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Honour Madiba as a doer of great deeds

He was never a saint nor a villain, but in his birthday week let Mandela's example be an inspiration to his troubled nation.

- As we reflect on Nelson Mandela's life this week, the news of his daughter Zindzi Mandela's death comes as a shock, Zindzi epitomised the struggle for freedom, justice and equality. In her 1980 anthology *Black as I am*, Zindzi, a diplomat, political activist and poet, wrote:
*A tree was chopped down
 and the fruit was scattered
 I cried
 because I had lost a family
 the trunk, my father
 the branches, his support
 so much
 the fruit, the wife and children
 who meant so much to him
 tasty
 loving as they should be
 all on the ground
 some out of his reach
 in the ground
 the roots, happiness
 cut off from him*
- The poem was written when her father had already spent 18 years of his life in incarceration. Yet, just as the late Winnie Madikizela-Mandela did, Zindzi had forged her own political identity.
- As we reflect on the lives of our struggle heroes, we also reflect on their complex natures. Nelson Mandela is often reduced to a mythological persona. Revered elsewhere, he is often branded a sellout in SA by peacetime and armchair revolutionaries.
- In our narrative, Mandela is either sanctified or vilified. Often, he is vilified by people who are unwilling or unable to deal with the complexity of change that is brought about by the confluence of technology, politics and global competition.
- Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, in a TED Talk some years ago, warned of the danger of a single story. Tales from the American and British books she read had stirred her imagination and opened up new worlds for her, she said, but the unintended consequence was that she did not know that Africans could exist in literature. As she said: "The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."
- Metaphorically, nothing could be truer for Mandela. He is often remembered with a single narrative – and there is great danger in knowing only one story.
- In a *Business Day* column following Mandela's death in 2013, University of Cape Town political science professor Anthony Butler wrote: "Who really gains from the elevation of a political figure into an untouchable icon? Not Mandela himself, who does not need our plaudits. The mythmakers who claim that a leader is beyond fault are ultimately seeking to shield a whole political class, and not just one individual, from the public scrutiny upon which democracy depends."

8. Mandela's legacy is anything but a single story. Few who criticise his decisions in the early '90s are aware of just how close SA was to civil war, just how many tyres were set alight around necks and just how much blood had already been spilt. As struggle stalwart Ahmed Kathrada said: "You have no idea how much military power the apartheid government had, how difficult the negotiations were, or what would have happened if we did not negotiate."
9. We must, of course, acknowledge that the SA we find ourselves in now is not the one envisioned in 1994. Five years into Mandela's presidency, the cracks had already begun to show. By 1999, the Aids epidemic was tearing through the nation and promises of growth, employment and a level playing field for all were looking unlikely ever to be realised. The economic policies of the Reconstruction and Development Programme and Growth, Employment and Redistribution aimed at social equality were crumbling.
10. We find ourselves now, more than 25 years after democracy, still fighting the scourges of poverty, unemployment and inequality – which are among the worst in the world. This certainly is not the future that was imagined. Mandela himself would admit that there is still a long road to walk.
11. As he once put it: "As long as many of our people still live in utter poverty, as long as children still live under plastic covers, as long as many of our people are still without jobs, no South African should rest and wallow in the joy of freedom."
12. Mandela – like other icons such as Julius Nyerere, John F. Kennedy, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King jnr or Kwame Nkrumah – does not escape the harsh scrutiny of hindsight. We are so inundated with information and knowledge that often these figures cannot live up to our ever-evolving standards. We must remember that perhaps, with the knowledge we have today, different decisions might have been made. Yet the actions that were taken to topple the apartheid regime and in the advent of democracy were right under immensely trying circumstances.
13. This is not to say that criticism is not appropriate. However, the Madiba magic still stays with us. Madiba understood the power of his personality and brand and used it productively for altruistic purposes. This magic permeated all aspects of his life and actions as he used it for social cohesion, unity, building bridges and changing fossilised views derived from apartheid. His was a life that actively sought to shape a new narrative.
14. His legacy, in the context of education, is fighting for equality and against the inequities of the past that shaped our landscape. That his was a life that inspired a reborn nation is undeniable. That it turns out that he was just a human behind the narrative does not dim this magic.
15. As Madiba put it: "I am not a saint, unless you think of a saint as a sinner who keeps on trying."
16. It is in this context that, as a society, we should spare no effort to ensure that we educate the new Madibas who will tackle the problems of climate change so that we leave a habitable planet. We need to harness people with the resolve of Madiba to position SA at the centre of the technological developments that are brought about by the advances in the fourth industrial revolution. As Nkrumah (first President of Ghana after independence from Britain in 1957) put it: "Think! Study hard! Work with sustained effort! As never before we want thinkers – thinkers of great thoughts. We want doers – doers of great deeds."

Written by: Tshilidzi Marwala

Professor Marwala is Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg and Deputy Chair of the Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Article from Sunday Times, 19 July 2020.

Museum or mosque? Turkey debates iconic Hagia Sophia's status



For more than 1,400 years, the majestic domed structure of Hagia Sophia has stood above Istanbul, Turkey. It once served as the Byzantine Empire's main cathedral. Later, it became a mosque under the Ottoman Empire. From 1934 to July 10, 2020, it was a museum, attracting millions of tourists each year.

The sixth-century building was recently at the center of a heated debate. Nationalist, conservative and religious groups were pushing for Hagia Sophia to be reconverted into a mosque. Others believe it should remain a museum, emphasizing Istanbul's status as a bridge between continents and cultures.

On July 2, Turkey's Council of State began reviewing a request by a religious group devoted to reverting Hagia Sophia into a mosque. This council serves as the country's highest administrative court. The group was pushing to overrule a 1934 decision made by a council led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Atatürk, recognized as the founder of modern-day Turkey, wished to create a secular, or nonreligious, government. It was under Atatürk's leadership that the historic structure was turned into a museum.

On July 10, Turkey's Council of State officially repealed the 1934 decision that declared Hagia Sophia as a museum. Hours after, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who leads an Islamic-oriented party, formally converted Hagia Sophia back into a mosque and declared it open for Muslim worship. In a statement, Erdoğan said the first prayers inside Hagia Sophia would be held on July 24.

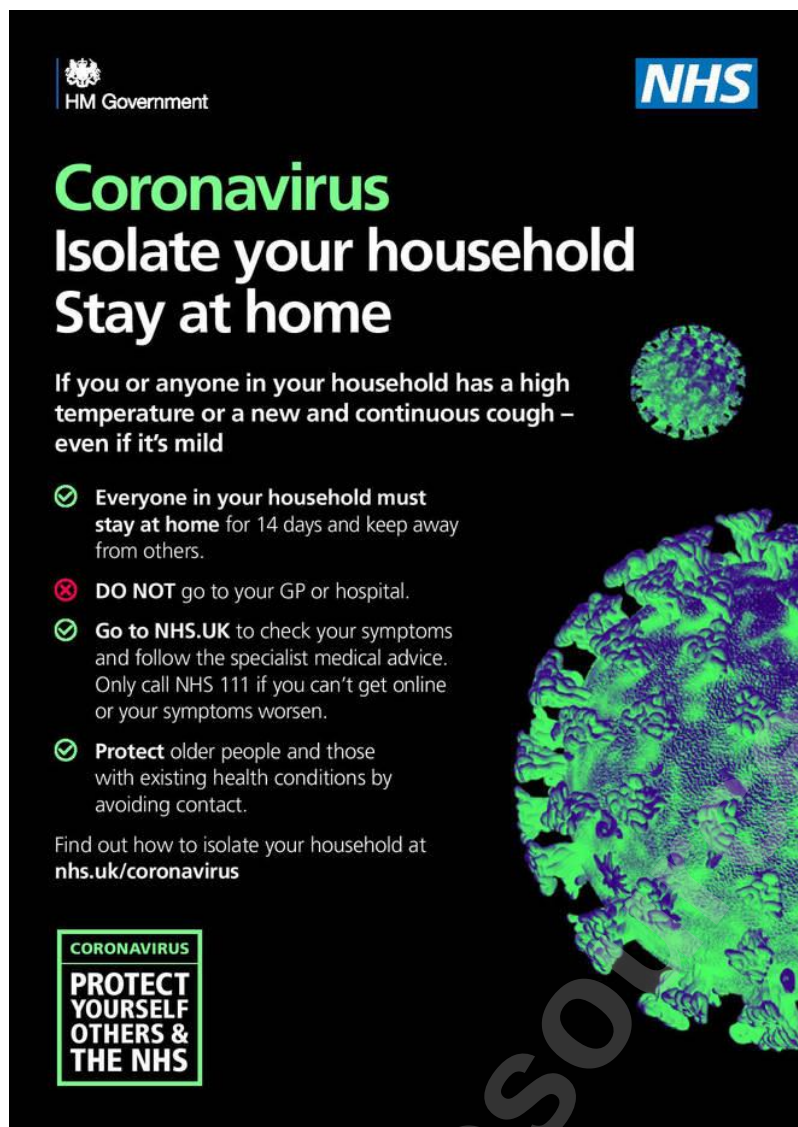
"We will open Hagia Sophia to worship as a mosque by preserving its character of humanity's common cultural heritage," Erdoğan said. "Like all of our other mosques, the doors of the Hagia Sophia will be open to all, locals or foreigners, Muslims and non-Muslims."

Garo Paylan, a member of Turkey's Parliament, tweeted on July 10 that it was "a sad day for Christians." "The decision to convert Hagia Sophia into a mosque will make life more difficult for Christians here and for Muslims in Europe," he wrote. "Hagia Sophia was a symbol of our rich history. Its dome was big enough for all."

As a museum, Hagia Sophia can function as a place and symbol of experience, dialogue and peaceful coexistence of people and cultures. It is a symbol of mutual understanding and solidarity between Christianity and Islam. On July 1, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo also urged Turkey to keep Hagia Sophia as a museum to serve as "an exemplar of its commitment to respect faith traditions and diverse history."

"This is not just a debate about a building," said Soner Cagaptay, who studies Turkey for the Washington Institute. "Atatürk established Hagia Sophia as a museum to underline his vision of secularizing Turkey. And nearly 100 years later, Erdoğan is trying to do the opposite."

[Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news>]



HM Government **NHS**

Coronavirus

Isolate your household Stay at home

If you or anyone in your household has a high temperature or a new and continuous cough – even if it's mild

- ✓ Everyone in your household must stay at home for 14 days and keep away from others.
- ✗ DO NOT go to your GP or hospital.
- ✓ Go to **NHS.UK** to check your symptoms and follow the specialist medical advice. Only call NHS 111 if you can't get online or your symptoms worsen.
- ✓ Protect older people and those with existing health conditions by avoiding contact.

Find out how to isolate your household at nhs.uk/coronavirus

CORONAVIRUS
**PROTECT YOURSELF
OTHERS & THE NHS**

TEXT 3b



Planning for danger

Flu season will start next month

Hospitals and clinics will be flooded

Fertile ground for spreading coronavirus

Send more teams quickly into communities to test for Covid-19

Build treatment centres for Covid-19 patients in each town

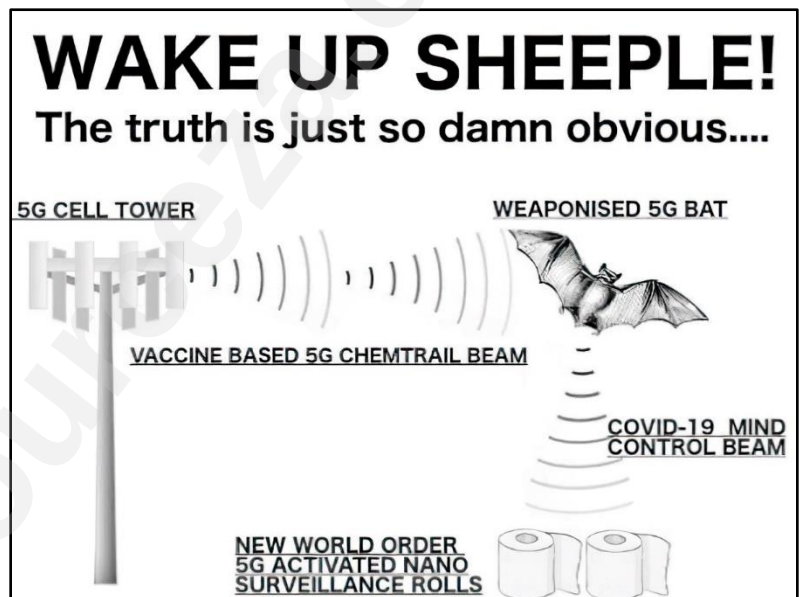
Get medics from China and Cuba to help

Source: South Africa's Health Ministry

Getty



TEXT 4b



TEXT 4c

