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## Constitutional Court stops traditional leaders from imposing taxes on communities

*“In some instances, levies were raised for services that should be provided free of charge, such as obtaining a proof of address letter.”*

**LIMPOPO**  
The Democratic Alliance (DA) in Limpopo has welcomed the recent Constitutional Court judgment, declaring that Section 25 of Limpopo’s Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act 6 of 2005, which allowed traditional councils in the province to raise and impose taxes on their respective communities, is inconsistent with the Constitution and therefore invalid.

Lindy Wilson, DA Leader in Limpopo, said the judgment confirms that only legislative bodies have the authority to raise and impose taxes declaring that traditional leaders may also not impose taxes under customary law.

“The Section 25 of the Act empowered Limpopo traditional councils to “levy a traditional council rate upon every taxpayer of the traditional area concerned”, and stated that

failure to pay the rate could result in the taxpayer being ‘dealt with in accordance with the customary laws of the traditional community concerned’,” she said.

Wilson added that the judgment highlighted that across Limpopo, communities were being forced to pay various levies imposed by traditional leaders without consultation or adoption by the community.

“In some instances, levies were raised for services that should be provided free of charge, such as obtaining a proof of address letter. In other cases, services like the issuing of a proof of address letter were unjustly withheld, or fines were imposed for the non-payment of these levies,” informed Wilson.

She said the party is calling upon the Limpopo Provincial Government to widely publicize this ruling to ensure that affected communities are made aware of their rights.



DA Leader in Limpopo, Lindy Wilson, says the party has welcomed the Constitutional Court’s ruling to prevent Limpopo traditional leaders in imposing taxes on their communities.



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# Police operations lead to arrests of illegal miners and illegal foreign nationals

## DENNILTON/TAFELKOP

In a concerted efforts to combat illegal mining activities through the multidisciplinary operation Vala Umgodi, which were conducted in various parts of Limpopo Province, the police task team in Sekhukhune arrested a 42-year-old male suspect after he was found loading sand illegally onto a truck at Rameleteng in the Dennilton Policing area.

Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Thakeng, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said the arrest took place during an operation conducted between Thursday, 2 January and Friday 3 January 2025.

"During the arrest, four shovels and one pick were confiscated during the operation,"

he said. In another incident, two suspects, aged 26 and 56, were arrested for illegally mining sand in Tafelkop Village under the Sekhukhune District, along with one undocumented foreign national," he said.

Thakeng said additionally, the task team, operating in the Mopani District, apprehended five undocumented foreign male nationals, aged between 24 and 27, during operations at illegal mining sites in the Ritavi Policing precinct.

Meanwhile, the Limpopo Vala Umgodi Task Team apprehended four suspected illegal miners and eleven suspects for contravening the Immigration Act during the operation conducted on Friday 10 January 2025.

Thakeng said the task team apprehended two illegal miners involved in suspected gold-bearing mineral extraction during multidisciplinary operation conducted at the Letsitele Policing precinct.

"The two illegal miners, aged 31 and 34, were arrested at illegal mining sites near Molati Village. During the arrests, the police confiscated a step ladder, bucket, plastic bins, spade, corrugated iron used for processing presumed minerals, a 3kg plastic bag of presumed suspected gold and another 1.5kg plastic bag containing suspected gold," explained Thakeng.

He added that during the operation, an additional four suspects, aged between 29 and 42, were arrested for contravening the

Immigration Act.

"In a separate operation, six suspects, aged between 28 and 51, were also arrested for similar immigration violations in Saselamani, Vhembe District. The Waterberg District Task Team also arrested three foreign nationals for selling expired food during an operation in the Mahwelereng policing area," Thakeng said.

"The South African Police Service will continue to take decisive action against criminals involved in illegal mining activities, aiming to eradicate such crimes and contribute to the creation of a crime-free society. The suspects will appear soon in their local magistrate courts respectively," concluded Thakeng.



The shovels and a pick that were confiscated by the police when arresting the illegal sand miner



The sand mining at Rameleteng in Dennilton where a 42-year-old man was apprehended by the police for illegal mining.



## Suspect apprehended for possession of unlicensed firearms and stolen properties



The ammunition, including special rounds, were recovered in possession of the suspect when he was arrested at Thabampye Village in Ga-Masemola.



The unlicensed firearms that were found in possession of the suspect during his arrest.

**GA-MASEMOLA/TAFELKOP** - A 31 year-old suspect facing charges of possession of possession of unlicensed firearms and suspected stolen properties, Lehutso Sefoka, had his matter remanded to 21 January for formal bail application when he made his first appearance before the Nebo Magistrate's Court on 10 January.

Sefoka was arrested after members of the Nebo-Jane Furse Tracking Team received information about him possessing the unlicensed firearms.

Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Thakeng, Limpopo Provincial Police spokesperson, said an operation was quickly activated by Masemola Station Commander, Nebo Station Commander, Jane Furse Tracking Team, Masemola K9 Unit and other members of the Masemola South African Police Service (SAPS), subsequent to which, the 31 year-old suspect was arrested at Thabampye Village.

Thakeng indicated that the suspect was found in possession of special rounds, pistol rounds, a shotgun and 9mm pistol, both serial numbers of which were erased. The firearms were hidden around his yard and inside the house.

The Provincial Commissioner of SAPS in Limpopo, Lieutenant General Thembi

Hadebe, has lauded the members for the arrest of the suspect and removing the firearms from wrong hands.

General Hadebe said the arrest is a breakthrough as the firearms could have been used to commit serious and violent crimes within the province.

Meanwhile, two suspects aged 26 and 56 were nabbed for illegal mining of sand in Tafelkop along with one undocumented foreign national during the Vala Umgodi Task Team operations conducted on Friday, 10 January.

The suspects are expected to appear before the Motetema Magistrate's Court in due course facing charges of illegal mining of sand.





# DUP expands reach with new branches

## SEKHUKHUNE

The Democratic United Party (DUP), has kick-started the 2025 year with the theme: “Year of the Branch by the DUP Leadership”, a significant step towards improving service delivery in communities by establishing new branches.

This move is expected to bring the party closer to the people, allowing them to better understand and address the needs of local communities.

DUP was formed in Sekhukhune a few years ago with the aim to accelerate service delivery to communities.

According to the party, by having a stronger presence in the ground, the DUP aims to provide more effective and efficient services, ultimately enhancing lives of community members.

Tonic Manchidi, DUP President, said the party will be formulating a programme of membership recruitment and drives as part of their “Year of the Branch by the DUP Leadership” initiative.

“The Secretary General Office (SGO), which consist of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General is in consultation with the Limpopo Provincial Convenors and Coordinators, in order to formulate a programme of membership recruitment and drives and visits provinces and sub-regions to set clear goal on how to implement and sustain the programme of the Year of the Branch”, he said.

Manchidi added that the party urges all members to renew their membership for 2025 and continue to recruit new members

in preparation for the 2026 Local Government Elections (LGE).

“Whilst at it, DUP structures must start to identify nominees who, after a vigorous DUP selection processes, will be candidates for ward councilors in 2026. Potential ward candidates must start mobilizing their communities in preparation of the 2026 LGE. The SGO is ready for engagement, advice, assistance and guidelines regarding LGE,” Manchidi said.

Furthermore, Manchidi said through the party’s “Adopt-a-School” initiative, DUP is currently focusing on a Back-to-School programme around Sekhukhune villages to ensure that all learners are placed during the 2025 academic year.

“Our members in all their immediate communities must make sure that no learner is refused admission where they reside. Each DUP structure, especially a branch, must adopt a school in their ward to support that school with their immediate needs. The structure must make sure every child in the community attends school, has basic needs such as stationery and uniforms, proper sanitation and nutrition. Each DUP member must adopt a learner to support in their immediate communities,” explained Manchidi.

He advised that it is illegal for schools to refuse learners their reports cards due to non-payment of school fees.

“All challenges pertaining to opening of school must be reported to the DUP SGO for quick intervention,” concluded Manchidi.

# Limpopo Province achieves record-breaking matric results



MEC for Health in Limpopo, Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya, says she is impressed with the historic 2024 matric pass rate in the provinces.

## LIMPOPO

For the first time in history, the class of 2024 matric in Limpopo Province has produced a whopping 85.01% pass rate, a 5.5% increase from the 79.5% previous results in the province, placing the province on position sixth nationally.

This was revealed by MEC for Education in Limpopo, Mavhungu Lerule Ramakhanya, during the announcement of the 2024 National Senior Certificate (NSC) results, held on Tuesday 14 January 2025 at The Ranch Hotel in Polokwane.

Ramakhanya said she was delighted because the matric class of 2024 has made history by pushing boundaries and delivered on their promise.

“I am also delighted to announce that we have moved a step up from position 7 that we occupied last year to position six. We are a province on the rise. Three years ago, I stood before you in this very same venue and declared that we are a province on the rise. The declaration was made when the performance of the province was not at the expected levels and we were at the tail end of performance nationally,” she said.

Ramakhanya applauded the caliber of the department’s senior managers, districts directors, circuit managers and educators, stating that they made a commitment that together they were going to turn things around and be on the rise.

“Our foot soldiers, the educators, who are in the coalface needed a motivation and purpose to work harder and to deliver the province out of doldrums. Together with the

premier in October 2024 counting down to matric, we committed that the province will perform above 80 percent. A target that was never achieved since the dawn of democracy. We trusted the work that was being done by the school principals and the educators who kept their eyes on the ball. We have delivered on our promise,” she said.

The MEC emphasized that her department is currently preparing the matric class of 2025 to match if not surpass what their brothers and sisters achieved last year.

“We have a new target for this year, we are fearless and ready to punch above our weight. Our target for the class of 2025 is to be amongst the top 5 performing provinces when results are announced next year,” committed Ramakhanya.

She also praised parents, school governing bodies, traditional leaders, pastors and all other stakeholders for their unwavering support and trusting the process, stating that without them the province would have not been this far.

“We always trouble you when the tough gets going and you are always available to shoulder the responsibility and provide support,” she said.

Ramakhanya commended members of her Executive Council (EXCO) and colleagues in the legislature, for adopting schools, and furthered thanked the local and district mayors for a sterling work they have done in their respective places to ensure the good matric results.

The MEC advised pupils who did not make it in matric to make use of other government programs to improve their results.

“Those of you who are still of

school going age, you can return to class as fulltime candidates to repeat the year. You can also register as part-time learners to re-write your subjects during the May/June or October/November 2025 examination periods. We have the second chance Matric Programme with centers across our ten education district to support learners who need face to face learning support,” she said.

During the occasion, Todani Nzumbululo, from Mbilwi Secondary School in the Vhembe East District, Sibasa Circuit, was announced as the top achieving 2024 matric learner in the province, obtaining a total of 1 731 marks.

The second position was scooped by Maselesele Lalamani from Tshivhase Secondary School in Vhembe East District, Tshinane Circuit, who achieved 1 714 total marks.

The third position in the province was occupied by Mushwana Rinono Nkateko from EPP Mhinga Secondary School, Vhembe East, who obtained 1 697 total marks.

Mogalakwena District was announced as the top performing district in the province with 87.8%, followed by Mopani West with 87.2%, while Capricorn South and Vhembe East tied up in the third position with 85.8% each district.

Mopani East occupied the fifth position with 85.3%, followed by Waterberg District in the sixth spot at 85.0%, Capricorn North is in 7th position with 84.9% and Vhembe West District is on the eighth position with 84.8%. Sekhukhune East District occupied the ninth position with 84.0% and Sekhukhune South is at the bottom with an 80.0% pass rate.



DUP President, Tonic Manchidi, says the party has formulated programs to intensify establishment of branches in the country.



## EMLM Ward Councillor among 8 suspects arrested for alleged extortion



EMLM Ward 30 Councillor, Tobias Malope, is among suspects arrested in connection with alleged extortion and disruption of the R555 Road construction project in Roossenekal.

### ROOSSENEKAL

The Police in Roossenekal have apprehended eight male suspects, aged between 25 and 43, including Elias Motsoledi Local municipality (EMLM) Ward 30 Councillor, Tobias Malope, for alleged extortion at the construction site along R555 Road in Roossenekal on Thursday 9 January 2025 at about 07:00.

Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Thakeng, Limpopo Provincial Police Spokesperson, said according to the information, the police received a complaint from a 54 year old victim that he was approached by a group of individuals led by a man suspected to be a councillor.

“Apparently threats were made to the construction owner and that the community members are going to be mobilized against the construction site and even employees were hindered to access the construction site to continue working. According to the complainant, he lost an undisclosed amount of cash,” said Thakeng.

He added that on Thursday 9 January 2025, members of the Police Organized Crime Investigation Unit visited the site and they successfully identified the suspects who were actively obstructing employees from performing their duties.

“The eight suspects were immediately arrested and appeared before the Groblersdal Magistrate’s Court on Monday 13 January 2025, facing charges of extortion,” said Thakeng.

The suspects were remanded in custody and the case was postponed to Friday 17 January 2025 for a formal bail application.

EMLM Spokesperson, Simon Makua, said the municipality is aware that the newly elected Ward 30 Councillor, along with other community members, were arrested.

“The arrest relates to allegations of extortion at a construction site along the R555 road in Roossenekal and the illegal closure of the local mine. We take these allegations very seriously and are fully cooperating with the authorities involved in the investigation,” he said.

Makua said the municipality is committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity, accountability, and transparency in all its operations.

“As the matter is now before the courts, we are unable to comment further on the specifics of the case at this time. However, we would like to reassure the community that our commitment to delivering essential services and promoting the well-being of all residents remains unchanged,” informed Makua.

He said the local municipality will continue to provide updates when more information about the case emerges.

# Sekhukhune shines during 2024 matric results announcement

### SEKHUKHUNE

Sekhukhune East District was announced as the most improved district in Limpopo Province in the 2024 matric results. This was revealed during the announcement of the 2024 National Senior Certificate (NSC) event, held at The Ranch Hotel in Polokwane on Tuesday 14 January 2025.

In the past three academic years, Sekhukhune East District improved its performance by 19.5%, from 2022 to 2024.

In 2022, the district achieved 64.5% and in 2023 they performed at 74.7%. In 2024, the district had an impressive 84.0% achievement in matric results.

Furthermore, Ngwaabe Circuit in Fetakgomo Tubatse Local Municipality (FTLM), was also announced as the most improved circuit in Limpopo Province.

The circuit improved its performance by 35.3% in the past three academic years, where they attained 57.0% in 2022 and in 2024 academic year, they obtained 92.2%.

Meanwhile, Kgothala Secondary School from Dennilton in Sekhukhune South District, received the ‘Special MEC Award’ from MEC for Education in the province, Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya.

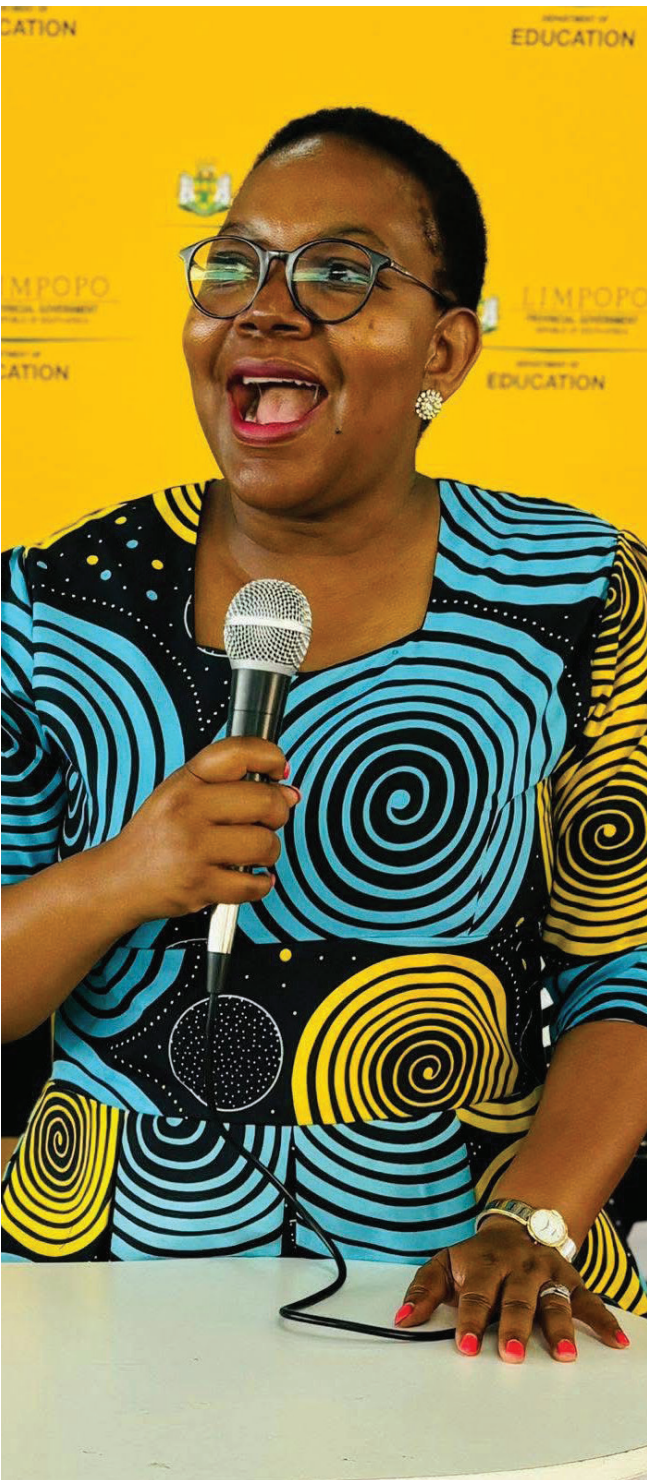
In the 2019 academic year, the school attained 92.9% in matric results and in 2020 they improved to 97.1%, dropping to 93.90% in 2021 and achieving 93.80% in 2022. In 2023, the school obtained 100 percent pass rate, progressing 87 out of 87 learners. Their matric enrolment in 2024 was 127 pupils where 126 learners passed, with just one learner failed. The school achieved 99 bachelors in the 2024 academic year.

Presenting the MEC Special Award, Lerule-Ramakhanya commended Kgothala School Principal, Johanna Mabena, saying that she defied the odds to make sure that the school is recognized among best performing ones in the province.

“She is a phenomenal woman who stood firm and took the bull by its horns. I am today honoring a Mbokodo who against all odds, agreed to take over a dysfunctional school. It was in 2017 February when she was appointed a principal of a school that was performing at around 20 percent for over 10 years. Her presence was felt with a jump to 47.98% percent in 2017,” she said.

Lerule-Ramakhanya indicated that while in the helm, Mabena immediately influenced parents to take part in the day to day running of the school where the discipline of learners, attendance and punctuality eventually changed.

“In the following year, the school obtained 90.9% pass rate, an improvement of over 40 percent in just one year. The school is now one of the best performing schools in Sekhukhune South and have never performed below 90 percent since,” Lerule-Ramakhanya said.



Limpopo education MEC, Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya during the matric results announcement.

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# Limpopo government pledges interventions following rain damages

**LIMPOPO** - Limpopo provincial government has announced intervention plans following severe damages caused by the recent heavy downpours experienced in the province. The government said all the five districts of the province have reported significant damage to school infrastructure, roads and homes. Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba indicated that the reports they have received tell of a devastating impact that requires immediate to long-term interventions from various departments and national government.

Ramathuba expressed that they were saddened by the loss of five lives reported as a result of the rain especially in the hard-hit Waterberg and Vhembe districts. "We prayed for rain, but the resulting outpourings have resulted in damages and are not what we anticipated. It is for this reason that I have asked for a multi-departmental team to be assembled to assist us in assessing the situation in order to deal with the eminent disaster. In addition to the Disaster Management Centre, the team will include the departments of Public Works, Road and Infrastructure,

Education, Health, Social Development and Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs. The team should make immediate interventions, as is currently happening, with visits to affected communities, fixing damaged roads, and addressing schools that have collapsed," stated Ramathuba. The premier highlighted that while action is taking place, they will be speaking to the national departments to assist in disaster-stricken areas and quantify the extent of repairs that may be required.

She assured that the government will

conduct assessments across the entire province. Waterberg district is the heavily affected in the province. Ramathuba urged residents to stay alert and avoid driving and crossing rivers that are overflowing. She reaffirmed the government's commitment to addressing the damage. "We shall use the available capacity within public works to make the interventions on roads and bridges that have been swept away whilst the Department of Social Development will be dealing with affected families," remarked Ramathuba.



R33 Road bridge, approximately 30km from Vaalwater within the Waterberg district, which was recently submerged in water.



## Matriculants raise Sekhukhune district's flag high



Some of the top achieving learners from Sekhukhune district with Executive Mayor, Minah Bahula at the Ranch Hotel outside Polokwane.

**SEKHUKHUNE** - Several 2024 matriculants from Sekhukhune district made the region proud with their outstanding achievements.

Four of the excellent learners were awarded during the Limpopo provincial government's announcement of the Senior National Certificate results at the Ranch Hotel outside Polokwane on Tuesday, 14 January.

The district's jewels are Bontle Sedutla from Ngwanakwena Secondary School in Manapyanne Village within the Tsimanyane education circuit who is the overall top candidate in Agricultural Science. Sedutla

plans to pursue a Bachelor of Engineering in Mechatronics at the Nelson Mandela Bay University.

Groblerdsdal Academy's Michael Tau asserted top candidature in Mathematics Literacy and is set to study Accounting Science at the University of Johannesburg.

Koketso Chego from Mphuzulu Secondary School attained 300/300 in Business Studies and aspires to follow a career in law.

Tlhogelolo Makola from Malekutu Secondary School within the Ngwaritsi education circuit also achieved 300/300 in Mathematics and prepares to study Electrical

Engineering at either University of Pretoria or Witwatersrand University.

Furthermore, the work of Miss Johanna Mabena, Kgothala Primary Secondary School principal in Moutse East, could not go unnoticed as she raised the Moutse's flag high when she received the Special MEC's Award for her consistent improvement in her school's overall performance.

Limpopo MEC for Education, Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya, commended Sekhukhune district for its 2024 matric results.

Ninety-three thousand learners sat for the 2024 matric examinations in Limpopo.

Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba said they have faced challenges, but have remained steadfast in their commitment to improving their matric pass rate beyond the impressive 79.5% achieved by the class of 2023, praising the remarkable progress made.

"I stand before you today, filled with pride as we reflect on the results announced by the minister of education yesterday. Our aim was to maintain an 80% pass mark and achieving 85.5% is a commendable accomplishment that speaks to the dedication of our learners, teachers, parents and departmental officials," remarked Ramathuba.





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12 x 750ml

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Unit Price Per Case: 499.92



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12 x 750ml

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Saint Wine Variants 750ml

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# Sports

## Reakgona dominates Proudly Angels in one-sided netball clash

**TAFELKOP** - On Friday 10 January 2025, Reakgona NC from Tafelkop Village, hosted Proudly Angels NC from Dipakapakeng Section for a friendly netball match, played at Rovers Sports Grounds in Tafelkop.

The games were organized by Reakgona Community Organization, a Tafelkop based Non-Government Organization (NGO), which is seeking to strive for the development and upliftment of Tafelkop and surrounding communities.

During the game, the host, Reakgona NC, trembled Proudly Angels with a biggest score of 63-5 to easily win the match.

According to Reakgona Director, Johannes Nkgadima, the friendly netball matches were organize with a primary purpose to encourage sports participation among young people in the village.

“The aim is to take these young girls off the streets and introduce them to various sporting codes catered by the organization including football. We believe that through sports participation, these young people will stay away from immoral activities such as substance abuse, alcohol as well as teenage and unplanned pregnancies,” he said.

Nkgadima indicated that the organization, on a later stage, is planning to take young talented netball players to greater heights by exposing them to bigger netball clubs in the country.

Furthermore, Nkgadima said apart from sports, the organization is also involved in

other various community building initiatives such as agricultural programmes, educational programmes and community voluntary programmes.

“The different programmes absorbed over 150 locals who are fully participating in the NGO’s capabilities and finding it fruitful to them,” he said.

To uplift the community in terms of provision of food parcels for underprivileged households, Nkgadima said the NGO has recently established a sustainable food security programme through small scale agricultural projects.

“The organization has recently embarked on a small farming project, aimed at enhancing food security and economic empowerment within the community. However, as we endeavor to cultivate the land and establish a sustainable farming venture, we are facing challenges in acquiring essential resources, including seeds, water and farming equipment. These fundamental requirements are critical to the success of our small farming project and would significantly contribute to our ability to yield a successful harvest and positively impact the livelihoods of local farmers,” he said.

He said it is pity that they have knocked in different doors, seeking assistance in the form of donations or sponsorship to support their small farming project without any success.

Nkgadima said Reakgona has also started a football team for elderly people keep them fit and to promote a healthy lifestyle among them.



Reakgona NC that defeated their opponent, Proudly Angels NC with a heavy 63-5 score at Rovers Sports Grounds in Tafelkop.

FORM 8

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR LIQUOR LICENCE IN TERMS OF SECTION 28(1) ( C)

Limpopo Liquor Act, 2009 (Act No. 5 of 2009)

Regulation 8

I, the undersigned applicant hereby give notice in terms of S28(1)( c) that an application for liquor licence will be lodged with the Sekhukhune District Local Liquor Authority. In terms of S28(1) (b) of the Act, you may lodge an objection to the application. The objection form is obtainable from the above -mentioned Liquor Local Authority. Objections must be submitted to the aforesaid Local Liquor Authority within 21 days from the date of lodgement of the application.

1. Full names of Applicant: Phatlane Kwapeng Toys

2. Intended Trading name: Relokwane liquor store

3. Identity number of applicant: 630712 5496 086

4.1. Full address and Location of the premises: No Z1E-TAFELKP MGABABA SECTION

4.2. Global positioning system(GPS) coordinates of the property where the retail operations are to be carried out.

LATITUDE:

-2	4	.	8	3	2	0	9
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LONGITUDE:

2	9	.	8	1	2	2	9
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5. Type of licence applied for: **Liquor Store**

6. List of Schools, places of worship etc. within a radius of 500m from the premises listed in paragraph 4.

School: **None**

Place of Worship: **None**

Public Transport Facility: **None**

Buildings where the public have access to public services: **None**

Filling Station: **None**

## Traditional healer missing since 2018, help reunite her with family

**MAFEFE** - The South African Police Service (SAPS) in Malipdrift within Sekhukhune district are appealing to members of the public to help locate the missing 71 year-old traditional healer from Ngwanamme Village, Mafefe.

Mapula Rinkie Thobejane is alleged to have gone missing since December 2018 at the village. The Thobejane family made several efforts to locate her at relatives, friends and surrounding areas without any success until the matter was reported to the police on 7 January.

The missing traditional healer reportedly likes wearing traditional clothes with beads around her neck, hands and body.

The type of clothing she was wearing at the time of her disappearance is not known. Anyone with information on her whereabouts is requested to contact the investigating officer, Warrant Meshack Mabotha on 076 891 4132, the crime stop number 08600 10111, the nearest police station or use the MySAPSApp.

The host, Reakgona NC, taking on Proudly Angels NC during a friendly match played at Rovers Sports Grounds in Tafelkop.