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FREE SWAZILAND

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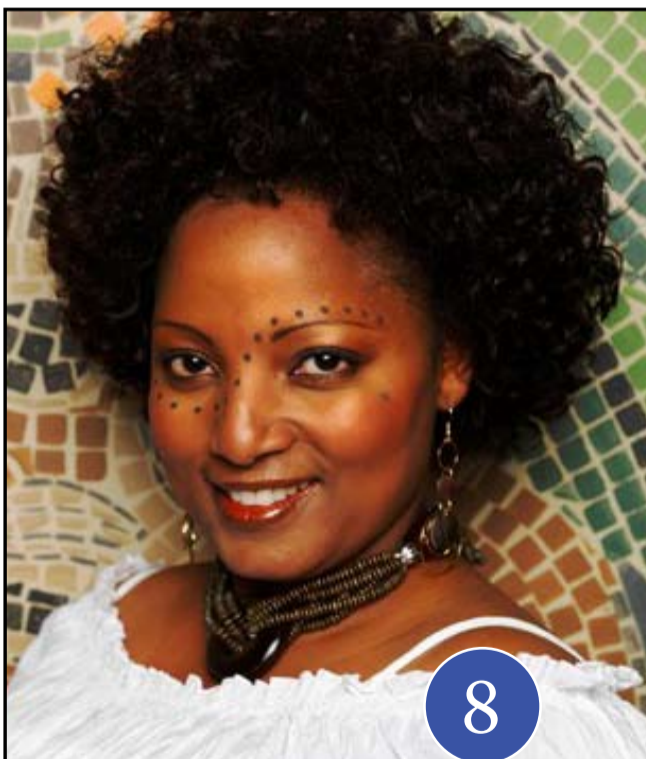
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# MEGA'S PINOCCHIO

ZIWAPHI INVESTIGATION REVEALS THAT MEGA DID ISSUE AN IT CONTRACT ON 9 JULY 2009



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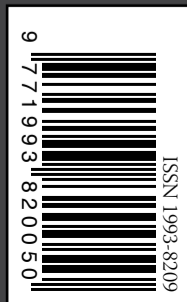
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**FREE MARIO MASUKU****FREE SWAZILAND****ESTABLISHED ON APRIL 13 2007**

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# The one man who can see a voice

## Mndawe makes history by protesting inside the Chamber

The plight of people living with disabilities was brought to the fore at the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature last Friday when one man almost brought the Chamber to a standstill.

Meshack Mndawe, like everybody else, went to the Legislature to listen to the Policy and Budget Speech of the MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism by MEC Jabulani Mahlangu.

The gallery of the Legislature was fully packed and everybody was listening attentively to Mahlangu, except Mndawe.

He was moving up and down the corridors, trying to get attention, but no one cared why he was not settling down.

MEC Mahlangu had his eyes glued to his speech and was oblivious to the subtle commotion that was developing.

A lone Mndawe was holding a placard protesting against the absence of a Sign Language interpreter. He can't speak or hear. His antics were unsettling the scores of people in the public gallery.

**By Comrade Phinda Mzala**

His placard read, "MEC - No Sign Language Interpreter".

It took several minutes, before a sign language interpreter went to the podium and stood next to Mahlangu where he wasted no time and started making the gestures that are only understood by those who know the language.

The interpreter's positioning was also very bad, because his hands were obscured by Mahlangu's figure.

The unrelenting Mndawe used his hands this time to direct the interpreter to move sideways, away from Mahlangu, so that his gestures could be more visible.

By this time, Mndawe seemed content, as he was listening very attentively, with his eyes fixed on the interpreter, of course.

Whenever the public gallery cheered, Mndawe cheered as well, though waving his hands.

At the end of the debate, Speaker of the Legislature, Jackson Mthembu apologised profusely to Mndawe for the inconvenience.

It is the responsibility of the Legislature to ensure that there are interpreters at the Legislature, and this time the interpreter was there, but he was not interpreting, What if the interpreter were not there.

Mndawe made history by being the first person to protest inside the Legislature, but his protest also highlighted the difficulty that people who can't hear or talk have to face in their daily lives.

But still, they have the greatest gift - to see other people's voice.

We salute your brevity.

**The protest****Reading hands****Victory**

## SACP • MBOMBELA BRANCH

**"Without Revolutionary Theory, There Can Be No Real Revolutionary Movement" Lenin**

**Speakers:**

- SACP
- COSATU

**DATE: 1 Sep 2009****TIME: 17H00****VENUE: MBOMBELA CIVIC CENTRE****You are invited**

Workers, youth, students activists, radical intellectuals, MKVA cadres and you are invited

"Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and not an official expression of the newspaper, or its advertisers" Send your comments to info@uxhumano.co.za

# He said there was no IT contract

Minutes of a meeting which the COO attended reveal that MEGA did issue a contract



He said there was no IT contract, the minutes prove otherwise



## Minutes of Meeting between MEGA and ICT-Works in respect of Award of ICT Services Tender

Venue: MEGA Offices, Nelspruit  
Date: 16<sup>th</sup> July 2009  
Scheduled Time: 11h00

**Present:**

- Mr Elvis Rabohale – COO ER
- Mr Jacky Mkhonto – Corporate Services JM
- Mr Andrew A
- Ms Maggy Sibiyi MS
- Ms Daria Park DP

**Chairperson:**

- Mr Jacky Mkhonto JM

In our previous edition, we published an article in which the Chief Operations Officer of the beleaguered Mpumalanga government parastatal, MEGA, told the media and the MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, that the parastatal did not issue any IT contract after the Premier had announced the merger of three of the province's parastatals.

Elvis Rabohale, who was representing the perpetually absent Chief Executive Officer of Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency, Nosizwe Nokwe, at a press conference convened by the MEC Jabulani Mahlangu, denied that MEGA had issued an IT contract recently.

“There is currently no implementation of an IT system,” he said in the presence of a fully packed media briefing by the MEC earlier this month. He reiterated this information even after the MEC had warned that disciplinary action would be taken against officials whenever it can be discovered that they were lying.

Following his denial, Ziwaphi phoned an employee who confirmed that an IT company was busy at the parastatal.

“As I am talking to you, there are people on site,” he said.

Immediately after Rabohale's daring denials were published in Ziwaphi and other media, angry employees approached Ziwaphi vowing “to expose the lies that the management of the parastatal have been telling the media,” said one employee.

Indeed, earlier this week, three employees brought a copy of minutes of a meeting held on 16th July 2009 between MEGA management and one of the IT companies that MEGA had appointed to install an IT system at the parastatal.

In terms of the minutes, titled – Minutes of Meeting between MEGA and ICT-Works in respect of Award of ICT Services Tender – MEGA awarded the tender to a Johannesburg based IT company, ICT Works on 9 July 2009, a month after Premier David Mabuza announced the merger of parastatals.

The tender was issued to two IT companies, ICT-Works and Dimension Data. Their assignment are, respectively, loosely stated as ICT Service Management and ‘Emergency Take-Over’ on one hand and Maintenance Services on the other.

According to the minutes, ICT Works was assigned by MEGA to meet with Dimension Data in Johannesburg. The purpose of the meeting between the two companies was not specified, however, sources within MEGA told Ziwaphi that the meeting between the two companies took place on 21 July 2009.

According to the minutes of the meeting, MEGA COO, Elvis Rabohale,

was part of the meeting which was chaired by another MEGA kingpin, Jacky Mkhonto.

This latest Ziwaphi exposé, which has been brought to the attention of Mahlangu, is expected to elicit harsher action from the MEC, who is currently out of the country on government business. The Ziwaphi exposés on MEGA have until recently, been ignored by the previous political head, Craig Padayachee.

All eyes will be on Mahlangu when he holds his monthly media briefing in September.

MEGA has yet to respond to questions that Ziwaphi sent to them on the 29th July 2009 regarding the awarding of the IT tender.

MEGA is paying R15 000 a month to an image consultancy, and it is estimated that by the end of August 2009, the parastatal shall have paid R60 000 to answer questions from Ziwaphi.

Altogether, MEGA spends R180 000 per month for the services that the image consultancy renders to the parastatal.

Items that MEGA has been charged for, include greetings that the consultancy .

**Thank you MEGA officials**

Ziwaphi would like to thank those employees at MEGA who risk losing their jobs in an effort to end abuse of public resources by the MEGA management.

All that still needs to be done is to conduct an investigation into the activities of the MEGA board and the management.

We also thank the MEC for demonstrating his willingness to stop the MEGA rot.

It's about time.

Phinda Mzala - Acting Editor

Description	Responsible Person
<b>Introductions and Welcome</b>	JM
The purpose of this meeting was to clarify the detail of the MEGA award letter received by ICT-Works on the 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2009 and to discuss the way forward.	DP
ICT-Works understanding of the award letter was presented as ICT-Works being responsible for the ICT Service Management portion of the tender together with the 'Emergency Take- Over' which was verified after receipt of the award letter by e-mail correspondence.	DP
As a result of the understanding by ICT-Works, a correct interpretation of the award letter was requested with a full breakdown of the responsibility split between the two parties that were both sent award letters	MS
<b>Detail of Tender Award Split</b>	
The split of the tender was confirmed together with the content of both award letters. It was acknowledged that the content of the letters were not detailed with regard to the split of responsibilities pertaining to the tender	JM
The split of responsibilities according to the evaluation committee was then clarified as follows:	ER
ICT-Works responsible for 'Emergency Take Over', Support and Maintenance and ICT Service Management	
It was confirmed that the second party, to whom Maintenance Services was awarded is Dimension Data.	

# Government must listen to people, says Premier

NELSPRUIT

By Sydney Masinga

*Recent service delivery protests in Mpumalanga could have been avoided if public participation was encouraged by the provincial government.*

Premier David "DD" Mabuza said the protests were also the result of a lack of meaningful communication over matters affecting communities. He was speaking during the presentation of his proposed R196 million budget in the provincial legislature in Nelspruit on Tuesday.

"Government continues to take decisions on behalf of the people. We are basically doing things for them, and not with them," said Mabuza.

He said this attitude couldn't continue and that provincial government should become more people-centred.

"We have to ensure that the people shape their own destiny," said Mabuza.

Mabuza said his office would assist provincial departments and parastatals to encourage public participation in their decisions.

"This will require strengthening inter-governmental relations, municipal activities and other consultation processes. The premier's coordinating forum will also assist in strengthening public participation," added Mabuza.

He said government should also tell communities and government departments about the work that is being done in communities.

To do this, Mabuza said his office would develop a comprehensive communication strategy for the province.

"The strategy will enhance institutional

coordination and will bring about communication of government work to the public," added Mabuza.

He said the strategy will also outline communication priorities and clearly define communication functions for government administration.

"It is important to make government accessible to the citizens. It should be easy for communities to communicate issues of service delivery, register complaints and make inputs on the implementation of government programmes," said Mabuza.

He said this would enable government to respond promptly to issues raised by the communities.

Mabuza said his office will this year establish a call centre that will capture, process and respond to issues that communities raise.



Mpumalanga Premier, David "DD" Mabuza

## Department owes providers R730 million

NELSPRUIT

BY TSHWARELO ESENG MOGAKANE

Mpumalanga's education MEC has admitted that the department started its 2009/10 financial year owing service providers R730 million.

Reginah Mhaule made the admission while presenting her 2009/10 policy and budget speech at the provincial legislature in Nelspruit on Tuesday.

"We entered this financial year with accruals and commitments amounting to R292 million and R438 million respectively. This means that the department begins the financial year with reduced resources," she said.

Mhaule blamed the overwhelming debts on service providers who failed to submit their invoices on time, or at all.

She said the department could also not pay up because officials overspent R414 million paying

departmental employees.

"[This] then led to a number of suppliers not being paid on time. Funds meant for other programmes were used to pay salaries," she said.

Mhaule said the department would have to carry all unpaid debts into the current financial year.

She added that the department had introduced a six-step approach to dealing with its cash crisis, including shifting the department's focus to priority programmes and core activities, implementing cost curtailment measures, banning the filling of non-critical posts, implementing budget cuts, improving internal controls and risk management and employing a chief financial officer.

Mhaule said it was also important to mention that her department was receiving support from the provincial treasury to help with improving financial management capacity.

## Mpumalanga addresses matric result delays

NELSPRUIT

BY TSHWARELO ESENG MOGAKANE

Mpumalanga's education department will establish an examinations help desk and a script library to avoid a repeat of last year's delay in the publishing of matric results.

Department MEC, Reginah Mhaule, made the announcement while delivering her policy and budget speech in the provincial legislature in Nelspruit on Tuesday afternoon.

"We are improving communication with everyone involved. To this effect, the department is establishing a help desk and strengthening face-to-face interaction with schools," said Mhaule.

The help desk will allow school principals to contact the department directly to query result delays.

The introduction of a centralised script library will also facilitate the easy retrieval of scripts and marks sheets.

Mhaule said the measures were

important, considering Mpumalanga was one of the provinces that failed to issue all its matric results in 2008.

"This prompted the then minister of education, Naledi Pandor, to establish a task team to investigate the causes of the delays," she said.

The investigation found that the majority of the 701 delayed results from across the country occurred in Mpumalanga.

Mhaule said the delays were caused by a number of factors, including the introduction of a new curriculum and the problematic introduction of the integrated examination computer system.

Mhaule said the department had also appointed more examination managers who are expected to strengthen the department's management capacity before the 2009 matric exams. She added that the department would also look at establishing a data back-up system.

## Premier DD Mabuza and Benadie clash over corruption

NELSPRUIT, South Africa

By Sydney Masinga

The Democratic Alliance (DA) in Mpumalanga is refusing to support premier David "DD" Mabuza's proposed R196 million provincial budget because he has failed to deal with corruption in his government.

Provincial DA leader, Anthony Benadie, said Mabuza's pledge to deal decisively with fraud and corruption in the provincial administration was a slap in the face, considering what Benadie termed his "involvement in tender irregularities".

"The premier's credibility was drawn into question recently after he appointed Priscilla Nkwinika as director general in his office, even though the (province's) integrity unit recommended she be charged for fraud," said Benadie last week.

The integrity unit accused Nkwinika of awarding a multi-million rand tender to a construction company without authority from the bid evaluation committee.

It was also reported that Nkwinika made sure the premier's ex-wife received lucrative contracts from the provincial government.

"The fight against corruption has taken a serious blow in our province. The anti-fraud and corruption unit located in the office of the premier has become like a snail, slightly hard on the outside, soft and toothless on the inside," said Benadie.

Benadie further claimed that the premier used his position to prevent the unit from investigating certain irregular practices.

He said he would be asking legislature speaker, Jackson Mthembu, to launch an investigation into Nkwinika's appointment as director general, the way Mabuza handled the matter and

the awarding of contracts to his ex-wife.

Mabuza struck back and said his ex-wife is a citizen of the country and has the right to apply for tenders just like anyone else.

He refused to comment on the alleged tender irregularities, saying they were still under investigation.

Mabuza said he appointed two commissions to deal with the alleged procurement irregularities in the scholar transport scheme, as well as in the construction of the provincial archive building and the provincial disaster management centre.

# MEC MKASI SENDS STRONG ANTI-CORRUPTION MESSAGE



Dr Clifford Mkasi

*In an unprecedented move, the MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Dr Clifford Mkasi delivered what was arguably the strongest ever anti-corruption message to be delivered by a member of the Executive Council in Mpumalanga.*

The former department of Public Works recently hogged the media headlines on allegations of corruption prompting the MEC to dedicate almost a quarter of his speech to an anti-corruption message.

"We have undoubtedly broken the record for making the front page headlines in one of our daily publications five times in two weeks, all for wrong reasons. As an elected public

representative it therefore becomes my political and executive responsibility to account to this house and the public at large, on matters raised in the daily publication," said Mkasi.

Mkasi mentioned the steps taken by the Premier of Mpumalanga Province, David "DD" Mabuza to appoint a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the alleged irregularities in the construction of the Provincial Archives Building and the Provincial Disaster Management Centre, following reports that the prices had been inflated.

"The Commission has been instructed to investigate and report to [the] Honourable Premier [David] Mabuza on or before the 30 September 2009 and any person with information regarding the two projects is free to forward it to the Commission," said Mkasi.

Mkasi also undertook to make the findings of the report public on the investigation into alleged irregularities in the former department of

Public Works. The former Head of Department of Public Works, Priscilla Nkwinika has since been appointed to the Office of the Premier, however, Mkasi seem determined to expose any wrongdoing.

"I however, want to make an undertaking to this house in particular and the public at large that, as this has become a matter of public interest, we shall within the prescript of the law, communicate to the public all matters related to the final report and about any possible action we might take against any wrong doing," he said.

"Government remains more committed than ever in uprooting corruption and any corrupt tendencies. We will do so in a manner that is transparent, free and fair, affording all citizens the right to defend themselves. We do so because we are a democratic state and respect the rights of all citizens," he said.

## Mpumalanga to introduce full-time EPWP

Mpumalanga aims to introduce longer term Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) by providing incentives to government institutions which exceed their job creation targets.

The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport intends to introduce this radical change in the second phase of the EPWP. The most significant feature of the new-look EPWP2 is that not all work opportunities will be coupled with skills training.

Since its inception in 2004, Mpumalanga's EPWP has exceeded its target of creating 100 000 jobs by more than 7000.

During the current financial year, the government intends to create an additional 28 198 work opportunities, of which 8627 will be Full Time Equivalent jobs as part of its build up to the 2014 target in job creation.

"We further intend increasing work opportunities annually in order to contribute significantly to the national target of 4.5 million work opportunities by 2014. The provincial target for 2014 is to create 237 170 work opportunities of which 75 617 will be full time equivalent jobs," said MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Dr Clifford Mkasi last week.

Mpumalanga Premier, David "DD" Mabuza signed a protocol agreement with the Minister of Public Works, Geoff Doidge, committing Mpumalanga government and municipalities to the job creation targets.

## Mpumalanga to eradicate mud schools

The Mpumalanga Government has committed itself to eradicate mud and other unsuitable schools during the 2009/10 financial year. The commitment was made by the MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport during his policy and budget speech when he announced that his department has set aside R419 million for school projects for the 2009/2010 financial year.

"The eradication of the mud and other unsuitable structures programme at schools could not commence due to budgetary constraints in the 2008/2009 financial year. However, in 2009/2010 we will complete the implementation of 20 mud and other unsuitable structures to an amount of R29.8 million," he said.

Mkasi also said that the department will focus on completing 55

infrastructure projects dating back from 2004 to 2008. This is in addition to the 562 outstanding projects that the department completed in the 2008/2009 financial year.

The long awaited Mataffin's Cyril Clarke Secondary School will also commence this year. The students from the school were moved to a temporary facility to give way to the Mbombela Stadium which will host the 2010 FIFA world cup final next year.

"I am happy to announce that the designs for the Cyril Clarke Secondary School at Mataffin will commence in this financial year with the procurement processes starting in September 2009. The budget for construction has been set aside, allocated in two financial years, i.e. 2009/2010 and 2010/2011,"

Mkasi said.

Mkasi also announced the implementation of a new concept in school design at Magudu Primary School in Nkomazi. The new design will also be implemented in 16 other schools in Mpumalanga province.

"The new concept designs are designed in such a way that it moves away from the old "train type" structures and the provision of facilities in drips and drabs, but rather embraces a concept where a fully inclusive school is provided from the onset. A fully inclusive school includes the following facilities: classrooms, ablution facilities, an administration block, school hall, library, laboratory, computer centre, kitchen, sports facilities and a parking area for administrators," said Mkasi

## 2010 roadworks get more money

By Thobile Mlangeni

The Mpumalanga public works, roads and transport department will spend nearly R206 million to finish a crucial bypass in the host city before the 2010 Soccer World Cup.

Public works, roads and transport MEC, Dr Clifford Mkasi, said the department's total budget of nearly R2, 2 billion had to be streamlined in order to prioritise spending.

"We had cut out all unnecessary spending by government officials to ensure that we don't compromise service delivery. The Mbombela multi-modal infrastructure and the (N4 bypass) will be completed at a budget of R205 544 million," said Mkasi, delivering his budget speech last week.

Mkasi said other areas that would receive priority in the budget are the completion of a number of projects, including the Barberton-Bulembu, Lefiso-Marapyane, Sibange-Madadeni and the Manzini-Swalala roads.

A further R29 million had been set aside for designing seven projects, including the Piet Retief traffic control centre weigh bridge, the Mooiplaas to Ekulindeni road, the Ogies to Balmoral road and the Grootvlei to Balfour road.

Public and freight transport will receive nearly R516 million, while traffic management receives nearly R249 million.

Mkasi said traffic management efforts would be stepped up this year and that traffic officers would continue implementing their zero tolerance policy.

"We will ensure that traffic offenders receive no mercy," he said.

The department also set aside R4 million for bursaries for 167 prospective employees and officials.

Mkasi said a further R160 million had been budgeted for routine maintenance of roads in the province.

## Other projects

- 8 hospital facilities worth R570 million to be completed before the 2010 Soccer World Cup.
- The Disaster Management Centre to be completed before the World Cup as part of 2010 projects
- The recruitment for NYS III will commence in October 2009.
- Provincial Immovable Asset Register will be updated and consolidated before the end of the financial year.
- Phase 3 of the construction of the Samora Machel Memorial Heritage Site will be completed in the current financial year.
- A goal of 25% or more sub-contracting on all infrastructure projects is set for the 2009/10.

# At last, ANC Legislators flex their muscle

Members of the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature did the unexpected last week, when they gave the Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism near-impossible deadlines when it became clear that the department seemingly failed to comply with the rules and orders of the legislature.

During the Department's budget vote debate last Friday, MPL Thabelang Maabane presented a litany of shortcomings that characterise the department in the period leading up to the presentation of the policy and budget speech. These included failure to submit correct documents and failure to submit documents on time and that where such documents were submitted, they were fraught with errors.

The department was also instructed to resubmit its costed Implementation plans for consideration by the Legislature before the end of September 2009.

"The department must redo the costing of the Implementaiton Plan for the third quarter in Programme 2 and submit the re-worked portion on or before the 30th September 2009," said

Maabane.

Earlier this year, the Head of Department, Mandla Mazibuko, suspended almost the entire senior management of the department after they permitted employees to leave early to attend the burial of their colleague, the late Chief Financial Officer, George Msiza.

One senior manager who was fired by Mazibuko, Winnie Rambau, has since appealed against her dismissal in a case that is costing the department hundreds and thousands of rands.

Mazibuko himself has successfully evaded disciplinary action after he was found to have irregularly appointed a company R Kalidass to perform asset evaluation at the Bushbuckridge Office, costing the department R777 800 in February this year.

The Integrity Management Unit in the Office of the Premier recommended in June this year, that Mazibuko be charged with financial misconduct. If found guilty, he faces immediate dismissal.

Ziwaphi also exposed Mazibuko, after he awarded himself R140 000 a bursary to do a Master of Business Administration (MBA) course. He has

yet to be questioned on the above-mentioned charges.

Very often, the opposition parties such as the Democratic Alliance, have a field day in criticising the inefficiency of government officials, however, this time it seems the tide has changed. The impatience of the members of the ruling African National Congress was clearly visible, when the Legislature took 46 resolutions, the majority of which must be responded to before the end of September 2009.

"We were given a mandate by the people of Mpumalanga that together with them lead this province, and it is only because of that, that we must not fail them," said a visibly irritated Maabane.

MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, Jabulani Mahlangu, who inherited the department from Craig Padayachee, committed to respond to the resolutions, but not before reminding the sitting that responsible for sorry state of the department.

"I am glad the HOD is here, and I will personally follow-up on all the matters raised.



**Mandla Mazibuko has yet to explain why he irregularly appointed a company to perform asset evaluation in Bushbuckridge**

## Mpumalanga's Fourth casino licence shelved

NELSPRUIT

BY SYDNEY MASINGA

The Mpumalanga Gambling Board claims it has shelved the awarding of the fourth casino licence to save people from more financial hardship in the midst of the global economic recession.

Provincial department of economic development, environment and tourism spokesperson, Selvy Mohlala, said the decision was taken because the department didn't want to encourage more gambling in the province.

"The awarding the licence has been put on hold until further notice. We didn't want to put more strain on the people who are already being squeezed by the recession," said Mohlala.

The announcement was made in Nelspruit on Friday by MEC Jabu Mahlangu while presenting the department's R490 million budget speech.

Mohlala denied that the postponement

of the licence had anything to do with the fact that only one application was received and that the applicant didn't comply with the requirements.

The board extended the application deadline to March this year when it had only received one application by October, 2008.

The three existing casinos, Emnotweni Casino in Nelspruit, Graceland Hotel Casino & Country Club in Secunda and Champions Casino in Emalahleni (formerly Witbank), provide 1 150 jobs, draw more than a million visitors to the province annually and generate around R3 billion.

In 2006 the National Gambling Board allocated 40 casino licences in South Africa's nine provinces. Since then, 37 licences have been awarded, 35 to Casino Association of SA (Casa) members and two to non-Casa members. Currently there are 36 casinos operating in South Africa.

Three licences are still to be awarded, one in Limpopo, one in Mpumalanga and one in the Eastern Cape.



**MEC for Economic Development, Environment and Tourism Jabulani Mahlangu**

## Mpumalanga to tackle substance abuse to reduce crime

NELSPRUIT

BY SYDNEY MASINGA

The Mpumalanga government will spend millions of rands to tackle alcohol and drug abuse in an effort to reduce the level of crime in the province.

Provincial health and social development MEC, Dikeledi Mahlangu, said research had shown that substance abuse is a major cause of crime in the province. She said the province was in the final stages of developing a plan to combat drug and alcohol abuse.

"The cornerstone of the plan is preventive education, which will even limit the number of people considering trying substances that may be addictive and destructive. The plan will target mostly young people," said Mahlangu on Tuesday.

She said the plan would involve communities, the South African Police Services (SAPS), non-governmental organisations (NGO) and government.

She said the increased use of drugs was destroying young people's potential.

"The fact that a high number of people are willingly using cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana and cocaine adds tremendous pressures on society and limits our ability to progress," she said.

Mahlangu said she is also concerned that Mpumalanga is increasingly being used as a transit route by drug smugglers, making drugs more accessible.

"We require a concerted effort to



**Dikeledi Mahlangu - MEC for Health and Social Development**

fight the scourge of drug abuse in our communities. We can't have a future when more and more of our youth end up in prisons as a result of drug abuse," said Mahlangu.

She said while past efforts to fight substance abuse had focussed on the youth, the plan would also address abuse amongst adults.

"It is important to educate adults and bring them into the fold. They need to be able to identify youth who are involved in substance abuse and give them some form of counselling and support," she said.

# MEGA skeletons start rolling out of the cupboard

*Ziwaphi received a lengthy and fascinating media release from Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA) that was celebrating the dismissal of Petunia Morgan, the parastatal's Company Secretary, following a hearing that lasted 28 days.*

*While it is stated clearly in the media release that it was in response to articles published in the Sowetan and City Press, it was nonetheless circulated to various media houses in the province, including Ziwaphi.*

*This article explores whether the media release is based on "facts" as MEGA claims or it is just another desperate ploy to deflect attention from issues of substance to slander and outright defamation of some (within MEGA) for some to escape attention.*

As Ziwaphi, we'd like to sincerely thank MEC J.L. Mahlangu for stepping in and stopping the rout that has been taking place at MEGA. Officials in the Agency have been playing hide and seek with the media for far too long.

The Agency has personnel on payroll whose jobs entail supply of accurate information to the public they are supposed to be serving, the public to whom they owe their plum jobs and hefty salaries in this time of great unemployment and joblessness. However, these officials had decided that the public had no right to know what was happening in the organization.

The media, including yours truly, Ziwaphi, sent questions after questions in a bid to clear serious allegations which ranged from corruption to downright fraud but repeatedly MEGA chose not to respond.

Instead of answering simple questions they went on a drive to recruit image consultants who would work towards diverting the public eyes to thorny issues the media were raising.

A company was hired at exorbitant amounts to answer on behalf of MEGA 27 questions that Ziwaphi had been directed to send in writing by the CEO, Nosizwe Nokwe. To date none of the questions have been answered.

Through Samantha Beresford, the communicator in MEGA, Ziwaphi, surprisingly, received what is certainly the first salvo of image saving and pride salvaging spin doctored and calculated media releases.

MEGA, bitterly, complains that the media, Sowetan and City Press, have published articles without giving them a chance to tell their own side of the story. How cheeky! Of an organization that has without fail ignored questions that have been sent to them to give their side of the story? Ziwaphi had to resort to petitioning the MEC through an open letter to solicit a response from MEGA.

The first few paragraphs of MEGA's press release emphasizes that MEGA has zero tolerance to fraud and corruption. It trumpets that MEGA is an organization characterized by ethos of honesty and integrity. It also promises to provide accurate "facts", to "set the



MEC Jabulani Mahlangu

record straight", to "ensure accurate and balanced viewpoint." As Ziwaphi we were excited as we went through the first few paragraph but from then on the whole media release plunges into an anticlimax that is much stronger than the omnipotent force of gravity.

Ziwaphi will hasten to point out that none of the 27 questions served to MEGA over three months ago have been answered to date but MEGA selectively, chooses to address a disciplinary hearing matter of one of their employees, Petunia Morgan who had been suspended and subsequently released of her duties as Company Secretary.

MEGA claims that her charges were:

- She submitted fraudulent claims for travel expenses and for services, allegedly, rendered whilst she was on leave
- She signed a Master Rental Agreement contract without following due procurement procedures and that she had no authority to do so
- She put MEGA's name into disrepute

They further explain that she was subjected to a 28 day disciplinary hearing to answer to the charges and she displayed inability "to provide proof of her innocence." The Chairperson of hearing recommended that she be relieved of her duties with immediate effect.

By their own admission, MEGA has changed the principles of the legal system in the country, they haul people to hearings to give them a chance to provide proof of their innocence. What happened to "innocent until the contrary is proved?" MEGA has rewritten the laws of the country to read somewhat like this: "guilty as charged, until you prove your innocence." WHAT BALDERDASH! This proof of innocence principle is reason enough to rubbish

the findings and recommendations of the Chairperson of the Hearing because it is not based on principles of the laws of South Africa maybe in other laws people are guilty until they prove their innocence. The question is: how much money was spent for the 28 day kangaroo Hearing at MEGA?

On sexual harassment

MEGA, vehemently, deny claims of sexual harassment being reported to the CEO of MEGA, Nosizwe Nokwe by Morgan, however, Mr. P. Dexter, who was the Chairperson of the Board of MEGA confirmed that Morgan reported such allegations. In an email sent to Ziwaphi, he is even prepared to submit a sworn affidavit to the effect that the sexual harassment case was reported to both him and the CEO and that the CEO was supposed to deal with the matter. MEGA goes on to allege that Morgan brought the sexual harassment for the first time mid-way her Hearing. MEGA promises to take legal action against Morgan for defamation of character of innocent Board Members and staff.

We are left with two sets of truths in this matter: truth by Nokwe (CEO) and truth by P. Dexter (former Chair of the Board).

Contemptuous and criminal behavior

MEGA, claims that Morgan has arranged for two of MEGA employees to steal confidential documents from MEGA and that they have affidavits from the two culprits to corroborate their claim. They claim Morgan has "repeatedly brought a gun to work and made it a point that MEGA staff is aware she carries a gun, apparently as a form of intimidation." This is really bizarre and makes one wonder what zoo is the CEO running there.

MEGA, in their media release, claims they have policies and procedures to

deal with sexual harassment and surely they have procedures to bring to book an employee who is intent on criminal behavior. It would be interesting to get a report of how they dealt with Morgan for brandishing, repeatedly, a lethal weapon and threatening other workers. MEGA is paying a security company for safety services and Ziwaphi would like to know if the repeated incidents of gun totting are recorded.

If MEGA has not taken action against Morgan then they must admit that they were putting their employees to extreme danger and that constitute gross negligence on the part of management. If there is no formal record of these alleged claims and a record of a Hearing and sanction then it explains why there is no record of the sexual harassment in MEGA.

Beresford goes on to make a lot other allegations against Morgan including claims that she threatened everyone during the Hearing and boasted that she was connected in high places at the SAPS and that even if she were to be fired she would still be able to feed her family.

The allegations against Morgan are fascinating, to say the least, she is accused of criminal acts that would make the Mafia pale in comparison. She has the power to make members of staff steal confidential documents even when she is on suspension. She brandishes a gun at work and threaten everyone with alarming impunity by an organization that professes an "ethos of honesty and integrity." She has powers to overstep her authority and sign contractual agreements on behalf of MEGA, contracts which would be honoured for years by the organization. Where, the hell, was the CEO, CFO and COO when Morgan was doing all these transgressions? Why did MEGA wait all these years to act on these allegations?

Other accusations point to Morgan being very childish and boastful. She is alleged to have boasted that she can "still feed her family" even if she is fired. What a crime! She is alleged to claim she has connections in high places. That's fantastic, lady Al Capone changes to a childish "waffle" at the drop of a hat.

Ziwaphi thanks Beresford for the media release and shedding some light on the organizational culture that prevails at MEGA. This media release is quite a revelation and in their own record MEGA is providing accurate and balanced viewpoint. What a viewpoint!

Now MEGA that you have proved that you can respond to the media how about answering the questions Ziwaphi sent to you many moons ago. You chose to respond to National newspapers because you think they carry the propensity to cause certain individuals personal harm. This can be read to mean you do not care a hoot what the people of Mpumalanga think of your performance because these are the people that read, loyally, Ziwaphi's editions.

# Missing MK soldier's statue to be unveiled

BETHAL

TSHWARELO ESENG MOGAKANE  
& GOODENOUGH MASHEGO

*The statue of Umkhonto we Sizwe cadre Nokuthula Simelane, missing since apartheid police captured her in the early 80s, will be unveiled in Mpumalanga next month.*

Provincial government last week confirmed that the life-size statue will be erected on a platform between the Gert Sibande statue and the Nomoya Masilela museum in Bethal.

"The statue is in its fourth stage of production. They are now busy with the bronzing and the statue is scheduled to be erected by the end of Heritage Month," said culture, sport and recreation spokesperson, Sammy Mpatlanyane.

Mpatlanyane said the statue was part of a proposed R2,3 million cultural precinct that includes apartheid struggle hero



**The statue of Nokuthula Simelane, an Umkhonto we Sizwe cadre who went missing in the 1980s, will be unveiled in September.**

Gert Sibande's statue and monument, the Nomoya Masilela museum, a small amphitheatre, an area for indigenous games and stalls for crafters.

He said the unveiling of the statue is set to coincide with the annual Tjhalagani Kusephuka Tidzindzi Arts and Culture Festival.

Mpatlanyane said the precinct is set to draw heritage lovers to Bethal while also "immortalising liberation struggle heroes".

"Tourists will also get an opportunity to hear stories about how people went missing without a trace during apartheid," said Mpatlanyane.

Meanwhile, Simelane's younger sister, Thembi Nkadimeng, assisted by the Legal Resource Centre, is appealing the National Prosecuting Authority's decision not to pursue criminal charges against four former special branch policemen denied amnesty by the Truth and Reconciliation Amnesty

Commission for Simelane's torture and murder.

This is after failing to get the Pretoria high court to force authorities to arrest and bring William "Timol" Coetzee, Anton Pretorius, John Williams and Frederick Mong to justice for their role in Simelane's death.

The TRC never managed to solve the mystery around Simelane's disappearance, despite hearing evidence about how she was abducted by the Soweto Intelligence Unit on September 10, 1983, and tortured.

Two black police officers testified Simelane was never turned into a spy regardless of the torture, while the four white officers testified that she was turned and sent her back to Swaziland to spy. They claimed the ANC executed her when it was discovered she was a spy.

Simelane's whereabouts are still unknown.

## Rural Mpumalanga women want more skills

NELSPRUIT,

BY SIPHIWE NYATHI

*Women from rural areas in Mpumalanga want the government to capacitate them with the skills necessary to keep their self-help projects sustainable.*

This emerged at a special Women's Parliament held in the Mpumalanga legislature in Nelspruit on Friday which was attended by nearly 500 women from around the province who came to discuss opportunities for women during the 2010 Soccer World Cup and poverty eradication in the rural areas.

"The department of economic development, environment and tourism should collaborate with relevant stakeholders when implementing their programmes in rural areas and assist them with information in relation to their projects," said a representative of rural women from Nkomazi, Phumzile Msiyago.

She said government should consult communities in the rural areas before initiating projects that end up collapsing.

"If they do this, rural development will be successful," said Msiyago.

She added that government should also monitor projects that are given to beneficiaries, ensure that government officials don't exploit them and buy

the products that are produced by the projects.

She urged government to implement the suggestions made by the women and to update them on progress made at next year's Women's Parliament.

"We've had enough of talking about the same think month after month. This demotivates us women," added Msiyago.

Speaker of the legislature, Jackson Mthembu, said that women the country are faced with enormous challenges of poverty and underdevelopment brought on by apartheid and colonialism.

He also spoke about the emancipation of women in the country.

"Gender inequalities make women vulnerable to poverty. Measures to eradicate poverty must be developed and be aimed at ensuring sustainable livelihoods in our communities," said Mthembu.

He said that women earn 55% less than their male counterparts, shocking considering the country is 15 years into democracy.

"Women have inadequate access to the resources they need to become economically productive and independent, yet we know that women are very industrious and dynamic in the face of serious odds," he said.

## Metro-FM DJ addresses women in Mpumalanga

Metro-FM talkshow host Criselda Kananda was the guest speaker at a women's month event in Mpumalanga's capital on Friday.

Kananda, managing director of Positive Talk Services, addressed women at a La Femme Extra Ordinaire event titled 'Ordinary women doing extra-ordinary things'.

"The celebration aimed to encourage women to explore their own capabilities and encourage them to be women in a man's world," said member of the Ehlanzeni mayoral committee, Flomina Timba.

She said issues addressed on the day included health, business and women's rights as a human rights issue, violence against women and women achieving balance in the roles they play in society.

Hundreds of women from different areas across the province attended the celebration which was held at the Riverside Mall.

The event is being targeted at female councillors, the council's gender committee, disabled women and members of People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA).



**Metro-FM talkshow host Criselda Kananda addressed women at a special event held in Nelspruit on Friday.**

She said artists and small, micro and medium enterprise (SMMEs) had the opportunity to exhibit their work and network with their counterparts from other districts.

The event was organised by the Ehlanzeni district municipality in conjunction with the Women's Council.

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# GOVT COMMITS TO SETTling DEBTS BY MONTH-END

## NELSPRUIT

By Tshwarelo eseng Mogakane & Sydney Masinga

The Mpumalanga government says it will pay suppliers and service providers over R1 billion in outstanding invoices by the end of the month.

Economic development, environment and tourism MEC, Jabu Mahlangu, said the province was on track to honour all outstanding payments owed to small, micro and medium enterprises (SMMEs).

"We can confirm that all outstanding payments owed to SMMEs would have been settled before the end of this month. From now on, all service providers will be paid within 30 days as required by the law," said Mahlangu.

He added that any department

that deviated from the instruction "would be dealt with accordingly".

The outstanding invoices are for services rendered in the 2008/09 financial year.

By June this year, the provincial education department alone owed over 4 000 suppliers and service providers more than R200 million in unprocessed invoices.

In his state of the province address, premier David "DD" Mabuza said it was important for the provincial government to support SMMEs as they were part of government's plan to create jobs and advance broad-based black economic empowerment.

"We welcome the decision to settle debts as it commits government to working closer with SMMEs," said National African Federated Chamber of Commerce & Industry

(NAFCOC) Youth Mbombela deputy chairperson, Tlaisho Mashego.

"This will end the frustration faced by many business owners who have been disadvantaged by delayed payments from government," he added.

Mashego said currently, many entrepreneurs had to borrow money from relatives, friends and small loan companies to provide government with supplies and services.

"No sane entrepreneur would refuse to give a quotation when asked to by government. However, we often end up not making a profit because of loan interest or because we can't pay for services we have outsourced," he said.

Mashego said one of the reasons why Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) is failing is because of late

payments to SMMEs.

"Government needs to understand that SMMEs don't have capital reserves. This bureaucratic behaviour puts entrepreneurs out of business," he said.

Mashego said NAFCOC was also concerned about reports of entrepreneurs having to pay bribes to get contracts.

He said the organisation's goal this year was to mobilise young entrepreneurs to collectively lobby president Jacob Zuma to send auditors to Mpumalanga.

"Government is able to do what it does because we let them. You can't win an individual war, because you will get blacklisted. If we come together we can demand transparency," he said.

## THE EHLANZENI FAMILY



EHLANZENI  
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

UMJINDI  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

MBOMBELA  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

NKOMAZI  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

THABA CHEWU  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

BUSHBUCKRIDGE  
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



Re-discover life

# Women's Build campaign reaches impetus



MASUKU IN ACTION at the launch of Women's Build 2009 at Thekwane North

Up to 25 housing units have been built in Mpumalanga since the start of the Women's Build Campaign on 14 August 2009.

The Department of Human Settlements in Mpumalanga is hosting the National Women's Build for 2009. The campaign was launched by MEC for Human settlements in Mpumalanga, Madala Masuku on 14 August 2009 and it involves the construction of houses for vulnerable groups between the 14th to the 28th August 2009.

The campaign aims to construct a total of 20 000 houses by all provinces in commemoration of the estimated 20 000 women who took part

in the 1956 women's march against pass laws.

The campaign is celebrated annually and Mpumalanga's target for this year's campaign is the construction of 1956 housing units. Since the campaign started, Mpumalanga has built 25 housing units and it is expected to build 53 housing units when the campaign is officially closed on Friday the 28th August. National Minister for Human Settlements, Tokyo Sexwale is expected to officially close the activities at an event to be held at Thekwane North.

"Our society remains a diverse yet united. The modern-days of our country continue

to expose women to harsh realities like high crime rate, domestic violence, child abuse, HIV/AIDS, poverty etcetera. These are some of the social ills the country needs to address as a collective – not only this month, but throughout the year," said Masuku at the launch of the campaign.

"As stakeholders we need to join hands and deliver for our communities. I would like to commend the inputs and pledges made by our business partners and other role players (volunteers, business community) to have a vision of sheltering our communities. Let us start now and deliver the 53 houses," he said.

## Rural community gets mobile clinic

NELSPRUIT

By Sydney Masinga

A rural Mpumalanga community finally has access to primary health care with the donation of a mobile clinic by an American organisation.

Family Health International South Africa (FHISA), funded by the President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR) through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), handed the mobile clinic to Mpumalanga MEC for health, Dikeledi Mahlangu, on Saturday at Engelse Draai village near Badplaas.

Family Health International (FHI) spokesperson, Lungi Morrison, said FHI works closely with the South African department of health to deal with the lack of access to basic health care services experienced by many people, especially in rural communities.

"We have similar FHISA mobile clinics in Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, the provinces with the highest prevalence of HIV/Aids in the country and also where health needs are the greatest," said Morrison.

FHISA country director, Sonja Pilusa, said the handing over of the clinic affirms FHISA's commitment to the

rural communities.

"FHISA will continue to address the needs of the most vulnerable people in our society, in line with FHI's worldwide mission to improve lives," said Pilusa.

The mobile unit has facilities for family planning, HIV counselling and testing, TB screening, cervical cancer screening, sexually transmitted infection (STI) diagnosis, treatment and management, minor ailment diagnosis and referral and anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment.

"The mobile clinics serve home-based care project sites and the surrounding communities, with staff working closely with stakeholders such as school

principals, police, hospital and clinic staff, local authorities and church leaders," she said.

Pilusa said the mobile clinics are operated by professional nurses, health promoters and HIV counsellors managed by FHISA.

MEC Mahlangu said the clinic will be valuable to the residents, some of whom had to travel more than 15km to get to the nearest clinic.

"We are very thankful for the role of the private sector in the delivery of services. Government can't deliver everything on its own," she said.

# Mpumalanga jazz musos record very first album

NELSPRUIT

By Eric Mashaba

Well-known Mpumalanga jazz group Chessa has fulfilled their dream of recording their very own album.

Despite performing since 1985, when Chessa was originally formed by bass guitarist Serro Malumane, the band was never able to record an album.

"Our dream was to perform alongside great artists and record our own album. We began performing publicly and locals started to support us," said Malumane.

After starting the band, Malumane was joined by his younger brother Jinda, on vocals, and Clement Bhengu, on keyboard. The band grew from strength to strength, performing alongside top artists like Oliver Mtukudzi, Jimmy Dlodlu and Ringo Madlingozi.

He said millionaire businessman, traditional musician and songwriter, Robert Matana Gumede, also performed for Chessa.

"Gumede told us not to give up on our



Some of the Chessa members, from left, Gideon Nkosi (lead guitarist), Serro Malumane (bass guitar), Wandile Moya (keyboards) and Gibbs Nkosi, band manager.

dreams. We believe his input brought us to where we are today," said Malumane.

During Gumede's 45th birthday celebration held in Nelspruit recently,

Chessa shared the stage with Grammy-award winners and international top sellers, including Kenny Lattimore, HHP, Stimela, Mafikizolo, Hugh Masekela, Tsepo Tjola, Caiphus Semenya and Letta

Mbuli.

He said the band was also influenced by "Chikapa" Phiri, lead singer and founder of Stimela, who showed great interest in the band after seeing them perform live on stage.

Music promoter Bruce Kgapane, of Ziyaphenduka Promotions, said he is planning tours for the band to Johannesburg and Cape Town and wants to relocate the band to Gauteng where it will receive more recognition.

The album, Happy Children, consists of 13 tracks and features artists like Julio Mochekoa on lead guitar, Tito Ngwenyama and Paul Alexandra on drums, Abraham Lizanne Heldeberg on brass and Wandile Moya, a song writer who composed four tracks.

The rest of the tracks were composed and produced by band members Serro Malumane and Clement Bhengu. The album will be released later this year.

## Buses will transport Mpumalanga maidens to Swazi reed dance

MBABANE

By Lunga Masuku

All Mpumalanga maidens in waiting will be able to catch a free lift to Swaziland to attend the annual reed dance.

National Swaziland overseer, Prince Ntfonjeni Dlamini, said King Mswati III wanted all South African-based Swazi maidens living in Mpumalanga to attend the dance.

"Maidens from traditional centres like Msogwaba, Daantjie, Badplaas and Barberton will be collected by bus on Tuesday and transported to the royal palace," said Dlamini.

Dlamini said it was important that parents don't try and get disabled children onto the buses. He also urged chiefs to make sure the regiments accompanying the maidens stay out of their sleeping tents.

"I appeal to the chiefs to make sure that they send responsible regiments who will respect the maidens' right to privacy. In the past we have had cases of regiments forcing their way into the tents," said Dlamini.

Imbali regiment leader, Nothando Nhlengethwa, said the maidens are expected to arrive at the palace on Tuesday so that they can cut reeds along the banks of the Mbuluzana and Bhamsakhe rivers on Wednesday. He said this year's reed dance will take place on August 31.

Nhlengethwa said the maidens will have to register when they arrive on Tuesday in Ludzidzini and that they will spend two nights in the veld, some at schools and others in tents.

She said August 31 was declared a national holiday so that businesses could prepare themselves to welcome tourists.

## Novel looks at men who deliberately infect women with HIV

By Tshwarelo eseng Mogakane

*Mpumalanga author Kgebetli Moele's second novel looks into the dark world of men who purposefully have unprotected sex with women knowing they are HIV positive.*

Moele's latest novel, The Book of the Dead, was written at the same time as his first novel, Room 207, which was released three years ago.

"I was anxiously awaiting the release of this novel, which takes the public on a merry-go-round of loneliness, desperation and the fear of death," said Moele, on Wednesday.

Moele's novel details the life of Khutso, a boy who grows up in Masakeng village in Bushbuckridge and becomes

a young professional, husband and father.

The strong bond between Khutso and his son alienates his wife, Pretty, who loses interest in her beautiful house and career and turns to another man for comfort.

The drama unfolds when Pretty contracts HIV and, filled with grief and despair, commits suicide, leaving her husband infected with the disease.

Faced with life as an HIV-positive single parent, Khutso decides to leave his son with his family and embark on a monstrous campaign to infect other women.

He lists the names of potential victims in a little black book and starts luring

women into his world of darkness.

"The inspiration of this story came from people that I knew personally, men who would deliberately sweep women off their feet, only to put them six feet under," said Moele.

He said many HIV-positive people fear dying alone and see "taking someone along with them" as the only way out.

Moele said he didn't write the novel to warn anyone about HIV/Aids, only to tell people that there are men out there with "little black books".

The Book of the Dead was launched on August 18 at Exclusive Books in Rosebank Mall.

## Mpumalanga government buys into music business

NELSPRUIT, South Africa

By Tshwarelo eseng Mogakane

Mpumalanga's provincial government has spent R500 000 recording six local albums, including hip hop and kwaito music.

The provincial department of culture, sport and recreation's head of performing arts, Mandla Mabuza, said the albums had already been recorded and were being finalised in Nelspruit.

"Six groups have been in the studio since June this year. They all laid down vocals on catchy beats that will put Mpumalanga arts on the map for years to come," said Mabuza on Thursday.

He said the department had sponsored the recording of the

albums following the Tjhalalani Kusephuka Tidzindzi arts and culture festival that took place in October last year.

The competition was held in the form of auditions organised in all 18 municipalities in the province, where groups were invited to perform their songs before a panel of adjudicators.

"We ended up with 30 musical groups from all three regions in Mpumalanga," he said.

The finals were held in Bethal and two groups selected from each region, namely Gert Sibande, Nkangala and Ehlanzeni.

Winners included hip hop collective Blank Page, kwaito outfit Legit, Afro-pop sensation Truza, African jazz band Dikwa, Maskandi

trailblazers Iqhuga Liphilile na Majongisi and gospel choir Divine Magic.

The department's manager of cultural affairs, Dr Mafika Lubisi, said government's responsibility was to ensure that programmes like the Tjhalalani festival produce long lasting value.

"Running a competition where artists just win a trophy and go back home doesn't benefit the province. We want to give artists a platform to launch what could become a career," he said.

Mafika said the festival will happen again next year and that the department will continue looking at ways of helping artists market and distribute their music.

# The 2010 world cup countdown has begun

By Mbekezeli Mbuli

The 2010 Senior Communications manager at the office of the Premier, Janine Julies believes that the province is getting readier by the minute to be a successful host of the 2010 Soccer World Cup.

With less than 290 days to the eagerly anticipated 2010 Soccer spectacle, Julies is adamant that Mpumalanga is all set for the biggest soccer stage in the globe.

“I honestly believe that the whole province is ready to welcome the world and stand up as a successful host,” said Julies during the 300 days countdown held last week at Thulamahashe.

She said that the 2010 showcase is not only going to benefit the sporting fraternity but the Tourism industry, local businesses and economy.

“We believe that the 2010 World Cup is not only about soccer so people should not be just one sided about it but grab every opportunities that come with this historic event,” she said.

“I believe that our people have heard the call and are now ready to be part and benefit from this biggest Soccer showcase in the universe and I believe that our government and the private sector are also ready,” Julies said.

During his budget speech, the Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza said that the province is working hard to ensure that it meets its obligation in terms of the FIFA guarantees.

“The 2010 World Cup provides opportunities for economic development, as well as increasing tourism in the province. We believe that we are on track to deliver on this project,” said Mabuza.

The province hosted three different road shows last week at Sakwela (Emakhazeni Municipality), Thandukukhanya (Mkhondo) and Thulamahashe (Bushbuckridge) where the official FIFA mascot Zakumi made another appearance and proved to be a hit with children.



The kids' favourite, Zakumi

## Ligwalagwala FM rewards women



NELSPRUIT

By Bongekile Mhlanga

A Mpumalanga radio station had decided to carry on celebrating Women's Day for the rest of the month.

Nelspruit-based LigwalagwalaFM will be rewarding women with prizes they can win by simply sharing their stories.

“LigwalagwalaFM plans to make women winners this month,” said the station's promotions and publicity officer, Christinah Mazibuko.

The show will be presented by Lungile Mhango between 10am and noon every Wednesday until the end of August and will address issues that affect women.

Women who have been the victims of crime will be invited into the studio and be rewarded for their courage.

“The women will talk about their experiences as victims of rape and abuse. This will help other women who've been in the same situation,” said Mazibuko.

Women listeners will be able to call in and share their understanding of what being a woman means to them.

“Two callers will go head-to-head and will receive votes from the listeners,” said Mazibuko.

The winners will receive a variety of prizes, including microwaves and CD hampers.

On August 28, the station will be treating two women from the Greater Nelspruit Rape Intervention Project to a meal at Detroit Spur in the Riverside Mall.

The women will enjoy the meal along with LigwalagwalaFM DJs and actress and singer, Relebogile “Elle” Tisane.

“We will bring hope to these women and celebrate their strength,” said Mazibuko.