



BAOBAB NEWS

LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER

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R4.5 billion hospital to be built in Limpopo Province

Limpopo Province will build a R4.5 billion state-of-the-art hospital which will create 1220 part-time and 2461 full-time jobs.

Mathabatha said the designs for the construction of the academic hospital have been completed.

"The Minister of Health has indicated that construction will begin in due course. We shall continue to monitor this at it is of strategic importance in our quest to ensure universal access to primary health care," said Mathabatha.

Mathabatha said the construction of the hospital will create much needed jobs in Limpopo and further reduce unemployment in the province.

He further conveyed heartfelt condolences to the families that lost their loved ones during a devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria. "No less than 46,000 lives were lost, whilst many are still unaccounted for".

"I applaud the five members of the Limpopo Emergency Medical Service Rescue Team who volunteered to go to Turkey and Syria to help with their expertise and services. They are true resemblance of what has always defined us, solidarity with fellow people during the time of despair," said Mathabatha.

According to Limpopo government spokesperson Mr Ndavhe Ramakuella, the hospital will be built in the northeast of the Peter Mokaba Stadium. "The hospital will boast 488 beds and cost the province R4.5 billion.

"When completed, it will come in handy for locals and those living beyond the province's borders. It will save travel costs for patients seeking medical services outside the province while at the same time, attracting patients from other areas," said Ndavhe.

Ramakuella said the construction of the hospital was also billed to contribute to the province's gross domestic product that would, in turn, boost the province's economy. **DM**



Premier Mathabatha outline plans to build new hospital during SOPA

R10 million set aside to support established youth entrepreneurs

In partnership with the National Youth Development Agency, Limpopo Provincial Government has set aside no less than R10 million, to support established and aspiring youth entrepreneurs in the Province.

Premier Mathabatha pronounced in the State of the Province Address that young people across the province are invited to take advantage of

government support so that they become meaningful role players in the mainstream economy in the future.

Mathabatha said, during the 2022/23 financial year, government have exceeded its target for supporting SMMEs that helped to sustain up to 1000 jobs.

"In addition, a total of R4,4 million worth of loans were disbursed to support SMMEs

and co-operatives. A total of just over 13,000 local enterprises received assistance throughout the province. We shall continue to support 100 SMMEs and 100 co-operatives in the next financial year," said Mathabatha.

"We have in place a strategic partnership with EXXARO to operate a Satellite Office in Lephalale Region. We have also partnered with Impact

Catalyst for the co-implementation of specific enterprise development programmes on behalf of the participating mining houses in Limpopo. Further, we have a strategic partnership with Black Umbrellas for the co-implementation of enterprise supplier development programmes targeting the private and public sectors." **DM**

Tourism is one of the key strategic economic- points in Limpopo Province

During the State of the Province, the Limpopo Premier Mr Chupu Stanley Mathabatha announced that tourism is one of the key strategic economic –points in the province.

Limpopo Province, according to Mathabatha has recorded an increase of over 1, 5 million visitors in quarter 3 of 2022 from 600,000 in 2021. The figure has surpassed the 2021 international annual performance and that puts Limpopo back to the top three performing provinces in international tourist arrivals.

"In domestic performance, Limpopo had the greatest number of trips originating from the province with 1, 53 million trips in 2022, compared to just over 57,000 in 2021. This is a tremendous growth, compared to the previous years."

Mathabatha said Limpopo has



One of the Big 5 to be experienced in Limpopo

recorded 1, 62 million trips by Province of destination in quarter 3 of 2022." This puts Limpopo back to the

top three performing provinces in domestic trips."

"Hoedspruit Airport is amongst the

busiest airports and a major competitor among its peers in the country," said Mathabatha. He confirmed that out of the 78,000 passengers that land at Hoedspruit Airport, 61 000 of them are European tourists. The airport's ability to fly international allows many international travellers to have easy access the regional routes such as Vilanculo in Mozambique, Maun in Okavango delta Botswana and the Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe.

"I have assigned the MEC for Transport and Community Safety, to work with ACSA, and coordinate a team to ensure development of a workable strategy for repurposing of Hoedspruit Airport." **DM**

Picture taken during State of the Province Address



Group photo of the members of the legislature take during the State of the Province Address

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Traffic congestion soon to be something of the past in Ga-Malekana

Traffic congestion will soon be something of the past in Ga-Malekana after the Road Agency Limpopo (RAL) and Limpopo Provincial Government, sod –turning the construction of the steel bridge over the Steelpoort River on 21st February 2023.

The Construction of the Bridge over the Steelpoort river, at Ga-Malekana will cost R127-million. Local community members and small, medium-sized and microenterprises are expected to benefit from the project.

MEC for Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure Mme Nkakareng Rakgoale said the plans for the construction of a state –of-art bridge is at an advance stage. "As government, we are excited about the collaboration with mines to ensure that the plan is implemented. We call upon all our stakeholders to cooperate to avoid delays that will directly affect the implementation of the project. Once we allow a delay in a project it means that an additional funding will be needed and that might end up stalling the project".

"We also hope that the national government's declaration of a National State of Disaster will enable



Dignitaries during SOD turning ceremony

us to speedily intervene to repair damaged bridges, as well as identified critical roads that need to be repaired," said Nkakareng. "Our agency RAL is also hard at work upgrading and doing preventive maintenance to the roads in the province. I want to announce that RAL has just appointed 41 constant engineers and about 100 contractors and consultants for upgrading, rehabilitation and designs of our

roads," she said.

In addition, there are dozens of kilometres of road that still need to be upgraded and, for this to happen, the MEC said RAL required about R138-billion in funding.

The project is scheduled for completion in July 2024. The duration of this project will see more local labourers in the Tubatse area being employed as the contract makes provision for the employment of the

local labourers by the contractor during the 16-month long contract period.

Speaking on behalf of the eight mining partners, Conroy Van Der Westhuizen said the collaborative effort is part of heading the call made by the national Department of Mineral Resources for a major infrastructure development in Limpopo, especially in the Sekhukhune district. **DM & MN**

Limpopo Premier Bursary Fund Changed my life - Maria Molaba

Limpopo Premier Bursary Fund has changed my life," said Maria Molaba.

Studying under a lamp post, surviving abuse, multiple suicide attempts and being homeless to most may be too many misfortunes to bear, but for Maria Molaba, it's a lived experience that inspired and propelled her to greatness.

Born in family of seven siblings and raised by a single mother, her anecdote captures hardships hallmark that 'prepares ordinary people for extra ordinary destiny.'

The 208 Limpopo Premier Bursary Fund beneficiary with a BA Honours degree in Social Work's journey to success was exceedingly difficult. Maria grew up in a improvised tent house in Lebowakgomo which she shared with her single unemployed mother and seven siblings. Circumstances at her home were extremely unbearable such that she had to study under a streetlight in preparation of her matric examinations.

In the same year, whilst in matric Maria survived multiple abuses, attempted suicide twice, was homeless and had to survive by being a helper at a church which provided her with accommodation and meals.

Her socio-economic misfortunes inspired her to pursue a career in social work at University of Limpopo where she was fully funded by the Limpopo Bursary Fund covering her tuition fee, stationery, textbooks and meals. Financial support from the bursary fund helped her to focus fully on her studies and she became the first person to attain a higher education qualification in her family.

Her goal was to come back and help her family and community. "I had to work hard to become a social worker so that I can come back and help my family and other vulnerable and less fortunate children in my community," she said.

Maria, who is currently employed as a social worker by Limpopo Department of Social Development in



Maria Molaba who completed her higher education qualification under difficult environment

the remote village of Mafefe could not hold back her emotions as she expressed gratitude to the funders of the bursary fund and staff at Limpopo Premier's Office for the support she received her difficult and vulnerable period at institution of higher learning. "I like to appreciate Limpopo Office of the Premier, funders of the bursary

fund and staff for really helping me and other less fortunate students to achieve their dreams. I am no longer vulnerable and less fortunate thanks to them," said Maria. **SL**

Mrs Mphela Sylvia Yelane Founder of Ezamazwe Education Centre

Mrs. Mphela Sylvia Yelane is the founder of Ezamazwe Education Centre for Innovation in 2020. The Centre is based in Lenyenye under Greater Tzaneen Municipality. The organization is focused on making quality education accessible to all including children in rural communities.

Ezamazwe Education Centre for Innovation intends to reduce level of poverty and illiteracy in the country through reading, storytelling, basic mathematics skill and Innovation programs, to empower rural learners to become independent thinkers and leaders of society.

They offer homework assistances to the young pupils, tutoring and extra lessons, coding and robotics, digital literacy and now introducing international culture exchange program.

The foundations also provide quality learning materials to the less privileged pupils and provides internship opportunities to unemployed graduates regardless of their field of studies.

Yelane was born and raised at Ga-Maake village outside Tzaneen. She is a qualified Economic Analyst from the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT), a pre-eminent thinker who influences key decision makers in strategic education development and policy. She is respected for her unique perspectives, balanced contrarian thinking with measured judgment and her ability to turn economic insight into inevitable ideas.

Throughout her academic journey, Yelane gained analytical knowledge in Economics and Statistic Analysis, and that is why she decided to dedicate her next journey to education, in anticipation to contribute towards United Nations (UN) 2030 Sustainable Development Goal No.4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, alleviate poverty through education and create job opportunities for youth and rural women).

Her postgraduate studies and research in Europe helped her to acquire both global and local perspectives of Economic Development and integrating key industrial models to bring about change that directly translate to Local Economic Development.

In February 2022, Yelane was invited as a delegate to the Stellenbosch University for 2030 reading panel, where the panel's goal was to review whether South Africa is on track to reach the 2030 goal to



Mrs Mphela Sylvia Yelane, the founder of Ezamazwe Education Centre explains how she discovered her dream

have a 10-year-old who can read confidently in grade 4, and what needs to change to ensure the country get there.

"I am a good citizen who is trying to use my qualification or skills to change the world but one step at a time. We noticed that for us to achieve a sustainable economic development, we need to change how things are done instead of developing those who already have the resources, I wanted to go back to the previously disadvantaged families," Yelane said.

Yelane said that the idea to start her education centre started in 2015 and upon registering with the Department of Social Development, the research work commenced where they were trying to evaluate how their program will operate and how unique they intend it to be from others, and it was officially launched at Lenyenye township in 2020.

Yelane stressed that statistically, about 78% of 10-year-old cannot read and write, so that was the main motivation to establish Ezamazwe Education Centre for Innovation in order to make an impact in the community as education is a primary tool to a better society and without the population being educated it would take longer for the society to advance. As a result, early last year the education centre launched Early Reading Clubs, also known as Reading Out of Poverty Program, where they go to local Early Childhood Centers (ECDs) and their team teaches them how to read and storytelling.

The intention to base the foundation

at Lenyenye was to ensure accessibility as locating the foundation in the CBD would isolate the same people they intend to serve such as families with low incomes. Despite having lack of funding challenges, the education centre impact at Lenyenye and surrounding villages is yielding results.

About 98% of their learners have progressed academically both in primary and secondary level with high pass rates and most of the learners got university admissions.

"We also created 10 internship programs in this financial year alone and employed about 15 volunteers who are getting work experience in Marketing, Accounting, IT, Media Studies, Communications and Business Management," Yelane highlighted.

Ezamazwe Education Centre for Innovation is currently operating without major sponsors despite partnering with CETA, they depend on personal investments, family's assistance with stationaries and laptops amongst other resources and Yelane is calling for other Organisations to also come on board and assist financially considering that they have a much anticipated USA summer camp.

She confirmed that the intended number of candidates expected across South Africa for the 2023 USA Summer Camp is 100 and at least 20 spots have been reserved for Limpopo Province with Eastern Cape, Kwazulu-Natal, Western Cape and Gauteng occupying the remaining 80.

Summer camp is a place in the USA where parents send their children

during the school summer holidays to take part in outdoor and social activities. Individuals with experience in sports, arts and other crafts are employed as camp counselors.

During the nine weeks summer camp program, counselors will be responsible for facilitating activities that take place at the camp and supervising campers and keeping them safe.

The program consists of different camps that include religious' camps, All Girls/Boys, Special Needs, Traditional Camps, Girls Scouts, and Unprivileged. The camp facilities also include lakes, pools, sports fields, creative/performing arts, rope courses, horseback riding programs. As a result, Ezamazwe Education Centre for Innovation is looking for counselors passionate about children, their wellbeing and exercise a great deal of patience.

Applicants will be anticipated to pay a program fee, however return flights, food and accommodation are fully paid by the camp and counselors will also be paid a stipend.

Youth intending to take part of this great initiative must be strictly between the ages of 19 to 27, have experience in Sports related crafts, must enjoy working with children, must be South African citizens with valid passports, must not be employed, fully vaccinated from Covid-19 and they must be available from the 20th of June.

Candidates are expected to apply before the 15th of March 2023, and they are expected to pay an amount of R6 000 for their passports and VISA applications.

"At least let us have a minimum of 10 young people from all five districts in Limpopo, where the government will be able to pay for their passports. The closing dates for application is the 15th of March 2023 and anyone from Limpopo can apply and this will change how they see the world and it will also help them to network."

As part of the Education Centre's future ambitions, Yelane said they would love to build the biggest center for Innovation in Limpopo Province, to open more branches in villages and townships within the province and to grow the Economic Research Division to serve local Economic Development Department with qualified research and reports.**MN**

Femicide nightmare

Private dwellings have been turned to crime scenes instead of a safe space for women and children. Perpetrators have gone as far as violating from toddlers to pensioners.

While the province is still trying to come to terms with the femicide tragedy instigated by an alleged serial killer the statistics of Gender Based Violence (GBV) continue to be on the rise.

To give support to victims, Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) work together with the provincial government to offer victim support. Ekuphumleni (which means a place of peace) Restoration home also known as Thy Rest is one of the organization that advocates for non violence against women and children and offer support on different levels to victims.



act, some never report the matter to authorities and family.

The pregnancies resulting from rape forces mothers to constantly be reminded of how they were violated because they feared to report the case to the family as at times family members such as uncles, cousins and even fathers are the ones committing the act.

Research has proved that there is a link between GBV and alcohol. Some perpetrators use it as a defense for their action and many reported cases are always based on two parties consenting to the intercourse while if they were in their sober mind, they will have not made any consent

The perception that, for a women to end up being a statistic of murder and rape is because they provoked the perpetrator remains on the mind of those that still believes that no person can be raped if she wore appropriate or if she did not send mixed signal of inviting the act.

The myth is escalated by unemployment where women are expected to be raped as a remuneration to getting a job while others are lured to be made to believe that they will get employment while they are at a risk of being human trafficked and killed by those they

believed will be their potential employers.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual & Transgender (LGBTQ+) are not immune to the rape and murders, they are often killed and raped to correct their sexuality as it is believed that there is something wrong with how they identify themselves.

Government is working together with NGOs and universities to offer support to those that are affected. Last year University of Limpopo (UL) has launched a gender desk as part of victim support to students. There are calendar days such as 16 Days of Activism Against Women and Children that the province is actively raising awareness. The GBV and Femicide summit that was held in the last three months in Polokwane, The Ranch Hotel to get inputs from various stakeholders on how to tackle the femicide nightmare.

SAPS has improved their victim services by implementing victim empowerment programme to prevent secondary victimization.

This allows victims to report the abuse in a safe space and not in the front line where they used to queue with other people seeking different services.

The space is a dignified room that allows the domestic trained personnel to deal with the case in a more dignified and professional manner. The safe space restores trust and confidence to victims. **EC**

Government boost agricultural projects with funding to ensure food security

Several agricultural projects in Limpopo Province has received financial boost to ensure food security for the people of the province.

The Lebowakgomo Abattoir has received a boost, with an approval of R32 million by National Empowerment Fund.

Premier Mathabatha in his State of the Province Address, said government in 2022, promised to come up with the turnaround strategy to support Zebediela Citrus Estate. On the 23rd February 2023, Mathabatha confirmed that, recently the government intervention is bearing the fruits. Preparatory work on the development of a comprehensive Master Plan for Zebediela in partnership with Impact Catalyst has started, following the conclusion, and the signing of a Co-operation Agreement in October 2022.

"Despite the challenges



A tomato farm that is supported by Government

experienced, mainly financial constraints from lower-than-expected income, the production of oranges is well on course. Preparations for harvesting are underway, scheduled to start later this month. The contribution made through the Social

Employment Fund, which is implemented by Impact Catalyst, has managed to create more than 600 jobs," said Mathabatha. He also indicated that the progress has been made through the Farmer Production Support Units Programme.

"The building for Masala Farmer Production Support Unit in Mopani District has been completed. This will benefit no less than 110 farmers producing food on the 2,203 hectares of land."

According to Mathabatha, Since Project Koba-Tlala Production Brigade was initiated in 2022/2023, the South African National Defence Force procured over R1 million worth of fresh produce from the farmers involved. Similarly, 32 collection points have been established to ensure active participation of small-scale farmers close to military establishments.

Furthermore, he announced that ZZ2's investment of R128 million into a cutting-edge agro-processing facility for avocados and tomatoes is now complete. **DM**

Best performing public school in Limpopo Province

Mbilwi Secondary School is the best performing public school in Limpopo Province for academic year 2022 with 246 bachelors. The school is situated in the Vhembe East Circuit.

It has a proud history of being a top performing public school, not only in the province, but also in the country. The School recorded 246 bachelors' (65, 60%), 77 diplomas' (20, 53%) and 52 higher certificates (13.52%). Mbilwi has managed to record a total of 635 distinctions in all learning areas respectively.

This includes 137 distinctions in Tshivenda Home Language, 1 distinction in English Home Language, 116 distinctions in English First Additional Language (FAL), 2 distinctions in Afrikaans First Additional Language, 42 distinctions in Mathematics, 50 distinctions in Physical Sciences, 37 distinctions in Life Sciences, 57 distinctions in Geography and 193 distinctions in Life Orientations.

Notably, all content subjects at Mbilwi Secondary School (Mathematics, Physical Science, Geography and Life Sciences) produced the best teachers and learners in prestigious club 100. A school qualifies to be in the prestigious club 100 if 100 or more candidates pass' each of the subjects, that is, Mathematics and Physical Science at 50% or more.

The school principal, Mr. Nnyambeni Cedrick Lidzhade, was jubilant with pride and said that this year's matriculants would have to work extra hard to maintain the standard.

"It feels good to be number one again by producing quality results although I believe that there's still a room for improvement. We did not only produce quality results, but we also topped the province with the number of distinctions produced and we managed to ensure that the learners get university admissions." Lidzhade said "To our matric class of 2023, we want all 508 Grade 12 learners this year to keep the standard that was set by last year's group and continue to reach higher and higher."

Principal Lidzhade acknowledges that the school has a strong foundation originating from lower grades and all educators have tasks to pay close attention, from grade 8 to 12, to ensure that they complete the syllabus and continuously monitor their performances.

He said that the enrichment programs they have in all grades, focusing mainly on Mathematics and Physical Science, are yielding positive outcomes which is why they have been excellent in those two major learning areas over the decades.

"Discipline and maintaining order also play pivotal roles to achieve greater results".

"No learner in our school is allowed to linger around and outside the school premises during the learning time, and this was another reason why Mbilwi is rated the best," said Lidzhade.

Two of the school's learners who did exceptionally well are Orifha Tshikororo



Miss Limpopo congratulates two of the best learners from Mbilwi

who obtained 300/300 (100%) for mathematics and Livhuwani Mutshidzi Sidebi who obtained 300/300 for physical science.

Tshikororo (18) is a girl who hails from Ngovhela just outside Thohoyandou and is now pursuing a career in Actuarial Science at the University of Pretoria.

Tshikororo obtained 90% in English FAL, 92% in Geography, 95% in Life

Sciences, 98% in Physical Science, 91% in Tshivenda Home Language and 93% in Life Orientations which contributes to overall total of 49 university Application Point Score (APS).

She said avoiding last minute preparations was a huge boost for her in achieving this milestone. "I managed to achieve these results because of my hard work and determination. From the

beginning of the year, I have been practicing Mathematics a lot and studying other learning areas hard as well. I did not wait until the examinations approached as we know that procrastination is a thief of time. I was always ready for the exams throughout the year," said Tshikororo.

Tshikororo said she was elated to see her efforts not being in vain and her hard work materializing, considering that she was raised by a single mother who works as a supervisor at a Thohoyandou Spar Supermarket.

She urged the Limpopo matric class of 2023 to prioritize their studies and strive for excellence in order to improve the results of 2022.

"They must be committed to their studies and listen to their educators because they are experienced and have their best interests at heart. We are all aware that sleeping is fun and nice especially during exam time, so they must sacrifice that and not procrastinate. They must fight for their future through education." Tshikororo concluded Sidebi (18) hails from Makwarela Extension 3 and he was raised by a father who is an educator and an unemployed mother. He's passionate about all science related streams and He is now pursuing a medical degree at the top-rated University of Cape Town. Sidebi also obtained 99% in Mathematics, 94% in Life Sciences, 98% in Life Orientations, 91% in English FAL, 89% in Tshivenda Home Language, and his lowest mark was 88% in Geography which contributes to overall total of 49 university APS.

He said perseverance, hard work and being attentive to educators played a pivotal role in reaching his landmark.

"I used to study everyday including weekends. I used to ask my teachers a lot of questions for clarity wherever I come across challenges. I also had a study group with my friends, and we used to push each other. On achieving 100% in Physical Science, I was shocked and excited at the same time because all my hard work paid off. It's always good to dream, put efforts to your goals and it is so satisfying to see the results," said Sidebi.

"I was not taking languages serious (Tshivenda Home Language and English FAL) because I would be more focused on Mathematics and Science only and throughout the year my language marks were not that good. But towards the end of the year, I went to my language teachers for assistance because paper 3 for both languages had higher marks. I got the balance of some sort prior to the final examinations, I then started to balance my life, time management and with that I recovered what I have lost." **MN**



NSNP Director, Matamela Matanga (centre) receiving an award on behalf of Madjadji Primary School from Deputy Minister Dr. Reginah Mhaule. Pic: LDoE/Thabo Mashitsho

Madjadji Primary School scoops R800 000 worth State of the Art kitchen

Pretoria - Madjadji Primary School in Mopani East Education District has scooped the 2022/ 23 National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) Award for Best Daily Meal for learners. Dr. Reginah Mhaule, the Deputy Minister of Basic Education,

announced the NSNP winner yesterday, on 23 February at the DBE Conference Centre in Pretoria.

The school will receive a fully equipped kitchen worth R800 000, sponsored by the Tiger Brands Foundation. The NSNP provides a daily

nutritious meal to school children across South Africa. The daily meal helps the school children perform better in school. This is made possible by the hard work and dedication of officials in districts and schools.

Madjadji Primary School outshined

others and came out tops after the Department of Basic Education visited and evaluated all nine of the best schools nationally. **MM**

Language activism month



MEC Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya (left) CEO of PanSALB, Lance Schultz (right). Pic: LDoE/Thabo Mashitsho

Polokwane - Language is a tool to transform education and a vehicle to integrate different cultures in the South African societies.

The Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB), in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education and the SABC held a successful two-day International multilingual conference on the 20 - 21 February 2023 at the Ranch Resort, outside Polokwane to promote and support the use of languages. The two-day conference which was attended by variety of education stakeholders including Curriculum Advisors further aimed at administering and promoting the use of indigenous languages or marginalized languages

in the South African societies. This forms part of the institution's continued efforts to promote the use of mother tongue and multilingualism.

The conference also focused on the advancement of the adoption of the Department of Basic Education's Mother Language Based Bilingual Education (MTBBE) programme as well as fast tracking its roll-out in schools throughout the country. The conference was held under the theme "Multilingual education - a necessity to transform education" as declared by UNESCO to promote the improvement of learning performance through the adoption of a multilingual approach to education.

In her keynote address, the Limpopo Department of Education Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya applauded those who perpetually strives for the preservation of Indigenous Languages.

"We need to move along the footsteps of equitable quality education in a subject taught in mother language for its preservation, The department of arts and culture, the practitioners, and the writers and all of us who made the workshop possible, your contribution has been noted and recorded. We need to understand and celebrate diversity and independency which is in our identity. Today it is about diversity that is within us as the world and the people of South Africa. Our responsibility as

the department of education is to make sure that our languages are taught at schools so that the learners can go and speak at home. The parents need to join hands and participate in the whole activities from foundation phase and grade one. We also need to ensure that proper documentation of the languages is made" said MEC. **MM**

Crime Statistics for the second quarter of 2022/23 reveals horrifying reality

The crime statistics for the second quarter of 2022/23 revealed the horrifying reality of 83 rapes and 19 murders committed on the premises of educational facilities nationwide. The recent survey by SA statistics reported that one in five learners (22.2%) had experienced some form of violence while at school, 12.2% of the learners had been threatened with violence, 6.3% had been physically assaulted, 4.7% had been sexually assaulted or raped and 4.5% had been robbed. Studies have shown that these crimes can make student to appear irritable, intensive, arrogant and restless.

Department of Transport and Community

Services(DTCS) continues to amplify school safety messages and therefore reiterates that there is no place for bullying, harassment, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation, corporal punishment and other criminal acts in schools as it poses a serious barrier to learning.

Department continues to thrive in a solid partnership with the South African Police Services (SAPS) aimed at linking schools with local Police- Stations and the establishment of functional School Safety Committees.

The DTCS Safety Promotions team together with members from various divisions in the SAPS and other

significant stakeholders such as the CPF, Community in blue and YCOP, visited Mogale wa Bagale Technical High School and Leolo Technical High School in Burgersfort, Sekhukhune District on an unannounced schools safety visit.

This is part of the department's efforts to facilitate a crime-free learning environment, opportune for both learners and educators.

The visit was characterized by searches on pupils, their bag-packs and around the school premises using trained police dogs.

The multidisciplinary team deployed at the two schools, held talks with the scholars against crime, domestic

violence, bullying, drug and substance abuse, and handed them information materials containing Safety tips pertinent to the issues in discussion.

The pupils were also stimulated to refrain from any preposterous or criminal conduct and to break the silence against crime and abuse around the school premises and their respective places of inhabitation. **GM**

#breakthesilence
#StopBullying

MEC Kick start the Back-to-school Campaign to improve the results



MEC Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya (3rd from left) and other delegates handing over sanitary towels and school shoes to the needy learners. Pic: LDoE

Malamulele - Limpopo Education MEC Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya kick-started the 2023 back to school campaign by visiting Vhembe East Education District during the first week of February. The MEC handed over sanitary towels and school shoes to needy learners of Johannes Ramavhoya and Movhe Secondary schools respectively in Mulendze village.

The MEC who was accompanied by Collins Chabane Mayor, Cllr. Shadrack Maluleke used the opportunity to motivate learners during the campaign

and urged them to work harder if they want to achieve their dreams. The visit was wrapped up at Nwaridi secondary and Tshivhade primary schools at Mashau village where she also conducted an oversight visit of the water and sanitation project currently underway.

The stakeholders from the local municipalities, tribal authorities, circuit managers and school management who joined the MEC on her first visit have commended the visit and made a commitment to continue with the

oversight responsibilities.

The department aims to offer and pledge their support to the learners and teachers by fostering partnerships with parents, to encourage and motivate them to remain devoted to their goals.

"We are here to show our love, support and to encourage you to sacrifice and work hard in your studies. We would like to see you representing our country internationally by achieving more than the expectations. The only way for our society to grow and prosper is through proper education at all levels

and we fully rely on you as our future generation", said MEC Lerule-Ramakhanya.

The MEC handed over dignity packs and school shoes to one hundred learners from Tshivhade and Nwaridi schools to restore the dignity of the less fortunate. The MEC said the packs which comprise mainly of toiletries is a token to the needy and will reduce the number of learners who drop out because of inequalities. **MM**

Shova Kalula Bicycles Handed To Vhembe District Learners



Deputy Minister Sindisiwe Chikunga (6th from right) handing over Shova Kalula bicycles to the learners.

Malamulele - Deputy Minister of Transport Sindisiwe Chikunga handed over 257 Shova Kalula bicycles to learners in Vhembe. The bicycles were given to qualifying learners of Shirelele Secondary school, and Hlalukweni.

The Shova Kalula bicycles are given to learners who walk more than 3 kilometres to school to ensure that they arrive at school on time. The event that was part of the Back-to-school Campaign and Cycling Safety Education Awareness was held at the Worship Tabernacle Christian Church just outside Malamulele town. Another 541 bicycles were handed over to four more identified schools in Musina, Makhado and Thulamela Local Municipalities to make the total of 798 bicycles that were distributed in the Vhembe District early this week. The Deputy Minister is planning to provide a total of 1400 bicycles to the province to reach the target set for 2023.

The Deputy Minister stated that since 2001, they have distributed over hundred thousand bicycles to

the learners in townships and rural areas to reach a target of 1 million in the country.

"The Department has been distributing the bicycles to maximize the use of low-cost non-motorized transport to enable learners especially in the rural areas who walk at least 3 kilometres but not more than 5 kilometres to school to access basic education needs," said Deputy Minister Chikunga. She further outlined that the department will assist in providing road safety to all the beneficiaries.

Deputy Minister Chikunga encouraged and invited learners to apply for bursary opportunities in transport related fields such as Aeronautical studies, Aviation, Civil Engineering, Maritime Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Road traffic Engineering studies. Learners were also encouraged and motivated to focus on their studies and show more resilience and willingness to keep trying when faced with challenges. **MM**



Bicycles given to learners

Provincial School Readiness Drive



Premier Mathabatha talking to learners during back to school campaign

Sekhukhune - Premier Mathabatha and MEC Lerule-Ramakhanya, activated the Back-to-School campaign to mark the start of the 2023 academic year in Sekhukhune District.

At the beginning of each academic calendar the Department assess the state of readiness of schools across the province to advance any form of assistance from the earliest possible point in the year. All members of the executive committee were deployed to

various schools in the province as part of monitoring the readiness for the academic year 2023. The delegation was part of the province's teams visiting schools across the province to assess their state of readiness for the resumption of the schooling programme. The focus was on highly enrolled schools and schools that did not perform well in 2021.

The programme of this campaign had two segments in it. Firstly, the delegation met with school

management bodies which are led by the school principal, secondly they addressed learners, encouraged and motivated them as they steady themselves to negotiate the year ahead. During the meeting sessions between the government delegation, the school management and the School Governing Body (SGBs) principals give profiles of their schools.

It is the profiles of schools that determine the nature of interventions needed in each school. "The majority of our schools issued stationery and

textbooks, while all learners eligible for feeding are fed in our schools that are participating in the NSNP. Furthermore, the reports I received from our ten Education Districts is that attendance of learners at all our schools is satisfactory", said Premier Mathabatha.

The Department takes this opportunity to welcome all the role-players back in schools and to extend best wishes for the year 2023.**GM**

Educations aims to bring dignified sanitations to schools

Thohoyandou - The plan to eradicate pit latrines in schools remains a key priority for the Limpopo Department of Education.

The province has the lowest number of schools without access to improved sanitation services. In an attempt to remove pit latrines, Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation Dikeledi Magadzi and MEC for Education Mavhungu-Lerule Ramakhanya launched the sanitation project at Rasivhetshele primary school, HaMangilasi village in Vhembe East Education District.

The Deputy Minister and MEC both had an opportunity to attend the 2022 World Toilet Day commemorations that aimed at making interventions through government and private sector partnerships providing an opportunity to profile the work done in support of government to improve access to dignified sanitation and drinking water.

In ensuring the sustainability of these services, Water and Sanitation Community Structures (WSCS) and



Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, Dikeledi Magadzi (seated) and MEC Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya (standing) cutting the ribbon. Pic: LDoE



School Governing Bodies (SGB's) have also been capacitated to operate on the maintenance of good hygiene practices. They are further required to increase community education and awareness whilst raising the importance of washing hands with soap at critical times to reduce the transmission of communicable diseases.

Wateraid Southern Africa, Kimberly-Clark Corporation and Tsogang through this initiative, planned to increase

access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities in schools and surrounding communities in Vhembe District.

This partnership seeks to rehabilitate and construct water points and increase water storage, "female friendly" toilets to accommodate approximately 8 574 learners. It is anticipated that the official handover will begin to take place in February 2023 The Department of Education acknowledges the complaint regarding

the delay in responding to infrastructure challenges in the province.

The department is currently navigating through challenges that have caused the delay by reconciling the different viewpoints regarding the scope of work to be executed at schools through IDT working on 50 schools, Mvula Trust with 202 and DBSA with 154 active projects.**MM**

Grannies Soccer World Cup 2023 Kicks off in Nkowankowa

The Vhakhegula Vhakhegula brand has officially launched the first ever Grannies International Football Tournament (GIFT), which will kick off at Nkowankowa Stadium on the 26th to 29th March 2023.

The three day event, will have 32 teams, 23 foreign teams and nine local teams, one from each province, competing for the top spot. The Grannies International Football Tournament is for women who are above the age of 50.

The international teams are from France, Spain, Denmark, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Togo, Ghana and United State of America (USA), with the other being South African teams, one each from 9 provinces.

The first day of the competition will include round-robin games with 20 teams split into five groups of four teams. The matches will be played for a duration of 40 minutes with 20 minutes of it being half time.

The triumphant five teams on points form each of the five pools together with three of the best second placed teams will advance to the quarter finals and the winner walking away with R50 000 and runner ups with



R20 000.

According to Head Coach Mr Abraham Sevor the international event will be an opportunity for both Limpopo Province and the Country to promote tourism products and showcase the local talent.

"The team is ready to compete with the world's best teams and that will also entice other countries to participate in future"

"It is challenging to work with the grannies because you need to exercise patience and be strong

mentally. However, we are ready for the international tournament and intends to show the world what we're capable of by keeping the trophy here in our province of Limpopo," Abraham said.

Ms Makoma Langa from Vutomi Wellness and Fitness said the Grannies are well taken of, physically and mentally. Vutomi Wellness and Fitness is responsible for assisting them with fitness training, diet programmes and maintain fitness lifestyle on and off

the football pitch.

"Grannies' diet is an everyday routine and they are always advised to eat healthy and not skip meals".

Vhakhegula Player Mme Muriel Shiluvane, admitted that healthy diet is what keeps them strong as players." As an older adult, regular physical exercise is one of the most important things you can do for your health and it also helps your muscles grow stronger. Training prevent many of health problems that seems to come with age and you can keep doing your day to day activities without becoming dependent on others, while at the same time helping with your blood pressure to remain normal".

The other stadiums approved for the Grannies International Tournament are Lenyenye and Burgersdorp.

The tournament will be preceded by gala dinner at the Tzaneen Country Lodge on 25 March 2023, an event which Limpopo Premier Chupu Stanley Mathabatha and MEC for Sport, Arts and Culture Mme Nakedi Grace Kekana are expected to attend. **MN**

"Mother Theresa" of Limpopo founder of Mama Beka Foundation

Mama Beka Foundation was founded in 2003 by Mme Beka Ntsanwisi known as the "The Mother Theresa" of Limpopo.

Mme Beka has proven that women are the pride of the country. In 2007 she also formed grannies soccer team called Vhakhegula Vakhegula.

She is a philanthropist and radio personality who was born in 1968 at Nkowankowa Village outside Tzaneen in Limpopo. Born to a father who was an educator and school inspector. She started her education at Nkowankowa Primary School and matriculated at Hudson Ntsanwisi High School, which was named after her father –a man who had contributed to the improvement of the community .She went on to study music at the University of Venda.

From 2002 to 2006, she won the Black Management Forum Limpopo Woman of Excellence Award. She also won the Limpopo Achiever's Award in 2005 and the Premier's Award in 2006. In June 2006, the Nkowankowa branch of the South African National Civic Organisation honored her for all the activities in which she is engaged to assist the helpless.

Ntsanwisi, who is aptly known in Limpopo, has done a lot for the poor



Mama Beka Ntsanwisi founder of Mama Beka Foundation

and poverty –stricken community of this region. She has advanced colon cancer but this has not stopped her from serving the community.

She is now known for her role as a judge on the SABC 2 Xitsonga Telenovela Giyani, Land of Blood. As she responded to questions posed by Mr Maano Nekhevhambe, Journalist from Office of the Premier, explained that she indeed suffered from colon cancer.

"I formed a support group together with the Department of Health to help those who are suffering from cancer and to dispel the myths of witchcraft which are prevalent in

some of the communities".

Those who have been following Mme Beka know that despite her being chronic, she proved to be a live-wire, finding solace in helping the sick and the needy through her popular programme in SABC.

She said while she was a radio presenter she had an opportunity to talk to many listeners who phoned in to discuss their problems. She then contacts the business community or health institutions to assist.

"There were times I was sponsoring students out of my pocket until the community of Nkowankowa and surrounding

villages joined hands to assist in the Foundation.

Ntsanwisi further said, she initiated a number of developments in rural areas to assist local communities and has opened an office in Polokwane for youth developments initiatives.

"...I was told by the doctors that I only have three months to live and no matter how fortunate I might be, I won't live for three years. I had medical aid and got treated at private hospitals but whenever I visited public hospitals to support cancer patients, I discovered that most of the Grannies were admitted at the hospital. After spending time on the wheelchair, doctors advised me to exercise regularly to increase the flow of blood. I recruited some of the grannies to join me for exercise and other days will go to the soccer field for a jog until the day we saw young boys playing soccer and decided to join them. After experiencing the joy from sport, I then formed soccer team called Vakhegula Vakhegula as part of the foundation".

"It was not an easy road to bring everything together for the Foundation to operate but today I am proud of the success achieved by the foundation in its 20 years of operation," said Mme Beka. **MN**