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Corrupt traffic officers caught during Limpopo's "Operation Coconut"

The Hawks in Limpopo have on Thursday 5 September arrested two traffic officials in Groblersdal Town in Connection with corruption charges. The two traffic police, Nhlanhla Masina, aged 33 and Jacob Pitso, aged 36, were arrested by the Polokwane based Hawks Serious Corruption Investigators after they were trying to solicit bribes from members of the Hawks who were driving along the Van Riebeeck Street in Groblersdal. Hawks Limpopo Spokesperson, Warrant Office Lethunya Mmuroa, said it is alleged that the Hawks members were driving a state vehicle at Van Riebeeck Street in Groblersdal when pulled off the road by the traffic officials. "The officials informed the driver that he had contravened the National Road Traffic Act by using a cellphone while driving a motor vehicle. They asked him to produce a driver's license. He gave one of them, and they requested him to get out of his car and come to their vehicle. The traffic officer, who was driving, allegedly told the driver to buy a lunch for them so that they can not issue him with a ticket. The driver apologized, but the second traffic official allegedly insisted that he must buy lunch for them. They demanded R100-00 from him. He went to his colleagues to ask for cash and handed it to those traffic officials. The Hawks arrested them immediately after receiving and pocketed that money," explained Mmuroa. Masina and Pitso appeared before the Groblersdal Magistrate's Court on Tuesday 10 September facing charges of corruption. "Masina was denied bail whereas Pitso was granted a R20 000 bail. The matter was postponed to 30 October 2024 for further police investigation," he said. The Road Traffic Management Anti-Corruption Unit (NTACU) has confirmed that by Friday 6 September 2024, eleven traffic officers were arrested in the province on allegations that they have been taking bribes from bus operators, taxi drivers and motorists. According to NTACU, the officials have been under investigation since March 2022, as part of an undercover operation called "coconut", which was targeting law enforcement officials involved in unethical and unlawful conduct which lead to high crashes on the N1 toll road. Prior to the arrests, an investigation carried out by NTACU under the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) revealed that traffic officials operating along the N1 freeway and those inside towns and villages abandon their duties and drive to the N1 to carry out corrupt activities. It is alleged that the officers stopped motorist and conducted inspections, but they would demand

bribes instead of issuing a traffic fine when they found faults with the vehicles or driving licences. Following the corruption acts, NTACU established an undercover operation to prevent, detect or investigate the commission of an offence was conducted after an entrapment permission was obtained from the Director of Public Prosecution (DPP). The suspects were identified after a lengthy investigation involving the South African Police Service from Limpopo Provincial detectives. The suspects are expected to appear in the Polokwane Magistrate's Court soon to face charges relating to defeating the ends of justice, extortion, and solicitation of bribes from motorists, bus driver operators, Malaishas travelling from other provinces through Limpopo province to Zimbabwe along N1 and alternative routes. According to NTACU the arrest of more officials has not been ruled out at this stage as investigations are continuing. Provincial Head of the Hawks in Limpopo, Major General Adv Gopz Govender hailed the arrests and praised the Hawks team and the police for arresting the suspects. "These members are applauded for their unwavering commitment to the directorate for acting with the true spirit without fear, favour or prejudice," said Govender. The Provincial Commissioner of the Police in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, has commended the Provincial Organised Crime Unit, led by Deputy Provincial Commissioner for Crime Detection, Major General Samuel Manala for arresting traffic officers for their alleged involvement in corrupt activities. "Corruption derails the good intention of the existence of the rule of law and order, thus a setback to-

wards the creation safer communities. Any form of corruption including receiving monetary rewards in return of any favour will not be tolerated," said Lieutenant General Hadebe. She further encouraged communities to report all elements of corruption to the police without any hesitation.



The two traffic officers, Nhlanhla Masina and Jacob Pitso during their appearance at the Groblersdal Magistrate's Court after they were arrested trying to solicit bribe from members of the Hawks.



Some of the arrested traffic officers who were nabbed along the N1 toll road during Operation Coconut.

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Alleged hitman hands himself at Groblersdal Police Station

A 30-year-old male suspect who is alleged to be the hitman believed to be involved in the brutal murder of a 49-year-old Dennilton businessman on 05 June 2024, has handed himself to Groblersdal Police Station on Tuesday 3 September 2024. The suspect, Tshepo Jan Mahlangu, is accused of the murder of May Seletisha who was ambushed in broad daylight by unknown assailants when he was on his way home from Middleburg on business purposes. Seletisha was fatally shot while attempting to escape from the assailants and lost control of his vehicle that veered on the side of the road. Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said the deceased was residing in a plot at Uitspanning under Dennilton Police precinct and reportedly involved in multiple businesses when he met his untimely death while traveling along the Elandsdoorn Road between Dennilton and Loskop Dam. "The victim who was driving a silver Grey Polo Vivo motor vehicle was shot allegedly by an unknown male suspect who fled the scene in a blue BMW sedan. The 49-year-old businessman sustained gunshot wounds and was declared dead by the members of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) upon their arrival," explained Ledwaba. He said a case of murder was opened and immediately transferred to the Limpopo Provincial Murder and Robbery Unit for further investigations. "Following intensive investigations by the police, a 30-year-old suspect realised that the police were closing on him for apprehension and subsequently handed himself to Groblersdal SAPS being accompanied by a legal representative," he said. Ledwaba added that the suspect has made his first court appearance at Groblersdal Magistrate's Court on Thursday 05 September 2024 and the case was postponed for formal bail application and further investigations. Seletisha was described by many as a good Samaritan who was intending to do good to fellow residents and willing to help his community. The victim was a funeral parlour owner in Dennilton and as part of some of his community upliftment initiatives, he was offering free burials for those who did not have money to bury their loved ones. He was also described as a selfless, amazing and very welcoming to everyone who had a direct involvement with struggling families since the establishment of his company, May 2K Funeral Parlour, that assisted not less than 100 families. He was also involved in community development where he was assisting child-headed households with work opportunities and providing tertiary institutions' registrations for orphaned young people after passing their matric.



Tshepo Jan Mahlangu was arrested in connection with the brutal murder of May Seletisha who was a businessman in Dennilton.

Five people perished during N11 horrific accident

Five people have lost their lives in a collision that involved two vehicles, along the N11 between Groblersdal and Marble Hall in the evening of Saturday 7 September 2024.

Limpopo Department of Transport and Community Safety Spokesperson, Tidimalo Chuene, said according to reports, an SUV unsafely overtook another vehicle and got involved in a head-on collision with an on-coming light motor vehicle. "Both drivers, together with three passengers have lost their lives in the crash. Speeding has been cited as a possible cause of the accident," she said. MEC for Transport and Community Safety in

Limpopo, Violet Mathye, has sent messages of condolences to the bereaved families, who lost loved ones in this crash. She has also appealed to motorists to drive with caution, especially during weekends. The MEC has also expressed a concerns on the incessant occurrence of accidents, where people perish in large numbers. This accident happens 'hot on the heels' of the other two, where a cumulative 15 lives were lost, at once.

All these happened within a space of less than two weeks in the province. Earlier this month, a horrific bus accident claimed the lives of five Zimbabwean Nationals when

they were travelling on the N1 North. The five victims, who were traveling in a cross-border bus, which was reportedly travelling from Johannesburg to Zimbabwe, included one female and 4 males. Scores of passengers have sustained injuries of varying degrees, in the process, and have been taken to hospitals for medical attention. Reports have suggested fatigue as a possible cause of accident, however, eye-witnesses and survivors of the crash, have attested that the accident was preceded by a loud bang, which sounded like a tyre puncture. During her visit at the Mokopane Hospital, the MEC Mathye in-

teracted with two heavily pregnant women, who survived this crash with minor injuries. One of the pregnant women survived the crash together with her toddler and they are all receiving treatment in hospital. She has also registered a concern about these accidents, that are affecting cross-border public transport operators, and appealed to the bus companies to ensure that their drivers are 'fit for purpose', as fatigue could possibly have been a cause in this accident. The MEC has encourage motorists to rest enough on the road, and also, to ensure that their vehicles are road-worthy at all times.



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Five people lost their lives in a fatal accident that occurred on the N11 Road between Groblersdal and Marble Hall.

Tafelkop man charged with statutory rape after investigations

The police in Motetema have arrested a 29-year-old male suspect believed to be a foreign national in connection with statutory rape, committed at Nyakelang Section in Tafelkop Village on Sunday 1 September 2024. The suspect, who cannot be named to protect the identity of the victim, was arrested after raping a 15-year-old girl. Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said according to the report, the victim was staying with her brothers when she met the suspect, and the two allegedly fell in love. "She then moved in with the suspect to his rented room. While at the rented room, the duo had an argument and the landlord heard them fighting, and he called the police. When the police arrived at the rented room, they discovered that the victim, a minor who had been staying with the suspect, was assaulted and was found to be pregnant. A statutory rape case was opened and the suspect was immediately arrested," explained Ledwaba. He said the suspect has appeared before Motetema Magistrate's Court on Tuesday 3 September 2024 facing charges of statutory rape and his case was postponed for bail application and further police investigations.



Community fears as housebreaking escalates in Elandsdoorn and OR Tambo

The communities of Elandsdoorn and OR Tambo in Dennilton are living in fear following the spiking incidents of house breaking and robberies in the area, which have seen six houses in the same street being robbed in one night. According to residents, the unknown perpetrators are targeting unsuspecting residents during mid-night, breaking into their houses and robbing them of appliances and other valuables before fleeing the scene. Following the incidents, residents convened a community meeting recently at the Ndlovu Miracle Theatre in Elandsdoorn, aiming to find solution in the rampant criminal activities currently taking place in the area. The Dennilton SAPS, local councillors, community members from Elandsdoorn, OR Tambo and nearest places, were part of the meeting. During the meeting, residents demanded the police to appoint hundred police reservist from local villages and intensify police visibility. They also urged the police to prioritize all house breaking and robbery cases. Part of their grievances, residents were complaining about the ongoing Eskom's load reduction programme, which they say it is implemented in the early hours and exposing those who commute to work in danger of being attacked by criminals. Residents also suggested that a satellite police stations should be situated closer to communities and the increase in police personnel as the current number is no longer enough to cover the whole of Dennilton. They also raised that more vehicles should be provided to make it possible for police members to conduct road

blocks and generally be visible on the streets. Part of community resolutions included establishment of block committees, and both Sekhukhune District Municipality (SDM) and Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality (EMLM) to form part of those block committee structures. They also agreed that counseling should be provided for robbery victims, re-launching of official Community Policing Forum (CPF) structures, persuasion of EPWP safety programmes from affected municipalities, engagement of the business sector in the fight against crime and safety priorities be given to pensioners, child-headed households and the vulnerable group which includes women and children. They also resolved to invite other relevant stakeholder in their next meeting that will include the Department of Justice, Department of Social Development, Eskom, EMLM and SDM. Bolsheviks Party of South Africa Leader, Seun Mogotji, said they are more concerned about the rampant crime incidents in the area. "This has obviously infuriated the community which has now vowed to take matters into their own hands as they are tired of living in fear of criminals," he said. However, Mogotji said they have acknowledged the presence of the new Dennilton Police Station Commander who was part of the meeting. "We appreciate his approach unlike his predecessor who was aloof and never wanted to get involved in such matters. We welcome him and hope he will hit the ground running as Dennilton has become a crime hotspot. People are killed and no one gets arrested, robberies, rapes and



Concerned communities of Elandsdoorn and OR Tambo directing their complaints to Dennilton SAPS during the meeting.

Residents of Elandsdoorn and OR Tambo fully packed the Ndlovu Miracle Theatre in Dennilton during the meeting that was aiming to find resolution on the alarming rate of house breakings.



other crimes are on the rise and part of the reason is lack of police visibility," he said. Mogotji said they believe that establishment and prioritisation of CPF structures will intensify the war on crime and make their streets safer for everyone. "We believe these demands and suggestions are achievable if we are all serious about crime prevention, all hands must be on deck if we are to win this fight," he said.



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To learn more about the proposed FTSEZ, always look out for in depth conversation on your favourite local radio stations


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Motetema residents crack down on illegal immigrants

Disgruntled community of Motetema Township, lead by Mkhonto We Sizwe Political Party, have embarked on a rampage to remove all undocumented foreign nationals in the township. The programme has started last month in partnership with the Motetema Police where dozens of community members, joined by the local police members, pay visits to areas occupied by immigrants to evacuate those who are not in possession of proper documentation to be in the country. Residents are complaining about alleged spiking of criminal activities committed by undocumented foreign nationals who are mainly from Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Pakistan, Sudan, Ethiopia and Bangladesh. They say they are concerned about the influx of foreign nationals in Motetema who occupy sections of Shushumela, Rangers, Morula View and Phomola; the majority of them commit crime such as armed robberies and sell expired and counterfeit goods to residents. MK Party leader in Motetema, Solomon Mmatladi, told the paper that they are tired of crime and they are removing the undocumented foreign nationals because they are untraceable. "The raid was first conducted at local spaza shops and other Motetema sections that are mainly occupied by foreign nationals in a search for those who are undocumented. Forty-two undocumented immigrants were removed on the first day," he said. Mmatladi indicated that they are removing the undocumented foreign nationals to eradicate and prevent all root forms of crime, corruption and making the entire Motetema free from illegal foreign nationals. "As residents, we are cleaning our country. We are tired of them committing crime and not been arrested at the end because they are not in the system. This is now a daily programme. We had agreed with local station commander to make sure that we are doing the programme in a rightful manner and no one is harmed. The community is making sure that all the undocumented ones move totally out of our township," he said. However, Mmatladi said they are worried that some of the undocumented foreigners who were removed are back in the township, allegedly after paying bribes to the police. "To our surprise, those who were removed were back on the streets the next day. We are worried that some of the police officials are taking bribes to release these illegal migrants instead of fighting for their deportation," he said. Mmatladi said that during the ongoing programme, they will also start to hold accountable locals who are renting out residence to undocumented foreign nationals. Limpopo Provincial Police Brigadier Hlulani Mashaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, has confirmed that the police in Motetema together with Department of Home Affairs and members of the community, conducted an operation where 42 undocumented foreign nationals were arrested. Mashaba said after their apprehension, they were processed by Department of Home Affairs and deported back to their country of origin, through the Beitbridge port of entry. Mashaba indicated members of the community have the right to effect citizen's arrest in the absence of police and immediately, they have to alert the police to handle the matter further without taking law into their own hands. "Furthermore, the community members are not authorised to conduct operations without any member of the SAPS involved. As part of partnership policing, if they are involved, they must work as a force multiplier under strict supervision of a SAPS member," he said.



Disgruntled community members of Motetema going house to house to evacuate undocumented foreign nationals from the township.



Community members of Motetema Township, joined by Motetema Police members busy with the removal of illegal foreign nationals.

Massive manhunt underway following armed robbery in Moutsiya Mall

The Police in Dennilton have launched a massive manhunt for a group of unknown armed suspects who robbed Engen Filling Station at Moutsiya Mall in Dennilton. The incident occurred in the early

hours of Monday 2 September 2024 at approximately 02h00. Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesper-

son, said a group of around seven suspects, armed with pistols and rifles and wearing face masks, stormed into the garage, pointing staff members with firearms and blasted the drop-in safe and made off with an undisclosed amount of cash. "The suspects, who spoke in Ndebele, fled the scene in a white single cab bakkie without registration numbers," he said. Ledwaba said the police are urging the public to come forward with information leading to the arrest of the suspects. "Anyone with information may contact the investigating officer, Sergeant Junior Mashiane on 076 818 3828. Alternatively, tip-offs can be made through Crime Stop Number on 08600 10111, the MySAP-SApp," he said. Earlier this year, the Provincial Commissioner of the Police in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, has directed the police to work around the clock to apprehend suspects involved in a series of business robberies that happened in Dennilton policing area. The reaction by the provincial commissioner was prompted by three business robbery incidents that took place at separate filling stations in Dennilton policing area. During one of the incidents that also occurred at Engen Filling Station in Moutsiya Mall, the cashier at a was on duty together with her colleagues when two unknown bakkies arrived and stopped next to the main entrance of the premises at about 04:45. One of the bakkies was loaded with approximately six male suspects in possession of firearms. Two suspects suddenly entered the kiosk shop and threatened the cashier with firearms and demanded a drop safe. Fearing for her life, she complied and revealed the location of the drop safe. The suspects allegedly forced the cashiers to vacate and join the customers who were ordered to lay down on the pavement and they suddenly heard a sound of a bomb detonated while a security guard was inside the kiosk shop. Afterward, the suspects ordered the male customers to assist in carrying the drop safe to the bakkie and immediately sped off from the scene with an undisclosed amount of cash that was contained inside. The police said during the business robbery, multiple shots were fired by the suspects and nobody sustained any injuries but the security guard was transported to a local clinic for medical treatment after he was severely affected by the bomb smoke during the incident.



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Police make breakthrough in Motetema and Dennilton murder cases

The Police in Motetema have arrested a 28-year-old male suspect for charges of murder and kidnapping, following an incident in which the suspect attacked a 63-year-old male who was a pensioner and killed him, there after burned his body and buried his remains in his yard, at Motetema during July 2022.

Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said the suspect was arrested on Thursday 5 September 2024 at Sunnyside in Pretoria, Gauteng Province, following an intensive lengthy investigation. "Further investigations revealed that before the suspect was arrested, he noticed that the police were tracing him. He went to his residence in Motetema and exhumed the deceased's remains and apparently scattered them at his friend's yard. His friend who was allegedly not aware of the incident, informed the police after he discovered the human remains in his yard," explained Ledwaba.

He said during the murder incident, the suspect also stole the victim's truck and sold it. "The suspect will appear before the Motetema Magistrate's Court soon facing charges of murder and kidnapping. The truck is not yet recovered but police investigations continue," Ledwaba said. The Provincial Commissioner of the Police in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, has commended the investigating officers for their meticulous handling of the case and ensuring that the suspect is arrested. Meanwhile the Sekhukhune SAPS Tracking Team members have arrested three suspects, including a female aged 31, 36 and 42, in connection with the murder of a man at the Elandsdoorn Extension in Dennilton Policing area on Sunday 8 September 2024.

According to Colonel Ledwaba, reportedly, the police received information related to the murder of a man considered to be 34-year-old. "Upon arrival at the scene, the police found an assaulted body of a man with stab wounds abandoned inside an unused house. According to the information provided, it is alleged that the victim was assaulted on suspicion for being one of the robbers terrorising the community. Emergency personnel services were notified. Upon arrival, they certified the victim dead. The identity of the deceased will be revealed in due course. More arrests are still to come. Police investigations are still ongoing," he said.

Ledwaba said after a police preliminary investigation, three suspects were apprehended and they will appear before the Moutse Magistrate's Court soon facing charges of murder. Once again, the Provincial Commissioner of the Police in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Hadebe, complimented the team on the arrest of three suspects.

The 43-year-old victim who was found lying dead inside an unused house at Elandsdoorn in Dennilton.



Community tip-off leads to arrest of suspect with illegal firearm

The Provincial Commissioner of the Police in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Tembi Hadebe, has hailed the impact of partnership policing in fighting crime, following the arrest of a 26-year-old suspect for possession of an illegal firearm who was nabbed on Sunday afternoon, 8 September 2024, in Marble Hall.

Brigadier Hlulani Mashaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said the arrests emanates when the police swiftly acting on a tip-off and responded to the local complex where they found the suspect with a bag containing the concealed firearm and arrest him.

"Two cellphones were also confiscated during the arrest and investigations are ongoing to determine their origin. The suspect is scheduled to appear before the Marble Hall Periodical Court soon for possession of an unlicensed firearm," explained Mashaba.

Lieutenant General Hadebe praised the community for their role in the arrest, saying, "This is a testament to the effective collaboration between the police and the community in combating crime. We encourage the public to continue providing valuable information to assist in keeping our communities safe."



The unlicensed firearm and cellphones that were recovered in possession of the suspect during the arrest.

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Suspect fatally shot, another arrested after exchanging gunfire with police

The Police in Marble Hall have on Wednesday 4 September arrested a male suspect involved in cases of attempted murder and possession of suspected stolen motor vehicle, following a shooting incident with the police officers occurred along the Elandsdraal Road at around 13h00.

Colonel Malesela Ledwaba, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said according to the information, the police in Marble Hall were alerted about the suspects that committed house robbery at Motetema Township who also fled the scene in a Toyota double cab, silver in colour.

"After receiving the information, roads were immediately blocked by the police and the suspects driving in a described vehicle were spotted. Police swiftly advanced and stopped the vehicle. The suspects then sped off and started to shoot in the direction of the police," he said. Ledwaba added that the police retaliated and a 27-year-old suspect was shot and sustained serious injuries and later died in hospital. Another suspect, aged 26, was arrested while another one fled the scene on foot and disappeared into the nearby bushes at local farms. "During the shootout, one of the suspects sustained serious injuries and was rushed to the local hospital where he later succumbed to his injuries. The arrested suspect, aged 26, will appear before Motetema Magistrate's Court soon. Police investigation are continuing," he said.

Ledwaba said the police appeal to anyone with information that can lead to the arrest of the remaining suspect to contact Detective Commander Captain Martin Kgomo on 082 318 9861, the Crime Stop Number on 08600 10111, the nearest police station or make use of MySAPS App.



One suspect was fatally wounded and another one was hospitalized during a shootout with the police following a house robbery committed in Motetema Township.

Police seeks leads after unidentified man found deceased at Kameelrivier

The Police in Vaalbank Village outside Siyabuswa are requesting community members around Siyabuswa, Kameelrivier, Vaalbank and surrounding areas to help in identifying the person who was found deceased in Kameelrivier Village open field on Saturday 31 August 2024. Captain Mangoseni Nkosi, Mpumalanga Provincial Police Spokesperson, said the police received information about the discovery of the body of a male person estimated to be aged between 49 and 55 years, who was seen lying motionless in an open field. "On arrival, the police could not see any signs of life. As a result, medical practitioners were summoned and the person was declared dead on the scene. The deceased was wearing a pair of green trousers, a white shirt, a black jacket and brown shoes bearing the CAT label," explained Nkosi. He said the police urge the community members, friends and anyone who might know of a missing person matching the description to please contact the investigation officer, Sergeant Sello Seku on 072 489 1945, the Crime Stop Number on 08600 10111, alternatively members of the community can send information through MYSAPSAPP. Nkosi said police investigation are still ongoing.



The police in Vaalbank appeal to the communities to help to identify the body of a man who was located at an open field in Kameelrivier Village.

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Sekhukhune delegate to explore business opportunities in China

The Executive Mayor of Sekhukhune District Municipality (SDM), Cllr Minah Bahula, has bid farewell to a delegation of administration officials, Small, Medium and Macro Enterprise (SMMEs), and unemployed youth graduates from the district, as they embark on an exciting business exchange programme in the People's Republic of China. The group consists of seven unemployed graduates, six SDM officials and 8 SMMEs who are part of the six months programme.

The delegation has departed to China on Monday 9 September and will represent not only Sekhukhune District but the entire Limpopo Province. SDM Spokesperson, Lemson Moropjane, said the initiative is the result of a partnership between the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) and the Chinese Culture and International Education Exchange Centre (CCIEEC). "The two organizations have laid the foundation for establishing sister-city relationships between South African and Chinese cities, aiming to promote cultural exchange, economic trade, and mutual understanding between the two nations," he said. Moropjane added that the exchange programme focuses on enhancing cooperation through skills training related to local government, which will ultimately benefit municipal officials, unemployed graduates, and SMMEs.

He said the core objectives of this programme include investing in cities and local government, job creation, entrepreneurship, infrastructure development and societal and community development. In her farewell message, Executive Mayor Bahula expressed her pride in the delegation, saying: "This is a lifetime opportunity for our SMMEs and unemployed graduates. You are ambassadors of not only Sekhukhune but the entire province of Limpopo. Embrace this journey with open hands and your hearts. The skills, knowledge, and networks you gain will contribute to your personal growth and the development of our communities. We believe in your potential to turn this opportunity into tangible benefits for our district and the broader South African society". The executive mayor said this ground-breaking exchange programme marks the beginning of a long-term collaboration between South Africa and China, with the potential to drive socio-economic development in both countries.



The Executive Mayor of SDM, Cllr Minah Bahula, said the business exchange programme between the district municipality and China marks the beginning of ground-breaking relationship.

SDM takes proactive approach to land use management with SPLUMA

The Sekhukhune District's Development Planning Unit has recently successfully conducted a Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) complaint training on appeals authority, held at the Sekhukhune District Municipality (SDM) Council Chambers in Groblersdal. According to SDM Spokesperson, Lemson Moropjane, the training was aiming to enhance decision-making on land development applications, ensuring consistency, transparency and the swift, fair resolution of appeals. "The training was designed to capacitate local municipalities on the processing of appeals. Section 51 of the SPLUMA Act mandates that local municipalities establish their own appeals authorities, which necessitated this important training session," he said. Moropjane said currently three of four local municipalities in the district have since established their appeals panels, with the exception of Elias Motsoaledi Local Municipality, who were encouraged to do so soon. He said Fetakgomo Tubatse Local Municipality's appeals committee includes a diverse mix of internal structures and provincial government stakeholders. Key participants in this significant training included the Limpopo Provincial SPLUMA team chaired by Timmy Shilenge from the Department of Land

Reform and Rural Development (DLRRD), Tshishonga Ntshengedzen who is the Deputy Chairperson from the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements, and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA), Musa Mhlongo who was representing the Office of the Premier (OTP) and Meshack Baloyi from the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA). Moropjane said the training marked a crucial step in ensuring effective and just management of land development appeals across the district.



Attendees from various sectors in Limpopo attending the SPLUMA complaint training held at the SDM Council Chambers in Groblersdal.

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Ben Viljoen High School 7's rugby trophies grow

This past weekend our sevens rugby teams participated in the PHS Blitzfees at Hoërskool Pietersburg. A day of action-packed, fast paced rugby with a festive atmosphere prevailed.

The results are as follows:

u.15:

lost 12-19 against Hoërskool Pietersburg

won 54-00 against Hoërskool Piet Potgieter 2

won 48-00 against Northern Academy

won in the Plate Semi-final 19-15 against Hoërskool Ben Vorster

won in the Plate final 47-05 against Hoërskool Frikkie Meyer

finished overall fifth out of sixteen teams

u.17:

lost 14-15 against Hoërskool Ben Vorster

won 19-07 against Hoërskool Frans du Toit

won in the Bowl Semi-Final 15-00 against Hoërskool Louis Trichardt

lost in the Bowl final 05-07 against Hoërskool Merensky

finished overall sixth out of twelve teams



Marnu Hancke, Ryan Cox, Eden De Villiers, Damain Joumath, Mondray Arendse, Lwandile Hlongwane Dr Carel Hancke, O'Niell Lenting, Junaid Stevens, Philani Siguqa, Aldin Baatjes and Mnr Bongi Dlamini

Ben Viljoen High School learners and staff supporting local event

This past weekend, some of our Ben Viljoen learners, as well as staff members, took part in the Cara Cara Mountain Bike and trail run race which took place at Ruby River Resort outside Groblersdal.

Results: (Top 10 places only)

Mountain Bike Section: Nicole Senekal - 3rd place in the 18km 13-14 Sub Junior Girls division

Altus Venter - 7th

place in the 18km

Open Men's division

Carel Klingbiel - 4th

place in the 38km

17-18 Junior Men's

division

Field Race - Ladies

10km:

Carlia Kirchner - 3rd

place

Ms Nicolene Kotze -

7th place

Field Race - Men's

10km:

Omphile Tshikane -

1st place



Official and Team manager have Ben Viljoen roots



Mr Excellent Mnkomo officiated the match between the u/19 Lions and u/19 Leopards at Emirates Airline Park on Friday, 6 September 2024.

On the photos, Mr Mnkomo stands with Motheo Rabodiba, the team manager of the Fidelity ADT Lions u/19, u/21 and Senior Currie Cup Team, one of our alumni members that was part of the class of 2007!

Ratanang FC gains promotion to Hollywoodbets SAFA Sekhukhune Regional League

Mooihoek based Ephraim Mogale Local Municipality (EPMLM) Local Football Association side, Ratanang FC, has been promoted to the Hollywoodbets SAFA Sekhukhune Regional Football League. The team gained promotion after playing 30 league matches, winning 23, having drew 6 and lost only one match in the entire 2023/2024 league campaign. Ratanang managed to accumulate a record breaking of 72 points. Ratanang also boasts the record of being the team with most goals scored and less goals conceded respectively, managing to score 81 goals while conceding 27 in the league. Ratanang Marketing Director, Jeffrey Walker, said despite all the determination and impressive LFA performance by the club and the technical team, the glory was not an easy ride as the team had experienced challenges such as financial difficulties during the course of the competition. "It was not easy at all, there was a time where players and technical team have to contribute to pay transport for away games and also the referee fee per every game. The players were asked to meet coaches halfway by contributing R5 and sometimes R10 when the away game is far, not every player could afford to contribute," he said. Walker stated that another challenge they faced was by the time when one of the players was not having soccer boots. "This situation is painful because if they did not get someone to borrow them soccer boots before the match started then they were not available for selection, which deprives the team some depth. But Ratanang FC made it against all odds. Indeed 'great leaders are not the best at everything, they find people who are best at different things and get all on the same team'. This quotes explains the recipe for Ratanang's impressive 2024 LFA league campaign under the leadership of Bobby Coach Bull Manasoe. The combination of strong technical team and determined players is what made Ratanang to be most feared team in the LFA," he said. Walker said Ratanang is hoping to secure a sponsor that will help them to have everything needed to compete within the Hollywoodbets SAFA Sekhukhune Regional Football League. Ratanang FC Head Coach Bobby 'Coach Bull' Manasoe said: "It was a roller coaster of a campaign but we did not want to let the challenges we faced to determine our fate. I would like to extend my humble gratitude to my technical team Coach Mogoane and his assistant Coach Matlala after they have contributed immensely to the success of this team," he said. He further said a big credit should go to the boys who gave their best week in and week out during the EPMLM League campaign. "They really deserve this victory, they worked so hard for it," he said.



Ratanang FC from Mooihoek Village in Tsimanyane have been promoted to the Hollywoodbets SAFA Sekhukhune Regional League after topping the EPMLM LFA League in the 2023/2024 season.

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