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343th Edition

Friday 13 October 2023

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WIMPY

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Hawks nabbed former SDM senior officials for fraud and corruption

The Hawks in Limpopo have arrested a Senior Administration Officer at Sekhukhune District Municipality (SDM), in connection with fraud and corruption relating to multi-million of rands committed during July 2018. Andries Makgotho (45), who was SDM Senior Administration Officer together with co-accused, Bongani Masupye (45), Kedibone Magagane (45), Sivhadana Murovhi (39) and Charles Malema (42), appeared before the Groblersdal Magistrates' Court after they were charged with six counts of fraud. Lieutenant Colonel Matimba Maluleke, Hawks Spokesperson in the province, said the suspects were arrested on 29 September 2023 following an intensive investigation. "It is alleged

that in 2018, the Sekhukhune District Municipality awarded tenders worth over R5 Million to different companies to provide security services. It is further alleged that the former municipal Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Senior Administration Officer connived with other companies who never rendered any service to deposit money into their accounts that was later shared among themselves. As a result, the companies that rendered the services did not receive their payments," explained Maluleke. He said the matter was reported to the Hawks' Serious Corruption Investigation members for further probe and on 28 September 2023, a take-down operation was conducted in Groblersdal and it resulted in the arrest of the former municipal official, Mokgotho and two service providers, Masupye and Murovhi. "The other suspects, Mokgotho, Magagane and Malema were employees of Sekhukhune District Municipality as expenditure clerk, expenditure manager and chief financial officer respectively," said Maluleke. Maluleke added that it is alleged that between 5 and 7 July 2018, the suspects connived and direct the payment of R5,4 Million to Murovhi and Masupye who never rendered service to the municipality. The monies were supposed to be paid to the three service providers who were rendering security services, collecting water reticulation and completion of precast VIP toilets structures. "During the take-down operation, the Senior Administration Officer was not found but he handed himself to the Hawks in morning of 29 September 2023. The former CFO is still on the run but he is being traced," he said. Major General Copz Govender,

Hawks Limpopo Provincial Head, has welcomed the arrests and vowed to hunt down the outstanding suspects. "We are on a mission to clean both government and private sectors by rooting out corruption. This is just the beginning, more takedown operations are still going to be conducted," said Govender.



Former SDM official, Andries Makgotho, is among accused arrested by the Hawks in connection with fraud and corruption.

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EPMLM celebrates Heritage Day while handing over six high mass lights

The Mayor of Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality, Cllr Given Moimana, has celebrated Heritage Day officially handing over six high mast lights to the community of Greenside Village in ward 13 of the local municipality. The event was held on Friday 6 October under the theme "Celebrating our cultural diversity in democratic South Africa. Among dignitaries who attended the event included the National Police Commissioner General Sehlahle Fanny Masemola

who hails from Greenside Village, Speaker of the Council Cllr Rebecca Lentsoane, Whip of Council Cllr Itumeleng Magane, EXCO members Mary Ramphele, Eunice Tshiguvho, Ward councillors TP Nkoana and Director of Community services Maphuta Mashaba. The two pronged event was marked with different cultural groups across the municipality as they showcased their traditional attire, traditional dances and talents as when entertaining the audience. Delivering a keynote address, Mayor Moimana encouraged communities to take part in all cultural activities so that they could understand and promote their different cultures. "These high mast lights that we are officially handing over here today will help to minimise acts of criminality more especially on stock theft and other crimes. We are calling on the community to safeguard the property because it is your asset and it will benefit you for the longest time if you protect it," he said. He also called on community members to take part in sporting activities from their respective villages to sharpen their skills and talents. Moimana rewarded all participating cultural groups with trophies as a token of appreciation for honoring the event. "I see lot of young people here embracing their culture here today and they must be encouraged and nurtured to write, sing, dance, live and learn about it. As future leaders of this country, you must engage in activities that would help you to develop and grow. Please avoid social ills such as teenage pregnancy, alcohol, drug abuse and crime," said the mayor. When given the platform, General Masemola applauded the municipality for providing the high mast lights in the village, indicated that these will help the community in reducing crime such as car hijackings and stock theft. Masemola promised the mayor that he will bring a Crime Awareness Imbizo that will address all crime related matters in the local municipality. He made a clarion call that communities must work together with police to curb crime. A community member, Mme Mohlahlo, said they are happy to have high mast lights adding that they will be able to walk



The Mayor of EPMLM, Cllr Given Moimana (Left) with National Police Commissioner General Sehlahle Fanny Masemola (Right), officially handing-over the high mast lights to Greenside community.

freely at night without fearing criminals. "We are excited as residents of Greenside Village to have six high mast lights that provide massive light in our village during the night. Now we are able to walk freely, send our children to the shops during the night without fear of being attacked by criminals and we are no longer experiencing burglary and stock theft as community," she said.

Illegal miner killed by falling rock

The Police in Apel outside Jane Furse are investigating an inquest docket, following an incident that occurred on Tuesday 3 October 2023 at around 09h00, in which an alleged illegal miner was killed when a rock fell on him while mining chrome illegally at Atok, Bogalatladi Village. Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said the police were summoned to the scene after the rock fell on top of the man and on arrival with Emergency Medical Services (EMS), they found the male victim severely injured. "He was certified dead at the scene by EMS. The deceased was identified as a 39-year-old male originally from Mozambique. Police investigations are still ongoing," explained Ledwaba. The Provincial Commissioner of the Police in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, has warned communities to resist from participating in illegal mining activities, saying they are not only committing serious crime but as well putting their lives in danger.

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NOTICE OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND WATER USE LICENCE APPLICATION PROCESSES FOR THE PROPOSED LEFAKONG SMART CITY IN PHOKWANE ON PORTIONS 7, 9 OF THE FARM UITKYK 851KS AND PARCEL 3 OF MOHLAREKOMA TOWNSHIP, MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

INVITATION TO REGISTER AS AN INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTY AND COMMENT ON THE DRAFT SCOPING REPORT

APPLICANT: Lefakong Property Development (Pty) Ltd

PROJECT DETAILS: The proposed mixed-use development entails the construction of a shopping mall, filling stations with convenience shops, a taxi rank, drive through restaurants, a hardware and value mart centre, tyre fitment centre, a workshop, a private hospital with doctor and nurses' residence, private school, an office park, a substation and a community hall.

LOCATION: The project site is located in Phokwane, Mohlarekoma on Portions 7, Portion 9 of the Farm Uitkyk 851KS and Parcel 3 of Mohlarekoma Township, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Limpopo Province.

LEGISLATION: In terms of the National Environmental Management Act (No. 107 of 1998), as read with the 2014 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations of Government Notices GNR 326, 327, 325 & 324 (as amended), a Scoping and Environmental Impact Assessment Process is required for the environmental authorisation of Listed Activities associated with this project from the Limpopo Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET). In terms of Section 21 of the National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998), a Water Use License is required as a result of the project's proximity to a watercourse.

AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT SCOPING REPORT (DSR) FOR PUBLIC REVIEW & COMMENTS: The DSR has been prepared and made available for a 30-day public review and comments from 13 October 2023 to 13 November 2023. You are invited to review the report at the following location: Phokwane Library - Phatametsane Limpopo.

Envirolution Consulting (Pty) Ltd has been appointed as an Independent Environmental Assessment Practitioner to conduct the EIA, WULA and Public Participation Processes (PPP) for the proposed development. Should you wish to obtain further information, access the electronic copy of the reports, comments or and register on the project database, kindly submit your name, contact information and interest in the project to Nomusah Mapheka at Tel: 0878 98 50 00; Fax: 0861 626 222, E-mail: nomusah@envirolution.co.za. Please submit written comments by 13 November 2023

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Voter registration drive commenced in MLM

The Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality (MLM) has kick-started a voter registration drive to various villages of the local municipality. The programme commenced on Friday 6 October to various communities across the length and breadth of Makhuduthamaga, who praises the caring leadership of the municipality for embracing one of the fundamental pillars of the Batho Pele practices, which means putting the people first. The outreach activity programme was driven and co-ordinated by the council Speaker, Judy Mphelane Nkgadima's Office, Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), as part of intergovernmental relations and cooperative governance. Over one thousand people, including the elderly, have been assisted during the inception of the campaign. MLM Mayor, Cllr Minah Bahula, alongside the Speaker, Cllr Mphelane, as well as several other councillors and key stakeholders, officials from Home Affairs and the IEC and civic organisations were all hand-on criss-crossed the municipality in a quest to assist the residents with ID collection, registration and re-application program by the department of Home Affairs as its legal

and core business is hailed as a resounding milestone. During the programme, the communities were either applying or collecting their IDs and even checking their voting status with the electoral body. "Major challenges that comes with travelling to Jane Furse to Home Affairs offices, at times during extremely hot conditions and on rainy season, or the current electrical power cuts interruptions that we are facing, necessitated this program, and for us to indeed take government to the people. We

are happy that our people are responding positively in numbers and are being assisted. Therefore, engagements and our interacting network with Home Affairs and other structures will not end here. This is the people's government, their lives matter and must be improved," said Bahula. Furthermore, the communities were also granted an opportunity to interface directly with the local municipality and get a sense of some of the service delivery backlogs that they are grappling with. Lemson Motopjane, MLM Spokesperson, said the programme is organised through the four clusters of the local municipality and set to run until Wednesday 11 October, however, leaders are already engaging on whether to extend to other days if the need arise.



MLM Mayor, Cllr Minah Bahula, is leading the voter registration outreach drive at various villages of the local municipality.

EPMLM fills critical senior management position



The Council of Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality (EPMLM) has during its special council sitting held recently, resolved to appoint Tshepiso Promise Maphutha as the new Director of Infrastructure Services effective from the 1 September 2023. Maphutha commenced his duties on Monday 2 October 2023 and he holds a B. Tech in Civil Engineering. Prior to his current appointment, Maphutha was serving as PMU Manager of Thembisile Hani Local Municipality in Mpumalanga. The municipality said Maphutha is bringing a wealth of over 10 year experience with local government and expertise to Ephraim Mogale. Cllr Given Moimana, EPMLM Mayor, said he was delighted that the local municipality is taking a step ahead in filling senior management positions. "On behalf of the municipality, we are happy that all the vacant senior managers' positions are filled and we would like to take this opportunity to welcome Maphutha and wish him well on his new assignment," he said.

Tshepiso Promise Maphutha was appointed the new Director of Infrastructure Services at EPMLM.

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Stock theft soars as Marble Hall Stock Theft Unit lacks resources

The Democratic Alliance (DA) in Limpopo said they are concerned about lack of resources at Marble Hall Stock Theft Unit which they say contribute to the alarming rate of stock theft. The party said they learned about the under-resource unit when conducted an oversight at the Marble Hall Stock Theft Unit which they say highlighted the severe lack of resources. The Marble Hall Unit is one of eight Stock Theft and Endangered Species Units in the province and serves 10 police stations, including Groblersdal, Motetema and Zaaiplaas. Katlego Phala, DA Provincial Spokesperson on Transport and Community Safety, said during the oversight visit, the party discovered that the unit has been allocated nine police officers and the two constable officers, do not have laptops which affects the administration of the unit.

Zebediela Citrus Estate in an appalling state

The Democratic Alliance (DA) in Limpopo said they were appalled by shocking and visible neglect at Zebediela Citrus Estate outside Marble Hall. The shocking discovery was made by the DA during their oversight visit at the facility on Wednesday 4 October. Lindy Wilson DA Provincial Spokesperson on Agriculture and Rural Development, said to make matters worse, Eskom has removed their transformers out of fear of vandalism and there has been no electricity at the estate since June 2023. "There was no water on the estate and reservoirs stood empty because water cannot be pumped. Thousands of trees were on the verge of dying and staff have apparently not yet been paid for the month of September," explained Wilson. She indicated that the DA was reliably informed that the MEC for Agriculture, Thabo Mokone, has not been to the estate since February this year, despite his department having put millions into the estate in the last couple of years. "A visit to the administration block highlighted the shortage of staff and management at the facility and we were later advised that the financial management is exclusively managed by the Community Property Association and the beneficiaries of the CPA," she said. Wilson said the estate's liquidation process was supposed to be finalised by May, and the department advised that once finalised a new investor would be found for the facility. "MEC Mokone must urgently advise where monies for this estate have gone and to whom. It was certainly not put into maintenance and infrastructure on the farm, and obviously the electricity bill is not paid," she said. Wilson said furthermore, the seasonal workers were appointed through a contractor, instead of the estate. "The MEC must advise which contractor is being used and at what cost. If the department continues to offer bailouts to the Zebediela Citrus, they have a vested interest and must be informed on the expenditure of the farm and exactly where funds are going," Wilson said. She said the DA has written to MEC Mokone, with requests for answers to the questions and an explanation of where taxpayers' monies is going to.



The Zebediela Citrus Estate is in a state of decaying despite millions of rands allocated by Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

"Currently, the unit only 4 vehicles at their disposal. Although stock theft decreased by 7.1% provincially in the SAPS 2023/24 crime statistics, there were exponential increases in stock theft in the area served by this unit," she said. According to Phala, Marble Hall has seen a 100% increase in stock theft, Groblersdal with 42.9% increase, Motetema with 35.7% and Zaaiplaas with 400% increase. "The exponential increase in stock theft is indicative of a lack of resources, specifically vehicles compound the challenges around effective policing," said Phala. According to the National Livestock Theft Prevention Forum, cases not being reported to police were increasing and resulted in a skewed picture of the rate of livestock theft in the country. "Livestock is the economic backbone in rural areas and stock theft directly affects future economic and agricultural activities, threatening food security. The predisposed hardships that come with being a farmer cannot be aggravated by living in fear that your livelihood will be stolen," Phala said.

Katlego Phala, DA Provincial Spokesperson on Transport and Community Safety, said the party is concerned about lack of resources at the Marble Hall Stock Theft Unit that contribute to the escalating incidents of stock theft. She said the party will continue to hold the SAPS accountable to their mandate of effective policing in rural areas.



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SAVE R20 PER m²
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Hlogotlou fugitive re-captured in Motetema

The 38-year-old fugitive, Lewis Magoro, who escaped from the police holding cells in Hlogotlou on 4 May 2023, has been re-arrested in Motetema on Saturday morning 7 October,

following a shootout with the police where one firearm was recovered. The suspect was previously arrested for various offences such as illegal possession of a firearm, attempted

murders, business and house robberies committed in Motetema. Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said the suspect was busted at his hideout in Tafelkop through an intelligence led operation by Motetema Detectives and Crime Prevention members subsequent to a tip-off. "The suspect was wounded during a shootout with the police after he opened fire on them during the arrest. The firearm was confiscated," Ledwaba said. He said the suspect will appear at different Magistrate's Court soon to face additional charges of attempted murder, illegal possession of a firearm and escaping from lawful custody. Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, Provincial Commissioner of the Police in Limpopo, appreciated the working relationship with the community who came forward and provided information regarding the whereabouts of the fugitive, and also commended the swift response by police to the tip-off.



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MLM to support re-establishment of local gospel choirs

The Mayor of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality (MLM), Cllr Minah Bahula, has vowed to embrace and support established local government choir groups. Bahula made the commitment as she witnessed scintillating voices of local entertainment during the Lesedi La Bophelo Gospel Choir 1st Anniversary Celebration, held at Phaahla Community Hall outside Jane Furse on Sunday 8 October 2023. The music event was organised to bring together well established local choir groups across Makhuduthamaga area and to celebrate the existence and relevance of choral music and entertainment rejuvenated by Lesedi La Bophelo Gospel Choir in and around the community of Ga-Phaahla and the surrounding areas. Lesedi La Bophelo Gospel Choir marked one year milestone by also officially unveiling their new uniform during a concert that attracted choral music supporters and three other local choir groups including Mashabela Gospel Choir, Mangeloi A Tumelo Gospel Choir and Baitapishi Ba Morena Gospel Choir group. Aubrey Manchidi Makoko, Lesedi La Bophelo key player, said the restoration of choral music and culture in the communities will help entertain, create and sustain a peaceful and happy society, but most importantly,

to reduce the rate of other social ills such as alcoholism and gangsterism. Delivering a key-note address, Bahula said: "My dream is to see all local choirs getting the same support and

exposure. We are encouraging other choirs to re-establish their operations and in future all Makhuduthamaga choirs should come together, drive their operations as a collective and form a committee that will represent the interests of all choir groups."



The Mayor of MLM, Cllr Minah Bahula, with members of Lesedi La Bophelo Gospel Choir during their first anniversary celebration.

SDM hold International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction

Sekhukhune District Municipality (SDM) has joined the rest of the world to celebrate the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction. The day was commemorated on Thursday 28 September at Spitzpunt Community Hall in Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality (EPMLM). International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction was created by the United Nations in 1989. The United Nations General Assembly designated 13 October as the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction. The day is an opportunity to acknowledge global progress in preventing and reducing disaster risk and losses. SDM Executive Mayor, Cllr Maleke Mokganyetji, said the event was aiming to interact with communities to discuss daily influences of life. The most common disasters in our areas are thunderstorms, drought, floods and wildfires. Recently, our Fire fighters have been extremely busy extinguishing wildfires in the farms around Marble-Hall," she said. Mokganyetji indicated that the Sekhukhune District is annually experiencing varying levels of storms. "It therefore, calls on all of us to take matters of disaster risk management seriously. Disaster risk management has four stages including prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Managing and responding to disasters effectively requires paying careful attention to each stage," explained the executive mayor. "Children must be taught as early as possible about Global Warming. Simply put; the world needs lot of oxygen for its living organisms. The oxygen that we inhale is produced by plants. The plants use Carbon Dioxide and produce oxygen. When we cut trees and burn fossil fuels, we increase the amount of Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere instead of Oxygen. The impacts include higher temperatures, drought, changing rainfall patterns, and increased climate variability," explained Mokganyetji. Mokganyetji said the district municipality must put systems in place that will ensure that there is life after each disaster. "The survivors of disasters are supported and reintegrated back to their communities through available government services," she said.

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SAFA Sekhukhune Regional Football League to commence in October month end

After delaying for weeks due to change of sponsorship and amendment of new regulations, the Hollywoodbets SAFA Sekhukhune Regional Football League is expected to kick-off at the end of October 2023. Hollywoodbets replaced SAB as the new sponsors of regional football leagues for a period of two years with an option to renew. Part of the new laws, all SAFA regional football leagues are regulated to play in the league of 18 teams where the topping teams will play in the provincial playoffs and top two winners gain promotion to ABC Motsepe League. SAFA Sekhukhune Regional Football League Coordinator, Frank Maredi, said the new regulations come as challenging as the region has 86 participating teams in the league. "The main problem is that they only need 18 teams while we have 86 teams. How are we going to come up with those 18 teams. What about the remaining teams. Where are they going to play?" asked Maredi. However, Maredi said Sekhukhune Region has decided to play as usual with 86 teams. "We are now going to have six streams instead of eight. We have combined streams C, D, G and H," he said. Maredi indicated that another challenge that faces the region is that some teams are reluctant to affiliate. "We are having weekly meetings to iron out some of these stumbling blocks. The league has delayed because the teams are affiliating in small numbers. But we are expecting the league to commence at the end of the month in all sub-regions of Sekhukhune," he said. Announcing the new sponsorship, SAFA Vice President Linda Zwane said: "We are really happy about this partnership that will benefit football in rural areas. It is great to have a big entity that understands football needs financial support. For two years, the lack of sponsorship has made it hard for teams to develop. But now, with the prize money, teams will feel motivated. They will know there is something to win beyond just moving up to a higher division," he said. Zwane said with the new partnership, they anticipate a future of enhanced player exposure, elevated competition and professional club development. "This sponsorship is more than just financial support, it is a powerful testament to the shared vision of uplifting communities," he said. Hollywoodbets Senior Football Sponsorship Co-ordinator, Indira Albuquerque, said that they were very excited about this new partnership as they want to have an impact in the communities and football is the best way to reach the masses.



Juventus FC will be among the 86 teams taking part in the Hollywoodbets SAFA Sekhukhune Regional Football League 2023/2024 season.



Jane Furse Blackpool is one of the teams expected to be crowned champions of the Hollywoodbets SAFA Sekhukhune Regional Football League.

EMLM Mayor acquires Bachelor Degree in Public Administration

The Mayor of Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality (EMLM), Cllr David Magetle Tladi, has on Tuesday 10 October, officially obtained his Bachelor Degree in Public Administration from the Management College of Southern Africa (MANCOSA). The mayor said he studied towards the qualification as it is his duty to lead by example. "My qualification provides a more nuanced study of the interface between politicians and the bureaucracy, as well as the public service and the private sector. It capacitates me to understand the need for an effective government and beyond that, how it can be achieved through improved co-ordination and planning efforts of the developmental state by means of a planning entity to ensure faster change," he said. When receiving the qualification, Tladi was accompanied by a diverse group of individuals including his wife, Suzen Tladi, who provided him with unwavering support and companionship, his elder brother, Patrick Tladi, who was also there to share in the journey while offering familial guidance. Tladi believes that education is a cornerstone of every leader that seek to inspire the nation and wishes to thank his wife, family, comrades and friends for the support throughout this journey. He further encouraged young people to seek further education as self empowerment is a foundation to self-reliance and knowledge acquisition forms part of assets that will stay with them for a lifetime. A close friend, Winter Ratlou, joined the group, bringing a sense of camaraderie and adventure to the occasion. Lastly, his uncle, Johannes Makgatha, added a touch of wisdom and experience to the mix, making their shared adventure a memorable one. Together, they formed a varied and supportive entourage.



The Mayor of EMLM, Cllr David Tladi, has graduated with Bachelor Degree in Public Administration from MANCOSA.

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