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The official newsletter of the SA Irish Regiment

Nationwide Memorials for the battle of Delville Wood

Written by Chris Szabo, Sunday, 19 July 2015

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF), international organisations, embassies and veterans organisations have remembered the biggest single loss in any action by a South African military unit, that at Delville Wood, part of the Somme Offensive, in World War I.

Memorials were held on July 12 in Durban and Port Elizabeth, while the main events took place in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Pretoria on July 19. The Pretoria event, held annually at the foot of the SA Scottish Statue in Burgers Park, was opened by Master of Ceremonies, Major Tim Lane of the Pretoria Highlanders. He recited the Canadian war poet Lieutenant Colonel John McCrea's evocative work, "In Flanders Fields", likely to send a shudder down many a spine, as a short quotation shows:

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
 Between the crosses, row on row,
 That mark our place; and in the sky
 The larks, still bravely singing, fly
 Scarce heard amid the guns below.



The Pretoria Highlanders also provided the sentries for the occasion.

The memorial, showing a Highlander in full battle dress, is based on the memorial in Killin in Scotland by Alexander Carrick, a famous Scottish sculptor and WWI veteran. In 1923, the South African Scottish Regimental Association commissioned him to create a similar statue. He made a copy in larger scale, changing only the cap badge and certain items of equipment including the bayonet which were specific to the South African soldiers.

The Delville Wood battle lasted from 15 to 20 July, 1916, cost the 1st South African Brigade, made up largely of local "Scottish" units, the highest losses ever suffered by a South African unit. Of 3 153 men, 121 officers and 3 032 other ranks, 1080 were dead and 1735 were wounded with only 338 soldiers physically uninjured. At Roll call on 21 July only 29 Officers and 751 other ranks were able to answer the roll.

These losses have never been equalled in either of the two World Wars or other more recent conflicts. Only the Special Forces have come close to their losses.

The Department of Military Veterans, the four Arms of Service of the SANDF, military attaches from the UK, France, Britain and Holland as well as a large number of veterans organisations, including the MOTHS, SA Legion, SAAF Association and many others, as well as the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) laid wreaths to the traditional pipers' lament. The piper was supplied by the South African Military Health Service (SAMS).

Memorial services were also held in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

2016 is the Centenary year for the battle and some government participation is expected on the day as well as visits by veterans organisations at the Delville Wood Memorial and at Ypres in Belgium.

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From the Editor

From: The Editor

We were saddened to hear of the passing of our comrades and brothers Rfn. N.S. Makhubela and Sgt. M.T. Buthelezi. Both were longstanding members of the Regiment and they will be missed. Our condolences go out to their families.

The editorial staff wants to congratulate Sgt. Daniels on his selection to participate in the international military skills competition there in Bulgaria.

We want to wish Bravo Company good luck on their departure to the border area for their tour of duty. Make us proud guys.

Remember: Contributions towards “The Shamrock” can also be emailed to irish.regiment@gmail.com

Remember: Newsletters can be downloaded from the internet. Go to www.sairish.webs.com to download Regimental newsletters and copies of the latest SA Soldier magazines in PDF format. You can also listen to the Regimental march on our website.

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From the OC’s Desk

By: Lt Col. M.A. Bennett

Since the last newsletter, as a Regiment have gone through times of great sadness at the loss of old friends and comrades. We have also had great rejoicing in the triumphs of the Regiment.

We as a Regiment were saddened by the loss of our comrades and brothers Rfn. N.S. Makhubela and Sgt. M.T. Buthelezi. Both had been members of the Regiment for many years and both were veterans of several operations. Their loss was a heavy blow to the Regiment and they will be missed by their Regimental family.

We are very proud of the hard work and preparation of Bravo Company, that have finalised their deployment preparations.

We are also very proud of Sgt. Daniels who was chosen to participate in the international military skills competition there in Bulgaria where he did very well. Congratulations, you kept the SA Irish flag flying high.

To all our members not deploying to the border I want to remind that there is still a lot of work to be done in preparation for more deployments next year. Although we are headed for the end of the year, we can not afford to slow the pace not. I expect the same dedication and commitment that everyone showed during the preparation of Bravo Company.

- Faugh a Ballagh!
Lt Col. M.A. Bennett
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News from the SANDF – Gallantry in Sudan.

Written by defenceWeb

A platoon of South African soldiers from 8 South African Infantry Battalion will be cited for gallantry after being accosted by heavily armed militia in Darfur, Sudan.

On 18 August a team of 37 South African National Defence Force (SANDF) members were escorting an United Nations team on a long range patrol to north of the South African Company Operating Base (COB), Mellit in the Darfur Region of Sudan as part of their deployment with the Unamid peacekeeping mission in the region. The patrol comprised four Mamba Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs), one Recovery Vehicle and two Land Cruisers. The patrol was to a small village, called Selibilo, 51km north of the base. The team was led by Lieutenant Phiri, a Platoon Commander from 8 South African Infantry Battalion.

On the way back to the COB the team was ambushed by an armed group and a stand-off ensued, SANDF Joint Operations said in a statement. As the protection element of the patrol had passed the ambush point, this allowed the militia to stop the second group behind them. The SANDF said that the

militia were aiming an anti-tank weapon and 12.7 mm machineguns at them and had further militia members deployed on a hillside nearby.

The militia fighters then ordered the Section Commander to get out of his vehicle while pointing a weapon at him. Two fighters jumped onto one of the APCs, with one pointing a weapon at the SANDF light machine gun (LMG) gunner whilst a second armed man removed the LMG gunner from the vehicle. They demanded to see the Platoon Commander and when he arrived they ordered him to surrender and give them all their weapons otherwise they would kill everyone. “However, the Platoon Commander, Lt Phiri refused,” the SANDF said.

After two hours of negotiations to return the 7.62mm machinegun, the militia told Phiri that his members were surrounded by eight vehicles from a southerly direction and six others from a northerly direction but Phiri still refused to hand over anything. The militia then took firing positions, prompting Phiri to deploy his troops on the ground in a battle formation. He informed his troops that they would move out of the area with all vehicles, walking alongside the vehicles irrespective of the obstruction by the militia members.

Before the patrol started moving out of the danger area on foot, one of the militia members punctured the rear tyre of one of the UN Land Cruisers. One of the SANDF members observed this and pushed him away from the vehicle, all the while with automatic weapons being pointed at him. Phiri instructed the recovery vehicle to come forward and tow the UN vehicle.

The SANDF Mambas were able to move forward with the troops alongside, with weapons being pointed in both directions. “They safely moved out of the danger area and proceeded back to the base after mounting the vehicles one kilometre from the danger zone. The members who stood their ground in the face of great danger will be cited for their deed of bravery,” the SANDF statement concluded.

Around 2 000 SANDF personnel are currently taking part in peacekeeping operations, as South Africa increases its role in regional conflict resolution and peacekeeping efforts. SANDF troops are deployed in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The SANDF has more than 800 troops deployed in Sudan with the African Union and United Nations as part of Unamid (their joint operation in Darfur).

The SANDF has recorded several incidences in Sudan – for instance, on 11 April 2010, four South African UN Police personnel were attacked in South Darfur and abducted and two vehicles stolen. They were released sixteen days later. On 26 August 2010 the South African contingent had one assault rifle stolen.

An attack on a Unamid patrol in North Darfur on 12 November 2012 killed one South African; an attack on a Unamid patrol on 17 October 2012 killed one South African in North Darfur; and an attack on a South African Unamid patrol in North Darfur on 29 October 2014 injured three. The ambush was on a section dispatched from the South African battalion base to collect water.

Earlier this year President Jacob Zuma, as commander-in-chief of the SANDF, extended the South African deployment in Darfur by another 12 months. Keeping the 850 soldiers in Sudan until March 31 next year will cost R369,079,895 for the 12 months.

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Regimental Events

By: The Editor

Date classified – Deployment to the border areas. Destination of deployment to be confirmed by higher HQ.

7 November - Freedom Regiments Parade

8 November - JHB Remembrance Parade – JHB Cenotaph

22 November - Sidi Rezegh Commemoration Parade

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Did you know?

By: The editor

Article From: SOLDIERS WITHOUT REWARD: Africans in South Africa's Wars by J S Mohlamme

The one highest awards gained by a South African soldier in the Second World War was the DCM (Distinguished Conduct Medal) awarded to a stretcher-bearer, Lucas Majozi (1916-1969).

The DCM was the second highest British award for gallantry after the Victoria Cross. It was awarded to Lucas Majozi for the great bravery that he displayed during the epic battle of El Alamein which commenced on 23 October 1942 when the British 8th Army under command of General B L Montgomery attacked the German/Italian forces under command of Field Marshal Erwin Rommel.

The 1st South African Division played a spearhead role. It had to breach the German minefield which had been sown with more than half a million mines.

The 1/2 FFB, soon after the battle began, was pinned down in the minefield by German machine gun and artillery fire. The regiment suffered very severe casualties. Throughout the night of 23 October, the stretcher-bearers worked under heavy enemy fire, tending to the wounded and evacuating them from the battlefield.

For the purpose of this article, the citation given to Lucas Majozi, NMC, for the DCM is given below:
No N 17525 Cpl Lucas Majozi, NMC, a Zulu from Zastron, Orange Free State att. FFB - Distinguished Conduct Medal.

The citation to the Award says:
'On the night of October 23-24, Majozi accompanied his company into action as a stretcher-bearer. In the later stages of the action when he was within 100 yards of the enemy and under heavy fire, he thought nothing of his personal safety and continued to evacuate casualties assisted by co-bearers. He was then wounded by shrapnel, but he continued evacuating the wounded. Told by a medical corporal to go back to the regimental aid post, he replied

that there were many wounded men still in the minefield.

He went back, and with the assistance of other stretcher-bearers, he brought back more wounded. After his co-bearer had become a casualty, he did not waver, but carried wounded men back alone on his back to the aid post. When he was eventually told by the Company Commander to go back, he smilingly refused and remained on duty, working incessantly till he collapsed next morning through sheer exhaustion, stiffness, and loss of blood. His extreme devotion to duty and gallant conduct under continuous enemy fire throughout the night saved the lives of many wounded men who would otherwise have died through loss of blood or possible further wounds.'

At a parade in Egypt after the battle, the commander of the 1st South African Division, Major-General Daniel Hermanus Pienaar (popularly known as Dan Pienaar) said of Lucas Majozi: *'This soldier did most magnificent and brave things. With a number of bullets in his body he returned time after time into a veritable hell of machine gun fire to pull out wounded men. He is a man of whom South Africa can well be proud. He is a credit to his country.'*

After the war, Majozi returned to the town of his birth, Zastron. In 1948 he joined the South African Police (SAP), attaining the rank of sergeant. He died in 1969. The South African National Museum of Military History is in possession of both his portrait (by the famous artist, Neville Lewis) and his medal group.

We salute his courage. Faugh a Ballagh!
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From the Pipes and Drums.

By: The Pipe Major

S A Irish Regiment Pipes & Drums 2015 Calendar of Events:

- 26/09/2015 : South African Solo Drumming Championships
- 03/10/2015 : George Ackroyd Challenge Solo Piping Contest (SPSW)
- 07/11/2015 : Freedom regiments parade

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- 08/11/2015 : Remembrance day parade
- 22/11.2015 : Sidi Rezegh Parade

Faugh a Ballagh!

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News from the SANDF – Navy has plans in place to recruit sailors for new patrol vessels.

Written by Kim Helfrich

With seven new hulls coming its way over the next five to six years, the SA Navy is keeping its cards close to the chest on personnel requirements for the new acquisitions.

Armscor will start evaluating tenders for a new hydrographic vessel to replace the ageing SAS Protea at the end of next month. June 30 is also still currently the closing date for tenders for three offshore and three inshore patrol vessels for the maritime arm of service of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF).

When the new patrol vessels come into service they will need ship’s companies of around the 45 mark (offshore) and 35 for the smaller inshore platforms. Each platform will also accommodate at least a Maritime Reaction Squadron section and a SA Military Health Service (SAMHS) team when at sea.

In seagoing terms that means the Navy will have to recruit and train in the region of 300 sailors for the patrol vessels.

This is not seen as an insurmountable obstacle for the Navy, already hamstrung in many areas of proficiency and skills.

Rear Admiral Sagaren Pillay, Director Maritime Strategy at Navy headquarters in Pretoria, said: “There is a clearly formulated personnel plan that will address the manning of future acquisitions”.

He also pointed out regular targeted recruiting drives are held and that the Navy also recruits from its military skills development (MSD) intakes. This year the maritime arm of service was

allocated 214 of these volunteers, the second highest but still a long way off the 1,574 who find themselves in various SA Army formations.

The new patrol vessels will have Durban as their home port. The naval infrastructure there is in the process of being upgraded to that of a naval base, having been downgraded to a naval station when the then Minister Class strikecraft were taken out of service. Three of those platforms have been refurbished and currently provide the Navy with its only offshore patrol capacity with the Valour Class frigates the sharp end as far as blue water capability is concerned.

The SA Navy is also receiving two harbour tugs.

As of March 31 last year, the Navy had 7,702 personnel on strength, against a planned figure of 7,306. It is the second smallest arm of service in the SANDF after the SA Military Health Services.

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News from the SANDF – Youth leadership development programme underway at 3 SA Infantry Battalion.

Written by defenceweb

Over 600 young South Africans are currently at 3 SA Infantry Battalion in Kimberley as part of the youth leadership development programme run by the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform.

The students initially assembled at Thaba Nchu early April for intake and other administrative tasks after which they were moved to the Northern Cape capital.

Since arriving in Kimberley, the 633 strong group has been going through their various programmes with the overall aim of empowering them via discipline, entrepreneurial skills as well as social development and upliftment skills. These are integral to the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform’s youth leadership development programme. Overall and

in conjunction with the SANDF, the programme aims to build character by focussing on leadership, discipline, teamwork, volunteerism and patriotism.

The use of 3 SAI facilities is not the first time a military base has been a temporary home and learning base of young people who signed up for the initiative managed by Minister Gugile Nkwinti. Similar courses have been presented at the SA Navy Academy in Saldanha and the SA Army’s De Brug training area outside Bloemfontein. The SANDF, under previous Defence Minister Lindiwe Sisulu, committed to assisting the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform with its National Rural Youth Service Corps (Narysec).

While at 3 SAI the students receive instruction in fields ranging from civic education through to health and safety, spiritual counselling (by the SANDF Chaplain Services), HIV awareness, effective communication, community project management as well as leadership training.

The Kimberley group will have their passing out parade on June 12 after which they will find themselves deployed to working environments, in either the public or private sector, to further sharpen their “employability skills”, an SANDF spokesman said. Some will find themselves interned to the sponsor department.

Since it started five years ago Narysec has had more than 4 000 young people attend its courses, the majority of which are staged at SANDF bases where qualified instructors supervise all training. Medicals are conducted before training starts by SA Military Health Services to ensure students are fit for the physical rigours of the course.

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News from the SANDF – Mankayi is new 43 SA Brigade GOC.

Written by Kim Helfrich

Brigadier General Xolani Mankayi has been appointed General Officer Commanding 43 SA Brigade.

He takes over from Major General Lawrence Smith who is now SA Army Deputy Chief.

Mankayi was born in East London and did basic military training in Angola as well as a number of courses in the then USSR, Yugoslavia, the then German Democratic Republic and Bulgaria. He served in a number of positions in MK including as personal staff officer to Joe Modise, the first Minister of Defence in a democratic South Africa, and Chris Hani. This was when they were MK commanders and chiefs of staff.

Highlights of his career in the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) include being second in command and then Officer Commanding 12 SA Infantry Battalion. This was followed by a stint as OC of Infantry School before he became the first South African officer to be appointed as a contingent commander. This was the Africa Mission in Burundi (AMIB).

Mankayi has completed both the Senior Command and Staff Course (2000) and the Executive National Security Programme (2005). He attended a senior officer's peace support operational planner learning programme in Kenya in 2002 as the sole SANDF representative.

Prior to taking over command of 43 SA Brigade headquarters he was Infantry Formation Chief of Staff.

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News from the SANDF – The Navy's simulation centre is now operational.

Written by Defenceweb

The SA Navy is the proud owner/operator of a state-of-the-art simulation centre. It was officially taken into service at SAS Simonsberg, the Navy's maritime warfare training centre.

The centre is the result of a joint venture with industry to enhance naval training using the latest in technology. According to the South African Navy, the objective is to enable sailors to gain the necessary practical experience and elevated ability to execute simulated tasks, naval operations and exercises up to and in high risk environments. Integrated training of this type is part of the Navy's vision and mission "to win at sea" and "to remain unchallenged at sea".

Equipment for the simulator was provided by Cybicom Atlas Defence (CAD) and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) with facilities compliments of the maritime arm of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF). Training will, in addition to sharpening the skills of sailors, provide feedback to the suppliers. This will allow for fitted equipment to be further

upgraded.

Dave Viljoen, managing director of Cybicom, showed Chief of the SA Navy Vice Admiral Mosuwa Hlongwane, exactly how the simulation centre is put together following the recent official opening ceremony.

The centre has four sections: a naval bridge simulator display designed to facilitate training in safe vessel navigation and naval operations; a helicopter similar display which has the main platform, flight control and pilot's seat; a helicopter flight deck trainer display designed to provide training for flight deck controllers and maritime rotary-wing pilots; and a PC-based submarine trainer display. This is a tool to supplement training of the onboard sensor and weapons systems for commanders and crews of the Navy's Heroine Class Type 209 submarines.

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News from the SANDF – Fallen SA soldiers remembered.

Written by SANews

Commitment to sustain peace and stability in South Africa was the order of the day on Sunday, 31 May, during the Annual Memorial Services held at Freedom Park and Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria.

The memorial services event is part of the commemoration of soldiers who fought for freedom and humanity of South Africa and was attended by Defence and Military Veterans Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, reports SA News.

The Minister said she had a first time experience of an event of this nature and also participated in laying the wreath during the ceremony at Voortrekker Monument's South African Defence Force (SADF) Wall of Remembrance.

The Minister said she felt privileged to have commemorated the lives of veterans and heroes who lost their lives in defence of the country.



“It was a mixture of emotions as I watched people laying their wreaths. I am human, I am a mother... I could feel the pain. On the other hand it actually hit me really hard to realise that it is not only just the Military Veterans of the non-statutory forces but I am a Minister for all Military Veterans, both who were in the statutory forces and those in non-statutory forces,” she said.

She described the ceremony as dignified, and symbolising the rainbow nation and South Africa’s reconciliation. The minister said the event also made her realise even more the importance of having a Heroes Acre in South Africa as many heroes “are still out there in the soil of other countries”.

It was important for every human being to remind themselves of their origins and history and commemorate that.

In the morning of the memorial services, the programme started at the Isivivane in Freedom Park, to allow dignitaries to lay wreaths for fallen heroes of any form of struggle that South Africa ever experienced.

Freedom Park Acting CEO Jane Mufamadi explained Isivivane as a symbolic resting space for those who sacrificed their lives for freedom and humanity. People who visit the place take off their shoes as it is considered sacred.

There are eleven boulders erected in a form of a circle at the Isivivane, representing all nine provinces of South Africa, another one for the nation and the last represents the international community.

Mufamadi said the international community is represented at the Isivivane because South Africa recognises the support it received from the international community to liberate the country.

“We call Isivivane a sacred place because after the boulders were donated from the provinces, we invited religious leaders of diverse faith based organisations that are formally recognised in South Africa, to come

together to pray in the space and imbue it with a sense of spirituality,” she said.

She said the nature of Isivivane makes it appropriate to hold memorial services and lay wreaths in a form of a ceremony.

“The significance of today’s ceremony is having members of liberation formations, former sowing enemies, members of SADF and Veterans coming together to recommit to building peace and stability in South Africa,” she said.

She said the ceremony also contributes to opening reconciliation and social cohesion dialogues.

Construction of Freedom Park was completed in 2013, and Mufamadi said more people, including the international community, are starting to show interest in visiting the park and learn about the heritage and history of the country.

“To date, we have about 85 000 names on the wall that are inscribed for people who died for freedom and humanity. But we don’t only focus on the liberation struggle, we acknowledge the eight conflicts that shape the historical consciousness of South Africa because there are different struggles that our people went through, like colonial wars, World War I and II, the South African war— which included black people who were not recognised before,” she said.

The first Deputy President of South African National Military Veterans’ Association (SANMVA), Major General Gert Opperman, said he was grateful that the annual memorial service initiative of this nature was established three years ago and the event is growing.

“For me it signifies that we are more and more aware of the need to come together and to remember the past together, to talk about differences and get beyond those differences that caused a war amongst us.

“We were enemies but we got beyond that and work towards a better future for our country,” he said.

Opperman said it was very important to involve the international community in the annual commemoration, and this year five ambassadors from foreign countries were part of the service, including Zambia, Cuba, Serbia, Belgium and Denmark.

He said as much as it is important to always remember fallen heroes and commemorate their lives, it is vital to note that South Africans are collectively working together for a better life of the country.

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News from the SANDF – New equipment trickling in for the SA Army.

Written by Guy Martin

The South African Army is slowly but surely getting new equipment, from armoured vehicles to field kitchens as it grapples with the challenge of outdated equipment.

Chief of the South African Army, Lieutenant General Vusimuzi Masondo, told journalists at a media breakfast on 11 June that “we have been grappling with the challenge of outdated equipment and have put measures in place to address this issue. We continue to make good progress on acquisition of state-of-the-art equipment for the landward forces to replace the aging equipment that at times hampers our operational effectiveness and hinders the optimal attainment of our objectives.

“The Air Defence Artillery Formation took delivery of the Starstreak Very Short Range Air Defence Missile System from our defence industry late last year to complement the 23 mm and the 35 mm ground-based anti-aircraft guns, providing the SA Army with a highly effective static ground-based air defence capability to be employed as a defensive asset for the SA Army critical installations.

“This corps will also take delivery of an upgraded battery fire control post, known as the Thutlwa, that provides air defence assets with a 120 km radius radar coverage. The South African Air

Defence Artillery Formation and the South African Infantry Formation with its Badger infantry fighting vehicle, are both undergoing extensive equipment renewal that the Defence Review recommended as one of the identified milestones that needs to be addressed,” Masondo said.

A contract was placed with Denel Land Systems in September 2013 for 238 Badger vehicles in five variants, which will enter service by 2022 and partially replace the Ratel fleet, which is three decades old.

“Of course, there are other equipment renewal projects we are involved in,” such as the upgrade of the Gecko tactical vehicles in 2013; the Mamba upgrade in 2014 and the 40 mm automatic grenade launcher upgrade in 2014, according to Masondo.

Other refurbishment and improvement work on SA Army equipment has in the last several years seen R4 assault rifles upgraded (under the African Warrior programme) and upgrades to the Rooikat armoured vehicle, Olifant main battle tank and SS-77 7.62 mm machinegun.

Masondo told defenceWeb that several mission equipment projects are underway including the acquisition of a water purification system which should be commissioned in 2019; the acquisition of new engineering vehicles, which should arrive by 2016, and new

portable mine detectors by 2016 under Project Pirate. New field kitchens under Project Teamster should enter service by 2017/18.

In addition to acquiring new hardware, the Army is also maintaining and bringing to life some of its ageing and unserviceable equipment that needs urgent attention. “Members of the Cuban Defence Force are in South Africa, as part of a partnership and bi-lateral military-to-military agreement to bring expertise and capacity to our shores and share ideas with our technical services personnel that would see efforts injected into the repair and maintenance of our fleet of ageing vehicles,” Masondo said.

“This intervention adds to our efforts to maintain the equipment at our disposal at optimal operational standards that ensures that our soldiers are able to meet their operational objectives, thus supporting our mandate.

“This ongoing execution of Project Thusano meant to maintain and repair our operational vehicles is beginning to yield results that would save the country millions of rands, that would have otherwise been spent procuring external service providers to maintain our vehicles. What it also brings with it is the skills capital that our technical service personnel gains from their Cuban counterparts.”

Masondo said that a huge part of the

budget has been going to maintaining the Army’s vehicles, yet the Army is struggling to maintain serviceability and availability of its vehicles, hence the utilisation of Cuban skills. The South African Army has sent a group of engineers to Cuba for training.

“We have also made inroads on repairing and improving some of our facilities that have been in disrepair to ensure the comfort and safety of our soldiers by fast-tracking renovations on a number of sites across the country. A total of 22 projects in conjunction with the Department of Public Works have been completed. The projects involve renovations of buildings, maintenance of mechanical and electrical infrastructure and the erecting of security installations,” Masondo said.

Although the Army has numerous acquisition projects underway, some have been deferred, such as Projects Sepula and Vistula, aimed at replacing the Army’s light armoured vehicle and cargo truck fleets. The deferment is due to the fact that the Defence Force is looking at using the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) to assist with the renewal of these fleets.

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News from the SANDF – SANDF reportedly looking for more white recruits.

Written by defenceWeb

The Department of Defence (DoD) apparently plans to reverse racial quotas in the recruitment process so more whites and fewer blacks will be in uniform.

The latest South African Survey by the SA Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) shows the South African military plans to employ more whites and fewer blacks, reports Johannesburg daily The Times.

The defence force admits there is a shortage of white personnel but said recruitment drives are not based on racial quotas.



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The SAIRR survey shows the DoD's employment equity targets are changing with its black employment target dropping from the current 72% to 65%; Coloured employment also drops from 13% to 10%; Indian employment will remain at 1%: and the target for whites will increase from 14% to 24%.

The Institute's figures are based on information contained in the defence department's annual report and on its own calculations.

Stats SA's 2015 mid-year population estimates show blacks represent 80% of the population, coloureds 8.8%, whites 8.2% and Indians 2.4%.

Research undertaken by the SAIRR shows there are huge numbers of vacancies in the military's land and air defence, medical, and defence intelligence services.

According to the paper the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) currently has 57 141 black, 10 991 white, 10 099 coloured and 916 Indian members.

SAIRR researcher Kerwin Lebone said the organisation had repeatedly asked the SANDF to explain its recruitment plans but to no avail.

"We believe a skills shortage - especially of members able to operate equipment bought during the arms deal and subsequent acquisitions - is the reason," he said.

"There are not enough skilled people in the defence force. It's no secret equipment is lying around because no one can operate it. Look at the air force and its grounded fighter jets, which can't be flown because there are hardly any pilots."

Lebone told the paper when the defence force started to get rid of whites to bring it into conformity with national demographics it could not have foreseen that new equipment would need people with experience or skills.

"Because of this, one of the things the defence force is doing is hiring skilled personnel. It takes time to train people."

Lebone added: "The principles of black economic empowerment must be weighed against what's important for the country."

SA National Defence Union (Sandu) national secretary Pikkie Greeff said the military found itself in this position because "when they started awarding exit packages they let go too many of the racial groupings they now want to increase".

Defence Department spokesman Sipiwe Dlamini admitted there was a shortage of full-time white members but denied there were plans to change racial quotas.

"In terms of the 2014 South African Defence Review, the department's personnel system must adhere to the principles of equity and equal opportunities.

"The SANDF's recruitment campaigns include high schools and tertiary institutions. Potential white recruits are also reached and invited to consider following a military career," he said.
oOo

News from the SANDF – SA Navy needs more than three offshore and three inshore patrol vessels – Expert.

Written by Guy Martin

Although a welcome boost to the South African Navy and local shipbuilding industry, the six new inshore and



offshore patrol vessels being acquired under project Biro have been criticised as being too few, with an expert suggesting at least eight offshore patrol vessels are needed to adequately patrol South Africa's waters.

Defence analyst and former Defence Review committee member Helmoed Romer Heitman has suggested that three offshore patrol vessels (OPVs) are too few. "They are relatively small ships and will be limited in their ability to conduct patrols far from home without either a base or a local support arrangement, or a support ship in company. But they will be a very useful complement to the frigates," he stated.

However, when it comes to the inshore patrol vessels (IPVs), Heitman is of the opinion that "the three 60 m IPVs now envisaged as part of Biro are an embarrassing misstep by the Navy and will be an entirely pointless expenditure," because, "at 60 m they will be too large and complex to be the 'cheap and cheerful' equivalent to the old SDPs, to be used for close inshore work and more importantly to train and develop officers and ratings...At 60 m they will be too small to be really useful (the strike craft were good special operations platforms, but had the speed and the self-defence capability these vessels will lack.

"The Navy's experience with the strike craft demonstrated that 60 m is precisely the wrong hull length for SA waters: Shorter and the ride is lively but dry; longer and the ride is more comfortable and dry. At 60 m it is uncomfortable and wet, with real risk of

damage in rough seas. Remember how many of the strike craft found themselves inadvertently doing a submarine crash dive imitation in rough seas.

"What we should be doing is increasing the OPV buy to at least four now, with a target - as per all of the previous studies -

of twelve. Study of the DR [2014 Defence Review] will show that the absolute minimum number will be eight, accepting some gaps and some tasks falling to the frigates,” Heitman stated.

He suggests that the South African Navy should re-role the three refitted strike craft (and possibly a fourth) for the fast inshore patrol role as they will be able to do what the new IPVVs will be able to do and will cost much less to bring to a standard for that role.

Heitman goes on to suggest that the IPV requirement should be revisited to develop a vessel of somewhere around 30 to 40 m, “which will be cheap and simple and good enough for patrolling port environs - and ideal for training.”

The acquisition of the six IPVVs/OPVs will be a major boost to the local shipbuilding industry as 60% local content is required. All the major shipyards in South Africa are bidding for Project Biro, as well as Project Hotel, for a new hydrographic survey ship.

However, Heitman believes that “kick-starting a proper ship-building industry should be done with a substantial buy of a single class,” ideally OPVs and not IPVVs to complement the four Meko class frigates.

Prasheen Maharaj, CEO of Southern African Shipyards (SAS), told defenceWeb that in terms of economies of scale, it would be better to have six of one type rather than three of each. He said from a selfish point of view, it would be better to have larger and bigger vessels. Such an expanded project would have a greater economic impact on the local economy.

Southern African Shipyards (SAS), as the largest shipyard in South Africa, is bidding for Project Biro and is offering Vard (formerly STX) designs to meet the requirements. SAS plans to function as a prime contractor, bringing in different subcontractors and suppliers, such as Denel Integrated Systems and Maritime. If it gets the contract, it would then be able to offer the design to other customers, particularly in Africa.

Another shipyard that is bidding for Biro is Paramount Naval Systems (incorporating the military side of Nautic Africa), which is partnering with Navantia for the OPVs and with Austal for the three IPVVs. Eddie Noble, Project Director: Vessel Operations for Nautic South Africa, told defenceWeb that Austal is offering its Cape Class patrol vessels for Biro – these are currently in service with the Australian Customs and Border Protection service.

For the OPV component, Noble said that Paramount and Navantia are offering the Avante class vessel. Between 19 and 22 December 2012 the Spanish Navy’s Avante 3000 class OPV ESPS Relámpagois paid an informal visit to Cape Town.

Noble said that it was likely the IPV and OPV tenders would be awarded to different local shipyards. In addition to Paramount Naval Systems/Nautic Africa and Southern African Shipyards, the other main Biro competitor is Damen Shipyards Cape Town. Other companies interested in Biro include Germany’s Abeking & Rasmussen and China’s Poly Technologies.

Noble said that although Biro’s split orders were relatively small, they would still be a very welcome boost for the South African shipbuilding industry and would allow local companies to market the designs elsewhere in Africa. “There is a lot of opportunity elsewhere,” he said. Vessel designs for Biro could be sold across the continent and built as well as maintained in South Africa.

The six new Biro hulls are expected to be taken into service in three to four years from now and will, at least initially, work alongside the current OPVs. These are the converted Warrior Class strikecraft SAS Isaac Dyobha, SAS Galeshewe and SAS Makhanda.

“Project Biro’s expanded capacity would then enable South Africa to mount cheaper, more focused and more effective missions and operations against the threats and challenges it encounters in its maritime domain, especially illegal fishing and trafficking. This improved capacity will be of immediate and immense national benefit. Of particular interest will be the

possible impact on maritime security in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the rest of Africa and beyond,” according to Timothy Walker, Researcher, Conflict Management and Peacebuilding Division, ISS Pretoria.

“The IPVVs would patrol South Africa’s coast and territorial waters for criminal activities, while the helicopter-equipped OPVs would have the ability to operate further out into South Africa’s exclusive economic zone and the high seas.

“South Africa needs Project Biro to better police its huge maritime domain, which is 1 553 000 square kilometres in size and often labelled its ‘10th province’. Claiming sovereignty over such a large area also gives South Africa substantial international duties and obligations, as recognised and envisioned in the Defence Review. These include search and rescue, hydrography, disaster response and assistance, peace support operations and naval diplomacy,” Walker pointed out.

Armscor issued the Biro tenders on 3 December last year. The OPV acquisition has been planned for quite a number of years, initially as a concept to acquire 10 multi-mission hulls to replace the remaining Warrior-class and River-class mine hunters. The date tenders close for Project Biro has been extended to 30 September this year while Project Hotel tender bids close on 30 June.

Speaking during her recent budget vote address in the National Assembly, Defence and Military Veterans Minister Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula said: “Maritime crime and piracy in Southern African Development Community (SADC) waters has necessitated maritime patrols on our east coast, while we remain mindful of similar challenges on the west coast (of Africa)”.

The South African anti-piracy effort – Operation Copper - is a SADC one along with Mozambique and was earlier this year extended until March next year by SA National Defence Force (SANDF) Commander-in-Chief President Jacob Zuma. He indicated the deployment of 220 SANDF members

(mostly SA Navy with the SA Air Force and SA Military Health Service also contributing) would cost R127 027 773 until March 31, 2016.

Walker notes that the vessels planned for in Project Biro would free up the navy's existing small fleet of fatigued frigates from continuous patrol duties for which they were neither designed, nor purchased.

In Moscow the Minister recently gave an insight into South Africa's maritime security strategy to an international security conference. "Maritime security," she said, "is a key component of collective security, stability and peace, more so today, in a multi-polar world order. Our oceans encompass almost 70% of the earth's surface and carry more than 80% of global trade.

"All nations, whether coastal or landlocked, are to a greater or lesser extent dependent on the sea for the continued success of their economies and hence the well-being of their peoples. The freedom of nations to use the highways provided by the oceans to ply their trade to all the corners of the earth is the basis for this dependence.

"In the case of Africa, the importance of maritime trade for economic development and regional integration cannot be over-emphasised. About 90% of the total trade of our continent is seaborne. Ships remain the means to trade between continents and islands.

"Closer to home, in SADC, about 30% of the world oil supply passes through the Mozambique Channel annually. Consequently, the ability to trade, as well as the principle of the freedom of the seas, is central to any policy and planning of the security of the region.

"It was for this reason the continent and the SADC region recognised the rise in maritime insecurity around the Horn of Africa as a detriment to security of states as well as to the continent's economy. In particular, piracy and maritime crime is negatively impacting on the economies of African states connected to the Indian Ocean as well as Indian Ocean Island States whose economies depend to a great extent on tourism.

"These aspects of maritime criminality include illegal fishing, plundering of maritime resources, illegal exploitation of minerals and hydrocarbons and the trafficking/smuggling of illegal goods, weapons, people and drugs. Piracy also targets hydrocarbons and natural gas exploration and drilling at sea. There have been instances where vessels carrying gas to Indian Ocean Island States have been hijacked, significantly impacting on the supply of gas.

"The nature of SADC maritime security and the costs of piracy today call for a comprehensive approach to this global challenge of maritime piracy which entails short and long term initiatives," she told delegates to the Moscow conference.

In April last year South African Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Rusty Higgs, said that Biro was important as no country can exercise control over its maritime domain without the ability to deploy naval patrols and that the four frigates are not enough to protect South Africa's maritime domain.

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News from the SANDF – 6 000 SANDF troops deployed on internal and external missions.

Written by Guy Martin

At the moment some 6 000 South African National Defence Force (SANDF) personnel are deployed on internal and external missions, including 2 200 on peacekeeping duties, 2 200 on South Africa's borders and several hundred on Operation Fiela.

Chief of the South African Army, Lieutenant General Vusimuzi Masondo, said that at the moment a total of 18 000 troops are either deployed, being prepared for deployments or coming back from deployments.

"At the apex of our mandate is the SA Army's provision of combat-ready forces for the SANDF to deploy on continental missions in support of peace and security as well as ensuring that our borders are secured, curbing the influx of illicit goods and undocumented

persons into our country," Masondo said.

"The SA Army has to that end trained and provided a total of 2 213 members who are currently deployed in the Democratic Republic of Congo [DRC] and the Darfur Region in Sudan as part of United Nations and African Union mandated missions. The South African Army continues to support these missions with personnel during rotation intervals. 121 South African Infantry Battalion has now taken over from 5 South African Infantry Battalion in the DRC as part of the United Nations Force Intervention Brigade that is credited with neutralising M23 and continues being a stabilising force in the vast DRC.

"Our training mission in the DRC – Mission Thebe - a mission in support of the integration training of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC), has to date trained and handed over 9 000 recruits and soldiers for utilisation by the DRC," Masondo said.

"Following the attacks on foreign nationals, the SA Army provided forces to support the South African Police Service and other state agencies in stabilising the situation around hotspots in our country. As part of Operation Fiela, our soldiers in support of the South African Police Service helped apprehend a number of known criminals and undocumented persons. The majority of those arrested were South Africans with foreign nationals being a minority. The focus here was to arrest the wide-spread criminality that people were willing to commit, masquerading as protestations against the presence of foreign nationals in our communities."

Between five and six hundred soldiers were deployed at the height of Operation Fiela in support of the South African Police Service (SAPS). Masondo said that Operation Fiela has not been too taxing in terms of budget and that internal operations have not been too demanding on the South African Army. "Even though we have challenges we have been coping."

Masondo said that the defence minister in her budget vote said that another two

companies would be deployed on border protection duty as part of Operation Corona, but the minister will be engaging Treasury to find a way to fund this. At the moment there are 13 companies (around 2 000 soldiers) are currently deployed along all South Africa's landward borders – Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

The South African Air Force is currently re-establishing 10 Squadron, its unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) squadron. Masondo said that UAVs are force multipliers and looks forward to utilising them “to be more effective in our operations.”

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News from the SANDF – South Korea commemorates South African airmen.

Written by Dean Wingrin

Exactly 65 years ago to the day when North Korea attacked South Korea (25 June 1950), the embassy of the Republic of Korea held a commemoration ceremony at AFB Ysterplaat, Cape Town.

The event was to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War on the 25 June 1950 and the 62nd commemoration of the signing of the Armistice Agreement on the 27th July 1953.

When war broke out in Korea, the Union Government announced on 4 August 1950 its intention to place an all-volunteer South African Air Force (SAAF) squadron at the disposal of the United Nations.

2 Squadron, whilst equipped with Mustangs, flew 10,373 sorties and out of a total of 95 Mustangs acquired, no fewer than 74 were lost due to enemy action and accidents. Twelve Mustang pilots were killed in action, 30 missing and four wounded. A further 2,032 sorties were flown in Sabres jets, with four Sabres lost out of 22 supplied.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to South Africa, His Excellency Choi Yeon-ho, said that he would like

to “express our deepest gratitude to our heroes, the Korean War veterans, for their sacrifice and contribution.”

South Korea was eternally grateful that South Africa joined the United Nations forces and that “the young South African pilots and ground crew came to Korea to save the South Koreans from the communist attack.”

Of the approximately 816 Airforce members that went to Korea, 34 made the ultimate sacrifice.

Choi noted that after the war, the Korean government had launched several programmes to express their gratitude to the Korean War veterans and that the relatives of the veterans should be proud of what their husbands, fathers or grand-fathers did.

For the people of South Korea, the Korean War has not ended as the two Koreas are still technically at war. “It has not ended,” Choi said, “Our heroes will live and be remembered in the hearts and minds of Korean people forever and forever. Everlasting heroes.”

Col DJ Louw, President of the South African Korean War Veterans Association and himself the son of a Korean War veteran, noted that in comparison with the rest of the United Nations forces, South Africa suffered a tremendous loss, given the size of the South African Air Force.

During the ceremony held at the Korean War exhibit at the SAAF Museum, wreaths were laid around the miniature replica of South African Air Force Memorial that was erected in Pyongyang by the South Korea government. With many veterans and family members attending, the sounding of the Last Post by a lone bugler of the South African Army Band, followed by two minutes of silence, was particularly poignant.

According to the book *Tumult in the Clouds, Stories from the South African Air Force* by Dean Wingrin, 2 Squadron (the Flying Cheetahs) sailed for Japan on 25 September 1950. Following conversion onto the F-51D Mustang supplied by the USAF, 2 Squadron

served as one of the four squadrons of the USAF 18th Fighter-Bomber Wing and flew their first mission in Korea on 19 November 1950.

The SAAF flew with the distinctive Springbok in the centre of the roundel, introduced when 2 Squadron was sent to Korea. Their role was close air support against enemy positions to soften them up for ground attacks, interdiction against the enemy's logistic and communication lines, providing protective cover for rescue operations, reconnaissance flights and to a lesser extent, interception of enemy aircraft.

In January 1953 the squadron received USAF F-86F Sabre jet fighter-bombers and the sturdy Mustangs were returned to the USAF. The first Sabre mission was flown on 16 March 1953. This marked the entry of the SAAF into a new era of jet warfare. The Flying Cheetahs thereafter took part in fighter sweeps along the Yalu and Chong-Chong rivers as well as against ground targets.

The war ended on 27 July 1953. Prior to the SAAF members returning to South Africa in late 1953, the Sabres were returned to the USAF.

During their time in Korea, 34 SAAF pilots had lost their lives and eight taken prisoner of war, including the future Chief of the Air Force, General Dennis Earp.

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News from the SANDF – New arms deal allegations surface.

Written by defenceWeb

Saab and BAE paid over a billion rand in commission to agents to secure the sale of 26 Gripen fighter jets to South Africa, the Swedish newspaper Expressen has reported, citing documents obtained by the UK's Serious Fraud Office (SFO).

According to the tabloid, BAE documents handed to the SFO in 2007 show that money was paid to agents believed to be involved in bribery, with 7.25% of the Gripen and Hawk sales'

value (13 billion kronor or \$1.58 billion) possibly paid out to agents.

At the time the 26 Gripens and 24 Hawks were sold to South Africa in 1999, the deals were arranged by Gripen International, a joint venture between Saab and British Aerospace. Gripen International was subsequently dissolved, with Saab marketing the Gripen on its own.

The Expressen on Thursday also suggested that Allan MacDonald, BAE's former head of marketing for South Africa and Asia, kept Saab informed about the payments. Saab has in the past denied any wrongdoing, saying BAE negotiated with agents in South Africa. MacDonald apparently said Saab paid BAE extra to take responsibility for the commission payments.

Saab's press officer Sebastian Carlsson told defenceWeb that Saab has investigated the matter internally, with Swedish attorneys and with South African authorities and discovered no actions in the deal that were against the law. He said it was normal for companies to hire lawyers and advisors, especially when operating in foreign markets, and that he was confident Saab's advisors followed the law. Carlsson emphasised that there is a difference between commissions and bribes and that in South Africa commissions were paid.

Apparently R154 million of the R1.5 billion in commission was paid to Fana Hlongwane, adviser to late defence minister Joe Modise. According to Expressen, R2 million was paid to Hlongwane in October 1999 via the company Red Diamond. The money then travelled via a Swiss agent into Hlongwane's company Westunity.

In February this year the HSBC leak, according to Swedish Radio news programme Ekot, found 100 million kronor (\$12 000) in three Swiss bank accounts belonging to Hlongwane. The programme reported that the money was related to the sale of Gripens to South Africa.

Arms deal critic Terry Crawford-Browne last week said the revelations

follow Swedish TV4's expose in 2012 that the present prime minister Stefan Löfven (whilst then a trade union official) had facilitated the laundering of additional BAE/Saab bribes of R30-R35 million to ANC politicians ahead of the 1999 elections.

"The Scorpions in 2008 seized 460 boxes and 4.7 million computer pages of evidence against BAE. That massive volume of evidence was the very cause of the Seriti Commission's creation by President Jacob Zuma in 2011. The Commission however, deliberately failed to investigate that evidence which, reportedly, it has left lying in two shipping containers at the Hawks premises in Pretoria... That the Seriti Commission has been a farce and a gross waste of time and public resources is yet again confirmed by the Swedish disclosures," Crawford-Browne said.

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News from the SANDF – SANDF salaries to increase.

Written by defenceWeb

Come the middle of July SA National Defence Force (SANDF) members will be pleasantly surprised by salary advice notices.

The seven percent salary increase agreed to and signed on June 28 in the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council is retroactive as from April 1. The upward adjustment of salaries paid in August will include the additional seven percent for April, May, June and July.

The increase is above the inflation rate, which is running at just below five percent according to government.

Parties in the Council also agreed to an increase of the average projected CPI (Consumer Price Index) plus one percent for the year April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 with the same holding good for the 2017/2018 financial year.

According to a Department of Defence News Flash the directive contained salary related details for Public Service

Act personnel will be published and circulated internally soon.

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News from the SANDF – Sea trials next for refurbished "Drakies" .

Written by Kim Helfrich

An extensive refit and systems upgrade over an 18 month period to the SA Navy's fleet replenishment vessel SAS Drakensberg is complete and sea acceptance trials "later this year" are the first item on her work agenda.

The 28-year-old "Drakies," as she is affectionately known, is the largest ship built in South Africa for the maritime arm of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF). She was also the first naval vessel to be completely locally designed. She is a product of what was the Sandock Austral Shipyard in Durban and was launched in November 1986 with commissioning following more than a year later in November 1987.

Questions as to how long she was in dry dock, exactly what work was done and her future movements were not released by Flag Officer Fleet because they pertain to "operational ships' movements and availability".

When fully laden Drakensberg (A301) displaces 12,500 tons and her 147m length can be pushed through the water at a maximum speed of 20 knots. At a speed of 15 knots she has a range of 8,000 miles.

In addition to replenishment duties, Drakensberg is also employed as a search and rescue vessel and also undertakes patrol and surveillance duties. It was in this task that she, to date, has been the only SAN ship to be part of a successful anti-piracy operation. This was when she was deployed on station in the Mozambique Channel as part of Operation Copper in April three years ago helping European warships detain seven Somali pirates.

With the first of its Valour Class frigates – SAS Amatola - due to be handed back to the Navy on July 10, the

mid- life refit planned for frigate number two, SAS Isandlwana, has been put on hold. According to Armscor General Manager: Marketing And Business Development, Lulu Mzili, the tender “has been cancelled until further notice”.

South Africa’s shipbuilding sector, earmarked by President Jacob Zuma for a major role in the blue economy sector of his Operation Phakisa, views the cancellation of this tender as a blow to particularly any possibility of job creation in the short term. A representative of a Durban shipyard said it appeared the security and job creation aspects of Operation Phakisa were “not front of mind for all roleplayers”.

Picture: Allan Roy, with thanks to the Unofficial SAAF website.
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News from the SANDF – SAS Amatola almost ready for the Navy.

Written by defenceWeb

By 10 July, Naval Station Durban will welcome home SAS Amatola following an extensive mid-life refit at Southern African Shipyards (SAS).

She was the first Valour Class frigate to be delivered to the SA Navy and was commissioned in September 2005. Amatola has been in SAS’s Durban facility for the past 15 months undergoing a complete refit, excluding armament but including the removal of her engines and gas turbines for overhaul.

Amatola was originally due to be handed back to the Navy by the end of this month but “problems” with the Port of Durban management have delayed the handover by eight working days.

Charles Maher of SAS said the frigate would be taken back into the Navy inventory when she steams to Naval Station Durban on July 10.

“Once there she will firstly undergo harbour trials with a naval crew followed by sea trials and it is expected

she will then transit to Simon’s Town,” he told defenceWeb.

Back in her home port, Amatola will have her armament refitted and indications are she will then undergo a complete sea and weaponry assessment before being put onto the equipment roster as “fully serviceable” again.

Her armament includes a 76 mm Otobreda main gun, a pair of LIW DPG 35 mm and two Oerlikon 20 mm cannons as well as eight Exocet MM40 anti-ship missile and Umkhonto 16 cell vertically launched surface to air missiles. She is also fitted with torpedo tubes but none of the Valour Class frigates presently carry torpedoes.

Unconfirmed reports have it Armscor has withdrawn the tender for mid-life refit work on the second Valour Class frigate, SAS Isandlwana. Tenders for this work were originally set to close on July 2. The withdrawal had not been confirmed at the time of publication.
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News from the SANDF – Veterans’ housing programme underway.

Written by defenceWeb

By the end of March next year at least 1,900 military veterans will have their own houses.

The Department of Military Veterans (DMV) has entered into an agreement with the Department of Human Settlements, headed by former defence and military veterans minister Lindiwe Sisulu, to deliver the houses measuring a minimum of 50 square metres to veterans. In statement the DMV said the houses are exclusively for veterans who are unemployed or do not earn enough to buy themselves a house.

Works on the veterans’ housing has started with construction in certain areas and planning underway in other areas. Houses will be built in all nine provinces with R78 million transferred to the Human Settlements department in the current financial year and another R164 million earmarked for the 2015/16 financial year.

In Eastern Cape veterans in the Lukhanji, OR Tambo and Chetty districts will be received houses while four Free State districts have been selected for veterans’ houses. They are Manguang, Moqhaka, Metsimaholo and Ngwathe.

In Gauteng Nellmapius, Westonaria Borwa and Golden Gardens are the selected military veterans’ housing districts with no less than 11 KwaZulu-Natal district municipalities getting a share of the veterans housing funding. The districts are Ethekwini, Uthukela, Harry Gwala, Umgungundlovu, Amajuba, Ilembe, Ugu, Umkhanyakude, Umzinyathi, Zululand and Uthungulu.

Veterans houses will also be built in Mamusa, Mafikeng, Naledi, Matlosana and Ikatiseng in North West; Sol Plaatjie, Lerato Park and Soul City in Northern Cape and the Blue Downs district of Western Cape.
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News from the SANDF – The SA army wants you(th).

Written by Hlengiwe Nhlabathi – City Press

As soon as June next year, young people could find themselves forced to become part of a youth military programme as government tries new ways to contain spiralling unemployment.

Over the past few weeks, the presidency’s national steering committee has held marathon meetings amid pressure to finalise details of a youth service programme that could see government sending young people, from the age of 18, to the army for military training.

And the clock is ticking as the deadline for the full roll-out of the plan has been set for June next year.

The ANC-led alliance has already called for the urgent implementation of an improved National Youth Services

The Shamrock

(NYS) programme in which the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) and various government departments will play a role.

This expanded, multisectoral youth service is set to benefit millions of young South Africans, most of whom are unemployed.

However, there have been differing views on whether it should be compulsory for all young people to join the army as part of national service requirements.

In a interview with City Press last month, ANC secretary general Gwede Mantashe said he would support the reintroduction of conscription, which was scrapped in South Africa in 1994.

“We moved away from conscription too soon. Naturally, we would actually say that every youth person may serve an X number of years or months in the army to be trained because the army is the most equipped structure that could deal with young people in a structured way.

“Actually, the best engineering capacity in the country is in the army. So that’s what we should be thinking about,” he said.

However, Dr Bernice Hlagala, who is the director of youth development in the presidency, told City Press the draft framework had ruled out compulsory military training, but it could still be changed.

The draft has yet to be presented to the deputy minister in the presidency, Buti Manamela. If he rubber stamps it, the youth military programme will then be tabled at Cabinet for a final decision.

“The primary aim of the NYS is not military. There are many aspects to it, like encouraging youth to volunteer at old-age homes or government departments and acquire skills in the process.

“We will identify exit opportunities but we can’t create the expectation that everyone will be absorbed where they provide services. But for those going to the army, we are saying – in the draft – that it is voluntary,” said Hlagala.

Although reintroducing conscription may go against the spirit of the Constitution, Mantashe said “the country must do what it needs to do for the country to work”.

Manamela established the national steering committee to drive the process towards a better youth development programme, as one of the interventions touted in the national youth policy 2020, which was recently adopted by Cabinet to deal with youth unemployment.

The ANC and its allies believe military training will tackle the social alienation of youth, gangsterism, alcohol and drug abuse – and instil discipline, patriotism and volunteerism.

Hlagala said it was envisaged that some participants would emerge as professionals including doctors, pilots and engineers, while others would take on technical and artisan jobs.

The department of rural development has successfully implemented its youth service plan, the National Rural Youth Service Corps (Narysec), in partnership with the SANDF to train youth between the ages of 18 and 35.

Under the programme, army generals are tasked with whipping young people into shape before they enrol in Further Education and Training colleges.

Hlagala said the proposed NYS plan would give participants, including those who have not completed high school, the opportunity to further their studies, on condition that they give back to their communities. Hlagala said funding would be sourced from National Treasury once Cabinet approval was obtained.

Meanwhile, General Fumanekile Gqiba, head of the Narysec college in Thaba 'Nchu in the Free State, told City Press that some of his programme’s beneficiaries were now employed or running their own construction businesses. He said the only way to deal with social ills and ill-discipline among young people was to force them into the army – but not for combat training.

He said conscription was an ongoing discussion “among comrades”, but had not been taken further than that.

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Battlefields of South

Africa – The Battle of Gingindlovu - The Zulu War

Written by Ian Knight

War: Zulu War

Date: 2nd April 1879

Place: Eastern Zululand in South Africa

Combatants: British and Natal colonial troops against the Zulus.

Generals: Lieutenant General Lord Chelmsford against Somopho kaZikhala

Size of the armies: 5,250 British and colonial troops against 11,000 Zulus.

Uniforms, arms and equipment: The Zulu warriors were formed in regiments by age, their standard equipment the shield and the stabbing spear. The formation for the attack, described as the “horns of the beast”, was said to have been devised by Shaka, the Zulu King who established Zulu hegemony in Southern Africa. The main body of the army delivered a frontal assault, called the “loins”, while the “horns” spread out behind each of the enemy’s flanks and delivered the secondary and often fatal attack in the enemy’s rear. Cetshwayo, the Zulu King, fearing British aggression took pains to purchase firearms wherever they could be bought. By the outbreak of war the Zulus had tens of thousands of muskets and rifles, but of a poor standard, and the Zulus were ill-trained in their use. The Zulus captured some 1,000 Martini Henry breech loading rifles and a large amount of ammunition. Some of these rifles were used at Rorke’s Drift. All the British casualties, few though they were, were shot rather than stabbed.

Winner: the British

British Regiments:
Royal Artillery
3rd Regiment, the Buffs: now the Princess of Wales’s Royal Regiment.
57th Regiment: later the Middlesex Regiment and now the Princess of Wales’s Royal Regiment.

3rd Battalion, 60th Rifles: later the King's Royal Rifle Corps and now the Royal Green Jackets.

91st Highlanders: now the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.

99th Regiment: later the Wiltshire Regiment and now the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment.

Account:

The Zulu War was among the most savage of Britain's colonial wars: Isandlwana saw the massacre of a battalion of British infantry (1st Battalion, 24th Foot): At Rorke's Drift 140 British troops slew 500 Zulus with their breech loading rifles, firing from inside the fortified post. At Khambula, Evelyn Wood's column killed 2,000 Zulus with its volley fire and probably mortally wounded a further 1,000.

At the end of March 1879 Colonel Pearson's Number 1 Column lay

isolated in a fortified position at Eshowe deep in eastern Zululand. Lord Chelmsford's desperate worry was that this force would succumb before he could relieve it.

Following the disaster of Isandlwana, the British government rushed reinforcements to Natal: 2 regiments of cavalry, 2 batteries of Royal Artillery and 5 battalions of Foot.

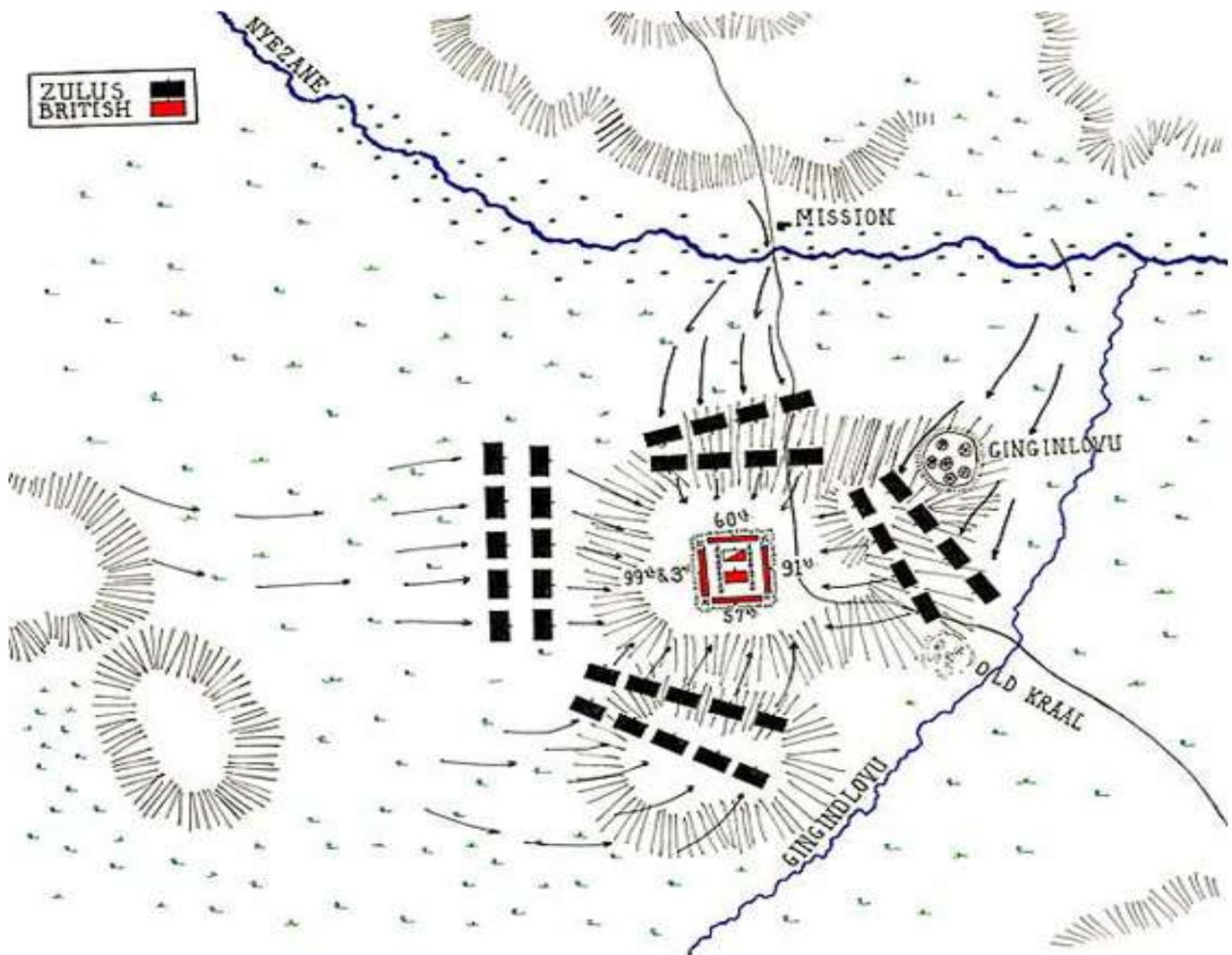
On 29th March 1879 Chelmsford's column crossed the Tugela River and began its march to the relief of Pearson's force. The country was covered by Zulu scouts and signals flashed from Pearson's camp at Eshowe. It was clear to Chelmsford that his advance would be fiercely contested, progress further impeded by the terrible weather.

On 1st April 1879, Chelmsford's column reached the Royal Kraal of

Gingindlovu and laagered for the night. A heavy rain came on. Chelmsford had taken careful note of the lessons from Isandlwana. At every encampment the wagons were carefully positioned to create an unbroken laager wall and the troops required to dig sections of trench around the laager. Every camp was rendered fully defensible in case of sudden attack.

Chelmsford's chief scout, John Dunn, a pre-war inhabitant of Zululand for many years, scouted across the Nyezane River. Beyond the river he encountered the Zulu Army, some 11,000 warriors. Dunn returned to the British camp and reported to Chelmsford that the Zulus would attack in the morning.

Chelmsford's column was laagered on the top of a hill, the sides sloping away in each direction, as good a position as any for the battle. In accordance with the new standing orders, the laager was



The Shamrock

entrenched in a square.

The north face of the square was held by the 3rd Battalion, the 60th Rifles; the left by the 99th Regiment and the Buffs (3rd Foot) and the right face by the 57th Regiment. The corners of the square were reinforced by Gatling Guns, conventional artillery and rocket troughs.

As the sun rose, Irregular Horse and infantry piquets patrolled towards the Nyezane River, scouting for the Zulu advance.

The regiments in the camp stood to at 4am. Shortly before 6am, reports came in from the advanced piquets of the Zulu approach. A native soldier pointed to the skyline. "Impi" he declared. The officers stared at the hill top before realising that what they had taken to be a long smudge of vegetation was the mass of the advancing Zulu "chest". Zulu skirmishers opened fired from cover as they rushed forward.

The first attack was received by the 60th Rifles. One of the newly arrived regiments, the young soldiers of the 60th found the ordeal of the Zulu attack trying in the extreme and it took all the leadership of the battalion's officers to keep the line steady and firing, the Gatling guns at the ends of the line providing much needed support.

Under heavy fire from the British line the Zulu charge faltered and flowed around to the west flank of the square, where the attack was renewed against the 99th Regiment. In the face of the volley firing from the two sides of the square the Zulu "chest" finally went to ground in cover.

The "horns" of the Zulu advance rushed around the British position expecting to find the rear open, as at Isandlwana, only to meet the volley firing of the 91st Highland Regiment. Here too the Zulus were forced into cover.

In the face of the sustained fire from the 91st, the attack on the rear of the laager ebbed away and Chelmsford ordered his mounted units out of the square to complete the victory. The mounted attack was premature and it was some

time before the Zulu withdrawal took hold.

Soon after 7am the battle was over and the Zulus in full retreat, pursued by the mounted troops and the native contingent. Large numbers of Zulu warriors were killed in the long pursuit.

As at Khambula the Zulus wounded on the battlefield were massacred. The Zulu army was effectively dispersed.

The outcome of the battle was a great relief to Chelmsford, showing him that his army's confidence was re-established and enabling him to continue his advance to Pearson's camp and on to defeat the Zulu King, Cetshwayo, at the Battle of Ulundi.

Casualties: British casualties were 6 officers and 55 men; among the dead was Lieutenant Colonel Northey of the 60th Rifles. Zulu casualties were calculated at 1,000.

References:
Zulu War by Ian Knight (Pan Grand Strategy).

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From the Chaplain

Read Philippians 3:13,14

Regret nothing. Not even the sins and failures when you have repented and when God has forgiven them. When a man views earth's wonders from some mountain height he does not spend his time in dwelling on the stones and stumbles, the faints and failures, that marked his upward path.

So with you. Breathe in the rich blessings of each new day - forget all that lies behind you.

"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind ...
I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:13,14

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Regimental Photos

Bravo Company preparing for deployment.

