



2 Gauteng leads in job creation



4 Partnership to bring services closer to the community



6 Youth bridge digital divide



8 Learners use arts to beat odds

MARCH 2013

■ EDUCATION

■ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

■ FEATURES

■ SPORT

In Brief

GAUTENG READY TO ROLL OUT SINGLE ARV TABLET

The Gauteng Department of Health will be rolling out the fixed-dose combination (FDC) of anti-retrovirals (ARVs) to all people receiving and those who are still going to be initiated on ARVs from the beginning of April. The fixed-dose combination of antiretroviral - emtricitabine, efavirenz and tenofovir - is a multiple anti-retroviral drugs combined into a single pill, which helps reduce the pill burden. Health MEC, Hope Papo, said that patients will benefit from the FDC because it simplifies treatment, cutting down the number of tablets that a person has to take daily. "They also allow patients to take their medication more discreetly - if that is what they prefer to do. With one-pill-a-day FDC, adhering to your antiretroviral therapy is as simple as taking any other tablet," Papo said.

NEW CENTRAL DRUG AUTHORITY BOARD MEMBERS ANNOUNCED

The Minister for Social Development, Bathabile Dlamini, has announced the new Board of Central Drug Authority (CDA). The CDA was established as an advisory body in terms of the Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Act (Act No. 20 of 1992) and is mandated to assist in the fight against substance abuse in the country. "If we are to conquer this war, it will not be as a result of government action alone, but it will occur as a result of a co-ordinated national effort. The high levels of alcohol and drug abuse, and in more recent times, the emergence of cheap and easily accessible drugs like nyaope and whoonga requires a concerted and on-going effort by all sectors of our society," Minister Dlamini said.

EKURHULENI READY FOR THE AIRPORT CITIES CONFERENCE

The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is confident that the city is in pole position to maximise on the advantages of hosting the first-ever Airport Cities World Conference and Exhibition (ACE) on African soil in April. The City of Ekurhuleni joins a host of other major airport cities across the world such as Denver, Memphis and Beijing who previously hosted the sought-after conference. The gathering will take place on April 24 - 26 at Emperors Palace. The ACE, now in its 11th year, is the annual event for airport chief executive officers, airlines, economic development agencies, real estate developers, architects and planners as well as businesses benefitting from the proximity to the runway and taking citizenship in the Airport City/Aerotropolis.

LET'S RISE AGAINST ABUSE - PREMIER



PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE... Premier Mokonyane used the Human Rights Day event to lash out at the abuse of women and children



Photograph: Photograph: Thomas Chauke

The Sharpeville Massacre may have taken place more than 53 years ago; but the pain and horror of that Monday afternoon shooting in March 1960 remains as fresh as yesterday for some of the survivors - most of who are calling on the government to enlist their experiences to spearhead moral regeneration in Gauteng communities.

KHUITSEMANG DISEKO

Seventy-two year-old Johannes Safatsa was barely 19 years old when he was called to identify the lifeless body of his brother, Phehello, following the massacre that shook the world and brought the spotlight on the ruthlessness of the apartheid regime.

"I am still getting nightmares from that picture," the elderly Sefatsa told Gauteng News. Twenty-one year old Phehello was one of the 69 people certified dead from the shooting on that day. More than 200 other people were injured.

"We were just gathered at the old Sharpeville police station to demonstrate against the dompas system and were singing the struggle song - Senzeni na - when

the police shot at us. Many were maimed and my brother, like the 68 others, was shot in the back while running away from the live bullets," Sefatsa said.

Sefatsa was part of the Human Rights Day event in Sharpeville where massacre survivors, the Gauteng Executive Council and political parties laid wreaths and honoured the memory of those who fell on that fateful day.

"We must never forget these heroes and heroines," he said, to the agreement of the families of the survivors such as Mary Mantso (68), Selloane Phethane (67) and Abram Mofokeng (74).

Mofokeng, who is still living with a bullet stuck in his body from the shooting, called on the

government to do more to help the families of the victims and survivors of the massacre.

"Our experience in fighting for a just society can be used to fight the many social ills we find in our society today; from drug abuse to gender-based violence. Our youth today are affected by things such as nyaope and pornography. The government could use us to teach at schools and other learning institutions so that people can know the foundations of our democracy and freedom," Mofokeng said.

Meanwhile Premier Nomvula Mokonyane used her keynote address at the Human Rights Day event, which was preceded by a march against the abuse of women and children, to call on Gauteng

communities to be vigilant regarding matters of gender-based violence.

"(To) those (men) who are thinking about it (abuse); just don't do it. Those who have done it; let them face the full might of the law (and) those who have not yet been arrested; let the communities speak out," she said. The province's Executive Council also used the event to pledge against the abuse of women and children. Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture MEC,

Lebogang Maile, said the men should use Human Rights Day as a reminder about the responsibility to speak out against sexual violence.

khuitsemang.diseko@gauteng.gov.za

DON'T DO IT



OVER 200 SUPPORT CENTRES FOR THE ABUSED

EDITORIAL

Enough is enough! The scourge of violence against women and children must be nipped in the bud as it is tearing many Gauteng communities apart. Recent studies have shown that a concerning number of Gauteng men (78%) have admitted to abuse their partners at one point or another. Another depressing statistic from research done by NGO group, Gender Links, showed that more than half of all women in the province have been subjected to some form of violence in their lifetime. These are worrying numbers. However, what is even more concerning is the fact that abuse is under-reported in the country; meaning these figures might be lower than what we currently know.

It is this concern that even saw Premier Nomvula Mokonyane and her Executive Council sign a pledge on Human Rights Day in Sharpeville committing the Gauteng Provincial Government to pursuing policies and programmes that counter the scourge of gender-based abuse and sexual violence. The premier has urged communities to expose abusers and promote the protection of the most vulnerable members of society as part of commitment towards human rights.

Speaking human rights, many of the survivors of the 1960 Sharpeville Day Massacre have called on the GPG to enlist their experience and knowledge in helping to curb the many social ills that face the province today. These range from gender-based violence to teenage pregnancies and drug abuse. Read further on this in our lead story.

We also feature a story on the recent colloquium on teenage pregnancies and the measures that the authorities are putting in place to reduce the incidents. Read more on page 2.

On page 4, the University of Johannesburg partners with pharmaceutical company, Aspen Pharmacare, to help boost access to quality healthcare for the community of Tarlton.

Page 6 highlights the uplifting story of two young people from the Sedibeng District who are using IT to bridge the digital divide and create jobs for others. The inspiring story of Apple Nexus shows how – with a little push from the government – young Gauteng residents can help build a Gauteng we can all be proud of.

Happy reading!

If you have any views, contribution etc, please contact us by fax on 011 355 6245 or email letters@gauteng.gov.za

COLLECTIVE EFFORTS NEEDED TO REDUCE TEENAGE PREGNANCY



SHARING IDEAS ... Various stakeholders converged to share ideas on how to reduce teenage pregnancy.

Photograph: Andronica Nedzamba

With the latest official statistics from the Department of Health showing a 13.2 percent decrease in teenage pregnancy nationally; hope is there that campaigns against teenage pregnancy in South Africa are starting to bear fruits.

MELITAH MADIBA

The Department of Basic Education report on Teenage Pregnancy in South Africa also showed that Gauteng had the lowest number of pregnancies per 1 000 registered learners.

Though statistics show a decrease in the incidences amongst learners, the Gauteng Department of Education is not sitting on its laurels and is looking at ways of doing more to address the issue.

Earlier this month the department called a colloquium to device interventions and look at ways in which teenage pregnancy could be dealt with.

Held under the theme "The role schools and stakeholders can play in reducing teenage pregnancy", the event

discussed the role of the broader community, especially parents, youth organisations, faith-based organisations and government organisations in addressing the issue.

Addressing the colloquium, MEC Barbara Creecy, said the common goal was to ensure that fewer young women face responsibilities of parenthood before they have completed their own education.

"Teenage pregnancy changes a teenager's life forever. Younger mothers and their babies face greater health risks.

"We remain concerned about the valuable learning lost and the ever present threat that new responsibilities of motherhood may mean that some give up their

own education for their child," Creecy said.

MEC Creecy added that to ensure that the girl-learners did not fall victim to early pregnancies, government had put in place a number of mechanisms and programmes to educate all children on reproductive health.

"The Life Skills Programme has been implemented in schools since 1998 and deals with the holistic development of the learner throughout childhood.

"It equips learners with knowledge, skills and values that assist them to achieve their full physical, intellectual, personal, emotional and social potential," said Creecy.

In addition to these interventions, Creecy added,

the department had increased curriculum interventions in the form of the Secondary School Intervention Programme (SSIP) to maximise the opportunities for learners to do well in Grade 12.

However, Creecy said they were mindful that addressing teenage pregnancy was not a challenge facing only one department.

"Addressing teenage pregnancy is a battle that requires the active involvement of all stakeholders if it is to be won.

"These stakeholders include other government departments, key organisations in the non-governmental sector, the research community, religious sector, community leaders and more importantly, parents and learners themselves," said the MEC.

According to the Gauteng Department of Health's Dr Elizabeth Floyd, a number of social and structural factors drive the epidemic and increase the risks, especially for women.

"Educated youth have led to improvements in safe sex behaviours, so life skills training in schools remains a top priority," said Dr Floyd.

Wits School of Education lecture Dr Mischeck Ndebele said family systems needed to be strengthened to promote greater parental authority.

"There is a need for parental presence and supervision. Strengthened partnerships with families and communities can play a major role in reducing teen pregnancy," Ndebele urged.

He also called on youth organisations, churches and teacher unions to discourage alcohol consumption and to promote participation in sports and recreational activities.

Melitha.madiba@gauteng.gov.za

GAUTENG LEADS COUNTRY WITH MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

South Africa's biggest economy, Gauteng, is the largest contributor of job creation and when matched with other provinces; the Province recorded an even major reduction in unemployment rate.

MIKATEKO MKHATSHWA

According to the MEC for Economic Development, Nkosiphendule Kolisile, in the second quarter of 2012, the province's joblessness rate was at 25.4 percent. This has now come down to 23.7 percent.

"That said, unemployment remains one of the biggest challenges facing our province's economy," the MEC conceded.

His department has been given the mandate to lead in creating employment opportunities and have introduced various initiatives are aimed at creating jobs in the province.

"The Census 2011 results underline the imperative for

collective effort by government, business, labour and civil society to inclusively grow the economy of the province and to expand economic opportunities available to Gauteng citizens. The department has made significant inroads in discharging its mandate," said Kolisile.

The Gauteng Enterprise Propeller (GEP), an agency of the Gauteng Department of Economic Development, has surpassed its objectives in terms of SMME and co-operative backing.

This financial year alone, the GEP has provided support and training to 231 SMMEs and 391 co-operatives. By these facilitations, the department has added to the provisions of 761 jobs into Gauteng economy.

Financial funding to approximately 60 small companies in construction, wholesale and retail, agriculture, ICT, automotive and manufacturing sectors was provided.

A total of 110 businesses



CREATING JOBS... Statistics show that the Province is making inroads in fighting unemployment.

Photograph: Andronica Nedzamba

owned by people with disabilities also received funding from the GEP. The financial assistance provided to these businesses led to the creation of 402 job opportunities.

This financial assistance is a lifeline to small businesses in Gauteng, especially given the hurdles that small businesses

encounter in accessing funding from private financial institutions.

"We are also powering ahead with our plans to help the informal businesses. In this regard, we will be supporting informal traders with training, and we will scale up our engagements with this sector," said Kolisile.

Mikateko.Mkhatshwa@gauteng.gov.za

TOP BRAINS GATHER TO FIND SOLUTIONS TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN GAUTENG

It's because of poverty, some say. It's a result of our messy, violent past; others claim. It's the impact of globalisation, others chirp. Ask anyone in Gauteng about the scourge of drug addictions, especially nyaope, and its related crimes and one gets a myriad of answers.

MELITAH MADIBA

This uncertainty about the causes for substance abuse is one of the main reasons the MEC for Social Development in Gauteng, Nandi Mayathula-Khoza, convened a two-day Anti Substance Abuse Summit at the Birchwood Hotel earlier this month.

Mayathula-Khoza was also giving support to Premier Nomvula Mokonyane's lobby to classify drugs such as nyaope illegal.

Held under the theme "Working together to declare nyaope an illegal drug and ensuring a substance abuse-free Gauteng", the summit sought to find ways of addressing the non-classification of nyaope as an illegal drug; find a workable plan of action and solutions to be implemented in order to eradicate the scourge of nyaope.

The summit also discussed ways to improve education and awareness, encourage government departments to take an authoritative stance in the fight against nyaope as well as to encourage communities and the media to join hands with

government in combating the scourge.

Delivering the keynote address, MEC Mayathula-Khoza said she was concerned that according to South African Police Services, 60-percent of crimes committed nationally were related to substance abuse, especially nyaope.

She added that the statistics from the South African National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (SANCA) showed that a total of 83 people who used drugs sought help at the community-based Thusong Services Centre in Mamelodi alone since January 2012 to February 2013.

"These statistics show how widespread the problem is. To address this we have implemented the Provincial Substance Abuse Strategy.

"The strategy is aimed at ensuring the provisioning of appropriate and holistic preventative treatment, aftercare and re-integration programmes to individuals, families and communities," Mayathula-Khoza said.



FIGHTING THE SCOURGE... Stakeholders at the Anti-substance abuse summit called for combined efforts in the fight against drugs.

Photograph: Andronica Nedzamba

She said the pillars of the strategy were prevention, early intervention, treatment, aftercare as well as re-integration.

"Since 2009, twenty-seven Local Drug Action Committees have been established throughout the province as well as five regional Drug Action Committees. These are some of our efforts in the fight against the scourge. While progress has been made, lots more still needs to be done before we say we have achieved our goals and objectives," the MEC said.

The Gauteng Department of Education's Brennard Smith said everyone bore the brunt of substance abuse and that if left unattended, drug abuse would affect the quality of learning and teaching in schools.

"Substance abuse plays a major role in many social problems and has major impact on learning

and teaching. Our objective is to ensure that schools are drug-free zones.

"We also aim to increase knowledge, provide life skills, build confidence among learners so that they are less likely to engage in problematic alcohol and other drug use problems," said Smith.

SANCA's national coordinator, Cathy Vos, said drugs, especially nyaope, were dangerous substances to young people as they are both emotionally and physically addictive.

"Once addicted, for them to stop, intensive treatment such as medication, therapy, family counselling and aftercare is needed," Vos said.

The National Prosecuting Authority Advocate G Roberts said drugs had become a lucrative business that equals money and

Working together to declare nyaope an illegal drug and ensuring a substance abuse-free Gauteng"

therefore it was difficult to contain it.

Roberts said the major problem was getting to the kingpins and druglords who make money at the expense of people's lives.

All stakeholders called for a greater coalition as well as practical solutions in working collectively to decrease the supply and demand of drugs.

SOCIAL SPENDING GETS LION'S SHARE OF GAUTENG BUDGET

The biggest chunk of the Gauteng Provincial Government's budget will go to education and health services.

Tabling the R76.9 billion budget for the 2013/14 financial year recently, MEC for Finance, Mandla Nkomfe, said the Education Department would get a whopping R29.2 billion, followed by the Department of Health, which has received R27.9 billion.

NOZIPHO DLAMINI



As part of stabilising the health sector in the province, Nkomfe said an additional amount of R1.1 billion has been made available over the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period to supplement funding for the non-negotiable items that make the health institutions functional.

"Part of the key priorities of the Department of Health is to focus on primary health care (PHC) implementation and ensure health system effectiveness through the Health Turnaround Strategy," said Nkomfe.

Nkomfe noted that delivering

PHC was central to the provincial government's on-going efforts of improving quality health care.

"Our commitment to deliver this very crucial service is demonstrated by the additional funding of R 430 million to the baseline that is allocated over the

PRIORITISING ESSENTIAL SERVICES... More funds injected into providing quality education and healthcare

Photograph: Mandla Nkosi

MTEF for enhancing PHC," he said.

In addition to these key priorities, the 2013/14 budget makes provision for the HIV and AIDS programme.

The programme continues to focus on social mobilisation to increase knowledge, attitudes and protective social norms and media campaigns.

The province further plans to extend Anti-Retroviral Treatment to more people through local clinics.

An amount of R10.2 billion is allocated for the HIV and AIDS programme over the MTEF.

"The Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation (SACR) supports this outcome of

healthy lifestyles by implementing educational programmes on HIV and AIDS through the mass participation programmes in various hubs and by awarding grants to sport, arts and culture organisations that provide HIV and AIDS programmes.

"Funding amounting to R6.8 million has been made available to the department over the MTEF," said MEC Nkomfe.

He announced that Helen Joseph, Tembisa and Kalafong hospitals have been reclassified and assume the status of tertiary hospitals while Natalspruit and Zola hospitals would be commissioned in the 2013/14 financial year.

The department has been allocated an amount of R1.5 billion over the MTEF to cater for operational costs of these hospitals. An additional allocation amounting to R2.2 billion over the MTEF is earmarked and has been made available for personnel.

Nozipho.dlamini@gauteng.gov.za

GAUTENG BUDGETS R240M FOR MORE LAND FOR HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

With an ever-growing population and its many informal settlements, the Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG) has had to seek additional land to build houses for some of its residents.

The GPG recently acquired 45 land parcels for upgrade, Premier Nomvula Mokonyane told delegates at the Gauteng South African Local Government Association's (SALGA) 7th Provincial Members' Assembly (PMA) in Tshwane.

NOZIPHO DLAMINI

"To this end, we have acquired almost 45 land parcels for upgrade. In the 2013/14 financial year, we will allocate approximately R240 million towards the acquisition of 15 properties which are well-located for low income and affordable housing," said Mokonyane.

The PMA, which is held at least once a year, is a constitutional meeting of all municipalities which is convened in between provincial conferences.

Furthermore, Mokonyane said the provincial government was positioning itself as the province that protected jobs and wanted to see increase levels of youth employment.

"The province is building on current job creation initiatives, including the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) and the Community Works Programme (CWP). We are pushing for the promotion of investments through the creation of the Gauteng Investment



HUNGRY FOR LAND ... Premier Mokonyane told SALGA delegates that the GPG was hungry for land to build integrated settlements for its growing population. Photograph: Thomas Chauke

Centre," said Mokonyane

In line with the meeting's theme of "Positioning local government as the centre for developmental state", Mokonyane said the provincial government would use the opportunity to engage on some of government's flagship projects such as the National Developmental Plan and Gauteng Vision 2055.

In addition, Mokonyane outlined some of the key flagship projects and urged the local government sector to work with central and provincial governments in ensuring that these projects were implemented successfully.

The meeting was also attended by the Gauteng SALGA Chairperson and Johannesburg Mayor, Parks Tau.

Addressing the meeting, Tau

said local government continued to be plagued with service delivery and developmental challenges.

"There is a need for organised local government to develop strategies that are aimed at supporting member municipalities in curbing those challenges," said Tau.

He said the PMA created a platform aimed at providing an opportunity for SALGA Gauteng leadership to address some of the key processes necessary to achieve its mandate of representing and advocating for its members.

"The express aim of this meeting is to assess the progress made in the implementation of the 2012-2017 SALGA strategic plan and the formulation of the Annual Performance Plan and the implementation plan for the 2013/14 financial year," he said.

SWEET SOUNDS FOR SOWETANS AS BARA GETS HEARING AID DEVICES DONATION

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the production of hearing aids meets less than 10-percent of the global need. In developing countries, fewer than 1 out of 40 people who need a hearing aid have one.

LENAH LESALA

This dire need for the devices recently led Danish company, GN Resound, to donating hearing aid devices to Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital and clinics in and around the sprawling township.

The donation comes after the organisation realised that there were too many patients on the Baragwanath hearing aid waiting list.

According to Tania Steven, an audiologist at the hospital, the institution had been struggling with a bloated waiting list until the sponsorship from the Danish company.

"Our first patient had been on the waiting list for more than eight months," said Steven.

Stevens added that the

donation would benefit residents beyond Soweto.

"We advice patients to go to their local clinics for help first and their clinics will facilitate the process and then, if needs be, refer them to us," said Steven.

The company donated about 360 hearing aid devices and laptops to local clinics in Chiawelo, Mofolo and Zola to allow the health centres access to the company's online database.

Bongani Phewa of Jabulani was one of the first beneficiaries of the devices. Phewa said his hearing aid has improved his life.

"I can hear better now, I can feel the difference," he said.

Steven said hearing loss was prevalent amongst males around the age of 65 and upwards.



LENDING AN EAR... Bongani Phewa was among the first beneficiaries of the hearing aid devices. Photograph: Andronica Nedzamba

IMPROVING HEALTH CARE FOR THE PEOPLE OF GAUTENG

A partnership between a private pharmaceutical company and a local university is helping residents of Tarlton and surrounding access to improved primary healthcare.

Launched following an agreement between the University of Johannesburg's Faculty of Health Sciences; pharmaceutical giant, Aspen Pharmacare; the Gauteng Department of Health's West Rand Health District and Mogale City Local Municipality, the Aspen/UJ Tarlton clinic is expected to boost the agricultural community's access to quality healthcare.

TERRI-LIZA FORTEIN

The mobile clinic is an expansion of the existing facility and will allow the staff at the clinic, supported by UJ students, to assist more people in a shorter period of time

The community of Tarlton, an agricultural or small-holding area that falls within the jurisdiction of the Mogale City Local Municipality, consists of low-income earners and few are educated. In most cases, residents rely on primary healthcare services provided by the

government.

The services that are rendered at the Tarlton clinic range from family planning, HIV/AIDS counselling and testing; mental health and wellness; primary health care, and maternal and child health care.

These services are offered 5 days a week between 8h00 and 16h00.

Mpho Maria Tekane, the facility manager at the clinic, welcomed the extra space, saying the clinic predominantly provided



READY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE... University of Johannesburg nursing students will be serving the community of Tarlton using a new mobile clinic.

Photograph: Yandisa Monakali

ARV treatment to the community and on average assisted about 140 people each day.

Michael Ncube, 37 from Tarlton, is happy with the services.

"We already enjoy good services here so things will only get better with the new improvements," he said.

The UJ's Head of the Nursing

Department, Professor Mary Chabeli, said the outreach clinic was a highly flexible means of delivering health care to the medically under-served in low-income areas.

"We are a teaching institution, so our principal objective is to provide a teaching component to our primary health care nursing students. But, as in all

health professions, there is also the necessity to serve a public need. The students will get real-world experience by assessing, evaluating and providing on-going primary care to local patients, while educating the community in healthy lifestyle choices. They are filling gaps in the health care system as they learn about their future profession," she added.

The Gauteng Health MEC, Hope Papo, was the keynote speaker during the launch.

In his speech, Papo, expressed how he was looking forward to strengthening the relationship with Aspen and the UJ in rendering primary health care services to other disadvantaged communities like Tarlton.

"This will also benefit the UJ Primary Health Care students that will be rendering primary health care services to the community of Tarlton as part of their training," the MEC added.

Terri-liza.fortein@gauteng.gov.za

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS MONTH



The history of South Africa is characterised by the systemic and legislative exclusion of the majority of its people from exercising their right to self determination. Through various political epochs in this country, the central theme has been the exclusion of Africans, being the majority and indigenous people of this country, from political and economic decision-making.

MAHOLE SIMON MOFOKENG

This exclusion was by various laws, in particular the various constitutions of this country, extended to the fundamental right of the ownership of land. From this exclusion, through the various pieces of legislation, the right to choose where to live, where to attend school, the right

to the choice of accommodation, the time to sleep, as well as the right to have visitors in your own home.

If that sounded ridiculous, the right to be in a particular town, the right to work and the type and nature of the beverage of choice were all strictly regulated. This also included where, as an

African, you could spend your hard-earned money to buy food.

These rights, and many others, were denied Africans since the advent of the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. With the signing of the Constitution into law in 1996 and its twin sister - the Bill of Human Rights, all the above rights and the

right of Africans and all the other components of the South African people were restored in full.

The fact that Africans, Coloureds and Indians were regarded as less human than their white counterparts rang a very discordant note in South Africa.

It is against this background that the significance and importance of the Human Rights Month should and must be viewed. The Human Rights Month must be celebrated as a victory of the human spirit over the evils which reduced a vast

sector of society to slaves and servants of the designated few.

The Human Rights Month must be extolled as a lesson for future generations on the universality of equality of all. In this manner, South Africa and the entire world will rid itself of notions such as xenophobia or segregation based on nothing more than the amount of melanin or length of nose if not the thickness of one's lips.

Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng is the Executive Mayor of the Sedibeng District Municipality

BLOOM SHOULD PAUSE AND ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

At a New Year's party this year, a politically astute friend of mine – in the midst of the festivities – suddenly sighed and looked a bit worried. As a friend; I naturally asked him for the reason of his sudden change in demeanour.

"2013 is the year before elections," he said, "I don't want to know how many ridiculous stories are going to come out as politicians try to tarnish one another's names. The silly season starts."

Reading several statements by the Honourable Member of the opposition in the Gauteng Legislature, Jack Bloom, following the State of the Province Address and the Budget Speech, one has to agree that the 'silly season' has indeed started – almost one year before South Africans go to the polls.

As part of this 'silly season', we are aware that Bloom will also peddle accusations around the premier's corporate credit card, the furniture and the official residence despite us having answered his questions on the above several times already. And sadly, our media will fall for this 'hook, line and sinker'; maybe because of a lack of institutional memory, juniorisation of the newsroom or simply because they thrive on controversy.

In his latest criticism against everything Gauteng, Bloom lashes out at the maintenance of the premier's official residence in

While it is all well and good to raise alarm when one suspects that wrong is done, as any good opposition should, Member Bloom, who purports to have the interests of Gauteng residents at heart, chooses to go the sensational route before verifying this anomaly with either the Gauteng Treasury (which controls the provincial budget)

Bryanston. This after he allegedly discovered that there were plans to do maintenance work at the property valued at R7.5m over the Mid-term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period.

While it is all well and good to raise alarm when one suspects that wrong is done, as any good opposition should, Member Bloom, who purports to have the interests

of Gauteng residents at heart, chooses to go the sensational route before verifying this anomaly with either the Gauteng Treasury (which controls the provincial budget) or the Department of Infrastructure Development, which is responsible for the upkeep of all the province's properties.

Remember that Bloom is more privileged than you and I; he is a Member of the opposition in the Legislature and can ask any question he deems fit. But no; he wants to create headlines by tarnishing the image of the Premier, as I believe his strategy is about casting aspersions on the character of the premier and planting a seed of doubt in the mind of the electorate.

At the same time, I am certain Bloom would be the first one to pen and distribute a slew of media statements and opinion pieces were he to find out that the province's properties are not being maintained adequately to ensure that they retain their market-related values.

I am neither a politician nor a finance expert. However, I knew that even if these were estimates, they did not seem realistic to me and I wondered how these figures could jump from the thousands to the millions. In my endeavour to make sense of these estimates I asked my colleagues from Treasury and Infrastructure Development to explain what the trends have been

regarding maintenance costs over the last few years. A simple call and a few emails later I had my answers.

True to his sensationalist style, Bloom attempts to blemish Gauteng's excellent record of housing delivery to the poor by saying the maintenance money to be used should have built an X number of RDP houses. It is clear that he has not read the 2011 Quality of Life Survey and Census 2011 which both show that despite immense challenges brought about by in-migration and a shrinking purse, Gauteng has, on the whole, delivered 94 000 houses since 2009.

While we expected Bloom's outburst; we had at least anticipated that this would happen towards the latter part of the year as the elections would be around the corner. But, alas, the proverbial horse has bolted way before the cart!

Nevertheless, before lashing out, Bloom would, as a Member of the Legislature, know that these are estimates and they would have to go through a rigorous process, be interrogated by the Finance Committee and finally approved by the Legislature. He would also know that last year's maintenance estimates of the property in Bryanston were R400 000 and what is appropriated this year is R120 000.

Finally, I am not sure what this fixation on the Premier's official residence is all about. All these reports about the Premier's official residence erroneously give an impression that the premier will personally benefit from the maintenance and upkeep of a government-owned property designated for seating premiers.

It is important that people appreciate the fact that premiers, in general - not just the Gauteng Premier - occupy similar houses - and are not involved in determining the amount of money to be spent on any given property, whether it is their official residence or any other state property. Such responsibility is the mandate of the Department of Infrastructure Development, as is the case with the national government; its property portfolio maintenance is located within the department of Public Works.

Furthermore, the provincial Treasury will embark on a process to ensure all departments undertake a condition assessment of all government buildings. The process will assist in picking up trends and determining future maintenance costs.

In the meantime, my politically astute friend says I must sit tight; fasten my seat belt as the silly season begins in earnest.

Matlakala Motloung- Head of Communication in the Gauteng Provincial Government

APPLE NEXUS TAKES CONNECTIVITY TO EKASI



YOUNG, GIFTED AND A JOB CREATOR... Thuto Mosholi and Gilbert Khosa are bridging the digital divide and creating jobs for their peers in the Sedibeng District. Photograph: Thomas Chauke

It is often said that entrepreneurs are not made but born. Thuto Mosholi and Gilbert Khosa founders of Apple Nexus internet café franchise based mainly in the Sedibeng District Municipality fit the adage. About eight years ago the duo left a cushy life of paid salaries to enter into an uncharted territory of business. The two said they were driven by a need to create change in their society while filling a niche in the market.

LERATO MAILLOANE

Their internet cafes are providing many residents in the Vaal area with their first taste of internet and e-mail accounts.

The pair was born and raised in the Vaal and soon realised that there was a gap in the market. At the time the internet cafes were not accessible to the youth and they did not offer much to assist their customers on how to use a computer.

With that in mind they

ultimately decided to set up shop and open up an internet café which would not only be helpful but also create a fun, learning environment for computer first-time users.

Starting from humble beginnings, Khosa said they did not only decide on this business for the money, but to try to bring internet to residents in disadvantaged townships of the Vaal.

"We are young people who want to promote the use of the internet, to encourage the people to be part of the information age. We allow people to be free when they come to our shop by offering them assistance," he told Gauteng News.

In 2008, the partnership was joined by Mpho Mosholi who brought her financial expertise to the business.

To date their business has

"We are young people who want to promote the use of the internet, to encourage the people to be part of the information age. We allow people to be free when they come to our shop by offering them assistance"

grown from an internet cafe and community-based small business service station into a multi-faceted ICT company (Information and Communication Technology).

"We now have a branch in Zamdela, Bedworthpark, Sharpeville, Vereeniging and two in Vanderbijlpark with about ten full time and part-time employees," said Khosa with pride.

The growth stems from their desire to ensure that their services reach young people in townships.

Khosa sees the internet cafe as a small step in the right direction.

"There are very few people in the township who have computers. We assist them with job applications. We do their CVs, we open an e-mail account for them, and then they send their CVs to employment agencies or directly to companies.

"If you are a student you get student discounts when you need

to do research for assignments, printing out school work. All you have to do is present your valid student card and the scope of work to one of our friendly staff members," he added.

The two shops based in Sharpeville and Vanderbijlpark are now franchised to their former employees.

"We called a meeting with our employees and told them to raise start-up capital which they did and we arranged repayment terms whilst still giving them guidance on running the business," said Khosa.

In 2011, the Gauteng Enterprise Propeller (GEP) gave Apple Nexus much-needed funding of marketing material. As part of the township business renewal programme they also received a grant for the shop in Sharpeville to buy equipment to the tune of R50 000.

The GEP's Sello Sekaja said the GEP offers a range of programmes depending on where your business is located and also considered several factors such as the potential of the business, the history and the owner's commitment to the business.

"We assist people to put systems in place to run their business and, depending on the viability of the business idea, we then finance businesses for up to R2.5 million depending on factors," said Sekaja.

Sekaja said to qualify for funding the business has to be registered and comply with SARS regulations.

lerato.mailloane@gauteng.gov.za

TOWN PLANNER ON THE RISE

Taariq Ismail may only be 24-years old and fresh out of university. However, he is already doing his bit to ensure that Gauteng's cities remain sustainable and grow into smart cities.

TERRI-LIZA FORTEIN

Ismail is one of the many young minds working in the development planning unit of the Gauteng Provincial Government's Planning Commission, which is tasked with city-region wide spatial and development planning.

Ismail holds a Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of the Witwatersrand and was hand-picked to join the Planning Commission.

"I received a bursary from the Gauteng City Region Academy (GCRA) and I was approached about this opportunity to join the Planning Commission. I grabbed the opportunity because I had

always wanted to help people and as a public servant I would be doing this," Ismail said.

Because towns already exist and do not need to be planned from scratch; town planners sustain cities and regulate how they function and use resources.

Ismail explained that if it were not for town planners, "cities would just expand unsustainably, that's why we come in as nurturers of the city to ensure it reaches its full potential."

Although Ismail admits that he has had to learn quickly and "was thrown in at the deep end with a safety net" - the safety net being his supervisors and mentors



TAKING ON THE TOWN: Planner, Taariq Ismail, is helping to make the Gauteng of the future the best it can be. Photograph: Terri-liza Fortein

- it has been an exciting twelve months in the public service, especially with the imminent launch of Vision 2055.

In May 2012 the Vision 2055 discussion document was released and a public participation process was embarked on. The discussion document contained a conceptual framework that reflects province's

vision for 2055, the key ideals that underpin it, and the role of all stakeholders in realising it.

Gauteng Vision 2055 is to be launched later this year and takes into account the National Development Plan's insights and integrates its core ideas into the plan. It also reflects the social,

economic and spatial reality of the Gauteng City-Region by taking advantage of its potential and addressing its specific challenges.

Ismail's advice to young people who are getting their careers started is to be passionate about what you do and be prepared to work hard.

DISCOVER JOZI'S HIDDEN TREASURES IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

So, it is the weekend again and all you have planned is the SABC 1 action movie from the eighties which you will watch on the couch. Maybe it is time to try something new and discover the interesting attractions scattered across Gauteng.

TERRI-LIZA FORTEIN

Couch potatoes and home bodies do not even need to discover these attractions on their own. Johannesburg Tourism, in conjunction with thirty Joburg-based tourism industry stakeholders and Kaya FM, has launched the next phase of the Jozi, Discover Your Own Backyard Campaign.

"The campaign was initially launched by Joburg Tourism in September last year. This is a tourism awareness campaign to educate Joburg locals about the fabulous vibrancy and diversity of their city, encouraging them to explore and immerse themselves in the sights and sounds of Joburg, becoming knowledgeable ambassadors in so doing," explained Phelisa Mangcu, Acting CEO, Joburg Tourism.

Gauteng residents are invited to share their favourite, authentic

Joburg experiences via the Joburg Tourism Facebook page. They can also test their knowledge of Joburg by entering the quiz on the same page.

The Mo-G Show on Kaya FM on Friday afternoons will also form a pivotal part of the campaign as it will be broadcast from hidden gems throughout the City.

Entrants for the competition, including both quiz entrants, as well as those who have submitted their favourite Joburg experiences, will be encouraged to tune into the Mo-G Show every Friday afternoon from 15h00 – 18h00, to find out if they are winners.

For more information visit: <http://www.facebook.com/JohannesburgTourism/> app_531499800216007 or follow: @Joburgtourism.



CENTRE AIMS TO BE JOB CREATOR FOR VOSLOORUS

Poor Ekurhuleni residents who cannot watch movies because of the high costs have no excuses to buy pirated films anymore. That is because of the Reagile Village in the municipality where one can view a movie for just R7.

LENAH LESALA

Not only that, the Centre also has plans to renovate the place and create a better, user-friendly centre.

"We are planning to turn this place into a mini-plex which will consist of a computer centre, kiosk, closed patio, community care centre and a policing centre," said John Eschenburg, the founder of Reagile.

The refurbishments will cost around R1.2 million and this will include a policing centre which will house police reservists. The Reagile "In his service" Pty Ltd is a local cinema which was established 5 years ago with the purpose of entertaining residents in and around the Ekurhuleni.

The Reagile Centre is based at the Ke-Ditselana cultural village in Vosloorus. Reagile is a Sesotho word which means "we have



MORE THAN JUST FOR FUN ... Reagile's John Eschenburg told Gauteng News the village provides more than just entertainment for Vosloorus residents. Photograph: Thomas Chauke

created".

According to Eschenburg, the project has the potential to create employment to 32 000 people in and around Ekurhuleni.

"The sole purpose of the idea is to create jobs," said Eschenburg.

Reagile forms part of the co-operatives, which simply means

that more than one person, is entitled to ownership. The village sustains itself through advertisements and ticket sales. The movie house viewing site has a 60-seat theatre, which also caters for people with disabilities.

Furthermore, the Reagile Village serves as an education

centre for learners from as early as pre-school up to high school matric level.

"Learners come to the viewing site from 8h00 to 14h00 for educational purposes and we assist wherever we can," said Lebo Mahlathini, co-member at Reagile.

"We have learners from the Perseverance Day Care and Pre School, for example, who come for viewing every Wednesday," added Mahlathini.

"The learners enjoy coming here - they just love it," said headmistress of Perseverance Lucia Nxumalo.

"We are planning to turn this place into a mini-plex which will consist of a computer centre, kiosk, closed patio, community care centre and a policing centre," said John Eschenburg, the founder of Reagile.



SPORTNEWS

MARCH 2013

LEARNERS GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE THEIR LIVES THROUGH ARTS



LEARNING THROUGH ARTS ... Diepsloot learners were overjoyed after participating in the tie and dye project.

Photograph: Andronica Nedzamba

With many children across the province turning to bad influences because they have lack recreational activities; learners at Diepsloot Primary 4 School this month welcomed the launch of Tsogo Sun's SunCares Arts Academy with open arms.

The academy aims to make a difference in the learners' lives by developing their artistic talent as well as providing them with life skills.

MELITAH MADIBA

The programme is also linked with the Education Department's priority of introducing extra-curricular activities back in schools and is currently running in 12 schools; six in Diepsloot and the other six in Mayfair consisting of 480 learners in total.

The school's principal, Joe

Makhafola, said he was ecstatic about the programme as it will not only provide the youngsters with life skills but also keep them off the streets.

"The skills that they are going to learn such as self-discipline, time management and presentation skills will also assist

them greatly with their academic work.

"The programme will also supplement the creative arts theory that they are being taught in class as they will be doing practicals. Over and above that, the project will keep them active and tackle obesity through the

"The skills that they are going to learn such as self-discipline, time management and presentation skills will also assist them greatly with their academic work."

exercise activities that they will be participating in," said Makhafola.

An enthusiastic Thabisile Nkosi, one of the educators at the school, added that the programme will also expose learners to different arts forms and bring out their creativity.

Tsogo Sun's CSI Manager, Shanda Paine, said the launch signified the start of a new dimension of experience for the learners with experiences that they believed will stand them in good stead throughout their lives.

"The Arts Academy aims to make a real difference in the learners' lives by developing their artistic talent and providing tertiary opportunities to learners within the programme," said Paine.

The programme includes two sessions a week at each school run by two facilitators and provides

foundation basics in drama, dance, vocal training, voice training - together with a structured life skills course that covers a broad spectrum of topics to empower the youngsters to make sound life choices throughout their lives.

Keeping a journal is also incorporated into the lessons.

At the end of the year, the programme will culminate in a performing arts extravaganza where the learners will present their own productions within their communities.

Montecasino's General Manager, Glenn Joseph, said they were extremely proud to be able to reach so many youngsters in such a meaningful way.

"I am enthusiastic about the programme and have no doubt that we will soon see these youngsters embrace this new learning (experience) in their lives and make most of the opportunities being offered.

"We are committed to this programme and look forward to one day seeing this youngsters make a real contribution to the performing arts in South Africa," said Joseph.

A confident Grade 6 learner Sabani Mtule, 11, said the programme would teach her how creativity, team work, leadership skills, communication skills as well as conflict resolution as they would be working in teams most of the time.

PUISANO – MUSIC TO MY EARS!

"If music be the food of love, play on," the Bard - William Shakespeare - once said.

So, it would seem as though the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation (SRAC) heeded his call with the Puisano live music project, aimed at promoting amateur musicians.

VUYO SABANI

Through the project, the department says it wants to provide a platform for emerging bands to showcase their talents as well as offer them market access and opportunities to tour the province and establish their brand.

Auditions were done late last year and once logistics have been sorted out; workshops and an induction will follow in the coming few months.

"We have selected ten bands; two bands per region in Gauteng. We were looking for any band

that plays live music that is jazz, afro jazz, afro pop, hip hop, and kwaito as long as they play live and a band of more than four people in it," said the SRAC's Titus Motlomelo.

The department will then enter into a 12-month contract with selected bands and organise workshops for them.

These workshops put emphasis on various trainings such as voice, stage and self-management. It will further train them on how to market themselves.

Motlomelo said the bands



UNEARTHING MUSICAL GEMS ... Emerging musicians will get an opportunity to showcase their talents throughout Gauteng

Photograph: Mandla Nkosi

get to perform at the most posh events around the province in a bid to boost their confidence and expose them to industry players.

"Bands that are selected

from the audition process will participate in a range of live performance showcases that will be hosted at various live venues throughout Gauteng - including

festivals that are sponsored by the department.

"These include the Joy of Jazz, Moretele Park Festival and Moshito Music Conference and Exhibition. The bands also get an opportunity to market themselves at the Cape Town International Festival and Grahamstown Arts Festival, and negotiations are at an advanced stage to also take part in the Macufe festival," he added.

Motlomelo further told Gauteng News that the MEC for SRAC, Lebogang Maile, is passionate about the programme and takes keen interest in the bands' progress.

"The Puisano programme has been most instrumental in advancing and creating market access for unsigned and unrecorded bands in the Gauteng," said Motlomelo. vuyo.sabani@gauteng.gov.za