

# The industry thanks a man of integrity

## A BIG SURPRISE

During an illustrious event held at the Avianto Hotel in Muldersdrift on 8 December 2015, the engineering and construction industry honoured Nazir Alli, retiring CEO of SANRAL, for his outstanding leadership over many years, and for modernising South Africa's national road network to world-class standards.

What was organised as a surprise black-tie event, saw Trevor Manuel, Ketso Gordhan and Jack van der Merwe as industry speakers celebrating Nazir Alli's dedicated service to civil engineering and his exemplary contribution to SANRAL. Among the other prominent guests were Maria Ramos, Thuli Madonsela, Mac Maharaj, Trevor Fowler, as well as industry representatives such as Malani Padayachee-Saman, Danai Magugumela, and Werner Jerling from Stefanutti Stocks who acted as Master of Ceremonies.

On his arrival a very surprised Nazir Alli was met by a guard of honour formed by a bevy of prominent leaders. The appreciation for Nazir's contribution to the industry was obvious throughout the evening. In a booklet sponsored by WBHO and handed out at the event, a substantial number of contemporaries paid tribute to Nazir:

- **Marissa Moore, National Treasury, Public Finance:** "We say goodbye to an inspirational leader, who was able to retain and motivate technical specialists, leaving a legacy of quality infrastructure for future generations."
- **Rodney Milford, SAICE 1999 President:** "Nazir was a no-nonsense person, with a unique ability to bring a solution forward. Through his leadership and extensive managerial and technical involvement across roads, transport and other infrastructure, he has left a legacy in the construction industry."

- **Skhumbuzo Macozoma, JRA Managing Director:** "Roads are about human beings and human needs, not just economics or politics. Farewell servant of the people. We will carry on, but please don't be lost to the industry."

- **Danai Magugumela, Managing Director, Bosch Stemele:** "It has been a personal privilege of mine to have looked up to you as a captain of industry, as a mentor and as a living example of humble leadership. I wish you very well in your next endeavours."

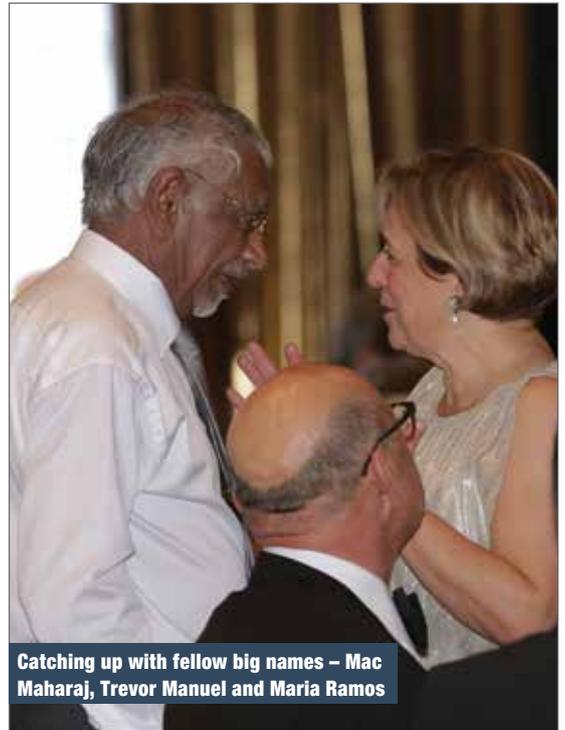
- **Kollan Pillay, Director, Glad Africa:** "I will remember you for the boardroom arguments, your tenacity, and your authentic leadership style. May the Lord grant you good health and longevity so you can continue to change the world."

The main sponsor of the surprise dinner was Nyeleti Consulting (Pty) Ltd. The other companies and bodies who financially supported this happy event were Bosch Stemele, CESA, CIDB, COLAS, Hatch Goba, HHO, Iliso, Much Asphalt, Murray & Roberts Infrastructure, Raubex Group, Royal HaskoningDHV, SARF, Tosas, UWP and WBHO. The coming together of so many companies and institutions is a clear indication of the degree of appreciation of Nazir's contribution to South Africa.

At the event the South African Forum of Civil Engineering Contractors (SAFCEC) bestowed their President's Award upon Nazir. Thembinkosi Nzimande, SAFCEC President, said: "Under Nazir's leadership SANRAL has become renowned for its ability to deliver infrastructure projects on time, within budget and to a remarkably high quality ... Nazir has always been supportive of the role of SAFCEC within the construction industry, and has regularly sought and valued our opinion on matters affecting our industry."



Part of the welcoming guard of honour (from left, Jack van der Merwe, Danai Magugumela, Trevor Fowler, Allyson Lawless and Thuli Madonsela) with Nazir's wife, Naseema (who kept the arrangements secret from her husband) looking on



Catching up with fellow big names – Mac Maharaj, Trevor Manuel and Maria Ramos



The ever gracious Thuli Madonsela greeting Ismail Vadi, Gauteng MEC for Roads and Transport



SAICE 2015 President, Malcolm Pautz, handing Nazir the SAICE Gold Medal (in the tiny blue box in his hand), with past presidents Sam Amod and Allyson Lawless looking on

## SAICE GOLD MEDAL

SAICE also honoured Nazir at the event by awarding him the Institution's prestigious Gold Medal. The bestowment of this award was motivated not only by Nazir's proven technical achievements, but also by his many infrastructure-related contributions to our country. Under his leadership SANRAL has grown from managing a road network of 7 200 km in 1998 to 21 403 km currently, which is expected to grow to 35 000 km in the future, and which is of outstanding quality, having won numerous global awards in engineering excellence. The successes attributed to this network are testimony to Nazir's strong leadership, technical competency and excellent business acumen. In addition, his commitment to the country's socioeconomic transformational agenda led to SANRAL's launching of chairs at three universities (Free State, Cape Town and Stellenbosch), thereby making a substantial contribution to the training of the next generation of engineers, and to research that addresses the needs of the country's road industry.

Nazir has been instrumental in developing the concept of public-private partnerships in South Africa, which culminated in

the acclaimed Maputo Development Corridor. SANRAL's performance was acknowledged by government when it was requested to take ownership of a number of provincial roads, nationally, as SANRAL was seen as the only organisation that could successfully upgrade and maintain these roads.

Nazir, who is a Fellow of SAICE, is also a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers (UK), the Institute of Directors of Southern Africa, and a Fellow of the South African Academy of Engineering. He is the 2003 recipient of the SAICE Transportation Division Chairman's Award for outstanding service to the transportation engineering profession, and of the 2010 South African Road Federation President's Award.

In addition he served as Chairman of the ECSA Governance Committee, as President of the Association of Southern African National Roads Agencies (a SADC body), and as Executive Member and Council Member of the World Road Association.

Nazir Alli is indeed a worthy recipient of the SAICE Gold Medal, and the Institution feels privileged for having been allowed to bestow this award at such an auspicious industry occasion. ■