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Year 11

270th Edition

Friday 17 July 2020

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## Sekhukhune District Municipality offices close as employees contract Covid-19

15 July 2020					
LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH					
Total Tests Conducted	Sector	Test Conducted	Positives	Total Cases = 3482	
42708	Public	23611	971	Recoveries = 1503	
Total Positives	Private	19097	2511	Deaths = 42	
3482				Active Cases = 1937	
DISTRICTS	Local Municipality	Cumulative	Active	Recoveries	Deaths
SEKHUKHUNE	Elias Motsoaledi	158	89	68	1
	Ephraim Mogale	36	22	14	0
	Fetakgomo Tubatse	359	109	248	2
	Makhuduthamaga	113	66	45	2

The main offices of Sekhukhune District Municipality in Groblersdal are temporary closed until Monday 20 July 2020, as employees attached to the municipality tested positive for Covid-19.

The number of positive Covid-19 cases among officials of the municipality now stands at 11, including the Acting Municipal Manager Mpho Mofokeng who tested positive two weeks ago. In addition, approximately 48 officials await their results and consequently they are expected to work from home in self-isolation. The closure will provide an opportunity to decontaminate the offices. However, workers in satellite offices and those who are not office bound will continue to report for duty as usual. Executive Mayor Cllr Keamotseng Stanley Ramaila wishes officials who tested positive for Covid-19 a speedy recovery. Sekhukhune District Municipality Communications Manager, Moloko Moloto, said the acting municipal manager is currently in self-isolation. Moloto said after seeking advice from Health Department officials, a decision was taken to clean and disinfect municipal offices. "With the exception of a select number of officials who will be informed, majority of municipal employees who ordinarily report for duty at the head offices were instructed not to report for work. However, every employee will report on duty when the offices reopen for the public after disinfection. But municipal officials who usually report for duty at satellite offices and those who are on sites, were not affected by the disinfection process at the head offices, and therefore reported for duty at their respective workstations," he said. Acting Executive Mayor Cllr Orginia Mafefe appeals to everyone to remain cautious. "Our prayers and thoughts are with the employees who tested positive, we wish them a speedy recovery," said Mafefe. "The infection numbers are rapidly increasing. We're all at risk of contracting the corona virus, that's why we appeal to everyone to remain at home, and those who are out in the public must observe all health precautions so we can defeat this virus," Mafefe said.



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# Tender irregularities implicate senior officials in Sekhukhune District Municipality

The Bolsheviks Party of South Africa (BPSA) has requested the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) to investigate corruption claims within the Sekhukhune District Municipality, following alleged irregular tender contracts. This is after the municipality allegedly attempted to spend over R26 Million to pay eight companies without any service rendered to the municipality. According to the party, the companies were not even in the municipality's panel of contractors, which raised eyebrows that lead to the interception of the payments. BPSA Leader, Seun Mogotji said a number of senior officials within the municipality including the Supply

Chain Manager, Deputy Director of Infrastructure and Acting Municipal Manager played a role with the aim of defrauding the municipality through irregular tender appointments and payments. Mogotji said this is not the first time senior officials within the municipality are looting millions that are meant to benefit the poor and nothing has been done to hold those who are implicated accountable. "The Sekhukhune District Municipality has seen more than 2 cases where the municipality has been defrauded of large amounts of money which were set to benefit the people of Sekhukhune, but has been benefiting a certain group of individuals while

the communities are left to suffer," he said. "On the 18th of June a memo was generated by the PMU manager amounting to R26 345 879,71 to pay eight separate companies that were given contract appointment," he said. Mogotji said in this regard, the party requested the SIU to investigate appointments of the companies and their previous services to the municipality. "The district municipality has made indications that it seeks to approach the court to review the appointments of the companies. To date no case of fraud and corruption has been laid against any of the implicated officials. It is also in this regard that a lifestyle audit on the implicated municipal personnel who signed the memo is requested from the SIU," he said. Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) Councillor in Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality, Ali Maloba said this is a system used by officials to defraud the municipality of millions of Rands. "Every time when the Executive Mayor is not around the municipality loses millions of Rands to fraudsters. When he comes back he will be shocked like everyone and that proves the executive mayor is part of the fraudsters as nothing has been done in the previous cases," he said. Sekhukhune District Municipality Spokesperson, Moloko Moloto said the matter has been brought to the attention of the

acting Executive Mayor and the Accounting Officer. "Our legal services unit has pursued the appointments of these service providers and its legal opinion is that we must seek a judicial review. I can confirm that we are in the process of challenging these appointments in the High Court because we are convinced they were made in violation of supply chain management prescripts," he said. Moloto said the municipality did not make any payment regarding this matter. "There will be consequence management against all our officials who are implicated and due process in this regard will result, we have written letters to the concerned service providers informing them that we are suspending their contracts. Importantly, as Executive Mayor Keamotseng Stanley Ramaila has always said, we have taken a firm stance against financial irregularities and suspected corruption," he said. Moloto emphasized that the executive mayor has appointed a task team that is headed by Member of Mayoral Committee Orginia Mafefe, and comprising internal audit, legal services and corporate services as well as MMC for Budget & Treasury Yvonne Mmakola, primarily to establish facts around this matter. "The team will write a report to the executive mayor, who will then take a decision henceforth," he said.



**Sekhukhune District Municipality marred by multi-million Rands of tender irregularities again.**

## Rapid increase of Covid-19 among healthcare workers concerns Matlala Hospital employees

The daily rise of Covid-19 infections within Matlala Hospital outside Marble Hall concerns health workers in the facility. Staff members in the health facility claim they are worried about health workers getting infected with the coronavirus, while the hospital management quarantine Covid-19 positive staff secretly. According to workers, staff members who tested positive for the virus are not disclosed to those who had contact with them in order to take tests and isolate themselves as well. More than 13 workers in the facility have said to be tested positive for the virus and their results have been kept secret by the management. Since the first case was reported, the hospital was never cleaned or disinfected and continues to admit patients as usual. Workers claim the hospital is not complying with Covid-19 regulatory health standards as a result of shortage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and maladministration. A staff member, who did not want to be named said they were only informed by fellow staff members who tested positive for Covid-19 about their results. "There is no transparency at all, the management is silent about cases of Covid-19 reported in the hospital. Those who test positive are secretly taken to quarantine without telling primary contacts who work closely with them. The Health Department does not show any care for these workers and this is highlighted by the fact that workers' struggles are not prioritized by the government," he said. He said there is no sufficient PPE to protect staff members as prescribed by the Occupational Health and Safety Act. "Workers are getting infected because of the intermittent supply of PPEs where some doctors and nurses are forced to wear the same gloves and masks for days. The management refuses to test primary contacts who might find themselves exposed to the virus working closely with staff members who tested positive for the virus. Probably there are new cases everyday in the hospital, we are told taking Covid-19 tests is expensive and we have to get sick before we could be tested," he said. He indicated that since the first case was reported in mid June, the hospital was never disinfected and continues with its normal operations while Covid-19 cases are rising daily. "It is business as usual as if nothing is happening. I am feeling for the public, who comes to the hospital not knowing about the exposure of the virus in the facility. We have raised these concerns to the management and no one is willing to listen to ensure the compliance to all health and safety measures in our workplace," he said. Limpopo Department of Health Spokesperson from the MECs Office, Thilivhali Muavha slammed claims that there were shortages of PPE in the hospital. "The entire hospital has enough PPE that can last up to four months. It is sometimes negligence from staff members not to use PPE when they are on duty," he said. Muavha said the department cannot disclose names of workers who tested positive as a privacy protocol to fight stigma among workers in the institution. "We only test those who are working closely with that person and instruct them to self-isolate if needed," he said. He added that it is impossible



for the department to close the hospital when a staff member test positive as that will affect other services provided by the institution to the public. "What we do is we close down only the section where the individual is working and disinfect it while the other part of the hospital is fully operational," he said.

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# EFF closed down Global Filling Station after murder of two

The Economic Freedom Fighters Limpopo Provincial Leadership has shut-down operations at the Global Filling Station in Ga-Masemola Village outside Jane Furse, following a brutal murder of two community members.

It is alleged that the victims went to withdraw money at the ATMs in the filling station in the early hours of Friday 3 July when the security guards have mistaken them to be ATM bombers, firing shots killing them immediately. The deceased were identified as Mabiditje Richard Nchabeleng (37) who was a station manager at Masemola Community Radio and a 63-year-old Rabophepheng Jonathan Rakgahla. The victims were said to be in the filling station in the early hours to collect social grants in order to avoid the overcrowding during the day. On Thursday 9 July, the EFF, lead by Limpopo Provincial Chairperson Jossey Buttane, went on a rampage and closed down the filling station. The party accuses the filling station management of attempting to offer a R15 000 bribe to the family of the deceased. The security guards who shot and killed the victims were arrested and later released on warning, which angered EFF members accusing the SAPS of being captured by the Global Filling Station owners and decided to immediately halt operations of the

company in the village. Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, Brigadier Motlafela Mojapelo said the police at Masemola Police Station have opened two counts of murder after two people were shot and killed at Big boy (Global filling station) on Friday 3 June at around 02:00. Mojapelo said according to the information they received, the security personnel were responding to an attempted ATM bombing and the victims were caught in the cross fire. "It is alleged that about four male persons were dropped off by a motor vehicle and then went to ABSA ATM next to the filling station. Two security guards were on duty and immediately called for backup. The backup security officers allegedly parked their vehicle at a distance and approached on foot. It is alleged that they then found the four people tempering with the ATM and fired warning shots and

those males fired back and cross fire ensued. Two males were shot dead and were identified as Mabiditje Richard Nchabeleng and Rabophepheng Jonathan Rakgahla," he said. He said two firearms were found next to the two deceased. "According to the eye witnesses, the suspects who were attempting to bomb the ATM were having a rifle but they ran away. Investigations are continuing," he said.



*Angry members of the EFF marching on the streets at Ga-Masemola Village to close down Global Filling Station after two people who were mistaken to be ATM bombers were shot dead by security guards.*

## Limpopo resumes School Nutrition Programme

The Limpopo Department of Education has started feeding all learners who are part of the National School Nutrition Programme in the province as from earlier this month. The programme will help about 1.5 Million pupils



pupils in the province who depend on the feeding scheme for their daily meals. According to the Department, all learners in Grade R to 12, in quintile 1-3 who are benefiting from the programme will be receiving their daily meals from their schools. "The department has already instructed service providers to deliver food to their allocated schools and food handlers to start with preparations for all grades. Schools participating in the programme using the decentralized model have also been directed to procure for all their learners. Learners will only be served meals at schools," said the Limpopo Provincial Department of Education Spokesperson, Tidimalo Chuene. She added that schools were further directed to develop workable mechanisms of feeding within the guidelines of the adopted standard operating procedure for the prevention, containment and management of COVID-19 in schools on food preparation and serving. "These require schools to adequately take into consideration aspects of social distancing, hand washing, sanitizing all work surfaces, cooking food thoroughly and ensuring that learners do not share utensils, food or drinks," she said. Chuene said parents and caregivers are urged to ensure that learners who only come to school for meals have their masks on at all times and return home as soon as serving is done. MEC for Education in Limpopo Polly Boshieho said the programme will benefit less privileged children who are urged to go hungry because of their families' poor backgrounds. "This is a matter which needs us to cooperate with parents, guardians and caregivers so that all learners are safe when they receive their meals. This is for the good and welfare of those learners who depend on this programme for a reliable meal. Let it serve its purpose as intended", said MEC Polly Boshieho. The school nutrition programme is feeding close to 10 Million pupils countrywide. The programme was halted after the unprepared schools' holiday during the introduction of the nationwide lockdown and negatively affects millions of children depending on it.



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# Groblersdal SuperSpar donation to fight Covid-19 at local schools

To respond to a call by President Cyril Ramaphosa to join hands in the fight against Covid-19, Groblersdal SuperSpar donated hand sanitizers and Covid-19 sign boards to various schools in Groblersdal and surrounding villages. The donation was handed over on Thursday 7 July to Rakidiwane Schools in Groblersdal and other various schools around Motetema Township and Tafelkop Village. Groblersdal SuperSpar Manager CC Venter said the donation was made to fight the spread of Covid-19 at local schools. "It is everyone's responsibility to take action towards the fight against the virus. We are trying where we can to contribute as the store in a way of giving back to the community that support us," he said. Venter said a total of thirteen schools benefited and probably the shop will donate more in the near future. "Each school received 20litres of sanitizer and Covid-19 sign boards in the gesture that we are planning to expand to benefit more community members. Our focus is now at schools and probably we will also assist in other institutions because there is a need as well," he said.



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## Sekhukhune District Municipality delegation monitors progress at Flag Boshielo Dam

The Sekhukhune District Municipality Mayoral delegation paid homage to the Flag Boshielo Dam, in Ephraim Mogale Municipality on Tuesday 13 July. The site visit was aimed at monitoring the implementation of the 8 megalitre package plant, implemented by the Lepelle Northern Water. The new plant is a long awaited intervention by government aimed at expanding water supply to the 156 villages and townships supplied by Flag Boshielo Dam. "We are excited by the progress made on site. Irrespective of the challenges ranging from Covid-19 and labour disputes, we are hopeful that the project will be completed in November 2020. And therefore, the beneficiaries of water from the dam, will get water 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. The overall work done is 86%. That includes the civil works and electro-mechanical work done. Our people from Dichoeung to Leeuwfontein, Manapjane to Phokwane, will finally be relieved from long toiling years of water supply disruptions," said MMC Mbusi Mahlangu, the leader of SDM delegation. The site visit equally agreed to set up a Task Team to deal specifically with illegal connections and seamless water supply to all the 156 areas impacted by Flag Boshielo Dam. The task team will include water Forums from different communities, SDM, Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality and Lepelle Northern Water.

## Security guard shot dead at Municipal Satellite Office

The Mayor of Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality Cllr Julia Mathebe conveyed her deepest condolences to the family and friends of a security guard who was fatally shot on duty at Motetema Satellite Office. The female security guard was killed while on duty on Sunday 29 June by suspects who were attempting to steal the municipality's truck on the premises. Simon Makua, Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality Spokesperson, said the security guard was employed by Gubis 85 Solutions, the contracted security services provider for offices, assets and facilities of Elias Motsoaledi. "Her services to the municipality include providing a safe environment to

the employees, members of public and the property of the institution. Sadly Mme Matau Linda was gunned down by armed suspects at around 2h00 am on Sunday 29 June 2020," he said. Mayor Mathebe strongly condemns the shameless attack of the security guard who was protecting the infrastructure meant to serve the community. "Our thoughts are with the family during this time of bereavement. Their loss has shook us and left us with disbelief. In her honour we will continue the hunt-down of the suspects to the just conclusion of this case and maintain the safety of the residents of Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality," concluded Mathebe.

## AMENDMENT OF DIRECTIONS FOR THE RE-OPENING OF SCHOOLS FOR GRADES R,1 ,2 ,3 ,4 ,5 ,8 ,9, 10 AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS

The Limpopo Department of Education will be phasing in other grades in accordance with amended directions published in the Government Gazette No. 43510, by the Minister of Basic Education on 7 July 2020. The phased return of the remaining learners in the province will be as follows:

### 20 July 2020:

- Grades 3 and 10
- Schools of Skill: Year 3
- Schools for Learners with Severe Intellectual Disabilities: Grade R, Grade 3 and final year (Occupational)
- Schools with Learners with Severe and Profound Intellectual Disabilities: Year 3
- Schools with Autistic Learners: final year (18 years and above)

### 27 July 2020:

- Grades 1 and 2
- School of Skill: Year 2
- Schools for Learners with Severe Intellectual Disabilities : Grades 1 and 2
- Schools with Learners with Severe and Profound Intellectual Disabilities : Years 1 and 2
- Schools with Autistic Learners: junior group (below 13 years)

### 29 July 2020:

- Grade R

### 17 August 2020:

- Grades 4 and 9
- Year 1 in Schools of Skill
- Schools with autistic learners: Senior Group (13 years and above)

### 31 August 2020:

- Grades 5 and 8
- Schools for Learners with Severe Intellectual Disabilities : Grades 4 and 5.

School management teams have been directed to make sure that all learners receive orientation on the COVID-19 pandemic, so that they can comply with all required measures to combat and prevent the spread. "We are encouraged by the positive reports we have received with regards to the phasing in of Grade 6 and 11 learners. I am confident that working with our communities, parents and every other strategic stakeholders, we will be able to ensure that learners are safe when at school and when at home", said MEC Polly Boshielo. Schools that have applied for deviation and granted to phase in certain grades not in line with the Minister's published directions, will not be affected by this schedule of dates.

*The Sekhukhune District Municipality delegation monitoring progress at the implemented 8 megalitre package plant in Flag Boshielo Dam.*



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## TS Galaxy unveils new signee

TS Galaxy Football Club has announced the acquisition of former Jomo Cosmos keeper, Melusi Buthelezi who has already joined the reigning Nedbank Cup champions at Kameelrivier outside Siyabuswa. The 22-year-old had put pen to paper with the Rockets in June in a deal that will see him at TS Galaxy FC for the next three seasons. According to the club, Buthelezi, who hails from Nquthu in KwaZulu-Natal brings healthy competition to the Rockets' goalkeeping division, something that will give Coach Mabuthi Khenyeza an exciting variety of options come the resumption of football. Speaking to the club's website, the lanky shot-stopper said he was excited to be joining a Club of TS Galaxy's caliber and is eager to contribute to the team's success. "Joining a club like TS Galaxy is something I do not take for granted. This is one of the fastest growing clubs in the country and to be a part of such a team is



TS Galaxy Head Coach Mabuthi Khenyeza (Left), TS Galaxy new goalkeeper Melusi Buthelezi (Centre) and club owner Tim Sukazi (Right).

## Farmers donate food parcels and seeds to Moganyaka emerging farmers

As a result of unintended consequences brought by the Covid-19 pandemic, most communities in Sekhukhune District are faced with daily challenges; shortage of food in particular. The unfortunate situation has led to the community of Moganyaka to decide to approach farmers around their areas to help where possible. Hendrik Schoeman CEO of Schoeman Boerdery and Piet Engelbrecht CEO of Piet Engelbrecht Trust, responded positively to the plea of the community and donated food parcels and seeds to local emerging farmers towards the establishment of gardens. More than 6000 food parcels containing six different types of vegetable seeds were donated to the community. Piet Engelbrecht said the gesture was aimed at making the situation of Moganyaka residents better during the Covid-19 period. "I am aware of the situation within the communities around our farms, we believe working together to assist the people in need and giving them the means to create long term sustainable food sources in their yards can provide long term solutions. By working together with communities during this lockdown, we can provide a platform to minimize daily challenges faced by the needy," he said. Engelbrecht is involved in a number of programmes donating to local communities including in Leeufontein where he is affectionally known as the "Real Blesser" by community members. Pastor Cletus Damba of FIG International Ministries said they have been working together with farmers, educating communities about small scale farming and gardening. "We are providing logistical resources and we have over 300 gardens today in Sekhukhune in good care. We would like to thank all the farmers and chiefs around Sekhukhune for their support," he said. A local traditional leader, Kgoshi Mokgoma Rahlagane who is also a chairperson of Nape A Maswi Business and Community Solutions thanked the local farmers for their contribution towards the elevation of hunger among Moganyaka residents. "I would like to take this opportunity to thank Hendrik Schoeman and Piet Engelbrecht for giving more than a helping hand. Most of our community members are employed by Piet Engelbrecht Trust and his action in this time of need proved that we have people we can count on. I would like to thank everyone and also to invite other farmers to assist the community where is needed. We are truly grateful for the donated seeds to community members who completed small scale farming and gardening workshop held before lockdown. We believe those seeds will create awareness about sustainable community programs," said Rahlagane.



a great honour. I am looking forward to working hard with the players, coaching staff and management in ensuring that the club soars to even greater heights" said Buthelezi. Club President, Tim Sukazi welcomed Buthelezi and wished him all the best in his new home. "TS Galaxy Football Club would like to welcome Melusi Buthelezi. We believe that he will be a great asset to us and will gel well with the current squad and the vision of the Club" said Sukazi. In February the Rockets secured signatures of two topflight experienced players Thabo Ntethe and Matome Mabena. Three players tested positive for Covid-19 and are in self-isolation recovering from the disease. The club's Marketing Executive, Dudu Sukazi told Timeless News that despite three of their

players confirmed to be having the virus, the team is back on training. "All other players who tested negative are currently training as we are awaiting a go-ahead from the PSL to resume with the league. The three that tested positive are regular players and we are worried that they are not training with the rest of the team and this will affect their fitness. Hopefully they will test negative and return to re-join the team after their 14-day-period of self-isolation that is ending next week," she said.

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