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## A STEP TOWARDS A PROGRESSIVE MUNICIPALITY: SEKHUKHUNE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY FORGES PARTNERSHIPS FOR DEVELOPMENT

**LIMPOPO** - Groblersdal in the Sekhukhune District Municipality witnessed a pivotal moment on February 9, 2024, as Executive Mayor Cllr. Minah Bahula led a crucial meeting at the Sekhukhune headquarters Council Chamber. The gathering, convened with the aim of fostering collaboration between the municipality and the National Department of Public Works, brought together emerging contractors alongside seasoned professionals, marking a significant stride towards communal development.

The meeting culminated in an agreement that underscores the commitment of both parties to laying the groundwork for skills development, a cornerstone of progress for both the country and the district.

Under this agreement, the National Department of Public Works will allocate funding for the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), specifically earmarked for training learner contractors engaged in labor-intensive infrastructure projects.

In return, the district municipality will allocate onsite projects, fostering hands-on experience and professional growth among local contractors.

Addressing the gathering, Mayor Bahula articulated the primary objective of the meeting: to identify and address the challenges hindering contractors from fulfilling their tasks effectively.

"Our goal is to equip the people of Sekhukhune to seize opportunities within the district, with a focus on delivering quality work," Mayor Bahula stated.

Despite hurdles such as grading, procurement, and limited access, contractors expressed enthusiasm for contributing to community sanitation efforts.

Mayor Bahula, alongside Municipal Manager Meshack Kgwale, reiterated their commitment to overcoming barriers and delivering effective solutions.

They insisted on the importance of collaborative support from municipal



**The Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality, Cllr. Minah Bahula, spearheading a crucial meeting and discussions at the Sekhukhune headquarters Council Chamber. Picture: Supplied.**

authorities in addressing systemic issues and fostering sustainable development in the water and infrastructure sanitation sectors.

The meeting concluded with a renewed sense of purpose and a shared commitment from all parties involved to work together towards a more prosperous and inclusive future for the Sekhukhune District Municipality.

Among the attendees were notable figures, including the district's council speaker, Cllr. Kwediyebotse Chego, MMcs in Infrastructure Water Services, and the leader of the Executive Business in Sekhukhune, Cllr. Kuki Sefala.

The gathering serves as a testament to the municipality's dedication to fostering partnerships and driving initiatives aimed

at propelling Sekhukhune towards a brighter tomorrow.

With collaborative efforts and a shared vision for progress, the district stands poised to realise its potential and usher in a new era of development and prosperity for its residents.

## RISE MZANSI CALLS FOR ACTION AMID ESCALATING ROLLING BLACKOUTS: A CALL FOR NEW LEADERSHIP



**Leader of Rise Mzansi Songezo Zibi. Picture: Rise Mzansi Twitter.**

**SOUTH AFRICA** - In a stark indictment of the current administration, RISE Mzansi has raised alarm over the worsening rolling blackouts plaguing South Africa, culminating in the unprecedented escalation to Stage 6 shortly after President Ramaphosa's State of the Nation Address on February 9, 2024. The organisation asserts that these

outages, lasting up to 12 hours in a 24-hour cycle, are emblematic of six years of failed leadership under President Ramaphosa's tenure.

With a sense of urgency, RISE Mzansi underscores the impact of these blackouts on South African families, communities, and businesses, decrying the government's inability to address what has become a 17-year crisis.

Despite promises of a new dawn, the reality is a regression into darkness, with the majority of South Africans left to grapple with an unreliable power supply and its debilitating effects on economic activity.

The organisation contends that the political establishment's indifference or incompetence has exacerbated the situation, leading to a dire need for new leadership with innovative solutions.

To address the crisis and propel South Africa towards prosperity, RISE Mzansi

proposes a multifaceted approach:

**Elect New Leaders:** RISE Mzansi calls for a decisive vote against the current political establishment in the upcoming 2024 national and provincial elections.

Leaders who presided over the collapse of Eskom and the economy, the organisation argues, cannot be entrusted with the task of rebuilding.

**Fix Eskom:** Central to the solution is the urgent need to rehabilitate Eskom, the embattled state-owned utility responsible for power generation.

RISE Mzansi advocates for the cancellation of inflated and corrupt contracts, replacing them with transparent agreements that prioritise affordability and efficiency.

The funds saved from these measures will be reinvested in sustainable, less carbon-intensive power generation and transmission infrastructure to mitigate future blackouts.

**Invest in Renewable Energy:** Recognising the potential of renewable energy sources, RISE Mzansi proposes leveraging cheap international funding and grants to stimulate the production of solar energy products locally. By empowering young people to manufacture and install solar panels, the initiative aims to decentralise power generation and provide reliable electricity to all households.

As South Africa stands at a crossroads, RISE Mzansi states that the choices made in the upcoming elections will determine the trajectory of the nation. It presents a stark contrast: continued years of stagnation and escalating blackouts under the current leadership, or a future of prosperity characterised by uninterrupted power supply, economic growth, and job creation. The call to action is clear: South Africa needs new visionary and accountable leaders to steer the country towards a brighter future where the lights never go out.

# MAYOR BAHULA'S FIRST 100 DAYS IN OFFICE: FOSTERING COLLABORATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN SEKHUKHUNE



Delegates being addressed by Mayor at the Sekhukhune headquarters Council Chamber. Picture: Supplied.

**LIMPOPO** - As Mayor Minah Bahula prepares to mark her first 100 days in office at the end of February 2024, the Sekhukhune District Municipality reflects on significant strides in collaboration and development initiatives under her leadership.

Taking the reins as the third mayor of Sekhukhune in less than a year, Mayor Bahula succeeded Maleke Mokganyetji and Julia Mathebe, inheriting a mantle of responsibility amid high expectations for progress and change.

A major advancement in the ongoing collaboration between the National Department of Public Works and the municipality was highlighted at a recent meeting chaired by Mayor Bahula in the Council Chamber of the Sekhukhune headquarters in Groblersdal.

The gathering, which highlighted a dedication to skill development and infrastructure improvement within the district, brought together up-and-coming contractors and well-established industry players.

The Sekhukhune district issued a press release highlighting the agreement between the municipality and the National Department of Public Works, which represents a substantial investment in the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

Through the provision of training opportunities for learner contractors and the allocation of funding for labor-intensive infrastructure projects, this initiative seeks to enhance the community's economic empowerment and skill set.

"To address the challenges faced by



Delegates being addressed by Mayor at the Sekhukhune headquarters Council Chamber. Picture: Supplied.

contractors and provide concrete solutions to enhance their capabilities was the main goal of the meeting called by the Executive Mayor," Mayor Bahula stressed.

"It is our responsibility as a district to see that these initiatives are implemented successfully, and we appreciate the department's assistance in this endeavour."

Contractors at the meeting conveyed their excitement about supporting community sanitation initiatives, but they also pointed out important challenges like grading, procurement, and restricted access.

Mayor Bahula and Municipal Manager Meshack Kgwale, however, reaffirmed their dedication to removing these obstacles and providing workable solutions.

Mayor Bahula stated, "In order to address systemic issues and foster sustain-

able development, the collaborative support from municipal authorities is crucial." "Together, we can create a future for Sekhukhune that is both prosperous and inclusive."

The Sekhukhune District Municipality intends to celebrate Mayor Bahula's first 100 days in office with a launch event in the near future.

Media outlets are being invited to attend the event, where Mayor Bahula will discuss plans for the district's future growth and development as well as reflect on the progress that has been made thus far.

The municipality is committed to furthering the interests of its citizens, encouraging economic empowerment, and creating a strong and lively community for all Sekhukhune residents as Mayor Bahula's term goes on.

## SEKHUKHUNE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY LEADERS CONDEMN ALLEGED RACIALLY MOTIVATED ATTACKS



Piet Groenewald and his son Stephan appear at the Groblersdal Magistrate's Court. Picture: Supplied.

**LIMPOPO** - In a show of solidarity against racial discrimination, the Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune, Cllr. Minah Bahula, joined forces with Police Minister Bheki Cele and Justice and Constitutional Development Minister Ronald Lamola on January 31, 2024, to witness the court proceedings of alleged perpetrators of racially motivated

attacks.

The leaders convened at court during the appearance of individuals accused of racially motivated violence against two men, highlighting the gravity of the issue and the collective commitment to justice.

The alleged incidents involved the assault of Veneruru Kavari, a 29-year-old Namibian national, who was reportedly

attacked with a hard object by Piet Groenewald and his son Stephen.

The assault, suspected to be racially motivated, also involved the release of dogs on Mr. Kavari.

The presence of supporters displaying the old apartheid regime's flag outside the court further underscored the underlying racial tensions permeating society.

Mayor Bahula vehemently condemned all forms of racism, saying that such acts undermine the fundamental values of equality, tolerance, and dignity that South Africa upholds.

She stressed the importance of holding perpetrators accountable and eradicating racism wherever it surfaces, asserting that justice must prevail.

Furthermore, Mayor Bahula called upon all citizens to stand united against racism in all its forms, advocating for the construction of a society built on principles of equality, respect, and unity.

Premier of Limpopo Stan Chupu Mathabatha, Justice Minister Ronald Lamola, and Police Minister Bheki Cele all agreed with her assessment of the court proceedings.

The Sekhukhune District Municipality urges community members to remain vigilant and report any incidents of racism or discrimination. Mayor Bahula emphasised that only through collective efforts and solidarity can communities combat prejudice and foster a more inclusive and equitable society.

The leaders' united stance against racism sends a powerful message of intolerance towards discrimination, signaling a commitment to upholding the values of democracy and human rights in South Africa.



Ms Makhosazane Masilela  
Speaker:  
Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature

# SOPA 2024

## State of the Province Address

### OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE: STATE OF THE PROVINCE ADDRESS 2024 – 01 MARCH 2024

The Speaker of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, Ms Makhosazane Masilela has the pleasure of announcing the Official Opening of the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the 6<sup>th</sup> Mpumalanga Legislature and the delivery of the State of the Province Address (SOPA) by Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane. The event is scheduled to take place as follows:

**Date : Friday, 01 MARCH 2024**

**Time : 10:00** (Invited guests are expected to be seated by 9am)

**Venue : Riverside Government Complex: Baobab Building,  
Legislature Chamber**

The Proceedings will be live on Legislature's Facebook page and YouTube Channel, Ligwalagwala FM, Ikwekwezi FM, Rise FM and on several Community Radio Stations

**Theme: "Following up on commitments, growing South Africa, together."**

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# SOUTH AFRICA'S 2024 BUDGET: NAVIGATING ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY AND POLITICAL PRESSURES

**SOUTH AFRICA** - As South Africa anticipates the unveiling of its 2024 Budget Speech, Prof. Andre Roux, an esteemed economist at Stellenbosch Business School, sheds light on the intricate challenges and decisions that lie ahead in the realm of fiscal policy.

## Economic Downturn and Fiscal Strain

Over the past two decades, South Africa's economic narrative has transitioned from one of promise to one of dwindling prospects.

Despite initial post-apartheid economic resilience, recent years have seen the nation grappling with substantial obstacles.

McKinsey's analysis paints a stark picture, showcasing that South Africa has consistently trailed behind the African average in economic growth since the early 2000s.

## Structural Challenges

Underlying this economic stagnation are deep-seated structural issues.

A dysfunctional labour market exacerbates unemployment woes, hindering both

workforce absorption and productivity growth. Additionally, inadequate infrastructure and fragmented stakeholder collaboration serve as further barriers to economic advancement.

## Fiscal Imbalance and Debt Accumulation

The fiscal landscape is equally troubling, with South Africa contending with soaring government debt. Over the last decade, the budget deficit has exceeded sustainable levels, propelling the gross debt-to-GDP ratio from a modest 27% in 2007 to a concerning over 70%.

Worse still, a significant portion of this debt has financed non-productive expenditures, burdening future generations with financial obligations.

## Budgetary Dilemmas and Political Considerations

As the finance minister grapples with these challenges, tough decisions loom large. Tackling the deficit necessitates either expenditure cuts or revenue augmentation.

However, politically sensitive areas such as civil servant remuneration and

social welfare programmes complicate the implementation of austerity measures.

Moreover, tepid economic growth projections limit revenue generation prospects, potentially leading to contentious tax hikes, including proposals for VAT increments or wealth taxation.

## Exploring Alternative Solutions

Amidst these constraints, alternative avenues emerge.

The utilisation of the Gold and Foreign Exchange Contingency Reserve Account offers a potential mechanism to alleviate the deficit without resorting to austerity or tax burdens.

Nevertheless, such an approach carries inherent risks and uncertainties regarding future economic stability.

## Uncertain Future and Public Perception

The efficacy of the forthcoming 2024 Budget Speech in fostering sustainable growth remains uncertain.

While it may serve political expediency, its capacity to address long-term economic challenges and assuage public concerns remains dubious.

Moreover, the risk of disappointing various stakeholders underscores the complexity of reconciling competing demands.

## Conclusion

As South Africa braces for the 2024 Budget Speech, it faces a precarious economic landscape fraught with dilemmas.

Balancing diverse interests, the government confronts the daunting task of charting a course toward economic resilience and inclusive growth. Nonetheless, the inherent trade-offs and uncertainties underscore the formidable nature of this endeavor.

In essence, the 2024 Budget Speech stands as a testament to the delicate interplay between economic pragmatism and political realities, underscoring the complexities of governance amidst uncertainty.

## ZIMBABWEAN NATIONAL SENTENCED TO JAIL FOR PANGOLIN TRAFFICKING IN LIMPOPO



**Authorities in Limpopo arrested Francis Shereni for possession of a pangolin which was kept in a steel cabinet. File Picture SAPS**

**LIMPOPO** - The Mankweng Regional Court in Limpopo has delivered a significant verdict, convicting and sentencing Francis Shereni, a 45-year-old Zimbabwean national, for trafficking a live pangolin.

The verdict, according to Limpopo provincial spokesperson for the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), Mashudu Malabi-Dzhanghi, saw Shereni handed a five-year jail term.

During the trial, witnesses testified to finding the pangolin in Shereni's possession, confined within a steel cabinet.

Tragically, the animal exhibited signs of mistreatment, displaying injuries inflicted by the cabinet's sharp edges and suffering from dehydration.

In advocating for an appropriate sentence, the prosecution, led by advocate Steven Muavha, highlighted the prevalence of such offences within the court's jurisdiction.

Muavha emphasised the need for a punitive sentence to deter potential offenders. Furthermore, the state underscored the constitutional obligation to safeguard the environment for future generations.

In response to the compelling arguments presented, the court imposed a five-year jail

term for possession of the pangolin, coupled with two years each for animal cruelty and contravening the Immigration

Act. These sentences will run concurrently with the initial five-year term.

Reacting to the verdict, advocate Mukhali Ivy Thenga, the Director of Public Prosecutions in Limpopo, expressed satisfaction with the outcome.

Thenga commended both the prosecution team and the diligent efforts of the police detectives who investigated the case.

Pangolins, classified as one of the world's most trafficked animals, face an existential threat due to the illegal wildlife trade.

With their numbers dwindling, law enforcement agencies continue to intensify efforts to combat pangolin trafficking and protect these endangered species.

Shereni's conviction and sentencing serve as a stern warning to would-be offenders, signalling the commitment of South African authorities to combat wildlife crime and uphold environmental conservation efforts.

## TEENAGE PREGNANCY ON THE RISE

**SOUTH AFRICA** - Socio-economic challenges such as inadequate sex education, gender-based violence, and limited access to contraception have been labelled as the major factors contributing to the rise in teenage pregnancy by Dr. Jessica Stanbridge, a psychiatrist also working with the South African Society of Psychiatrists (SASOP), during Pregnancy Awareness Week, dated February 6-10, 2024.

"Teenage pregnancy implies that the pregnancy is usually unplanned, and pregnancy in very young adolescents aged 10-14 is evidence of statutory rape.

This, together with the alarming numbers that do not factor in unregistered births, miscarriages, or backstreet abortions, paints a disheartening picture," says Dr. Stanbridge.

Although global statistics from the World Health Organisation (WHO) may have shown a recent decline in adolescent pregnancies, the same cannot be said about South Africa.

In June 2023, the adolescent birth rate (ABR) had decreased from 64.5 births per 1000 women (15-19 years) to 41.3 births per 1000 women globally.

In South Africa, approximately 90,000 pregnancies were recorded for girls aged between 10 and 19 between April 2021 and March 2022, while between Christmas 2023 and New Year's, about 335 new teenage moms were recorded.

Dr. Stanbridge, though, has further

reiterated the need to seek counselling for teenage mothers due to the mental challenges that come with the sudden transition into motherhood; "The mental health toll on teenagers giving birth cannot be understated.

Teenage pregnancies often come with a range of emotional and psychological challenges, impacting the mental well-being of young mothers.

The societal stigma, coupled with the abrupt and sudden transition to parenthood, can lead to heightened stress, anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder."

She also mentioned that teenage mothers, more often than not, drop out of school, face social repercussions, and encounter a range of emotional and psychological challenges, leading to heightened stress, anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Minister of Social Development Lindiwe Sisulu recently launched an outreach programme focusing on teenage pregnancy, gender-based violence, youth, women, and persons with disabilities in and around the City of Cape Town.

Minister Sisulu has always been vocal about matters relating to teenage pregnancy, and at one stage she mentioned the need to chemically castrate older men impregnating underage girls.

## COMMUNITY STUNNED AS LAERSKOOL DELMAS FINANCIAL OFFICER ACCUSED OF FRAUD

**DELMAS** - Shockwaves reverberated through the tight-knit community of Delmas as news broke of the arrest of Larrisa Aloma Vern, a 52-year-old financial officer at Laerskool Delmas, on charges of fraud.

The arrest, conducted by the Hawks Secunda-based Serious Commercial Crime Investigation, has left residents grappling with the ramifications of financial impropriety within their educational institutions.

Vern, entrusted with the crucial responsibility of managing the finances of Laerskool Delmas, stands accused of exploiting her position for personal gain.

Her duties, ostensibly intended to benefit the school and its stakeholders, from handling payments for services to ensuring the smooth disbursement of teacher salaries, allegedly became channels for deception and malpractice.

The unravelling of this harrowing saga began with suspicions raised regarding unauthorised bonuses paid to Vern.

What initially appeared as isolated incidents soon snowballed into a far-reaching investigation, uncovering a distressing pattern of financial irregularities.

From unauthorised bonus payments to illicit transfers amounting to a staggering R2,665,007.34, the alleged extent of fraud has sent shockwaves rippling through the community's trust in its educational

institutions.

As the investigation reached its zenith, authorities executed a warrant for Vern's arrest on Friday, February 9, 2024.

Subsequently, the accused was detained pending her court appearance on Monday, February 12, 2024, marking a pivotal juncture in the pursuit of justice.

In a sombre courtroom scene on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, Vern faced the Delmas Magistrate Court, where she was remanded in custody pending further legal proceedings.

The weight of the accusations bore heavily upon her as she awaited her fate behind bars.

With the case adjourned to February 19 and 20, 2024, for a bail application hearing, the community remains on edge, grappling with the far-reaching implications of the alleged betrayal of trust.

As the wheels of justice continue to turn, residents cling to the hope of reassurance and accountability from the judicial system, yearning for a resolution that not only upholds the integrity of their educational institutions but also endeavours to restore faith in those entrusted with their stewardship.

Timeless News remains committed to monitoring this unfolding saga and will provide updates as they develop.

# MPUMALANGA FARMER SURVIVES HARROWING ATTACK, WALKS 2 KILOMETRES FOR HELP



Resilient Farmer, Johan Le Roux (Left). Picture: Facebook

**MPUMALANGA** – Johan le Roux, a resilient farmer from Mpumalanga, miraculously survived a brutal attack on Wednesday, February 13, 2024, afternoon after being shot multiple times by four assailants while mowing his lawn.

Despite sustaining severe injuries, including a broken arm, le Roux managed to free himself and embark on a courageous journey, walking 2 kilometres in search of assistance.

According to reports, the harrowing ordeal unfolded when le Roux was ambushed by the assailants near his property, adjacent to Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport.

The attackers, emerging from behind a rubber tree, unleashed a barrage of gunfire at le Roux, leaving him critically wounded before dragging him into his own home, where they bound him and ransacked the premises.

Left for dead by his assailants, le Roux exhibited remarkable resilience, freeing himself from his restraints and embarking on a perilous trek to seek help.

Frank Swanepoel from Hi-Tech White River, among the first responders on the scene, recounted the astonishing account, noting that they were alerted to le Roux's distress call via a local WhatsApp group.

Upon arriving at the compound, they swiftly transported le Roux back to safety. Emergency medical services were promptly notified of the incident, with ER24 Lowveld branch manager Kim Habib confirming that le Roux had sustained multiple gunshot wounds and a broken

arm.

Despite his grievous injuries, le Roux's determination to survive saw him trek 2 kilometres to find assistance.

Le Roux was treated by ER24 paramedics and taken to Mediclinic Nelspruit, where, according to Mediclinic spokeswoman Liza Pillay, he is presently listed in stable condition.

The swift response of Albert Gryvenstein from AG Solutions proved instrumental in the investigation, with the tracking system installed in le Roux's vehicle facilitating the discovery of the abandoned vehicle near the airport.

However, the perpetrators managed to evade capture, fleeing the scene on foot. Provincial police spokesperson Captain Magonseni Nkosi revealed that a case of house robbery had been opened, with investigations underway.

Despite le Roux's initial trauma-induced inability to provide a statement, authorities are committed to pursuing justice in light of this heinous attack.

Johan le Roux's fortitude in the face of hardship is evidence of the farming community in South Africa's unwavering spirit, which rises to the occasion.

As the investigation unfolds, the community stands united in support of le Roux, denouncing such acts of violence and standing firm against criminality.

## VICTOR KHANYE MUNICIPALITY'S LETSEMA PROGRAMME TRANSFORMS WARD 5 UNDER MAYOR BUDA'S LEADERSHIP

**DELMAS** - Victor Khanye Local Municipality was abuzz with activity on Friday, February 16, 2024, as residents of Ward 5 witnessed the impactful execution of the Letsema Service Delivery Programme led by Executive Mayor Cllr Vusi Buda.

From the crack of dawn until the afternoon, municipal teams descended upon the ward with a clear mission: to address infrastructure challenges and uplift the community.

Streets that had long been neglected received much-needed attention as grading operations commenced on Mqwathi Street, Brown Houses, Msiza Street, and Sepenyane Street.

The rumble of machinery filled the air as road crews worked tirelessly to improve accessibility and enhance the overall quality of thoroughfares.

Baba Mnguni, a Botleng resident who owns a house in Ward 5 Msiza Street told the Highveld Chronicle that it is pleasing to see action taking place especially in attending to the roads by grading them.

"Our communities lack dignity because of roads here and some people stay away because they do not want their vehicles to face any challenges.

It is a good thing the mayor and his team are doing something," Mnguni said.

Safety took center stage with the installation of speed humps strategically placed at Dlozi Crescent, Mabuza Street, and Marokoane Street.

These measures aimed to curb speeding and promote safer driving habits, ensuring the well-being of both motorists and pedestrians.

But the Letsema Programme was not limited to roadworks alone.

Teams were deployed to clean roads throughout Ward 5, ridding the community of debris and promoting a cleaner environment. Additionally, illegal dumping sites at Mabuza Street, Nkwanyane Street, Mnguni Street, and Phahla-Mohlaka Street were cleared, signaling a concerted effort to combat environmental hazards.

Infrastructure enhancements were also in full swing, with trenches being opened in various streets to facilitate the installation of essential utilities.

Furthermore, the fixing of high mast lights illuminated the municipality's commitment to improving safety and visibility within the community, particularly during the night.

The success of the Letsema Programme underscored the power of collaboration between the municipality and its residents.

Executive Mayor Cllr Vusi Buda expressed his satisfaction with the day's achievements, emphasizing the importance of community-driven initiatives in driving meaningful change.

He commended the dedication of municipal workers and residents alike, highlighting their collective efforts in realizing a shared vision of progress and development.

As the sun set on Ward 5, the echoes of the Letsema Programme reverberated throughout Victor Khanye Local Municipality, leaving behind tangible evidence of positive transformation and a brighter future for all its residents.

## CANNABIS IS NOT AN EFFECTIVE TREATMENT FOR EPILEPSY, SAYS A LEADING NEUROSCIENTIST

**SOUTH AFRICA** - At the launch of National Epilepsy Week, Dr. James Butler, a specialist neurologist and executive board member of the Neurological Association of South Africa (NASA), debunked the misconception surrounding the use of cannabis as a treatment for epilepsy.

Contrary to popular belief, Dr. Butler underscored that while there is scientific evidence supporting the efficacy of a pure extract of cannabis, known as cannabidiol (CBD), when used consistently at precise doses, there is no such evidence for the consumption of cannabis for social purposes.

He highlighted the presence of numerous unexamined compounds in socially consumed cannabis, some of which may even exacerbate seizures.

"Epilepsy is a complex neurological condition characterised by brief, excessive electrical activity in the brain," explained Dr. Butler.

"It is imperative to differentiate between evidence-based treatments and unproven remedies, such as social cannabis consumption, which may pose risks to individuals with epilepsy."

Statistics reveal that approximately 1 in 26 South Africans will develop epilepsy, with 1 in 10 experiencing epileptic seizures during their lifetime.

Despite the prevalence of the condition, individuals with epilepsy continue to face unwarranted stigma and discrimination. NASA expressed concern over the pervasive ignorance surrounding epilepsy, leading to societal misconceptions and prejudice.

"Much of the suffering experienced by individuals with epilepsy stems not from the condition itself but from societal perceptions rooted in misinformation," stated a NASA press release.

Doctor Butler underscored that epilepsy is akin to other medical conditions like high blood pressure or asthma and should be treated as such.

He dispelled common myths associated with epilepsy, clarifying that seizures are not indicative of psychiatric disorders or supernatural phenomena.

In addition to addressing misconceptions, NASA highlighted the psychosocial challenges faced by individuals with epilepsy, including social withdrawal, bullying, and discrimination in the workplace.

Regarding the causes of epilepsy, Dr. Butler noted that while some cases may be attributed to genetic factors or minor brain abnormalities, others may result from injuries or infections, such as HIV or tuberculosis, particularly prevalent in South Africa.

In light of these challenges, Dr. Butler stressed the importance of raising awareness and fostering understanding to support individuals living with epilepsy and combat the stigma associated with the condition.

As National Epilepsy Week unfolds, the focus remains on promoting accurate information, advocating for evidence-based treatments, and fostering inclusivity for individuals affected by epilepsy within South African society.

# EPHRAIM MOGALE

## LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

111  
MARBLE HALL  
0450  
013-261 8400  
013-261 2985



Leeuwfontein Office (013) 261 8509  
Elandskraal Office (013) 261 8506  
Zamenkomst Office (013) 973 9160  
Traffic Section (013) 261 8400

### PUBLIC NOTICE OF ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/2023 FINANCIAL YEAR

#### INVITATION TO SUBMIT COMMENTS ON THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022/2023 FINANCIAL YEAR

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 127 (5) of the Municipal Finance Management Act, Act 56 of 2003 and Section 21 (a) of the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000 which requires municipalities to publicise their Annual Report and invite the public to make representations or public comments on the report after it has been tabled in Council meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2024.

The Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality (EPMLM) has tabled its Annual Report for the financial year 01 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 at its Council meeting held on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2024.

Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality hereby invites the public to make representations or submit public comments on the Annual Report, in writing, to reach the municipality before or on 28 February 2024 at 16H30.

Copies of the Draft Annual Report 2022/2023 are available on the municipal website, [www.ephraimmogalelm.gov.za](http://www.ephraimmogalelm.gov.za) as well as the 3 Satellite Offices of Zamenkomst, Leeuwfontein and Elandskraal and at the municipal main offices at 13 Ficus Street, Marble Hall.

#### Anyone who wishes to make comments or make representations can submit in writing to:

- Office of the Municipal Manager  
Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality  
P.O. Box 111  
Marble Hall  
0450
- Manager IDP & PMS: Mr. Maepa M.R. on [rmaepa@emogalelm.gov.za](mailto:rmaepa@emogalelm.gov.za)

All comments or representations must be submitted on or before the 28/02/2024.

  
MOROPA M.E.  
MUNICIPAL MANAGER

30/01/2024  
DATE

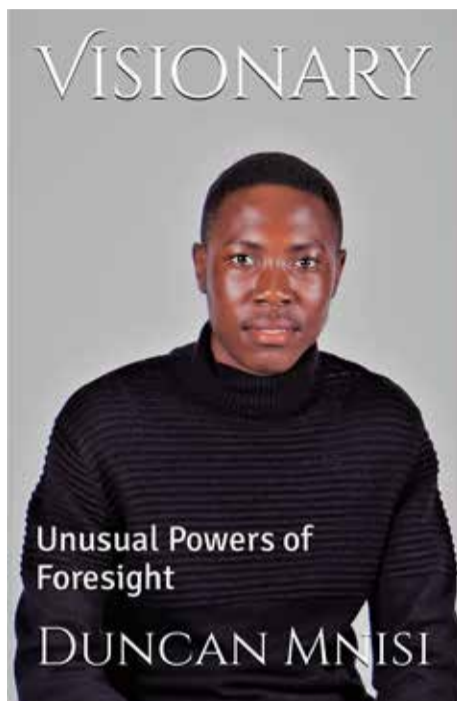


# BOOK REVIEW



## "VISIONARY: UNUSUAL POWERS OF FORESIGHT"

### BY DUNCAN MNISI



"Visionary: Unusual Powers of Foresight by Duncan Mnisi

Duncan Mnisi's "Visionary: Unusual Powers of Foresight" is a thought-provoking exploration into the realm of extraordinary human abilities.

Published in November 2022, this self-published work offers readers a captivating journey into the world of visionaries and their remarkable foresight.

The book delves deep into the phenomenon of foresight, drawing on historical accounts, scientific research, and personal anecdotes to shed light on the nature of these exceptional powers.

Through meticulous research and compelling storytelling, Mnisi presents captivating case studies of individuals who have demonstrated remarkable foresight throughout history, from ancient seers to modern-day visionaries.

One of the strengths of "Visionary" lies in its engaging narrative and thought-provoking analysis. Mnisi invites readers to question their own understanding of time, intuition, and the boundaries of human perception.

By exploring the ethical considerations, potential benefits, and challenges associated with foresight, the author encourages readers to contemplate the implications of these extraordinary abilities.

Moreover, Mnisi's personal journey adds depth to the narrative, offering insights into his own experiences and beliefs.

As a 23-year-old South African author, Mnisi embodies the principles of leadership and philanthropy that he espouses in his work.

His commitment to making a difference in the lives of others, combined with his passion for promoting unity and togetherness, serves as a powerful testament to the transformative power of vision and purpose.

The story is further enhanced by Mnisi's multi-talented personality, which is demonstrated by his work as a writer, YouTuber, radio host, and activist.

His upcoming book, "Ku Tiyisela Swa Pfuna," promises to continue this journey

of exploration and inspiration.

In conclusion, "Visionary: Unusual Powers of Foresight" is a compelling read that challenges conventional perceptions and encourages readers to embrace the possibilities of the human mind.

Mnisi's blend of storytelling, research, and personal reflection creates a unique and thought-provoking exploration of foresight and its implications for society.



Writer Duncan Mnisi holding his book

## RISING STAR: THE JOURNEY OF HAPIVAAL, - SOUTH AFRICAN RAPPER AND ENTREPRENEUR

**Daveyton** - Happy Mhlongo, professionally known as HapiVaal, has emerged as a notable figure in South Africa's music scene, making waves as a rapper, songwriter, and entrepreneur. Born and raised in Daveyton, a township affectionately known as "Vutta," HapiVaal's journey to musical success is a testament to passion, talent, and hard work.

HapiVaal's love for music blossomed at a young age when, at 12 years old, he participated in a poetry competition during his time in primary school. It was through public speaking and performance that he discovered his calling in music.

In 2010, HapiVaal took the leap into the world of rap. His career gained momentum when he collaborated with Pollack and M. Tech, renowned producers who had previously worked with industry heavyweights like Harrison Crump.

The positive reception of his debut song propelled him forward, leading to the acquisition of a manager and collaborations with artists like Drenko.

With his growing popularity, HapiVaal secured gigs that allowed him to share the stage with esteemed acts such as MiCasa, Pitch Black Afro, DJ Shimza, DJ Oskido, Nasty C, Zola, and Khuli Chana.

In 2011, he joined forces with Maffa to form the group Hapivaal and Maffa,



South African Rapper and Entrepreneur, Hapivaal. Picture: Supplied.

focusing on a fusion of Maskandi and Hip-Hop, which quickly gained traction in the music scene.

Their EP, 'Iyahlome,' garnered significant attention and sold 300 copies.

As his career flourished, HapiVaal embarked on tours with organisations like Blood Donation SA, YFM, East Rand Colleges, and CAN DO, sharing stages with notable artists such as Robbie Malinga, Musa, Kwesta, and Kid X.

His versatility as an artist was further highlighted through appearances in advertisements for Pepsi and Hunters Dry, as well as international beer brands.

Beyond his musical endeavours, HapiVaal has proven himself as an astute entrepreneur and event organiser.

His multifaceted talents have led to collaborations and interviews with various radio stations, including Ek FM, Hillbrow FM, SAUMU HD Radio, and Alex FM. HapiVaal's journey serves as inspiration to aspiring artists and entrepreneurs alike, showcasing the power of determination, creativity, and perseverance in achieving one's dreams. As he continues to evolve as an artist and a businessman, HapiVaal remains a shining example of South Africa's vibrant and diverse cultural landscape.



# TIMELESS SPORT

# SANGARE

## SECURES

## GOLD FOR

## SEKHUKHUNE

## CELEBRATING

## AFCON

## TRIUMPH



Sekhukhune United's Badra Ali Sangare. Picture: Gallo Images.

**LIMPOPO** - Amidst the drama, cheers, and a spectacular showdown at the Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON), Sekhukhune United's goalkeeper, Badra Ali Sangare, emerged as a golden hero, bringing home the coveted African title for his nation and securing a gold medal - a feat unmatched by any other Premier Soccer League (PSL) player.

The journey to victory was not without its challenges. After a sluggish start in the group stages, which led to the dismissal of French coach Jean-Louis Asset, the indomitable lions eventually found their rhythm. They clinched the African title for the third time in their history, with Sangare playing a

pivotal role between the goalposts.

Born in Bingerville on May 30th, 1986, Sangare has been a stalwart on his national team, amassing 31 caps before an injury setback saw him temporarily sidelined in favour of Yahia Fofana.

However, Sangare's resilience and skill earned him a place in the starting lineup for the AFCON tournament, where he shone brightly, ultimately claiming the championship.

In an exclusive interview with Timeless News, Sekhukhune United's senior coach, MacDonald Makhubedu, expressed the team's jubilation for Sangare's achievement.

"As a team, we're immensely proud

of Badra, and we celebrate his success wholeheartedly. Our CEO shares in this joy," Makhubedu remarked.

Sekhukhune United had two more players representing their respective nations in the tournament: Nyiko Mobbie for Bafana Bafana and Larry Bwalya for Zambia.

Makhubedu highlighted this as a testament to the growth of the club as a brand.

"The gold and bronze medals brought by Badra and Nyiko, respectively, are a source of pride for us.

Having three players in the tournament speaks volumes about our ambitions as a club," he added.

With the spotlight now turning to domestic football, Sekhukhune United is gearing up for a rigorous campaign in the DSTV Premiership, Nedbank Cup, and CAF Confederation Cup.

Makhubedu outlined the team's ambitions, setting their sights on finishing in the top 8 in the league as they continue to build on their recent successes.

As Sangare basks in the glory of his AFCON triumph, Sekhukhune United stands united in their support, ready to conquer new heights both on the continental stage and within the domestic arena.