured to officiate at these events as this project is an integral part of the Armed Forces Week. Lt Gen Masondo said: “The Armed Forces Day is an annual event we have chosen to mark as an integral part in observation and recognition of the role played by those who perished in the SS Mendi in 1917 at the height of World War I in the English Channel.”

He urged the learners to learn about our country’s history for it will be an important building block and enrich their understanding of where we come from, the role of the armed forces, and how they should see it as a career of choice. He further said there is no profession you will not find within the armed forces.

The Chief of Staff said: “It was decided that a legacy of the event must be left for the people of the area. From the defence establishment, we wish to donate these items that will be useful in your education. This will go a long way to ensure that we implement the Freedom Charter’s clause: ‘the doors of culture and learning shall be opened to all’. This I believe will go a long way towards alleviating the plight of students in the schools.”

The MEC for Education in the Northern Cape, Ms Martha Bartlett, said that the week-long celebrations of Armed Forces Day had sparked an interest in a career in the military for the youth of the province. Ms Bartlett said: “The military has given hope to the youth of the province and shown them what is possible. The endless possibilities and careers in the military were also exposed.”

She said the minds of the youth were blown away by the variety of careers in the military, some of which they were completely unaware of. The MEC said she has never felt more proud to be a South African. It was an experience of a lifetime. She thanked the SANDF for bringing the Armed Forces Day celebrations to Kimberley.

The Chief of Staff of the SA National Defence Force, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo, and the MEC for Education in the Northern Cape, Ms Martha Bartlett, unveiling the plaque of the Legacy Project at Retlameleng Special School.
Fan Park – a hub of activity and knowledge

By S Sgt Itumeleng Makhubela, Sgt Ally Rakoma, AB Samuel Ramonyai and Ms Beauty Pinga

As customary the Fan Park was a hub of activity and thrilling displays that kept spectators gasping in awe. The SA National Defence Force (SANDF) welcomed a throng of learners, community members and university students to learn more about

The displays and activities at the Fan Park showcase and educate the public in terms of the capabilities existing in the SANDF. (Photo by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole)

The SANDF’s marketing and recruitment drive also brought a sense in Kimberley was at full capacity, as the crowds flocked in to witness the demonstrations of the military activities. To make the crowd even more enthusiastic, the activities unfolded with a parachute free fall, followed by a precision drill, a gun run, a mock attack, a Military Police hostage release demonstration, a bridge laying demonstration and an aerobatic display, among others.

The Fan Park at A.R. Abass Stadium in Kimberley was at full capacity, as the crowds flocked in to witness the demonstrations of the military activities. To make the crowd even more enthusiastic, the activities unfolded with a parachute free fall, followed by a precision drill, a
SA Navy members thrilling the audience with their precision drill during the celebrations of Armed Forces Day at the A.R. Abass Stadium. (Photo by L Cpl Paul Mpangala)

Children interacting with SA National Defence Force members who are showcasing military hardware. (Photo by L Cpl Jonathan Mogano)

An SA National Defence Force (SANDF) member informing the youth about the variety of careers in the SANDF. (Photo by S Sgt Lebogang Thaole)

of optimism to many and reached a critical mass of young people who showed that they were readily willing to take up opportunities presented by the career exhibitions with enormous energy and positive spirit. Recruitment personnel from the SA Army, the SA Air Force, the SA Navy and the SA Military Health Service enlighten the youth about a wide range of careers available in the SANDF.

Lt Col Veronica Moeti who managed the opening proceedings and the arena programme said the Fan Park comprises of a number of villages for each Service and Division of the SANDF. She said the activities and displays that take place are meant to introduce and educate the public about what the SANDF is about and the need for its existence.

She added: “The displays and activities showcase to the public in terms of educating them on the capabilities existing in the SANDF. In a way we would make them aware of the military such that they are actually inspired and consider serving along us within the SANDF.”

Lt Col Moeti believes that showcasing the SANDF capabilities to the public instils pride in its members as much as it does to the public viewing. She said capability demonstrations of military hardware would inspire them.

The Premier of the Northern Cape, Ms Sylvia Lucas, echoed the same sentiments as she graced the opening of the event alongside the Chief of Staff of the SANDF, Lt Gen Vusi Masondo. Premier Lucas said displays and activities present an opportunity for the youth to consider careers in the SANDF.

Ms Lucas added: “For us as a province we feel that if at all this opportunity comes at a scale that it is here, we cannot but show our deepest gratitude. I would like to urge the people of the Northern Cape to welcome the SANDF as they are here to make sure that they contribute to a better life for the people in the province.”

Ms Noluthando Twala, a Grade 11 learner, and Ms Bonolo Majodina, a Grade 10 learner from Paballelo High School, who visited the Fan Park, said that they were captivated by the sight of all the military equipment. They said: “We are so thrilled by the level of professionalism and activities that we see here today. We now have adequate knowledge of what the SANDF is all about. We were exposed to various career fields in the SANDF that we were unaware of. We cannot wait to apply, particularly to join the SA Navy.”
Thousands thrilled by the military capability demonstration

Article and photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaoe

Government officials, foreign dignitaries and members of the private sector were among thousands of people who were thrilled as the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) showcased its military skills, prowess and capabilities at the De Brug Training Range near Bloemfontein on 18 February 2018 for the public and for invited guests on 20 February.

The awe inspiring capability demonstration was part of the 2018 Armed Forces Day celebrations, which was dedicated to the memory of the first Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, the late President Nelson Mandela, who would have celebrated his 100th birthday in July this year.

Armed Forces Day celebrations, which was dedicated to the memory of the first Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF, the late President Nelson Mandela, who would have celebrated his 100th birthday in July this year.

The De Brug Training Range skyline and its surrounding area resembled a war zone as hundreds of soldiers took part in the demonstration. As the paratroopers descended, fighter jets and helicopters soared through the skies. Tanks, Ratels and the Rooikat Armoured vehicles rolled along to the delight of the thousands who turned out for the largest military spectacle yet seen in the Free State.

The demonstrations started with an insertion of a pathfinder group that parachuted from a CASA C212.
A narrator set the scene for the exercise, explaining the objectives of the demonstration. The event started with the insertion of pathfinders parachuted from a CASA C212. Once the enemy was detected the battle started with the mock attack by Hawk MK120 and Gripen fighter jets and Rooivalk combat helicopters. This was followed by earth-shattering explosions as SA Army Engineers destroyed the infrastructure of the enemy. Additional reinforcements were parachuted onto the battlefield from a C130 Hercules. Additional supplies were also para-dropped to supply the forces on the ground. This was followed by the evacuation of injured personnel by helicopter and the joint mechanised attack with air support.

Excited community members were left in amazement and were filled with a sense of wonder and inspiration. Besides its entertainment value, the demonstration provided an opportunity for closer interaction between the defence force and the community.

Adults and children alike said they were captivated by the action, which ended with an airshow by the Silver Falcons, the aerobatic team of the SA Air Force. It was a family outing for

A highlight for the public was undoubtedly the spectacular fire power demonstrations that involved the main battle tank.

LEFT: Rooivalk helicopters dispersing flares.

An Oryx helicopter airlifting a casualty from the battleground.
armed forces day

responsibilities of those in the defence force.”

The demonstration inspired some youth to say they wanted to join the military. Ms Maria Kgabodi said that the event was fascinating and she was glad she attended. She said: “I now feel like joining the defence force and playing my part for the nation. I’m so proud of our soldiers. They came here to De Brug and gave us a glimpse of how they operate, which shows how well they are prepared for any situation.”

The public are now convinced that joining the defence force means taking pride in wearing the uniform and standing among soldiers, officers and personnel of the defence force who would not hesitate for one second to sacrifice their lives in defending our country.

The capability demonstration unquestionably gave the enormously, enthusiastic and eager crowd a new outlook regarding our military. The crowds viewed the demonstrations of strength, courage and pride as our military proved once again that it was worthy of protecting our country. The participants were enthusiastic and showed pride in what they did and in their technology and equipment. These well trained military personnel with their expertise can most definitely safeguard our country and its people.

A highlight for the public was undoubtedly the spectacular fire power demonstrations involving the main battle tank, G5, G6, Batteleur, Bosvark, Z3, Gripen, Hawks and Rooivalk helicopters.
Photos and collage by Mr Katiso Mabuza.
Music brings people together. Love, sorrow, gladness, hope, harmony and delights belong to all of us, in all times and in all the places music is the only means whereby we feel these emotions in their universality.

Music in itself is healing and it’s an explosive expression of humanity. True to the spirit of Mandela Centenary Celebrations, the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) hosted a grand night of music concert at the Mittah Seperepere Convention Centre in Kimberley. The global icon would have turned 100 years in July 2018. Adding flair to the evening, as February is the month of love and romance, love and feel good songs were performed.

The Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, thanked the Premier of the Northern Cape for allowing the SANDF to host this prestigious annual event in her Province. Gen Shoke also thanked Mr Gwangwa for gracing the occasion in honouring the SANDF invite to the concert, and lastly the Chief of the SA Air Force, as the main executor of the 2018 Armed Forces Day celebrations, and confirmed that the music concert also proved a resounding success. Gen Shoke presented tokens of appreciation to them.

The Premier of the Northern Cape extended a vote of thanks to Gen Shoke and the men and women in uniform. Ms Lucas stated that she was thrilled to be part of the spectacular showcase of music art. She said: “Music in itself is healing and forms a core part of our humanity.”

SA Soldier spoke to South Africa’s most celebrated legendary jazz musician and cultural activist, Mr Jonas Gwangwa. He said that he was honoured to be part of the thrilling military music event. Mr Gwangwa said: “It is indeed a great privilege. I am excited to be a part of something that is so inspiring.” He added that as a nation we achieved so much following the end of apartheid. He added: “Music is part of the social, cultural and spiritual fabric of our rainbow nation. Music by its very nature nurtures the idea of UBUNTU.”

The Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), Gen Solly Shoke (right), with the Premier of the Northern Cape Province, Ms Sylvia Lucas (middle), and the Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang.

2018 Armed Forces Day which was attended by the Premier of the Northern Cape, Ms Sylvia Lucas, and the South African Jazz legend, Mr Jonas Gwangwa, and his wife, Ms Violet Gwangwa.

The concert created a never-seen before festival experience of live music backed by an exceptionally talented line-up of combined military bands of the SA Army, the SA Air Force, the SA Navy, the SA Military Health Service and SANDF choristers in honour of the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and former President of South Africa, the late Mr Nelson Mandela.
A grand afternoon of music and the spirit of UBUNTU

By Sgt Ally Rakoma
Photos by S Sgt Lebogang Tlhaole

As part of the week-long celebrations of the 2018 Armed Forces Day in honour of the incredible story of the first Commander-in-Chief of the SA National Defence Force, the late President Nelson Mandela-his centenary. This year our country and the entire globe is organising a range of activities to celebrate and honour the former Statesman. The centenary celebration of Mr Nelson Mandela allows for an opportunity to do self-introspection whether we are following in his footsteps. Tata Madiba would have turned 100 years in July this year.

In advancing the cause, the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) prides itself on making efforts to engage with communities in order to empower and change lives of the needy. It was undeniably a joyous affair as the senior citizens of Seochoareng Old Age Home in Kimberley, were treated to a musical extravaganza of the SA Navy Marimba Band performing a variety of music under the direction of CPO Monyane Mokhesi. The objective and theme of the event was in recognition of Tata Madiba and also embracing the role played by our senior citizens.

The spirit of UBUNTU was displayed in the selfless acts of generous giving and donating of treats to the elderly. Col Khumalo conveyed a message of encouragement, sharing stories and a laugh with the elderly. To top it all adding flair to the event was Gogo Lettie Louw who will be turning 100 years old on 31 May 2018. Congratulations Gogo Louw! Gogo Louw said that she is filled with God’s grace, mercy and amazing strength. Adding: “How beautiful a day can be for an elder when kindness touches her. Thank you for giving me strength; the Lord is my Shepherd.”

Seochoareng Old Age Home was established in 1964 and houses the elderly who are in dire straits. The Old Age Home currently accommodates fifty senior citizens. Ms Lenah Khuduga, the Deputy Chairperson of Seochoareng Old Age Home, expressed her gratitude towards the SANDF for the goodwill visit to the Old Age Home.

Mr Steven Mabika, the Chairperson of the Old Age Home, said: “Today we are proud of the SANDF and as citizens we embrace it as our own. We see the military as the organisation which our sons and daughters would want to work for. He added that the contribution of time was greatly appreciated: “The senior citizens are left with much excitement, sparkle in their eyes and warmed hearts.”

Col Debbie Khumalo sharing words of encouragement with the senior citizens of Seochoareng Old Age Home in Kimberley. In the background is the SA Navy Marimba Band.
A feisty musical affair unfolded at various high schools in Kimberley where the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) military bands displayed their orchestral prowess during the week-long Armed Forces Day celebrations.

Military bands had taken to the centre stage in activities that were the first to draw the public’s attention to the Armed Forces Day 2018 celebrations. Few days leading to the actual Armed Forces Day, most of schools, if not all had already received the Armed Forces Day message through the military bands performances. Maj Andrew Strugnell, Band Master of the National Ceremonial Guard, said these events had a mission to promote Armed Forces Day and bring the SANDF to the people.

The Band Master of the SA Army Kroonstad Band, WO1 Carel Steyn, echoed the same sentiments when he said they were excited by the reception of the schools they have performed for. WO1 Steyn said: “As part of our support to the Armed Forces Day celebrations we undertook to do music events at different schools and venues to set proper public relations in place.”

WO1 Steyn explained that they enjoy playing in all the venues as they are also able to teach children about music. WO1 Steyn said: “Part of our performances include introducing and teaching the learners about different musical instruments and demonstrating how they work and sound. We will also include rehearsals for the big parade on the 21st.”

This is what some of the teachers from different schools had to say about the event. During an interview with SA Soldier the Principal of Pescodia High School, Mr Hendrick Phillies, said: “As this was the first visit I humbly wish that the SANDF can do this more often, this is because I have seen the response...
from the learners and I am very sure that they would like to know more about the Services in the SANDF.

“This day is a positive turnaround for our school, I as the principal never thought that the band would actually put learners on their feet and the response was over the top, I am quite happy of this day”.

Mr Greg Pharos, the Deputy Principal at the Roodepan High School, said: “The learners enjoyed themselves from the Military Band performance and everyone felt that they were very good. I will definitely make a turn at the Fan Park to explore more of the SANDF capabilities.”

Ms Nashley Haulenberg, an educator at the school for Grade 10 learners, said: “I understand that the SANDF protect the country and also assist other African countries in restoring peace order whenever required. I saw the Armed Forces Day billboards and convoys of military vehicles moving around the area. The SANDF must inform us more about what they do, especially for the high school learners who may wish to take up careers in the military. I will visit the Fan Park and I hope that our interaction with them will be educational and fun.”

Mr Nathanel Dube, Ms Emma Williams and Ms Skylah Wiltshire, learners from Diamantveld High School, said that music brings people together and the truest expression of a nation is in its dance and music. They reiterated that music is therapy and gives life to everything.
The Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), Gen Solly Shoke, hosted a Golf Day during the week-long celebrations of Armed Forces Day in Kimberley.

The Military Command Council and various sponsors participated in this Golf Day held at the Flamingo Casino Golf Club in remembrance of SANDF members who paid the ultimate price in combat. The event was also held in a befitting manner to honour one of the South Africa’s worst military disasters, the sinking of the troopship, the SS Mendi, during World War II.

Altogether 616 South Africans, of whom 607 were black troops, plus 30 British crew members died in this disaster on 21 February 1917.

Addressing the guests at the prizegiving Gala dinner, Gen Shoke said: “The purpose of this event was not only to witness SANDF members playing golf with sponsors in honouring fallen heroes and heroines, but also to raise funds for the SANDF Education Trust for the dependants of soldiers who lost their lives in the line of duty.”

General Shoke said: “Most of you should be familiar with how we decided to start the SANDF Education Trust. We believe that if you want to empower someone, provide them with the opportunity to study. I always say the SANDF Education Trust will strive to ensure that dependants of soldiers who passed away in the line of duty are not left in despair.”

He added that it is of utmost importance that the SANDF and corporates continue their collaborative efforts in making sure that all children of fallen soldiers are able to further their studies.

The Chief of the SANDF continued: “There is no amount of money that is too little. Any contribution, though it might not be worth a million, will surely change someone else’s future. So I humbly urge you to collaborate with us and give the little that we have so that we can help those who are in need.”

Gen Shoke thanked everyone who sacrificed their time to ensure the success of the event.

The total amount of pledges contributed by both the Military Command Council and various sponsors amounted to R2.5 million.

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“We believe in heroes. We keep your spirit alive”

The SANDF Education Trust


The main objective of the SANDF Education Trust is to support the education needs of the dependants of the following persons:

- SANDF members killed or severely injured subsequent to April 1994, while on official duty.
- Civilian members of the Department of Defence (DOD) killed or severely injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, while deployed during official SANDF operation.
- Citizens of the Republic of South Africa killed or injured subsequent to 27 April 1994, during official SANDF operations provided that such citizens are not engaged in activities opposing the SANDF.

The SANDF Education trust is funded through donations and contributions received from the private sector and international business enterprises. Ongoing fund raising initiatives are in place, and the SANDF welcomes all contributions.

For more information on the SANDF Education Trust, visit www.dod.mil.za

The banking details are as follows:

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For further enquiries and to obtain application forms please contact:

Tel: +27 (12) 355 5107                Fax: +27 (12) 355 5882
Email: sandfedutrust@gmail.com

We believe in heroes, we hope you do too.

Together we move South Africa Forward
South Africa and Nigeria focus on peace and stability on the continent

By Mr Malose Malema
Photos by Mr Katiso Mabuza

Under the flagship of both the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU), the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) had committed itself to ensure ever-lasting peace and security of the African continent. The SANDF always strives to make meaningful collaborations with fellow influential militaries with the same interests across the continent in an attempt to achieve this momentous task.

The Chief of the SA Army, Lt Gen Lindile Yam, recently hosted a Nigerian military delegation led by the Nigerian Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai. The event took place at the SA Army College in Thaba Tshwane on 23 January 2018. The two Generals held a media briefing after the parade.

The core business at hand for these Army Chiefs was to deliberate and reaffirm their long standing bilateral military relations. Ideas were shared in various aspects such as cutting-edge defence technology, improved border control and management, as well as new innovations in defence mechanisms.

Both Generals agreed that the two countries complement one another in defence-related matters as they are perceived to be super-powers in their respective geographical regions. Although military relations between these countries had been in existence for decades, it was not until a decade ago that senior Nigerian Army officers started participating in various military exercises in South Africa.

According to Lt Gen Buratai, the fruits of military exchanges between the two countries had assisted the Nigerian Armed Forces in areas, such as armour, logistics management, maintenance and expertise and tactical intelligence. He said: “This country (South Africa) is doing a tremendous job in helping the Nigerian Army by providing equipment and necessary expertise needed to maintain peace and stability in our country and our region as a whole.”

Lt Gen Buratai said Nigeria had advanced extensively from such an important military arrangement with South Africa. He said: “Knowledge gained by our senior officers who were here for various military-related exercises had already yielded positive results in empowering our army in our quest of uprooting terrorists in the country.”

Lt Gen Yam said military relations between South Africa and Nigeria are not one-sided as it might look. He said: “It is impossible to be a jack of all traits. It is impossible for armies that do not work together to start doing so on the battlefields.” He revealed that the SANDF is benefiting in areas that it had not yet encountered. These include but are not limited to jungle arrangement, infantry and terrorism fighting capability, artillery and training, as well as commemorative alliance.

The Nigerian delegation also held closed-door discussions with the Chief of the SANDF, Gen Solly Shoke, at Defence Headquarters in Pretoria on 24 January 2018. They were expected to end their tour of South Africa with visits to both Limpopo and the Western Cape after similar stops in North-West and Gauteng respectively.
The Nigerian Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai, was flown to Limpopo, Musina in Venda to pay a visit to Joint Tactical Headquarters Musina Operational Base on 25 January 2018.

Lt Gen Buratai’s visit to Musina operational area was twofold. He wanted to benchmark with the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) on Operation CORONA borderline safeguarding and Nigerian Army fortifies its bilateral relations with the SANDF

The Troop Carrier or passenger transport vehicle has a strengthened roll cage, has a five passenger seating arrangement at the back with weather guard canvas, fitted with radios and space for weapons.

On arrival at Musina, accompanied by the General Officer Commanding Army Support Base Garrison, Brig Gen Nkhanedzeni Ndou, Lt Gen Buratai was welcomed to the operational area by the Joint Operations Division Chief of Staff, Brig Gen Philip Mavhungu, who as per custom introduced his SANDF personnel which included the Officer Commanding Joint Tactical Headquarters Limpopo, Col “Joe” Joseph Tshugulu, with the Nigerian delegation that accompanied the Nigerian Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai, at the shooting range.

The Nigerian Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai, takes the salute during the inspection of the guard of honour parade upon his arrival to Operation CORONA in Musina, Limpopo.
There is an increased international awareness and emphasis on curbing multi-national terrorism and the general strengthening of safety and security between United Nations (UN) member countries.

It comes as no surprise that many defence forces throughout the world are putting strong and advanced measures in place to counter the new and sophisticated forms of international security breaches. South Africa, both an African Union (AU) and UN member and regional military super-power, has been playing a leading role in re-laying the foundation against any form of multi-national lawlessness.

In an effort to fight multi-national security breaches in Africa, particularly in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) reiterated this mandate with the opening of the 17/2018 Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme (JSCSP).

The Chief of Human Resources, Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, officially declared the 17/2018 Joint Senior Command and Staff Programme open.

Cpl Abakwe Keakeditswe deployed on Operation CORONA in Musina from the SA Army Specialised Infantry Capability (SAASIC) K9 Unit in Potchefstroom explaining to the Nigerian Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen Tukur Yusuf Buratai, how they execute their tasks using trained dogs to confiscate contraband especially illegal narcotics meant for the black market.

Lt Gen Norman Yengeni thanked the Joint Operations Division Chief of Staff, Brig Gen Philip Mavhungu, for his assistance in making this visit a success.
The umbrella of the SA National War College (SANWC) was officially opened at the Peace Mission Training Centre in Thaba Tshwane on 17 January 2018. The main aim of the JSCSP is to prepare selected officers for senior appointments at operational level by developing their command, staff and analytical skills.

It is expected by the conclusion of this course in November that these officers would have harnessed their professional understanding in the following disciplines: joint inter-agency and multinational operations, management of defence, as well as all the wider aspects of conflict.

Extensive knowledge gained through modules covered in this course attended by 123 student officers, transcends the South African borders. These include two student officers from Zimbabwe and Zambia respectively, as well as a student from Tanzania, Côte d’Ivoire, Uganda and Ghana each. They constitute 1% of the entire international representation of the 17/2018 JSCSP.

The overall composition of student officers for this course is as follows: the SA Army has 63 students, the SA Air Force 22 students, the SA Navy 11 students, the SA Military Health Service nine students, Defence Intelligence 10 students and eight international fellows (students). Combat participants equal approximately 40% on course with Combat Support 30% and Combat Service Support 30%. The overall gender representation of the course is 92 male and 31 female students.

However the main functionary, the Chief of Human Resources, Lt Gen Norman Yengeni, warned against laziness and complacency. He advised the student officers to be prepared to part with their daily luxuries as they embark on this physically and emotionally draining course. He said: “As you consider yourself privileged, to be selected for this course, remember that it is not going to be a walk in the park as this is a very challenging course which demands both mental and physical toughness.”

Since the SANDF has a mandate to prepare itself against any eventuality, this alone should motivate and propel all officers to do better in this eleven-month course. Apart from encouraging student officers to have an extensive knowledge about their country.

Lt Gen Yengeni also urged members to familiarise themselves about the current situations in those African countries ravaged by conflict since their effects might spill over to South Africa. He said: “It is imperative for armed forces to be acquainted with conflicts in the Sudan, Mali and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), etc. The reason for this is that this course will teach you to analyse, plan and execute wars and resolve conflicts.”

According to Lt Gen Yengeni the possibility of the planned relocation of the SANWC around April this year will further increase the number of student officers in the future. Before declaring the course officially opened, Lt Gen Yengeni thanked all the support personnel and wished all student officers all the best for the duration of the 44-week course.

As the Commandant of the SANWC, Brig Gen Siseko Nombewu, said he is privileged and honoured to be the host of this prestigious course.
Established in February 1920, the SA Air Force recently celebrated its 98th anniversary in style and precision during its annual Prestige Day Parade at Air Force Base Swartkop in Pretoria to honour its serving men and women in uniform, fallen members and also to acknowledge the exceptional performance of Directorates, Bases, Squadrons and Units.

The landscape in which the SA Air Force is expected to operate has changed dramatically over the years. Marking of such an anniversary also brings together with the festivities, an element of reflection on the highs and lows of the previous years to the professional, world-class SA Air Force of the future.

The Chief of the SA Air Force, Lt Gen Zimpande Msimang, presided over the parade and presented the Most Prestigious Unit of the Year Award to Air Force Base (AFB) Langebaanweg. It was received by Brig Gen Mayenzeke Matanda, Officer Commanding of AFB Langebaanweg. This award is recognised as one of the most prestigious awards presented to the unit/base that excels at all levels of tasks and operations.

Addressing the guests and members on parade, Lt Gen Msimang paid tribute to the men and women in the SA Air Force including the Reserves and civilian members. He paid homage for the invaluable contribution made by military veterans and paid tribute to all our brave men and women who are in deployment areas abroad and on the home front, serving our people and safeguarding our national interests. He stated unequivocally that the SA National Defence Force is the nation’s insurance policy and we all have to take collective responsibility to not allow this policy to lapse.

Lt Gen Msimang highlighted some of the SA Air Force’s achievements in 2017, including its participation in the Opening of Parliament, Armed Forces Day in Durban, the Air Power Capability demonstration at Roodewal, Exercise WINTER SOLSTICE, assisting the SA Navy to conduct maritime security patrols along the Mozambique Channel, providing air support to the peacekeeping contingent in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and fighting fires, particularly in Knysna and Port Elizabeth.

The Chief of the SA Air Force acknowledged that the SA Air Force is also facing challenges. Lt Gen Msimang said: “Although we did the best with the resources at our disposal I strongly believe that we can still do better. With the current resources constraints, we are forced to cut our cloth to size. To ensure that we continue to have the people with the necessary skills sets and equipment, we have had to instantly change the way we used to do business, by firstly changing our contracting models and engaging robustly with underperforming service providers.

“The SA Air Force was engaging with the industry to reduce service delivery turnaround times and address aircraft support issues. Engagement with the industry has resulted in the SA Air Force exploring the possibility of creating war rooms to track and monitor stock and components, establishing warehouses to reduce delivery times and developing in-house engineering skills.”

Lt Gen Msimang also mentioned that with the Rooivalk helicopter continuing...
to prove its prowess in deployments “we are readying ourselves to work with the local industry partners to enhance this platform and thus ensure that it remains a renowned and world class combat helicopter to ever grace our airspace”.

He also highlighted some of the SA Air Force’s focus areas for 2018 which include the 2018 Africa Aerospace and Defence Exhibition in September, an ethics awareness campaign, which is currently being rolled out, continue chess workshops and tournaments, as this grooms leaders in decision-making, and the establishment of an Air Force Academy of Excellence where all graduates will be commissioned as officers. Included in this vision is the creation of an Air Force school that is envisaged to become the feeder for the future Air Force Academy. Lt Gen Msimang noted that the first African female combat pilot, Capt Mandu Mfeki, is currently undergoing training at 85 Combat Flying School.

SA Soldier conversed with Brig Gen Mayenzeke Matanda, Officer Commanding of AFB Langebaanweg, upon receiving this prestigious award. When asked how he felt about the achievement, Brig Gen Matanda replied that it is humbling. “The achievement of the unit is the results of combined efforts of each individual member and it is only through standing together that we can achieve our vision.”

When asked what his secret was, Brig Gen Matanda replied positive attitude, consistency and commitment to excellence that guided their daily conduct. He added that attitude of members determine their direction. Success is connected with action and that will enable you to attain the success you seek. “The only way to do great work is to love what you do”.

How important is it for a leader to engage with subordinates in order to achieve success, General? Brig Gen Matanda mentioned that he considers the ability to arouse passion and enthusiasm among men and women as the greatest asset of an organisation. He added: “The way to develop the best that is in a person is through appreciation and encouragement.”

Brig Gen Matanda expressed appreciation to all members of his unit from all levels of their functional domains, including civilians for working tirelessly. He said that their efforts and endeavours are noted with sincere gratitude.
Capt Sepedi Sithole is not one to let a little disappointment stand in her way. When her dreams of becoming a pilot were dashed because she was not tall enough to pass the strict SA Airways (SAA) criteria, she picked herself up and decided to do the next best thing – become an air traffic controller (ATC) and help pilots do their work.

She is a member of the SA Air Force and works at Air Force Base (AFB) Waterkloof in Pretoria. As an ATC, her role is to regulate the orderly departure and arrival of aircraft at an airfield and ensure that they are separated by safe distances and heights en-route. When aircraft approach an airfield for landing, ATCs vector (give directions and altitude) the pilot towards the runway so that they can continue with a visual approach or intercept the radio beam of what is called the Instrument Landing System.

Making sure aircraft arrive safely

Capt Sithole explained that ATCs are responsible for private and commercial aircraft using South African air space.

She added that ACTs based at the AFB Waterkloof also control civilian aircraft operated by flying schools around Pretoria. Sometimes pilots request clearance to fly along November One. This is jargon for the N1 highway which is a prominent geographical feature. All pilots can use geographical locations depending on their altitude and weather conditions. In bad weather the pilots cannot land unless they can see the ground from an aircraft. If a pilot does not have reference to the ground they have to rely on an ATC to give them directions to their destination.

Capt Sithole explained that she has
the big picture of what is happening in the airspace she controls thanks to an instrument called an Air Picture Display System. This system gives the exact location of the aircraft, the level, direction and speed. She added: “We are in communication with the pilot but keep our transmissions brief.”

Challenges of the job

Capt Sithole explained that her job can and does present challenges and she must remain calm, rational and think on her feet. She recounted the time she received a report of an aircraft flying into South Africa from a neighbouring country that was operating on only two of its four engines. She explained: “It could still fly with two engines, but it might not have made it to OR Tambo International Airport.”

In responding to this situation, Capt Sithole had to guide the pilot to safety making sure that all airports along the pilot’s route were on standby in case of an emergency landing. She said during such times one might experience a moment of panic but ATCs must set aside their emotions and think quickly to make sure the aircraft and people on board arrive safely.

Capt Sithole said: “We are trained to handle stressful situations.” With her assistance the pilot landed safely at OR Tambo International Airport.

Dreams of flying

Capt Sithole did not originally have her eye on a career as an ATC. Her dream was to be a pilot. She was still in school when the aviation bug bit. At a time when teachers were pushing her to enter the medical field she was too shy to tell people that she had dreams of becoming a pilot.

Capt Sithole’s desire to enter the world of aviation was further ignited during her matric year in 2005. She entered the Wonders of Flying competition run by SAA and her essay about her passion for aviation was the winning entry from Limpopo.

The prize saw her spending four days exploring the aviation industry with SAA.

She explained: “During this competition I got to see every sector of aviation. When I saw all of this it confirmed within me that this is what I wanted to do with my life.”

After passing matric with good marks her dreams of entering the aviation sector were crushed when SAA did not select her for pilot cadet training. She recalled: “I had good marks at matric level so I also had bursary offers. I conceded and went to the University of Cape Town and studied towards a degree in mechanical engineering. I was miserable.”

To be accepted in air traffic control in the SA Air Force, a candidate must be a South African citizen; not be younger than 18 years and not yet 22 when starting basic military training; be classified medically fit for duty by the Institute for Aviation Medicine; and be recommended by a selection board.

Things looked up for Capt Sithole in 2007 when the SA Air Force finally invited her to take part in the selection process. For a second time she experienced disappointment as she was not tall enough to become a pilot. However, by then she had an alternate career choice in mind and decided to be an ATC and remain in the aviation business. She said: “I have never looked back.”

Capt Sithole has been in this position since 2011 and looks forward to growing her career in aviation. She said: “This job also allows me to think and have fun because as an ATC you cannot be rigid. The rules that we use are just guidelines. You must use those guidelines to help you make a decision that is best in the current situation. I love having fun while I do my job.”

The path to becoming a military ATC

Capt Sithole is proud to work for the SA Air Force and encourages other young people to follow in her footsteps. She advised them to do their homework and to be clear about entrance requirements in the flying industry.

To be accepted in air traffic control in the SA Air Force, a candidate must be a South African citizen; not be younger than 18 years and not yet 22 when starting basic military training; be classified medically fit for duty by the Institute for Aviation Medicine; and be recommended by a selection board.

Academically, aviation hopefuls must have completed Grade 12 and passed English, Mathematics (NSC level 4) and geography are also essential. Capt Sithole added that Science is also a valuable subject to have studied.

Candidate SA Air Force ATCs undergo basic military training at the Air Force Gymnasium and 18 months of training at Air Space Control School at AFB Waterkloof.

Capt Sithole suggested that young people read widely on aviation and what it entails so that they can make informed choices and find out what career they truly want to pursue. She added: “Find your own truth about what you want to do.”

This and that

How do you relax?
I love spending time with my family. I have an amazing family.

What is your favourite food?
Seafood and hot wings.

What is your favourite holiday destination?
Where there are white sandy beaches, either Camps Bay or Mozambique.

What is the slogan you live by?
Every expert was once a beginner.
Brig Gen Stephen Masipa took over command of Mobile Military Health Formation (MMHF) as General Officer Commanding (GOC) from Brig Gen Simane Dibetsoe during a change of command parade recently held at the Pretoria Military Sports Club in Thaba Tshwane. The ceremony was attended by the Surgeon General, Lt Gen Aubrey Sedibe, and other senior Generals and officials of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

Brig Gen Dibetsoe is retiring from active service in the SANDF. During his tenure in the SANDF he held various positions that included among others, Air Show Health Coordinator at Africa Aerospace and Defence exhibition, the Second-in-Command of Medical Task Team in Burundi, the SANDF Medical Planner for Exercise THOKGAMO in Gaborone Botswana, Directing Staff at the SA National War College, Director Emergency Military Medical Care. He held his last position as GOC MMHF from January 2014.

During his farewell speech, Brig Gen Dibetsoe said that his job as GOC MMHF was very challenging and has been a roller coaster journey that he could have not fulfilled without the support of the members of the MMHF as well as the support from colleagues from Services and Divisions. He said he prides himself with the performance of the Formation.

The incumbent, Brig Gen Masipa, a qualified registered Nurse, started his military career with the National Peacekeeping Force from February to May 1994. In June 1994 he was part of the integration into the SANDF as a Lieutenant.

The outgoing General Officer Commanding Mobile Military Health Formation, Brig Gen Simani Dibetsoe, bidding farewell to Mobile Military Health Formation.

During his encounter in the SANDF he completed various military and academic courses, such as Officers Formative, Trauma and Emergency Nursing, Platoon Commanders course, Advance Trauma Life Support, Advance Cardiac Life Support, Junior Command and Staff Programme, Diploma in National Security and Defence and Post Graduate Specialty Course in National Security and Defence both in Cuba among others.

Since his integration, Brig Gen Masipa worked at various units such as Military Health Training Formation, 1 Military Hospital, established a clinic in the office of the President in 2000 to 2001, the School for Military Health, 8 Medical Battalion Group, SA Military Health Service Headquarters and as Second-in-Command at the MMHF.

Brig Gen Masipa said that some of the highlights of his career include leading a Medical Task Group during Exercise GOLFHINO in 2009 and the Soccer World Cup in 2010, and attending the National Security and Defence Studies in Cuba.
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Air Defence Artillery Excellence Week captures hearts and minds

By Capt Marumo Machete, SO2 Communication Improvement and Research, Defence Corporate Communication
Photos by S Sgt Hendrik Nkoe

The annual Air Defence Artillery (ADA) Formation Excellence Week, headlined by the coveted Gun Run and a string of festivities, was recently held at Diskobolos in Kimberley – the home of 10 Anti-Aircraft Regiment and ADA School.

With a bumper-packed programme that included traditional Air Defence Gunners’ opening ceremony at the Oppenheimer Gardens while others lined the streets of this buzzing Northern Cape town to catch a glimpse of the twenty adrenalin-oozing gun push teams strutting the military hardware in the sweltering heat, all in celebration of the time-honoured profession of gunners.

The competition was stiff as teams tried to outmanoeuvre one another for the top honour of being crowned winners.

LEFT: Traditional Zulu dancers entertaining the crowds.

WO1 Pierre Hayes.

The Excellence Week put the Diamond City of Kimberley on logjam with hundreds of residents attending the Gun Push opening ceremony at the Oppenheimer Gardens while others lined the streets of this buzzing Northern Cape town to catch a glimpse of the twenty adrenalin-oozing gun push teams strutting the military hardware in the sweltering heat, all in celebration of the time-honoured profession of gunners.

Hosted by ADA Formation under the stewardship of its General Officer Commanding, Brig Gen Sandile Hlongwa,
the ADA Excellence Week and its signature draw card event, the ADA Gun Run did not disappoint. It attracted a little over twenty strong teams from diverse origins – teams from other military units from across the length and breadth of our country, ladies-only team, South African Police Service, Correctional Services and civilian teams from the dusty streets of Galeshewe.

The Gun Push event has not only grown to create camaraderie between gunners but has since morphed into a stakeholder relationship building event that unites the community of Kimberley and surrounding areas.

The ADA Excellence Week also affords the local industry, state departments and the SANDF to take stock of the year that was, while rubbing shoulders on the greens through a gentleman’s game of golf at the Flamingo Golf Course.

The Gun Push event has earned the adulation of the Kimberlites – as locals are affectionately known - and made it to the Diamond City’s event calendar with citizens eagerly looking forward to seeing their local heroes and heroines competing in true sportsmanship fashion against one another. Competitors put their bodies to the test while battling the over 950kg heavy self-propelled Anti-Aircraft twin-barrelled gun, under the blistering 32 degrees plus heat of the Diamond City.

First to cross the most sort-after finishing line was the super-fit 104 Battery which comprises the fittest gunners ADA has at its disposal - the paratroopers of 10 Anti-Aircraft Regiment - in a time of 01:00:32, hot on their heels was the young-bloods from Air Defence Artillery School Camden Military Base, Ermelo in Mpumalanga, in a time of 01:12:14. The last podium position went to the SA Army Infantry Formation’s 44 Parachute Battalion B-team with a time of 01:13:17.
The drought in Western Cape Province which includes Western Cape metropolitan has brought about a dire water shortage crisis in that area. As a consequence of the drought Western Cape has been officially declared a disaster area by the national government in accordance with the Disaster Management Act No. 57 of 2002 (as amended).

The Act provides for an integrated and co-ordinated disaster management policy that focuses on preventing or reducing the risk of disasters, mitigating the severity of disasters, emergency preparedness, rapid and effective response to disasters and post-disaster recovery, the establishment of national, provincial and municipal disaster management centres, disaster management volunteers and matters incidental thereto.

Col Keith Aarons, Officer Commanding Joint Tactical Headquarters Western Cape (J Tac HQ WC), informed the SANDF’s constitutional mandate and Operation CHARIOT – disaster support, established a SANDF Disaster Management Forum in July 2017 to assist in and manage the eminent disaster. The purpose of the forum is to disseminate the military must render to other organs of state in time of disaster and other crisis. Severe water shortage requires all the SANDF units and facilities in the Western Cape to become self-sufficient in a sustainable manner as far as water supply and usage is concerned. This intrinsically means Western Cape units should not rely on water supply from the municipality. Furthermore the units in Cape Town will have to prepare to become part of the city of Cape Town contingency, if water runs out. The units must plan their contribution and form part of the operational reaction as part of the contingency.

Based on the above premise, the constitutional mandate of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) is explicit and unambiguous in terms of the assistance of environmental matters

The SANDF to assist drought stricken Western Cape

By Mr Lufuno Netshirembe
Photos by Mr Katiso Mabuza

Col Keith Aarons, Officer Commanding Joint Tactical Headquarters Western Cape.

Some residents collect water at Dido Valley water collection point Simon’s Town - this water is contaminated and therefore not suitable for human consumption, but good enough for other uses.
information to all units on the water situation in the Western Cape, assist with the finalisation of the SANDF’s part of the contingency plan for Cape Town, coordination of the SANDF’s response to the disaster and give assistance to all units with the implementation of their own resilience plan and contingencies to cope with the impact of the disaster in each unit.

The forum gave rise to the water resilience programme under guardianship of Col Aarons. Water resilience programme addresses four aspects as the approach of the SANDF in the Western Cape in dealing with the water shortage disaster. The programme focuses on implementation of water saving awareness and campaigns in Military units and accommodations, implementation of a resilience programme that includes the harvesting and re-use of water, water augmentation projects that can include bore holes, use of natural fountains and wells, activating desalination plants and ensuring operational readiness to participate in the safety and security plans of the Western Cape Province and the city of Cape Town as the different contingencies are activated.

While J Tac HQ WC is heavily involved in assisting in water crisis it does not neglect or abscend from its Operation CORONA responsibilities. Contrary to unfounded belief that J Tac HQ WC has no role in Operation CORONA, as the operational unit close to the sea, this unit is a leading role player in Maritime Border safeguarding of South Africa’s territorial water in conjunction with the SA Navy, executing sea search and rescue tasks Maritime Rescue Coordinating Centre (MRCC) under Operation ARABELLA, and protecting marine fauna and flora.

Maritime border safeguarding is a multi-facet operation that includes deployment of land, sea and air patrols capabilities supported by reaction teams of the SANDF, the SA Police Service (SAPS), the SA National Parks and the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry.

The J Tac HQ WC unit is also involved in the safety and security of major events in the province such as Opening of Parliament known as State of Nation Address and other Parliamentary activities as part of the Provincial Joint Operational Centre where the Officer Commanding J Tac HQ is the Provincial Co-Chair with the SAPS Provincial Commissioner and the Provincial State Security Agency Manager.

Col Aarons mentioned that his vision and plan is to have a permanent maritime deployment using SANDF land, sea and air assets because of the continuous existence of maritime challenges that warrants a permanent deployment to curb such challenges.
Military Academy acknowledges academic achievers

Outstanding students of the Military Academy were recognised and celebrated during an awards evening and passing-out parade hosted by the Military Academy at the Joe Modise Hall under the leadership of the Commandant of the Military Academy, Brig Gen Basil Pharo, and the Dean of the Faculty, Prof Sello Tshehla, respectively. The Chief of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF), Gen Solly Shoke, was the guest of honour at the awards evening and the Adviser to the Principal and Vice Chancellor at the University of Pretoria, Prof Tinyiko Maluleke, was the guest speaker.

Year on year the awards and passing-out parade have improved to give attendees, speakers and achievers an evening and day to remember, the students were recognised after 30-months of hard work at the Military Academy where they went through extensive training and studying in military and academic studies. The top achievers were recognised for their brilliant academic results which were attained through the thirty months they were at the base.

The Commandant of the Military Academy officially opened the event and welcomed all the guests and students. Thereafter the guest speaker gave his welcoming address and highlighted the importance of education and research, and why leaders such as the late Mr Nelson Mandela needed to be celebrated.
Prof Maluleke said that as an academic, he stands in awe of all military men and women from all walks of life who have contributed to our democracy and continue to do so through research studies. He said: “There has never been any doubt in my mind about the importance of military education and indeed the word ‘education’ ought to stand always next to the word ‘military’ and I am really pleased to learn that the Military Academy is ranked among the top 10 military institutions around the world.”

Addressing the students at the passing-out parade, the Chief of the SANDF said that the students must know that they are soldiers and they carry their ranks with them wherever they go and it is their responsibility to treat their ranks with honour and respect. Gen Shoke said: “You are the leaders of tomorrow for this organisation and we know that this dynamic organisation will be in good hands since we have young people who are committed to learning.”

Students were recognised and awarded in the various categories - the Undergraduate Achievers were as follows:

- **Masiza Community Service Certificate**: Lt Moesfieka Abvonia Moses from Logistic Support Formation
- **Overall Best First Year Student with an Overall Average of 74.5%**: Mid Khetukuthula Nxumalo from SA Naval Base Simon’s Town
- **Overall Best First Year Student in Human and Organisational Development Programme**: CO Tumisang Manake from SA Military Health Service Administration
- **Overall Best First Year Student in the Technology Programme**: Mid Willy Khosa from the SA Naval Office
- **Overall Best First Year Student in the Technology and Defence Management Programme**: Mid Khetukuthula Nxumalo from SA Naval Base Simon’s Town
- **Overall Best Third Year Student with an Overall Average of 86% and Overall Best Third Year Student in the Human and Organisational Development Programme**: CO Refilwe Maria Mahlaku from Joint Support Base Garrison
- **Overall Best Third Year Student in the Technology Programme**: Mid Hans Mangenge Malatji from SA Naval Base Simon’s Town
- **Top students over three years of study**: CO Refilwe Maria Mahlaku from Joint Support Base Garrison (first position) and Lt Moesfieka Abvonia Moses from Logistic Support Formation (second position).

The recipients during the passing-out parade were as follows:

- **Best SA Army Student as well as Sword of Honour Winner**: CO Refilwe Maria Mahlaku from Joint Support Base Garrison
- **Best SA Navy Combat Student**: Mid Hans Mangenge Malatji from SA Naval Base Simon’s Town
- **Best SA Military Health Service Student**: CO Celumusa Gracious Thwala from 1 Air Supply Unit
- **Best SA Air Force Student**: CO Monewa Malebo Daphney Mzimba from 68 Air School.
Western Province Rally Championship

By WO1 Patrick Vermaak, Reconnaissance Systems Section Head at 2 Aircraft Servicing Centre Detached

WO1 Patrick Vermaak and Ettiene du Toit succeeded in winning Group N2 of the South African Special Stage Rally Championship in 2007 and were rewarded with a season in Group N3 with Sasol South Africa for the 2008 South African Rally Championship. The SA Group N2 championship winning Toyota Corolla RXi 1.6 20v was mothballed and the pair would finish the 2008 Group N3 South African event of the Western Province Special Stage Rally Championship. The Cape Car and Motorcycle Club (CCMCC) organised iKapa Reticulation and Flow Rally near Klipdale in the Overberg district, attracting a healthy 24 team entry including four very fast Namibian entries.

Much to their own surprise WO1 Patrick Vermaak and Du Toit would finish the event as the first Western Province home team, first in class and second overall. Richard Slamet becoming the first Namibian born driver to win a round of the Western Province Rally Championship with local navigator.

Team 467 WBMK S3 Ettiene du Toit (driver) and WO1 Patrick Vermaak (navigator) – Toyota Corolla RXi 1.6. (Photo courtesy Chris Hitchcock)
Derek Jacobs, in the I&S Freight Services class S5 Toyota Run X 2.0 4x4.

Round two saw 25 teams head into the Swartland district for the Cape Peninsula Motorcycle and Car Club (CPMCC) that organised Malmesbury Rally on 1 April 2017. Though running very competitively, incorrect damping on the Corolla saw the team retiring after solid contact with a telephone pole almost removed the left rear wheel on Special Stage 3. Everything but an April fool’s joke!

Many a late night followed for the Team 467 crew but the Toyota Corolla was declared ready for the Witzenberg Motorklub (WBMK) that organised the third round, the Ceres Toyota Rally on 13 May 2017. As members of the host club it was indeed a personal highlight for WO1 Vermaak and Du Toit to win their “home” event overall in the Team 467 Kranzle S3 Toyota Corolla RXi 1.6 and maximum points saw them challenging for the championship despite having retired from the Malmesbury Rally.

Round four was a combined CPMCC and CCMCC event and the 1 July 2017 Riebeek Kasteel Rally was run in near perfect weather and on roads perfectly suited to high speed rallying. Once again WO1 Vermaak and Du Toit achieved first Western Province Team, first in class S3 and second position overall whilst their direct opposition failed to finish the event. Changing surface the fifth round of the Western Province Championship was presented by CCMCC in conjunction with the Western Province Motor Club (WPMC) at the Killarney International Raceway. The entire event ran on tarmac and within the perimeters of the motorsport complex over two days: 28 and 29 July 2017.

Du Toit put his racing experience to good use and with WO1 Vermaak providing accurate instructions as navigator, the duo not only added another class victory but actually won the event overall. A feat they had achieved ten years earlier in the same car! The bonus of this result however was the fact that Du Toit had done enough to claim the 2017 Western Province Drivers Championship and together they also sealed the 2017 S3 Regional Drivers and Navigators Class titles.

The Caledon Rally on 22/23 September 2017 provided WO1 Vermaak and Du Toit with a championship result when they completed the national/regional combined two day event in sixth overall, first Western Cape Team, first Witzenberg Motorklub team and first in class S3 in their Team 467 Toyota Corolla RXi 1.6.

Making this an even sweeter result WO1 Vermaak is the fact that his 22-year-old daughter, Tania Vermaak, completed her debut season in the sport as navigator with veteran driver, Andy Haigh-Smith, in the Team AHS Racing 432 CPMCC S3 Mitsubishi Lancer GT1600 in a brilliant fourth place overall and second place in class S3.

Andy Haigh-Smith, the father of 25-year-old Asley Haigh-Smith, was on of only two South Africans contesting the World Rally X Supercar category during Round 12 of the FIA World Rally X Championship hosted at the Killarney International Raceway on 11 and 12 November 2017. Driving a 600hp Ford Fiesta 4x4 against the cream of the sport including nine World Rally Drivers Champion Sebastian Loeb (French) and two World Rally X Champion Petter Solberg (Norwegian). Add Ken Block of Gymkhana fame and the magnitude of this event becomes evident.

This the only FIA World Championship event to be hosted on the African continent in 2017 and it will be returning for five years.

More good news is the fact that Team 81 of the SA Air Force Silver Falcons aerobatic team flew opening shows on both days under the leadership of Maj Mark Gentles.

WO1 Vermaak and Du Toit were officially crowned the Western Province Rally Champions during a gala awards evening at Bon Amis on the Bloemendal Wine Estate recently.

PS: WO1 Vermaak was also awarded the Sport Personality of the Year Award during the Air Force Base Ysterplaat Sport Club Awards ceremony held recently.

Together with Mr Neels Rabe and Dr Nick van der Meulen as freelance presenters of the Motorsport Focus 104Fm Motorsport programme every Thursday evening 20h00-50 the trio was awarded as winners of a fourth consecutive SAGMJ MJOY - Radio Journalist of the Year (Motorsport) Golf Award.
True love equals sacrificial actions

By Col (Ds) Ronnie Stanton, Senior Staff Officer Human Resources at Chaplain General Division

This time of the year is known for flowers, chocolates and romantic dinners. Who can resist the temptation to feel love sick on Valentine’s Day. It is the ideal time to either get married or to ask the BIG question. True love, according to many, is a strong emotional feeling people have for one another. But what if that strong emotional flame is not burning so strong anymore? Maybe people have a wrong perception of love.

True love is depicted in the Bible as: “Sacrificing something for the sake of somebody else”. Ephesians 5:2 says, “Your life must be controlled by love, just as Christ loved us and gave His life for us as a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice that pleases God.” Love is much more “doing” than “feeling”. Love is like a coin with two sides. The one side cannot go without the other side.

When we talk about the feelings, words like “compassion, empathy (feeling with) and sympathy (feeling for)” come to mind. Yet, love is often described with words such as “desire, lust and physical passion”. Owing to this emphasis on the negative emotional words of love, people have lost the capability to truly love in word and in deed.

Love in action is love that sacrifices. The other side of the “love coin” entails action. Action means that you do not only hear “I love you”, but it is visible and clear in the way that another treats you. Often the way I feel (my attitude) towards others determines how I treat them. For my friend I am willing to sacrifice, but I will not make sacrifices for those whom I do not like.

Unconditional love is therefore the ability to balance how I feel about somebody with how I behave towards him or her. True love is the ability to treat people with dignity irrespective of how I feel about that person. When I am offended it becomes very difficult to treat that person with dignity because I do not feel like it. On the other hand, unconditional love does not allow feelings to determine actions.

Love should never be limited to a certain time of the year. Love must be actions that are shown throughout the year. My actions of love should not be determined by the fact that others treat me well. The more I sacrifice the stronger the positive feeling of compassion and empathy will become. At the same time the stronger the feelings of compassion and empathy grows; the more visible love will become in my actions.

Let’s not wait for others to do good (express love) to us. Be the starting point in showing love through your actions. Do not allow negative feelings of others to determine you showing love.

Love your neighbours as you would love yourself.

Do (express love) unto others as you would like them to do (express) unto you.
armed forces day in pictures
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The South African National Defence Force is a pillar in the reactive physical campaign being fought against poaching on the ground and in the skies. We also engage in proactive educational campaigns to spread awareness about the intrinsic value of this magnificent animal.

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