Letaba Herald
Regional Herald
Mopani District News
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STORM DAMAGE

Communities left without electricity for weeks





The aftermath of heavy rains and wind. Insert Top: A tree is uprooted by strong winds. Bottom: Electricity poles are damaged by the storm.

Tintswalo Shipalana

Two weeks after a storm ravaged through communities in the Greater Tzaneen Municipality (GTM), on December 26, some areas are still without electricity.

As a result of frustrations which came with the power outage, some communities, which include Burgersdorp, Zhangoma and Nkowankowa Section C, took to the streets, while some protested outside Eskom offices at Nkowankowa industrial area.

This is after residents were forced to spend their Goodwill Day in darkness following power outages caused by heavy rain that occurred late that afternoon.

The heavy downpour, accompanied by lightning and strong winds, damaged homes, electricity infrastructure, churches and businesses. The storm resulted in fallen trees, road blockages and flooding in several areas.

Weddings and other events were delayed, due to the damage caused at several venues.

On the day of the incident GTM reported that "affected areas included the stretch between Letsitele and Tarantaalrand, where trees have fallen and are obstructing the road; the R71 near Makgoebaskloof Dam, where a tree has fallen onto the road; flooding reported along the R36 at Bridgeway village, Maake Plaza and Mhangweni village; fallen trees on roads in Agatha; and in Nkowankowa, from the power station to Mariveni, where trees are also blocking the road," the municipality said.

GTM spokesperson Vutivi Makhubele, told the Herald that they have been working together with different stakeholders including Eskom and Mopani District Municipality to make sure they attend to the affected communities. Unfortunately the natural disaster, was beyond our control and we are trying our best to make sure that people have electricity, after transformers and electricity poles were damaged.

"Our team is working tirelessly to make sure that the issue is fixed," she said. Meanwhile GTM together with the Gift of the Givers Foundation and the Department of Social Development, have donated food parcels to 500 households which were affected by the storm.

At the time of going to print the municipality and Eskom technicians were busy repairing electricity infrastructure.



EMR Vision Foundation celebrates 3 years of community empowerment

Sharon Makhongele

Nkowankowa-based EMR Vision Foundation has marked three years of dedicated service, reflecting on a growing footprint in community development, health awareness, and social empowerment.

Since its establishment, the foundation has focused on building informed, resilient families and communities through targeted programmes. Key initiatives include health talks conducted in partnership with local stakeholders, addressing issues such as men's health, wellness, and disease prevention. The sessions have helped to promote early intervention, healthy lifestyles, and informed health choices.

The organisation has also hosted parent talks and networking sessions, creating safe and practical platforms for parents and guardians to engage on child development, discipline, education opportunities, and social challenges affecting families. "These dialogues have strengthened parental involvement and community cohesion," said Eric Magamana Rikhotso, founder of EMR Vision Foundation.

"A flagship intervention has been a men's conference, which provided a space for men and boys to discuss mental health, responsibility, fatherhood, gender-based violence, and personal development. The conference aligns with the foundation's advocacy for raising boys into responsible men and champions positive masculinity."

Beyond dialogues, EMR Vision Foundation has implemented skills development and empowerment activities, including support for SMMEs through information-sharing sessions, youth empowerment programmes, and school-based initiatives such as agricultural support projects. The foundation has also collaborated with partners to support vulnerable groups, including the elderly and learners.

As it celebrates this milestone, EMR Vision Foundation reaffirms its commitment to community upliftment through partnerships, education, and advocacy. The organisation expressed gratitude to community members, partners, volunteers, and supporters who have contributed to its impact over the past three years. Looking ahead, EMR Vision Foundation aims to expand its programmes in health awareness, youth development, men and boys' empowerment, and community capacity building, continuing its mission of creating informed and empowered communities.

Stibium Mopani Mine

015 151 0888
info@stibium.co.za
https://stibiummining.com

No 777LT Farm Josephine
Gravelotte, Tzaneen, 0895

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL JOB ADVERTISEMENT

POSITION: General Foreman
LOCATION: Stibium Mopani Mine (Gravelotte – Limpopo)
DEPARTMENT: METALLURGY

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates to fill the above-mentioned vacancy.

MINIMUM ROLE REQUIREMENTS:
- Must be in possession of Grade 12.
- Minimum of 5 years Gold Plant experience of which 3 years should have been in a supervisory role.
- Diploma in Metallurgy will be advantageous.
- Previous experience of data capturing and trend monitoring will be an advantageous.
- Control Room (Scada) experience will be advantageous.
- Knowledge of Mine Health & Safety requirements.
- Valid Driver's Licence.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:
The incumbent will be responsible for the following:
- Supervise Foremen and shift work employees in accordance with plant policies and procedures.
- Monitor all mill and process plant parameters to ensure safe and effective operation of the production plants according to operating procedures and standards.
- Responsible for meeting shift production goals.
- Train and coach shift work employees.
- Conduct Planned Task Observations.
- Coordinate production startups, shutdowns, and changeovers. Control and monitor all process equipment.
- Follow up problems identified by the operators in their sections.
- Responsible for shift scheduling - to include work section assignments / rotations, employee training, employee vacations, employee breaks, overtime assignment, back-up for absent employees, and shift rotations.
- Schedule and conduct shift meetings.
- Maintain housekeeping.
- Complete shift paperwork.
- Monitor and record process parameters to ensure effective operation.
- Submit all required samples to Assay Laboratory at the end of shift.
- Conduct shift handover and communicate deviations with other Foremen and Metallurgical Supervisor.
- Do standby for plants.
- Responsible for Gold Room daily duties standards and procedures.

KEY COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS:
- Production experience.
- Risk Assessment experience.
- Computer literate. Confident using computerised systems and Microsoft Office Package. Scada system knowledge.
- Must be able to multi-task, work with a team or on their own if required.
- Be prepared to work shifts, weekends, public holidays and overtime.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Leadership, Planning and Problem-solving skills.
- Be prepared to work long extended hours, if required.
- Gold smelting experience will be beneficial.

This role reports directly to Metallurgical Supervisor

Interested parties should submit detailed curriculum vitae to:
Attention: Human Resources Dept
Email: careers@stibium.co.za
Closing Date: 16/01/2025

Stibium Mopani Mine is committed to the achievement and maintenance of diversity and equity in employment.

Communication shall be limited to shortlisted applicants.

Note: Applications who receive no response to their application within 14 working days may consider their application for the position to be unsuccessful.



The current 'pear to beat' is Riaan and Julia de Wet. **> Photo: Supplied.**

Monthly Pears season kicks off

The popular Letaba Herald Monthly Pears competition will kick off its 2026 calendar with the first event of the year taking place on January 10 at the Tzaneen Bowls Club. The event will start at 10:00, with participants required to arrive by 9:30.

Entry costs R50 per person, with R30 going towards the Pear Tree fund, while the remaining amount contributes to the prize pool. The current 'pear to beat' is Riaan and Julia de Wet as competition heats up for a chance to claim the growing pears jackpot, currently standing at R3 580.

Non-members are welcome to participate, with a once-off R100 fee granting full-year membership in the Pears Club.

The Monthly Pears competition has become a firm favourite on the local sporting calendar, combining friendly rivalry with community spirit, and organisers are expecting a strong turnout for the first event of 2026.

Letaba Herald

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DISTRICT UPDATES

Limpopo moms deliver healthy Christmas and New Year babies

Tintswalo Shipalana

Limpopo Health MEC Dieketseng Mashego has congratulated all the moms who gave birth to Christmas and New Year babies in hospitals and clinics across the province.

Limpopo recorded 38 newborns, 22 girls and 16 boys on Christmas day. She also welcomed the arrival of 106 newborns, 51 boys and 55 girls, on January 1, reflecting a positive and hopeful start to the year.

Mopani District welcomed a total of 47 Christmas babies at different health facilities.

There were 15 babies from Tzaneen hospitals, six from Phalaborwa, 12 from Giyani, six from Maruleng and eight from Greater Letaba Municipality. Mopani also topped the New Year babies list, with a total of 77 bundles of joy, 37 boys and 40 girls, across the region.

There were nine teen mothers with the youngest being 14, and six teens became Christmas moms with the youngest being 15 years of age. The MEC extended her heartfelt congratulations to all new mothers and families, commending healthcare workers for their continued dedication in ensuring safe deliveries and quality maternal and neonatal care during the busy period.

In different municipalities mayors also took their time and visited hospitals such as Letaba, Van Velden, Nkhensani and Maphuta Malatji among other hospitals.



Limpopo Health MEC Dieketseng Mashego welcomes a Christmas baby. **> Photo supplied.**



Regional Herald
Mopani District News

Several schools in rural villages still rely on pit toilets.

Pit toilets at rural schools - parents call for intervention

Anwen Mojela

Despite repeated government promises to eradicate unsafe sanitation in schools, many rural learners in Mopani District continue to attend classes at schools that still rely on pit toilets and crumbling infrastructure.

Several schools in deep rural villages remain without proper sanitation, adequate classrooms or basic facilities, years after national deadlines were set to eliminate pit latrines and improve learning conditions.

At one primary school outside Giyani, learners are forced to use pit toilets that parents describe as "dangerous and undignified".

"We fear for our children every day," said one parent, Basani Maluleke.

"These toilets are old and unsafe, but nothing has been done despite complaints."

The Department of Education is committed to eradicating pit toilets nationwide, following several tragic incidents in which learners lost their lives. However, parents and school governing bodies in Mopani say rural schools continue to be overlooked while infrastructure upgrades are concentrated in urban and semi-urban areas.

The school governing body at a rural secondary school said overcrowding remains a major challenge. "We have more than 60 learners in one classroom because new classrooms were promised but never built," they said. "Teaching and learning suffer, but rural schools are always last in line."

Community members allege that some infrastructure projects were started but never completed, leaving schools with half-built classrooms and unused foundations.

Education activist Merriam Mokoena warns that the ongoing infrastructure backlog deepens inequality between rural and urban schools.

"Learners in rural areas are expected to compete academically with learners who have libraries, laboratories and safe toilets," said Mokoena.

"That is not fair and it affects results and morale."

The Department of Education has previously cited budget constraints, contractor challenges and logistical issues as reasons for delays.

At the time of going to print, the department had not responded to questions on how many schools in Mopani still use pit toilets or when they will be replaced.

As schools prepare for the new academic year, parents are calling for urgent intervention.

"Our children deserve dignity and safety," said Daisy Malungane. "Being from a rural village should not mean being forgotten."

YOUR VOICE

What would you like to do in 2026?

Tintswalo Shipalana

When a new year starts, many people are usually motivated to try something new. The Herald spoke to three readers who are optimistic about the year ahead and are ready to try something new and do something different, which they always wanted to do or did not have the guts to attempt. Here is what they said:



Ivy Makofane, a mom of three from Nkowankowa, says she would like to try horse riding and hiking this year. "Everytime I see people riding horses, it makes me to want to try it. I also want to start hiking, I like how it has fitness/health benefits, at the same time it also gives one an opportunity to enjoy nature."

Glen Mabunda from Phalaborwa says as a foodie he would like to try and experience more seafood cuisine. "I have been hesitant to try seafood, but this year I am taking the leap and trying it.





Sheila Maluleke, a mom of two from Tzaneen says, this year she wants to go on a week-long girls trip to unwind. "My schedule is always tight and busy with family, work and church activities, and don't have much resting time. A girl's trip will do me good and I'm willing to commit myself to spend time with my friends."

Uncovering the heart of your community.



Herald
Letaba Mopani Hoedspruit Phalaborwa
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Mopani District News

DISTRICT UPDATE

Mopani water infrastructure projects: Promises vs reality as residents lose faith in timelines

Anwen Mojela

For years, residents of Mopani have been told that relief is on its way. Multibillion rand water infrastructure projects have been announced with fanfare, budgets approved and completion dates promised. Yet for many communities across the district, the daily reality remains unchanged: dry taps, long queues at communal boreholes and a reliance on water tankers that arrive late or not at all.

Two of the most prominent projects; the Giyani Bulk Water Project and the Mametja-Sekororo Bulk Water Project, were meant to be game-changers. Together, they were designed to supply reliable, treated water to dozens of villages that have struggled with shortages for decades. On paper, these projects symbolised progress and a commitment to restoring dignity through access to clean water.

The reality on the ground, however, tells a different story.

The Mametja-Sekororo project, launched more than a decade ago at a cost exceeding R1b, is still incomplete. Despite repeated assurances that work is nearing completion, many villages in the Sekororo area continue to rely on unsafe water sources or tanker deliveries. Residents say they have lost faith in timelines that shift year after year.

Similarly, the Giyani Bulk Water Project, which cost billions, has been plagued by delays, planning challenges and governance concerns. While some bulk infrastructure has been completed, the critical last step, reticulation to households, remains unfinished in many areas. As a result, water flows through new pipelines but fails to reach taps in homes.

Community frustration has boiled over on several occasions. Residents have staged protests, demanding answers and immediate solutions. Many question how so much money can be spent with so little visible improvement in their daily lives.

Mopani District Municipality has acknowledged challenges, citing ageing infrastructure, vandalism, electricity supply issues and limited technical capacity. Officials also point to ongoing interventions, including borehole repairs, refurbishment of water treatment works and the use of emergency water tankers to mitigate shortages. However, critics argue that these measures treat symptoms rather than causes. Civil society organisations and opposition parties have raised concerns about poor project management, weak oversight and a lack of accountability for stalled or failed projects. They say communities deserve transparency about how public funds are spent. Experts warn that without proper maintenance plans and skilled technical staff, even completed infrastructure will struggle to deliver long-term benefits. Water infrastructure is not just about building pipelines and reservoirs, but about ensuring sustainable operation, maintenance and monitoring. As Mopani enters another summer season marked by high temperatures and increased demand, the gap between promise and reality becomes starker. For residents, access to water is not a political talking point or a budget line item, it is a basic necessity.

Herald contacted Mopani District Municipality spokesperson Odas Ngobeni on the progress of the ongoing projects, by the time of going to print no response was received. An update will be published once information is received.

CRIME

Stock theft remains a major concern

Anwen Mojela

Stock theft continues to plague rural communities across the Mopani District, with farmers reporting ongoing losses of cattle, goats, and sheep, particularly in remote grazing areas.

According to police and community reports, stock theft incidents have been recorded in several parts of the district, including areas around Tzaneen, Kgapane, Ga-Sekororo, and the greater Giyani region. These areas are characterised by communal grazing lands and large farming spaces, which often make it difficult to monitor livestock continuously.

Farmers say the crime has a devastating impact on livelihoods, especially for small-scale and communal farmers who depend on livestock for income, food security, and cultural practices.

“Losing even one cow is a serious setback,” said Matome Ragolane, a farmer from Kgapane. “For many families, cattle are not just animals, they are savings, school fees, and security.”

Police investigations have shown that stolen livestock is moved quickly to other areas, sometimes being sold illegally or taken to auctions before owners realise they are missing. In several recent cases, community tip-offs helped police recover stolen cattle and make arrests. SAPS spokespersons have repeatedly warned that unbranded or poorly marked livestock remains an easy target for criminals. They are urging farmers to ensure their animals are properly branded and that brands are registered, as this helps with identification and recovery.

Sgt Ridgewell Rikhotso said that Giyani villages are the main hotspots for stock theft compared to other villages in the Mopani area.

Stock theft units operating in Limpopo have increased patrols, particularly during early mornings and late evenings. However, police admit that vast rural distances and limited resources make it difficult to cover all areas effectively.

Community leaders believe stronger cooperation between farmers, traditional authorities and police is key to tackling the problem. Neighbourhood watches, farmer patrols and shared communication platforms have already proven effective in some villages.

Mopani District Municipality has also acknowledged stock theft as a challenge affecting rural development and food security.

As stock theft continues to threaten livelihoods across the district, residents are calling for tougher sentences for offenders and increased visibility of police stock theft units.

For now, farmers remain vigilant, hoping that coordinated efforts between communities and law enforcement will help curb the crime and protect one of Mopani’s most valuable resources.

Letaba Herald’s evolution

The history of the newspaper industry in Tzaneen took as many interesting turns as the town and the region itself.

Tzaneen has had a newspaper since January 15, 1959. The Impala was started by Ronnie van der Berg at a time when Tzaneen was probably one of the smallest towns in the country to have its own newspaper. The Impala was sold to Theo Senekal in 1968 under whose leadership the newspaper grew from strength to strength until he decided to discontinue publishing the newspaper in 1974.

In the same year, the Lowvelder group from Nelspruit, under the leadership of Jan Cilliers, decided to start a new newspaper in Tzaneen.

In September of that year, the first issue of the Letaba Lowvelder was published. The newspaper’s first editor was Eugene Kruger, who later became editor of several well-known speciality magazines. He was succeeded by Tienie Fourie, who later became head sub-editor for Beeld.

In 1974 Lukas Groenewald made his first appearance in Tzaneen after being promoted from sports editor for the Lowvelder in Nelspruit to news editor for the Letaba Lowvelder in Tzaneen. He took the reins from Hennie Egen who joined the team at Pretoria News. During 1976 Senekal felt drawn back to the newspaper world, prompting him to take over the struggling Zeederberg and revive it. Tzaneen thus had two newspapers, albeit only for a short time.

In September 1977 Senekal appointed Archie van Reenen as editor. Out of his pen flowed not only numerous articles and reports but also a weekly commentary on local, national and international news.


LETABA Herald

Two shot, killed in crime wave


HOEDSPRUIT Herald

centre set to open doors

An old Hoedspruit Herald Newspaper. Left: A 2016 edition of the Letaba Herald.

In June 1978 Senekal decided to sell the business and the Zeederberg was shut down. In July 1979, Piet Snyman approached the Lowvelder to buy the Letaba Lowvelder. His offer was accepted and Snyman decided to change the name to the Letaba Herald to reflect the paper’s newfound independence.

In 1980 Snyman approached Groenewald, then still employed by the Lowvelder, and offered him the position of editor. He accepted and under Snyman’s leadership and Groenewald’s editorship, the paper was named the best rural newspaper in South Africa in 1982. Two years later the paper came second, and in 1992, after changing ownership twice, the same management team was once again named the best in the country. In 1983 Snyman decided to sell the newspaper back to the Lowvelder due to health reasons. Groenewald meanwhile joined the team at Beeld and Willem Gagiano was appointed editor of the newspaper. In 1985 Snyman made an offer to buy back the Letaba Herald once again, which the owners readily accepted. He immediately approached Groenewald to take over as editor. In 1999 Caxton took over ownership of the newspaper and they entered into a new partnership agreement with Groenewald until he sold his shares to them in 2010. He stayed on as manager until his retirement in 2019. Minke Slabber became editor in the 2000’s until 2018. She was succeeded by Bertus de Bruyn; and in January 2020, Benno Stander became manager and Karen Engelbrecht editor, who currently serves as sub-editor. In 2023 the management of the Letaba Herald was moved to the Northern Media Group, a Caxton subsidiary in Polokwane with Mario Janse van Rensburg as manager and Joline Bothma as group editor.

Learn more about the Tzaneen Museum’s history

Jurgen Witt first came to South Africa on a ship from Sweden in 1952. This after his uncle, who had been residing in East Africa had his land confiscated in 1939. The people who had their land taken away could apply to get their land back, but applications had to be done from a British dominion. South Africa was therefore one of those places and Witt came to SA in order to assist his uncle with the task. He arrived with no money, only a one pound note he was given by a Swedish woman as he left the ship. Before his move, he had always been interested in African artefacts. Even though he and his uncle failed in their quest to get the land in East Africa back, Witt fell in love with South Africa and decided to stay. Moreover, at the time, returning was not a financially viable option. In 1960, Witt and his German wife moved to the Tzaneen area and Witt continued to improve on his collection of artefacts. His interest was largely in pottery, “Some people did not recognise it as art. But I insisted it is, in its own way,” says Witt, “There is so much experience embedded in each piece.” Witt is enamoured by the skill and craftsmanship that goes into creating each pot, “They have no wheel to turn the clay or to make the walls even.

“Each piece must rest on one single point.” He emphasises that pottery has been used in the area for the last 1 500 years and although its purpose is one of practicality, the pieces are decorated to make them an object of art. Witt did not want the history enveloped in pottery to be lost, “The pottery is a representative of the area and the cultures” and additionally, feels it of great importance that African artefacts remain in Africa.

Many pieces are being traded overseas and Witt wants to ensure that some artefacts remain in the land on which they were crafted. Soon his collection was vast and Witt approached the Tzaneen Town Council in 1965 to establish a museum, selling much of his collection to the town council. Soon thereafter, there was a change in local Government, the museum plans were quashed and the collection sold on to a private collector.

Witt began to collect again, largely from scratch, adamant not to lose the local cultures embodied in the pottery artefacts.

He, along with other museum committee members, took on the challenge of approaching the Town Council again and the museum was officially opened by the then Mayor, Felix Masinge, on June 24, 1995. Twenty-three years in existence, the museum on Agatha Street is worth a visit.

According to the Macmillan Travel Guide, “If you’re interested in African art and history, this is undoubtedly one of the top provincial museums in the country.”

Lekompo vs Piano All Black Music Festival a resounding success

Tintswalo Shipalana

The inaugural Lekompo vs Piano All Black Music Festival was a resounding success, held at Nkowankowa Stadium on December 13.

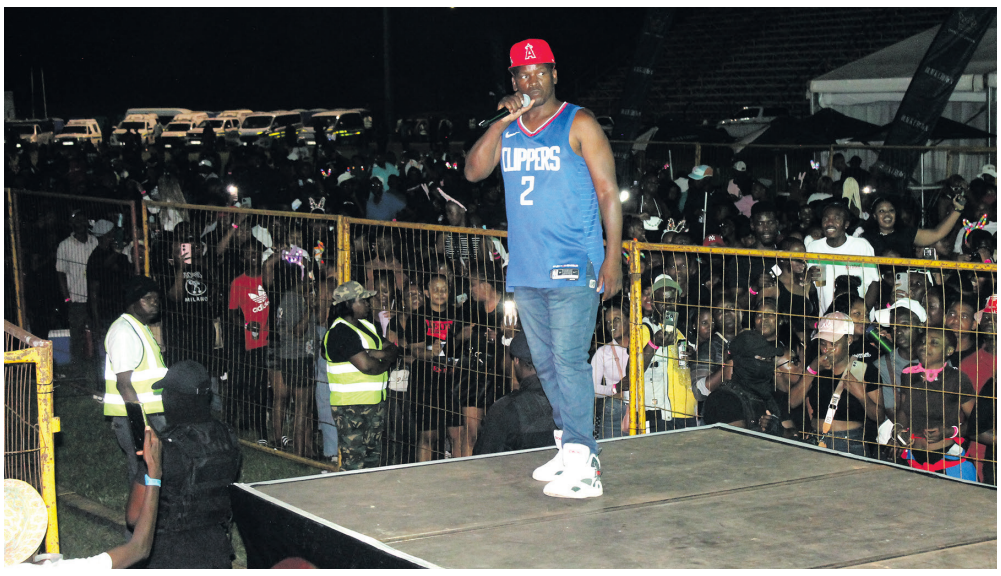
Despite the rain and the absence of Shebeshxt, who could not perform due to ongoing court cases, revellers turned out in great numbers, ready to enjoy the festivities. Many attendees embraced the event's 'all black' theme, dressed to dance the evening away.

The crowd was kept energised by MCs Gergesh, a Gaza influencer and businessman, and radio personality Khutso 'Khutsolicious' Chuene, who led the programme with enthusiasm. Performers gave their all on stage, including Thapelo Rabothata, Fortunator, J John, Charmer Girl from Botswana, and several others. Benny Mayengani delivered a standout performance and even stepped into the crowd to shake hands with excited fans. The final act, Jadesh, performed early on Sunday morning, with music lovers still fully awake and dancing to her tunes.

According to Ntsako Mongwe, the event's marketing manager, the festival aimed to give local music lovers the chance to experience a mix of popular local and international sounds.

Lekompo, a music style originating in Bolobedu, and Amapiano, a globally recognised genre from South Africa, were both featured, along with Xigaza music, a traditional Xitsonga style.

"We aimed to create a fusion of these different sounds to give people a fun and unique experience as the festive season kicks off. The local community came out in great numbers, and we are grateful for their contribution to making it a success," Mongwe concluded.





Benny Mayengani entertains revellers. Rigth: J John and his dancer on stage.

Get into shape in 2026

Tintswalo Shipalana

As the new year kicks off, gyms fill with individuals eager to shed holiday weight and achieve their fitness goals.

However, Tzaneen personal trainer and health enthusiast, Vukosi "Vuks" Shivonivoni, cautions that many of these new gym-goers do not last beyond three months.

"Most people quit in a short space of time because they set unrealistic goals or expect immediate results. They get frustrated when they don't see changes right away," Vuks explains.

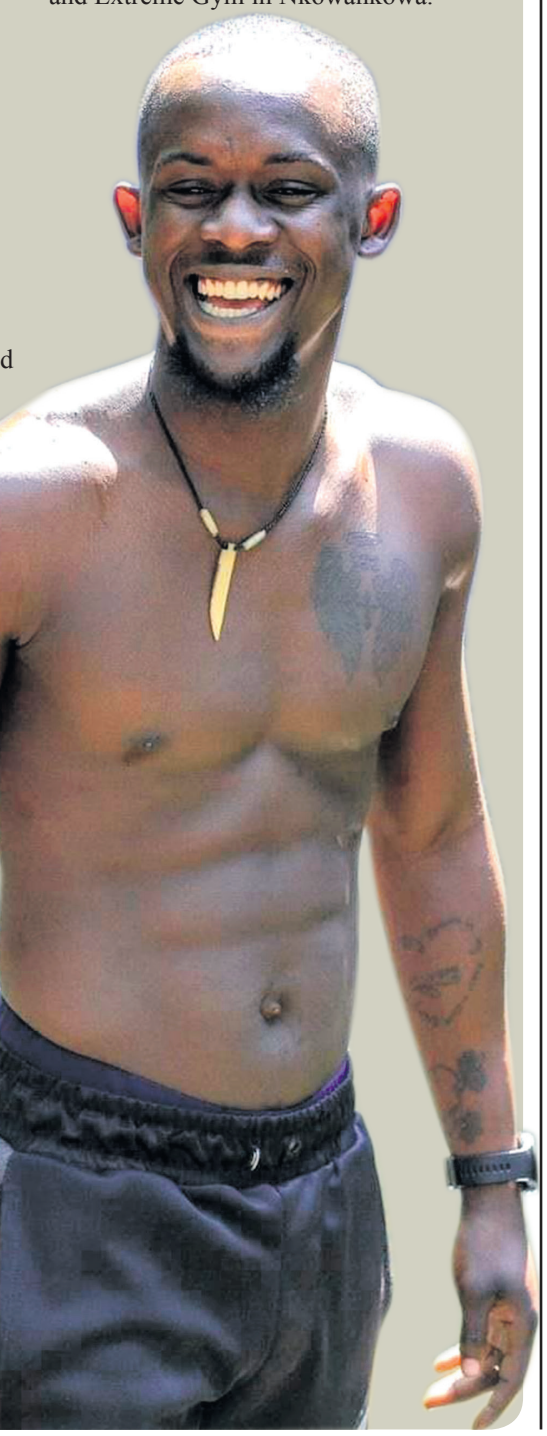
According to Vuks, the key to a successful fitness journey lies in understanding that exercise is a lifelong commitment. Those who stick to it beyond the initial months are often goal-oriented, passionate about fitness, or motivated by health concerns.

"Maintaining a healthy lifestyle begins with your diet," he says. "Many health issues, especially among young people, are linked to junk food and highly processed meals. A good diet is essential for sustainable health."

For those intimidated by the gym, Vuks suggests starting with simple activities like walking and stretching to promote blood circulation.

"You don't have to join a gym right away," he says. "Begin with small, manageable steps and focus on eating wholesome, nutritious food."

Vuks offers personal training services at the Health and Fitness Gym in Tzaneen and Extreme Gym in Nkowankowa.



Vukosi 'Vuks' Shivonivoni.

DID YOU KNOW?

ALCOHOLISM IS A DISEASE

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY TODAY, FIND AN AA MEETING

AA UNITY SERVICE RECOVERY

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24 / 7 HELP LINE

THY REST
Ekuphumleni Restoration Home

A DECADE JOURNEY OF AN ORGANISATION FOUNDED BY A RAPE SURVIVOR IN THE FIGHT AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND FEMICIDE

Ekuphumleni Restoration Home operating as "Thy Rest", a registered Non Profit organisation based in Moletjie operating in Limpopo for a decade. Founded by Nobza Ramukhotheli who converted her house to supporting victims and survivors of GBVF with a shelter and victim support and community development centre. Their services range from sheltering for victims, psycho-social support (counselling) skills development, advocacy, re-integration programs, community awareness outreaches, community development programs and support groups.

Thy Rest for the past 10 years has accommodated close to 40 residents in their shelter, trained hundreds of women on various skills, distributed more than 10 000 sanitary towels, and hundreds of toiletries and groceries packs. The organisation has also hosted hundreds of kids during their annual Children's Christmas parties.

Thy Rest is planning to expand their services in mining areas within the province, e.g. Burgersfort, Lephalale etc to bring support services to mine workers and their families. They are looking forward to collaborating with stakeholders in these areas.



'Come to ME, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you REST.'
Matthew 11:28

STOP GBVF
Gender-Based Violence and Femicide

015 023 1259 | 073 174 9185 info@thyrest.org.za www.thyrest.org.za



JANUARY 31 - FEBRUARY 1

PRINCESS DUTCH HOCKEY CLINIC

Hockey coaching clinic hosted at Stanford Lake College in Magoebaskloof. Open to players 10-18 years. Tickets at www.sportways.co.za.

FEBRUARY 7

HOEDSPRUIT FARMERS MARKET

Popular monthly market hosted on the first Saturday of each month at the Farmhouse, Zandspruit Boulevard, from 07:00-13:00. Vendors can contact Lethabo at 066 377 6592.

FEBRUARY 7-8

BLUEBERRY FESTIVAL

Hosted at Blueberry Heights in Magoebaskloof. For more information, call Heather at 071 540 3800.

FEBRUARY 14

VALENTINE'S FESTIVAL

Hosted at Pot 'n Plow in Magoebaskloof. For more on the event, call Lara 074 059 0560.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EVERY SATURDAY - PARKRUN
In Tzaneen and Hoedspruit at 07:00, visit parkrun.co.za for more information.
FEBRUARY 14 - HOWZIT HOMEGROWN MARKET
Hosted in Haenertsburg at the Village Green. For more information, call Louise at 071 768 0459.
28 FEBRUARIE - VISVANGKOMPETISIE
Aangebied by die Piesangdam/Kramerdam op die Letaba Landgoed in Tzaneen. Groot pryse op die spel. R100pp vir twee stokke. Skakel vir Pieta by 082 370 8242, 071 460 3491 of 082 776 0243.
5 MAART - MEL DIE STORIEVERTELLER
Dié internetsensasie tree by Merensky Landbou Akademie op om 18:00. VIP-sitplekke is R350, gewone sitplekke is R320. Vir meer inligting skakel vir Marili Korff by 072 079 9506.
MARCH 14 - ANNUAL EBENEZER MILE
Open water swim event at Ebenezer Dam. For more information call Peter at 082 825 9654.
MARCH 15 - THE WIK TRIATHLON
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EDITOR'S CHOICE

Registrations open for Tzaneen Tuffy marathon

Sharon Makhongele

The much-anticipated Spar Tzaneen Tuffy 4-in-1 Marathon is set to take place on March 7, promising athletes a scenic yet challenging run from Lombard Avocado on the Agatha Old Coach Road.

Organised by Spar and Tzaneen Athletics Club, this Comrades qualifying race offers distances of 42.2km, 21.1km, 10km, and a 5km fun run, catering for both serious athletes and casual runners.

The feature event, the 42.2 km marathon, starts at 06:00. The 21.1km, 10km, and the 5km fun run are scheduled for 07:00.

Online entries are open and will close at midnight on Monday, February 1. Entry fees range from R120 for the fun run, R240 for 10km, R340 for 21.1km, and R430 for the 42.2km marathon, with R50 for a temporary licence and a free T-shirt for all online entries. Entries are limited to 1450 entries.

For online entries, visit entryninja.com or scan the QR code. For more information, contact Busi at 071 891 8438 or Paul at 083 460 4204

Scan the QR code to enter.



Runners at the 2025 4-in-1Tuffy marathon. > Photo: Sharon Makhongele.





Police members attend a briefing prior to the operation.

Cops sweep clean during operation

Police were hard at work in Tzaneen and surrounding communities, making sure that criminals don't thrive during the festive season. Limpopo police arrested 843 suspects for various serious and priority offences during the ongoing multi-disciplinary Operation Shanela, conducted from December 29-January 4.

The intensified operations which were aimed at clamping down on violent crime and removing illegal firearms from communities, resulted in the recovery of three unlicensed firearms and 132 rounds of ammunition. A total of 185 undocumented foreign nationals were also apprehended for contraventions of immigration laws.

Offences detected during the operation included murder, attempted murder, rape, assault, robbery, burglary, drug-related crimes, possession of dangerous weapons, illegal dealing in liquor, and possession of illicit cigarettes.

Operation Shanela was executed through co-ordinated deployments involving various police units, supported by the stakeholders including South African National Defence Force, Department of Traffic and Community Safety, Department of Home Affairs, Department of Minerals and Energy, Department of Small Business Development and other stakeholders.

High-impact policing actions included high-visibility patrols, roadblocks, vehicle checkpoints, stop-and-search operations, tracing of wanted suspects, farm visits, inspections of licensed liquor premises, and compliance inspections at informal businesses, including spaza shops.

Arrests recorded include 185 undocumented foreign nationals, six for murder, five for attempted murder, 18 for rape, one for attempted rape, five for house robbery, one for robbery with aggravating circumstances, four for business robbery, 86 for assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, 46 for assault common, seven for residential burglary, six for business burglary, 27 for malicious damage to property, three for illegal possession of firearms, two for possession of dangerous weapons, four for dealing in drugs, 32 for possession of drugs, 52 for illegal dealing in liquor, 69 for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, one for possession of illegal cigarettes, one for possession of precious metals and 264 for other crimes

Police recovered the following items in the process: 287.3 litres of alcoholic beverages, three handguns, 132 rounds of ammunition, four dangerous weapons, 403kg of dagga, 2.5g of cocaine, 1.6g of nyaope and one motor vehicle.

The acting provincial commissioner, Major General Jan Scheepers commended members and operational partners for their continued commitment.

“We are starting the year with firm action against criminality. These operations will continue beyond the festive season as we intensify efforts to protect communities and maintain stability across the province,” said Scheepers.

DISTRICT UPDATES

Tzaneen and Haenertsburg residents advised to continue monitoring weather conditions closely

Anwen Mojela

The first week of January has brought uneven but welcome rainfall across parts of the Greater Tzaneen and Haenertsburg areas, with light drizzle recorded near Tzaneen Dam and significantly heavier falls along the escarpment in George’s Valley.

At the Macadamia farming area near Tzaneen Dam, rainfall over the period from January 1-6 was generally light, characterised mainly by drizzle and isolated thundershowers. The most substantial rainfall at this site was recorded on the morning of January 1, when a thundershower delivered 27mm. This was followed by smaller amounts over subsequent days, including 0.5mm on January 2, 2mm on January 3, 3.1mm on January 4, and 1.2mm of drizzle in the 24 hours leading up to 05:00 on January 6.

In total, the Macadamia–Tzaneen Dam area received approximately 33.8mm of rain during the six-day period.

While the rainfall has contributed to soil moisture, the predominance of light drizzle has limited runoff into dams and rivers.

In contrast, the Haenertsburg and George’s Valley area experienced more substantial rainfall. Measurements taken at Allandale Timbers, F4, in George’s Valley recorded 42mm on January 1, followed by a further 26mm on January 4. The combined total of 68mm over four days reflects the typical pattern of higher rainfall along the escarpment, where moist air is lifted and enhanced rainfall often occurs.

The variation in rainfall between Tzaneen and Haenertsburg highlights the highly localised nature of summer precipitation in the region. While lower-lying areas received modest and intermittent falls, escarpment zones benefitted from stronger convective activity and heavier showers.

Farmers and residents are advised to continue monitoring conditions closely, as forecasts indicate that summer rainfall may remain sporadic, with showers varying significantly over short distances. Further widespread rainfall will be needed to sustain crops, replenish water resources and support grazing conditions as the season progresses.

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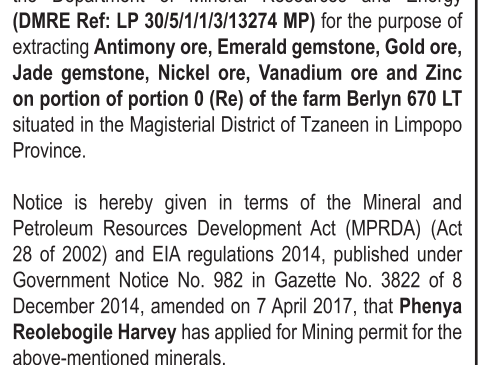
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NOTICE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FOR MINING PERMIT AND ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION APPLICATION

XITSONGA

Xitiviso xa xikombelo xa layisense ya mindzhuku: Phenya Reolebogile Harvey yi rhumele xikombelo eka Department of Mineral Resources and Energy **(DMRE Ref: LP 30/5/1/1/3/13274 MP)** hi xikongomelo xo humesa **Antimony ore, Emerald gemstone, Gold ore, Jade gemstone, Nickel ore, Vanadium ore na Zinc eka xiphemu xa xiphemu 0 (Re) xa purasi ya Berlyn 670 LT** lexi nga eka Xifundza xa Vuchavela bya Tzaneen eka Xifundza xa Limpopo.

Xitiviso lexi xi nyikiwa hi ku landza Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) (Nawu wa 28 wa 2002) na milawu ya EIA ya 2014, leyi kandziyisiweke eka Government Notice No. 982 eka Gazette No. 3822 ya 8 December 2014, leyi pfuxetiweke hi 7 April 2017, leswaku **Phenya Reolebogile Harvey** yi kombile layisense ya mindzhuku ya timinerali leti boxiweke laha henhla.

XIVITO XO KOMBELA MAVONELO

Vapfumeri na/kuva na mhaka leyi (I&APs) va kombiwa ku tsarisa leswaku va ta kuma ntokoto wa nkarhi hinkwawo wa ntirho lowu naswona va nyikiwa nkarhi wo nyika mavonelo eka phurojeke leyi ku boxiweke henhla. Hi kombela ku rhumela vito ra wena, vuxokoxoko bya ntirho wa wena na ku rhandza mhaka leyi hi ku tsala, eka Muongori wa Ta Mbangu **Nkosikazi Bongokuhle Sibiya** emahlweni kumbe hi nkarhi wa **29 wa Janyuwari 2026** hi ku tirhisa vuxokoxoko bya ku tihlanganisa lebyi ku nyikiweke laha hansi. Vanhu hinkwavo va tlhela va rhambiwa ku hlaya no nyika mavonelo eka Xiviko xa Masungulo xa Ku Hlaya Mbangu na Riprogramu ya Vuphikizano bya Ta Mbangu (DBAR & EMPr). Xiviko xa masungulo xa BAR & EMPr xi ta kumeka leswaku xi hlayiwa hilaha ku ringaneretaka masiku ya khalendara ya 30 ku sukela hi Siku ra Vhiki ra **Ravuntlhanu ra ti 30 ta Ndzhati 2026 ku fikela hi Mugqivela wa ti 28 ta Hukuri 2026**. Xiviko lexi xi ta kumeka eka layiburari ya Vaaki ya Mulati (Layiburari ya mani na mani Mafarana) na khopi yo olova loko yi komberiwa ku suka eka **GeoEnviro (Pty) Ltd**, hi ku tirhisa vuxokoxoko bya vuhlanganisi bya Mutsundzuxi wa Ntivo-mbango laha hansi. Mavonelo eka DBAR & EMPr ya fanele ku yisiwa eka **Bongokuhle Sibiya** ku nga si hundza ti **20 ta February 2026**.

ENGLISH

Notice of the Mining Permit Application: Phenya Reolebogile Harvey has lodged an application with the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy **(DMRE Ref: LP 30/5/1/1/3/13274 MP)** for the purpose of extracting **Antimony ore, Emerald gemstone, Gold ore, Jade gemstone, Nickel ore, Vanadium ore and Zinc on portion of portion 0 (Re) of the farm Berlyn 670 LT** situated in the Magisterial District of Tzaneen in Limpopo Province.

Notice is hereby given in terms of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) (Act 28 of 2002) and EIA regulations 2014, published under Government Notice No. 982 in Gazette No. 3822 of 8 December 2014, amended on 7 April 2017, that **Phenya Reolebogile Harvey** has applied for Mining permit for the above-mentioned minerals.

INVITATION TO COMMENT

Interested and/or Affected Parties (I&APs) are hereby requested to register in order to receive updates of the process and afforded the opportunity to provide comments on the above-mentioned project. Please submit your name, contact information and interest in the matter in writing, to the Environmental Consultant **Ms Bongokuhle Sibiya** before or on the **29th of January 2026** using the contact details provided below. The public is also invited to review and comment on the Draft Basic Assessment Report and Environmental Management Programme Report (DBAR& EMPr). The draft BAR & EMPr will be available for review for 30 days calendar period from **Friday the 30th of January 2026 to Saturday the 28 of February 2026.** This report will be available at **Mulati Community library (Public library Mafarana)** and a soft copy upon request from **GeoEnviro (Pty) Ltd**, using the contact details of the Environmental Consultant below. Comments on the DBAR & EMPr must be submitted to **Bongokuhle Sibiya** no later than the **20th of February 2026**.

Contact details of the Environmental Consultant:

GEOENVIRO (PTY) LTD

Physical Address: 12 Van Der Walt Street, Delmas, Mpumalanga, 2210
Contact Person: Ms Bongokuhle Sibiya
Cell No: +27 68 540 6970
Email Address: geoenviro1@gmail.com

Contact details of the Applicant:

Applicant:
Mr. Reolebogile Harvey Phenya

Physical Address: 22 Boundary Road, Karen Park, Pretoria, Gauteng, 0118
Cell No: +27 78 571 1367
Email Address: phenyarh@gmail.com

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Isle van Eck and Theo Wolmarans.

SPORT NEWS

Strong start as first competition delivers high drama

Sharon Makhongele

The first competition of the year set the tone for what promises to be an exciting season, with members turning out in impressive numbers and bringing plenty of competitive spirit to the greens.

The second 2-4-2 Bowls Competition was held under unusual circumstances, as the defending champions were unable to take part. This left the field wide open and created the perfect opportunity for a new champion to emerge. From the opening bowl to the end, the standard of play was exceptionally high, with closely fought matches and fiercely contested games throughout the day.

After a series of tight encounters, the competition came down to a thrilling final between Theo Wolmarans and Illse van Eck, and Willie Jonker and Ansie Taute. Willie and Ansie dominated the early stages and looked firmly on course for victory in the first half.

However, Theo and Illse showed remarkable determination and resilience, mounting an outstanding comeback to turn the match around and claim a hard-earned win.

A total of 22 teams entered the competition, with some participants even cutting their holidays short to be part of the event. This level of commitment highlighted the passion and enthusiasm within the club and underscored the importance of the competition on the calendar.

Legends claim back their pride

Tintswalo Shipalana

The Legends Football Club managed to break a seven year drought of the Nkowankowa Community Games after they won the 2025 edition, with a 1-0 victory against Rich Gang in the finals at Nkowankowa Stadium recently.

Rich Gang went into the games as favourites and the loss broke a three year winning streak in the tournament. The Legends founder, Fofoza Shikwambana told the Herald that winning after years of not reaching the finals and a win, feels good.

"We came into the tourney more prepared and intentional to reclaim the pride of the team. We had to beef up our squad and make sure that we make our presence felt," he said.

Meanwhile Rich Gang Football Club coach, Lesley Shivuri, says the loss was a shock and admits that they went into the competition over confident. "This taught us to not undermine our opponents and they punished us, as they were more hungry. In the first half, we changed about six players, giving others a chance. However, we have learnt our mistakes and in the upcoming games, we are taking back our trophy,"he said.

Four soccer teams participated, including Dream Team and Nkowankowa Big Eleven. Dream Team lost to rivals Rich Gang 8-7 in penalties after a goalless match, while Big Eleven lost to The Legends 1-0 in the first game.

In rugby it was a battle between Nkowankowa Rugby Club teams, the seniors against the young guns. Experience helped the seniors win 14-10. Bryan Mashigo, founder and one of the coaches of the club, says he is happy with the standard of rugby which both teams showed on the day.

Meanwhile in netball Nkowankowa City Rebblers once again won the title, after playing an excellent game and winning against Golden Bees in the finals. The day started with a colour run and a cycling team which cycled 100km.


Players of The Legends Football Club celebrate their victory.


A colour splash before the fun run.


Cyclists at the starting point.