

Government - SA's most ambitious media baron

By Mandy de Waal: [@mandyldewaal](#)

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Not satisfied with just owning this country's biggest broadcaster, the [state is set to launch](#) what will be South Africa's biggest circulation newspaper at a print price tag of well above R1 million an issue. Critics warn of printing for pulp, of a government that has not done its homework, but also of a state that's knee-jerking politically and seriously damaging [media diversity](#) in the process

Jimmy Manyi's announcement in [City Press](#) that government will launch a fortnightly newspaper called *Vuk'uzenzele* is just the beginning. Manyi says the publication will be the unapologetic mouthpiece of government, and that with this foray into the newspaper world is just the beginning of the state's expansion into media production and ownership.

"We are not ruling mobile out in terms of our future plans, and we are looking at that space very closely as well. We already have a radio studio at GCIS [the government communication and information system] where we broadcast to about 25 community stations, so we already have that kind of capacity." Manyi admits, though, that while there is capacity, these radio studios aren't used regularly.

Manyi says the very reason for his controversial appointment as head of the GCIS was to take state media "to the next level. This newspaper is just the first early steps that we are packing on. We want to make sure government is not a secret service. We want to make sure all avenues of getting the news out will be entrusted to us."

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Editor, writer and researcher. *Editor of #TheFutureByDesign & The Africa Annual *Published in Africa's Greatest Entrepreneurs *Published in Rolling Stone Magazine, The Guardian (UK), Daily Maverick, Finweek, Mail & Guardian, City Press, Rapport, Moneyweb, Noseweek, Brainstorm Magazine, ITWeb, and MarkLives. *Before becoming a full time writer, de Waal founded brand agency Idea Engineers, and led the Cape Town office of Text 100.

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