

Business leader of the year: Maria Ramos

Transnet CEO Maria Ramos has been named Business Leader of the Year at the Sunday Times Business Times Top 100 Companies awards in Johannesburg. Ramos was chosen by her peers in recognition of her achievements to date in turning around the troubled transport parastatal.

The Business Leader of the Year is voted by the CEOs of the Top 100 companies, which are provided with a list of candidates, but are not restricted to these names.

Business Times also honoured veteran entrepreneur Nthato Motlana with the 2005 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Motlana, 80, known as the father of black economic empowerment, was given the Lifetime Achievement Award by an independent panel that included Empowerdex CEO Vuyo Jack, Nedlac business convener Raymond Parsons, Nafcoc secretary general Buhle Mthethwa and Sacob president Deidre Penfold.

The Business Times Top Company for 2005 - for the second year in a row - was shipping and logistics group Grindrod. A string of acquisitions, a robust increase in earnings and announcement of huge expansion plans all helped Grindrod win the award.

The annual Business Times Top 100 Companies acknowledges those listed companies that have earned the most wealth for their shareholders. The share-price performance of every company listed on the JSE Securities Exchange SA is measured on the basis of R10 000 invested over five years: in this case from 1 October 2000 to 30 September 2005.

A full report on the Top 100 Companies, including interviews with Ramos; Motlana and Grindrod MD Ivan Clark, appears in the Business Times Top 100 Companies Survey, published with the Sunday Times this week.