

Headline Zuma admits latest love child
Date 07 Feb 2010
MediaTitle New Sunday Times
Section World
Journalist N/A
Frequency Weekly
Circ / Read 153,409 / 295,000

Language English
Page No 39
Article Size 210 cm²
Color Full Color
ADValue 6,212
PRValue 18,636



Zuma admits latest love child

JOHANNESBURG: Confirmation that President Jacob Zuma, who has three wives and a fiancée, has fathered a child with yet another woman has prompted jokes in South Africa's media but has also hit a nerve in a country hardest hit by AIDS.

For a president whose political career survived a rape trial, Zuma is expected to emerge relatively unscathed from the disclosure that he is the father of a baby girl born in October.

Even so, the opposition says he is a poor role model in a country where an estimated 5.7 million of 50 million people are infected with HIV, more than any other country.

"All these AIDS campaigns tell us to have one partner but our president has five," said Phemelo Mmitsinyane, an 18-year-old University of Johannesburg student.

While some South Africans see Zuma's polygamy as outdated, others applaud him for embracing what they see as traditional values. South African law recognises such

traditional marriages, though fewer young people enter into them because they are seen as expensive and old-fashioned.

But after this latest indiscretion, *The Star* newspaper lambasted Zuma in an editorial: "His rampant libido has made South Africa a laughing stock of the world and may even harm the country's interest."

Helen Zille, leader of the main opposition Democratic Alliance party, said Zuma's polygamy and sex outside marriage undermines the country's fight against HIV/AIDS.

And the fact that Zuma's mistress got pregnant indicates they may have had unprotected sex.

"Zuma believes he is above the law and social norms. He believes that — by virtue of his position — he can get away with anything," Zille wrote in a weekly newsletter on Thursday, a day after Zuma acknowledged he was the baby's father.

The mother is Sonono Khoza, the 39-year-old daughter of a prominent soc-

cer official who is helping lead preparations for the World Cup, according to media reports.

Since the disclosure, Zuma has wound up being lampooned in political cartoons. On Friday, *The Star* ran a list of Zuma jokes on the front page.

One of the jokes said ruling party officials have stopped Zuma from kissing babies "because they might call him 'Daddy'".

Zuma, 67, said it was "mischievous" to argue he has undermined the battle against AIDS and admonished the media for identifying his daughter. The birth of Zuma's 20th child was first reported in the *Sunday Times* newspaper, which cited unnamed friends of the mother's family.

On Friday, the ruling African National Congress called Zille's comments about Zuma setting back the fight against HIV/AIDS "at best preposterous or just plain madness".

The president — once ridiculed for saying a shower could prevent AIDS — earned

high marks on World AIDS Day on Dec 1 when he announced expanded treatment for HIV-positive babies and pregnant women, a move that could save hundreds of thousands of lives.

Zuma was acquitted of rape in 2006 after he insisted the unprotected sex he had with the HIV-positive daughter of a family friend was consensual. — AP



Some people see Jacob Zuma's polygamy as embracing traditional values