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Businesswoman slain in suspected hit

The police in Siyabuswa have launched a massive manhunt for suspects who murdered a businesswoman at Maphotla Village, outside Siyabuswa. According to the police, the 48-year-old woman, who was identified as Emily Mthimunya, was gunned down in a hail of bullets by four unknown suspects at her business premises on Monday 3 May 2021. "According to information received, armed suspects entered the woman's premises and forced her children to open the kitchen door to gain entry, as she was not home at the time. Two of the suspects then entered while the others remained outside and waited for her to come home from her business. The victim arrived and one of the suspects fired shots and fatally wounding the woman after she closed the gate," said Brigadier Leonard Hlathi, Mpumalanga Provincial Police Spokesperson. Hlathi said all suspects fled the scene after leaving the woman lying on the ground in a pool of blood. "However, no valuables were taken. Police as well as medical personnel were notified about the incident, where upon arrival, the woman was certified dead. She was identified as Emily Mthimunya, who owned a tavern in the area," explained Hlathi. He said a case of murder was opened and the matter is currently being investigated. "The motive for the killing is unknown at this stage," Hlathi said. Hlathi appealed to anyone with information that can help police trace the suspects to contact the investigating officer, Captain Sergeant Mahlangu on 082 6317103 or call the Crime Stop number on 08600 10111. "Alternatively members of the public can send information via MYSAPSAPP. All received information will be treated as confidential and callers may opt to remain anonymous," concluded Hlathi.

Suspected stock thieves burned to death

The police in Vaalbank outside Siyabuswa are looking for suspects who allegedly torched four men after suspecting them of being stock thieves. Brigadier Leonard Hlathi, Mpumalanga Provincial Police Spokesperson, said the police were notified about the incident in the morning of Tuesday 11 May. "The police were summoned to Troya Farm near Ga-Matimpule Village in Vaalbank outside Siyabuswa and on arrival, they found a vehicle, an Isuzu Club Cab with four human remains inside burnt beyond recognition," said Hlathi. According to Hlathi, it is alleged that the four unknown victims, who are all males, were seen stealing goats, loading them into a white bakkie when community members spotted and tried to intercept them. "The men then reportedly fired shots at the community during the commotion but they were eventually overpowered and in the process allegedly assaulted them before setting them alight inside their vehicle. During the shooting, one of the community members was shot in his lower body and is currently in hospital receiving medical care," Hlathi said. He said four cases of murder were opened and currently under investigation.

The Acting Provincial Commissioner in Mpumalanga, Major General Thulani Phahla, raised his concern over the rising number of mob justice cases reported within a short period in the province, and strongly appealed to the community not to take the law into their own hands. "Taking the law into your own hands is a crime which is punishable by law," he said. Phahla urged the community to report incidents of crime to the police or provide information through the relevant community structures.

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GBVF on the rise in Limpopo



MEC for Social Development in Limpopo Nkakareng Rakgoale is concerned about the rising number of GBVF in the province.

The Limpopo Department of Social Development (DSD) says it is concerned about the spike in Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF), despite calls for people who are experiencing challenges in relationships to seek professional help. In a recent incident, a senior official in Sekhukhune District Municipality, Mpho Maepa, was caught in a video assaulting a woman at Groblersdal Mall. An incident occurred at a parking lot in Polokwane CBD where a man shot and killed his partner. About three weeks ago, a traffic officer also shot and killed his girlfriend in Bela Bela in the Waterberg District. Social Development MEC, Nkakareng Rakgoale, said there is more that still needs to be done by government, civil society and individual community members to end these scourge and senseless killings. "As a society we must pause and find ways to end these senseless killings of people whom we describe as vulnerable. It seems like our call for people to seek professional help when they are faced with challenges is just falling on deaf ears. The department alone will not be able to clamp down on the attacks of women and children as most of these incidents occur behind closed doors," she said. Rakgoale urged the people to break the silence when they experience any form of abuse before it is too late. "Our social workers have now been dispatched to the family of a victim in Seshego for them to start providing psychosocial support to the affected groups. We also want to commend the SAPS for swiftly arresting the man and we call for the court not to grant him bail," said Rakgoale.

Jane Furse CIT left one guard critically injured



Limpopo House of Traditional Leaders has suspended the 2021 winter initiation.

A Cash In Transit heist (CIT), happened at Jane Furse Plaza on Monday 10 May, left one guard injured and hospitalized. Reports emerged that during the heist around 11am, a group of heavily armed men accosted a G4S armoured vehicle when it was about to offload money at ABSA bank branch. According to witnesses, the criminals started firing shots at the guards, leading to a shootout that ensued between the men and G4S staff, leaving one guard critical after sustaining multiple gunshot wounds. The video, purportedly depicting to the heist, show a man, who is reportedly a guard, lying on the ground while women screaming that he should get immediate help. The suspects allegedly have fled with an undisclosed amount of money. Attempts to get a police report from Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, Brigadier Motlafela Mojaepelo, bore no fruits as he could not immediately answer his cell-phone and respond to messages sent by the Dispatch for a comment.

Limpopo suspends winter initiation school



The Limpopo House of Traditional Leaders, has suspended the 2021 winter initiation, amid of the Covid-19 pandemic. "Following the recent extension declaration of the State of Disaster in mid-March 2021, due to Covid-19 pandemic, the house of traditional leaders has resolved to suspend the launch of the initiation school for the winter season until further notice," said Chairperson of Limpopo House of Traditional Leaders Kgoshi Malesela Dikgale. Dikgale said the decision is informed by the threat of the spread of Covid-19 and to save lives of initiates. "Currently Covid-19 is still with us, even though we are at level 1 of lockdown. It is speculated that we might enter a third wave and more people are going to be affected by the virus," elaborated Dikgale. He said the schools will remain suspended until it is safe for all to participate in this passage for young men and women in order to be responsible adults in the society. "We are calling all traditional leaders to work hand in hand with government, in ensuring that all stakeholders adhere to the call that all initiation schools should not be launched to their communities during the winter initiation season," explained Dikgale. He said the house will keep on assessing the environment, checking the risks relating to Covid-19, guided by the National Command Council and all the key stakeholders. "We will decide on a way forward, as the house, we will continue working with all relevant stakeholders, Department of Health and the police in preparation for the next initiation school season. Preparations are underway and once we have an approval, we will communicate with our communities," he said. Dikgale called to all traditional leaders to prioritize health of the initiate. "All stakeholders are urged to stick to the decision and focus on the fight against Covid-19. We are warning anyone that the perpetrators on this matter will be prosecuted," he said.

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Dilapidated primary school poses risk to pupils

Embokodweni Primary School in Saaiplaas, Elias Motsaoleli Local Municipality, is in a dire state. The condition of the school is causing sleepless nights to parents, with its old dilapidating structure and ceilings falling off frequently. According to parents, the school was built in the early 1980s. The only primary school in the village, admitted more than 600 pupils with only two four-classroom blocks. Now parents and concerned residents threaten to shut-down the school demanding urgent intervention by the Limpopo Provincial Department of Education. A concerned parent, Abram Mahlangu, told The Dispatch that they informed the Education Department about the poor state of the school about ten years ago. "We have spoken to the department immediately when we realized that the school was starting to fall apart. They promised to send officials to assess the school and that never happened. They did nothing to attend to our problems," he said. Mahlangu added that their main concern is the safety of pupils, who are urged to take their lessons in classrooms that are seemingly to be posing risk to their lives. "The structure is no longer conducive for teaching and learning, particularly for young primary school learners. Back in 2019, ceiling boards collapsed in several classrooms, injuring and hospitalizing a learner in one of those classes. Something must be done about the situation," he said. Mahlangu said parents pleaded with the Education Department on district level to renovate the school as a temporary measure. However, they were told to use the norms and standard budget to do the renovation work. "It is impossible to use those funds for renovations as they have other purposes to serve in the school. This is a clear indication that the school is neglected and abandoned," he said. Mahlangu said they will prevent their children from attending the school if necessary intervention is not taken by the department. Limpopo Department of Education Spokesperson, Tidimalo Chuene, said they dispatched an infrastructure team to make assessment in the school. "We will comment further about our interventions as soon as we receive the assessment report," she said.



The collapsing Embokodweni Primary School in Saaiplaas poses danger to lives of hundreds of learners.



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Dr JS Moroka main source of water dried-up

Residents in the drought-stricken Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality say they are urged to go without potable water for days, as a result of the local municipality's failure to supply drinkable water. This is after taps in the municipality have run dry for the past few years. One of its main water sources, Mkhombo Dam, experienced a significant drop in water level and now dried up. According to residents, water challenges are not properly addressed by the municipality, subjecting the community to buy water or resorting to drink with animals from the nearby streams and wells in areas of Katjibane and Mokgwane. The water shortage problem is also affecting residents and they pay for water every month. A resident, Christopher Mhlana from Section D in Siyabuswa, told the Dispatch that they experience extreme water cuts, but they are sent bills to pay for water. "We sometimes go without water for about six months, while paying for municipality services," he said. Mhlana said there is no contingency plan to solve water problems in the municipality. "Residents here buy water to survive or drill boreholes in their yards. That is the only way they survive the water crisis facing our municipality," he said. DA Caucus Leader in the municipality, Cllr Thapelo Mokoala, said the party has challenged the water crisis issues in the municipality without seeing the problem being addressed. "Yes we understand

that water challenge is a national matter at this stage. But it could have been handled better by the municipality to supply drinkable water to the communities," he said. Mokoala lambasted the municipality for failing to complete a water infrastructure project from Loskop Dam that was aiming to supply water to residents after the drying-up of Mkhombo Dam. "About R20 Million was set aside for the project but it was never completed because of corruption. Another project for which millions were budgeted to provide boreholes as a temporary measure has also never materialized. The boreholes were only constructed in yards of councilors but the community struggles to get water," he said. Mokoala said the only intervention the municipality has is through water tankering, which is inadequate due to the vast area of the rural Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality. Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality Spokesperson Masabatha Ramatsetse, said the municipality is experiencing an excessive water demand as a result of drying-up of Mkhombo Dam. "In areas where there are water shortages, we supply water tankers," she said. Ramatsetse added that the only time when Siyabuswa D Section experiences water cuts is when there is maintenance of infrastructure. "It is not true that there is no water in the area for six months at Siyabuswa D and we urge residents to pay for the water they consume," she said.



Residents of Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality are subjected to drink water with domestic and wild animals as a result of lack of water supply in the municipality.

Tender scam marred Ephraim Mogale Municipality

Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality warns the business people not to fall victims to tender scams. According to the municipality, it has been made aware of a person who pretends to be a municipal official, promising tenders in exchange of money. "Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality has noted with concern that there is a person who deliberately impersonates the municipality official, in particular the name of Supply Chain Manager, Mr Joseph Madisha for the intention of soliciting money from the unsuspecting service providers. This is a serious corrupt and fraudulent activity," said Jan Phasha, Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality Spokesperson. Phasha said the municipality strongly condemns the baseless allegations and further urged anyone with information to report fraud and related incidents to the police. "Please note that the municipality strictly follows official procurement processes. No quotation or tender can be awarded without a bid or quotation process being followed. All official quotations are advertised on the Municipal website and newspapers when applicable," explained Phasha. He said service providers are requested not to deposit any money into private bank accounts. "Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality never charges a deposit on the award of tender or order. No delivery of goods and services should be made without any official Purchase Order of the Municipality," detailed Phasha. He stressed that the municipality condemns such illegal activities and encourages all service providers to refrain from entertaining such request.

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Linah Sooka is the winner in our "Face book like and picture" competition for the month of April 2021. Linah, lives in Motetema, Shushuwela, took a picture with the Dispatch newspaper and placed it on our Face book page on the 21 April 2021 (go and have a look). She is a new Dispatch reader and gets her newspaper from Marius Fruit and Veg as well as Vleidmark. She won herself a whopping R500 cash. All you need to do to stand a chance to win the money is take the Dispatch (the largest community newspaper in Sekhukhune), and take a picture with it and place it on our Face book page. Tag all your friends for added chances and see. Every month a winner will be drawn on the last day. Our competition for March is already on the way and everybody is welcome to enter.



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Mayor embarks on food donation drive



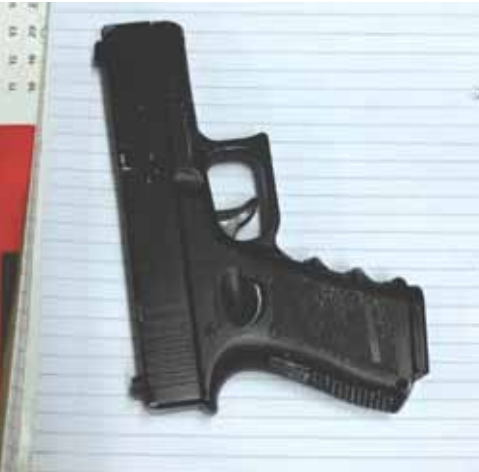
On Monday 3 May, the Mayor of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Cllr Minah Bahula, has embarked on a food donation drive program, visiting 4 different poor families around Ga-Masemola and Malope area. The Honorable Mayor’s goodwill and kind gesture comes after these destitute families, which mostly are child headed households, were identified by the local municipal ward committees through their public participation program and door to door visits. Bahula thanked the local businesses that contributed

The Mayor of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality Cllr Minah Bahula (Right), during the food donation programme in the municipality.

Provincial police operations yield positive results

The relentless efforts by members of the police in Limpopo and other law enforcement agencies continue to bring the levels of crime down across the province, as more than 1000 suspects were arrested during joint operations that were conducted until Monday 10 May 2021. During the operations, a total of 1287 suspects, aged between 19 and 64, were arrested for various crimes including kidnapping, murder, attempted murder, possession of suspected stolen properties, robberies, burglaries, possession and dealing in drugs and illicit cigarettes, assault, MITP, possession of unlicensed firearms and ammunition, contravention of the Road Traffic Act, illegal Immigration Act, driving under influence and contravention of the regulations under the Disaster Management Act.”These intelligence driven operations that are being conducted week in and week out, are comprised of the Crime Intelligence Unit, Detectives, the Limpopo Highway Patrol Team, Tactical Response Team, Organised Crime Unit, Stock theft Unit, Public Order Police Unit, Vehicle Crime Investigation Unit, K9 Unit, Air wing, Narcotics Unit and other law enforcement officers,” said Brigadier Motlafela Mojapelo, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson. Mojapelo said during the process of these operations, the police confiscated 1935 sticks of illicit cigarettes, 20 dangerous weapons, 69 grams of dagga, 41 grams of crystal meth, 154 grams of Nyaope, 9 firearms, 662 895ml liquor, 38 knives, 9 stolen/robbed motor vehicles. 1217 fines and compliance notices related to the Road Traffic Act were issued.”As liquor plays a major role in contributing to commission of crimes, especially contact crimes, enforcement on compliance with the Liquor Act was heightened which resulted in 187 fines being issued. 289 shebeens were also shut down. 425 Second-Hand Goods Act Compliance Inspections were conducted,” he said. Mojapelo said the swift response of the Organised Crime Unit and Highway Patrol Team led to the arrest of four suspects aged between 23 and 64, in in Sekhukhune for separate incidents of kidnapping and possession of suspected stolen motor vehicle.”The 64-year-old scrapyard owner and a 59-year-old woman were arrested for possession of suspected stolen motor vehicle following an incident that took place in the Florida policing area, Gauteng province, where the victim was shot and killed during the hijacking. The members with assistance of Saps Arwing and tracker company traced the said vehicle at a local scrapyard in Sephukubye Village. Further investigation revealed that the vehicle was brought to the shop by the female suspect, who was allegedly sent by her daughter after she came home with an unknown man. The

other suspect are still on the run but police manhunt is still underway,” detailed Mojapelo. He said the suspects arrested during these operations have started appearing before different magistrate courts across the province. The provincial commissioner of the police in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, have greatly elated by the high levels of commitment and determination manifested by the members during these operations.”I urge our police members to continue working closely with communities as they play a very important role in the fight against crime.” said Hadebe.



Illegal firearms were seized when the police arrested over one thousand people during joint operations that were conducted until Monday 10 May 2021.



The police recovered drugs when conducting operations across Limpopo Province.

to make the drive successful. “We thank everyone who contributed for their continued commitment in donating food to the municipality so that in turn, we are able to provide relief to our poor communities. We rely heavily on their good hearts, and also make a clarion call to other local businesses to do so and feed the needy”. The benefiting families, Masemola, Mampholo, Sello and Mangope appreciated the good efforts from the Mayor and her team collective.

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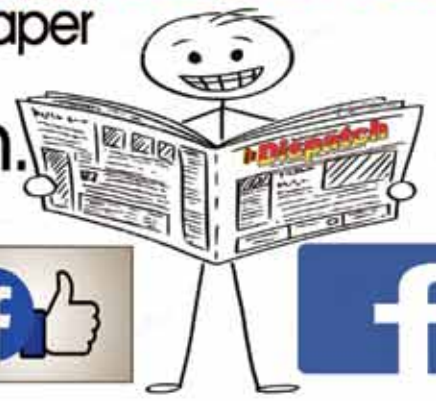
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SDM working towards clean audit

The Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality, Cllr Keamotseng Stanley Ramaila, says the municipality is working towards a clean governance. "In the past months, our municipality hogged the media headlines for wrong reasons. Our concerted efforts to reposition this municipality as the epitome of clean governance, were undermined by a criminal syndicate that had infiltrated our financial systems," said Ramaila. Ramaila said the district municipality will be overhauling the entire system in order to put the brakes on thievery. "Corruption and fraudulent activities steal from our people, and these ills must be frowned upon by every one of us. A newly restructured Audit Committee has now been appointed. With their many years of experience in local government and varied expertise, these men and women are doing a great job in assisting council to improve accountability and

governance matters," explained Ramaila. He indicated that they are concerned that for three consecutive years, since 2016, the municipality had received unqualified audit opinions. "While that positive record was blemished by a regression, along with the audit committee, we are working tirelessly toward attaining a clean audit outcome. An audit action plan has been developed and is in place. Compliance with applicable supply chain management policy and legislation when procuring goods and services, is non-negotiable," detailed Ramaila. He said they have instructed that the municipal manager provides the Mayoral Committee with a monthly procurement report. "This will assist the Mayoral Committee to monitor compliance with the approved time frames, rules, policies and legislation, for the executive mayor to accordingly report and account to council regularly," he said. According to Ramaila, during

the recent Strategic Planning Session, the Mayoral Committee emphatically instructed that all contracts and appointment of service providers be made before commencement of the next financial year in July. "This was done to avoid forfeiting back to the National and Provincial Treasury Departments, money that has been allocated for water projects. We have always been consistent about this action as shown by an improvement on our Capital Expenditure," he said. Ramaila said when

awarding these tenders and contracts, the municipal manager, as the accounting officer, was instructed to ensure the process is legitimate, honest and clean. "Our Information Technology service is being fortified on a continuous basis, to proactively detect and prevent any form of infiltration. The appointment of a full-time municipal manager also plugged the leaking hole at the upper echelons of municipal management. We are happy with her work, and we support her," he said.



The Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality Cllr Keamotseng Stanley Ramaila says the municipality is working to attain a clean audit outcome.

MEC launch Breast Milk Bank in Sekhukhune

MEC for Department of Health in Limpopo, Dr Phophi Ramathuba, recently launched a Breast Milk Bank at Philadelphia Hospital in Dennilton. The Breast Milk Bank, which is the first ever in Sekhukhune, the second in the province, was launched in conjunction with the celebration of Mme Charlotte Maxeke, a South African religious leader, social and political activist. The donated milk is expected to help reduce mortality rates of infants and children under the age of five. The milk will be kept at a room temperature in a sterilised environment. Addressing the people, Ramathuba encouraged women in Sekhukhune can donate breast milk to support the initiative. The milk is usually donated by lactating women in the same hospital. The MEC emphasized the importance of breast milk bank and breastfeeding, saying it will play a major role amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Ramathuba said the bank will help

to save the infants whose mothers are infected with chronic illnesses, orphans and babies with weak immune systems that could be saved by breast milk donated by healthy mothers. "It is preferable for babies to be fed with breast milk in the early weeks after birth. Research has proven that breast milk is good for a baby's health and growth and there are many other benefits," said Ramathuba. She said indicated that breast milk reduces the risk of the child developing chronic conditions, such as type 1 diabetes, celiac disease and other chronic conditions.



MEC for department of Health in Limpopo, Dr Phophi Ramathuba, launched a Breast Milk Bank at Philadelphia Hospital.

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TTM wins Nedbank Cup challenge

Sekhukhune based Tshakuma Tsha Madzivhandila(TTM) FC, are the new champions of the Nedbank Cup competition. TTM lifted their first cup ever by defeating Chippa United F.C 1-0, in the final match played on Saturday 8 May at Free State Stadium. In a post-match interview, (TTM) Chairman Abram Sello, announced that he has decided to give the entire Nedbank Cup R7 Million winnings to his players and staff members. "I am going to take the whole R7 Million amount and give it to all the structures of the club, starting with the cleaners. Everyone worked hard for this and it was not only the players," he said. Premier of Limpopo Province Stanley Mathabatha congratulated the team for representing the province with honour in the competition. "Once again the brightest stars are shining in Limpopo," he said. Mathabatha indicated that he noted that the road to the finals was not an easy road for TTM as the Club had to face formidable and well-resourced clubs. "We salute the team, the technical staff and the management for bringing the Nedbank Cup trophy to Limpopo. This victory will go a long way in inspiring our youngsters to also aim for the stars and achieve in their various fields, particularly in the field of sport," he said. The premier emphasized that he believe that this deserved victory will inspire and energies both TTM and Black Leopards as they fight to remain in the PSL. Mathabatha made a clarion call to all the soccer loving people of Limpopo, wherever they are to embark on celebrations in honour of this victory by TTM. The Mayor of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality Cllr MinahBahula, paid tribute to the team management collective, saying they contributes hugely to the development of football and sport in general in the municipality. "This will continue to inspire hope and shape the local teams," she said. Bahula said the recent team's success on the pitch against big teams in the PSL, propels themunicipality's map firmly on the local football. "It's a fantastic achievement that will have a lasting impact. A victory that we as the municipality are very proud and will remember for a very long time," she said.



Top: TTM Players Gustavo Paes, Nicholas Lukhuleni, Thabo Monyamane and Justine Shonga celebrating with their new silverware.

Left: TTM FC celebrating after winning the 2021 Nedbank Cup.

SAB SAFA Sekhukhune Regional Football League to complete their season

The SAB SAFA Sekhukhune Regional Football League is currently running smooth in all its seven streams, after the lifting of amateur football ban amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The teams have currently played ten matches each, with only a few matches left in the first round. League Coordinator, Frank Maredi, told the Dispatch that the teams are fully complying with the Covid-19 health and safety protocols to ensure safety of players and management. "We are working closely with the Department of Health to make sure that the players are safe during the matches. Fortunate enough, we never had a situation where we had to suspend matches because of players testing positive for the virus," he said. However, Maredi said they are still challenged by spectators who come to watch matches, which is a serious violation of Covid-19 regulations. "Our main task is to keep extraordinary steps towards interests of safety of players. Stopping spectators to come and watch the matches is becoming beyond our control," he said. Maredi indicated that the league is expected to be completed by mid-June. "We had to split the streams so that we can finish the league in time. Remember we started the league late because of the pandemic and we have to play our matches every week to be able to crown the winners in June. The only stream that was not divided is stream D, in Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality because it has only 12 teams," he said. Maredi indicated that most of the teams lack sponsors, which affect their performance. "Transportation is becoming a problem to these teams because they have to use bakkies to go to matches. Some of those vans will even load about 30 players, which is also against the Covid-19 safety protocols," he said.



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