

# Vabakshnee Chetty making a name on radio and television

By SUBRY GOVENDER

A local lass who entered the field of journalism early in 2000 as an "enthusiastic young reporter", has today, in the short space of nine years, risen to become one of the main news readers on the SABC's national radio and television.

Ms Vabakshnee Chetty, 29, who is from Seatides in Tongaat, has become a household name since assuming the roles of being the morning news anchor on the national radio, SAFM, and an anchor on the "News at 7pm" on SABC 3 a few months ago.

"Juggling between two jobs keeps me very busy and I barely have any free time," said Ms Chetty in an interview.

"I enjoy the hurly burly life of a news person who is not only involved in reading the news but also preparing and producing the news items for broadcast.

"I am really fortunate to be part of such a national news environment. My working day starts at 4am when I get a wake up call from the office. I then drive from my house in the suburb of Northcliff to the office and prepare for the first news highlights that are broadcast on SAFM at 5:30am.

"Thereafter, I have to work with my colleagues to prepare news bulletins every hour and news highlights every 30 minutes after the bulletins. I work flat out until 11am and then have a break before preparing to present the evening TV News at 7pm.

"Despite my busy work schedule, I still find sometime to cook a decent chicken curry, squeeze in some 'me time', and make time to visit my parents in Seatides at every available opportunity."

Ms Chetty, who completed her matriculation at Tongaat High in 1999, studied journalism at the former M L Sultan Technikon and obtained her National Diploma in journalism (cum laude) in 2002. She was declared the top journalism student in 2002.

She was given a chance to work as an intern at

the Durban office of the SABC and became a bulletin writer/reader on Lotus FM in 2003. During the same year she obtained her Bachelor of Technology degree at the Durban Institute of Technology.



Ms Chetty moved to Johannesburg in 2005 after she was offered an opportunity to read the news on SAFM.

"After a year at SAFM I moved to television, joining the team at SABC Africa and then SABC News International as a producer and news presenter. It was then that I got my big break and became an anchor for the news@7 on SABC 3. I have also presented Weekend Live on SABC 2.

I'm currently juggling both radio and

television as I'm also the morning news anchor on SAFM." The young lady, whose first name Vabakshnee means "come wish", made such an impact after she moved to Johannesburg that in 2005 she was awarded the SABC News Award in the category, "Journalist, News Bulletin: Radio."

"I am really grateful to all the people in the broadcast industry who have encouraged and provided me with support.

"I really enjoy both radio and television and have learnt so much from both mediums. Eventually I will have to make the rather difficult choice of committing to one medium, but for now I'm happy juggling both.

"Although I'm always nervous before going 'live', I have become addicted to the adrenalin of live radio and television. Working in the ruthless industry of broadcasting has taught me to think on my feet - after all 'you're only as good as your last broadcast'," said Ms Chetty.

She said she was grateful to her parents who supported her in pursuing "what at the time seemed like an impossible dream".

"And for that, I will always be grateful. They guided my decisions but still allowed me the space to choose a career that I love and enjoy. Through sheer determination, the long shot has paid off."