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13 June 2008

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**NEWSMAKERS**

**Ahead of the pack**

By Matebello Motloung



Cyril Ramaphosa - Hanging in there

**Businessman and former** presidential hopeful Tokyo Sexwale has emerged as the top business newsmaker of 2007, according to the annual *Newsmaker Report*, conducted by media analysis group Media Tenor SA. He is followed by Jacob Zuma's former financial adviser, Schabir Shaik, and Shanduka boss Cyril Ramaphosa, who moved up two places.

In the politics category, President Thabo Mbeki overtook then ANC deputy president Zuma as the biggest newsmaker in 2007.

The woman in the news most often was health minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, with about 2 200 citations, followed by opposition leader Helen Zille (1 400 "hits").

Mbeki was, not surprisingly, also the most caricatured figure, featuring in 340 cartoons (up from 200 the previous year), followed by Zuma, who topped the list in 2006.

The survey is used as a trend indicator about people, organisations and issues that form part of the media and public dialogue in SA.

In Sexwale's case, the report finds, it was the Mvelaphanda boss's decision to avail himself for the ANC presidency that increased the spotlight on him. He overtook Shaik (in second place) as the most reported-on black businessman in 2007 (as he was in 2006).

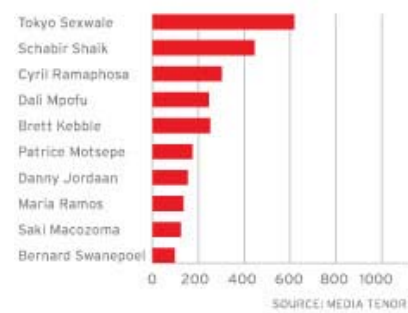
Transnet boss Maria Ramos slid from fourth to seventh position - despite being ranked the 14th most powerful woman in international business by *Fortune* magazine.

Absa Group retained its position as the company most reported on for the third year in a row. This was only slightly due to the group's dismissal of former non executive director Danisa Baloyi for her involvement in the Fidentia scandal, and the Premier Soccer League sponsorship saga in October, where the bank was accused of bribing soccer officials.

In second spot was Standard Bank, which gained wide coverage after its sale of a 20% stake to the Industrial & Commercial Bank of China, a move seen to signify local businesses' attractiveness to foreign investors.

Mining company Harmony, on the other hand, had a bad year in 2007. Reports that the company's market capitalisation took a knock, followed by the Elandsrand mining accident in which 3 200 miners were trapped underground, saw it slump from a "positive 3%" to a "negative 5%" score.

**Top business newsmakers in SA media: 2007**



The most quoted media were the *Sunday Times* and the *Mail & Guardian*, who continue to lead the pack in breaking or investigative news. In third place was *City Press*, with *Business Day* holding its own in fifth position.

The research is based on 320 000 articles in 33 SA media, including print, radio and television.

The report will be released next week.

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