

EDITOR'S VIEW

I am speaking out, my voice will be heard

AGAINST the backdrop of the past week, with the scourge of violence against women across the whole country making news, Independent Media has launched a moving and powerful initiative called #MYPROMISE, of which the POST is a part.

#MYPROMISE is aimed at encouraging men to speak up and be accountable – not just for their own actions but, for those around them – and to commit to setting the right example for themselves and other men and to those who will follow in their footsteps.

The simple premise of the campaign is that it doesn't take a real man to read an advert, but it will take a real man to read this particular advert out loud.

Independent Media is also asking men to record this promise and send it out into the world and actively encourage other men to follow suit.

The time for being passive is past, it is action that is required, and Independent Media hopes that this action will be the catalyst for real systemic change beyond just awareness.

The pledge is:

*I, Aakash Bramdeo, speak out aloud as I promise to never be silent while you suffer.*

*To speak up, instead of speaking down.*

*To condemn, instead of condone.*

*To object, instead of objectify.*

*I know I will never understand your deepest fears, because only a woman could, but I promise to do everything I can to make our country a better place for you.*

*A place where you never have to fear walking home alone.*

*Where you never have to worry about what men will think about the clothes you're wearing.*

*Where you never have to worry about being raped and killed.*

*Where women never have to fear strangers or family, just because they're men.*

*Where men stop protecting other men, just because they're men.*

*I promise to never mute offensive chat groups and inner circles, but rather unmute myself and speak out.*

*I promise to stand up and be counted.*

*To be accountable.*

*I promise to be more than a man, because being a brother, father, son or uncle is not enough.*

*I promise to make sure your voice will always be heard.*

I encourage you to take up this pledge.

See Page 9 and take action now.

The Quote

Empathy is the starting point for creating a community and taking action. It's the impetus for creating change.

MAX CARVER  
American actor

POST

FOUNDED 1955

Editor Aakash Bramdeo  
Newsdesk 031 308 2421  
Advertising 031 308 2004  
Subscriptions 0800 204 711  
Deliveries 031 308 2022

Mail: PO Box 47549, Greyville, Durban, 4023  
E-mail: post@inl.co.za  
Web: www.thepost.co.za  
Facebook: facebook.com/postnewspaper/  
Twitter: @PostNewspaperSA  
Instagram: @/post\_newspaper/

INDEPENDENT

PRESS OMBUDSMAN

Jovial Rantao is Independent Media's Press Ombudsman. Rantao is the chairperson of The African Editors Forum and the Southern African Editors Forum. Complaints relating to editorial content can be sent to him via complaints@inl.co.za

POST is printed by Insights Publishing, Independent Media, 18 Osborne Street, Durban. The copyright in the literary and artistic works contained in this newspaper and its supplements, as well as in the published editions and any other content or material (including in any online version), belongs exclusively to Independent Newspapers (Pty) Limited unless otherwise stated. The copyright, including the reproduction and adaptation of any content or material contained in this newspaper and its supplements, is expressly reserved to the publisher, Independent Newspapers (Pty) Limited, under Section 12(7) of the Copyright Act of 1978. The circulation of POST is certified by the Audit Bureau of Circulations, which can be contacted at 2nd Floor, 7 St David's Park, St David's Place, Parktown, 2193 or PO Box 47221, Parklands 2121.

Cover price: R9.50 (includes VAT at 15%)

# Mugabe - the visionary turned monster

*Under his leadership, Zimbabwe became heaven for some, hell for others*

JUGGERNAUT



KANTHAN PILLAY

THE death of Zimbabwe's founding president, Robert Mugabe, has opened a floodgate of memories. The country became independent in 1980, the year I earned my first front-page by-line in this newspaper.

In effect, for almost my entire working career until he was deposed in 2017, Zimbabwe had only one ruler. And that ruler came to symbolise everything that is wrong about democracy in Africa.

Much of what Mugabe did is unforgivable. The genocide of thousands of mainly Ndebele citizens in Matabeleland is well documented. The plundering of state resources to enrich his family while his country slipped into poverty is well known. Even today, being identified as homosexual in Zimbabwe can be a death sentence.

Against this backdrop, many may wonder why so many people, myself included, are reluctant to issue blanket condemnation of Robert Mugabe. It's because some of us recall a time when our neighbour to the north held the promise of all we hoped would come true in our own country.

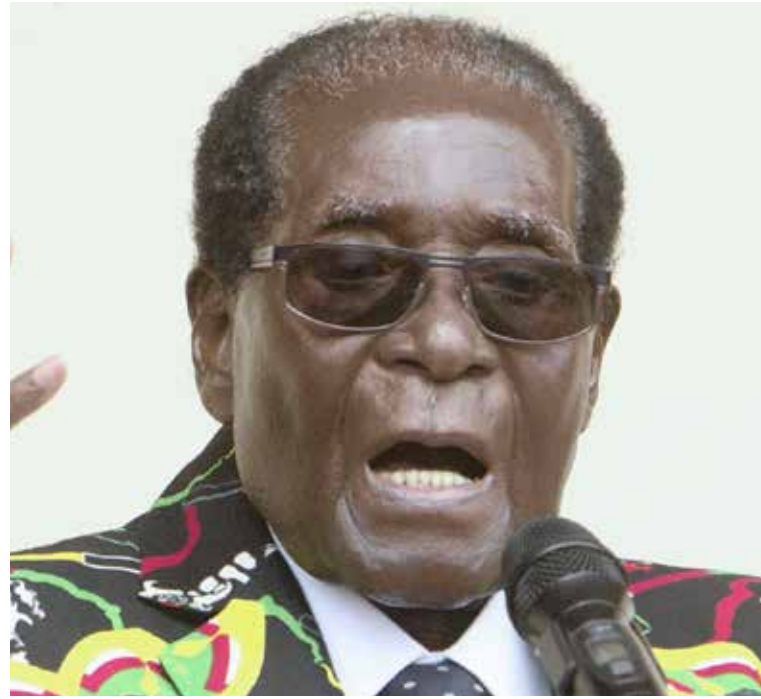
"Zimbabwe has come to mean everything I hoped for South Africa. For the first time, I have the opportunity to explore my fullest potential..."

It was January 1984. Two days before, a colleague and I had crossed the South African border across the Limpopo River at Beit Bridge in her Toyota Corolla. Now, we were sitting in the suburban Harare home of Govan Reddy hearing him extol the virtues of the country that had adopted him.

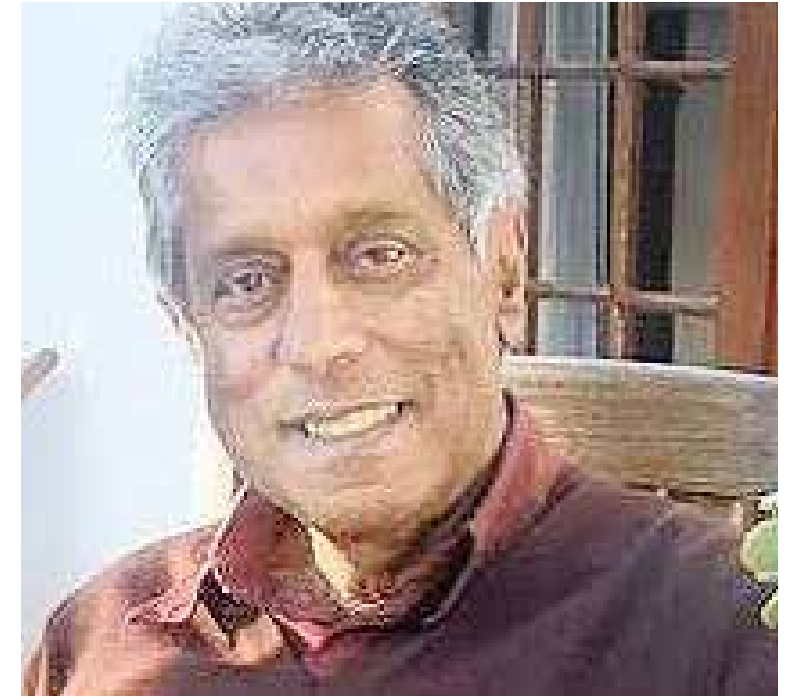
Reddy was then 39 years old, a former Durban academic, historian, and journalist. He left South Africa in March 1981 shortly before a five-year banning order under the apartheid Internal Security Act was to expire. He left the country by illegally crossing the border into Swaziland. Shortly thereafter, he became the first South African political refugee to be registered with the UN in Zimbabwe.

Under the Mugabe government, Reddy became a radio and TV journalist with the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, driving current affairs on the mainly educational Radio Four, while doubling up as an interviewer for several television talk shows.

Reddy's tale was not unusual. As white



Robert Mugabe, left, and Govan Reddy. | African News Agency (ANA) Archives



former Rhodesians fled Zimbabwe in the wake of independence, many South African expatriates were making a new life in Zimbabwe.

What was not to love? The economy had jumped 20% immediately after independence. Month-to-month inflation was running at less than 0.5%. The Zimbabwe dollar was substantially stronger than the rand. In the ten years following, the economy grew on average 4.5%.

But the deeper reasons for so many South Africans being drawn to this new land was that Mugabe at the time was very much a visionary.

Take the case of Manival Moodley. The former schoolteacher of Sastri College in Durban had left the country in 1950 after obtaining a BA in law as a part time student at the University of Natal. In 1957, he was admitted as a barrister-at-law to the Inner Temple in London. In September 1966, he returned to Southern Africa as a resident magistrate in Zambia. At the time of his leaving in 1983, he was a judge in the Zambian High Court.

Moodley left because Mugabe invited him to do so. He was 58 years old at the time when I sat down to dinner at his home in Harare.

"I first met the Prime Minister, Mr Mugabe, in Ghana in 1959. I joined Adisadel College on the Cape Coast as a teacher, and he was also teaching there at the time," the former judge recounted.

That friendship led to Moodley being the first person to come to mind when Mugabe created the country's first ombudsman – a high ranking post pioneered by the government of Norway and existing in very few other countries at the time.

The purpose of the ombudsman, Moodley explained, was to investigate the actions of any government ministry or department where it is alleged a person suffered injustices. The ombudsman had wide-ranging powers to order the production of documents and to compel government officials to supply information.

"Playing the role of an ombudsman is very challenging. Obviously, when you are employed by government to investigate the affairs of government and ensure in effect that it doesn't step out of line, you are treading a fine path.

"But there are very few countries in the world that have this sort of system and it is to the credit of the government that they were able to create the post."

Across town, a day later, I was renewing acquaintances with Dr Kesavaloo Goonam, then close to 80 years old. She was Durban's first resident female doctor in 1936, working as a gynaecologist and obstetrician. Influenced by Mahatma Gandhi, whom she had met, she became an outspoken critic of apartheid and was vice-president of the Natal Indian Congress.

We were eating dhal and rotis she had prepared as she recounted taking her passport

in for renewal at the South African Embassy at Trafalgar Square, London, UK, where it was confiscated. She was now stateless.

She, too, found refuge in Mugabe's Zimbabwe, working as head of the geriatric ward at a large hospital in the capital.

"Here, I am free to do as I like, go where I want, live where I want to, and be a person – not a statistic."

Back to today, 35 years later, I'm discussing Mugabe's passing with my Zimbabwean housekeeper. She recounts her mother being beaten by his notorious 5th Brigade during the Matabeleland Massacres while she herself ran to the nearby dam to hide.

Her tears are flowing as she recalls her aunt being buried up to the neck, then shot in the head.

She shudders visibly at the word "Gukurahundi", the Shona word which loosely translates to "the early rain which washes away the chaff before the spring rains" – a callous euphemism for the genocide.

So I do not mourn the monster that he became, but I do mourn the visionary who educated his people and gave true refuge to so many of my fellow South Africans.

*Srikanthan is one of the names of Vishnu. Another name for Vishnu is Jagannath, "the unstoppable force", which gives us the modern word juggernaut. Pillay writes about understanding the unstoppable forces which shape our lives in technology, commerce, science and society.*

## Kashmir: defanging the Bantustan in India



AMI NANAKCHAND

FOR more than a century, history has been a constant preoccupation of South Africans. More so in the past 25 years.

Last week I had the privilege of interviewing fellow journalist and much-acclaimed spy-hunter author, Jonathan Ancer, about his newly published book, *Betrayal: the secret lives of apartheid spies*.

Ancer's revelations shed further light on a generation that believed the Security Branch and its allied intelligence agencies of the police force were the antidote to the ANC and other South African liberation movements.

Today, some of our dynamic countrymen cannot understand why anyone would spend their leisure hours reading about the past when the time could be put to better use through self-improving pursuits like reading motivational books by management gurus.

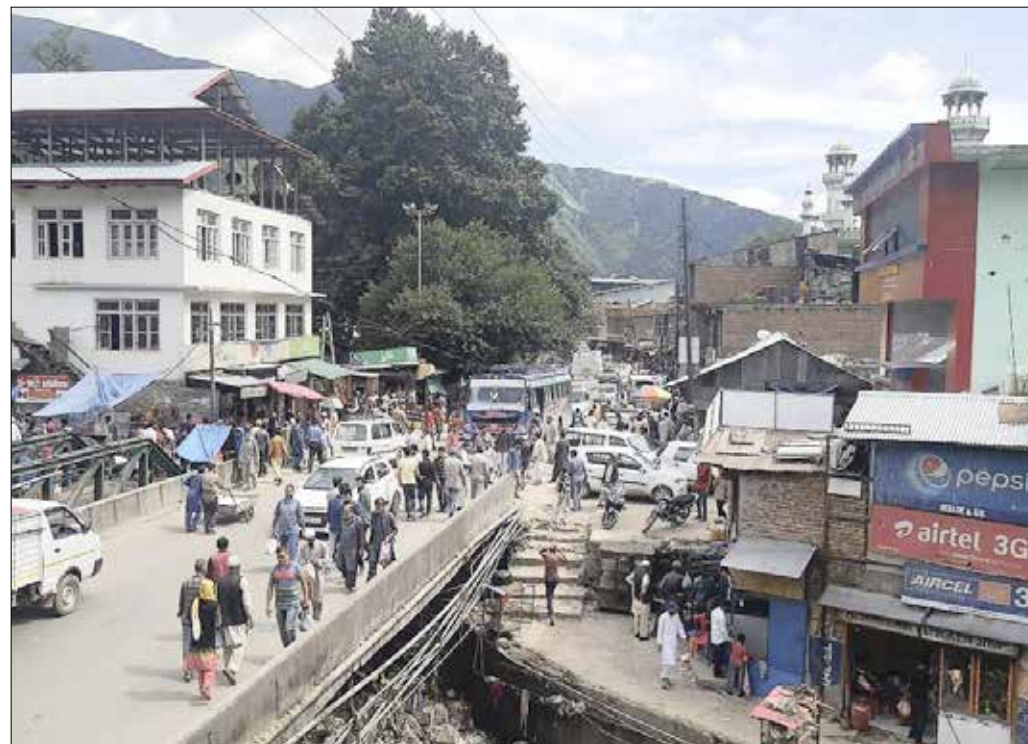
I refer to our passion for the past in the context of a brief flicker from more than 360 years of our own experiences under colonialism and apartheid to centuries of India's colonial history and, in particular, its 73 years post-independence narrative of the Kashmir valley which has been of significant focus in the columns of the local press.

This might be the occasion to assess the implications of the revocation of Article 370 – the Jammu and Kashmir (Reorganisation) Bill, 2019, of the Indian constitution. The measure strips Jammu and Kashmir of its status of a state and converts it into a Union Territory – with its own legislature.

Since 1948 there was consensus that Jammu and Kashmir warranted exceptional treatment.

This exceptionalism would be guaranteed by the special provisions of Article 370. But the state would continue to be preserved as an integral part of the Indian Union.

Over the years, this special status would be diluted which meant the state would inch towards greater integration with the rest of India. Seemingly it regressed into its greater



THE city of Srinagar in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, India has all along maintained that Kashmir is an internal matter, the writer says. | AP

uniqueness as a regional autonomy.

In the mid-20th century, under the apartheid regime, South Africa had similar pseudo-homelands or regional autonomous territories called Bantustans for the country's African citizens.

Bantustans or South Africa's black "states", (there were 10 such territories) were a major administrative device for the exclusion of African citizens from South Africa under the racist political system of "separate development".

When the Union of South Africa was established in 1910 as a dominion of Britain to the white minority with four integral provinces, the country's sovereign border was clearly defined.

At an international level, the curtain came down on the colonial legacy of the Union of South Africa in 1961, when the Republic of South Africa ended 51 years of British rule.

With apartheid as its lodestar, the

governing National Party embarked on balkanising the country into 10 "independent" Bantustans in the hope that the aspirations of the African citizens could be assuaged by this political solution of "dual sovereignty".

But the parameters of four of the regional autonomies – Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei, or the "TBVC" states – were defanged with the adoption of democratic South Africa's Constitution in 1996.

The republic's 10 Bantustans, torn by feudal decadence, together with the country's four provinces were consolidated into nine provinces – each with their own legislature, but integral to the republic.

Not without the chief minister of KwaZulu and erstwhile leader of the IFP, Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, threatening to boycott the country's first democratic election.

The demise of KwaZulu and Buthelezi's well-entrenched position of chief minister

stared stark.

One calculation was premised on the fragile belief that brinkmanship that was certain to be a recurring feature of day-to-day politics did not lead to unintended consequences – KwaZulu homelands seceding was mooted.

Buthelezi threatened to withdraw from the Codesa negotiations for a democratic constitution if his demands were not met. He sought international mediation to resolve the impasse.

Eventually, the IFP entered the historic election late – only to come third in the multiparty election.

The parameters of Kashmir regional autonomy were diluted, first in 1953 and then following the Indira Gandhi-Sheikh Abdullah understanding in 1974, the special status of Kashmir was protected by the Constitution.

Whatever the to and fro of regional autonomy, Article 370 would preserve Kashmir as an integral part of the Indian Union.

In 2010, a third-generation Abdullah, Omar Abdullah, the chief minister of Kashmir and Sheikh Abdullah's son, who was also hurtling towards political oblivion, pleaded for more autonomy.

Beyond good governance and economic packages, he sought a political solution that was acceptable to both India and Pakistan. Unlike Buthelezi, Omar Abdullah is history.

India has all along maintained that Kashmir is an internal matter.

A reality which, at an international level, was recognised by the UN Security Council last month and, by the G7 countries only last week.

Recently, it has become drearily routine for advocates of separatism in Kashmir to be given prominent play in the media. If anything, the separatists in Kashmir and their backers in Pakistan, South Africa and elsewhere have been struck by the fact that unlike the Bantustans or Gaza, the campaign has been relegated to the fringes by the international community.

There is a feeling in some circles that, in the coming months, one can witness an even greater international momentum endorsing India's sovereign right to determine the future of Kashmir.

*Nanakchand is journalist*