

# Roshgold

AUG - OCT 2017

# NEWS

**Social justice  
through  
corporate reform**

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**Disruption  
&  
entrepreneurship**



**Jozis Books  
& Blog Festival**

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**Zahab makes  
debut appearance**

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an enchanted land**

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**Womens month**

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**Short Story  
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**THE NEW ECONOMY –  
NOTHING VENTURED  
NOTHING GAINED**

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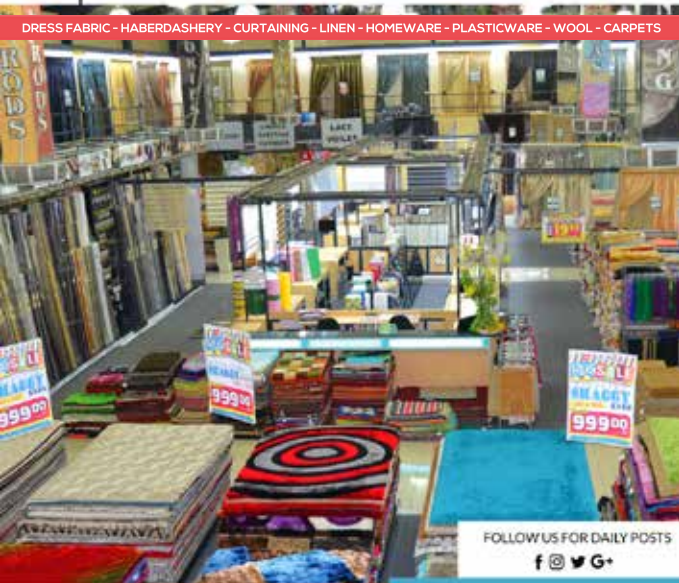
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## Eds Entre



### A breath of fresh air!

This issue focuses on hope and opportunities. Our contributors help readers grapple with the opportunities in the new economy and how one can exploit such possibilities.

As supporters of Jozi Books and Blog festival we cover the event not only from the social point but also from the business opportunities that this marketplace showcased. The presence of ex-Finance minister Pravin Gordhan in Lenasia when he has so much on his plate was incredibly motivational. South Africans were galvanising and at work. There is hope!

WIEF IdeaLab Chairman, Ebrahim Patel has extended an invitation to you to join his delegation and experience what is happening in the start-up space in the Far East. The article provides sound advice.

August being Women's month pays tribute to women. Violence against women remains a scourge and gives all of us sufficient cause to champion the respect, protection and upliftment of women.

As usual we offer a prize gift to one "Letter to the Editor" on any of the articles in this issue.

*Until next time!*

Haroun Pochee  
Editor

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# NOTHING VENTURED NOTHING GAINED

By Haroun Pochee B. Com C.A. (SA)

Just as a ship is becalmed in the middle of the ocean, the South African economy is drifting aimlessly. The lack of confidence in our political leadership is not helping. We stuck!

The rest of the world continues to adapt to the changing economic and business environment. It is a scenario that demands investment in technology, reduction of costs and a more flexible workforce to survive.

Due to an uncertain business and political environment in South Africa, many businesses are sitting on surplus cash, ungeared balance sheets and holding back on investment.

In a Business Day article Nampak CEO and Manufacturing Circle chairman André de Ruyter is quoted “.. manufacturing has the highest multiplier effect in job creation, adding five to eight indirect jobs for every one direct job created. Demand is the big driver of investment – manufacturers are ready to invest if demand grows. It is vital for industry and government to collaborate to unlock the economy to enable job creation. The country needs a one-point plan to address the crisis of the unemployment.”

Lets get out of this rut! We should not allow ourselves to be marooned or stuck with analysis paralysis. This negatively affects sentiment and our productive endeavours.

No matter what happens into the future we need to begin planning seriously. Our inaction can be the cause of our downfall. Let's not procrastinate and adopt a wait and see attitude. I have heard laments; "Let's wait to see what happens at the ANC elective conference"; "waiting for government to go to tender"; "Let the economy improve".

Some years ago Clem Sunter became popular for his scenario planning on the possible outcomes for South Africa post democracy. The world we live in is changing rapidly and poses increasing difficulties. It requires a tangible plan. There are many factors that could influence outcomes. So what is your plan? And what outcome are you working towards? Nothing is ideal and we cannot have everything in our control. That is a pipe dream! If you learn that your plan is failing you do not lose sight of where you want to get to and your eventual outcomes. And if there is no plan in place you will slowly die with no hope for survival or success. Do not leave it to chance!

Instead of drifting in a becalmed state, invest your time in seeking new opportunities or developing new skills out of the traditional economy. It will take effort and sacrifice.

The recent Jozi Books & Blogs Festival clearly illustrated the migration away from the traditional economy. There was a neat cut away from traditional business while the model of reaching markets previously untapped was inspiring. Over sixty writers, scriptwriters, bloggers, life coaches, marketers, media personalities, photographers, story tellers from differing backgrounds showcased their offerings.

This is revolutionary! It is a fresh wind of change that can contribute to the stalled economy. Who would have thought that so many new economy players would use a traditional craft of writing to engage with economic activity in a market perceived not to be consummate readers to add to economic output and their sustenance. It has to be noted that technology has removed the barrier from traditional printing and publishing. The advent and proliferation of self-publishing and blogging enabling software together with social media has created real time and serious business opportunities. Throw graphic design and creative photo books to the brew. All these elements help towards economic growth and the sustainability of a budding new generation of entrepreneurs. Pinning it to the mast and other similar ventures could help the economy sail again.

I was impressed with the visionary thinkers of a multi-national water metering company in it's quest to transform into a new economy survivor. The company incorporates the following in it's product and sales strategy. They committed to the adoption process and yet are flexible in this scenario planning exercise. It incorporates the following:

- The steps and processes are in place in preparation for Industry 4. They quote; "Industry 4 means the radical changes of all areas of economy and life; It describes the fourth industrial revolution. This is based on the vision of a smart factory in which machines are networked and communicate with each other."
- Their technology offensive includes the development of innovative products and making technology companies acquisitions.
- Setting benchmarks in the industry through specialisation, solutions and partnerships.
- Their sales strategy includes more digitalisation (including mobile app) and investing in their sales infrastructure and distributing via online retailers.
- Seeking and growing new markets.

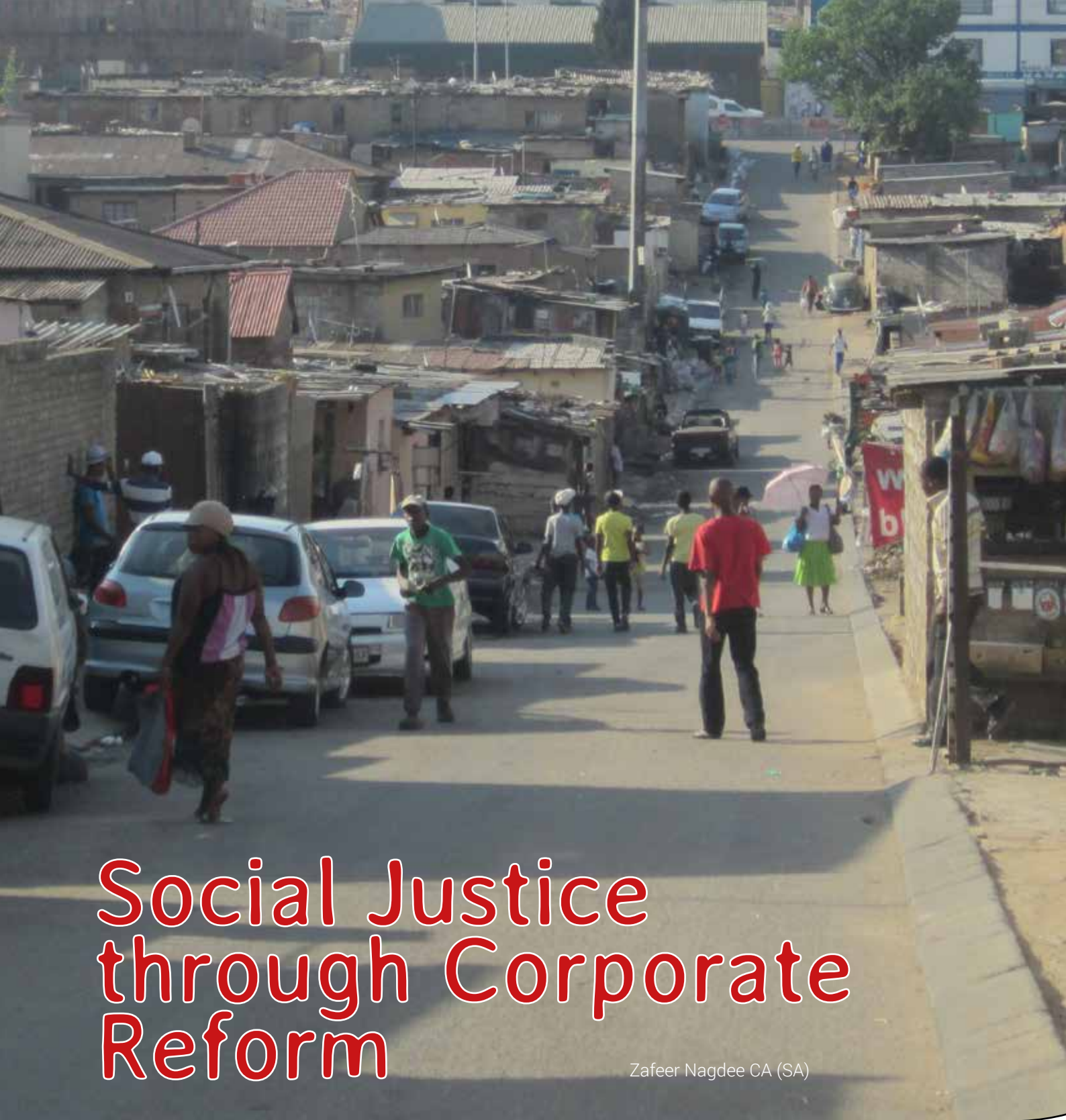
The listing of Long4Life supports action as the company's overview of it's intended purpose indicates: "Long4Life plans to invest primarily in businesses with attractive growth prospects, led by strong, entrepreneurial-minded management teams. The Board, who collectively have a wealth of operational and deal-making experience across various industries, will be responsible for capital allocation and will play an active role in identifying and executing approving attractive investment opportunities.

Long4Life's intention is to take a long term view on investments, while retaining the flexibility to dispose of investments which no longer meet the investment criteria and the agility to take advantage of opportunities as they arise."

Long4Life is clear and concise. It has a definite plan of action. No mention of uncertainty. They going full steam ahead.

It is time for action. It is a time for serious focus seeking a way to engage opportunity. Will it be technology or learning new skills? Are you ready for new technologies? Do you need to diversify completely or form a master group to start the process of creating such an opportunity?





# Social Justice through Corporate Reform

Zafeer Nagdee CA (SA)

In the twenty two years that have followed South Africa's political transformation we are yet to see as a nation, meaningful economic transformation that reaches all corners of our land. Among the most notable issues we face in modern day South Africa is that of economic inequality. A host of political interventions that have aimed to catalyse the move towards equality has brought about progress in some areas and dissent in others. Nevertheless, it is widely acknowledged that these interventions have not resulted in widespread economic change but instead, has in the interim benefitted only small pockets of black business. The result has been the development of a dual economy where the economic elite thrive under the protection of well-developed institutions whilst a large informal sector lives day to day at best. Given our past, this division still exists largely across racial lines.



***DESPITE BEING CUSTODIANS OF ONE OF THE MOST SOPHISTICATED FINANCIAL MARKETS IN THE WORLD, ORDINARY SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE YET TO SEE THIS PROSPERITY FILTER DOWN TO GROUND LEVEL.***

The stark reality of this disconnect is arguably the most pronounced in South Africa when compared to any other nation around the world. For instance, the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report indicates that within the domain of big business and sophisticated finance, South Africa ranks among the best in the world. As far as its financial reporting is concerned, the quality of South Africa's auditing and reporting standards are ranked number 1 in the world. The protection of minority shareholders' interests and finance through its local equity market are both ranked number 1 in the world as well. The quality of financial services (following Hong Kong) and the soundness of South Africa's banks (following Finland) both rank number 2 in the world. The regulation of South Africa's securities exchange (following Singapore and Finland) and the efficacy of South Africa's corporate boards (following New Zealand and Norway) rank number 3 in the world. Within this context South Africa is quite simply, "open for business". The reality however, is that this world is not accessible to the vast majority of ordinary South Africans.

In contrast, those indicators that speak to the proverbial man on the street reflects a South Africa that is quite different to the one described earlier. For instance, out of 138 countries that were ranked in the aforementioned report, South Africa ranks 137 in the world (ahead only of Lesotho) for incidences of Tuberculosis. With the context of HIV prevalence, South Africa ranks 135 in the world (ahead only of Botswana and Lesotho). The overall quality of South Africa's education system is ranked at 134 in the world with the quality of South Africa's mathematics and science education ranks 138 in the world. The matching data on business reflects that these indicators have significantly affected business development in the country where the business cost of crime and violence ranks South Africa at 133 in the world. The business impact of Tuberculosis and HIV ranks the country at 130 in the world whilst the flexibility in wage negotiations along with hiring and firing practices rank South Africa at 135 in the world with cooperation in labor-employer relations being ranked at 138.

Despite being custodians of one of the most sophisticated financial markets in the world, ordinary South Africans have yet to see this prosperity filter down to ground level. This reality evidences the need for transformative thinking within corporate South Africa and particularly within the context of the role that our corporations need to play in South African society. Whilst this is indeed a global debate, geographic regions (with the assistance of government) need to adopt their own stances taking into account their own social makeup and economic needs. As a country, it is high time that South Africans apply their collective minds more deeply to the role that corporations should play in our society. Through this process of thought, internal solutions need to also be developed without defaulting back to the practices of multinational corporations for guidance and thought leadership. Often within business circles, there is the view that as a developing capitalist nation, South Africa needs to direct business thought towards the direction of the US and Europe. This, combined with the philosophical view that business exists to maximize shareholder wealth is an outlook which largely serves the interests of only a few.

In moving towards an era of principled progress South Africa needs to establish a new discourse around what it is the nation expects from business and how businesses are to be held accountable in relation to societal expectations. As such, though leadership efforts need to be actioned in aligning the interests of business with the interests of society where it makes financial sense to adopt certain practices and refrain from others. The welfare, entitlement mentality that continues to plague South Africa needs to be socially re-engineered out of our collective psyche so that we leave room for dynamic, innovative and progressive partnerships between business, government and academia.

>>> to page 6



One such area that may be explored lies within the Chartered Accountant profession where approximately 1 500 new Chartered Accountants emerge each year. These young professionals have specialized knowledge of accounting practice, regulatory compliance and business development. Upon completing their formal training they are absorbed directly into the private sector without developing suitable appreciation for business development at grass roots level. Within various sectors of the economy, there is a desperate need for appropriate financial regulation and control and in other sectors, the need for financial literacy and entrepreneurship support. Before transitioning into private practice, almost all medical professionals undertake some form of community service at public institutions. As such, there is room for introducing a community service element to the training programme of accounting clerks before they qualify as CA's. Whilst granting exposure to real life challenges in regulatory compliance and entrepreneurship development, these young professionals also serve the country by providing much needed skills to areas in need of them. There is also room for audit firms to outsource audit clerks for short



term internships to government departments, schools, hospitals and other public institutions to provide basic accounting and audit services. Students may also be involved in assisting new business owners with basic accounting and financial control activities.

Within each of our own departments and organisations, we need to embrace the notion of principled progress and set aside time to engage with stakeholders to understand their needs and expectations more deeply. In doing so, a more integrated approach to the way in which business is done can be established where innovation doesn't necessarily only result in enhanced financial capital, but in enhanced prosperity for the communities within which they operate as well.



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# Disruption

what does this  
mean for

# Entrepreneurship?

By: Azim Omar,  
Africa Growth Markets  
Leader at EY

Not too long ago, any form of communication was either done by telephone, fax or direct interaction. Today, disruption is fundamentally changing the way the world works - disruption has commonly come to mean a transformation of business models and value networks driven by technology, or business innovation.

As businesses, government and individuals respond to shifts that would have seemed unimaginable a few years ago, many are also failing to keep pace with changing consumer needs. These fast changing consumer preferences now span across geographies with cultural barriers.

Today's society have more virtual friends than physical friends – we often hear the word 'instantaneous', and we now measure time in the form of MB per second.

We have already started getting familiar with concepts like robotics, artificial intelligence and blockchain concepts that are reinventing the workforce. In effect, we have entered into what is now termed as the fourth industrial revolution. So what does this mean for entrepreneurs?

The determination and importance of entrepreneurs will be the unchanging factor that we can expect to see through this technological change.

The world of disruption all begins with a thought of how to do things differently, some great examples of late have been, apps like Uber and AirBnB, who seemed to have changed their respective industries on its head. At this stage, many will state that this happens in developed countries, and I have to differ. Here on the African continent, we have many successes that we seem to just over look. The most common one would be M Pesa and Hello Paisa, who have revolutionised the money transfer sector.

According to recent EY research, purpose-led businesses are better able to navigate the challenges of a disrupted economy, changing stakeholder expectations and the demands of a new generation of employees. They are better at innovation and transformational change, they have more engaged employees, more loyal customers and consequently, they grow faster and make more money. As the forces of disruption push established companies off the stock-market leader-board, new entrepreneurial businesses are harnessing the power of purpose to drive performance.

EY's Growth Barometer Survey, *How are the world's fastest-growing businesses creating growth from seismic change?*, found that global executives are bullish on growth and are set to seize opportunities from geopolitical uncertainty over the next 12 months. Further findings of the survey, which sampled 2,340 middle market executives across 30 countries, reveal that in spite of geopolitical tensions, including Brexit, increasing populism, the rise of automation and artificial intelligence (AI) and skilled talent shortages, 89% of executives see today's uncertainty as grounds for growth opportunities. What's more, 14% of all companies surveyed have current year growth ambitions of more than 16%.

Growth, was a priority for one in four (22%) of "high-growth entrepreneurs" who plan revenue growth of more than 26%, the report found.

Global middle market organisations, companies with annual revenues of US\$1m-US\$3b, are showing no signs of slowing down in the face of geopolitical uncertainty. Over one-third (34%) of middle market companies plan to grow 6%-10% this year, far outpacing the latest World Bank global GDP growth forecasts of 2.7%, by more than 3%-7%.

In essence, what is being said is there is so much that is happening, yet there are so many ways in which business and customer service can be improved. The more things change the more there is a need for new solutions and disruptors to identify and fill the gaps. More importantly, we need to show one another, and the world, that entrepreneurship is alive and well in Africa, and we can only compete with the best in the world.

*The views reflected in this article are the views of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of EY in South Africa.*

# WIEF IdeaLab Aims to Strengthen the ASEAN Entrepreneurship Ecosystem



The World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) hosted the third edition of the WIEF IdeaLab 2017 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 2 and 3 August 2017.

This unique two-day boutique conference, aim was to strengthen the ASEAN startup ecosystem. It was hosted by the WIEF Young Leaders Network and attracted close to 400 participants from 35 countries. The event was held in partnership with the Malaysian Government's Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), AliBaba Cloud and AllChat.

"The evolution of business and technology has created disruption in traditional business, economic models and even the social landscape. With innovation and entrepreneurship being a key agenda in many countries it is only inevitable that startups are increasingly looked to as key drivers of socio-economic and market transformation," said South African based, Ebrahim Patel, Chairman of the WIEF Young Leaders Network and the International Advisor to the WIEF Foundation.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is changing the future direction of the global economy. Fifty years ago, the USA reached its apex as a "society of laborers" and the advent of automation has resulted in significant job losses and emptied factories. The power of computing, software and the Internet is now making many white-collar jobs redundant while allowing the boardroom and the office environment to become a mobile workplace.

The end result is more people are looking to start their own businesses either on a fulltime basis or even as temporary "gigs". The Online Marketplace is thriving and is replacing the employer as entrepreneurs embark with ventures that are evolving out of services provided to others.

In future years, there is an expectation that larger companies will develop infrastructure such as storage, logistics, transport and digital payment and digital security solutions that will be leased to smaller companies. The software industry is already going that way with licensing of software.

It has been widely promoted that high-growth startups are the backbone of both developed economies and emerging markets in

terms of employment, opportunities presented, sustainability, and economic growth. WIEFIdeaLab aims to open up the opportunity for startups to connect with one another as well as with investors and funders looking for high-growth startups.

Connecting the startup ecosystems between countries makes it easier for startups from different countries to recognise, learn, and access opportunities in overseas markets. It also addresses the current challenge of funding for startups. There is an uneven distribution of funding platforms in many countries. The aim is to bridge the gap and facilitate access to funders and capital.

In the past, Silicon Valley was seen as the top hub for startups but in recent years cities such as Singapore, Beijing, Shanghai, Kuala Lumpur and Sydney have become hotspots for innovation.

"Recognising this potential, our aim was to bring together global venture capital firms and angel investors looking at investing in seed to post-seed stage companies. This also includes startups in the ideation stage across ASEAN. By doing so, WIEF IdeaLab 2017 is a prime example of the core of values of the WIEF Foundation-that of building bridges through business, strengthening business and positively impacting communities," added Patel.

The two day event is regarded as one of the most inclusive in the region and is designed to provide opportunity for information, learning and attracting investors.

Startup's in the Ideation stage had access to carefully designed topics discussed by successful industry leaders and entrepreneurs. Business experts real-time and individual advice on matters such as legal, public relations, and marketing matters



Breakout sessions featured interactive discussions between the participants on the challenges they faced and finding common solutions.

Throughout both days, networking areas were provided for the participants to meet directly with experts and potential investors to discuss business opportunities.

A parallel Ecosystem Fair gave companies the opportunity to showcase and display their products and services with both startups and funding agencies taking part.

The main attraction was the IdeaLab Pitch session which saw 31 startups pitch their ideas to a group of global Venture Capital Investors on the first day in the hope of attracting investment. The elimination round saw a list of ten startups shortlisted for the final pitch session on the second day. The final pitch saw the top three receive expressions of interest from the VCs.

WIEF IdeaLab2017 is in line with one of the five industry growth vectors which will be discussed at the 13th WIEF this year - Entrepreneurship and Emerging Spaces. The other vectors are Disruptive Science, Technology and Innovation, Halal Consumables and Services, Islamic Finance and Law, and Arts, Culture and Design.

"The core reason we do this stems from the question of purpose and the kind of impact our contribution would be able to have on communities. Addressing the concerns and needs of local communities is usually the foundation in the building blocks of any startup's idea. The solutions that are built around these ideas aim at mitigating problems that are faced by communities," said Patel

"With the ASEAN economic Community (AEC) quickly approaching its 2025 milestone, there is now an accelerated focus on e-commerce and digital economy – potentially worth up to USD200 billion over the next ten years in the region. Companies such as Alibaba and Amazon are focusing themselves on the region. In Africa, countries such as Kenya and Ghana have focused on Technology and Startups as create economic growth and employment. In South Africa we are just starting to explore the potential. But this will require a collective effort from both government and the private sector".

The WIEF IdeaLab 2017 is one of a series of key events organised in the lead-up to the 13th World Islamic Economic Forum which will be held from 21-23 November 2017 in Kuching, Sarawak with the theme 'Disruptive Change: Impact and Challenges'.

"I would encourage Roshgold investors and readers to join us at the forum this year to learn new ideas, get the latest business trends and network with global business. It would be great to have a Roshgold investor group consider joining our delegation to Sarawak, Malaysia to attend the 13th Annual WIEF Forum", said Ebrahim.

### About the World Islamic Economic Forum (WIEF) Foundation

The WIEF Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation based in Kuala Lumpur, organises the annual World Islamic Economic Forum, a world-class business platform showcasing business opportunities in the Muslim world, and runs programmes of the various initiatives of the Foundation that strengthen people partnership and knowledge exchange between Muslim and non-Muslim communities across the globe. The WIEF has previously held forums in Malaysia, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Kuwait, Pakistan, the United Kingdom and United Arab Emirates and aims to bring together Muslim and non-Muslim communities through the common language of business. The 13th World Islamic Economic Forum is going to be held at Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia from 21 – 23 November 2017.

### About the WIEF Young Leaders Network

The WIEF Young Leaders Network (WYN) is a global youth network for young change-makers to connect and collaborate for business opportunities and social projects for the common good, with members from every continent across the globe. It brings together young people to share creative ideas and explore prospects of collaboration on world-changing solutions. The WYN organizers the Young Fellows Program, a seven day leadership program, the IdealLab and IdeaPad, programs for startups and entrepreneurs, the Global ThinkTalk series, a platform for engagement with global leaders, the MocaFest and MocaFellows for artists from the Islamic world.

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# POSSIBLE EQUITIES FOR YOUR PORTFOLIOS?

By Bruce Wolov PSG Wealth



## ECHO POLSKA PROP

Echo Polska (EPP), a real estate company, listed in 2016 in both Luxembourg and the JSE, owns a portfolio of prime retail and office assets throughout Poland. EPP has been extremely acquisitive since the listing. At the end of the March quarter, the company owned 10 retail properties, two developments and nine office projects. They aim to grow steadily, planning to double their retail portfolio by 2020, and disposing of the office portfolio by 2019, with the objective to be a "Polish Retail Champion" by 2025.

The company has the strategic benefit of long term investors with a wealth of real estate experience and proven track records, with Redefine Properties holding 44%. The Polish economy is set to continue growing at three percent plus for the next few years.

Echo Polska offers shareholders an opportunity to invest in one of the growth economies in Eastern Europe, and a Euro Rand hedge. The company offers an attractive and secure dividend yield of approximately 8%.

## ASPEN PHARMACARE HLDGS

Aspen Pharmaceutical Holdings, one of the JSE's darlings, has fallen from grace, from a high of R443 in January 2015, to a recent low of R244. It looks to be on the road to recovery.

Italian regulators recently imposed a €5.2m fine for raising the price of cancer drugs as much as 1.500%, one of the reasons for the recent price weakness. The CEO and co-founder, who holds 12% of the company, has responded defiantly, saying the extent of the increase overshadowed the low price of the treatment in question, which had not been increased in over 50 years.

The drugmaker, with operations in more than 152 countries would in future focus on emerging markets, such as Latin America and Africa.

Aspen is committed to continued acquisitive growth, together with very impressive organic growth has propelled the generic drugs specialist to SA's ninth largest market value company in 20 years. Having purchased two anaesthetic portfolio's in 2016 from UK Giants Glaxo Smith Kline and Astra Zeneka, Aspen is well positioned for further acquisitions. Aspen is definitely in BUY territory.

## ADVANCED HEALTH LTD

Advance Health, a healthcare group, specialising in day hospitals in SA and Australia was listed on the ALTX in April 2014. It has established eight facilities in SA and intends expanding to twelve by 2018, and twenty by 2020. Australia, although small in the number of facilities generates the largest portion revenue.

There is a huge scope for the day hospital market, locally and globally as seventy percent of most surgical procedures can be performed in these facilities. There is a benefit of avoiding risk of infections, and limiting a patient's stay in a hospital reduces the chance of infections.

Local healthcare funds, Medscheme, Government Employees, and Discovery are extremely cost conscious, pressuring doctors and surgeons to make use of day care facilities. Although Advanced Health Care is still in a loss making position, management is optimistic that the company will breakeven within three years. The company is to be watched carefully, as the model is attractive.



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# It is the Public Spirit that will keep our Societies Alive

Snippets from Mr. Pravin Gordhan's Opening Address at Jozi Books & Blog Festival 2017.

by Shaakira Rahiman-Saleh

As Mr Pravin Gordhan entered the gate of the SBSM School in Lenasia , I mustered up the courage and grabbed the opportunity to approach the Honourable Guest Speaker of the day. When asked if Roshgold may have one question with him and a picture taken, Mr Gordhan obliged and quipped "as long as it doesn't get me into any trouble".

I will never forget this moment. The guests and visitors in surrounding entrance and field fell silent. Never had I experienced the expression "you could hear a pin drop". All eyes fell on our gigantic bright blue Roshgold wall banner with Roshgol'd Zuber Saleh and Mr Gordhan at the fore.

ROSHGOLD: What is it that you would like to share with us as a community at the Jozi Books and Blogs festival?

MR GORDHAN: Firstly, thank you for the invitation to attend. I'm here hopefully to listen and learn some more and share a few thoughts on the importance of reading and writing. To being aware of what is happening around the world and in South Africa and becoming active citizens as a result of better knowledge.

The Roshgold Team thanked Mr Gordhan for his time as he made his way for the opening of the Jozi's Books and Blogs Festival 2017. Upon formally introducing him, the Principal of the SBSM School and Master of Ceremonies Mr Jateen Nana shared some interesting lesser-known facts about Mr Gordhan a few of which included:

The name Pravin is of Sanskrit origin and means to be "knowledgeable, skilful and proficient". Mr Gordhan attended Sastri College in Durban and worked in his family clothing store on Saturdays. He obtained a Bachelor of Pharmacy Degree in 1973 and worked as a pharmacist at the King Edward Hospital. He had become an active member of the ANC and the SA Communist Party and was fired from the hospital for his political activities. "The fight for liberation is a far greater struggle than my fight against weight"; Gordhan said when he was told repeatedly to take care of his health and weight. He was detained on three occasions, one of which was in 1981 when he was held in solitary confinement for one hundred and sixty days. He had a beard at the time, which his interrogators ripped from his face. Mr Gordhan was the Commissioner of the South African Revenue Service from 1999 – 2009 and on 10 May 2009 he was appointed as the Minister of Finance.



Mr Nana humorously added that for his festival address we were going to be bombarded with letters of the alphabet and not the numbers that we are so used to.

Mr Gordhan began his talk respectfully greeting everyone with various vernacular greetings acknowledging the diverse audience he was addressing. We share some of the highlights from his insightful address:

He was surprised by the huge turnout and could not believe people were out so early (especially in winter) and that was a testament to attendee's interest in books and blogs. The interest was a profound one.

He noted that it was encouraging to see many young people in the crowd and that they do not only carry the hope for literature but for the future of South Africa. South African's were experiencing not only a difficult but an interesting period, and one and that they will hopefully build on what the older generations have built before them.

He congratulated author, Achmet Dangor on his literary award and added that Mr Dangor has been an important figure not only in politics but in the literary world.

Mr Gordhan also complimented Dr Zaheera Jina, the Organising Director of the Jozi Books and Blogs Festival saying that that it is wonderful to see a mathematician who could mix numbers and letters.

He asserted the importance of writers not only reflecting the reality of the present day but also reflect on reality. This will help understand what is happening in a more informed manner. A very important task and for society at present.

Mr Gordhan reflected on his childhood and admitted that his association with books was not a very a close one. He grew up in the Grey Street district of Durban and the library was only five minutes away in Victoria street. Libraries played a very important role as there weren't book shops and the library were also a central meeting point for students. Mr Gordhan's favourite reads were a diet of Hardy Boys, Perry Mason and of course, Shakespeare which was the set works in school around 1969.

"We had a good mix of people from a Black Consciousness background, Unity Movement background and later from a Congress Background as well. The congress guys would bring copies of the Freedom Charter, one or two articles about Mandela or other (Freedom Fighters), and the Unity Guys used to show off about a particular chapter or a particular line from Karl Marx. Black Consciousness made references to Malcolm X and others. So it was an interesting period."

After speaking about his early exposure to literature and the past, Mr Gordhan endeavoured to answer the question "why do we read?"

"One reads to satisfy one's curiosity. Curiosity, particularly for younger people, is an important characteristic to have. It encourages one to look for and enquire about things one does not understand whether it be in the sciences, arts, politics or business. And in today's world where there is so much of information, not all of us can harness at the same time the magnitude of what we are talking about, the right kind of curiosity is something we need to harness in young people.

Secondly, we would read to get a deeper understanding. What we have today is the superficiality of today, the descriptive character of what is written. Understanding the underlying factors of why things happen is quite important.

Thirdly, in the 70's and 80's reading became a tool and guide for activism. Political morality is something you need firstly to understand and then practice and pursue. This is something that we will find missing in ourselves and many others today.

Fourthly, not just to understand an event but a trend. What are the trends that are dominating today's world? We should not only understand individual events but try to read and write about those things that will enable ourselves as writers and readers but more importantly also enable your readers, the general public. Give them the ability to understand trends so that they can command what is happening in the world and around them. Keeping information and facts and events defragmented is a disempowering exercise. It doesn't give us the ability to fully command what is actually going on. If you connect the dots you have a better understanding of what is going on".

Mr Gordhan congratulated the organizers for organizing the Jozi's Books and Blogs Festival. He noted that it is the first time he had attended a festival like this. He affirmed that "It is the public spirit which will keep our societies alive, keep people involved and it will teach young people to become familiar with



the better things in life, become more informed and educated, learn the art of learning so that they will forever be curious citizens in the future and inherit the world which we leave for them and more importantly improve on the world we leave for tomorrows generation as well."

Mr Gordhan concluded by saying that South Africa is a very lively country; one where people understand democracy, people know the sacrifices that have been made. He was complimentary about a more learned and engaged citizenry that is actively involved in events such as Jozi's Book & Books 2017. He was confident they will defend our sovereignty and extend our democracy. It is our guarantee for the future of a better South Africa.

# WHERE WORDS FAIL, PICTURES BEGIN.

By Azraa Sujee

The sky is draped with the gentle hues of early dawn. Peeking from beneath the blanket of the fading night, a ball of glimmering light shyly touches the horizon. You're walking across a bridge. There lies a river bank just beneath it. As your eyes adjust to the birth of sunrise, your ears are prickling with the steady ebb of the rivers flow. It is by mere chance that you decide to look over the railing. You are greeted with the sight of an old weathered boat, marooned on the shore, its fading red and white paint cracking against the wood. As you devour the setting in front of you, the epiphany hits that where words fail, the perfect picture begins.







pics: Yunus Chamda

It's a strange art, this thing called photography. Who would have thought man would one day be bestowed with the power of freezing time? Who would have thought that a moment could be made eternal? Who would have thought, that as man we could choose the precise second, the delicate focus, the intangible light that enters a lens and then bend it to create a living form of a moment past?

Well, it's evident some amongst us appreciate this endeavour or else we would never have been given our glorious spot at the Jozi's Books and Blogs Festival 2017. The obvious question would be, "why did a bunch of photographs decide to appear at a book festival?" As I hope my introduction proved, words can take us to the edge of a moment, but for each individual to experience something just as the storyteller wills it, that's when a picture is worth a thousand words.

With huge windows allowing the morning rays to glitter our exhibit, our little pop up gallery was greeted by various enthusiasts. You'd find the clustered groups who'd bustle about, giving a nod here, or a "this will look good in our lounge" gesture there. Speckled in this crowd, we also encountered a few budding photographers, who feasted on the images on display and were suddenly fuelled to make the transition from smartphone to digital camera. Better yet, was the rare and quite sporadic person, who stepped from one image to the next. Each frame earning a good five minutes of scrutiny, awe and appreciation.

In all honestly, who could blame these people. Weaving their way from black and white wildlife to dreamlike water scenes. From iconic film shots to star trails. From wrinkled hands to colour bursting flowers. From sun dripping landscapes to the intricate drop of water. The Roshnee Photo Club exhibit was diverse and refreshing. It showcased the eye and the perspective of the young, the old, and the imaginative. The images were left unattended, because sometimes art can't only be read, but demands to be interpreted. Some told tales of travels and adventures, others manipulated time and space. The gallery was meant to be an individual experience that allows for the connection between the viewer who receives and the capturer who is sharing.

I don't wish to offer you names of photographers or locations of scenes. No! My purpose in writing this is to allow you to grasp the intricacy of the power of a lens. It is to show the marriage of words and pictures. It is to make you understand that art cannot be limited or defined, it can only change form. So here's to the picture and here's to Jozi's Books & Blog Festival for allowing the Roshnee Photo Club to assault the senses of people through the stagnated captures of moments worth remembering!





# **IN DIALOGUE WITH PAMELA POWERS**

Shaakira Rahiman-Saleh

Roshgold New's Assistant Editor Shaakira Rahiman Saleh spent an early Saturday morning in a practical and engaging workshop hosted by the Jozi Books and Blogs Festivities. She chats to published writer and course facilitator Pamela Powers on the subject of "Dialogue". Here are her gems on how a would be writer can use dialogue to improve their stories and narratives. This tool can be very handy for school essays, poetry and even modern-day blogging.

**RG News: Tell us a bit about Pamela Powers and what drives you as a writer?**

"My passion would be "stories" really because I work as a script writer and editor for the SABC 2 soapie "Muvhango". I'm also a novelist of my first published book "Miss Conception". I've just released "Thing's Unseen" and I'm about to release my third new book 'Delilah Now Trending'."

**RG News: As a novelist tell us about your experience and journey in getting published?**

"The process for me was long, torturous and it took ages. A publisher initially expressed interest in my book and then let me down. I then got published a by Random House digitally in 2012. So I started writing when I was thirty six, I finished when I was forty and it only got published properly when I was forty four. That was my experience and it is not the same for everyone. What I'd like to say to people is age is not a barrier. Some people may hate your book, that's not a barrier either. If you believe in it go for it. There are a number of ways to get published including self-publishing. I do however believe in editing as I'm a Script Editor. I'm not into breaking people down with editing, I believe more in nurturing a writer, I don't believe in frightening people as they don't do their best when they're in a frightened state. I do believe you have to be straight with people though. I have personally loved being edited by Sarah Mcgregor of Clockwork Books for "Things Unseen". I loved the process and I loved the thought of making it better. As a writer you need to know that you have a good story and be open that you can make it even better."

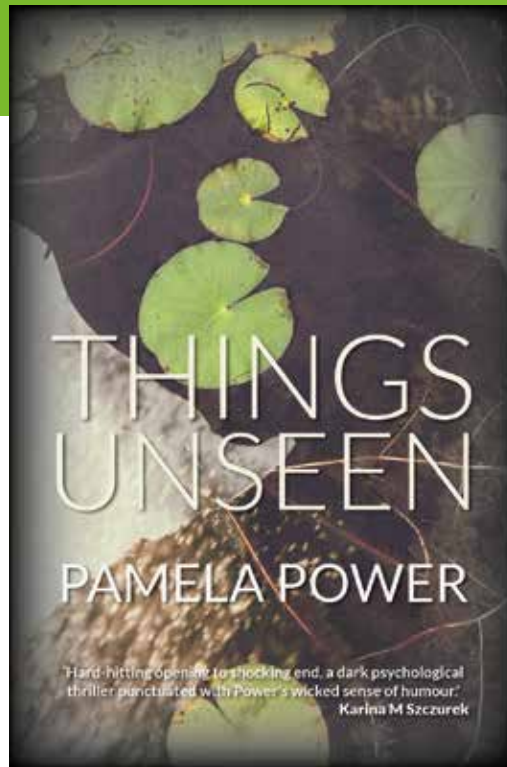
**RG NEWS: You also mention that you are a Script Writer for Muvhango, how challenging is it to write new stories that keep your viewers coming back for more? Tell us about the process.**

We have a story workshop once a month where we sit for two days and have an intense brainstorming session. What's unique about Muvhango is we have Venda, Xhosa and Zulu people working with us. What I love about working in these sessions the most is the respect for different cultures and that I learn so much through this experience. We are a family show so you won't see things like alcohol as our producer believes it promotes drinking. You also won't see things like hijackings or a lot of crime. We try and focus on the more positive aspects in South Africa. It is actually quite challenging to find mostly positive topics but we pride ourselves on that. It makes the series unique with the theme of "Nation Building" throughout the script.

**Why did you choose dialogue as the subject for your workshop with the Jozi Books and Blogs Festivities? Would you say that dialogue is something you can use in blogging which is quite a popular form of writing today?**

I chose dialogue because it is my strength and my books tend to be very dialogue-heavy because I'm a script writer. I also read a lot of poetry because rhythm is very important with dialogue. And for bloggers I think dialogue is great, I think it "lifts" your blog. I use it in my blogs all the time. I think sometimes if a blog can be quite descriptive and heavy you just bring in, for example, a spark of humour with dialogue. It connects people.

"At Clockwork books I receive more than three submissions a week and what I can tell you is that reading fiction with no dialogue is a 'drag'. It is one of the most common things I have to advise writers about is to add more dialogue. Good dialogue woven into text will give your writing rhythm and if you have good natural rhythm your readers will keep turning the pages"



Clockwork Books

# A few tips and tricks I learnt from Pamela Powers on dialogue and writing

Shaakira Rahiman-Saleh

**A** Don't be afraid to jump off the cliff: In the workshop Pamela encouraged all participants to be brave. Don't block your imagination. Don't imitate what other people do, be authentic. When you ask people for an original idea it often sends them into chaos, sometimes the first thing that comes to mind is the answer, be direct and be brave.

**B** Write about things you care about: Pamela Powers wrote a musical about raising kids and stand-up comedy about motherhood. Her first novel *Miss Conception* is about the struggle in raising kids. As she put it: "usually they say your first novel will be very autobiographical about things closest to your heart. I felt very strongly about these issues and that's why I wrote about it. I think it's good start to write about what truly has meaning to you."

**C** Don't throw your work away: Keep your writing safe on a computer and backed up, you never know if it can turn into a book or a movie later! Writers need content and you will be surprised when you come back to an idea and it works later.

**D** Beware of Cultural Appropriation: If you are writing about a culture other than your own you have to know the culture very well. As South Africans we are such a diverse nation, it is very important to understand different cultures and aspects in society. It is hugely important! We have to be sensitive to cultural appropriation but we must strike a balance by not shying away from topics or issues that need to be shared or discussed.



## F Practical First steps to your First dialogue:

1. As stated previously, choose a topic you care about. It will be easier to get down on paper.
2. Write a dialogue between two parties discussing the chosen topic or theme
3. It is recommended that the one character does not go over four lines without being interjected by the second character
4. Let there be rhythm. Characters should answer each other, on the odd occasion that they are not answering each other it could be for emotional reasons eg A teenager not answering his dad in a situation of a difference of opinion.
5. Speak Aloud: Dialogue is about Rhythm, speak aloud so you can hear the emotion and authenticity of your dialogue come through.
6. Ask yourself three questions:
  - Was the dialogue believable?
  - Did something happen? Example: a conflict situation between two people? Did the character change his/her stance at the end?
  - What happens next? In certain dialogue it is a good technique to use a "Cliff Hanger", ie the reader should be intrigued as to what happens next
7. Only write what is essential, editing is very important here. You will probably have a really lengthily and as Pamela put it "crappy" first draft that will need to be refined
8. We all love our own work but trust an experienced editor to guide you.
9. Continuity- The characters need to keep to their description and personality. You have to know the character well. It is wise for a writer to know your character, what colour are his/her eyes for example? Know how they respond to the world.
10. Understand what works and what doesn't work- you need to trust your intuition as well. That is the thing about the arts and with writing, its interpretative some may hate it and some may love it. And that's Ok.
11. Lastly once you are happy with your dialogue write a new page as if it were from a novel and add the narrative to your dialogue including exposition.
12. Have fun, feel the story and get into the dialogue- your readers will feel it too.

F Public Speaking: Pamela Powers is a trained actress with two drama degrees. Yet the idea of the book launch was daunting to her. She recommended that writers become comfortable with discussing their writing, they have to be able to connect with the public and their readers in public forums including social media.

Any last words to all writers and aspiring writers

G "Perseverance", to : "just finish it". Just get the words out. You may have a very "crappy" first draft but work at it. That's the only way you can improve.



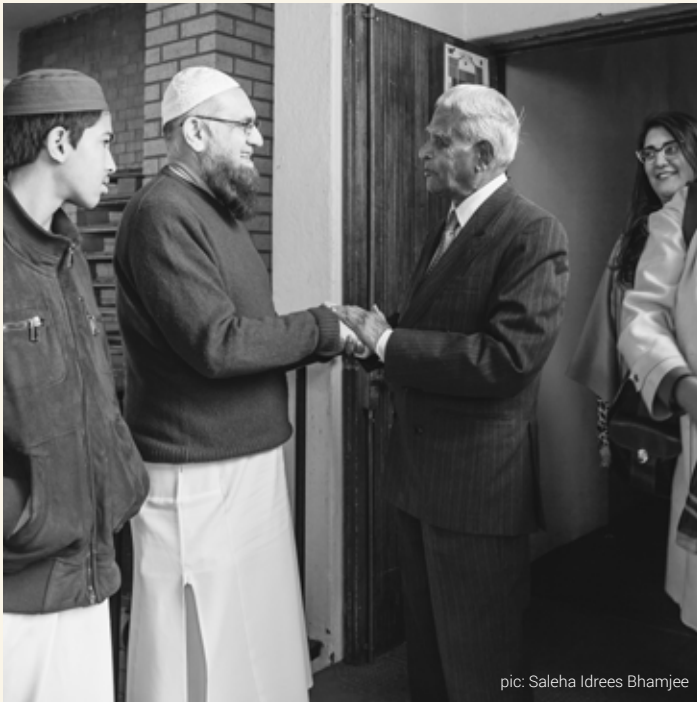
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# Jozi's Books and Blogs Festival 2017

CELEBRATING READERS AND WRITERS!



pic: Saleha Idrees Bhamjee

Mr. Ismail Vadi greeting Chotubhai Makan, a member of the Gandhi Satadbi



pic: Adnaan Bhabha

The Roshgold Team in preparation in the children's area



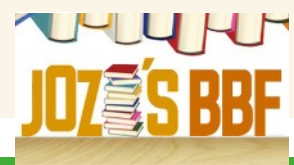
pic: Adnaan Bhabha

Blogger Sabeeha Mosam was MC for the Role of Love in Stories Section



pic: Saleha Idrees Bhamjee

Dignitaries and visitors attentive during the opening ceremony





Author Naseema Moola in conversation with Michelle Nkamakeng



Roshgold's Sannah Nhlapo looks on as the kids admire their gift prizes



L to R: Poet Khalida Moosa, Authors Yusuf Tilly, Zaheera Walker, Asleigh Giannossaro and Thumelo Moleleki in deep discussion during the Love and Literature session



Zahaab entertaining the kids while Roshgold's Michelle looks on



Making History: The youngest Author in South Africa, Michelle Nkamakeng 8 years old stands proud in between her Mum Lolo Nkamankeng (L) and Shaakira Rahiman-Saleh (R) from Roshgold

Dr. Zaheera Jina (Program Director) accepting a gift from Dimple Paima Patidar at the opening ceremony



pic: Saleha Idrees Bhamjee





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Al Baraka Bank has added impetus to efforts to promote a culture of saving amongst as a means of boosting economic growth.

Marking the beginning of the 2017/18 tax year, this commercial and Shariah-compliant bank has introduced the tax-free investment mechanism to assist clients to save more effectively for their future financial security.

Commenting on the move, the bank's Chief Executive, Mr Shabir Chohan, said: "We are fully supportive of Government efforts to actively promote an improved culture of saving in South Africa. We are continuously driven to make an impact on our customers' lives and for the greater good of society. Accordingly, our ongoing commitment to enhancing our offering by introducing this new investment - as a means of promoting savings - will, we believe, add significantly to our clients' overall banking experience and, importantly, help incentivise greater levels of both household savings and savings amongst our young people."

The new tax-free investment offering enables account-holders to enjoy the benefits of paying no tax on earnings, regardless of the investment period.

Mr Chohan said experience had shown the rate of household savings to be steadily dropping, averaging a mere 16% during the past 10 years, the result, to a large extent, of consumerism and a 'live-for-today' attitude.

With this country having one of the worst savings rates globally, the Government has initiated tax-free investments in a bid to change society's mindset, encouraging individuals to embark on sustained savings programmes, setting aside funds for the future.

Investors are freed from paying income tax on the returns from the Al Baraka Tax-free Investment tool and may invest up to R33 000 a tax-year and to a lifetime limit of R500 000, in line with all tax-free investments. However, exceeding the prescribed limits will result in penalties.

Mr Chohan also indicated that the bank's tax-free investment account may not be utilised as a transactional account and added that it would not be possible to apply debit or stop orders or ATM transactions from such an account. Only new accounts opened qualify, in order to promote additional savings.

"This is the ideal way to save effectively for one's future financial security, particularly for those who are not yet in the habit of saving and, especially, as a means of introducing children and teenagers to the discipline of saving instead of constantly living for today only."

"We all have a responsibility to ourselves to think about tomorrow and now is the time to think tax-free," said Mr Chohan.

# AGM

## 5 November 2017

Time: 9:30 am

Venue: Palm Continental Hotel,  
Johannesburg

Booking close: As soon as seating  
allocations are filled on system

All bookings will be done electronically on the web. Bookings will be open on the 30 September 2017 and closed once the venue limit is reached. Please look out for all Roshgold AGM news on our website, Facebook page and newsletters.

[www.roshgold.co.za](http://www.roshgold.co.za)

Email [anja@roshgold.co.za](mailto:anja@roshgold.co.za) for any information you may require.

**NO TELEPHONIC BOOKINGS WILL BE TAKEN**

# 33<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



## DEVELOPING A STRONG COMMUNITY THROUGH SUPPORTIVENETWORKS

*Together, towards tomorrow*

# Roshgold

INVESTMENT HOLDINGS LIMITED

# Many hands make light work- That's a team

Compiled by Shaakira Rahiman- Saleh



pic: Adnaan Bhabha

Roshgold was proud to support and be associated with the Jozi's Books and Blogs Festival. Our team was involved in the facilitation and co-ordination of the event. Our team of over fifteen individuals was relentless in its efforts to make it a huge success! When it came to D-Day the Roshgold Team clad in their blazers braved a cold winters morning. They arrived early to setup the Kinet centre for the children. Roshgold News and Roshgold Kidz Club proudly sponsored prizes, certificates and coordinated kiddies activities for the event. Team members provide feedback on their experience of this amazing event!

"Wow what a great turnout and a huge success! We were given the opportunity to assist and be part for a second year, and I must say it was so well organized. The school and its students had done a fantastic job. The Roshold team's hard work certainly paid off. Our Kids club mascot, Zahab made a grand appearance and brought many smiles not only to the kiddies but many adults too. There were many celebrities present at the event; from writers,

bloggers, community leaders, MPs, radio and television personalities. The 2017 event brought the Lenasia community together and the buzz was electric. The Jozi Book & Blogs Festival 2017 vision has grown into much more. It has been an honour to have been part of the event, and I hope we get the opportunity to be part of many more." *Aadilah Sallie, Roshgold Manager and Project Coordinator*



"As an avid reader and book lover I was excited to be given the opportunity to be part of this year's Jozi Books and Blogs Festival. It was a wonderful sight to see so many children and adults in attendance. The kids were eager to read and it is a rare occurrence in the technological age we are living in.

It was also a proud moment seeing that every child receive a Roshgold Kids club badge and money tins which I hope will encourage them to save and invest for their future. I look forward to be part of any future endeavour and seeing this amazing event become bigger and better." **Nazeera Cajee, Roshgold Consultant**

"I would say this years Jozi Books & Blogs Festival was well organized! The kids where on the move! My favourite Author of the day was Michelle Nkamankeng who published five books and she is only eight years old! She blew our minds! It gives me hope that the future can be so bright for young girls. The whole event was a success." **Sannah Nhlapo- Roshgold Consultant**

"I had the privilege of assisting Roshgold at the Jozi Books and Blogs festival. I spoke with the lovely and talented young child Author Stacey Fru after her session and what an inspiration she is. There were a few moments when the little ones asked Stacey questions and I felt so emotional by her answers as she explained how important education and reading is. She had my full attention throughout her session. And so was everyone else in the room. She is a wise little girl, inspiring the young to read and write. She inspired me to make more time to teach my own son to enjoy learning and reading. This was true highlight of my day!" **Michelle Taylor- Roshgold Legal Support**

"As a couple who assisted with promotion and support, we were inspired if not re-inspired to become more avid readers because we got first hand insight about the practice of reading and how it would benefit us and improve our lifestyles. We took many lessons that could help us become more proactive in our daily lives. An important learning was spending our free time reading instead of passively watching movies. Lastly, the day was such fun! It was phenomenal, being able to interact with the children and seeing them enjoying themselves. That was the highlight of the day." **Hamza and Lutfiyya Monga – Roshmed Hospital Investments.**

"It was my first time attending the humongous Jozi Books and Blogs Festival. It was worth attending. The festival for me was a life changing and eye opening occasion. I was so inspired by two young authors Stacey Fru and Michelle Nkamankeng. They motivated me to start reading books; which is something I was lazy to do. I also learned that hard work and dedication will lead you to your place called success. I was also excited to see Mr. Pravin Gordhan live for the first time. I felt honored to be in the same premises with such a humble and good leader of South Africa." **Sarah Mazia- Roshgold Consultant**

"My biggest highlight of the day was Zahab, the Kidz Club Camel Mascot making his debut appearance. He was a great hit with the children!

The vibe was electric! We attracted bookworms, bloggers and people who may not call themselves "readers" but expressed that they had a genuine interest in exploring the wonderful world of the written word. Whether it be traditional books or in a digital form attendees were interested. Writing as well as art and photography were exhibited and discussed for all to appreciate. Art as a form of self-expression for children was encouraged. Talent was all about and on show everywhere. I was proud to be part of the Roshgold Team which supported a much needed festival in our communities. It was a true pleasure working with the very capable and efficient Zaheera Jina, members and learners at SBSM School, Mask Events and the Jozis Books and Blogs Festival Team. Looking forward to Jozis BBF 2018!!! **Shaakira Rahiman – Roshgold Marketing**

Roshgold News and Roshgold Kidz Club would like to thank The Dadaville Gardens Pre-Primary School. They were kind to assist us with making the Kid Kinet Centre kid-friendly with props, colourful mats, play dough and fun activities to keep the kids busy and happy throughout the day. We also thank the Roshgold Team as mentioned as well as a few new Team Volunteers who assisted us on the day, including Adnaan Bhabha (our photographer and videographer), as well as Hamza Monga, Zuber Saleh and Moosa Ali for their efforts.

Thank you to the Jozi Books and Blogs Festival and all our partnering sponsors for a great experience of working with your respected organizations in achieving a successful and memorable event!



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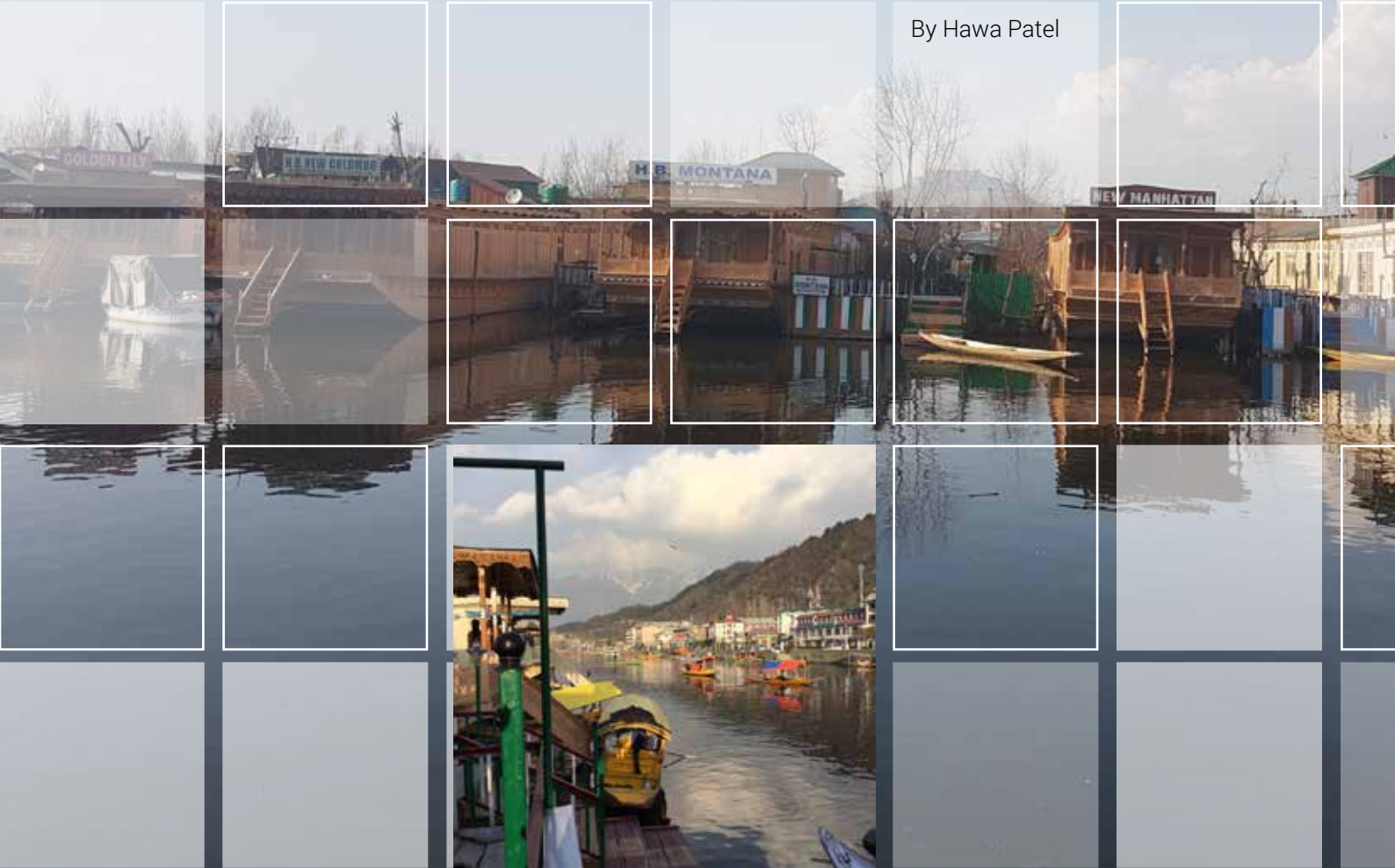
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# KASHMIR - A FORGOTTEN PEOPLE IN AN ENCHANTED LAND.

By Hawa Patel



Nestled in the northernmost region of the Indian subcontinent, Kashmir is a paradise for just about everyone. It is a place loved by many, due to its majestic charm and glorious landscapes. The Kashmiri conflict is territorial, primarily between India and Pakistan, having started just after the partition of India in 1947. Though the Kashmiri population has survived conquests, oppression and exploitation in their history, locals are so warm and welcoming. Kashmiris await tourists to enrich their economy.

My family and I travelled to India where we hopped on a flight to Srinagar. Our group of ten extended family members excitedly awaited the arrival to the most popularly spoken house boat in Srinagar.

## Day 1 - Srinagar

After a short flight from Mumbai, we arrived in Srinagar early in the afternoon. Founded in the 8th century, the city is surrounded by the Himalayan mountain ranges and wrapped around the Dal Lake. Sadly troubles of the past lead to desertion and neglect of the many fine house boats and buildings. The Dal Lake has shrunk to a mere sixth of its former self, but it still does not lack charisma. The tranquility is only disturbed by the gentle ripples created by the oar of boats men rowing their Chikaras ( gondola like boat). The lapping sounds at midnight can easily put a hypnotic trance.

The city falls in three parts, namely: the Commercial City (Uptown); Old City (Downtown - where the shopping is a lot less expensive), and the area around the lake. Shopping downtown is much cheaper where you can pick up bargains. Undoubtedly, Srinagar is a charming city with strong character and warm people. Srinagar is known for its handmade crafts and carpets.



The drive to the houseboat, along the lake is breathtaking, passing the many sites of Kashmiri untouched beauty. Bringing about the feeling of tranquility, peace and freedom, painfully ironic to the lives being led in Kashmir, the ride in the chikara is a must. It comes as highly recommended for visitors wishing to travel to the city.

Upon arrival we were served a delicious warm blend of a saffron infused drink popularly known as Kashmiri tea. We proceeded to visit Mughal gardens, which included the Nishat Bhag, Shalimar Gardens, Nazim Bhag, as well as the Botanical Gardens. Summers at the gardens are filled with beautifully bloomed tulips. However, the snow covered landscapes during the winter are just as beautiful. Further along the lake, passing the likes of poplar groves, hibiscus and willow trees, you arrive at the Hazratbal Mosque. Adorned in an impressive white marble dome, reminiscent of the former Mughal glory, the mosque is majestic, against the picturesque view of the lake.

A feast fit for royalty was served for dinner. After a sumptuous Kashmiri meal we retired early.

We were awoken before sunrise by the sound of shuffling in the room. We soon realized that it was the noise of a fire being lit for heat and hot water. As I sat on the balcony of the houseboat, listening to recitation of zikr (quaranic recitation) emerging from the speakers of the mosque brought a spiritual contentment in my heart.

### Day 2 - Palgam

After breakfast, we set off to a village called Palgam, some two and a half hours drive from Srinagar. We began a journey on horseback, up towards the villages. With vast fields clad in snow, one is able to understand why Palgam is not only a popular destination for honeymooners, but also a prime location for shooting of Bollywood movies.

Palgam is no less than a dream for nature lovers. The village boasts a variety of activities including, rafting, sledding, and gushing rivers ideal for angling. Many tourists enjoy camping alongside the Lidder River in the Aru Valley.

We visited factories where cricket bats are manufactured. My boys and nephew are besotted with cricket, were fascinated by the production process. Attention to detail truly makes for the perfect shot!

On our return we passed beautiful saffron fields. Kashmir is notorious for its plantation of the crocus sativus, a plant which produces beautiful lavender coloured flowers inlaid with crimson stigmas, commonly known as saffron. Saffron is spice which adds a regal taste to many dishes and is said to be a wonderful cure for ailments due to its anti-inflammatory properties.

Returning back to the houseboat, entering the city, the road bisects huge army barracks, in what is called the "Srinagar Containment Area." It reminded me of the checkpoints in Jerusalem. It was cozy sitting after dinner on the houseboat, enjoying Kashmiri tea with my nephew and niece the fireplace while hawkers came in their little chikara to sell some of Kashmir's beautiful goods.

### Day 3 - Gulmarg

We made our way early to the 'Meadow of Flowers', which is Gulmarg. The city can be a lovely sight in full bloom, with colourful flora displays in season.

Being winter, we enjoyed the snow along the prime hill stations. Gulmarg is a popular skiing destination for tourists. The annual Winter Gala is hosted between December and April. If neither skiing, ice skating, sledging or snowmobiling is for you, a gondola going up to the ski slopes comes to a stop to where the beauty of the majestic Himalayan Mountains can be taken in. The Gondola is one of the highest in the world and Gulmarg also boasts highest altitude golf course in the world. The course becomes Kashmir's major ski resort area in the winter

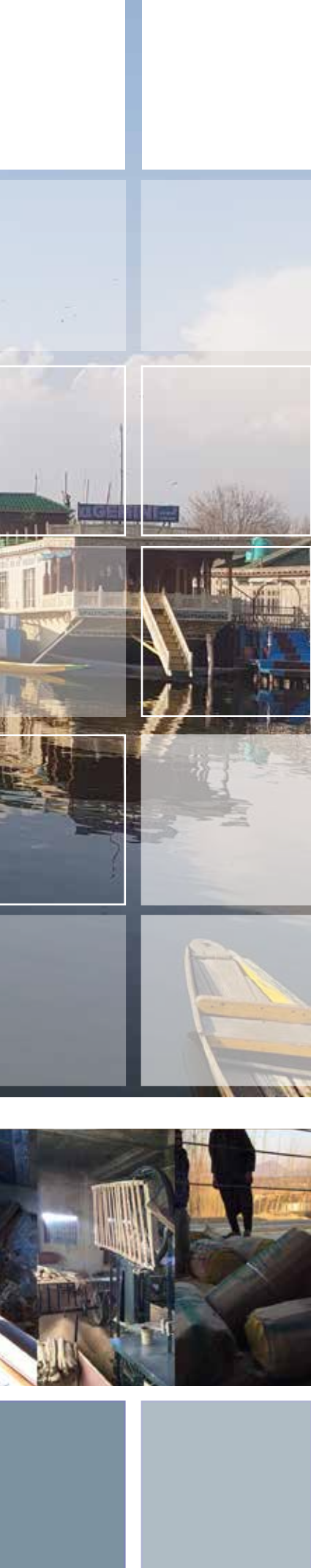
After hours of fun on the ski slopes, we took a late lunch and drove to the Kyber Hotel. The world-class resort stands at an impressive 8,825 feet above sea level. The beauty of this pristine setting in the Pir Panjal range of the Himalayas was a sight to behold. Experiencing skiing with the family on the Kashmiri slopes, riding a snowmobile, slicing through the snow was the highlight of my visit to Gulmarg.

### Day 4 – Old City

The drive through the Old City was fascinating. Known as Shehr-e-Khaas, it was once the hub of craftsmanship and manufacturing, with specialisation in the art of carpentry, weaving, metalworking and woodcarving. After a visit to the Jamiah Mosque for prayers, we walked through the bazaar. Clothing items sold here were affordable. We enjoyed engaging with the locals in the bazaar.

We set off on the next part of the journey. Yes, to take all the kids to Delhi to view the amazing Taj Mahal.

Planning a family get-away , honeymoon or an experience of untouched beauty and culture, then Kashmir awaits you!







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# I am a strong beautiful woman and I AM AWESOME!”

By Lolo Nkamankeng



Women are like roses growing from the fresh soil, a special diamond you want to keep forever. They fill their hearts with love and life and share it with others. When women get together in a group, the group intensely gets stronger and more powerful. They have hope in themselves, care for others, some even give their lives to save others.

You are your own woman. You are unique, talented, smart and kind. Don't listen to people if they say you're "useless, or not smart". Don't say "yes I should give up" but instead affirm that "No, you can't make me stop following myself and my life's true purpose". That is who a strong woman is, unique and strong.

A strong woman I look up to is Oprah Winfrey. I identify with her as she comes from a moderate background yet she never let it stop her; she dreamed big and followed her dreams. Her success today is a true inspiration to me. It shows you that you can start with humble beginnings and you can stand as a strong woman and achieve greatness. I often use the analogy that "The rejected stone is the corner stone." Often the person who is discarded at first, not taken seriously, but if they are determined they may surprise you with God's will and become the most honoured and most important people of our society.

Women should never be too hard on themselves. Women cannot succeed if half of them are held back. They consider their thoughts; what they think they become. Be the woman who knows that; "I am beautiful, and nothing can stop me from being beautiful."

When beautiful, soulful women dream, they also plan. When they see other people shine beautifully, they don't copy, they know that they are great in wonder. Always seeking the creativity within themselves and striving to unlock it. A strong woman is someone who never gives up, who keeps on going until she gets there. She is loyal to her family and friends and expects no more from others. Giving others the gift of thoughtfulness and supporting each other, loving each other through the worship of God, our Creator.

Women are very proud to be white or black, but white or black is not all they are. She is confident in her own skin and is confident that her dreams will come true, for if anyone's proof of it, it's the strong women around her. These Women of Wonder don't mind living in a man's world, for at least they can be a truly beautiful woman in it. Women should never let their bodies be controlled by men, don't ever allow your souls to be stepped on. Stand up against women and child abuse. You have the right to! Stand up for yourself and others and own your power to help and to heal yourself and those you care about. You have the right to be heard.

Lastly, remember that every great woman should be true to herself and the best thing a woman can hold onto in life is each other. One woman can make a difference but together women can rock the world! Always remember that "I am a strong beautiful woman and I AM AWESOME!"

***Lolo Nkamankeng is an entrepreneur, founder and CEO of LANSM EVENTS, wife, mother, speaker and many more.***



# PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY & HOPE THROUGH DIALOGUE

In April 2016, the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) published a report on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in South Africa. A literature review found that “the cause of GBV cannot be attributed to a single factor, but an interplay of individual, community, economic, cultural and religious factors interacting at different levels of society.”

“Factors ranged from gender inequality between men and women, social constructions of hegemonic masculinities, social perceptions of what it means to be a man, normalisation of violence, and cultural practices,” the report stated.

In accordance with the prophetic example of speaking out against injustice, Islamic Relief’s challenging advocacy and campaigning efforts give vulnerable and marginalised communities a strong voice, and actively lobby for positive change.

The organisation has adopted an integrated approach to protection and defines GBV as any harmful act carried out on a person because they are female or male. This may include domestic violence, sexual harassment, human trafficking, forced marriage and many more.

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"Our programmes usually take a rights-based, community-based and survivor-centred approach to the individual, family and community levels. We also mainstream protection principles into our humanitarian interventions which adhere to core humanitarian standards," Islamic Relief's policy on GBV and Child Protection (CP) reads.

As part of its objective to promote gender justice and child protection in order to change behaviour in communities, Islamic Relief South Africa partnered with World Vision International for the Channels of Hope for Gender training workshop, which took place in Cape Town last month.

According to IRSA workshop convenor, Taariq Mathiba, the Channels for Hope for Gender programme was aimed at equipping faith leaders to promote principles of equality to build harmonious relationships within families, faith groups and communities.

"Channels of Hope for Gender is an innovative approach to exploring gender roles, relations, norms and values from an Islamic perspective. The programme methodology challenged Imams, Ulema and community leaders to acknowledge and act upon gender injustices in their communities."

"Faith leaders are often among the most influential members in a community. Their beliefs and values can inspire entire communities to care for and love one another. Without proper information and insight, the misunderstandings of faith leaders can inadvertently promote stigma and discrimination," Mathiba added.

Islamic Relief Worldwide's Senior Policy Advisor on Gender, Iman Pertek, said it was "important to engage faith leaders in dismantling myths and religious or cultural misinterpretations that support the abuse of girls and women."

She added: "Faith leaders were best positioned to educate, inform and influence the views of the community, especially in Muslim-majority contexts."

As South Africa commemorates Women's Month this August, Islamic Relief will be hosting community dialogues based on some of the outcomes of the Channels of Hope workshop with its' rights holders at the Osizweni Community Centre in Ennerdale, south of Johannesburg.

In addition, Islamic Relief South Africa will also be rolling out its 12 for 1 sanitary pad campaign, which was aimed at rallying the community to donate sanitary pads that were handed out to schoolgirls and young women.

The project was initiated last year and 284 learners from the Bonteheuwel High School in Cape Town, received a year's supply of sanitary pads.

For more information about Islamic Relief South Africa's initiatives to promote gender equality, visit [www.islamic-relief.org.za](http://www.islamic-relief.org.za) or email [info@islamic-relief.org.za](mailto:info@islamic-relief.org.za).

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The Islamic Dawah Movement of Southern Africa (IDM) and "IDM Pretoria" are 2 SEPERATE and independent organisations. The Islamic Dawah Movement of Southern Africa has built over 50 Masajid, operates over 25 Islamic Centres in South Africa and is involved with translations of the Quran and other literature into local languages

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*Congratulations to Raashida Khan for winning Irtiqa Magazine's The "2017 South African Muslim Women's Short Story Competition". In addition to publishing her full story Raashida also wins a R 750 Gift Voucher for a "All About Writing" writing course, sponsored by Roshgold. Raashida Khan is a BA Hons (Economic History) graduate, has worked as a project manager at three NGOs and in client service at several marketing and advertising agencies. She loves books and reading and has always wanted to write fiction. She has written a novel, which she is hoping to get published later this year.*

# Your Voice, My Strength

by Raashida Khan

Amina painstakingly applied the make-up to shield the bruise on her left cheek. Fortunately, there was no cut and not much swelling. It still hurt like hell though. Luqmaan never left tell-tale marks. That left him only her whole body since she was covered head to foot. All anyone saw of her was her face. She herself, looked away from the mirror when showering or dressing. While applying salve or balms, the soft, creased lids almost closed over the eyes that were nowadays glassy. There was not an inch of her fragile frame, her husband of fourteen years, had left unmarked over the last nine.

Nine is my lucky number. Maybe it will stop before ten. At her very core though, she felt it would stop only with her death. She wrapped her head scarf carefully, ensuring all loose tendrils were tucked in and no make-up smudged off. Amina's narrow feet, in flat pumps, could not be seen and barely made a sound. The unadorned, frayed hem of her abaya was long enough to sweep the ground, so it looked like she floated to the kitchen. She read a Yaaseen as she unpacked the washing machine, defrosted meat, and mindlessly passed the morning with her daily routine – her endless chores.

As she sorted pretty pink socks, her heart contracted with love for her children. Luqmaan, on the other hand, never showed any interest because he did not like girls. The only thing he despised more was Amina's inability to produce a son. His cruelty had turned to abuse after Bilquis, their second daughter, was born. The beatings had stopped when she fell pregnant a third time, but when this pregnancy produced another girl, they started up immediately, intensifying in ferocity and frequency. The litany of complaints against Amina grew. Zaynub, her youngest, a gentle soul with an ever-ready smile, had not started speaking. She was almost five now, so even the gurgling and childish grunts had stopped. The child was silent. When you marry an uneducated girl, this is what happens. Luqmaan's words echoed in Amina's ears. You get idiot children.

Zaynub was entertaining herself. Amina chatted to her nonstop. It was a two-way conversation; Amina asking and answering questions for both of them, changing her lilt as she spoke for her daughter.

'Come, baby. Let's go fetch Fathima and Billie. But, Mom, I'm still playing. Okay, Zaynie. Finish up. We'll leave in five minutes.' Zaynub heard but show any indication that she understood. Amina reached for her hand. 'How about a snack?' She pointed towards the kitchen counter where she had laid out sliced apples in a plastic plate, cookies in a little bowl, and nuts in another. She knew the girl would go for the nuts, but the literature encouraged giving the child choices in the hope that this would encourage her to talk.

The conclusions of the three assessments concurred. 'There is no physiological reason for Zaynub not to speak. Her hearing is excellent too.' Speech and play therapies were recommended, but Luqmaan had refused. What would people say? Any attempts at persuading him otherwise led to confrontations, another reason to lash out his frustrations on her. Amina looked heavenward, praying for a change of Luqmaan's heart. 'I'm not wasting money on white people's nonsense,' was his feeble excuse, and then he just laid down the law – NO THERAPY!

Last night, Amina should have left it at that, but she was so vested in trying to convince him she missed the tell-tale sign of the hand closing into a fist. 'Shut up!' he shouted and smacked his phone into her mouth. She tasted iron and felt dizzy. He slapped her again and aggressively pushed her onto the bed. He straddled her as his lips bared menacing teeth. 'You want more?' His right arm was raised to strike again. Amina shook her head and kept silent. 'Just shut up about this shit, if you know what's good for you.' Another stinging blow ended the conversation and, gratefully, the beating too.

Now that Luqmaan had refused again, she had no choice but to take Zaynub to therapy in secret. It would be difficult, but she would make a plan. Over the years, she had tried everything to break into her daughter's cocooned world and draw her out, to help her become a butterfly. No. Not a butterfly. A bird. A singing nightingale. Reading and other forms of stimulation that she could do herself were exhausted. Every supplication to Allah: khatams and duas, mannats, blowing furtively recited prayers on water for Zaynub to drink, reading a verse from the Quraan as she gently placed her hand on Zaynub's throat and Zaynub's hand on hers, taaweezs from Maulanas, and an endless array of dietary changes recommended by the hakeem. She never became despondent or dejected, as she persevered, for He would grant her prayers. Zaynub would talk. Of that, Amina was convinced. She was accepting of His will and plan, and practised patient, nurturing love with Zaynub as she waited for His miracle.

At one-thirty, she left to fetch her older girls from school. The heat in the car was stifling. She pulled off her headscarf and revelled in the feeling of the cool air-conditioned breeze against her neck.

'Hey, Zaynub? What if your father were to see me now? Oh, mom, he would be so mad!' Her voice lilted when she spoke for the silent child. Zaynub's attention was focused on the school entrance. 'You want to join your sisters, huh, baby? Come to school like a big girl? Yes. Oh, Mom, can I? Please? When? Soon, baby. Next year, you can start grade R.'

Amina played with the child's soft, brown locks. 'You just have to start talking for yourself. But then you will be all alone at home, Mom. How can I leave you? Shnookums, you have to start school next year. Don't worry about me. When you're back every day, you can tell me all about it.'

Zaynub's expression changed, and she smiled broadly, showing her pearly teeth as she bounced up and down in her booster seat. Sure enough, her sisters were racing to the car. Each hugged Zaynub and showered her with kisses. The girls then softly hugged their mother, having learnt from a young age not to squeeze too hard, never knowing where a fresh bruise or fractured bone lay behind the layers of dark fabric.

At home, the older girls disappeared into their bedrooms while Amina readied lunch. She kept up her running commentary with Zaynub. 'Can't wait for your girls to be big enough to help me. Then I won't have to be in the kitchen all day. You love it, Mom. Admit it. You love cooking and baking. Haha! You're right, Shnookums. Know me too well. Clever girl!'

After dropping the older girls at madressah, Amina took Zaynub for the first session of therapy. Please, Allah. Please, don't let it be too late for Zaynub.

Lisa, the therapist, was professional and knowledgeable. She, in turn, was impressed with Amina's research and detailed record of Zaynub's history. She spoke kindly. 'Okay. I'll show you where you can observe us without being seen or heard.'

Amina hugged Zaynub. 'Mom will be right outside, Shnookums. Lisa and you are going to have a great time.'

For the next fifty minutes, Amina watched and waited and prayed. She prayed for a word, a sound. But there was nothing. Zaynub ignored Lisa, as though she did not exist. When it ended, Lisa was brief. 'It's the first session. It's too early to tell. Let's not rush things or jump to any conclusions.'

'Anything? I mean, is there anything I should be doing for her or with her?'

'I think you're doing everything right. Be patient.'

Amina paid and glanced at her watch. There was just time enough to fetch the girls from madressah, cook, and get the girls bathed and started with homework before Luqmaan came home. As she turned into the yard, however, her heart skipped a beat. His car was in the driveway. She wondered how long he had been home. Usually, she would have only left thirty minutes earlier to be on time for collection, but not today.

'Dad is home.' Her usual lilting cadence was replaced by a high-pitched tone. The older girls rushed in, but Zaynub ran to her mother and clung to her legs, wanting to be picked up. 'But you are too heavy for me now.' Amina hoisted the child and balanced her on her hip anyway. Zaynub's fair bare legs looked even whiter against Amina's black abaya.

'Assalamu-a-laikum,' Amina greeted, as was her habit when she walked in, even if the house was empty, she called the greeting for the angels in the house. Why is Luqmaan home? Today of all days!

Luqmaan summoned her to their bedroom. 'Where were you?' The words were spat out, the voice guttural.

'Madressah. I went early. I had to help Mualimah.'

Read on....



'Liar! You went to extension five.'

Amina's mouth dropped open. How did he know? Her stomach tightened. She could hear her heart thudding in her chest. Zaynub clung tighter, laying her body flat against Amina's as though she wanted their bodies to merge.

'Bitch! Cheat on me and lie on top of it! Who is he?' Luqmaan shouted and covered the distance between them ominously.

Amina instinctively put her arm up. 'Let me explain.'

'Fucking explain? Lie, you mean.'

Amina begged, 'Wait. Please, Luqmaan. Let me take Zaynub downst—'

Luqmaan ignored Amina's plea and grabbed her arm throwing her onto the bed. 'I'll show you, bitch,' he growled.

Zaynub squirmed out from under her mother and put her body between her parents. 'Stop!' Zaynub commanded. The word, her very first, had the impact of stilling everything in the room – Luqmaan's hands that wound tightly into fists fell to his sides, the vitriolic threats quietened, and he stood rooted to the spot.

Amina sat bolt upright and stared at Zaynub. Did she really speak? Did I hear Zaynub's voice? The guidance she had been given about her reaction when Zaynub did speak flew out the window, together with her fear. She placed her hands on Zaynub's shoulders and turned her around so their faces were centimetres apart. 'Zaynub?'

Zaynub looked at her father and spoke again. 'Stop. Dad. Don't hit my Mom.' The voice that had never been used before rang clear and strong.

Luqmaan stared and then his face creased into a scowl, making him appear monstrous. 'You witch! Who the hell are you to tell me what to do? Learn all this from your stupid, uneducated mother. I'll kill you!' He lunged towards the child.

Amina stood up tall and pushed him away with all her might. 'No! Don't you touch her!' Nothing and no one would harm her child. Luqmaan fell against the floor with a heavy thud, and his head connected with the dressing table with a loud crack.

He screamed and touched the side of his head, howling in pain and fear when he saw blood. 'Blood! Blood?' His voice was soft and teary.

'Oh, please. Stop with the theatrics. It's a small cut. You'll be fine. It's nothing compared to what you've put me through.' Amina felt empowered. First by Zaynub's words, and then by seeing Luqmaan's reaction to her show of strength. 'Do not ever raise your hand or voice to me or my children again. Do you understand?' Hand-in-hand, the diminutive mother and daughter towered over Luqmaan. Luqmaan cowered, staring mutely. He looked shocked, terrified. He nodded once then looked away.

Zaynub and Amina strode out of the bedroom, united in their power and their protection of each other. For years, Amina was Zaynub's voice. Today, Zaynub repaid her ten-fold when she spoke. Spoke for herself and for her mother.

'My voice. Your voice. Our voice. One voice.' Amina sang the words as they bounded away. We will never be silenced again.

### *Glossary*

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| abaya             | loose, flowing full length dress worn as a sign of modesty. Usually black in colour      |
| Yaaseen           | significant verse from the Quraan. Considered the 'heart' of the Quraan                  |
| madressah         | Islamic school attended by children to learn about and how to practise the religion      |
| khatam            | literally, "to complete/completion". To read the entire Quraan                           |
| dua               | prayer   |
| mannat            | a type of vow to do something specific (such as give to charity) if a prayer is answered |
| taaweez           | an amulet/talisman   |
| Maulana           | a learned scholar/holy man   |
| hakeem            | a homeopath who treats and prescribes according to the Quraan                            |
| Mualimah          | female madressah teacher   |
| Assalamu-a-laikum | Literally, 'Peace be upon you'. Muslim greeting  |

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# A DARK, EDGY LIFESTYLE STATEMENT



Rolls-Royce Sandton recently launched the Rolls-Royce Black Badge in South Africa. This new series comes in Ghost and Wraith only, and what more fitting place to launch the cars than the newly revamped Kyalami race track

**AUTHOR:** Torque Talk is a member of SAGMJ

**B**lack Badge is an attitude to life, an aspect of the Rolls-Royce brand that appeals to those people who are elusive and defiant, the risk takers and disruptors who break the rules and laugh in the face of convention. They are driven by a restless spirit. They play hard and they change the world. Technically and aesthetically Black Badge is the alter ego of Rolls-Royce, darker, more assertive, more confident and powerful, and more demanding. With Black Badge we have created the most commanding presence on the super-luxury landscape. It is a truly transformative moment for our great brand,' enthuses Torsten Müller-Ötvös, CEO of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars.

Today's generation of young, self-empowered, self-confident rule-breakers are just as uncompromising and unapologetic in their choice of living and lifestyle as their predecessors. They follow the road less travelled, live the unconventional life, darkly obsessed by their own pursuits and accomplishments from which they derive a pure adrenaline rush.

The result is Black Badge.

## **AN ALTER EGO FOR A NEW BREED OF CUSTOMER**

Rolls-Royce Black Badge speaks to the darker, more assertive, confident and demanding aesthetic of these customers. As a truly bespoke response to their desires, the interplay of brand and customer

has had a transformative effect on the appearance and substance of Rolls-Royce Ghost and Wraith. The result is Ghost Black Badge and Wraith Black Badge.

## **THE SUBSTANTIVE TRANSFORMATION OF AN ICON**

The transformation begins with the 'Flying Lady' who changes not in design, posture or material, but in colour to represent the owner's dark obsession. She mutates into a high-gloss black vamp, proudly scything through the night-time cityscape. The Double R badge on the prow, flanks and aft of every Black Badge motor car, inverted to become silver on black while chrome surfaces such as the front grille surround, boot lid finisher, lower air inlet finisher





and exhaust pipes turn dark. The multiple layers of paint and lacquer that go into creating Black Badge Black are repeatedly hand polished – the most exacting painting and polishing process ever used for a solid paint colour.

The ‘Unlimited’ infinity logo is also embroidered on the Black Badge’s upholstery as black leather combines with vibrant colours of Tailored Purple in Ghost Black Badge and Cobalto Blue in Wraith Black Badge, delivering a more edgy feel to the cabin.

The final touch? The moody light cast from the black starlight headliner and reflected around the cabin from the polished fascia to create a darkly atmospheric ambience.

In Ghost Black Badge it is important to ensure rear compartment passengers’ comfort by maintaining Rolls-Royce’s renowned ‘Magic Carpet Ride’. Rolls-Royce engineers used the flexibility of the 6,6-litre V12 engine to make Ghost Black Badge a little more menacing. Subtle engine output modifications see power increase by 40 bhp (30 kW) to 603 bhp (450 kW) and torque by 60 Nm (840 Nm) compared to the current Ghost, whilst upgrades to the eight-speed automatic transmission give Ghost Black Badge an added sense

of urgency in how it delivers its power.

Wraith Black Badge is a completely different proposition. Already the most powerful Rolls-Royce in the world at 623 bhp (465 kW), Wraith has always been the most driver-focused car in Rolls-Royce’s model range. However, understanding how driven this new breed of customer is and their wish to push the boundaries of life, Rolls-Royce’s engineering team worked painstakingly to give this most phenomenal fastback coupé a uniquely discernible extra edge.

Again, upgrades to the eight-speed automatic transmission inject a level of added urgency in how Wraith Black Badge delivers its power.

During deceleration or braking, the transmission downshifts a few rpm sooner, providing the extra security of added engine braking and thereby delivering a more spirited drive.

The result is a tauter and slightly more physical driving-focus with significantly increased handling capability, a high degree of steering feedback, and more neutral cornering characteristics.

## ENGINE



WRAITH BLACK BADGE  
6,5 L V12 CYLINDER

## POWER



465 KW

## TORQUE



870 NM

## 0-100 KM/H



4,5 SECONDS

## PRICE

POA

With its speed-dependent steering adjustment, the car delivers a greater sense of security, even at high speeds, as the weight of the steering adjusts to the speed of the car.

Always conscious of the safety of its owners and other users of the road, Rolls-Royce has also upgraded the brakes of both Black Badge models, increasing the diameter of the front brake discs by one inch for a swifter and more direct brake pedal response. As a final safety enhancement, Wraith Black Badge has been equipped with automatic LED headlights ensuring optimum night vision while scything through the dark. ■

# Attention Mathematics Teachers: Take up the challenge to create opportunities for your learners to reason mathematically

By Dr Zaheera Jina (PhD, WITS)



In present day mathematics classrooms, teachers are viewed as sole classroom authorities with respect to their subject. They decide which curriculum knowledge is to be learned, they demonstrate how to solve problems and they evaluate learners' responses. The learners listen to their teachers explain procedures and then they solve tasks accordingly. Much of what learners learn is how to do school mathematics, i.e., how to learn rules and apply procedures to get the right answers quickly, in order to do well on tests and examinations (Boaler, 1997). They become participants in teacher-centred practices, focusing on curriculum knowledge. As a result, teachers tend to be the only persons in the room who actually talk about mathematics, and they do this while unaware of how their learners are making sense of the mathematics.

A key focus of my articles is on how teachers need to help learners to reason mathematically. My focus is on ways in which learners represent and connect aspects of mathematical knowledge, the ways they understand mathematical ideas, use them in problem solving and justify their thinking. The key idea is that learning with understanding is more powerful than simply memorizing (Kilpatrick, Swafford, & Findell, 2001). Teachers can stimulate reasoning among learners through the kinds of tasks they select, the questions they ask and through the ways they interact with learners.

Stein, Grover, Henningsen, Smith & Silver (1996; 2000) use the concept of mathematical tasks to study the connections between teaching and learning in classrooms and view the curriculum as a progression of academic tasks. They define a mathematical task "as a classroom activity, the purpose of which is to focus students' attention on a particular mathematical idea" (1996, p.460). They argue that if the teacher selects and uses tasks that require learners to carry out calculations or procedures only, s/he is unlikely to promote mathematical reasoning. Stein et al (2000) defined four levels of cognitive demand of mathematical tasks. Memorization tasks involve reproducing previously learned facts, rules, formulae, or definitions. Memorization tasks do not require any explanation from learners; they are straightforward and learners use well known facts to solve them. Procedures without connection to meaning tasks require reproduction of a procedure but without connection to underlying mathematical concepts. Such tasks are focused on producing correct solutions rather than developing mathematical understanding. Procedures with connection to meaning tasks focus learners' attention on the use of procedures for the purpose of developing deeper levels of understanding of mathematical concepts and ideas. Such tasks focus learners on the procedures of solving mathematics problems, but in a meaningful way. Doing mathematics tasks do not require any procedure to be followed. There is no predictable way of solving the problems. In such activities there is more than one way of solving the activity. Learners working with such tasks need to analyse and actively examine task constraints that may limit possible solution strategies and solutions.

The cognitive demand of a task depends on the level of the learner, not only on the task itself. Learners can raise and also lower the level of the tasks by the way they solve them. For example, if a task is selected as a procedure without connection to meaning a learner

could solve it by making connections to meaning, thus raising the level of the task. In order to encourage mathematical reasoning, I encourage teachers to give learners tasks that are of different levels, including the higher levels. If learners are given only tasks that are of a lower level, they will find it difficult to tackle higher-level tasks. A reminder that we as teachers need to increase the level of the tasks which we give learners is a study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) (2012) which shows that the results of the most proficient learners in South Africa in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Studies (TIMSS) 2011 came close to the averages of learners in Singapore, Chinese Taipei, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Finland, Slovenia and the Russian Federation – the top performing countries in the TIMSS. The unfortunate reality is that on average, South Africa's learners came a disappointing second last in TIMSS 2011 (Mullis et al., 2012). Further research, (Human, Van de Walt and Posthuma, 2015) shows that international countries aim to develop mathematical proficient learners with higher-order mathematical reasoning skills, whereas South Africa is more content-driven with a focus on procedural fluency.

A crucial element of Stein et al's framework is the relationship between task set up and task implementation. Tasks at set up are those that are selected by the teacher. They can be from textbooks, worksheets, written work on the chalkboard, any material that is relevant for the task, or the teacher giving learners a verbal instruction on what to do during the lesson. Task implementation is defined by the manner in which students actually work on the tasks, usually in interaction with the teacher. Often tasks that are set up at a higher level decrease in level as they are implemented (Stein et al., 1996; Stein et al., 2000). This can happen for a number of reasons: learners might choose to work at a lower level than the task requires, ignoring the higher level task demands; and teachers might give learners too much help which reduces the level. Stein et al (1996) argue that "classroom norms, task conditions and teachers' and students habits and dispositions" (p.461) can all influence how tasks change at implementation. Their research shows that tasks are usually maintained at the same level or decline in level.

One of the ways in which teachers can help to raise or lower the levels of tasks is through their questions. Questions and answers are arguably the main way in which teachers and learners communicate (Sullivan & Clarke, 1991). The nature and range of questions used by the teacher in whole class interactive sessions and in small group interactions can affect how mathematics is seen and discussed in the classroom. Questions can support learners' thinking and may focus their attention on asking questions themselves (Watson & Mason, 1998). Whole class interaction can stimulate discussion and promote critical thinking. However different kinds of questions and different interaction patterns may promote mathematical reasoning to different extents (Brodie, 2007). Boaler and Brodie (2004) have developed a framework of the types of questions which teachers can employ in their lessons.

| Question Type  | Description  |
|--|--|
| 1. Gathering information leading students through a method | Requires immediate answer<br>Rehearses known facts/procedures<br>Enables students to state facts/procedures              |
| 2. Inserting terminology                                   | Once ideas are under discussion, enables correct mathematical language to be used to talk about them                     |
| 3. Exploring mathematical meanings and/or relationships    | Points to underlying mathematical relationships and meanings. Makes links between mathematical ideas and representations |
| 4. Probing, getting students to explain their reasoning    | Asks students to articulate, elaborate or clarify ideas  |
| 5. Generating discussion                                   | Solicits contributions from other members of class   |
| 6. Linking and applying                                    | Points to relationships among mathematical ideas and mathematics and other areas of study/life                           |
| 7. Extending thinking                                      | Extends the situation under discussion to other situations where similar ideas maybe used                                |
| 8. Orienting and focusing                                  | Helps students to focus on key elements or aspects of the situation in order to enable problem-solving                   |
| 9. Establishing context                                    | Talk about issues outside of math in order to enable links to be made with mathematics                                   |

Table 2: Categories of teacher's questions (Boaler & Brodie, 2004)

Type 3 to 9 questions might be significant in raising the level of tasks while type 1 might decrease the cognitive demands of tasks. This is because question types 3 to 9 focus more on conceptual relationships and learners' meanings, which are characteristics of tasks of higher levels.

**It is crucially important that teachers allow learners to make sense of mathematics and help draw their attention to how they do so through the types of questions asked. Creating opportunities for learners to reason mathematically is a central practice which teachers need to learn and become skilled at. I challenge teachers to adopt task and question practices in their lessons and share their challenges. Write to me, Dr Zaheera Jina at zaheera.jina@yahoo.com and we will tackle this domain together. Looking forward to hearing from you.**





# It is who I am

By Samia Banoo 11 years old



It all started four years ago when I was seven years old and standing on the stage of the school hall. I had to say what I would like to become. I remember saying 'I would like to become an artist. A mom in the crowd, who was an art teacher, told my mom to send me for art classes. And so I started going for art classes with Mam Lizelle.

Mam Lizelle taught me to draw from landscapes to self-portraits. I went every week and did not want to leave! I was so happy. I knew I could draw so much more than just "stick men" and triangular trees, it was awesome!

Art is my hobby and I can be drawing anything on a blank piece of paper. My teacher had many drawings displayed on the classes' walls. This inspired me on how I could make a drawing look like the real thing. I told her how much I liked it and she said I could do the same thing if I practiced and tried very hard.

I started working harder and harder and when I turned ten years old my teacher started helping me draw more difficult art. She taught me how to add shadows to drawings, how to mix colours and I learnt about the colour wheel. Soon after she allowed me to bring my own pictures and said that she would only help me with mistakes.

And believe me, my mistakes were many!

I now only know that the time and effort it takes for one picture is unbelievable. But I know it is fun and worth it in the end. It usually takes me six to eight hours to complete one picture.

And surely, if love and effort work together I should expect a masterpiece. Art relaxes me from a busy day and gives me energy. When I am bored I surf the internet and search for pictures to draw then set myself to produce the picture.

I am addicted to art because it keeps me busy and relaxed. Everything I observe in nature is beautiful and because I don't want to lose or forget a beautiful image I capture it on a piece of paper and let my hands stroke the canvas. I love art .... It is who I am.



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