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MATHEBE REIGN SUPREME IN SEKHUKHUNE



Julia Mathebe has been elected as the new Chairperson of ANC in Sekhukhune Region during the elective conference which took place in Groblersdal last weekend.
Picture Credit Simon Makua

MATHEBE REIGN SUPREME IN SEKHUKHUNE

STORY FROM PAGE 1

BY STAFF REPORTER

GROBLERSDAL: The African National Congress (ANC) Sekhukhune's eightieth Regional Conference has elected Julia Mathebe as the Chairperson, Tala Mathope as Secretary, Minah Bahula as Deputy Chairperson, Given Moima as Deputy Secretary and Eddie Maila as Treasurer. The eightieth Sekhukhune Regional Conference was held from the 17 to 18 December at the Groblersdal Rugby Stadium. Provincial Officials and the PEC members deployed to Sekhukhune congratulated the regional officials. Giving a political input during the conference, Limpopo Provincial Chairperson of the ANC, Premier Chupu Mathabatha said the conference must be a platform to disappoint forces who stood to benefit from the party's divisions. Mathabatha said the conference must address the immediate needs of the people in the mighty region of Sekhukhune. He said people wanted ANC to deliver basic services like water, electricity, roads, jobs, sanitation, employment, particularly for young people, urgently. People want this leadership collective to work with provincial and national government to unlock water from De Hoop Dam and all the bulk water schemes in the region. "People want their ANC to ensure that they leverage all opportunities available in the mines here in the region. Here they want jobs, empowerment through projects

and skills development. In addition, our people want an ANC that is able to coordinate government programs with social responsibility projects of the mines, so that development can take place on a large scale. Our people want this collective to realize the promise of relocating municipal offices of Sekhukhune district and sector departments from Groblersdal and Lebowakgomo to Jane Furse as promised," said Mathabatha. The Provincial Chairperson said that the people wanted an ANC region that would sustain relationship with their traditional leaders for a better Sekhukhune. He said the people also an ANC leadership that will never allow a repeat of the financial misconduct, at which monies meant for service delivery, was invested into VBS mutual bank. "Our people want an ANC that will lead society and never again allow monies meant for service delivery to be paid into wrong accounts without accountability. Our people are also tired of an ANC that is unable act decisively against those in municipalities, who are permanent culprits when it comes to over expenditures, under expenditures, fruitless and wasteful expenditures. Our people love the ANC that is capable leader of society, and that has massive experience with running their affairs," said Mathabatha.

ONGOING COVID-19 VACCINATION CAMPAIGNS UNLEASHED

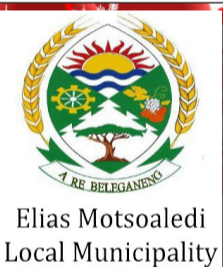


The Mpumalanga Provincial Government has unleashed a Vooma Vaccination weekend in a bid to slow down Covid-19 infection rate during Festive Season

BY STAFF REPORTER

NKANGALA: Following the announcement of the 'Vooma Vaccination Weekends' by President Cyril Ramaphosa, aiming to encourage the public to vaccinate against the Covid-19 pandemic, the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, together with the Health Department and other stakeholders, have in the recent past unleashed Covid-19 Vaccination Campaigns across the province. The campaigns are conducted in a bid to slow down the Covid-19 infection rate during the Festive Season. Led by Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, the campaigns started at various overcrowding points including taxi ranks, malls, hospitals, public places and resident's households. The drive saw Mtshweni-Tsipane kick-starting the campaigns at EL-Shadai in Arckerville, eMalahleni Local Municipality to encourage people to vaccinate against the pandemic. During the programme, the premier interacted with the public to outline the importance of taking the vaccine during the fourth wave, amid the Covid-19 Omicron variant. Furthermore, Mtshweni-Tsipane, together with the Department of Health, have recently embarked on a Vooma Vaccination Weekend Campaign at Perdekop, near Volkrust at Dr. Pixley Isaka Seme Local Municipality. The vaccination team was led by the Amajuba Memorial Hospital CEO, Makhosonke Mkhali, where 221 people were vaccinated by the team at at Perdekop Town, Siyazenzela Location Ward 6, and Amajuba Mall and Volkrust. Briefing, the vaccination team, Mkhali said the programme was in line with President Ramaphosa's call for all eligible South Africans to get vaccinated in order to protect themselves, their families, and their communities before a possible fourth wave of Covid-19. He said that the National Department of Health has identified priority districts and sub-districts in the province based on the number of unvaccinated people and the vaccination coverage to date. "In Mpumalanga Province, all three districts have been identified as having low uptake on vaccination and require attention.

However, the Gert Sibande District and Mkhondo Sub-District have been identified as having a very low vaccine uptake compared to the other districts in the province," he said. The team also visited the identified households to vaccinate residents, whereby, they also grouped and inoculated community members who voluntary came to do so, with elderly citizens coming forth to take their jobs. The Vooma Vaccination Weekend continued in Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality, with councillors, led by the Acting Executive Mayor Phumzile Mnguni, conducting a door-to-door programme to encouraging the citizens to vaccinate against the pandemic. The door-to-door campaigns were conducted in Siyabuswa, which according to the local municipality, seems to be a useful tactic as many people warmly welcome the health workers and opted to get vaccinated. In the Victor Khanye Local Municipality, MEC for Education in Mpumalanga, Bonakele Majuba, accompanied by the Executive Mayor, KV Buda and the Speaker Henry Ngoma, led the vaccination team to the households. The entourage visited Khehla's place and the Botleng Clinic to urge the community members, especially the children and elderly to vaccinate. During the campaign, Assistant Manager in the Health Department's Primary Health Care in the Victor Khanye Sub-District, Delisile Mathebula, reported that the area had 15 patients. Mathebula indicated that they have not yet experienced a high volume of positive confirmed cases. "We are proceeding with the door to door vaccination and the teams are continuing to vaccinate in all the four fixed facilities and strategic areas such as shopping centres, mines and factories within the sub-district," she said. According to the Provincial Government, Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane has currently deployed all the members of the executive council including executive mayors in the Nkangala District Municipality, to lead the campaigns and encourage citizens to vaccinate against Covid-19.



Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



On behalf of council, management and officials, I would like to send out this gracious message to all the citizens of Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality.

At this time of year many of us will be with family, friends, and neighbours, but it's also important that we look out for those who may be vulnerable through ill health, hardship, or who are alone.

There are many in our community who embrace the spirit of Christmas by thinking of others and acting in ways that bring happiness and peace. It's about showing those who may be lonely or unhappy this Christmas that we care by offering help where we can.

Even though we are still fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, we should follow the Government guidelines during the festive period and modify our activities for the benefit of your family and friends' health. We can still enjoy the family traditions associated with Christmas we just need to learn how to adapt to the situation to help protect ourselves and all those around us.

Those that are travelling, travel safe and remember to get the little ones properly buckled up at the back. Don't drink and drive, obey the rules and regulations of the road. Enjoy with caution and a sense of responsibility. Please remember that your life, as well as the lives of all citizens, is worthy.

On behalf of the Councillors and the staff of Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality, we wish you a Christmas that will give you satisfaction, happiness and love, and we wish you a very happy and prosperous New Year!

*Cllr David Tladi
Mayor of Elias Motsoaledi
Local Municipality*

HIS MAJESTY FEED THE NEEDY

BY STAFF REPORTER

PHOLA: On Saturday morning, Chief Siphohle Mahlangu of Ndzundza Sogutjhe Traditional House in conjunction with Phola Football Association, Liselihle Organization and Sogutjhe Foundation donated more than 100 food parcels to Phola Community which were mostly elderly people, orphaned children and those in need at Somhlolo Sports Ground in Phola. According to Thulisile Mahlangu the admin clerk at Ndzundza Sogutjhe in the office of Chief Siphohle Mahlangu, His Majesty started this initiative 3 years ago in partnership with the Phola Football Association and Liselihle Organization.

The main purpose was to feed the elderly in the community, orphaned children and those who are in dire need for assistance. His Majesty was touched by the level of destitute families since the advent of Covid19 "The chief was touched by the way COVID-19 affected the society and decided to reach out to the community with his partners hence Ogies Branch Capitec Bank joined forces and sponsored with food parcels." said Mahlangu. The tribal authority under his Majesty Siphohle Mahlangu is hopeful that number of beneficiaries will increase in the new year and more corporate sponsors will come on board to support this noble initiative.



Steve Tshwete
Local Municipality

SEASON'S *greetings*

The festive season is a time for family and friends to reconnect. With the new year approaching, it is also time to reflect on the past year and look forward to the year ahead.

We faced many challenges in 2021, and most of them showed us the power that communities hold. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate everybody living and working in Steve Tshwete Local Municipality (STLM), we all stuck together through a very hard year.

As we reach the end of the year, I hope we take the time to re-evaluate what is important to us, as we look forward to the recovery process in 2022. I also hope we will reflect on why this Municipality is such a wonderful place to live.

There is much to look forward to in our Municipality, and as our new administration begins, we pledge to serve the people in excellence as true public servants. As I begin my tenure as mayor, I look forward to being a champion of our Municipality, and I pledge to bring our community together.

I am here to listen and work alongside you. My door is always open to the residents of STLM, please feel free to share your thoughts, goals and concerns with me and the rest of the Council.

I am confident we can use our collective wisdom to return our Municipality to its former glory. I know together we can do this. I believe that if we work together, no matter our political faction or party, we can make a difference and make STLM a place where people want to live, do business, work, and visit.

We have a lot to be excited about in the coming year in the Municipality, but with that excitement, comes a lot of hard work. I believe that we are up for the challenge.

We will work towards finding solutions to our issues; work to attract new business, and work towards improved public engagement and communications with our residents. We will also be consistent in running a pro-poor administration that delivers quality services to our citizens.

On behalf of the Council, the residents and indeed on my own behalf, let me extend our warm seasonal wishes to everyone, and may your festive season be filled with happiness and goodwill.

May 2022 be productive and prosperous for all. May the spirit of this wonderful season be with you and your loved ones throughout the holidays, and many blessings for the New Year.

Remember, not only during this festive season, but also in our daily lives, take care of family and friends, drive safely, and help those in need. Let us join hands in making STLM a brighter one this festive season.

**Cllr Mhlonishwa Masilela,
Executive Mayor**



Contact us for

* Advertising

* Events

* For sale items

Thulane : +27 72 525 4778



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2022 Holidays for South Africa

- Jan 1 New Year's Day
- Mar 21 Human Rights Day
- Apr 15 Good Friday
- Apr 17 Easter Sunday
- Apr 18 Family Day
- Apr 27 Freedom Day

- May 1 Workers' Day
- May 2 Public Holiday
- May 8 Mother's Day
- Jun 16 Youth Day
- Jun 19 Father's Day
- Jul 18 Nelson Mandela Day

- Aug 9 National Women's Day
- Sep 24 Heritage Day
- Dec 16 Day of Reconciliation
- Dec 25 Christmas Day
- Dec 26 Day of Goodwill



**Steve Tshwete
Local Municipality**

2022
The number one African city
in service delivery and
good governance

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

COUNCIL SPEAKER
Rev. Thomas Ramatlatsane Mpye
078 819 5392

EXECUTIVE MAYOR
Mhlonishwa Masilela
083 550 8668

COUNCIL WHIP
Cacioux Shile Mashiloane
076 803 6988

**MEMBERS OF THE
MAYORAL COMMITTEE**

Bathobele Cloudeh Shabangu
MMC for Public Safety
079 082 4314

Marumo Jim Seigwele
MMC for Infrastructure Development and Service Delivery
076 323 6823

Grace Nankie Banengi Maitibela
MMC for Arts, Culture, Sport and Recreation and Environmental Health
073 241 1651

Mthokozisi Gift Maseko
MMC for Spatial Development and Human Settlement
083 674 8869

Manakedi Caroline Mphogo
MMC for Financial Services
082 549 7738

Leisaisi Ernest Nkwana
MMC for Corporate Services
079 034 1707

WARD COUNCILLORS

WARD 1 Bathobele Cloudeh Shabangu Part of Kwazamokuhle, Exts 4, 5, 6, 7 and Waaluis 079 082 4314	WARD 2 Rev. Thomas Ramatlatsane Mpye Part of Kwazamokuhle, Exts 4, 5, 6, 7 and Waaluis 078 819 5392	WARD 3 Jabulile Florence Shihole Part of Kwazamokuhle and Hendrina and surrounding farms 060 925 1898	WARD 4 Mgevu Edward Nyambi Komati Power Station and surrounding farms 072 110 7597	WARD 5 Manakedi Caroline Mphogo Pulleshope and surrounding farms and mines 082 549 7738	WARD 6 Sizewe Wonderboy Zulu Naledi, Lesedi, Vaalbank, Ext 24 and surrounding farms 076 313 6975	WARD 7 Iddy Mahlangu Amod, Rietkuil, Hammelfontein and surrounding farms and villages 078 592 8333	WARD 8 Paul Elias Williams Part of Ext 24, Nasaret, Rondsobosh and Sam Rose 074 897 7385	WARD 9 Johannes Skosana Somathepha Village and surrounding farms 072 106 9677	WARD 10 Mthokozisi Gift Maseko Eastdene, Halalamandi and part of Rondsobosh 083 674 8869	WARD 11 Deon Joubert van der Merwe Part of Eastdene, Mt Mail, Mineralia, Ext 18, Vaalbank and Industrial Area 074 281 4379	WARD 12 Hendrik Frederick Niemann Aeorand 082 083 9763	WARD 13 Susan-Mar Wait Part of the CBD 083 250 5968	WARD 14 Jos Petrus Pretorius Gholisg, Clubville and Ext 23 072 474 4088	WARD 15 Helena Gertruida de Klerk Part of the CBD and Kanonkop 083 264 7780
WARD 16 Johann Dyason Part of Kanonkop, Dennesig, Doornkop and 4SAI 083 241 3153	WARD 17 Marumo Jim Seigwele Newtown Exts 1 and 2 076 323 6823	WARD 18 Grace Nankie Banengi Maitibela Thembsa, Phumla, Modderfontein, Reabota, Jabulum, Burundi and part of the CBD 073 241 1651	WARD 19 Mthokozisi Lucius Shabangu Part of Mountainview, Malaylen and Plain 081 388 2909	WARD 20 Leisaisi Ernest Nkwana Vuka and part of Ext 1 079 034 1707	WARD 21 Mhlonishwa Masilela Part of Exts 1, 3 and 23 083 550 8668	WARD 22 Cacioux Shile Mashiloane Chromeville, Rockville and Mountainview 076 803 6988	WARD 23 Lirah Joyce Ntombikayise Zondo Ext 2 and part of Ext 4 083 660 9720	WARD 24 William Monty Moragaming Phelela Mhluzi Exts 4 & 7 073 392 8784	WARD 25 John Mxolisi Shongwe Part of Exts 6 and 8 073 897 3182	WARD 26 Maceda Gregory Amigo Ext 5 and part of Tokologo 079 399 7345 083 693 5698	WARD 27 Patrick Yusuuzi Malinga Part of Newtown and parts of Exts 5 and 8 071 267 8954	WARD 28 Linky Nomisa Sibanda Part of Tokologo & Ext 6, Malope Village, Uityykk, Ollanis River Lodge and Samekoms 071 565 5496	WARD 29 Anna Sophia Grobler Doornkop, Presidentsrus and surrounding farms 076 830 3123	

PROPORTIONAL COUNCILLORS

Nosipwo Bottoman 071 273 9942	Elias Morgan Bruiners 071 587 3888	Annah Chego 076 647 8758	Selape Thabo Mathunyane 083 750 2030	Jonathan Crooks Hearhoff 071 473 0908	Elvis Peprose Mahlangu 072 258 8151	Damien Dominic Klopper 076 873 2188	Bussisive Cindy Mashabela 073 345 0199	Gysbertus Hendrik Ernest Romijn 082 808 0387	Mareli Johannes Mapheto 076 126 4053	Moshakane Phillip Mogola 079 769 7335	Sophia Mammy Mogola 072 148 2327	Palesa Mobbango 073 975 8544	Priscillah Malinga 076 096 7333	Juanette Menz 082 823 2821
Ben Hamilton Mokoena 082 350 3574	Johanna Ntombizobwa Mhombeni 079 500 7237	Ntate Zanele Ogara Mlotla 061 434 2323	Zandile Joseph Nguweni 076 557 3278	068 123 1420	Helena Phodla 082 415 8029	Lucky Sipho Ooka 072 752 6664	073 315 3290	Omra Asmath Cossa 073 315 3290	Jomo Segage 076 941 1197	Cedric Moses Soko 067 813 8508	Daniel Andries Suurman 066 305 3249	Cornelius Johannes Wolmarans 083 343 9643	Ntshweng Thabiso Tshobane 076 865 6974	Angelo Odwa Thabatha 076 556 4422
Armelia Stuwig 082 898 5486														

DA TO APPROACH SAHRC OVER MASINAKANE SPECIAL SCHOOL'S 'APPALLING CONDITIONS'

BY STAFF REPORTER

SIYABUSWA: The Democratic Alliance (DA) said on Tuesday that they will approach the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), to take action against Mpumalanga Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, over her failure to address the challenges faced by intellectually and physically challenged learners at Masinakane Special School. Masinakane Special School, in Allemansdrift B outside Siyabuswa, Department of Education in Mpumalanga, has for many years deprived learners their right to education as a result of shortage of accommodation in the school premises to house them. The special school accommodates a large number of learners with special educational needs, coming from as far as Nelspruit, Ermelo, Carolina, Standerton, Middelburg and Balfour. According to the party, last year after an oversight visit to the school, the DA alerted the Provincial Department of Education about the challenges faced by the learners and staff of the special school. Late last year, during his visit to the special school, MEC for Education in Mpumalanga, Bonakele Majuba directed officials to fast track all due processes to improve the conditions at Masinakane Special School. Majuba directed officials to put all systems in place and to report to him on or before 30 November 2020. During that time, the Education Department indicated that it was in collaboration with the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport where they have already appointed a principal agent to facilitate improvements of infrastructure at the special school. "But the Department of Education did nothing to help until to date. The DA also

asked the Premier to visit the school to see the challenges for herself, but she refused. This prompted the DA to lodge a complaint with SAHRC against the Department of Education," said Jane Sithole, DA Spokesperson on Education. During the first complaint raised by the DA with the SAHRC against the Education Department, following issues: - Learners at the school are subjected to atrocious conditions, in that they sleep in classrooms with no ablution facilities to be used at night. The school does not have a hostel. - Since the Covid-19 outbreak, only 31 of the 154 learners are attending school, and the other 124 are confined at home without supervision simply because the department has not provided any facilities for them. According to the DA, a recent response to the party's questions in the provincial legislature, Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane said the makeshift boarding facilities at Masinakane Special School are not serious and they were contained. The Premier went on to say that the department should in the following financial year start with the planning and design of the boarding facilities, but the implementation will only start later. "The DA requested that the Mtshweni-Tsipane visit Masinakane Special School on two different occasions and the Premier declined twice stating that the DA should write to the chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Education and request the committee to do an oversight," explained Sithole. She added that during Mtshweni-Tsipane's response, it was appalling to witness her indifferent attitude to the serious issue and it appeared that she is not prepared to



DA Spokesperson on Education in Mpumalanga, Jane Sithole, says the party will approach the SAHRC to resolve issues facing Masinakane Special School after the Education MEC and premier failed dismally

face or acknowledge the inhumane living conditions of these learners with mild to severe intellectual disabilities. "Teachers and learners of Masinakane Special School have been struggling with poor boarding facilities since 2008, when learners were housed in a dilapidated boarding house. They were then moved into their mobile classrooms due to the boarding school

being declared unsafe for living," Sithole said. Sithole emphasized that the party believes that the Mpumalanga Government had ample time to build boarding school for these learners, yet they have continued to sweep this problem under the carpet. Spokesperson to the Premier, Sibongile Mkani-Mpolweni, was not available for a comment at the time of going to press.



Steve Tshwete
Local Municipality

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council@stlm.gov.za

NOTICE

CLOSURE OF MUNICIPAL OFFICES DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON

The community is hereby informed that all municipal offices will close at 12:00 on 23 December 2021 and re-open on 03 January 2022.

Komati pay point, Middelburg and Hendrina civic centers will open on 28 to 30 December 2021 from 09:00 – 12:00.

During this period, residents can pay and purchase electricity by using Pre-paid 24 online service (www.prepaid24.co.za).

Vending outlets situated in **Mhluzi Ext 4 Sasol Nkululeko Garage; Middelburg Maranata Engen Garage; Middelburg Tosca Kanonkop; Middelburg Kanonkop Superspar; Hendrina Burgers Garage; Middelburg Midwater Engen Garage; Middelburg Total Garage next to Middelburg mall; Middelburg; Middelburg park - Total Garage; Komati OK Grocery Store; Middelburg Sasol Garage - Meyer Street; Hlalamnandi Choppies Supermarket and Middelburg Mall Superspar** will be fully operational during this period.

For service delivery, enquiries and complaints, contact the following numbers and follow STLM Facebook Page: **WATER:** (013) 249 7143/083 570 4430/083 385 9722/066 127 0217, **ELECTRICITY:** (013) 249 7348/7344, **ACCOUNTS:** (013) 249 7349, **VENDING OUTLETS** (013) 249 7714, **LAW ENFORCEMENT:** (013) 249 7213/082 501 1879, **FIRE AND RESCUE** (013) 243 2222/(013) 249 7845 and **FACEBOOK** @officialstlm.

All standby, emergency and disaster services will operate as normal.

Enjoy the Festive season holiday, Drive safe and Arrive Alive.

MUNICIPAL MANAGER

Adv. B KHENISA

17 December 2021



www.stevetshwetelm.gov.za

SERIAL RAPIST AND MURDERER GETS THREE LIFE TERMS

BY STAFF REPORTER

EMALAHLENI: A 36-year-old has sentenced to three life terms and the additional 40 years imprisonment by the eMalahleni Magistrate's Court. Gcina Gama, was convicted and sentenced after the court found him guilty for multiple counts of rape, murder and robbery with aggravating circumstances. Monica Nyuswa, Mpumalanga Directors of Public Prosecutions Spokesperson, said the accused pleaded guilty and was subsequently charged along with his co-accused Siyabonga Fana Dlamini (42,) who pleaded not guilty and the state applied for separation of trial. "The court heard that between 2018 and 2020, Gama and Dlamini were harassing women who were hitch-hiking on the N4 Road in eMalahleni, Mpumalanga. In one incident, two women were in the company

of Musa Maluleka when Gama and Dlamini emerged. The pair attacked the trio, robbed them of their belongings and gang-raped the women, they further stab Maluleka who succumbed to his injuries," Nyuswa said. She said Dlamini's hearing is set down for 28 January 2022 at the same magistrate's court. State prosecutor, Maureen Nkosi, addressed the court about the scourge of gender-based violence in the society and its impact, urging the court to impose a suitable sentence. The court sentenced Gama and also declared him unfit to possess a firearm. The Acting Director of Public Prosecutions, Sonja Ntuli, said the sentence demonstrates that the criminal justice system is effective and working tirelessly to protect the victims of crime, and grateful to the investigations team for presenting a solid case that ensured justice to the victims.

PHOLA POLICE IN SEARCH OF CAR ACCIDENT VICTIM

BY STAFF REPORTER

PHOLA: The police in Phola, Ogies, are looking for a family of a woman who was hit and killed by a vehicle at the N12 freeway between Kendal and Arbor off ramp on Sunday 28 November 2021. According to the police report, the unknown victim, aged between 30 and 40, was discovered by the on duty police officers after receiving a call about the accident in the area, which involves a pedestrian. "Upon arrival at the scene of accident, the police found the lifeless body of an African woman, aged between 30 and 40, lying on the ground on the side of the road," said Sergeant Petros Ntuli, Phola Police Spokesperson. Ntuli said the deceased was wearing a red T-shirt, a sky blue jersey and a black pair of Jeans. Ntuli said the police identified the driver at the accident scene and he alleged that he was travelling from Johannesburg to Middleburg when the accident occurred. "The driver indicated that he had just passed the Arbor off ramp approaching Kendal off ramp when he, abruptly noticed that he bumped someone who was crossing the freeway. Apparently, he stopped to further investigate the matter and called the police only to find out that he had hit someone who was attempting to cross the freeway," explained Ntuli. He said the police furthered

summoned the paramedics to the scene and the woman was certified dead. "The body the victim was taken to the Witbank Government Mortuary and has never been identified since," he said. Ntuli said the police in Phola request the community to assist in locating family or friends of the deceased woman. "A case of culpable homicide and accident report has been opened at Phola Police station and an investigation is currently underway," he said. Ntuli appealed to anyone with information in the matter to contact Sergeant Thembi Shiba on 079 355 7702, Phola SAPS on 013 643 8601/2 or 076 605 4760. Meanwhile, Sergeant Ntuli said the Phola Police have arrested a 24-year-old man traditional healer for assault with intent to cause Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH), after he performed traditional rituals to three boys aged between 10 and 15 without the consent of their parents. Ntuli said the suspect was arrested on Saturday 11 December, after a family member of one of the boys' noticed that they have razor cuts on their bodies, allegedly performed by a traditional healer to give them supernatural powers. "The incident was reported to the parents of the victims and the police were later notified and arrest the suspect. A case of assault GBH was immediately opened and is under investigation," he said.

PASTORS AGAINST CHURCH CLOSURE TAKE POLITICAL ROUTE

BY STAFF REPORTER

MIDDLEBURG: A group of religious leader has established a political party that will be contesting for the upcoming general election in 2024.

The Active African Christians United Movement (AACUM), came into inception during the historical National Pastors Indaba held at the Pretoria Hotel from 12 to 14 November 2021, which mobilized the church leaders to engage the necessity of the political venturing during the sitting.

AACUM founding member, Apostle Advocate Moafrika Wa Maila, said the decision to go into political direction as the movement has began in the church defence as Pastors Against Church Closure. "Our birth was from uncommon circumstances of painful nature. We begin our mobilization as an opposition to a decree that was made by the President of Republic of South Africa to close the churches on the 28 December 2019, which was for the second time. We have come to realize a growing desire for our country political scenario and landscape to have a morally rooted radical conscious Christian political movement," he said.

Moafrika indicated that the pastors have learned with shock when government has on 10 February 2021, instructed the red ants to demolish churches in Middleburg,

Mpumalanga.

"Following the instruction, as Pastors Against Church Closure, we organised a support for protest to Steve Tshwete Municipality with local Pastors Fraternal to dispute the decision," he said.

Moafrika described AACUM as a radical movement that is pro-ethical political leadership and Christocentric movement that will protect the poor from the exploitation by the powerful in all spaces of human existence.

"The organization is an outspoken Christian movement that is non-compromising in its biblical position that has protest approach in nature that is non-violent. AACUM is a movement that derives its origin in the masses of the people, who have been suffering deprivation and marginalization by the system in previous and present government," he said.

Moafrika informed that the organization's ideology adheres and relies on Christian activism, as the doctrine and philosophy of its political and spiritual movement.

"We are intending to breed the kind of people who will be activist on matters affecting their daily lives. Our activism suggest that our movement is rooted in the essential of actioneering our approach than theorizing our concepts," he said.

Moafrika said they believe the movement



AACUM founding member, Apostle Advocate Moafrika Wa Maila, says the new political party will be fighting to serve interests of faith based communities in government

will be the expression that unite Africans and Christians to pursue a course of finding solutions for their God given continent and country.

"We believe that there has to be a way

forward. We believe that unity is one of the most important component for both humanity and Christianity to thrive. Unity is even the central aspect of the Christian faith," he said.

DUO ARRESTED FOR DEFRAUDING DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Godfrey Mthokozi Mchunu was arrested by the Hawks after defrauding the Mpumalanga Department of Rural Development over R1 Million whilst he was serving as the department's project manager



Hlaleleni Dinah Shabangu was arrested by the Hawks after her company Frugasec CC received fraudulent amount to the excess of over R1 Million with no service rendered

BY STAFF REPORTER

NKANGALA: The Hawks in Mpumalanga have arrested Godfrey Mthokozi Mchunu (50) and Hlaleleni Dinah Shabangu (45) I connection with fraud, theft and corruption. Captain Dineo Sekgotodi, Hawks Mpumalanga Provincial Spokesperson, said the arrest emanates from the incident that happened in September 2018, whilst Mchunu was employed as a project manager at the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, where he allegedly colluded with Shabangu who was a service provider and director of Frugasec CC, to make irregular payments. "The payments were made by the department to Shabangu's company for services that were not rendered, causing an actual loss of about R 1 265 400.00 for the department," Sekgotodi said. She said the duo was arrested, charged and subsequently appeared in the Nelspruit Magistrate Court on Wednesday 08 December 2021. "They were granted a R5 000-00 bail each and their case was postponed to 4 February 2022 for their appearance at the

Specialised Commercial Crimes Court," Sekgotodi said. Sekgotodi furthered said the Hawks have on Thursday 9 December, around 06:00 am arrested a 30-year-old male suspect at a house in Volkrust in connection with possession of drugs. "The suspect was arrested during the search and seizure operation conducted by members of the Secunda Hawks' Serious Organised Crime Investigation, Crime Intelligence, Standerton Crime Intelligence, Standerton K9 and Secunda K9, following information that there were drugs on the premises," she said. Sekgotodi said the premises was thoroughly searched, wherein, police and Hawks members found 28 pieces of crack cocaine hidden in the kitchen, a bag containing 61 sachets of nyaope and a bag containing pure heroin hidden at different areas throughout the premises. "One male who was found in the premises was interviewed and indicated that his brother had already left to town and he was immediately arrested and due to appear in court," she said.

MEC LEADS FIGHT AGAINST GBV



MEC for Mpumalanga Department of Social Development, Lindiwe Ntshalintshali, encouraged victims of GBV to report the perpetrators

BY STAFF REPORTER

MIDDLEBURG: MEC for Mpumalanga Department of Social Development, Lindiwe Ntshalintshali, said the number of Gender Based Violence (GBV) during the Covid-19 pandemic period in the province. Ntshalintshali was speaking during the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence Campaign, held on Friday 10 December at the Iraq Taxi Rank in Middleburg. According to crime stats for the 1st quarter of 2021/2022, 10 006 people were raped between April and June 2021. This is an increase of 4 201 cases, amounting to a 72.4% increase, compared to the reporting period. A sample of 5 439 rape cases revealed that 3 766 of the rape incidents took place at the home of the victim or the home of the rapist and 487 rape cases were domestic violence-related. In just three months, between July and September 2021, 9 556 people, most of whom were women, were raped. This is 7% more than in the previous reporting period. Of the nearly 73 000 assault cases reported during this period, more than 13 000 were domestic violence-related. The rate of child murders has climbed by nearly a third compared to the previous reporting period. "But we are happy that the police are hands-on and dealing with these crimes," she said. Ntshalintshali said they are discouraging women to who say if they go to police station they are told to go

back home and talk about is as a family. "Next time might be not going back, they might kill you. Hence we say allow the law and our law enforcement agencies to assist you," she said. The MEC indicated that her department has social workers and safety shelters where they put victims temporarily when they deal with their challenges. "Everybody has a right to be safe and treated with dignity. That is why we are saying everybody is protected by the constitution of the Republic of South Africa," she said. Asked if her department has plans in place to protect sex workers' rights, a business sector that seen spiking number of GBV cases in the country, Ntshalintshali said the department has a section that deals with sex workers issues where they work with the police and Health Department to provide workshops to the affected group. "We provide them with counselling and encourage the police to not turn them away. And we have workshops on how people must behave. It is unfortunate that some of them are been attacked when doing these activities and we say it can't be correct," explained Ntshalintshali. She said the province has about 30 000 cases of GBV, in which Nkangala District Municipality accounts for 11000 of the cases with most of them reported at eMalahleni.



TIMELESS SPORT

SWING CLUBS CLASH IN SEKHUKHUNE GOLF DEVELOPMENT DAY TOURNAMENT



Coming from different parts of the country, some of the participants of the Sekhukhune Golf Development Day Tournament during the matches at the Marble Hall Golf Course

BY STAFF REPORTER

MARBLE HALL: Thirty-two Golf Sport fanatics between the Sekhukhune Caddywise Golf Club, Naboom Spruit Club, Middleburg Golf Club and Witbank Golf Club clashed in the Sekhukhune Golf Development Day Tournament organized at Marble Hall Golf Course. The matches started at 9am under the Individual Point System (IPS), with each side pitching a player representing them on the field. Naboom started by dominating the matches from the onset, with their players making the most

longest-drives. Sekhukhune Caddywise tried to catch-up using a home ground advantage by the likes of Lucky Malesoene, but Naboom kept on the dominance until the end of the matches. Naboom won the tournament with most of their players leading the IPS, followed by Sekhukhune in second, Middleburg came third and Witbank was fourth. The majority of individual winners from Naboom walked away with prizes and hampers from various sponsors including McCaine, Toyota and Dr Mahlakwane. Marble Hall Golf Course

owner Mr Campbell also contributed the prizes to the winners and Coca cola sponsored the players with soft drinks. Sekhukhune Caddywise Golf Club Coach, Kwaaja Monama, said the tournament was organized to forge relationship with other golf players from different parts of the country. "Many of the players we hosted on the day were playing for the first time on the Marble Hall Golf Course and they were impressed," he said. Monama added that he believes that the sporting code is the unifier of communities from different

backgrounds. "By hosting tournaments of these nature, we are aiming to promote a relationship with other golfers with an objective of getting as many participants as we can so that the sporting code can grow in leaps and bounds," he said. Monama said the Sekhukhune Caddywise players has organized a rehearsal matches at the Marble Hall Golf Club on 27 December 2021. "Golf sport loving people, young and old, from different parts of Sekhukhune are invited to attend," he said.

STLM FIGHTING GBV THROUGH SPORTS

BY STAFF REPORTER

MIDDLEBURG: To fight the scourge of Gender Based Violence (GBV) perpetuated to the public, the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality (STLM) Youth Development Office, organized a sporting event, aiming to spread the awareness to tackle gender based violence in the communities. The sporting event was organized under the theme: "Orange the World: End Violence against Women Now", and has taken place at Mhluzi Extension 8 Sports Grounds. The sporting event was held in partnership with Multiracial Youth Centre from Nasaret, Khuthala Youth Development from Rockdale and the Tseladimatlapa Youth Centre from Doornkop. Activities for the day included football, netball and indigenous games such as diketo, morabaraba and ncuva. Football teams that participated in the tournament included, Mission United FC from Rockdale, Inyimbha United FC from Mhluzi Extension 24, Charmer Boys FC from Mhluzi Extension 24 and Middelburg City FC from Mhluzi Extension 24. The netball teams taken part in the tournament were Future Stars NC, Radical Girls NC, Mhluzi Young Fighters NC and Shooting Stars NC. According to STLM, the purpose of the tournament was aimed at spreading awareness against gender-based violence and celebrating 16 Days



Radical Girls NC won the netball tournament and walked away with gold medals.

of Activism against GBV. Outlining the purpose of the sporting event, STLM Youth Manager, Thabisile Mkwanzazi, warned the youth about the consequences and danger that can occur if people keep quiet when witnessing abuse around them. "When you get angry and you see that you will

end up doing something you regret, rather go to the sports field or keep yourself busy by teaching children in your community about sports and indigenous games. Just do anything that can keep your mind off doing bad things," she said. After a busy day of sporting where teams battling for

the first prize, Middelburg City FC won the football tournament and the Radical Girls NC won the netball tournament. The STLM thanked everyone who participated and volunteered to make the sporting event a success.