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11

*She died at the hands of apartheid agents*



12

*Film star in the making*



12

*Bongo - women are here*

**FLOOD WARNING**  
as more rain is forecasted for Mpumalanga

2

**SUSPECT GOES ON TRIAL FOR MURDER OF PUDEMO LEADER**

2

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS WASTES R4 MILLION**

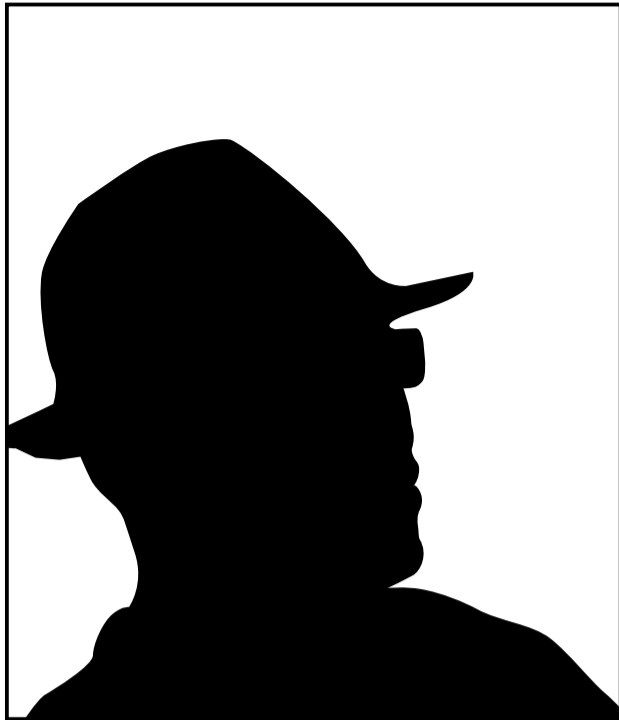
3

## IN THIS EDITION

- UNIVERSITY shocker • 3
- FOCUS on World Aids Day • 4



**CULTURE AND ARTS**  
• BACK PAGES



**By Comrade Phinda Mzala is on leave**



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# Alleged murderer of Swazi activist to go on trial

BY THABISILE KHOZA

MBOMBELA

*The trial against an Mpumalanga man who confessed to killing the deputy president of Swaziland's People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo) party will start on Monday.*

Former police reservist Dumisane Maduna (31) of KaNyamazane near Mbombela was arrested on October 29 last year in Nelspruit prison while in custody for an unrelated case.

"His trial will run for five days in the Nelspruit circuit of the Pretoria High Court," said Mpumalanga police spokesperson Captain Leonard Hlathi.

Maduna was arrested on charges of murder and rape after Dr Gabriel Thandokuhle Mkhumane (48) was shot execution-style on April 2 last year. Mkhumane's 18-year-old mistress was raped.

Maduna was tracked down when police traced the young woman's

cellphone, which had been stolen during the attack.

He was arrested at the Nelspruit prison where he was being held on charges of attempting to murder his mother-in-law.

Local publicist for Pudemo Siphasha Dlamini said the organisation was convinced that Mkhumane was assassinated and that the rape and robbery were an attempt to disguise the hit as a straightforward crime.

The spokesperson for the Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN), Lucky Lukhele, is also convinced that Mkhumane was killed as a political intervention.

Mkhumane was a Swazi revolutionary opposed to the current absolute monarchy headed by King Mswati III. He had been living in exile for 24 years since 1984, in Mozambique, Cuba and South Africa.

He was living in White River and worked as a paediatrician at Themba Hospital for eight years

before he was killed.

Mkhumane and his mistress were chatting in his car, which was parked outside the girl's parent's house, when they were attacked at about 9:45pm.

According to the charge sheet, Mkhumane was forced into the boot of the car. The couple was driven to Entokozweni dam near KaNyamazane where the young woman was raped and robbed of her cellphone.

Mkhumane was then taken out of the boot and shot in the forehead and the side of his head.

The woman was forced back in the car and driven around for about four hours before they stopped at an ATM in KaNyamazane to withdraw money from Mkhumane's bank account.

The woman took the chance to escape to a nearby house for help.

Mkhumane is survived by his Cuban wife, Soraida, and three children who are younger than eight.

## Mpumalanga police warn against con artists' scams

BY THABISILE KHOZA

MPUMALANGA

*Mpumalanga police have warned tourists and shoppers to be vigilant against con artists who increase their activities during the festive season.*

The spokesperson for Mpumalanga police, Captain Leonard Hlathi, said con artists were targeting people outside banks, supermarkets, clothing stores and money-lending companies.

"They look for easy victims who are carrying money and rob them or draw them in with scams," said Hlathi.

In a recent incident in Mhluzi near Middelburg, a 38-year-old man from Hendrina was robbed of R5 600 immediately after he had withdrawn the money from a bank in town.

"As he walked out of the bank, he was approached by a man carrying a transparent plastic bag with R100 notes in it," he said. "He did not

know the money was fake."

The man told the victim he would share the money with him and lured him to a car parked nearby.

"They got into the car in which another man was waiting and drove off to a river in Mhluzi where they said they would share the cash with him," said Hlathi.

Once the trio reached the river, another man appeared from the bush and identified himself as a policeman.

"The 'policeman' claimed that the three had stolen the cash in town and said he needed to take all of them to the local police station to lay a charge," said Hlathi.

The victim refused to hand over his money, after which the three suspects tied him up. However, they were disturbed by passers-by as they were trying to put him into the boot of the car.

The victim managed to escape and went to Mhluzi Police Station to report the matter.

"Meanwhile, the suspects crashed

their car into a Nissan Almera and a taxi and it rolled several times. It came to a stop a few metres from the police station," Hlathi said.

A 35-year-old man from KwaThema in Gauteng died on the scene, a 37-year-old man from Mbalenhle in Mpumalanga was hospitalised and a 40-year-old man from Jeppeshtown in Johannesburg was arrested on the scene.

The man who was hospitalised was discharged on Tuesday and appeared with his alleged accomplice in the Mhluzi Magistrate's Court on Wednesday.

They were not asked to plead and were remanded in custody until December 7 when they will apply for bail.

"This is one of many scams by con artists, so we warn the community to remember that if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is," Hlathi said.

He said people should not carry large sums of money and must try to walk in groups to avoid such incidents.

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# Mpumalanga flood warning

BY SIPHIWE NYATHI

MBOMBELA

*Mpumalanga's MEC for cooperative governance and traditional affairs, Norman Mokoena, will meet with mayors and disaster management teams from various municipalities after heavy rains fell in the area recently.*

They will discuss their preparation for possible floods on Thursday (yesterday).

"Weather predictions have indicated that the province will be receiving some heavy rains for the next week as well," said Mokoena, adding that many dams in the province were already 100% full.

"We urge people living in low areas and next to flood lines to be extremely cautious. They must move away from river banks and avoid crossing flooding

rivers and overflowing bridges," he said.

Rivers of concern include the Inkomati River at the Swaziland border and Komatipoort, Crocodile River at Malalane, Kaapriver in Kaapmuiden, Sabie River at Sabie, Steenkoolspruit in Kriel and the entire Olifants River.

Municipalities that have been placed on alert include Steve Tshwete, Dr JS Moroka, Emalahleni, Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge, Mbombela, Govan Mbeki and Pixely Ka Seme.

Dams that are already 100% full include Inyaka, Maguga, Nooitgedacht and Vygeboom in the Inkomati catchment area, and Bronkhorstpruit, Buffelskloof, Klaserie, Loskop, Rust De Winter and Tonteldoos dams in the Olifants catchment area.

[The outcome of the meeting was not known at the time of going to press.]



**MEC for Co-operative Governance, Norman Mokoena warns that some of the dams in the province are already 100% full.**

# Public Works department misspends R4-million

BY TSHWARELO ESENG MOGAKANE

MBOMBELA

*An Mpumalanga government department that must recover R61-million lost to corrupt officials has misspent a further R4-million.*

The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport claims it spent the money "wrongly" while preparing for the construction of the provincial archive in Mbombela.

"The report of the auditor-general indicated that the department could not provide detailed information on the amount of R4 116 721 that was spent on the planning of the archive building,"

said provincial chairperson of the Select Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa), Fish Mahlalela.

"The department says it spent the money on a site that was earmarked to house the archive building, but later discovered that it had been rezoned for an access road," he said.

Mahlalela, an ANC member who is known for grilling government officials on corruption, said Scopa could not accept the department's explanation of the missing money.

"The committee was not satisfied that the department spent the money on a wrong site. We strongly feel that they misled the Department

of Culture, Sport and Recreation (who commissioned the building) by identifying a site which was earmarked for rezoning," Mahlalela said.

But it seems the department will get away with it because Scopa only warned that it should ensure "proper planning" for future projects.

Last month, a commission of inquiry exposed corruption of R61-million in projects to build the provincial archive and a disaster management centre in Mpumalanga.

The Engelbrecht Commission, which was appointed to investigate irregularities in the department, found that there was severe flouting of supply

chain management processes in the awarding of the tenders.

Consultants overpriced the construction of the disaster management centre by at least R19-million, and the cost of the archive building went from R93-million to R148-million.

Chaired by Mpumalanga regional court president Naomi Engelbrecht, the commission recommended that the provincial government recover at least R61-million from those implicated.

Premier David Mabuza said consultants and government officials were involved in the corruption and fraud and would be punished.

# Shock over establishment of Mpumalanga university

BY MBEKEZELI MBULI

EMALAHLENI

*Even though it is now official that the province will finally have its own university after years of waiting, but the big question now is, how long is the wait going to take for it to come into being.*

The Minister of higher Education and Learning, Blade Ndimande made it official last week that a University will soon be established in the province. But he, himself could not give a straight answer as to when the University will come into being.

"It is official that the national government will provide this province with its very own University, but we must bear in mind that this project will require huge efforts and a number of aspects to look into of which some may not be resolved in a short space of time," said Ndimande.

The Minister was in the province, at



**ROBERT Gumede not impressed with the time-frame for the establishment of Mpumalanga's first university**

Emalahleni for a consultative imbizo for a way forward towards establishing the University. In attendance, was local business guru, Robert Gumede,

who had early in the year donated a cool million rand for the research on the establishment of the university in Mpumalanga.

Gumede, who delightedly applauded the government's move for considering establishing a university in the province, could not hide his frustrations over the projected time frame.

"I am over the moon that we [Mpumalanga province] are finally going to have our own university, however, I am a little worried that the process is taking too long. We need to work on a specific time frame, we have been waiting for too long for this to happen and we can't wait much longer now," said Gumede.

Asked where he would prefer the University be situated, Gumede simply said, "in Mpumalanga province". This was after a heated debate had sparked inside Emalahleni Hall over the desired neutral venue for the University to be situated.

This university is set to make history by becoming the first ever University to be established under the democratic government since 1994.



# Too late to prosecute Mbeki, says doctor fired for giving ARVs

BY SYDNEY MASINGA

MBOMBELA

*The doctor who was fired for giving ARVs to rape victims said it was too late to charge Thabo Mbeki for genocide.*

Dr Malcolm Naude was responding to the call by the Young Communist League that Mbeki and "his Aids denialists" be prosecuted for failure to provide thousands of South African Aids sufferers with life-saving ARVs.

According to Naude, these denialists include people such as former health minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang and former Mpumalanga health MEC Sibongile Manana.

"I do think Manana has a lot to answer for, and so does Mbeki and Tshabalala-Msimang. Their actions have had terrible consequences for many, many people, but what good would prosecuting them do? Will it bring back our dead? Will it strengthen our resolve to fight this dreaded disease?" asked Naude.

"I have often wondered what I would say to these people, but now I am just sad for them. They will have to answer

to a higher power, and I do not know how they will explain themselves," he said.

As health MEC between 2001 and 2004, Manana refused to provide ARVs to women who have been raped, and persecuted doctors who did so.

She also kicked out an NGO, the Greater Nelspruit Rape Intervention Project, which ran a rape crisis centre at Rob Ferreira Hospital and funded the ARV prescriptions.

Naude was fired by Manana in 2001 because he continued to prescribe ARVs to women who had been raped. He took Manana and the Mpumalanga Department of Health to the Braamfontein Labour Court for unfair and discriminatory dismissal, arguing that he was following his conscience as a doctor and politicians should not interfere with doctors' professional judgment.

In October last year, the court found that Naude had been unfairly dismissed and ordered the department to pay him R100 000.

Naude said the judgment meant that the court recognised the personal and professional sacrifices he had made.

"I was very pleased with the Labour Court ruling. For me, it was an affirmation that there are institutions that still have a sense of moral righteousness, and that people still care that we were doing the right thing. It meant that doing the right thing did not always mean being politically correct because, in 2001, the politically correct thing was morally and ethically incorrect, maybe even evil," added Naude.

On October 30 this year, Naude received the South African Medical Association's award for The Spirit of Medicine for his contribution to the fight against HIV and Aids.

"I was greatly honoured and humbled to receive such a wonderful recognition from my peers. I hope that this inspires my younger colleagues, new to the profession, to rise to the great heights of service this profession offers.

It is a great thing to be able to serve your community," he said.

Naude, who has practised in Australia since last year, said Mbeki's administration had been offered a great opportunity to become a world leader in the fight against HIV/Aids but it had "dropped the ball".

"I am saddened by all those poor patients we could have saved from contracting HIV, the children ... It is a heavy burden to carry, one that has changed many lives, doctors and patients alike. We cannot undo it," he said.

The co-ordinator of the Treatment Action Campaign in Mpumalanga, Bheki Khoza, said Manana had failed to use common sense, which led to the HIV disaster the province is facing.

"She did not think about the consequences of her actions regarding HIV when

she was health MEC. She failed dismally because she was trying to impress her boss [Mbeki]," said Khoza.

In a press conference earlier this month, minister of health Aaron Motsoaledi also blamed Manana for the increase in the number of HIV-positive babies in Mpumalanga.

"I don't think we would have been here if we had approached the problem in a different way. Our attitude to HIV and Aids has put us where we are," said Motsoaledi.

## Stop blaming and start fighting AIDS, says Health MEC - Mahlangu

BY SYDNEY MASINGA

SECUNDA

*The health MEC in Mpumalanga, Dikeledi Mahlangu, says there is no time to play the blame game in dealing with HIV/Aids.*

In a statement ahead of World Aids Day on December 1, Mahlangu said seeking blame was a luxury South Africa could ill afford.

"Our people are dying and we are all affected by Aids, so it would be too time consuming to talk about who did what," Mahlangu said on Friday.

Presumably, she was referring to the Young Communist League's call for Thabo Mbeki to be tried for genocide.

"It is time for action, and that action start with all of us

individually. The most significant step we all need to take is to test and know our status. It offers each of us the chance to live longer and healthier and make informed decisions about our lives," the MEC said

The Mpumalanga government will observe World Aids Day at Embalenhle Stadium near Secunda on Tuesday.

"We will use the day to extend the call for united action in pursuit of preventing further new infections," Mahlangu said.

South Africa's minister of health, Aaron Motsoaledi, released the results of the 2009 National Antenatal Sentinel HIV and Syphilis Prevalence survey in October.

It shows that nationally the prevalence rate among pregnant women has stabilised at about 29% of women between the age of

15 and 49 who attended antenatal clinics.

Mahlangu said it was disturbing that the results indicated that Mpumalanga had the second-highest prevalence rate at 35.5%, after Kwazulu-Natal's 37.4%.

"This is also a year-on-year increase. In 2006 we were at 32.1% and in 2007 we were at 34.6%, increasing to 35.5% in 2008," she said.

According to the survey, the Ehlanzeni district in the Lowveld is the only area to show a decrease on the prevalence rate - from 36.1% in 2007 to 34.9% in 2008.

The rate in the Gert Sibande district has increased from 38.9% in 2006 to 40.5% in 2008, while Nkangala district's rate has increased from 26.8% in 2006 to 31.8% in 2008.



MEC Dikeledi Mahlangu

# Langa Ride: a taxi industry revolution or evolution?

BY ZIWAPHI CORRESPONDENT

*As we went to print, the taxi industry was doing sophisticated stuff. Building a brand in a peaceful business environment.*

LangaRide is a catchy brand name. But I would never have associated myself with comfort and safety in minibus taxis if our team did not attend the Fifa Confederation Cup. Langaride is related to another catchy brand name, the Gauride project.

You might have seen minibus taxis on the N4 highway with this brand name, but never understood what they were. What is funny for me is that the leader of the Langaride campaign, Mr Irvin Phenyane, has cruised from managing aeroplanes and airports to managing the revolution of the taxi industry in particular and public transport in general. Before they spread elsewhere, we asked begged to ask the question, what this Langaride is.

Langaride is a program, a registered trademark related and managed by a subsidiary of South African Transport Solutions, the company that ran the Gauride project. According to the Managing Director of SATS N4, Mr Irvin Phenyane, "Gauride was originally free transport for general spectators in Gauteng to get to Confederations Cup 2009 matches at Joburg and Tshwane".

Phenyane also proudly explains that "through Gauride, we showed everyone that the taxi industry can deliver a successful 100%-taxi-and- 100%- black operation. Now the world and South Africa knows that there is absolutely no contradiction between black and success. Moreso, through SATS operating the Gauride, many of our friends, comrades and colleagues now concede that there is no contradiction between the taxi industry success and Fifa's precision and detail."

Gauride was also offering free transport from Vaal, East Rand, Pretoria and Mogale City to Ellis Park for matches being played in Joburg. During the Confederations Cup, SATS also managed "iTransie 2 Ellis Park," ferrying fans from specific park and ride zones around Joburg to Ellis Park. Our team was there and it is such a pity that, Gauride was not extended to take Gauteng ticket holders to matches taking place in Bloemfontein and Rustenburg. The Gauteng provincial government contracted more than 3 000 taxis with a few buses adding to the taxi fleet. Being South African, and prejudiced against the idea of a taxi, we never understood what Mr Mpho Mashinini, the SATS Board Chairperson, meant of Gauride by saying, "we select the best, safe and reliable. We go an extra mile to get you there safe."

We asked Mr Irvin Phenyane about how their operation will link the various malls, fan parks and park and rides. He explains that there is various consortia working on various details for 2010. We understand that the taxi industry is going to finalise their detailed involvement around January. We are curious to know because Mbombela and Mpumalanga is not known to have foresight in budgeting. The Ziwaphi team that attended the Confed Cup games experienced first hand how the two transport hubs Southgate Mall, in the south of the city, and the Coca-Cola Dome, in the north, were further used to link Johannesburg and Pretoria as Gauride park and rides. Some 3 000 taxi drivers were trained to take part in Gauride. This training included sessions on customer care, first aid and directing people to places of interest across the province.

Ziwaphi acknowledges that Mbombela has many problems around the management of the 2010 World Cup. On October 9th 2009, Minister of Transport Sibusiso Ndebele seriously noted that the FIFA organising committee has pointed out certain national shortcomings with regard to transport, which became apparent during the Confederations Cup. Thanks to the Gauride initiative that we were not so embarrassed. The CEO of the SATS Group Mr Nkululeko Buthelezi,

originally from Mpumalanga, concedes that when SATS presented a business plan for involvement of the taxi industry in Confederations Cup and 2010 World Cup, "some authorities still perceived taxis as dangerous and never took the proposals serious."

SATS has surely brought evolutionary change to the transport landscape. The taxi industry was previously involved in large events but at a very small scale. But it is comforting that other key transport priorities highlighted by the Minister include the engagement with the taxi industry to ensure that a new platform is created so that the taxi industry can participate more effectively in the mainstream economy. According to their official website, Johannesburg-based, South African Transport Solutions (SATS) is a public transport solutions provider with a wide range of skills, expertise and experience in the planning, development and implementation of transport solutions geared at delivering world class, secured and quality public transport. However, SATS N4 is their subsidiary, headed by Phenyane, a local business man who had roles of business development and project management at the KMI Airport; and even a stint as a militant politician.

We now understand why SATS is in the forefront of the taxi industry revolution. Or is it taxi evolution?

## Taxi Industry ready for 2010



Public Invitation  
to Langa Ride  
Launch Soccer  
Spectacular

After the successful management of the 2009 Confederations Cup transportation of general spectators, through 4000 GauRide Taxis ... SATS and Government partners are launching another related taxi industry initiative. You are invited to the launch of the LangaRide Spectator Shuttle Services: A 2010 Legacy Project.

Date : 04 December 2009  
Venue : Nelspruit Rugby Stadium, Mpumalanga  
Time : 11h00 - 16h00  
Format : Short Formal Launch & Entertainment

4 Regional Soccer Teams from the Mpumalanga Taxi Industry and Mbombela Municipality will entertain you in short soccer games to celebrate The FIFA Draw later that day.



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# PATIENTS TOLD 'WRONG' INFO ON ARVS, AIDS GRANTS

BY ERIC MASHABA

MBOMBELA

*Stocks of medicine for HIV/Aids patients that had reportedly ran out at a KaNyamazane clinic near Mbombela will be available from December again.*

Worried patients approached African Eye News last week, claiming they were told the clinic had run out of antiretroviral drugs.

But Susan Shabangu, an HIV-positive health worker at the clinic, said the clinic had enough ARVs.

"The Aids patients were told the wrong information. They must remain calm because the clinic had run out of Abacavir sulfate, not ARVs. The sulphate only ran short in November and it will be available again from

Wednesday," Shabangu said.

She said in the meantime patients with a high CD4 cell count were given AZT, while those whose count was low were given stavudine.

"They function the same as the sulphate - I know because I use them myself - so people must not panic about the sulphate shortage," she said.

Treatment Action Campaign provincial spokesperson Veli Khoza said most provinces did not use Abacavir sulphate any longer.

"The government stopped it a long time ago because it is an expensive drug when compared to ARVs. We don't know why Mpumalanga continues to use it, but they ran out because of a lack of funds," he said.

Abacavir sulphate, also known as Ziagen, helps to block a protein that

HIV needs to replicate itself, thus disrupting its reproductive cycle.

Themba Mhlongo (39), who was diagnosed with HIV more than five years ago, was relieved to hear about the ARV stock but complained about what he called "Aids grants".

"The nurses said the grants we get from the Department of Social Services to buy food will be cancelled. They said the reason was that the department has too little money to carry on with the programme. How are we going to support ourselves and our families? Most people suffering from Aids are unemployed," Mhlongo said.

Shabangu said patients did not seem to understand the conditions on which the grant is provided.

"We told them that, in the past, the grant was paid for a year. The

department has changed the system and the grant is now only available for a period of nine months," Shabangu said.

She said Aids patients wanted the grant to last for the rest of their lives, which the department could not afford.

Patients whose CD4 count was below 200 qualify for the grant, which is R1 100 per month. Those with higher counts are disqualified because they are able to work and earn a living.

Dumi Nkozi, ARVs manager from the provincial Department of Health and Social Services, said patients only received grants on instruction from their doctors.

"If the patient's condition has improved or if he can do some work and earn a living, they cancel the grant. Aids patients must get the right information on how the grants are paid," he added.

## We don't want strippers here, say Tonga police

BY THABISILE KHOZA

KOMATIPOORT,

*Mpumalanga police have closed down a building in a deep rural area that was earmarked to become a strip club.*

Tonga police in the rural Nkomazi area outside Komatipoort have forced the owner of the building, which was still under construction in Sibayeni village, to stop its construction after they received a tipoff that stripping shows would be hosted there next month.

"We closed the building when we heard that it was built as a club for strip shows this Christmas," said Tonga police spokesperson Sergeant Mzwandile Nyambi.

Nyambi said the police started investigating after concerned women

informed the police about the purpose of the building.

The police went to the site to confront the owner about the allegations.

"We asked the owner to stop building after he confessed that he was about to open it for December," said Nyambi.

"He told the police that he wanted to attract more customers to his tavern for better profits this holiday season. But strip shows is not allowed in our policing areas," he added.

Nyambi said the police believed a strip club would increase crimes such as rape and assault on women.

"We wanted to prevent the danger before it occurred because we know that, at the end of the day, these strippers would be victims of crime," he said.



Sergeant Mzwandile Nyambi

Nyambi said there were rumours that many attractive women had already registered their names to perform strip shows. "I repeat again: no strip shows will be allowed in our policing areas," said Nyambi.

Several young women in Naas Plaza said they wanted a strip club in the area because it would provide employment.

"We are very disappointed to hear that strip show won't be allowed, because it was supposed to be a good opportunity for us to showcase our beautiful bodies to men," said a woman who did not want to be identified.

Naas township has one of the highest rates of rape and assault cases in the Tonga policing area.

Other women were glad to hear the news because their men would not be tempted by strippers.

"A big thumbs up to Tonga police," said one woman. "They have done a very good job."

## Don't withdraw abuse charges - MEC says it's a waste of police time

BY THABISILE KHOZA

KOMATIPOORT

*Mpumalanga's acting MEC for community safety, security and liaison has appealed to the community to ensure that reported cases of women and children went to court.*

Vusi Shongwe was addressing hundreds of community members who attended the launch of the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children at Mangweni Stadium in

Nkomazi on Wednesday.

"Our mothers and sisters who come to police stations to open cases relating to abuse should work with the police in ensuring that they are successfully concluded," said Shongwe.

He warned people to use government resources prudently.

"You are not helping the police when you open a case today and tomorrow you come back and withdraw it. It is a waste of police time and resources," said Shongwe. "When we talk about confronting this crime head-on, we

refer to a solid partnership with the victims too."

Shongwe added that the provincial government was concerned about recent crime statistics that showed Mpumalanga had recorded more than 4 500 cases of sexual abuse between April 2008 and March this year.

"Despite having a world-renowned constitution and a legislative overhaul that safeguard women's rights, we still have among our communities an unacceptably high level of violence against women and children," he said.

The newly appointed Mpumalanga police chief, Commissioner Thulani Ntobela, pleaded with the community to become involved in fighting abuse.

"We need you to participate in sector policing so that you can alert us when you witness incidents of domestic violence because police officers cannot be on every street corner," said Ntobela.

He said 24% of sexual abuse cases involved people between the ages of one and 20, while teenagers between 13 and 17 years old made up an alarming 32% of statistics.

# Politics of evil, lies and propaganda

COMRADE GARRY NEVARI LIFTS THE LID ON THE NEW TENDENCIES THAT THREATEN THE EXISTENCE OF THE ANC IN MPUMALANGA

*Over the years since 1912, the African National Congress (ANC) has existed solely to unite African people against the barbaric and inhuman system of colonialism imposed by the western settlers in the African continent. This clarion call necessitated that Africans in particular, and blacks in general, must unite behind the vision and mission of the oldest movement of the people under the glorious banner: "Unity of Purpose".*

These, among other things, act as a uniting factor within the broader membership and supporters at large, even on the most trying of times with regard to serious ideological and fundamental differences within the organisation..

When JT Gumede, the erstwhile President of the ANC, visited the Soviet Union in 1929, he proclaimed "having seen the new Jerusalem". In his view, he wanted to change the ideological outlook of the ANC unto the socialist ideology as practiced in the Soviet Union. At that time, this socialist view did not enjoy a popular support within the ANC; hence his ousting in the 1930 divisive annual congress of the ANC. However, this event-driven division could not distract the long term vision of the ANC – "Unity of Purpose".

Even after the proclamation of the 1950 Suppression of Communism Act that subsequently led to the banning of the SACP (1950) and the ANC (1960), the ANC remained steadfast in the quest to liberate the people of South Africa as a minimum programme. The banning of the ANC led to deep frustration and distress within the membership and leadership of the ANC to a point where a crisis conference was called in Morogoro in 1969.

Though divisive, Morogoro did not lose the strategic objective of what the ANC stands for, to unite all the people of Africa, irrespective of race, ethnicity, religion, class and gender. Morogoro provided a strategic path to achieve this noble objective.

Why this background? It is important to clarify the historical foundation that sustained this glorious movement even in the most trying times in the revolution. It is also befitting to make a reflection of the past in order to gauge the present so that the path to the future can be paved. The central question will always be around whether we still have the unity of purpose or ours is a revolution gone wrong?

Prior 1994, the leadership role in the organisation came with a responsibility. It was not an easy thing for a member

*The ANC has welcome National Party agents within its ranks. Some of them are even leading higher structures.*

to accept leadership responsibility, because to lead the ANC involved sacrifice, detention, long-term jail sentence and the worst side of it included death. However, post 1994, leadership in the ANC comes with prestige, popularity and wealth or connection to state coffers. This is what divided the glorious movement because there is no more a distinction between leadership and those who should follow. We want to term this "an elevation of masses and lobbyists into leadership".

It is worth clarifying that what sustained any organisation in the world are its tradition, culture and history. And those who are elevated to leadership should master these three important aspects – a phenomenon lacking in the ANC, ANCYL and ANCWL today.

The case study should be the Ehlanzeni Regional Executive Committee as elected in Matsulu in 2007 September which became a victim of a novice, poor political decision making in the organisation. In the event where the two lower structures are at loggerheads, in this case the REC and the PEC, the NEC becomes the ultimate intervener and its decision is binding to all lower structures. Those who sit in the NEC should be agents, provocateur and defenders of such a decision – an aspect that has been missing in the PEC of the ANCYL in Mpumalanga.

The REC has kept it on record that the disbandment of the Ehlanzeni REC of the Youth League symbolised a culture of a master and a servant approach that seemed to characterise the politics of the movement, particularly in Mpumalanga. In the master-servant relations, the Youth League is used as a pawn to achieve the ambitions of some of our senior leadership in the ANC [the so-called principals], to an extent that the decision to disband the REC was taken - not by the youth league - but by some within the ANC who viewed the existence of the REC as an obstruction towards "Endumbeni" (government complex), though the decision was processed in the PEC of the Youth League.

The master-servant relationship is a pure return to slavery; and the REC will not be party to such patronising, mind-colonising relationship. The launching of sub-regional structures fell short of proper organisational and constitutional processes. This is because those who serve the master are not expected to "lose" conferences; thus can do all they can to produce positive results as expected by the master. These sub-regional structures should be deemed unconstitutional and do not deserve the blessing of the real

membership of the ANC.

The NEC of the ANCYL, in its 08 October 2008 ordinary meeting, resolved to set aside the disbandment of the Ehlanzeni REC. Instead, those who were tasked to communicate such a decision chose to perpetuate confusion in the structures for their myopic factional purposes. For whatever reason, the decision was never communicated to the REC. This delayed the REC to pursue its constitutional duty for the past 12 months or more.

Key amongst their lies and propaganda was their insinuation to the effect that members of the REC are surreptitiously affiliated to Cope, that the REC is not reinstated in defiance of the decision of the NEC. This propaganda was advocated by those who are new in the organisation, who despite that, were elevated to leadership positions without understanding the basic organisational processes. These individuals instilled a new culture in the organisation, which some of our new recruits see these tendencies as a normal organisational practice as long as it is done by the leadership (master).

These individuals confuse the decision and the subsequent processes. The decision of the NEC on the reinstatement of the REC is a principled decision based on both constitutionality and constitutional obligations. It has nothing to do with the conduct of individual REC members, that is, the processes solely rested on the REC to conclude.

In almost all REC post-reinstatement meetings, the issue of accusations of Cope was central to our discussion.

The REC thus noted that members join the organisation individually and not collectively and therefore, the REC cannot be collectively accused of being Cope. The REC started its process of probing those allegations against some of its members, resulting in the establishment of a team of two which was tasked with verifying the validity of the said accusations.

The team of two found two accusations on the members of the REC. On the first case, the REC took a principled decision that this member should, as per the constitution, rejoin in a branch and not in the REC. However, the REC further resolved that such a case must be referred to the PEC as such a member was welcomed back to the organisation through the office of the Provincial Secretary of the ANCYL during the time when the REC was in "political recess".

On the second case, the REC could not find substantial evidence on the member involved; thus resolving that such was rumour-mongering and propaganda aimed at destroying the member and seeking to brand the entire REC as illegitimate.

## Close down cheating private schools - YCL

The Young Communist League (YCL) of South Africa in Mpumalanga calls upon the Department of education in Mpumalanga to close all the private schools that have been involved in the grade 12 exam scandal, it is disgusting to see the so-called best schools engaging themselves into these activities every year.

The poor children from the working class families have worked very hard without adequate teaching and studying material to prepare for their exams but each and every year their future to a better life is always blocked by the privileged kids who got money to buy everything including their future.

Every year the MP GRADE 12 results are under scrutiny and these usually affect the poor kids, who lose out their sponsors and bursaries, and that the defeat the mission of the South African government of skills development and poverty eradication. We as the YCL believe that through education we can break the cycle of poverty and empowering young people to be independent, responsible citizen, innovative and employable.

In the last few years we have witnessed the misconduct by the

corporate world in South Africa from corruption to price fixing, as Private education has become an industry than a noble service therefore the private schools are not immune from this practices.

The YCL believes that those problems surrounding the Grade 12 exams would not be overcome until we have one system of education where by everyone compete in a fair, equal and similar environment. Education was part of the five priorities which made us to campaign and vote for the ANC, therefore as step forward to the realisation of the free and quality education for all. The YCL in Mpumalanga demand the following:

1. The MEC for education in Mpumalanga and the Minister of basic education to close all the private schools which been involved in this scandal.
2. All the officials who were involved to be dismissed and be banned to work with anything concerning education.
3. The government must stop to subsidise private schools.

SOCIALISM IN OUR LIFE TIME

Maviyo Ndinisa • YCL Spokesperson in Mpumalanga

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

# Learners stranded - govt can't answer

SCHOLAR TRANSPORT GROUND TO A HALT AS DEPARTMENTS POINT FINGERS AT EACH OTHER

BY ERIC MASHABA

MASHISHING

By Eric Mashaba

*Two Mpumalanga departments are unable - or unwilling - to say who had won a tender to transport school children in Marambane outside Mashishing (formerly Lydenburg).*

The children have been stranded without transport since schools reopened after the July holidays and parents have been forced to fork out money from their own pockets to hire bakkies to get their children to Boschfontein High School.

The Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport and the Department of Education referred questions about the tender to each other.

"We are unable to trace the winner of the tender because our department took over the provision of scholar transport from the Department of Education from August 1," said spokesperson for the public works department David Nkambule.

"With regards to the initial awarding of

tenders, all enquiries should be directed to the Department of Education as it was their responsibility to provide scholar transport for learners at the time," he said.

Spokesperson for the Department of Education, Jasper Zwane, said he could not disclose who had won the Marambane tender.

"All the documents regarding scholar transport and the winners of the tenders were handed over to the Department of Roads and Transport in August. We don't have any documentation that reveals who had won the Marambane tender," Zwane said.

Nkambule said his department had handed the matter over to Mpumalanga premier David Mabuza, who has appointed a commission of inquiry into the matter.

"The matter now rests with the premier's office and they are currently dealing with the investigation to discover who won this tender," he said.

Markos Nkosi, chairman of the Black Bus Owners' Association, which is also a provider of scholar transport in the province, said the tender for the

Mashishing area was awarded last year to the Green Forest bus company run by Wanda Xaba and his wife, Phumzile.

"I know that Xaba and his wife won this tender. Xaba subcontracted another operator, Khisane Shongwe, to run the project for him," said Nkosi.

Shongwe confirmed he had been subcontracted by the Xaba couple. He said he had never been paid since he began transporting pupils in June last year.

"The Xabas owe me more than R300 000. I stopped the operation in June this year after they failed to pay me," Shongwe said.

He said after he stopped, Xaba requested Nkosi to proceed with the project.

"I thought his buses were broken and decided to help. I ran the project until the end of July and demanded R48 000 as payment, but Xaba did not pay me, so I was forced to stop," said Nkosi.

The school circuit manager in Mashishing, Mandrew Nyambi, said he only knew two bus operators who operate in the area, Shongwe and Nkosi.

"I have not met Xaba and his wife and I don't know them as service providers. I also don't know who won this tender," Nyambi said.

Nkosi said the association wanted the matter resolved.

"We don't want the same problem next year. The pupils are the ones suffering. Why are the two departments hiding the information? We know everything," said Nkosi.

Another bus operator, who claimed to be employed by the Xabas and did not want to be named, said Phumzile fronted the tender application but her husband was actually running the operation.

He said he and four other drivers have also not been paid by the couple.

"I was transporting pupils for them in the Barberton region and they have not paid my salary of R5 400 for a month and a half worth of work. I don't know if they paid the other drivers, but I still have not received my salary," said the driver.

When asked for comment, Xaba said: "I don't know anything about the matter, and I have no comment."

## Star student wins R20 000 but can't pay fees

BY MBEKEZELI MBULI

ERMELO

*Despite having winning this year's edition of the Premier's Service Excellence and Youth Awards and pocketing R 20 000 cash, but still, that money isn't enough to pay for his University fees.*

The 2008 Matric star student from a deep rural village in the Nkomazi municipality, Crosby Sandile Nkosi's chances of finishing his Engineering degree at Wits University look bleak. Nkosi, a first year Aeronautical engineering student at Wits University could drop out any time due to insufficient funds.

"I am happy that I won this year's Premier's Awards but the money is just not enough to cater for my studies," said

Nkosi who obtained a 100% pass rate during last year's matric examination.

The 19 year old Nkosi, who comes from a very poor family background, said he struggled for about five months to get the required registration fee for his studies at the University.

"I did not only struggle with getting registration money but I also experienced a lot of difficulties, such as transport and accommodation problems, but some business people from around the Nkomazi region opened their hearts and helped me register for my studies," he said.

Nkosi, just like most youth from the rural communities didn't know where to seek financial help after completing his matric and as a result lost out on bursaries and other financial assistance.



Premier DD Mabuza with the winner Crosby Sandile Nkosi

## Exam theft suspects out on bail

BY THOBILE MLANGENI

MBOMBELA

*Nine Mpumalanga suspects arrested in connection with leaked matric exam papers appeared in court on Tuesday.*

They include six pupils, one education official, one prison warder who also

owns an Internet Café, and a man working at Clicks store in Mbombela.

All the suspects were arrested on Saturday and Sunday.

The suspects were not asked to plead to charges of theft when they appeared before the Nelspruit Magistrate's Court.

When asked if they would like to apply for Legal Aid representatives to defend

them, eight of the suspects told the court that they would conduct their own defence.

The 24-year official from the department said he had his own lawyer.

The six students are between 18 and 22 years old and all are from the Barberton area.

State prosecutor Brian Mogale told

Magistrate Anna-Marie van der Merwe that all the students should pay R1 000 bail and the warder R5 000, to which she agreed. They were all released.

The case was postponed for further investigation to January 11, when all 13 suspects, including a teacher and three students arrested last month, will appear in court together.

# Premier gives house to destitute family

BY MBEKEZELI MBULI

EKULINDENI - KROOMDRAAI

*A destitute family received an early Christmas gift, which will certainly go a long way.*

Head of the family, Dennis Mbalati who is physically challenged was on cloud nine as he was presented with his dream Christmas gift, a house, which was donated by the Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza.

Mbalati, who has been on the waiting list for an RDP house for over six years but never received one said he will cherish his gift for eternity.

"I have never dreamt that I would wake up one day to find myself owning my own decent house, but God sent me people with good hearts such as the Premier who came here and promised to build a house for me and to my surprise he fulfilled his promise and therefore, I am forever grateful to these good Samaritans. I will treasure this gift for as long as I live," he said.

**'I never dreamt I w'd own my own decent house,' resident**

Mbalati previously owned a one roomed shack, which he shared with his wife and three children. The shack eventually collapsed due to a heavy storm in that area and they were forced to seek refuge from the neighbours and relatives.

The Mpumalanga Premier, Mabuza first came to know of Mbalati's plight during

a service delivery community meeting at Ekulindeni back in July and promised to help.

"The Premier was genuinely touched by this heartbreaking story and pledged to sponsor for provision of a decent roof for the Mbalati family and today he has delivered," said Sello Shai, Senior Parliamentary officer to the Premier.

Shai, went on to say that the Premier acknowledges all the other sponsors who played a vital role towards the construction of the house.



MGB Chief Executive Officer: Mr. Bheki Mlambo



Botanical Gardens, Nelspruit



Emnotweni Sun, Nelspruit



Highveld Mall, eMalahleni



Stay Easy Hotel, eMalahleni



Golf Course, Secunda

## Something to smile about

Notwithstanding the most severe global economic downturn since the 1930's, our well-regulated gambling industry in the Mpumalanga Province has witnessed exceptional performance all round. The gambling industry in the province continues to create world-class tourism attractions that draw visitors and investors to the province.

Our licencees are currently spending in excess of R200 million to expand and refurbish their gambling establishments; adding a further 200 hotel beds, new cinemas, and other entertainment facilities to the province. The upgrades have created hundreds of new jobs and lucrative sub-contracts for local businesses, on top of the thousands of jobs already supported by the industry.

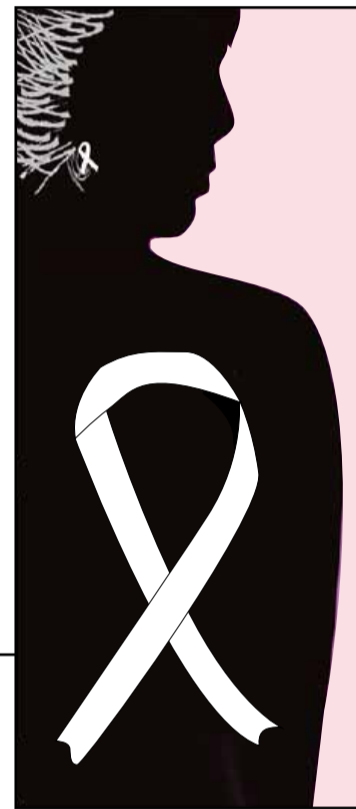
The investments into Mpumalanga's tourism industry prove that gambling is good for the province – but only if tightly regulated to protect the young, the poor and the vulnerable. As we celebrate the growth of our industry, it is equally important that we appreciate the other spin-offs of a well-regulated gambling industry. The gambling industry has become a significant player in the provincial economy, a stimulus for the tourism sector, a contributor to the welfare of communities within our borders, a creator of employment opportunities and small-medium businesses, especially the previously disadvantaged, as well as becoming a provider of world-class recreational facilities in the province.

There has to be a positive balance between the social costs and benefits of the existence of the legalized gambling industry. In this regard, the Mpumalanga Gambling Board will ensure that, while the industry expands, the potential negative impact associated with this form of entertainment is minimised through aggressive awareness and educational campaigns about responsible gambling, and the ills associated with gambling, particularly amongst the most vulnerable members of our communities.



pioneers in gambling regulation

Mpumalanga Gambling Board supports responsible gambling.  
Gambling is restricted to people 18 years and older. Winners know when to stop.  
National Responsible Gambling Tollfree counselling line 0800 006 008.



### ABOUT 16 DAYS

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is an international campaign that started in 1991 to mobilise the society and raise awareness on women and child abuse.

Annually, the campaign starts on the International Day Against Violence Against Women (25th November) and ends on International Human Rights Day (10 December) to link violence against women and human rights to emphasise that violence against women is a violation of human rights.



## Politics Of Evil, Lies And Propaganda

LIFTING THE LID ON THE NEW TENDENCIES WITHIN THE ANC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

By the way, it is not the duty of the REC [like other leaders of the ANC are doing] to recruit for Cope. So, it is not our responsibility to unleash sniffer-dogs to witch-hunt our members by spreading unfounded allegations against them. The ANC has managed to welcome National Party agents within its ranks, some of whom are even leading ANC structures that are far higher than branches. In fact, the duty of the REC is to recruit back those who, through misguided anger, defected to Cope.

The REC views such malicious and destructive rumour-mongering as a centrally engineered and coordinated activity by the forces of anti-progress some of whom took joy in the instability and disunity of the structures and membership of the organisation. These individuals cannot survive in a politically stable environment. In fact, they cannot pass through-the-eye-of-the-needle means test. In our view, such counter-revolutionary tendencies are more dangerous than those of open opposition like Cope and DA, and are meant to subvert our movement from within.

### Conclusion

Political imbecility and dwarfness have led to some individuals finding it correct to label a collective

constitutional structure of our glorious youth movement as just another organisation which happens to be an opposition to that particular structure. This is the highest form of illogical, brain-drained and unprocedural conclusion.

It is on this basis that what characterised our deep divisions in the organisation is lack of unity and cohesion on what becomes our primary objective in the current epoch. Unlike during the dark era of our struggle, some among us take joy in weakening and dislodging our movement from its core constituency for cheap political expediency and quick access to state resources without carrying the interest of our masses at heart.

The reinstatement of the REC means a continuation of the Matsulu Congress resolutions and meeting the targets as set by the NEC. The REC will strive to build a strong ANCYL founded on the firm ideological theory of our movement through mass political education, memorial lectures and symposiums. We are steadfast in our view that we have always been on the correct path and shall not allow any distraction from convening a political congress in 2010.

GARRY NEVARI IS ACTING AS REGIONAL CHAIR OF THE ANCYL IN EHLANZENI REGION.

## MEC visits families of bus accident victims

By Mbekezeli Mbuli

KWAMHLANGA

*The MEC for the department of Public Works, Road and Transport, Dr Clifford Mkasi, visited the families of the victims of the recent Moloto bus accident on Wednesday. He was accompanied by the Executive Mayor of Thembisile Hani Local Municipality, Vusi Nkosi.*

His visit comes shortly after the Moloto road, now dubbed, 'road of death', claimed yet more lives this past week, killing a total of ten people and leaving 22 with serious injuries.

The ten people who died on the scene were reportedly burnt beyond recognition after the bus they were traveling in collided with a truck on the R573 Moloto road.

Mkasi spent the entire day visiting the affected families at their homes to offer condolences.

He labeled the accident as an eye opener for his department which will be launching the festive season's road safety campaign next week Friday.

"We view this accident as an eye opener and we will now increase our patrol teams to ensure that all motorists follow and obey the rules of the road,"

he told Ziwaphe.

He added that his department would have to beef up the number of traffic officers to ensure that rules are obeyed and adhered to.

"We need to work together with the communities and motorists to create a safer environment for all," went on the MEC.

On the day of the accident the victims were returning from work in Gauteng province and never made it home as the two vehicles collided.

Moloto road, now infamous for claiming more lives than any other roads in the province has just undergone a total make over with the hope to reduce road carnages.

In 2007, one of the country's most powerful churches, ZCC conducted mass prayers in Moloto road in an effort to seek for divine intervention, however, more lives continue to perish.

It is estimated that road accidents cost the government about R 40 billion each year.

Mkasi will join mourners at a mass funeral over the weekend to be held at the Mabusabesala showgrounds in Siyabuswa.



**dpwrt**

Department:  
Public Works, Roads and Transport  
MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT



**MEC: Dr Clifford Mkasi**

### LAUNCH OF 2009 FESTIVE SEASON PROGRAMME

The MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Dr Clifford Mkasi invites the community within the Nkomazi Municipality to join him when he officially launches the 2009 Festive Season Programme. The MEC is expected to highlight the plight of road accidents and encourage road users to obey the rules of the road. The event will be held as follows:

**Venue:** Ka-Mhlushwa Ground (Open Ground next to Peter's Hardware)

**Date:** 11 December 2009 (Friday)

**Time:** 10:00

**Buses are available to ferry communities to the venue (Contact Mr. Mountain Tau at 071 605 5215)**



# Umkhonto weSizwe heroine's statue unveiled in Bethal

Tshwarelo eseng Mogokane & Goodenough Mashego

BETHAL

*The statue of Umkhonto weSizwe cadre Nokuthula Simelane, who went missing after the apartheid police captured her in the early '80s, was unveiled in Mpumalanga on Saturday.*

The MEC for culture, sport and recreation, Vusi Shongwe, told residents that the statue marked her return.

"Nokuthula is an unsung heroine in the struggle for liberation. She held true to her bold beliefs and protected her comrades to the bitterest of ends," he said. "This is an official recognition of the pain and suffering the Simelane family has endured on this issue. Through this statue, Nokuthula has finally come back home."

Shongwe labelled Simelane a "heroine who opened the way for democracy" along with Mpumalanga liberation struggle heroes such as Gert Sibande, Solomon Mahlangu and Barney Molokoane.

He said it was hard not knowing what had happened to Simelane, who was never found after being tortured by apartheid police.

"Until today, her family and the whole country have never found closure on her mysterious disappearance in the

brutal hands of the apartheid regime," he said.

Shongwe urged young people to have goals that would contribute to South Africa's development, just like Simelane did.

"She finally took up arms in defence of her people and to reclaim this land. She did this when it was still unfashionable to be a member of the ANC. This should indeed serve as an example to all of us to shape the future of this country," he said.

Simelane, a former University of Swaziland student, has been missing since September 1983 after she was abducted from Johannesburg's Carlton Hotel by the police for being a member of Umkhonto weSizwe.

"Nokuthula's remains have still not been found. Her mother, Ernestina, buried her late husband, Matthew, knowing that he had gone to his grave unable to bury his first-born daughter," Shongwe said.

Spokesperson for the department Setshaba Mphahlele said the statue formed part of the town's cultural precinct, which also includes a small amphitheatre, an area for playing indigenous games and stalls for crafters.

He said the precinct would draw heritage and culture lovers to Bethal while also creating an opportunity for tourists to hear stories about local anti-apartheid heroes.



## Family wants NPA to arrest and prosecute apartheid police

Simelane's younger sister, Thembi Nkadimeng, assisted by the Legal Resources Centre, is appealing the National Prosecuting Authority's decision not to pursue criminal charges against four former special branch policemen who were denied amnesty for torture by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The family asked the Pretoria High Court last year to force the NPA to arrest William "Timol" Coetzee, Anton Pretorius, John Williams and Frederick Mong 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 driven to police living quarters in Norwood, where she was tortured before being moved to a farm in the Thabazimbi area.

Testimony was heard about how she was

tortured throughout her long detention there but differed about what finally happened to her.

Two black police officers testified that Simelane was never turned into a spy regardless of the torture, while the four white police officers testified that she had agreed to work for the police.

They insisted she had been sent to Swaziland and claimed the ANC executed her when it was discovered she was a spy.

Their version was not accepted by the commission and their application for amnesty in connection with her torture was denied, although it was granted for her abduction, kidnapping and assault.

The commission viewed torture, as opposed to assault, as a systematic way of gathering information from detainees in which the infliction of pain was administered on both the body and mind of a victim.

## DEVELOPING OUR TONGUES

### SIKHATSI SIPHELILE

Sikhatsi siphelile sokuvuka ubuke lilanga  
liphuma lishona

Busika bengcile solomane wakhala  
letimathonsi

Imvula ine koma solo uhleli ndzawonye

Sikhatsi siphelile sokutikhalela wean

\*\*\*

Vuka usukume, unike tandla umsebenti wato

Sukuma muntfu lomusha, sukuma  
sidzandzane

Uvule emehlo, uvule ingcondvo

Ukhaliphise ingcondvo ngelwati

Likusasa likuwe, impilo ikuwe

\*\*\*

Nyakata nalabanyakatako

Lishone udle kudla kwemphefumulo

Fundza nalabafundzako

Landzela njenge mntfwana alandzela unina

Sikhatsi siphelile sokubuka batali emehlweni

By Princess Malope



*Princess is a local poet who is committed to the promotion of vernacular languages*

# Actress sets sights on making her own movie in Mpumalanga

BY BONGEKILE MHLANGA

BUSHBUCKRIDGE

*First-time film director Azaria Molobela will be returning to her hometown to shoot her debut movie, which she has also written.*

The movie, "Oile Mma Tsela" (the one who loves travelling is gone), will be filmed in the sprawling rural settlement of Acornhoek in northern Mpumalanga next year, as well as in Klaserie, Hoedspruit, Soweto and even Nigeria.

It tells the story of a South African woman who marries a Nigerian and dies in that country while visiting her in-laws. Her body then becomes part of a drug-smuggling operation.

"I'm happy and nervous at the same time that something I've been working on for a very long time is about to happen," said Molobela (26), who is an actor, dancer and scriptwriter.

She has worked with well-known playwright Mpumelelo Paul Grootboom in two highly successful plays, "Cards" and "Relativity: Township Stories", and travelled the world while performing in the latter.

Her movie is based on the true-



**Actress, dancer and scriptwriter Azaria Molobela will produce and direct her debut movie in her rural village of Acornhoek.**

life stories of women she knows in Acornhoek.

"These stories happened to people I know and lived with," she said.

Molobela has not yet chosen the cast but says most of them will be people with whom she has worked before.

They include the likes of Siphwe Nkosi, who plays the role of Chirwali in the SABC 1 TV sit-com "Emzini we zinsizwa".

"I worked with him in a film that was shot in Brakpan called "Sawetan", which was aired on Soweto TV. I really liked his work," said Molobela.

Nkosi, in turn, has only praise for the bubbly Molobela.

"I don't know her private life but, professionally, she is one of those people I can call a perfectionist," said Nkosi.

"I worked with her in a theatre play called "My Next Ex-Wife". The play was staged in the State Theatre in Pretoria and she was brilliant," said Nkosi.

Molobela's mother, Girly Mapheule, who still lives in Acornhoek, said she would have liked her daughter to have done better academically.

"That one is too lazy to read books. She dropped out of university a few weeks after enrolling," said Mapheule.

"But I'm glad she got the job at the State Theatre," she said.

Molobela had enrolled at the Tshwane University of Technology's Nelspruit Campus to study tourism,

but dropped out because she felt her passion was to be found elsewhere. She then went to Pretoria to look for fame. She got an audition for the youth series Backstage on e.tv, and ended up as an extra.

She left before her contract expired, however, and auditioned at the State Theatre for "Cards".

"And as they say, the rest is history," said Molobela.

"Cards" went on to have a sell-out season at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg and Paul Grootboom won the Standard Bank Young Artist Award and also the Naledi Award for Best Director for Cards.

Molobela's mother still pinches herself when her daughter is interviewed on TV.

"I couldn't believe it the first time I saw her. I cried with joy," she said.

Molobela would like her movie to make it to the big screen, but that will depend on whether she can get a big enough budget.

She has already approached on potentially big sponsor.

"I don't want to divulge the name of the sponsor yet because we are still finalising the finer details," she said.

## Mpumalanga babes go for the bongos

BY THOBILE MLANGENI

MBOMBELA

*Mpumalanga ladies are getting ready to enjoy the festive season in style - and bongo dreads are a must!*

According to Doris Ngwenyama (38), owner of Bongo Mantombazane Salon in Tekwane outside Mbombela, bongo locks reflect pure African beauty and are easy to maintain.

Ngwenyama's salon, which she runs from her garage, specialises in bongo dreads.

"I love doing bongos because natural hair is perfect for the style," she said. "They also don't require expensive equipment. All I need is hair dye, shampoo and electric dryers."

Ngwenyama started by twisting her own hair many years ago. It attracted the attention of many women who asked her do their hair as well.

In 2003, she decided to start her own salon to fight looming poverty.

"I was unemployed but now I am a

proud businesswoman with many clients," Ngwenyama said.

According to Ngwenyama, bongos are perfect for both formal and casual occasions.

"And, you have nice, clean hair all day long. You don't need to worry about the grease or oils that go with so many hairstyles, which often make women's collars dirty, especially in our hot summer," she added.

Ngwenyama's clients include women young and old, as well as some men. They come from all around Mbombela as well as Bushbuckridge, Barberton, Tzaneen, Ermelo and even as far as Johannesburg.

"I love meeting my clients on the streets. I always give them tips on how to maintain their bongos in perfect condition," said Ngwenyama.

According to client S'bongile Nkosi (26), bongos reflect her personality and she loves them because they are so easily manageable.

"Once I wake up in morning, I take a



**BEAUTIFUL: Yvonne Mbhele, S'bongile Nkosi and Nosipho Masilela, with Doris Ngwenyama looking on.**

bath and dress without worrying about having to fix a style as I used to before getting my bongos," said Nkosi.

Ngwenyama's dream is to see

Mpumalanga's ladies in bongos ushering the soccer teams into the Mbombela Stadium during the 2010 World Cup.