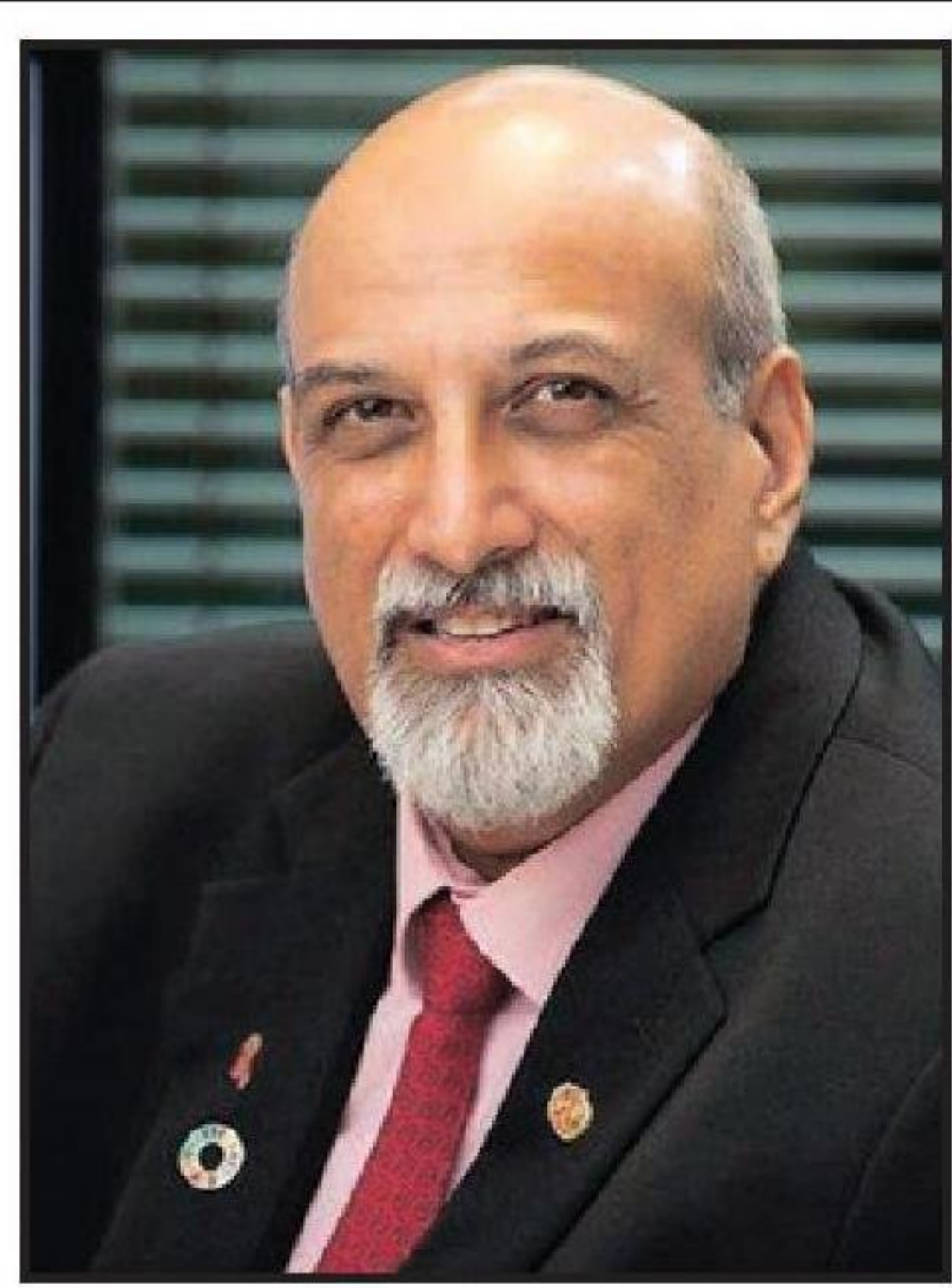




Munier
 GIVING YOU PLENTY

Grootbek
 TO TALK ABOUT

Cyril winning half a war



EXPERT: Prof Abdool Karim

THIS week a headline caught Munier's eye in the British press.

The *Daily Mail* ran the story, "UK announces 210 more coronavirus victims - the lowest daily tally since March 26 - taking the total death toll to 32 065".

The article was published the same day Prime Minister Boris Johnson triumphantly announced that Brits would be able to return to work and schools were set to reopen. And the English Premier League season could resume on 1 June.

Meanwhile back home, the South African government's daily update indicated the national death toll had risen to 206.

206 the total number of deaths in SA, and 210 dead in the UK in ONE day.

Please let that sink in before you assess Cyril Ramaphosa's management of this health crisis.

Now, it's no secret that the president's National Coronavirus Command Council has taken a conservative "better safe than sorry" approach to the pandemic.

Support

Ramaphosa's health-before-wealth, lives-before-livelihoods position has won him the moral high ground.

It's also been reassuring to know that the lockdown policy has been informed by experts, data and global trends - and carefully explained by South Africa's Covid-19 Ministerial Advisory Committee chief, Professor Salim Abdool Karim.

When Ramaphosa took to that podium - late or not - and announced the different risk-adjusted phases of the lockdown, we got a well-thought through plan.

Every detail from international travel to washing your hands was covered.

And when the prez announced a R500 billion cash injection for six months, our jaws dropped, we were all blown away by such a grand move.

People needn't starve, businesses needn't



FOOT OFF THE GAS: Cyril Ramaphosa

PREZ CAN'T BE LAX IN BID TO SAVE LIVES, ECONOMY

fold, relief was on the way, we thought.

Only the smokers and drinkers were complaining, but hey, they can suck it up. We've got bigger worries.

One of those worries is the economy. Despite the R500bn boost, companies are closing, retrenchments are happening, industries are choking.

It was always going to be the biggest challenge - saving lives while also keeping the economy alive.

At the moment, government deserves credit for the former - 219 deaths sounds a lot better than 20 000, right?

But the latter could spell catastrophe the longer we are suspended in a seemingly endless lockdown.

It's been seven weeks now, and still no sign of the country being opened for busi-



SHUT: Businesses still closed

ness again.

On Wednesday night, the country held its breath in anticipation of Ramaphosa announcing an end to lockdown level 4.

It was a different Cyril, though. He stumbled through his address and came across as unprepared, unscripted, unconvincing, uninspiring.

It was as if he had nothing to say.

Munier, who normally takes copious notes during the speeches, looked down at his pad afterwards and, to his surprise, only saw a couple of scribbled lines.

The one read that the country would switch from level 4 to level 3 - but that infection hotspots would remain on level 4.

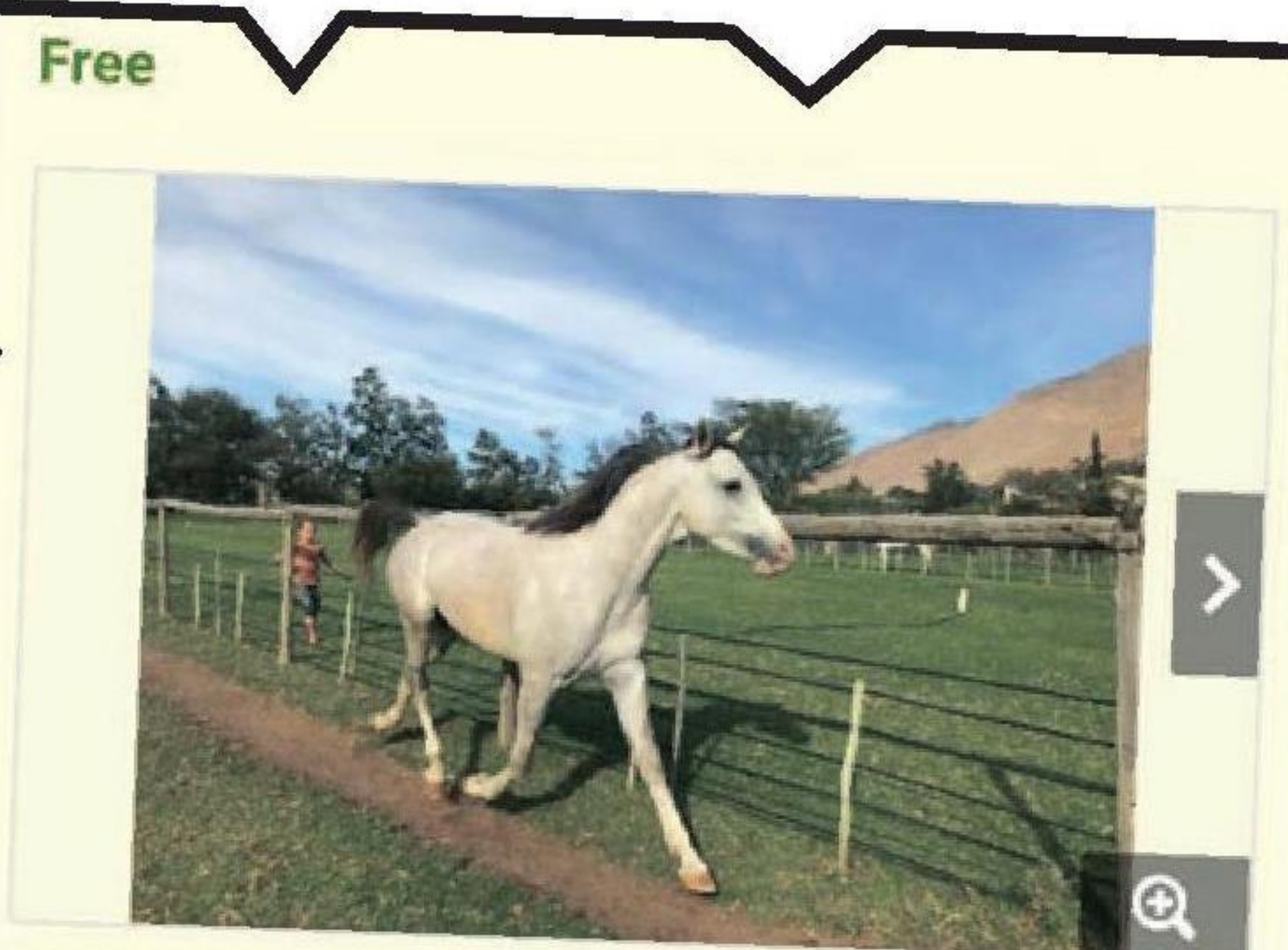
That was it, not much detail or clarity. The ministers would roll out the plans.

Quite frankly, it was a poor show by Ramaphosa, which can be forgiven after an intense seven weeks.

But the president can't afford any more lapses, which will cost him more support in the war against the Coronavirus.

He needs to be on top his game, and up for the fight to save lives and the economy.

Read Between the lies



Free
 Date Listed 13/05/2020
 Location Other, Cape Winelands
 Registered.
 Grey color.
 Nice temperament.
 Correct confirmation.

Yes; it really is free! You need to collect it in Montagu or arrange for it to be collected. That bit is your only cost.

FREE: Gumtree post advertising a horse for sale

EISH. Things are bad. Munier feels for folks working in the non-essential sectors.

Some of the worst off are operators in the tourism industry, where travel bans have paralysed the market.

The entertainment industry has been hard hit, with all events and shows postponed until further notice, and artists left without income.

The hospitality industry was shut down, restaurants have only been able to do take-aways this past week, but bars and nightclubs are longer-term casualties.

Sports and gyms are high infection risks, so those too are out of commission.

Devastating

The losses have been devastating.

But it was when Munier came across a Gumtree ad for a racehorse that he realised how badly that business has been hit too.

The ad says, "4 Year Old Arabian Colt Free" and the sale was marked "urgent".

"Yes, it really is free. You need to collect it in Montagu or arrange for it to be collected. That bit is your only cost."

It's a sign of the times.

Apparently the lockdown has put horseracing under serious threat of closure, which could leave 60

000 unemployed, but also see thousands of horses euthanised.

In a bid to avert a calamity, members of the industry have put together an online petition appealing to President Cyril Ramaphosa to step in and save them by allowing "horseracing to continue behind closed doors".

Champion racehorse trainer Jonathan Snaith said: "We are asking for closed racing which will involve about 65 people on a 100 hectare property with around 15 minutes of actual racing per day. That is all it will take to avoid the total collapse of this beautiful industry."

"Failure to resume racing now will see this industry close its doors for ever, along with the loss of 60 000 jobs and an international media disaster for South Africa, which would come about with the euthanasia of thousands of horses that can no longer support themselves by racing."

SA is the eighth most important horseracing market out of 65 countries, which is significant for horse exports and profitable TV rights.

Yesterday came the news that the Vodacom Durban July will take place this year, but behind closed doors as a broadcast-only event.

GIVE ME A SHOUT

Send emails to taariq.halim@inl.co.za or SMS comments to Rek Jou Bek on 33258