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TAXI WAR STARTS

SAMMY: KILLED LIKE A BEAST



Mpumalanga MEC for culture, sports and recreation Vusi Shongwe, left, and Mbombela municipal mayor Lassy Chiwayo at the memorial service.

BY SYDNEY MASINGA

MBOMBELA

Mpumalanga's MEC for culture, sports and recreation, Vusi Shongwe, says his department's head of communication and spokesperson was killed by the same "scavengers" who assassinated Mbombela's speaker last year.

Samuel "Sammy" Mpatlanyane (45) was shot to death by unknown gunmen in his house in Stonehenge, Nelspruit, last Friday.

The murder carries eerie echoes of that of speaker Jimmy Mohlala,

who was shot and killed in front of his son outside his house in KaNyamazane on January 4 last year.

Speaking after a memorial service for Mpatlanyane in Nelspruit on Tuesday, an emotional Shongwe accused the same assassins of killing Mpatlanyane.

"These scavengers who killed Sammy are the same people who robbed Jimmy from the opportunity to see the World Cup on our shores. We need to expose these people before they make this province mourn again," said Shongwe.

"They did this to Jimmy and now

they think they will get away with it again. It is about time they were stopped," he said.

Mbombela Local Municipality mayor Lassy Chiwayo, who is also rumoured to be on the killers' "hit list", echoed Shongwe's sentiments.

"Jimmy and Sammy have suffered the worst type of humiliation because they were slaughtered like beasts. It looks like a pattern because they were both killed in January. How long will the perpetrators do this, and why do we keep quiet and accept it when we can do something about it?" asked

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"Police used rubber bullets," commuter

BY THOBILE MLANGENI

MBOMBELA

A heated dispute between two Mpumalanga taxi associations left thousands of commuters stranded on Tuesday.

Speaking on behalf of Nelspruit taxi drivers, December Lukhele said the dispute broke out after drivers from the KaBokweni Taxi Association demanded that they be allowed to travel on Top Star Taxi Association's long-distance route to Johannesburg.

The Nelspruit Plaza Taxi Rank, which was recently overhauled to provide facilities for the 2010 Fifa World Cup, turned into chaos within minutes as drivers threw rocks and other projectiles at each other at about 8am.

Members from the nearby Nelspruit Police Station responded by firing rubber bullets into the crowds.

"Many people were injured as the police forced people out of taxis. Rubber bullets were fired at anyone there," said a commuter who did not want to be named.

All taxis were removed from the rank by the police and it was closed for the rest of the day.

Lukhele said the problem started on Monday morning when Top Star drivers discovered that KaBokweni's taxis were parked on its lines for ferrying people to Johannesburg.

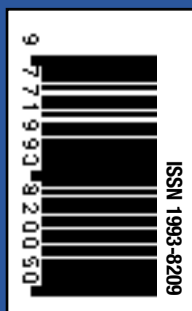
"Nothing was done to keep peace," said Lukhele, adding that KaBokweni taxis operated illegally on the route throughout the day.

Lukhele added that Top Star was the only

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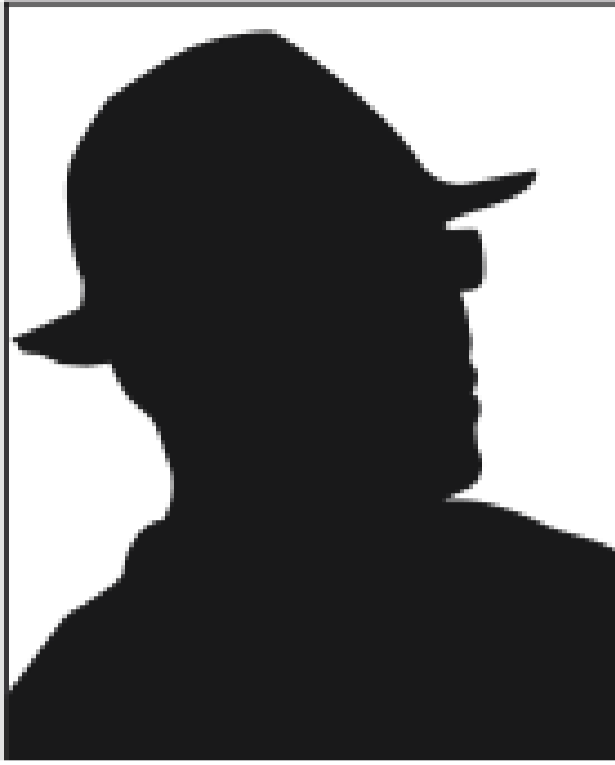
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Comrade Phinda Mzala is back



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Ag Sies, niyasinyanyisa

Welcome to our first edition for 2010!

Just like it was the case at the beginning of 2009, we start this year on a sombre note, the killing of Sammy Mpatlanyane - prompting other people to go as far as suggesting that those who killed Mpatlanyane were the same people who killed Jimmy Mohlala.

It's a bit far fetched, however all we can say is that there is or there are hit squads that are operating successfully in Mpumalanga and they are doing their work very effectively because even our police are not able to arrest the culprits.

Just as was the case with the murder of Mohlala, the killing of Sammy has also attracted all kinds of speculations from self-appointed "criminologists" who already have suspects.

All we can call for is that we should allow the police, to issue rewards and fail to find the perpetrators until January 2011 when another person is killed.

Wild suspicions can only help hurt many people.

HIT LIST

Whoever starts the gossip about the hit-list should make it public now or give to the police, and not wait until someone has been killed and then claim that the deceased was on the Hit List.

MATRIC RESULTS

As in 2009, we also started 2010 with another matriculation results scare.

Umalusi, the examination quality assurance council, shocked everyone by announcing that Mpumalanga matric results would not be released with those of the rest of the country.

Thanks to the intervention by the Minister of Education because we believe that the delay was unjustifiable.

The provincial department of Education, however, cannot be forgiven for the decline in the matriculation pass rate to below the 50% mark.

They must forget about the construction of schools and issuing of tenders and focus on their core business.

While we do not support the creation of a super department by the Premier, the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport and scholar transport, we believe that the removal of the scholar transport from the Department of Education will minimise number the excuses of failing to deliver a quality service.



Sammy and Jimmy. It's not good to speculate. Let's allow those inefficient police to do their own investigations and fail.



We agree with the Minister, Angie Motshekga that they should only concentrate on education, and not the stupid things such as school construction.

The Department of Public Works itself is not innocent because we now know that they, while it claimed that it had constructed schools, the Select Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) discovered that the department had lied by claiming that they had constructed schools where there were none.

Which makes us wonder why the a person who was in charge of such a Department was allowed to head such a crucial department as Education?

BUSY HOLIDAYS FOR THE HURRICANE

While everybody else was on holiday, the man they call the Hurricane was at his most devastating form.

On Christmas eve he appointed an HOD for the super department of Public Works, Roads and Transport. On new year's eve he appointed the province's new Director General.

Whatever he was in a hurry for, he was not properly advised that both these chaps had previously been suspended from their jobs.

It's a pity that while the Hurricane was critical of his predecessor, Thabang Makwetla, for appointing his Gauteng buddies, many of whom have become the province's biggest headaches, he also did the same thing, if not worse.

The poor chap (the new DG) had to run to the media to claim that he had been victimised by his former employers.

Well, we sympathise with the poor DG because it is not him we are concerned about. We are more

concerned that the Hurricane seems to be unearthing recruits that every other province or institution has no use for. In the worst case scenario where they had been involved, implicated or suspected of having been involved in some questionable dealings.

Do the people of the province have to be involved in scandalous conduct or suspected, rightly or wrongly, before they can be considered for appointment at senior level?

Ag sies, niyasinyanyisa!

We welcome the decision to bring the Hawks to Mpumalanga, except that what they are coming for, the leaking of matric examination papers, is just a tip of the iceberg.

Mpumalanga is South Africa's unofficial corruption capital. What we need is the Assets Forfeiture Unit.

"Seize the assets we can't account for and we will claim them back if we are able to prove that they were not acquired through the proceeds of crime."

Immediately after the Hurricane was swept into power, thanks to the "donations" to iNkandla, we advised him to conduct an audit to determine what he was inheriting. As expected, he ignored our advice.

We believe that a due diligence exercise or procedure was originated for a reason! While it is largely seen as a private sector practice, it is more relevant in the public sector.

Finally, we are told one of the lieutenants of the Hurricane has been told never to open his mouth again in Parliament until his term expires in 2014, because he every utterance is an embarrassment to the ANC.

Isikole sibalulekile indeed!

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Sammy: Killed like a beast - Chiwayo

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A personal friend of Mpatlanyane, King Kunene, said people who have information about the murders needed to come forward with it.

"I am sure that some people who were present just now in that service have information about the killers. They need to come out and expose them," he said.

The police have confirmed that Mpatlanyane was shot in his bed, but his body was found on the balcony leading from his bedroom on the second storey of the house. There was no sign of forced entry into the house.

"Mpatlanyane was found dead with one bullet wound to his chest and another through his ribcage. The headboard of the bed on which he had been sleeping was riddled with bullets," said Mpumalanga police spokesperson Captain Leonard Hlathi on Friday.

He added that Mpatlanyane was killed with a gun stolen from a policeman's house in Nelsville in late December.

Investigating officer Inspector Sonnyboy Moloko refused to comment on the murder investigation on Wednesday.

Mohlala's death last year came a week before he was due to testify in

the disciplinary hearing of former municipal manager Jacob Dladla, who had been accused of financial mismanagement of the Mbombela World Cup Stadium project. Dladla has since resigned.

Despite a R100 000 reward for information leading to the capture and conviction of the killers, no one has been caught.

The case was taken over officially by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigations, the Hawks, last week.

Hawks spokesperson Musa Zondi said claims that high-profile figures may be involved in Mohlala's murder would not be investigated without concrete evidence.

"What would be the basis for interviewing those people who are implicated without evidence?" said Zondi.

"There is no concrete evidence against anyone in this case, and as a result it is more difficult to make headway."

Mpatlanyane was buried yesterday (Thursday) morning after a funeral service that was held at the Mbombela Civic Centre.

The MEC for the department, Vusi Shongwe, expressed shock at the news of Mpatlanyane's death.



Police outside the home of senior provincial government official Sammy Mpatlanyane, who was shot dead on Friday morning.

He said all his staff members were dismayed and hoped that the police would soon arrest those involved in Mpatlanyane's killing.

"Mpatlanyane was a dedicated and seasoned spokesman who worked tirelessly to improve the communication channels between the government and the media," Shongwe said.

Mpatlanyane's death comes just weeks after he returned from a two-month educational sabbatical in Germany, where he was gaining knowledge in preparation for the 2010 Fifa World Cup.

"As we mourn his death, we take solace in the fact that Mpatlanyane was a person who was passionate about education, knowledge and development," Shongwe said.

TAXI WAR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

association officially mandated to ferry passengers to Pretoria and Johannesburg from Nelspruit.

Manyovu Mnisi, a member of Top Star's management, said the two associations had long-standing differences over routes. He accused the police of favouritism.

"Only drivers from our side were attacked by the police," he said.

According to Superintendent Msebenzi Nzima of the Nelspruit police, a case of assault had been opened against two Top Star association members who allegedly assaulted members of the KaBokweni association.

"Drivers also threw stones at the police and we responded by firing rubber bullets," said Nzima.

He confirmed that the taxi rank had been officially closed.

"It will only be opened tomorrow after a meeting between the two associations delivers a solution," he said.

Nzima said no serious injuries had been reported.

By late afternoon, taxis were operating illegally near robots and from corners in different parts of the city.

Mysterious death of a gentle communicator



Mourners at the memorial service of Samuel "Sammy" Mpatlanyane. His wife, Pinky Mpatlanyane, is in the front row dressed in black dress and hat, seated next to her are family members.

BY TSHWARELO ESENG MOGAKANE

MBOMBELA

The "mysterious" death of a senior Mpumalanga government official who was shot dead on Friday morning has left police with more questions than answers.

Mpumalanga's organised crime unit has opened a murder case after the head of communication in the Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation, Sammy Mpatlanyane (45), was found dead in his bedroom.

"Mpatlanyane was found dead with one bullet wound to his chest and another through his ribcage. The headboard of the bed on which he was sleeping was also riddled with bullets," said Mpumalanga police spokesperson Captain Leonard Hlathi.

There were no signs of forced entry into Mpatlanyane's luxury double-storey house.

"It is still unknown how the suspect or suspects gained entry into the house because all the doors were locked when the police arrived at the scene. What is more surprising is that the main

bedroom, where the police found the deceased, was also locked," Hlathi said.

He confirmed that Mpatlanyane's wife, Pinky, called the police.

Hlathi said a 9mm police pistol was found next to Mpatlanyane's body.

"Its serial number was still intact, and we found that it had been reported stolen by a police member last year in Nelspruit. We still don't know the motive for this murder, but police will work around the clock to get to the bottom of this case," Hlathi said.



Gun shock in Mpumalanga family murder

BY ERIC MASHABA

NELSPRUI

The gun with which an Mpumalanga man killed his wife, two children and himself on Saturday had been confiscated by the police a few months previously.

KaNyamazane police spokesperson Inspector Andries Skwambane said 31-year-old Mduduzi Ngomane's licensed firearm had been taken away after he threatened to kill his wife, Eunice Matsane (26), during a domestic dispute.

"We don't know how he got it back. Someone at the Kabokweni Police Station must have given it to him, because they responded to a domestic dispute between the couple," Skwambane said on Tuesday.

Ngomane shot dead his wife and two children, Nolwazi (11) and Senzeni (2), after an argument in the early hours of Saturday morning.

"He returned home at about 3am after he went drinking with two friends at a local tavern. They were with him when he reached his house but did not go inside when his wife opened the door for him," said Skwambane.

Inside the house, an argument broke out between Ngomane and Matsane. Shots were fired and when the friends went inside to investigate they discovered the bodies of Matsane and the children.

Ngomane still held the firearm in his hand and ordered his friends to get out of the house.

The men immediately called the police, but heard another shot before they could arrive.

Ngomane had turned the gun on himself.

Khelina Tsabetse (75), the owner of the house in which the murder took place, said Ngomane and his family were from Hlau Hlau near White River.

"They rented the house four months ago. I saw Mduduzi only on weekends and he seemed like a nice person. I was shocked to discover the news of their deaths."

Another neighbour, Nomthandazo Sithole (48), said Ngomane "drank too much liquor and when he was drunk he used to argue with his wife".

"The last time they fought, Eunice packed her bags and left. She returned a few days later and the situation seemed calm since then. We did not



House of murder: Neighbour Nomthandazo Sithole next to the house in KaNyamazane where Mduduzi Ngomane (31) shot dead his wife and two children before committing suicide on Saturday

suspect Mduduzi would kill her and the kids. He loved his family," said Sithole.

Skwambane said the police would open an inquest docket to investigate how Ngomane got his gun back.

He also advised couples and families to seek counselling when they experienced

problems.

"Too much drinking won't solve anything. It will only create more problems. People with serious family problems must either report them to social workers or the police to avoid making the wrong decisions," he said.

Illegal electricity connections: A deadly risk

BY ERIC MASHABA

MBOMBELA

Twelve deaths caused by illegal electricity connections were reported in 2009 in what Eskom calls its Northern Region, which comprises Mpumalanga, Limpopo, North West and Gauteng.

The region's communications officer in Pretoria, Ronel Kotzé, said almost all deaths caused by electrical contact were the result of illegal connections.

"One death is one too many. Eskom removes illegal connections on a continuous basis and we're also running a number of awareness campaigns to emphasise public safety," Kotzé said.

She said Eskom had "zero tolerance" for threats to public safety.

"Communities are urged to report electricity theft and illegal connections to their local Eskom offices or the police," she said.

Juanita Vogel, Eskom's spokesperson in Nelspruit, said the death of humans

was just one of many negative results from illegal connections.

"Besides the fact that Eskom loses revenue, electrical networks get overloaded and become unreliable, the security of electricity supply is threatened and the quality of supply to customers is affected," she said.

"Furthermore, our equipment gets damaged and Eskom's employees are exposed to injuries when working on these unsafe installations. The loss of supply results in a loss of revenue for affected businesses, loyal paying

customers are unduly inconvenienced and hospital and other emergency services also have their installations affected," she said.

Vogel added that Eskom regretted the "unfortunate deaths" of two young children in Msogwaba near Nelspruit on 26 December.

"The preliminary results indicate that an illegally connected cable was running through the stream the children were swimming in. Eskom is currently investigating the source of origin of the cable," she said.

Thieving security guard sentenced to three years

THABISILE KHOZA

MALALANE

A Mpumalanga security guard who stole laptops and digital cameras from the house of the Nkomazi local municipality mayor has been sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

When passing sentence in the Boschfontein Periodical Court on Tuesday, Magistrate Xolani Mzobe said he wanted to make an example of the convicted man.

"I want to teach you a lesson that you won't forget in your life. You were supposed to protect the family, not steal their property as you did, and

therefore I am sentencing you to stay in prison for three years," said Mzobe.

He did, however, give Annanius Khoza (42) the option of a R5 000 fine, but Khoza gave no indication that he could pay it and was taken away from court by the police.

Khoza, of Jeppe's Reef village near the Swaziland border, was responsible for guarding the house of mayor Johan Mavuso in Schoemansdal.

The break-in occurred on November 28 and was discovered the following day when the mayor's wife, Zodwa Mavuso, discovered that two laptops and two cameras that belonged to German tourists visiting the mayor's

house had been stolen. Clothes which the couple wanted to donate to poor people in Mozambique, as well as small household items, were also missing.

The police questioned Khoza, who confessed that he had left a window partially open after his day shift so that he could gain entry into the house.

The police confiscated nine other laptops as well as nine cameras at Khoza's house in Schoemansdal.

The mayor was in the Netherlands on a business trip when the theft took place.

The police later discovered that Khoza had a criminal record for robbery, dating from 2007.

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Mbombela Local Municipality



INVITATION FOR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC PERTAINING TO THE PROPOSED PETITION POLICY FOR MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

In terms of Section 152 (1) (e) of the Constitution of the RSA, Act 108 of 1996,

“a municipality must encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government”

Section 17 (2) (a) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000 stipulates as follows:

“a municipality must establish appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures to enable the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, and must for this purpose provide for:-

the receipt, processing and consideration of PETITIONS AND COMPLAINTS lodged by members of the local community.”

The current state of affairs within Mbombela Local Municipality does not provide for a mechanism/s to deal with complaints from the public pertaining to the lack of service delivery, except the Town Planning Tribunal which deals with objections pertaining to town planning issues in accordance with the relevant ordinance.

In order to address the above- mentioned shortfalls, Council, at its meeting held on 03 September 2009, Resolved in terms of Item A (2), inter alia, THAT

- the proposed petition policy as discussed at the mentioned Council meeting, be approved in principle and that the mentioned policy be published for public participation in terms of section 12, read with Section 17 (2) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000 in order to **enable and provide the opportunity for members of the public to make or submit objections or comments or make representations with regard to the proposed policy.**
- **Furthermore the Office of the Speaker as the custodian of Council’s public participation responsibilities has been delegated to give effect to the implementation of the petitions policy as soon as it has been finalised by Council pending the public participation process. Any petition/s or complaints would be submitted to the Office of the Speaker and discussed in the Public Participation and Petitions Portfolio Committee meetings for processing to ensure that the issues raised were addressed in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, inter alia, the key service delivery Department and the petitioner/s /complainants or affected parties.**

Note that COPIES of the PROPOSED PETITIONS POLICY FOR MBOMBELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY will be made available as from 1 February 2010 at the various municipal offices, namely Hazyview(Ms Thapelo Malibe/ 013/7377346), White River (Mr Joseph Ngobeni/ 013/7506025), KaBokweni municipal office (reception desk/0137960227), KaNyamazane (Mr MV Shongwe/013/7940211), Matsulu (Mr SD Shabangu/ 013/7788150) as well as in the Nelspruit Civic Centre (Office of the Speaker/013/7592258) and will also be displayed on the municipality’s official website (www.mbombela.gov.za) in terms of section 21A of the said Municipal Systems Act.

Any interested person/s desirous to make comments/representations in this regard is invited to do so in writing for the attention of the Senior Manager: Office of the Speaker, Mr MJ Maseko. Such comments/representations should reach the above mentioned Office before or **on Friday, 19th February 2010**. Persons/s who are unable to read/write can visit the Office of the Speaker, Ground Floor, Room G57 during offices hours with a view to making oral representation/s comment/s and will be assisted by municipal officials to transcribe their comments in this regard.

Any enquiries in this regard can be directed to the Senior Manager: Office of the Speaker, Mr MJ Maseko at Tel no. 013/ 7599147 / 2258, (e-mail address: Moses.Maseko@mbombela.gov.za or Manager: Public Participation, Mr Sello Malele at Tel no. 013 /7592277 (e-mail address: sellom@mbombela.gov.za) during office hours.

Written comments/submission/objections pertaining to the proposed petition policy can be forwarded at the address as set out below:

Acting Municipal Manager
1 Nel Street, Civic Centre
PO Box 45, Nelspruit, 1200

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS 19 FEBRUARY 2009

Bright stars lift the matric gloom

BY TSHWARELO ESENG MOGAKANE

MNBOMBELA

Amidst the gloom of achieving the lowest pass rate in the country, three Mpumalanga matriculants had reason to celebrate: they scored full marks in one subject each.

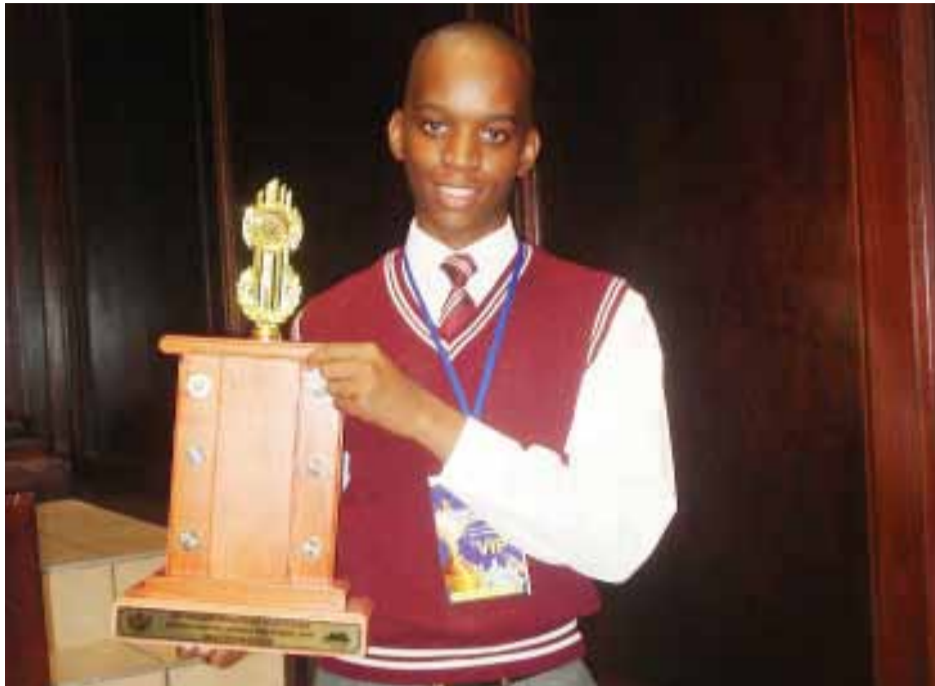
Because of the late printing of Mpumalanga's results, they only knew about these achievements by Thursday and not their overall results.

Muzi Tshabalala (16) was the star of the day when he was praised by Mpumalanga MEC for education Reginah Mhaule during a special handover ceremony for scoring 100% in maths.

Tshabalala, who wrote his exams at the rural Khutsalani Secondary School in KaBokweni near White River, said his secret was having a personal time table for his studies.

"My time table helped me to allocate time properly. And I only had one hour for watching television per day," said Muzi, adding that he was "over the moon" with the trophy he received for Mhaule.

Muzi said although maths was his "easiest subject", he had never rested until he got all his formulas right.



Muzi Tshabalala (16) from Kabokweni near White River scored full marks in mathematics.

Attending classes on Saturday also helped Muzi to gain an in-depth understanding of what he had been taught during the week.

"I also need to thank my teachers for giving us the extra hours. That really assisted. Now I am going to the University of Pretoria to study actuarial and financial mathematics," he said proudly.

Friends Mareli Olivier (18) and Naomi Smit (18) from Hoerskool Nelspruit were equally elated about scoring full marks in history.

"We are both going to the University of Pretoria. We find it amazing to be among the best matriculants in history in the country," Mareli said.

She wants to study journalism while

Naomi wants to do consumer studies.

Another proud matriculant from a rural area was Jamela Mthembu, who wrote her exams at ML Nkuna High School in Mkhuhlu township in Bushbuckridge.

Jamela scored 269 out of a potential 300 in agricultural science, which qualifies as a distinction.

"I was shocked when I received a call late last night that I should come and receive this trophy. For me, there is no other secret except hard work. I had nothing else on my mind except for my studies," said Jamela.

She said her father, Andrew Mthembu, supported her during the year, ensuring that she had enough text books for her subjects.

"There were no adequate texts books at school. Some of them were not even correct for the curriculum but my father managed to help me," she said.

Jamela is on her way to the University of the Witwatersrand to study medicine.

She said although all their subjects' results would only be released officially on Friday, she was confident that she did well enough in the other subjects to qualify for her studies to become a doctor.

Education a collective effort, says Education MEC

BY BONGEKILE MHLANGA

HAZYVIEW

Mpumalanga's MEC of education, Reginah Mhaule, has urged parents to take a direct interest in their children's education.

Mhaule visited Magashule Primary School and Shanke Secondary School in Oakley trust in Bushbuckridge on Wednesday to mark the start of the 2010 school year.

"Parents, take an interest in your children's education. The education of children is a collaborative endeavour, and it therefore requires all of us to rally side by side to attain a positive outcome," she said.

Mhaule said she was impressed by the mood among teachers and pupils at the two schools.

"I am excited by the high level of enthusiasm from teachers and learners alike. If the positive energy that I saw today can be sustained, there will be good things to come from our schools," said Mhaule.

Magashule Primary School's acting deputy principal, Anastacia Magagula, said the school was excited to be the first one that was visited by Mhaule.

"It feels good that, on our first day at school, the MEC came and prayed with us. She also motivated the pupils and told them that she used to teach at this very school in the 1980s," said Magagula.

Shanke High School's principal, Henry



MEC Reginah Mhaule flanked by (left) Aubrey Nyakane, and Siyanda Maluka

Dube, said both pupils and teachers were motivated by Mhaule's visit.

"This was an inspiration to us. When I went to class, I told the students that this is the first time in the history of the school that we received a visitation from such high-profile people," said Dube.

The deputy minister of communications, Dina Pule, matriculated at the school in 1984.

Mhaule said the early distribution of

stationery would enable teachers and learners to "get straight to the business of teaching and learning" on their first day.

She promised that the department would do everything possible to ensure that the school year proceed smoothly.

"I want to assure the provincial community that we will do everything we can to free our schools from underperformance and dysfunctionality," she said.

Three die in Ermelo car pile-up

ERMELO

By Thobile Mlangeni

Three people were killed when a truck ploughed into a bakkie on the N11 between Ermelo and Amersfoort in Mpumalanga on Wednesday.

According to David Nkambule, spokesperson for the provincial department of public works, roads and transport, an articulated truck was stopped at a yield sign along with a sedan and bakkie when the latter was hit by another truck from behind.

"While the three vehicles were waiting to drive off, another articulated truck came from behind and hit the bakkie, pushing it into the sedan in front. The sedan then hit the truck in front of it," said Nkambule.

Three occupants from the sedan died on the scene, while its driver and that of the bakkie were taken to hospital with serious injuries.

The two truck drivers sustained slight injuries and were treated on the scene.

The road has been opened after it was closed to investigate the accident, which took place at about 10am.

The spirit of Che lives in Matsulu

The students of Sitfokotile High School and the youth of Matsulu township were treated to a free political school on Wednesday morning. The teachers? A team of four young Cubans.

The delegation of four members of the Unión De Jóvenes Comunistas (Young Communist League in Cuba) is in the country at the invitation of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL). The main purpose of the visit is to mobilise South Africans to support the campaign for the release of five Cubans who are serving long prison terms in United States of America.

The Cuban 5, as they are popularly known were arrested by the FBI in September 1998 and falsely charged with espionage against the U.S. They were held without bail for 33 months between arrest and trial. For 17 months of this time they were held in solitary confinement cells, completely cut off from their families and young children, and not even able to communicate with each other.

They were convicted June 8, 2001 and sentenced December 2001 as follows: Gerardo Hernández, 2 life sentences; Antonio Guerrero, life; Ramón Labañino, life; René González, 15 years; and Fernando González, 19 years.

One of the members of the UDJ delegation, Irma González Salanueva, is the daughter of René González, one of the prisoners.

The extreme length of these sentences is made worse by the cruelty of the treatment of these political prisoners. Even up to now, family visits to the five have been forbidden. In the case of one of the prisoners his wife who was born and bred in the USA has been deported



Bennie (Young Communist League SA) , Isaac Mahlangu (ANCYL Provincial Secretary), Irma Gonzalez

to Cuba.

The message from the young Cuban delegation was that the Cuban people need international solidarity to defend their 50-year revolution, which has been under attack from the respective USA governments.

“We have had a blockade for 50 years and we have been trying to survive the blockade. Even though we have the blockade we are trying to develop our health, our education and own system and we have done so. So we are here to exchange experiences with the young people of South Africa and get them to know about the Cuban Five and for us to know about the history of South Africa.

Irma’s father was part of the Cuban contingent that participated in the Angolan war against the apartheid regime. He is a pilot and flight instructor.

The delegation will be in South Africa for 17 days and Mpumalanga Province was one of the five provinces that they will be visiting.

“We love the people of South Africa, they are our brothers and sisters because we fought together. We know that you also love our history and our people.”

The delegation handed out the picture of former Cuban President Fidel Castro and the Cuban internationalist and

The full delegation: Irma González Salanueva, Osnay Miguel Colina Rodriguez, Tirso Ibanio Peñaranda Basail and Kevry Pérez

revolutionary, Che Guevara.

Guevara who was a minister of Finance in Cuba and in 1965 decided to abandon the perks of being a government minister to pursue the liberation of other countries, starting with Africa and all the way to South America, where he was captured and executed by the CIA in Bolivia.

“We gave the picture to the school as a example of what you can do to make the world a better world for everybody, to inspire them to keep on studying the history of the world and their own decisions on their own behalf on the development of their own society,” says Irma González Salanueva.

When asked what encourages Cubans to be engaged in international struggles, it seemed as though the young Cuban was a reincarnation of Che.

“We fought the revolution, not only for Cuba, but for the entire world. We have never been struggling only for us. We’re trying to make a better world. We know we are a small country, but we just want to give our humble knowledge that we have gained to the people to say that there is a possibility to do something different for everybody, and not just the rich people; to study, to have access to health and to have a better system, because the world belongs to everybody.

“With the little resources we have been trying to help other countries by sending doctors, teachers and giving them hope by fighting alongside them. That’s something we feel we have to do. It’s a duty,” said González.

Cuba helped South Africa to defeat the apartheid regime

Cuba is a long time political ally of the liberation movements in South Africa and the African continent in general. The most notable intervention by Cuba on the continent was its decision in 1975 to support and defend the then newly liberated Angola against United States and South African backed bandits of UNITA.

The skirmishes between Angola army and the apartheid army escalated into what became known as the “Battle of Cuito Cuanavale” also dubbed by historians as “Africa’s largest land battle since World War II”.

To date there are still conflicting accounts of who really won the “Battle of Cuito Cuanavale” between the US backed apartheid army on one hand and the People’s Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA), People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), and Cuban international military contingent on the other.

While there are claims of the ANC’s Umkhonto WeSizwe’s involvement in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale, Ziwaphi could not find any confirmation from some of MK’s fighters who had military

training camps on the Southern part of Angola, where the battle took place in 1987 and 1988.

It was, however, inevitable for MK to be part of the Angolan conflict, as its military bases were largely located on the Southern part of Angola which was a UNITA stronghold.

A former MK fighter, however, pointed out that MK which was a guerilla army, did not possess the military artillery that was required for an open warfare, unlike PLAN of Namibia.

He also confirmed that while there were skirmishes between UNITA

and MK, there was, however, no formal declaration of hostilities between the two forces, even though the apartheid army, which MK had been fighting in guerilla warfare, supported UNITA.

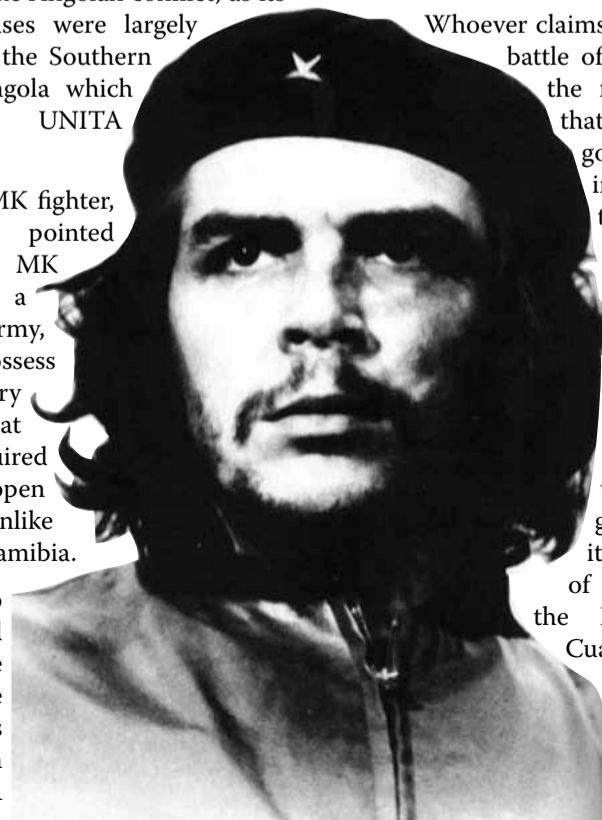
Whoever claims the victory of the battle of Cuito Cuanavale, the fact of history is that the apartheid government failed in its attempt to take over Cuito Cuanavale due to the resistance by FAPLA, PLAN and the Cuban forces.

Another fact of history is that the apartheid government ceased its military invasion of Angola following the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale and the apartheid regime, which had been reluctant to engage in negotiations,

was suddenly prepared to negotiate its withdrawal from Angolan territory and cease its occupation of Namibia, and subsequently the liberation of South Africa.

Namibia finally attained its freedom in 1989 when SWAPO defeated the apartheid supported party, the Democratic Turnhale Alliance (DTA) during first democratic elections in that country and South Africa attained its freedom five years later when it defeated the National Party and other smaller parties in the country’s first democratic elections.

The ideological contestations, however, will always remain, as writer Piers Paul Read remarked in his book, “Historical distortions are difficult to straighten out. A mistake about a chemical compound or an airline schedule will be exposed in due course by an explosion or a missed connection, but misconceptions about the past can persist for centuries, despite the diligent work of historians, either because vested interests benefit from the distortions (the Whig view of history) or because the fanciful version is more fun.”



Malaria alarm bells sound in BB-ridge

BY SYDNEY MASINGA

MBOMBELA

Five people have been killed by malaria in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga, since the beginning of January, the provincial department of health has reported.

Department spokesperson Mpho Gabashane (right) said on Tuesday that, since the start of December, its malaria surveillance team has recorded an unusually high number of malaria cases in Bushbuckridge.

"We have recorded 138 cases - 90 in December and 48 now in January. Three deaths have been recorded in Tintswalo Hospital, one in Mapulaneng Hospital and the other in Matikwane Hospital. All these deaths were adults and they all occurred in January," he said.

The department recorded 175 cases in the entire province between December 2008 and January 2009, which is why this outbreak is ringing alarm bells.

The malaria cases in Bushbuckridge were spread throughout the area, but Gabashane said it seemed more concentrated in the northeast, which is close to the border with Limpopo.

Villages such as Acornhoek, Arthur East, Rooiboklaagte, Brooklyn, Belfast, Clare, Green Valley and Welverdiend reported the highest number of cases.

"Our preliminary investigation has showed that 22 of the cases were imported from Limpopo, which is normal because of people's high mobility during and after the festive period," Gabashane said.

"The malaria control team has heightened awareness about malaria

through door-to-door visits and the use of local media. We are investigating all reported cases to establish the source of infection in order to apply the necessary and appropriate interventions," Gabashane said.

He added that affected areas were being resprayed to reduce the mosquito population.

"We request people to report early to their nearest health facility when they experience or detect symptoms such as high fever, severe headache and chills, especially if they have a recent history of travel to malaria-prone areas. We are also closely monitoring the situation and we are confident that our available resources are adequate to manage the situation," he said.



Mpumalanga director deplores school's poor management

BY THABISILE KHOZA

KOMATIPOORT

Mpumalanga's regional director for education in the Ehlanzeni District Municipality was furious when he discovered that a poor-performing rural school had no textbooks, curriculum management or functioning school policies.

Mfana Lushaba paid a surprise visit to Mbhudula High School in Mbuzini village near the Mozambique and Swaziland borders, along with other government officials.

The school obtained 28% matric pass rate last year.

"There was a lack of textbooks in the

school but no one had reported it to us. We found out that a geography teacher had one textbook of which he made copies to distribute to all the Grade 12 pupils," Lushaba said.

"There is generally a lack of communication between parents, pupils, teachers and the school principal," he said.

Lushaba said the visitors could find no school policy to guide teachers in how to do their daily work.

"I was so upset when I checked their schedule and found that there is lots of absenteeism among everyone, including the principal."

Lushaba added that some teachers did not seem committed to their work, especially "those who are teaching

science and economic science subjects".

"In subjects like SiSwati, consumer studies, geography and life orientation the school got a 100% pass rate, which gives you an indication that it is not all the teachers who do not do their jobs properly," he said.

Lushaba said radical steps would be taken against the principal and heads of department if the situation did not improve.

"We have given them a deadline until next week Friday to present their school management policy, and we are going to visit them on a weekly basis to monitor it," said Lushaba.

"We still have the right to remove and replace them with people who are committed to their jobs."

School governing body (SGB) chairperson Elmon Shabangu said the body was powerless.

"Since we've been selected as SGB members, we have never had a meeting and we are not informed about anything," he said. "We are always sidelined because they don't involve us in anything that's happening at that school. As the chairman of the SGB I was not even informed about Lushaba's visit."

Shabangu said he hoped official intervention would have a positive effect.

"I hope the director's involvement will bring some changes and that our voices will be heard," he said.

Students warned against fake training institutions

BY SYDNEY MASINGA

MBOMBELA

The Mpumalanga Department of Health and Social Development has warned students to verify the accreditation of training institutions before they enroll.

Department spokesperson Mpho Gabashane said prospective students, especially recently graduated matrics who want to register for courses in health sciences, must be extremely careful of "flight-by-night" institutions that can be found "all over the province".

"Many times in the past we have received reports of students enrolling for courses such as nursing and emergency medical care at these unrecognised institutions. They earn certificates and diplomas that are worthless," said Gabashane on Friday.

"Students are warned that only people

with qualifications from accredited training institutions can qualify for employment as healthcare workers in South Africa. Healthcare training is a critical discipline that requires the upholding of very specific standards, which are provided only by accredited training institutions."

Although he could not provide the names of specific unaccredited institutions in Mpumalanga, Gabashane said they seemed to target especially students who want to do nursing and ambulance training.

He added that depending on their fields of study, prospective students should verify institutions' accreditation with the South African Nursing Council, South African Pharmacy Council or the Health Professions' Council of South Africa.

Number of Mpumalanga exam leaks accused reaches 19

BY THOBILE MLANGENI

MBOMBELA

A teacher arrested in connection with the leaking of 2009 exam papers in Mpumalanga failed to appear in court with his co-accused on Monday.

Milton Msimango, a 31-year-old Zimbabwean teacher, was arrested with two students, a Clicks employee and a warder in November last year.

Msimango allegedly sold mathematics, physical science and accounting exam papers to his co-accused.

"He last appeared on the day he was given bail [November 13], so a warrant of arrest is now issued against him," said Magistrate Anna-Marie van der Merwe in the Nelspruit Magistrate's Court.

The court case also revealed that, until now, nineteen people, aged between 19 and 31, have been arrested.

After 13 people in total were arrested last year, six more students were added last Wednesday.

None of the 18 accused who appeared in court on Monday was asked to plead to charges of theft or contravening the Control of Access to Information Act.

Two of the pupils told the court that they would conduct their own defence, two had applied for legal aid representation and the rest had lawyers they had privately engaged.

The case was postponed to February 24 for a decision on prosecution from the National Prosecution Authority.

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Land beneficiaries want access to farms

BY ERIC MASHABA

MBOMBELA

The Shakoaneng claimant community in Mpumalanga wants a high court interdict preventing them from entering their ancestral land overturned.

The spokesperson for the claimants, David Mashego, said the beneficiaries needed to look after their homes and goats on the farms.

“We have appointed an attorney from Kruger Moeletsi Attorneys in Nelspruit to fight the interdict. We cannot abandon what is rightfully ours. We are the beneficiaries of the Shakoaneng Trust and the farms belong to us,” he said.

The interdict was issued by the Pretoria High Court in November to prevent the community from coming within 500m of two farms in Alkmaar, near White River.

It was issued after allegations that the beneficiaries were intimidating the tenants, André de Klerk and Ron Ashburner, who have lease agreements of between five and eight years with the interim trustee board of Shakoaneng Trust.



Spokesperson for Shakoaneng Claimants Community, David Mashego (left), Robert Monareng (85), Jack Mnisi (87) and Isaac Mokoena

“After we applied in 1998, we secured the farms Bossieskop in 2003 and Rietfontein in 2007 from the Land Claims Commission,” explained Mashego.

“We nominated Betwel Mashego as a trustee because he was the founder of the trust. Shortly afterwards, he

betrayed the clan and ran the trust as his own. He sold timber, sand and citrus fruit from the farms, and leased the houses without our permission,” he said.

Mashego explained that the community did not want to lease the farms to ensure their sustainability.

“We want total control of all the farms. We intend to allocate land to the heads of the households to establish cash crops to sell for a living. Our community is jobless, and we need these projects to survive,” he said.

On December 12, Nelspruit police arrested 35 beneficiaries on charges of stealing pumpkins worth R80 000 at the trust. They appeared in the Nelspruit Regional Court on December 14 and were released on warning. The case was postponed until January 20.

Mashego said Betwel had opened the case and accused him of using a private security company to prevent the beneficiaries from entering the farms.

But Betwel has denied the allegations.

“This is a blatant lie. I never hired a security company or sold anything from the farms. I also never opened a theft case against them; the lessees and the new interim board did,” he said.

“I do not run the farms as my own and have no control whatsoever. The beneficiaries wanted to evict the lessees, tenants and other shareholders who also have shares in the trust,” said Betwel.

Community tired of gaping potholes

By France Nyaka & Bongekile Mhlanga

KWAMHLANGA

The community of Buhlebesizwe village near KwaMhlanga, Mpumalanga, is fed up with gaping potholes that become splash pools when it rains.

The main road in the village, which is used heavily by taxis and buses, has eroded drastically because of heavy rains.

According to resident Poppy Skhosana (42), the potholes put their children's lives in danger.

“We fear for the safety of our kids because they like playing in the water. We don't have swimming pools in the area so they use it to splash around in on hot days,” said Skhosana.

“We want the municipality to do something soon, before something happens to our children,” she added.

Taxi driver Siphon Mahlangu (36), who uses the road on a daily basis, said it was a struggle to reach the village.

“This road is extremely bad because of the growing potholes. One day they will swallow our cars because they keep growing and growing,” said Mahlangu.

The ward councillor of the village, Thami Kubheka, blamed the municipality for neglecting the road.

“The community will have to find a way to fix the potholes by themselves because the municipality does not have



During the rainy season, the potholes become splash pools for the children in the village

the resources (budget) to maintain the road,” said Kubheka. “My attempts to speak with municipality were in vain. All I can do is watch the potholes grow,” he added.

Thembisile Hani local municipality spokesperson Themba Mtsweni said the municipality had appointed a service provider to take care of the road but the potholes kept on reappearing.

“The road is in a waterlogged area and it is used by buses, which makes its condition worse during the rainy season,” he said.

“We are planning to rechannel the water and upgrade the road's standard to that of provincial roads,” Mtsweni promised.



The Buhlebesizwe road is heavily used by public transport vehicles

Tool-making sector receives R14m boost

BY TSHWARELO ESENG MOGAKANE

NELSPRUIT

Twenty-five trainees from Mpumalanga will take part in a R14-million tool-making programme aimed at increasing skills in the manufacturing industry.

The National Tooling Initiative, in conjunction with the Toolmaking Association of South Africa and the Department of Trade and Industry, has identified 175 suitable candidates from seven regions in South Africa to participate in the programme.

"Much-needed steps have been set in motion to address the drastic skills shortage in the South African tool, die and mould sector, which is a key support sector for the country's manufacturing industry," said public relations officer Raphala Mogase.

National Tooling Initiative chief executive Dirk van Dyk said a three-step selection process was conducted to identify suitable candidates for the pilot programme.

"The first phase involved awareness sessions, which were conducted to tell young people about the pilot programme and why they should get involved. This phase focused on matriculants with an interest in the manufacturing industry, as well as tool and mould makers who wanted to enhance their knowledge and skills in the field," Van Dyk said.

The second phase involved follow-up sessions with school principals who were asked to assist in mobilising the right type of young people for the programme.

"We went through the same process with industry players to identify possible candidates already in the industry, who can become beneficiaries of the programme," said Van Dyk.

The third phase involved a detailed presentation on the role of toolmakers to demonstrate where tooling fits into the manufacturing process, as well as career opportunities in the industry.

Van Dyk said successful candidates would be notified on January 29 next



National Tooling Initiative chief executive Dirk van Dyk

year after a thorough assessment of all applicants.

Classes at a number of FET colleges and skills centres will start on February 15.

Mogase said the curriculum included maths, science, technical English, computer and life skills courses, as well as a formal manufacturing element incorporating safety in manufacturing, how to read engineering drawings, measurement techniques and basic manufacturing processes.

The formal curriculum will be supplemented with a workshop training phase during which participants will learn basic hand and machining skills, which will give them credits towards a competency-based apprenticeship.

"A further element of the programme is to ensure all participants gain exposure to various businesses in the tool, die and mould sector, large and small, and get practical knowledge of die-casting, injection moulding, blow moulding and metal pressing, amongst others," Van Dyk said.

He added that the R14-million will be split among the seven regions to cover operational costs, including salaries for teachers, infrastructure maintenance, trainee stipends, consumables and information and technology.

"This intensive programme will help candidates to determine whether they want to continue in this sector and will provide them with an excellent foundation for the competency-based apprenticeship programme, which is due to be launched in 2011," said Van Dyk.

Eskom: 'SA's heart has suffered cardiac arrest'

BY SYDNEY MASINGA

MBOMBELA

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) says it will accept only a 10% tariff hike from Eskom in 2010.

Speaking on Monday during the first public hearings into the tariff hikes in Nelspruit, Cosatu's provincial secretary, Fidel Mlombo (Right), said the proposed 35% increase was too high and would have a devastating impact on the economy and the poor.

"We are prepared to negotiate from 10% and lower. Anything more will not be acceptable," said Mlombo.

He encouraged delegates at the public hearing to join forces to oppose Eskom's hikes.

"Among other things, the high electricity tariffs will force low-income consumers to substitute electricity with 'dirty' energy, and huge areas will face disconnections and illegal reconnections," he said.

The acting chairman of Eskom Holdings Limited, Mpho Makwana, said South Africans may pay "a big price" in the future if Eskom's tariff hike was not approved.

"Eskom is the heart of the country's economy. The heart has suffered a cardiac arrest and needs help. It is too late to point fingers or blame someone - we are facing a crisis and we need to work together as a country to find workable solutions," he said during the hearing.

The regional manager of South African Pulp and Paper Industries (Sappi) in Mpumalanga, Du Toit Grobler, said

the proposed tariff hike would have "devastating consequences" for its employees and their families.

"We currently have an annual electricity bill of R350-million, and if Eskom's 35% tariff hike is approved, it will take us to a bill of more than R1-billion per annum, which might force us to retrench some of our employees," he said.

The hearings will move to Polokwane on Tuesday, Kimberly on Wednesday, Bloemfontein on Thursday and Rustenburg on Friday.

Next week, the hearings will resume in Durban on Monday, Port Elizabeth on Tuesday, Cape Town on Wednesday and Midrand on Thursday.

National Energy Regulator of South Africa (Nersa) spokesperson Charles Hlebela said it would like to encourage businesses and members of the public



Fidel Mlombo says COSATU will only accept a 10% increase

to fully participate and submit written comments in the public hearings.

Nersa is expected to make its ruling on the tariff hike in February.

Mpumalanga police to probe mysterious death of border guard

BY THABISILE KHOZA

KOMATIPOORT

Mpumalanga border police will find out on Thursday how one of their members died last Friday, allegedly in Mozambique.

Spokesperson for Mpumalanga police Senior Superintendent Sibongile Nkosi said on Wednesday that they received a report that one of their members responsible for patrolling the South African and Mozambican borders near Lebombo had died.

"At this stage, we can confirm that Inspector George Nhlapho, who was seconded to the border unit from the Vaalbank Police Station, is dead. But we don't know how he died or where," she said.

She said the police were still waiting for a postmortem, which would be conducted on Thursday to establish when and how he died.

Sources told African Eye News service that Nhlapho and his friends, who had been off duty, had crossed the border into Mozambique on December 31 to

celebrate the New Year.

They say the group went to Costa Do Sol beach in Maputo to swim and that Nhlapho drowned. After his body had been recovered, the group smuggled it back into South Africa to hide the fact that they had left the South African base near the border where they are stationed. The body was dumped at the Komatipoort Police Station.

Nkosi confirmed that border police were not allowed to leave the base.

"If our members are deployed, they are not allowed to leave the base because

they are always on guard," she said.

But she denied that Nhlapho had been dead when the Komatipoort police found him.

"He was not dead when he returned to South Africa because police managed to take him to the local doctor where he was declared dead on arrival," she said.

She added that the police would only be able to investigate the matter fully once the results of the postmortem were available.

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PYA want closure of cheating private schools

The Progressive Youth Alliance (PYA) in Mpumalanga want the closure of private schools in the province. This was revealed by Jabulani Kescor Mathabe after their visit to schools in the province as part of the Joe Slovo Right To Learn Campaign.

Their findings reminded one of the same conditions which characterised apartheid education - inequality, lack of facilities, lack of resources etc.

"One of the problems that we have identified is the lack of information by parents of the no-fee-schools," says Jabulani Kescor Mathabe, the Provincial Secretary of the Young Communist League of South Africa (YCLSA).

Officially there is no education crisis in the country. Well, even under apartheid, the regime never accepted that there was an education crisis, which was characterised by the same elements that we see currently.

An issue that is likely going to dominate the education sector this year, however, is the mushrooming of private schools throughout the province, and the fact that these are highly subsidised by government, while the public schools are neglected.

"We are concerned that there seems to be no regulation of these schools and that they are mainly the source of



FLASH BACK: PYA leaders, Mondli Kgalema (SASCO) , Nhlakanipho Zuma (YCL), Veli Masilela (ANCYL) and Sfiso Makhabane (COSAS).

the cheating that is happening during examinations, in particular matric exams," says Mathabe.

Currently 19 people have been arrested in the province. They include a teacher, a correctional service employee and other individuals and students. Students who are found guilty of cheating face banishment from writing their matric examinations for 3 years.

The PYA in the province was scheduled to hold a press conference yesterday to announce its programme which would include raising awareness among communities and students of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS).

The PYA, formed of the ANC Youth League (ANCYL), Young Communist League (YCL), South African Students Congress (SASCO) and the Congress

of South African Students (COSAS) criticised MEC for Corporative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Norman Mokoena after the latter tried to defend the current Premier for "demobilizing" the Tripartite Alliance last year.

This public stance by the PYA was the first known public criticism of the current Premier of the province, David DD Mabuza, by structures of the democratic movement.

The public criticism of Mabuza was not taken kindly by his strongman and National Party apologist in Nkomazi, turning the sub-region into a no-go area for the ANCYL and any progressive structures.

The Young Communist League in Mpumalanga province has already called for the dissolution of all private schools in the province, after it was discovered that these schools were implicated in the examination irregularities which almost caused the matric results not to be released with those of the rest of the country for the second year in running.

Snapping ID photographs with a difference

BY THOBILE MLANGENI

NELSPRUIT

In ID photos, most people look like criminals or as if they are having a very bad hair day.

But in Nelspruit, a group of 11 street photographers is making sure Mpumalanga citizens can be proud of their IDs and passports.

The group works outside the offices of the department of home affairs in Henshall Street.

"We've learned through practice to take the right shots. None of us has any educational certificates," says Faniki Sihlangu (33) of KaNyamazane.

Sihlangu started as an assistant to a photographer friend in 1995.

"I would go around scouting for people who needed photos for their ID books and was paid a commission," he explained.

Over time, he learnt to take his own



PICTURE THIS: From left, Faniki Sihlangu, Louie Masinga, Corris Mokoena and Joseph Matsane

photographs.

"I love my job. I have learned a lot and it has improved my life so much. It's also an easy job to do."

Louie Masinga (49) has been taking

photos since he was a child, but it became his career in 1994.

He has been elected chairman of the street photographers in Nelspruit.

"Team spirit, respect and self-discipline

has brought us this far," said Masinga.

He hopes the department will eventually recognise the photographers' contribution to ensuring that citizens have all their legal papers in order.

Masinga said sometimes, especially in winter, they had to brave harsh weather conditions to be able to provide for their families.

"We are against crime and so we created a job opportunity for ourselves, and our family members depend on what we put on the table," said Masinga. "It would be nice if we were given some shelter where we can work."

Lazarus Mhlongo (36), who has been a photographer since 1995, said school principals and football and netball coaches should call them when they needed photos of their pupils and teams.

"Some of us can also take video clips during family functions," said Mhlongo.

The photographers charge R25 for a set of four ID or passport photos.

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Stage set for finals of the Mayoral Cup

BY MANDLA KHOZA

NKOMAZI – *The highly awaited final of the Nkomazi Mayoral Cup's second episode has finally arrived. Two Nkomazi soccer giants will be battling on the soccer field to determine who is to be crowned the champions of the Mayoral Cup.*

Tomorrow, Saturday, Block A Naughty Boys will be locking horns with the 2005 Selati Cup finalists, Langeloo City Movers at the renewed Driekoppies stadium.

According to records this is going to be the dream final for the two teams since non of them has ever won a final in any of the Nkomazi's leading soccer tournaments.

Both teams, however, have proven to be the best in the Nkomazi region by defeating some of the well-known teams to reach tomorrow's final.

The clear rules of The Nkomazi Mayoral Cup state that teams are not allowed to have players from outside the Nkomazi region, hence that it will help the Nkomazi to develop its own soccer players.

Both Movers and Naughty Boys reached the finals by defeating their opponents in what was described as the tournament's biggest upsets. The Movers paved their way to the finals last Saturday by beating Middleplaas Blizzard by a goal to nil whereas the Naughty Boys became Nkomazi's favorites when they beat Magogeni Try Again by five goals to zero in the semis of the tournament at KaMhlushwa last Saturday.

Soccer lovers in Nkomazi are already placing their bets on The Naughty Boys which was undoubtedly the form team leading to the finals. The team had also humiliated Mangweni LTD by the same number of goals to reach the semis.

City Movers coach Mancoba Fulane said that his side would not duck from the raging Naughty Boys.



The favourites, Naughty Boys seem to have already put one hand on the trophy with their confidence. Below is the other finalist, City Movers of Langeloo.

"They can score many goals trying to threaten us, we are not frightened. Reaching the finals of the Mayoral Cup is our dream that we've been having for sometime and it has come true. Therefore we can not just let them humiliate us in front of our fans," said Fulane.

Meanwhile Naughty Boys assistant coach Walter Sibambo warned The Movers' fans and the technical team to go to the stadium already knowing that they will be slaughtered.

"We have no mercy in the final Cup. It's our first time to reach such a final but we're going to make a name for ourselves in the Nkomazi area. Come Saturday, The Movers will be history. Though we respect them they will not win, that's a fact," he said.

In the ladies soccer side the three times Selati Cup Champions Schoemansdal Real Gunners will face their long time rival Amazon in the finals of the mayoral Cup.



Leading Goal-scorer, Moses Sono. He scored two hat-tricks



Executive Mayor of Nkomazi - Johan Mavuso