

The awareness issues will be cascaded down to izinduna and local villages. Izinduna are the ones who will decide on whether events go ahead after consulting with the relevant chiefs

**INKOSI PHATHISIZWE CHILIZA**  
Chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal House of Traditional Leaders



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#### COVID-19: SHOPS WARNED NOT TO HIKE PRICES

This week, the government announced that those retailers who are found guilty of increasing the price of essential goods by more than the increases in the cost to produce these products during the pandemic, could face a hefty fine as well as possible imprisonment. | IOL

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METRO

■ COVID-19

# Ramaphosa 'is not God'

*Church leader vows to defy gathering restriction over Easter in wake of king adhering to president's order*

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WHILE King Goodwill Zwelithini fully supports President Cyril Ramaphosa's prohibition on gatherings of more than 100 people as a means to curb the spread of coronavirus, a religious group is preparing to defy the ban over Easter.

In a pre-recorded message broadcast on Thursday, Zwelithini encouraged people to heed the president's Covid-19 preventative measure which he announced last Sunday.

Prince Mbonisi Zulu, the royal household spokesperson, said the king had opted not to address his people on an open platform because he understood the risks.

"The king was pleased with the president's speech and realised that organising a large imbizo would be an act of defiance," Zulu said.

"He stressed cleanliness issues, and urged government departments to provide villages with access to water. He suggested that all social gatherings be postponed until a cure was found."

However, Bheki Timothy Ngcobo, bishop of Nkanyenzi Church of Christ, was not prepared to accede to the calls by the king and the president.

Ngcobo vowed to forge ahead with plans to hold a massive church prayer session, beginning on Good Friday

(April 10) and ending on Easter Monday. He argued that Ramaphosa was "not God".

"I am still mobilising congregants to pray about bringing an end to the virus.

"We Christians believe in the power of prayer to expel the virus. Ramaphosa does not understand; he represents no congregation," he said.

Ngcobo said he was speaking on behalf of the SA Zionist Churches Association in KwaZulu-Natal, and those who judged him were not above God.

Ngcobo, also president of the Durban-based political party, African Freedom Revolution, said he was not afraid of going to prison for defying the law.

He rose in popularity within an ANC faction when he co-organised night vigils for former president Jacob Zuma, before his court appearances.

Ngcobo said his views on the church's proposed gathering had nothing to do with politics.

Sihawu Ngubane, a Zulu culture expert at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, said only funerals should be allowed and other gatherings, like weddings, be postponed.

Time limits should be placed on funerals to avoid prolonged periods of contact.

He suggested that, during funerals, precautionary measures be applied,

but without compromising on culture.

Ngubane said the decision by academic institutions to postpone graduations and classes highlighted the seriousness of the coronavirus epidemic.

He said Ramaphosa should have gone further and imposed a State of Emergency to totally prohibit social gatherings, as some people would not adhere to the restriction.

He warned that village communities could be at risk of contracting the virus when relatives visited during Easter.

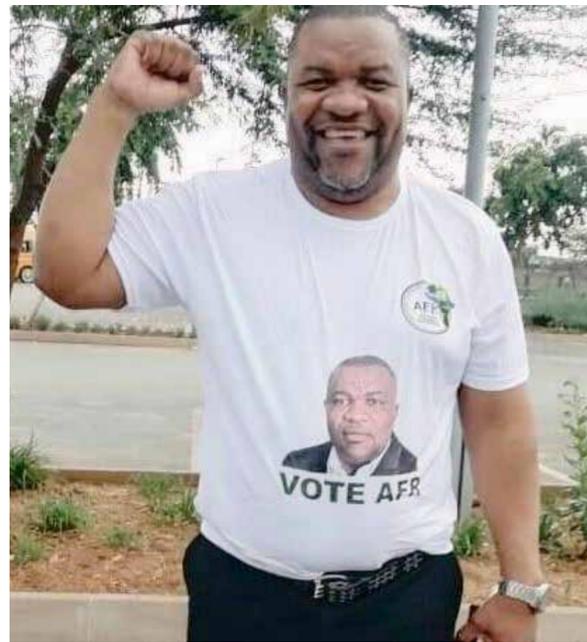
"Handshakes must stop and we should always keep a safe distance, but sometimes that can be interpreted as disrespect by some parents," he said.

He appealed to health officials to provide sanitisers and water to under-resourced communities.

Inkosi Phathisizwe Chiliza, chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal House of Traditional Leaders, said he supported the postponement of traditional weddings in rural communities, especially in areas with water challenges.

He said mourners at funerals should be divided into groups not exceeding 100.

"The awareness issues will be cascaded down to izinduna and local villages. Izinduna are the ones who will decide on whether events go ahead after consulting with the relevant chiefs," Chiliza said.



**BISHOP Bheki Ngcobo** has drawn flak for vowing to defy the Covid-19 restriction. | Facebook

## The Brief



### ICE YACHTERS BRAVE THE CORONAVIRUS AND THE ICY RUSSIAN COLD

WITH the coronavirus bringing most of the sports world to a standstill, ice yachters from around the world still gathered on Russia's Lake Baikal for the DN Ice Sailing Week where ice yachters on Thursday (March 19) braved not only the virus, but also the frigid Siberian cold as they glided across the frozen lake. Ice yachts use sails and glide across frozen lakes and can reach speeds of up to 100 kilometers per hour (62mph), but this year racers say snowy conditions on the ice have slowed them down a bit as sailing into "snow pies" can send the sleighs off course. The race here is open to the public and anyone suited up with the expensive gear and gumption to brave the harsh weather conditions and strong, icy winds. Many ice yachters say they love their sport for the feeling of freedom they get as they glide over the ice of frozen lakes. Ice yachts have been used in Russia since the 17th century when it was primarily used for winter fishing. | Reuters

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**Dr Sibongiseni Mkhize**, author of *A political biography of Selby Msimang*

**A**mong the big winners at the 5th Annual Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) Awards 2020 was Dr Sibongiseni Mkhize. His book titled *Principle and Pragmatism in the Liberation Struggle: A Political Biography of Selby Msimang*, was a joint winner in the non-fiction (Biography) category at the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences Awards ceremony held on 12 March at Constitution Hill.

The annual Humanities Awards, hosted by the National Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIHSS), celebrate the best work of creators and scholars from diverse backgrounds in HSS, and form part of a network of events and programs that highlight the strides, needs, and challenges of HSS disciplines. "Over five years, the NIHSS has seen an increase in biographical book submissions. With the passage of time comes a greater examination of the influence of the past on the present to help us better navigate the future. South Africa has many unsung heroes who were pioneers of the liberation struggle, and it is fascinating to read of their trials and courageous activism," says Prof Sarah Mosoetsa, NIHSS CEO.

The joint winner book about Selby Msimang shares the spoils with Professor Brian Willan for his book titled *Sol Plaatje: A life of Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje 1876-1932*.

Professor Willan is a visiting scholar at the Sol Plaatje University in Kimberley, Northern Cape.

Dr Mkhize's book is a biography of Selby Msimang, who worked as a clerk for ANC founder Dr Pixley Isaka ka Seme.

The book began its life as a doctoral thesis that Mkhize was completing at the University of the

## Great work is afoot to tell our story - by us

Witwatersrand in 2015.

"Selby Msimang worked as Pixley Ka Isaka Seme's legal clerk from around 1911 until the time of the First World War."

"I have always been fascinated by the history of Pietermaritzburg and its surrounding areas. This was inspired by the fact that the city was my main point of reference when I was growing up in Impendle, in the Natal midlands. When I relocated to Edendale in 1985, Pietermaritzburg played an important role in my transition from a rural to an urbanised view of life. For the people of Impendle, approximately 80 kilometres away, the city was their main urban centre in which they engaged in economic activities. Many young men and women dreamed of one day finding a job in some of the factories in Pietermaritzburg, as well as in the railways and the municipality. In this city, I was introduced to the complex political dynamics of the mid-1980s, especially the contestation for political space between the ANC-aligned United Democratic Front (UDF) and Inkatha, and began to appreciate the nexus connecting industrialisation, urban housing, political mobilisation and the migrant labour system."

"My decision to do research on the history of Pietermaritzburg and some of its prominent people was influenced by what I observed as a

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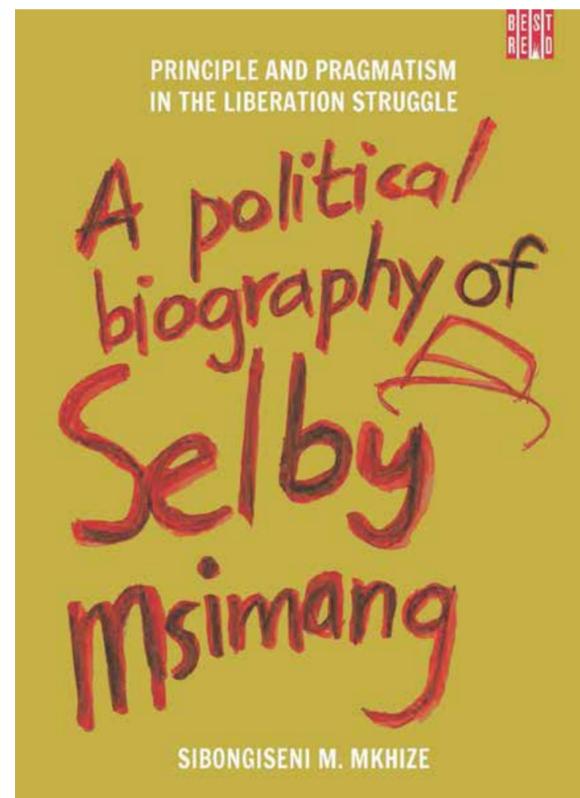
neglect of the city's history among historians in favour of Durban. From the 1960s, academic works by Maynard Swanson, Paul La Hausse, Paul Maylam, Iain Edwards and Tim Nuttall placed Durban in the spotlight while no similar efforts were made towards writing about Pietermaritzburg. Some academic works on Pietermaritzburg that emerged during the 1980s and 1990s, particularly Sheila Meintjes' thesis on Edendale's class formation and Graham Dominy's thesis on the military garrison, tended to focus on the nineteenth century colonial history and avoided the complex politics of the twentieth century. In order to contribute to the existing scholarship on Pietermaritzburg, I decided to research the history of political mobilisation in

Pietermaritzburg, with particular focus on the twentieth century. My aim was to complement earlier works by Debbie Bonnin and Ngqabutho Bhebe that focussed on selected aspects of the history of the Natal Midlands. It was while conducting research for my MA thesis that I encountered Selby Msimang's name and this was in relation to his relationship with A.W.G. Champion, and the fact that he resigned during the ANC's 'Defiance' Campaign in June 1952."

"The genesis of this thesis can be traced to a period in the late 1980s when I embarked on a journey to understand the socio-economic configuration of Edendale, especially the petty bourgeois, class-conscious people of Georgetown in comparison to the rest of the Greater Edendale area, a vast settlement incorporating mainly working class areas such as Machibisa, Dambuza, Sinathing and Pata. Many of the wattle and daub houses in these areas were rented from or built on land purchased from prominent Georgetown families such as the Minis and Msimangs. Often, in conversations about Edendale the names of the Mini and Msimang families came up, particularly in relation to land ownership and businesses. One of the beer halls that were destroyed during the August 1985 stay-away belonged to chief Lawrence Mini. It was often said that during the 1970s he used to hold a 'tribal court' at his homestead, and those found guilty were fined or received lashes."

"Some pieces of the puzzle began to fall into place when, in 1988, at the height of political violence in the Natal Midlands, I attended to Amakholwa High School, whose foundation stone proudly stated that it was built by the Amakholwa 'tribe' and opened by Chief L. S. B. Mini. I became curious about who the Amakholwa 'tribe' were. I knew that Mini was at some point a chief of Edendale. That on its own intrigued me because I grew up in a traditional community of KwaNxamalala in Impendle, and had my own preconceptions about the configuration of a tribal community. I struggled to understand how an urban community consisting mainly of landowners and oscillating migrant workers could have a chief."

"My interest was whetted further by my high school principal's constant remarks about the kholwa identity, mainly in relation to the land on which the school was built and why the descendants of the nineteenth century black Christian elite were so proud of their identity. It took me a long time to understand how the



amakholwa community came into being, and why there was a class schism between the landowners of Georgetown and the general population of Edendale extension. The reference to Edendale as 'umuzi wamakholwa' - the village of the believers - which I first came across in 1985 when I read E. H. A. Made's Indlalifa yase Harrisdale, began to make sense. I began to understand why so many houses and businesses were owned by the Mini, Seoka, Msimang families and why many of the doctors, lawyers, nurses, teachers and school inspectors lived in Georgetown. Unlike the rest of the Edendale, its streets and schools had English names."

He is clearly immersed in the character of his subject: "Out of the missionary melting pot of Edendale emerged the protagonist of this thesis, Henry Selby Msimang, also known as uNkonkawefusi, whose 70 year political career was characterised by a fair degree of social, economic, political and geographical mobility."

Dr Mkhize says Selby Msimang's elder brother, William Richard Msimang, was one of the overseas-educated lawyers who were instrumental in the formation of the SANNC. "Both Selby and William Richard worked closely with Sol Plaatje to document the hardships caused by the 1913 Natives Land Act as well to coordinate protest against the legislation."