

# STRUGGLE VETERAN TO BE HONOURED

## VIASEN SOOBRAMONEY

FORMER Cosatu secretary general and government minister Jay Naidoo will be conferred with a honorary doctorate from the Durban University of Technology (DUT).

The university announced last week that Naidoo would be conferred with the Doctor of Technology Degree in Engineering and the Built Environment in recognition of his contribution to the area of the built environment and his commitment to community welfare issues.

The university said Naidoo's work was significant.

"The DUT is honoured that Naidoo has accepted our invitation to receive an honorary doctorate.

"Naidoo has made a significant contribution to our nation and his work continues to make a positive impact around the world. We look forward to welcoming him into the DUT family," said Alan Khan, senior director of Corporate Affairs at DUT.

Naidoo is currently the chairperson of the global foundation, Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), a food security programme, and serves as an advisor to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Born in Durban 1954, Naidoo enrolled at the University of Durban-Westville (now



JAY NAIDOO

UKZN) in 1975 to study a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree.

His studies were interrupted by political unrest at the time. He then became a community-based organiser, working with grassroots civic structures.

Naidoo joined the Federation of South African Trade Unions as a volunteer.

He was later appointed secretary general of the Sweet, Food and Allied Workers'

Union (SFAWU). He was instrumental in the establishment of Cosatu and served as their secretary general for three terms from 1985 to 1993.

He went on to become a minister in the government of national unity under Nelson Mandela and was responsible for rolling out the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) before becoming Minister of Post, Telecommunications and Broadcasting from 1996 to 1999.

Naidoo said he was honoured by the conferment.

"My life was shaped by the values of respect, honesty, compassion and humility my mother, Bakkium, taught me when I was young. The institution was where, as a teenager, I first heard Steve Biko speak. It was that which set me on my political journey to fight for social and political justice," said Naidoo.

He said many people had helped shape him into the person he was today.

"My mother taught me my values. Biko taught me that liberation starts within by freeing your mind.

"The many illiterate, exploited migrant workers in hostels and factories taught me many of the most important lessons in my life. And of course, Mandela, Chris Hani and that generation who sacrificed their lives for the freedom we enjoy today," said Naidoo.