

# TIMELESS

# NEWS

INCORPORATING LIMPOPO AND MPUMALANGA - FRIDAY, 22 MARCH 2024

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"Thought Leaders in Community News"

**SALGA  
Municipal  
Awards  
- Page 2**



**Uniforms  
Empower  
Learners  
- Page 4**



**Limpopo  
Hawks Mourn  
- Page 5**



**Unveiling Stories,  
Empowering  
Leaders  
- Page 7**



## CATHOLIC PRIEST SHOT DEAD INSIDE CATHEDRAL

By Thembekile Mzimba

**Tzaneen, Limpopo** - As word spreads about the horrifying murder of 38-year-old Catholic priest Fr. William Banda, the festive spirit of Easter has been eclipsed by tragedy in the Catholic Diocese of Tzaneen, South Africa. Fr. Banda, a member of the St. Patrick's Missionary Society (Kiltegan Fathers), was preparing to celebrate Holy Mass at the Holy Trinity Cathedral when he was fatally shot in the head.

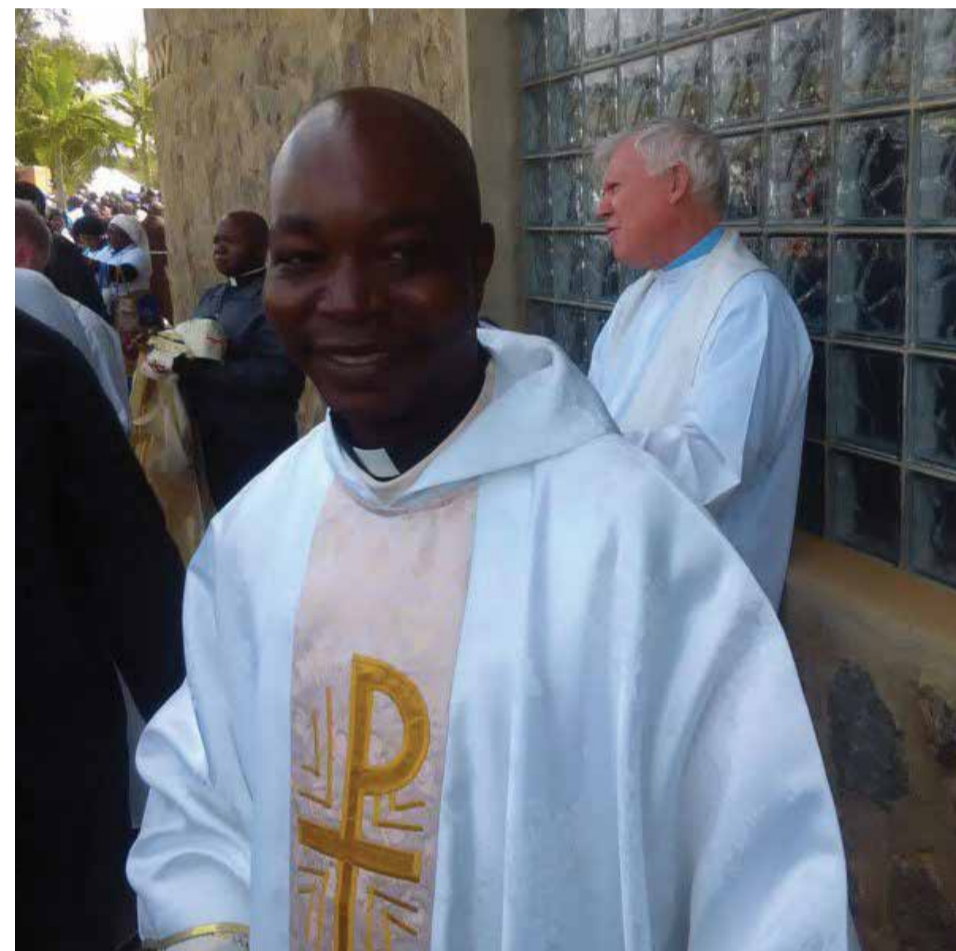
The incident occurred early Wednesday morning when Fr. Banda was in the sacristy, making final preparations for the service. According to reports, a "well-dressed man" entered the sacristy and, without warning, shot the priest twice in the head before fleeing the scene. Despite the swift response of police and emergency medical personnel, Fr. Banda was pronounced dead upon arrival at a nearby hospital.

The community of Tzaneen is reeling from the shock of this senseless act of violence against a beloved member of the clergy. Fr. Banda, originally from Zambia, was known for his dedication to his parishioners and his commitment to spreading the message of peace and love.

Police spokesperson Col. Malesela Ledwaba described the incident as "heinous" and confirmed that investigations into Fr. Banda's murder are currently underway. The identity of the perpetrator remains unknown, but law enforcement authorities are urging anyone with information to come forward and assist in the investigation.

Provincial Commissioner Lt-Gen. Thembi Hadebe has assigned the murder and robbery unit to lead the investigation, emphasising the urgency of apprehending the individual responsible for this tragic crime. Lt-Col. Richard Boshomane and Warrant Officer Phaladi Makola have been designated as points of contact for community members wishing to provide information.

As Easter approaches, the Catholic community in Tzaneen mourns the loss of Fr. William Banda while grappling with the incomprehensible violence that has shattered their sense of peace and security. Amid this darkness, they cling to the hope and promise of the Easter season, seeking solace in their faith and unity as they come together to support one another in the wake of this devastating loss.



The late Father William Banda was shot in the head and died while preparing to celebrate Holy Mass. Photo: X (Twitter).

## CHILDCARE CENTRE AND TITLE DEEDS EMPOWER COMMUNITY



**MEC for Human Settlements, Mr Speedy Mashilo in Balfour accompanied by Local Executive Mayor, Cllr. Khethiwe Moeketsi and District Executive Mayor Cllr. Walter Mngomezulu handing over title deeds.**  
Photo: Supplied.

By Thembekile Mzimba

**Ridgeview** - Mpumalanga's Dipaleseng community in Ridgeview celebrated a double win on Monday.

Mpumalanga MEC for Human Settlements, Speedy Mashilo, joined residents for the official opening of a brand new

multi-million-rand childcare centre and the handover of 180 title deeds.

The Childcare Centre addresses a critical need in the community by providing a safe and familiar environment for early childhood development (ECD) programmes.

Previously, residents had to send their children far away for ECD, which was a financial burden for many families.

"This community needed a centre like this," said MEC Mashilo. "Now, children can learn and grow in a familiar setting close to home."

Empowerment came in another form with the distribution of title deeds.

The local executive mayor, Cllr. Khethiwe Moeketsi, hailed the handover as a significant step towards a stronger socio-economic future for Ridgeview.

"The MEC's visit signifies a positive change for the community," she stated. "With these title deeds, residents are no longer simply occupants, but property owners.

This empowers them to leverage economic opportunities."

The joy was evident on the face of Ms. Jane Ngubeni (82), one of the title deed recipients.

"I'm so grateful for this document," she said. "It secures my future and the future of my grandson." Ngubeni and her family relocated from nearby Monareng settlements to their new Ridgeview home in late 2023.

The Ridgeview integrated settlements project is a comprehensive one, encompassing over 3,500 sites with 1,500 housing units already completed and occupied.

Looking ahead, MEC Mashilo announced that 60% of the remaining sites will be available for purchase for those who wish to build their own homes.

The remaining 40% will be allocated for further low-cost housing projects.

This Ridgeview handover is a positive step forward, and similar initiatives are planned for other parts of Mpumalanga.

The future looks brighter for the Dipaleseng community, with both their children's education and their economic opportunities receiving a significant boost.



**MEC for Human Settlements, Mr Speedy Mashilo in Balfour during handover of title deeds.**  
Photo: Supplied.

# FETAKGOMO SHINES WITH FOUR AWARDS AT SALGA MUNICIPAL AWARDS



Mayor of Fetakgomo Tubatse Cllr Eddie Maila and his Municipal Manager Mr Mogaramedi Dimo Makgatha celebrating four Awards that was conferred to them during SALGA Municipal Awards. Photo: Supplied.

By Staff Reporter

**Limpopo** - Fetakgomo Tubatse Municipality has emerged as a standout performer at the prestigious South African Local Government Association (SALGA) Municipal Awards, held at the Fusion Boutique Hotel, garnering recognition with four distinguished awards.

**The municipality's remarkable achievements include:**

- 100% MIG Spending.
- 100% Spending on MIG with Additional Allocation.
- Unqualified Audit Opinion.
- Most Improved Audit Performance.

These accolades signify the diligent efforts of both councillors and administration in

driving the municipality towards excellence in governance and financial management.

Mayor Cllr. Eddie Maila expressed profound appreciation for the municipality's turnaround strategy, which has led to significant enhancements in governance practices and the prudent management of finances.

He emphasised the municipality's commitment to utilising all conditional grants effectively to expedite service delivery, thereby combating the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and social inequality.

"The ultimate objective of the municipality is to attain a clean audit opinion, and this is achievable through the collective efforts of all stakeholders," stated Mayor Eddie Maila.

He extended gratitude to the residents of Fetakgomo Tubatse Municipality for their unwavering support in achieving these remarkable milestones.

This recognition marks a historic moment for the municipality, as it is the first time in its history to be honoured with four awards for excellence and hard work.

Mayor Eddie Maila concluded by commending "Team Fetakgomo Tubatse" for their dedication and commitment, highlighting that their collective efforts have propelled the municipality to new heights of achievement and success.

The impressive performance of Fetakgomo Tubatse Municipality at the SALGA Municipal Awards serves as a testament to its commitment to delivering quality services and fostering sustainable development within the community.

# MULTIPLE RECOGNITION AWARDS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY IMPACT IN MAKHUDUTHAMAGA



Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality Mayor Cllr Merah Masekwele Mahlase flanked by Council Speaker Cllr Judy Nkgadima Mphelane and Municipal Manager Mr Ronald Moganedi. Photo: Supplied.

By Staff Reporter

**Limpopo** - The Mayor of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Cllr Merah Masekwele Mahlase, along with other key officials, received prestigious awards at the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) Municipal Awards 2022/23 ceremony held at the Fusion Boutique Hotel in Polokwane on Tuesday evening.

The SALGA Awards, an annual event, aim to acknowledge professionalism, ethical leadership, and impactful service delivery within the local government sphere.

Mayor Mahlase, Council Speaker Cllr Judy Mphelane, and Municipal Manager Mr. Ronald Maišane Moganedi, representing Makhuduthamaga Municipality, were honoured with four awards in various categories.

**Makhuduthamaga Municipality, situated in the Sekhukhune district of Limpopo, stood out among its peers, securing recognition in the following categories:**

- Unqualified Audit Opinion in 2022/23.
- 100% MIG Spending in 2022/23.
- Spending 100% on additional MIG Allocation.
- Sustaining Unqualified Audit Opinion for multiple consecutive years.

The ceremony was graced by the presence of dignitaries, including Limpopo MEC for Coghsta Basikopo Makamu, who addressed the attendees on behalf of the Premier of Limpopo, MEC for Treasury Seaparo Sekoati, Chairperson of SALGA in Limpopo, and Polokwane Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr John Mpe, among others.

Mayor Mahlase attributed the achievement to collective effort, stating, "As a municipality, we dedicate this milestone as a legacy in motion, acknowledging the contributions of all leaders before us, including former Mayor Cllr Minah Bahula, who laid a solid foundation.

This groundbreaking record reassures us of our potential capacity to enhance the living conditions of our citizens."

The recognition bestowed upon Makhuduthamaga Municipality underscores its commitment to excellence in service delivery and accountable governance, setting a commendable standard for local municipalities across South Africa.

# FIRST-EVER FEMALE-OWNED MUTUAL BANK APPROVAL BY RESERVE BANK



Young Women in Business Network founders celebrate the launch of YWBN Mutual Bank. Photo: X (Twitter).

By Justice Mashego

**South Africa** - In a historic development for South Africa's banking sector, the Reserve Bank has approved the registration of the country's first-ever female-owned mutual bank.

The official statement from the Reserve Bank reads: "Notice is hereby given for general information, by the provisions of Section 27(a) of the Act, that YWBN Mutual Bank was registered as a mutual bank with effect from January 22, 2024."

With its registration, YWBN Mutual Bank became the first bank in South Africa to be owned entirely by women of all races, which is a historic moment in the country's banking history.

Managing Director Nthabeleng Likotsi, expressing her elation, stated, "I learned in September 2014 that black people could own the bank if they worked together; since then, not a day has gone by without me saying, 'We shall own the bank' and without the YWBN TEAM and YWBN

CFI shareholders working towards registering the bank."

After nine years of dedicated effort, Likotsi and her team have finally realised their dream of owning a bank.

Despite facing numerous challenges and detractors along the way, Likotsi emphasised the perseverance and determination of the YWBN team.

"We had many detractors, who went as far as using state-owned entities to attack, but we stood firm, blocked the noise, and focused on the end goal," she remarked.

The approval of YWBN Mutual Bank is a significant step forward for female representation in the banking sector, breaking barriers and paving the way for more diversity and inclusion in the industry.

Mutual banks tend to be more fiscally conservative than large commercial banks, opting for stable investments to support their depositors.

Furthermore, without shareholders, mutual banks are not pressured to grow at the same rate as commercial banks, allowing for a more stable and sustainable approach to banking.

Following the liquidation of VBS Bank, YWBN enters the fray as the fourth mutual bank in the country, joining Bank Zero Mutual Bank, Finbond Mutual Bank, and GBS Mutual Bank.

In her closing remarks, Likotsi thanked the resilience and dedication of each team member for sticking together throughout the nine-year journey until their dream was realised.

With YWBN Mutual Bank now registered, the stage is set for a new era in South Africa's banking landscape, one marked by diversity, inclusion, and female empowerment.

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## MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

The Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature hereby invites unemployed graduates who meet the minimum requirements to apply for enrolment in the Internship Programme for the duration of a twelve (12) months period as stated below:

**Name of the Programme:** Internship

Section	Qualification / Field of Study
Communications	Diploma / Degree in Communication Studies / Information Science
Financial Management and Accounting	Diploma / Degree in Accounting / Supply Chain Management
Public Participation and Petitions	Diploma / Degree in Public Administration / Public Management / Public Affairs
Human Capital Management	Diploma / Degree in Human Resource Management / Public Administration / Management (with HR related modules)
Legal Services	Bachelor of Laws (LLB)

**Total Number required:** Twenty (20) Interns are required for placement in the above five (5) Departments / Sections of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature.

**Duration:** The Internship programme is offered for a period of twelve (12) months. All applicants will be required to sign a contract which is not renewable and shall be placed within Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature for the duration of the programme.

**Remuneration:** All successful candidates will be given a stipend of R6 000 per month.

### Who is eligible to apply?

- Unemployed graduates in a possession of a National Diploma or Degree in specified field of study.
- All applicants should reside within Mpumalanga Province.
- The appointment is subject to verification of qualifications.
- Applicants should *NOT* have participated in any internship programme before.
- Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply.
- A driver's licence will be an added advantage.

### How to apply?

**NOTE:** Applications must be submitted on form Z.83, obtainable from any Public Service Department and must be accompanied by a comprehensive CV and certified copies of ID and qualifications. Please forward your application quoting the relevant reference number, to:

The Secretary Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature Private Bag X11289, Mbombela 1200 or hand delivered to Baobab Building No. 1 Government Boulevard; Legislature & Government Complex; Riverside Park Ext 2; Mbombela or e-mailed to [recruitment@mpuleg.gov.za](mailto:recruitment@mpuleg.gov.za). **(Only one attachment per application)**. If you do not hear from us within thirty 30 days after the closing date, please regard your application as unsuccessful. Correspondence is limited to shortlisted applicants only. Late or faxed applications will not be considered.

**Enquiries:** Mr Xolani Mlambo at 013 766 1210

**Closing Date:** 28 March 2024

# HOPE DELIVERED: UNIFORMS EMPOWER LEARNERS



Speaker of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, Makhosazane Masilela handing over the donation. Photo: Supplied.



Kellysville Primary School Principal, Ms. Beauty Johnson appreciates Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature for the Speaker's Legacy Project. Photo: Supplied.



The donated school uniforms and sanitary towels. Photo: Supplied.



Speaker Makhosazane Masilela and Cllr Herence Trower pose for a picture holding pair of school shoes. Photo: Supplied.

Staff Reporter

**Lydenburg** - The Speaker's Legacy Project, a heartwarming initiative by the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, brought a wave of relief and renewed hope to learners at Kellysville Primary School in Lydenburg on Monday.

The school is located in the Ehlanzeni District Municipality, and its proximity to squatter camps indicates that it faces the harsh realities of poverty.

The project's donation of essential school supplies, including uniforms and sanitary towels, addressed these challenges head-on.

Speaker Makhosazane Masilela, addressing a gathering of learners, teachers, and community members, explained the project's mission: to restore the dignity of all students, particularly those facing financial hardships.

Speaker Masilela's words resonated with Kellysville Primary School Principal, Ms. Beauty Johnson.

"This initiative goes a long way in keeping children in school and helping them secure a better future," Ms. Johnson remarked, expressing her deep appreciation.

She highlighted the project's impact not just on student well-being but also on attendance, a major concern for schools with underprivileged populations. Speaking for Thaba Chweu Local Municipality Speaker Cllr. Herence Trower, as

well as Ward Councillor Cllr. Annah Rankwe, both emphasised the project's timeliness.

They applauded the Legislature's initiative for directly benefiting those in need within the community.

Beyond the immediate benefits of the donation, the Speaker's Legacy Project has a lasting impact.

Standardised uniforms create a sense of unity and belonging among learners.

They eliminate the pressure to keep up with the latest trends, fostering a more inclusive learning environment where students are judged based on their merits and personalities rather than their clothing choices.

Perhaps most significantly, the project tackles the issue of absenteeism due to a lack of sanitary towels.

In South Africa, millions of girls miss school each month due to this barrier.

By providing these essential supplies, the Speaker's Legacy Project ensures all students can attend school regularly and focus on their education.

The story of the Speaker's Legacy Project serves as a powerful testament to the transformative potential of such initiatives.

By addressing basic needs and fostering a supportive learning environment, the project empowers students in underprivileged communities to reach their full potential.

It paves the way for a brighter future, not just for the students themselves but for the community as a whole.

## LITHO SCHOOL GETS UPGRADE TO SUPPORT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



MEC Bonakele Majuba handing over a Tablet to one of the grade 12 learners at Litho Secondary School. Photo: Supplied.

By Duncan Mnisi

**Mpumalanga** - In a bid to uphold the fundamental human right to education and ensure that no student is left behind, MEC Bonakele Majuba led a comprehensive infrastructure improvement initiative at Litho Secondary School in the Nokaneng Circuit, under the jurisdiction of Dr. JS Moroka Local Municipality.

The ambitious project, which commenced a month ago under the "Rhandza xikolo xa wena" campaign, aimed not only to enhance the physical structures of the school but also to create an optimal environment conducive to effective teaching and learning.

Beyond mere renovations, the endeavour encompassed the demolition and reconstruction of dilapidated classrooms, laboratories, and administrative blocks.

A tour of the school premises conducted by MEC Majuba, alongside the headmaster, school board, and other officials, showcased the remarkable progress achieved within a relatively short

timeframe.

Fourteen classrooms underwent renovation, while two classrooms were expanded to accommodate the growing student population.

Additionally, upgrades to the administrative block and library were implemented, along with improvements to seating areas, covered corridors, and parking facilities.

Critical infrastructure enhancements, such as plumbing and electrical systems, were also prioritised to ensure a reliable and efficient learning environment.

Measures were taken to upgrade water reticulation, sewage systems, and electricity supply, further underscoring the commitment to providing students and educators with world-class facilities.

As the nation commemorated Human Rights Day, MEC Majuba emphasised the intrinsic link between quality education and the realisation of fundamental human rights.

He underscored the importance of investing in school infrastructure as a means of empowering students and fostering their holistic development.

"In celebrating Human Rights Day, we recognise the imperative of equitable access to quality education.

Our investment in Litho Secondary School reflects our unwavering commitment to ensuring that every learner has the opportunity to thrive," stated MEC Majuba.

The gesture was met with gratitude and enthusiasm from the student body, particularly the Grade 12 learners who received tablets to augment their learning experience.

Expressing their appreciation, students pledged to redouble their efforts and harness the newfound resources to achieve academic excellence.

The initiative at Litho Secondary School epitomises a broader commitment to inclusive education and sustainable development.

By prioritising infrastructure improvements, MEC Majuba and his team have demonstrated their dedication to nurturing the potential of future generations and fostering a culture of excellence in education.

# LIMPOPO HAWKS MOURNS DEVOTED SPOKESPERSON, LT. COL. MATIMBA MALULEKE

By Thembekile Mzimba

**Limpopo** - The South African Police Service's Hawks division in Limpopo is mourning the loss of their esteemed spokesperson, Lieutenant Colonel Matimba Maluleke, who passed away on Friday, March 8th, 2024, after a brief illness.

He was 43 years old. His family, friends, and coworkers will always cherish Lt. Col. Maluleke for his unwavering work ethic, determination, and humility.

He leaves behind a legacy of excellence and integrity that touched the lives of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Born in Ribungwane, under the Collins Chabane Local Municipality, Lt. Col. Maluleke was a source of inspiration to his community and beyond.

His brother, Rhulani Maluleke, recalled him as a role model who instilled the importance of hard work and dedication in their family.

Major General Advocate Gopz Govendor, Limpopo Head of the Hawks, extended his heartfelt condolences to Lt. Col. Maluleke's family and colleagues, emphasising the significant contributions he made during his tenure with the division.

Lt. Col. Maluleke's dedication to his work was evident, leading to his promotion to his rank in May 2023, a testament to his exemplary service.

Lt. Col. Maluleke's sudden passing has left a void in the hearts of his colleagues and the media community.

Many have expressed their sympathies and shared memories of his kindness, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to justice.

Following his wishes, Lt. Col. Maluleke was laid to rest on Saturday in his hometown of Ribungwane.

Attendees at the funeral service included Hawks players, family, and friends.

It was a moving homage to a man whose influence will be greatly missed.

All those who had the honour of knowing Lt. Col. Matimba Maluleke will cherish and remember his legacy of service and devotion to the Hawks. May his soul rest in eternal peace.



The late Lieutenant Colonel Matimba Maluleke. Photo: Supplied.



Lieutenant Colonel Maluleke was a stalwart within the HAWKS, known for his unwavering loyalty, exceptional discipline, and boundless energy in his role as a Communication Officer. Photo: Supplied.

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**SATURDAY**

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**30 MARCH 2024**

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## COAL MAFIA ACCUSED: MINE STANDOFF SPARKS PROTESTS



**Mpumalanga Action Movement & National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) protesting in Sandton over closure of Optimum Coal Mine. Photo: Supplied.**

By Duncan Mnisi

**Sandton** - Over a thousand members of the Mpumalanga Action Movement and the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) marched to the Sandton offices of Glencore, Seriti, and Thungela on Friday last week.

Their frustration stemmed from the ongoing closure of Optimum Coal Mine in Mpumalanga, which was slated to resume operations on March 8th but remains shuttered.

The protestors believe Glencore, which they call the "head of the COAL MAFIA," is colluding with Seriti and Thungela to hinder the reopening.

They allege that these companies conspired in December 2022 to suspend Optimum Coal's rail division and port rights at the Richards Bay Coal Terminal, aiming to control export profits from the mine.

Community leader Hophney Moramaga highlighted the devastating impact of the closure: "The closure of Optimum Coal has brought a lot of poverty, pain, and strife to the communities that have depended on this coal mine for decades."

He emphasized the mine's historical role in sustaining local livelihoods and the

regional economy.

Demanding the handover of the Richards Bay Coal Terminal to Optimum Coal, the protestors threatened to disrupt the operations of Glencore, Seriti, and Thungela until their demand was met.

"Back terminal Coal will be handed over voluntarily or not!" declared Moramaga.

"There is no political protection that will save them.

If OPTIMUM COAL DOESN'T WORK, then SERITI, THUNGELA and GLENCORE will not work until they hand over the coal terminal."

Moramaga pointed to the February 2nd, 2024, North Gauteng High Court ruling that resolved the legal issues surrounding the mine and terminal.

He argued that Glencore, Seriti, and Thungela are obstructing the mine's sale to Liberty Coal by refusing to relinquish control of the terminal.

The protest lays bare the complex situation surrounding the Optimum Coal Mine. Allegations of corruption and the community's economic anxieties demand a swift and transparent resolution.

Whether negotiations or further legal action will determine the future of the mine and its impact on the Mpumalanga communities remains to be seen.

## MASHABA FACES FRESH ALLEGATIONS IN LIMPOPO SCANDAL

By Thembekile Mzimba

**Limpopo** - Convicted criminal Howard Mashaba faces fresh allegations of embezzlement in a wide-ranging corruption scandal engulfing the National Lotteries Commission (NLC).

The Special Investigative Unit (SIU) is probing Mashaba for allegedly diverting R34 million earmarked for cultural projects in Limpopo, including a failed music festival, to companies and individuals linked to him.

This investigation is part of a larger effort to address mismanagement and financial losses within the NLC, estimated at a staggering R1.4 billion.

President Cyril Ramaphosa authorised the probe in 2020, highlighting the seriousness of the situation.

The SIU has uncovered a complex scheme where Mashaba allegedly funnelled funds through companies believed to be under his control, despite not holding official directorships in many of them.

Internal reports detail over R34.4 million syphoned off over three years, raising questions about the effectiveness of the NLC's internal processes for ensuring fair funding allocation.

The investigation takes a disturbing turn as it reveals how Mashaba may have used family members to further his alleged scheme.

Companies were reportedly registered in their names, potentially leading to their being blacklisted due to unpaid debts and fraudulent transactions.

This reportedly includes his parents, in-laws, and even his alleged girlfriend. Mashaba's past casts a long shadow.

A 2019 conviction for contempt of court related to a debt owed to Mercedes-Benz South Africa raises concerns about his financial dealings.

Despite this conviction, the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) did not oppose his bail application in a separate case later that year.

Currently, Mashaba awaits judgement for allegedly concealing previous convictions during a bail application in 2019.

The NLC maintains its commitment to cooperating with the investigation, but external audits raise questions about the effectiveness of their internal controls.

As the SIU delves deeper, further details regarding Mashaba's alleged involvement and the NLC's internal shortcomings are likely to emerge.

The public awaits the outcome and potential consequences for those implicated in this alleged web of corruption.

## STORM RIPS THROUGH HOMES, FAMILIES DISPLACED



**Roofs Destroyed, Families Left Exposed After Storm in Nkomazi. Photo: Supplied.**

Thembekile Mzimba

**Nkomazi, Mpumalanga** - A devastating storm tore through Nkomazi, east of Mbombela in Mpumalanga, last Wednesday, leaving a trail of destruction in its wake.

Dozens of families from six villages, including Masibekela, GaNwandlane, and Chief Albert Luthuli, are now grappling with the aftermath.

Homes were left with gaping holes where roofs once stood, exposing furniture and belongings to the elements.

Power lines snapped, plunging homes into darkness, and roads became treacherous with fallen trees and debris.

The human cost of the storm is also significant. Several people suffered injuries during the storm's fury, requiring hospitalisation.

Now, with their homes uninhabitable,

families face the daunting task of picking up the pieces.

In Masibekela, Maria Ndlovu and her unemployed husband huddled with their seven children to safety after the storm had ravaged their home. "We ran for cover, but everything is damaged," Ndlovu laments. "We have no place to sleep, and the children have lost their school uniforms and books.

We rely on the children's support grant, and now we have nothing. We desperately need help."

Nkomazi Local Municipality is scrambling to assess the full extent of the damage.

"We're moving from village to village,"

says spokesperson Cyril Ripinga. "Our priority right now is to provide temporary shelter for those who lost their homes completely. We're also reaching out to other departments and organisations for assistance with food, blankets, and potentially even rebuilding efforts."

The storm serves as a stark reminder of the vulnerability of communities to extreme weather events. With the rainy season still in its early stages, concerns are mounting about the potential for further damage.

Local authorities are urging residents to remain vigilant and take precautions against future storms.

Meanwhile, a call to action has been issued for NGOs, charities, and the public to support the affected families. Donations of food, clothing, blankets, and building materials are urgently needed to help these communities rebuild their lives.

## MPUMALANGA REELS FROM CRIME SURGE, EHLANZENI WORST HIT



**Lieutenant-General Semakaleng Manamela presenting troubling third-quarter crime statistics in Mbombela. Photo: Supplied.**

By Thembekile Mzimba

**Ehlanzeni** - Mpumalanga faces an unsettling rise in crime, with a concerning surge in murder, rape, hijacking, and kidnapping cases.

The Mpumalanga Provincial Police Commissioner, Lieutenant-General Semakaleng Manamela, and MEC for Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Vusi Shongwe, released the troubling third-quarter crime statistics in Mbombela last week on Tuesday.

The statistics reveal a particularly sharp increase in contact crimes within the Ehlanzeni region.

Authorities expressed deep concern over this trend. The data showed a staggering 490 murders and over 900 rape cases reported in the third quarter of 2023 alone, representing a significant rise compared to the same period in the previous year.

Experts are now dissecting the factors driving the crime surge in Ehlanzeni.

Socio-economic issues like unemployment and poverty are suspected culprits, while the easy availability of firearms and a potential culture of violence are also being examined.

Police are further investigating the role of organised crime syndicates in the increase of hijackings and kidnappings.

A glimmer of hope exists with decreased cash-in-transit heists, house robberies, and business robberies.

However, authorities remain cautious. They are investigating a potential link between alcohol consumption and the rise



**MEC for Community Safety, Security and Liaison, Vusi Shongwe during the release of third-quarter crime statistics in Mbombela. Photo: Supplied.**

in violent crime, particularly in light of MEC Shongwe's announcement of increased tavern inspections on "overall Fridays."

"Murder is our main concern, and in most of these cases, guns and sharp objects are the weapons of choice," stated Lt. Gen Semakaleng Manamela.

He outlined plans to increase police visibility in high-crime areas and implement stricter gun control measures.

Vusi Shongwe, Mpumalanga Community Safety, Security, and Liaison MEC, acknowledged the need for a multi-pronged approach.

"We've implemented 'overall Fridays' where we target taverns to ensure compliance with regulations and patron safety," he said.

Shongwe also emphasised plans to collaborate with community leaders and social development organisations to address the root causes of crime and foster a culture of peace within Mpumalanga.

The significant rise in crime, especially in Ehlanzeni District, demands a swift and comprehensive response.

While the police are stepping up efforts, community cooperation is crucial. Reporting suspicious activity and participating in neighbourhood watch programmes can significantly aid law enforcement.

Addressing the socioeconomic factors that contribute to crime is essential for long-term success.

By working together, law enforcement, community leaders, and residents can create a safer Mpumalanga for all.

# –BOOK REVIEW–

## UNVEILING SUCCESS: A REVIEW OF HENDRICK LEDWABA'S "THE JOURNEY TO SUCCESS"

By Duncan Mnisi

Tired of self-help books that offer empty promises? Hendrick Ledwaba's "The Journey To Success" throws away the tired motivational tropes, instead offering a concrete roadmap to personal achievement.

Ledwaba, a multi-talented author, radio host, and public speaker, brings a wealth of experience to the table.

He seamlessly weaves personal anecdotes with practical advice, equipping readers with the tools they need to navigate challenges, set meaningful goals, and cultivate a winning mindset.

This transformative journey extends beyond Ledwaba's own experiences.

The book delves into the personal stories of others who have triumphed over adversity, offering valuable insights into navigating the inevitable ups and downs on the path to success.

Readers gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by others and discover the strategies they employed to overcome them.

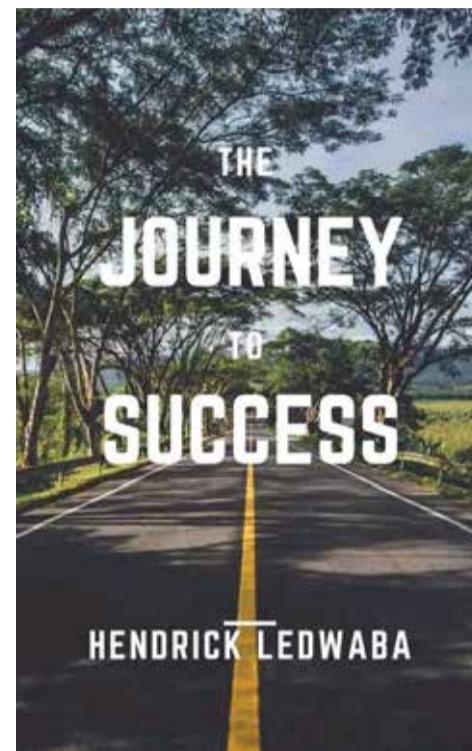
"The Journey To Success" goes beyond inspiration; it empowers readers to unlock their full potential. Ledwaba emphasises the importance of resilience, determination, and self-belief as essential tools for navigating life's unpredictable path.

He doesn't shy away from the hard work required for success, but his message is ultimately one of hope and empowerment. Ledwaba doesn't stop at simply outlining the path to success; he acts as a motivational guide, urging readers to take the first step.

This book is a valuable resource for anyone seeking guidance and inspiration on their journey towards achieving their dreams.

With its captivating storytelling and practical wisdom, "The Journey To Success" is more than just a self-help book; it's an engaging companion on the road to personal fulfilment.

Ledwaba's engaging style ensures the book is as enjoyable to read as it is insightful. Whether you're just starting your journey or looking for a boost of motivation, "The Journey To Success" is a valuable addition to any self-help library.



The book known for offering a concrete roadmap to personal achievement: The Journey To Success. Photo: Supplied.



Hendrick Ledwaba sharing insights of "The Journey To Success" on Air. Photo: Facebook.

# –PODCAST REVIEW–

## VALUETAINMENT REVIEW: UNVEILING STORIES, EMPOWERING LEADERS

By Duncan Mnisi

Forget the typical business podcast. Presented by Patrick Bet-David, Valuetainment goes beyond simple "how-to" guidance to become a forum for perceptive dialogue and stimulating debates.

This review dives into the heart of Valuetainment, exploring its unique approach and core values.

The history of the podcast is surprisingly straightforward.

Driven by an ardour to impart wisdom and motivation, Patrick began with videos on YouTube.

His vision, however, extended far beyond the personal spotlight.

Valuetainment, the name itself, reflects the core mission: to provide value and entertainment, fostering a global movement around entrepreneurship and leadership.

The key to Valuetainment's success lies in its unconventional content strategy.

Patrick doesn't shy away from unexpected interviews; from "gangsters to

comedians," the show features a fascinating array of individuals.

This commitment to diverse perspectives creates a platform for rich storytelling and a stimulating exchange of ideas.

Valuetainment champions transparency and free speech.

They believe in empowering listeners to form their conclusions through exposure to a variety of viewpoints.

"We don't want to take sides," states Patrick, highlighting their commitment to fostering "productive conversation."

The podcast recognises the importance of entrepreneurs—the risk-takers who drive innovation and create jobs.

Leadership, they emphasise, isn't limited to CEOs; it's a quality we can all cultivate.

While the core audience is entrepreneurs and aspiring leaders, Valuetainment's message resonates with a broader spectrum.

From students to parents, the podcast highlights the value of capitalism and its role in improving society.

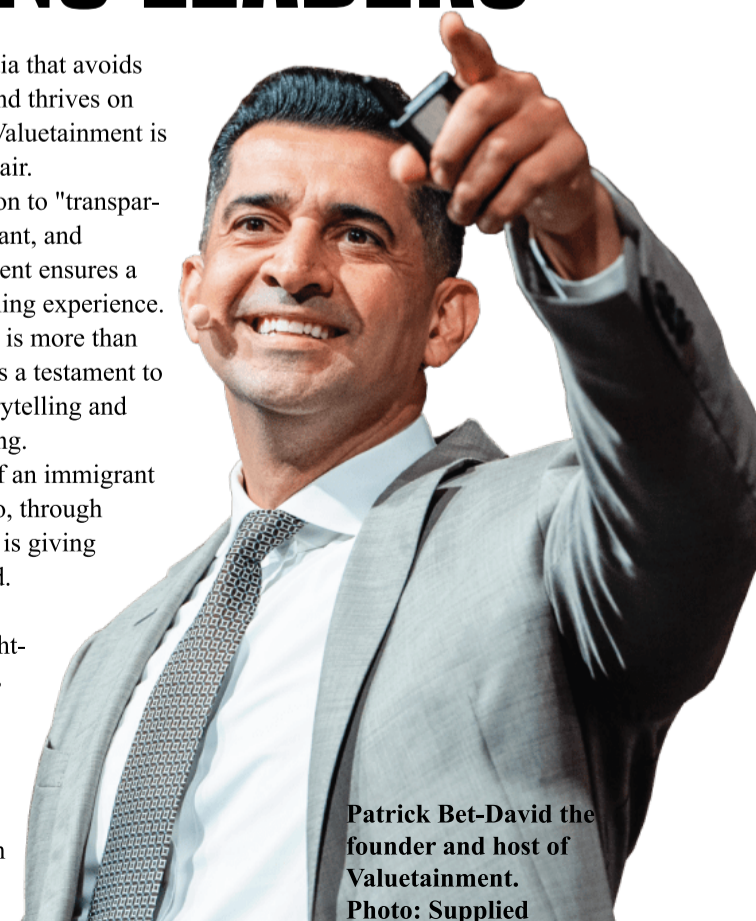
If you crave media that avoids sensationalism and thrives on open dialogue, Valuetainment is a breath of fresh air.

Their dedication to "transparent, trendy, relevant, and fascinating" content ensures a captivating listening experience.

Valuetainment is more than just a podcast; it's a testament to the power of storytelling and knowledge sharing.

It's the story of an immigrant entrepreneur who, through content creation, is giving back to the world.

So, if you're looking for insightful conversations and a chance to learn from successful leaders, Valuetainment is worth listening to.



Patrick Bet-David the founder and host of Valuetainment. Photo: Supplied

# TIMELESS SPORT

## EHLANZENI'S TRIUMPH: A STORY OF GRIT AND GLORY



The Ehlanzeni players and coach celebrate lifting their U20 Regional Cup trophy. Photo: Supplied/Kaptured Concepts.

By Staff Reporter

**Mbombela** - In the heart of Mpumalanga, amidst the rugged terrain and undulating fields, the passion for rugby burns brightly. On the hallowed grounds of Nelspruit Rugby Club, the stage was set for a showdown of epic proportions in the U20 Regional Cup.

Ehlanzeni, a team with dreams as vast as the horizon, stood ready to etch their names in the annals of rugby history.

The journey to glory was fraught with challenges, as they clashed against formidable opponents from the Gert Sibande and Nkangala districts.

Every match was an endurance test, a struggle between wills where grit and sweat met on the pitch.

But despite all of the highs and lows, Ehlanzeni never wavered in their determination to triumph as a group.

As the final fixture loomed, the stakes couldn't be higher.

Gert Sibande, perched atop the leaderboard, casts a daunting shadow of dominance.

But Ehlanzeni refused to yield, knowing that destiny favoured the bold. With hearts pounding and spirits soaring, they entered the arena, ready to seize their moment of reckoning.

From the opening whistle, it was evident that Ehlanzeni meant business.

Their players, the young titans of the game, unleashed a flurry of attacks, their movements orchestrated with precision and finesse.

Nkangala, worthy adversaries, fought tooth and nail, refusing to surrender without a fight.

The first half unfolded with breathtaking intensity as Ehlanzeni surged ahead,

fueled by the fervour of their supporters.

Four tries adorned their tally, each one a testament to their skill and determination. But Nkangala, undeterred, answered in kind, keeping the contest on a knife's edge.

As halftime approached, Ehlanzeni held a slender lead, their hopes hanging in the balance.

With steely resolve, they returned to the field, knowing that every moment counted in their quest for glory.

The second half was a symphony of rugby prowess as Ehlanzeni unleashed their full potential, leaving no stone unturned in their pursuit of victory.

Try after try, they marched towards their destiny, their spirit indomitable, their resolve unbreakable.

Nkangala fought valiantly, refusing to concede defeat, but it was Ehlanzeni's day

to shine in the end.

With a final score of 38-22 echoing across the stadium, they emerged triumphant, their names forever etched in the annals of rugby greatness.

Amidst the jubilant cheers and thunderous applause, Ehlanzeni hoisted the U20 Regional Cup high, a symbol of their perseverance and passion.

For these young warriors, the journey was more than a quest for victory—it was a testament to the power of teamwork, determination, and the unyielding spirit of rugby.

And as they celebrated their hard-earned triumph, they knew that their legacy would endure, inspiring generations to come on fields of glory yet to be conquered.