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AFRICA COMMUNITY MEDIA

Refurbishment on cards for Mansel Road Market

DOREEN PREMDEV

Urban decay in eThekweni has set in with migration for economic opportunities, property abandonment, poor service delivery and crime being among the reasons for it.

These conditions were exacerbated, in part, by the catastrophic floods in April 2022, that destroyed critical infrastructure, including roads, communication and electrical systems.

To respond to the challenges of the municipality, President Cyril Ramaphosa established the eThekweni Presidential Working Group (PeWG) in April 2024.

The working group was established to accelerate support from national and provincial government to rebuild the municipality.

Since its establishment, the

working group has provided support and fast-tracked efforts by the eThekweni Municipality to improve service delivery, improve business confidence, and reposition eThekweni as an investment and tourism attraction.

The working group operates across three spheres of government and includes representatives from the private sector and labour.

Last November, the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality announced plans to develop the informal economy sector by upgrading the infrastructure used by traders.

These projects include the R10 million upgrade of the Dalton Art and Craft Market, the R15 million upgrade for the Mansel Road Market, the R2.5 million

upgrade for the Tongaat Trader Market, the R4 million upgrade for the KwaMaKhutha Business Hive (Ward 94) and the R4.3 million upgrade for the Klaarwater Business Hive (Ward 17).

Traders at the Mansel Road Market were visited by Small Business Development Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams last year.

"The minister handed over about 100 sewing machines, equipment for those running food handling facilities such as freezers, pots, gas stoves, and microwaves," said chairman for Mansel Road Market Traders, Mboneni Qwabe.

Continued on page 3



eThekweni Municipality is to invest millions to upgrade the infrastructure in the city.

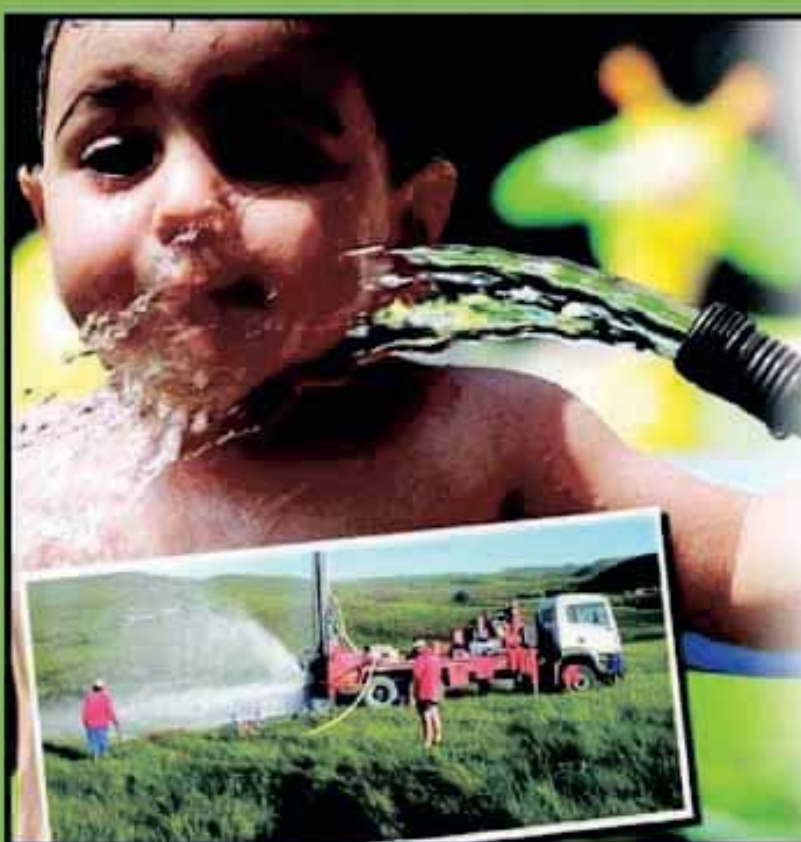
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DurbanLocal is a product of Africa Community Media, publishers of Cape Community Media, Isolezwe lesiXhosa and Diamond Fields Advertiser

VFD

Printed by Insights Publishing, Independent Media, 18 Osborne Street, Durban, for the publishers Africa Community Media, a division of Independent Newspapers Cape, 122 St George's Mall for and on behalf of the proprietors, Independent Newspapers (Pty) Ltd PO Box 1014, Johannesburg, 2000. Reg 71/1422/06

Norris the stork is back to make babies

DOREEN PREMDEV

Norris the stork is back at Crocworld and he has some important work to do – making babies.

Norris was a captive hatchling who hatched at Johannesburg Zoo on January 1, 2010. He recently celebrated his 15th birthday.

Busani Mthiyane, animal curator of Crocworld Conservation Centre, said Norris arrived at Crocworld on July 20, 2015 where he enjoyed a happy time with his mates.

“Norris was housed in our Crocworld aviary for some time. He had been somewhat anxious and unsettled. However, with much dedicated care, he has calmed down significantly and we feel he is ready to be living with his mates once again,” Mr Mthiyane said.

He added that Crocworld has many breeding programmes which are instrumental in furthering the genetic diversity of threatened species.

Norris has shown significant success in the programme, fathering a number of chicks over the years, including two last year. He added that they are patiently monitoring and observing Norris behaviour towards his mate.

The introduction of this Marabou stork comes with the intention of increasing their breeding rate as they have two males and one female on display. Marabou Storks breed during the dry season only and play an important role in the ecosystem by scavenging on carcasses, Mr Mthiyane



■ Norris the stork has returned to Crocworld Conservation Centre in Scottburg, Umzinto. He and his new mate, Merry, are to mate in the hope of producing more Marabou Storks.

said.

So far Norris has fathered three children with his previous mate, Samara. Unfortunately Samara died and now he has a new mate, Merry.

“There is a need to breed more storks because the regional population of Marabou Storks in South Africa is relatively small, estimated at around 340 to 520 mature individuals.

“The Marabou Stork is currently classified as ‘Least Concern’ by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). This makes them vulnerable to various threats, and breeding programmes help stabilise

and potentially increase their numbers. These programmes also enhance genetic diversity which is crucial for the long-term health and resilience of the species,” said Mr Mthiyane.

Mr Mthiyane said Marabou Storks are not known to be friendly or playful, however, during the breeding season, males perform courtship displays to attract females. This includes bill-clattering and spreading their wings. These unique displays intend to establish dominance and attract a mate, he said.

“Norris is certainly one of the beloved characters at Crocworld, and

we’re excited to be introducing him to the public once again. He is joined by many fantastic characters that reside at Crocworld, among them Henry the Nile crocodile.

“Henry is considered the world’s longest-living Nile crocodile in captivity, he just celebrated his 124th birthday. There’s his best mate, Colgate, who is in his 90s and almost as massive as Henry. Then there’s Elliot the Emu, and Sekhuru the African Fish Eagle.

“We encourage visitors to head to Crocworld to meet them all,” said Mr Mthiyane.



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How to play: Fill every column, row and 3x3 box so they contain every number between 1 and 9.

Solution on page 12

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				3				
2	7		8	1		6	5	
	4					1		
9		5				7		6
6	2						3	4
4				7				8
		7	5	1	3	4		

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STOKVEL WELCOME!

Man gets life sentence for crime spree

DOREEN PREMDEV

In March 2022, Siyabonga Prince Cele went on a crime spree in Inanda and Phoenix.

He was eventually apprehended when police confronted him at a petrol station. He was in possession of a stolen vehicle.

This week the Ntuzuma Regional Court sentenced Mr Cele, 23, to a term of life and 25 years imprisonment for rape, robbery with aggravating circumstances, attempted murder and kidnapping.

National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) regional spokesperson, Natasha Ramkisson-Kara, said on March 12, 2022 Mr Cele and other accomplices hijacked a motor vehicle in the Inanda area.

"The complainant, who worked as a metered-car driver, was dropping off a passenger when Cele and his accomplices approached him (the driver) with knives and firearms.

"They assaulted him, pulled him out of the vehicle and drove off. They then came

across the female complainant who was walking in the road. They grabbed her and forced her into the back seat of the motor vehicle."

Ms Ramkisson-Kara said Mr Cele forced her to undress and when she refused, he stabbed her on various parts of her body. He eventually raped her. Thereafter they found a bank card in her possession and drove to a petrol station where they filled up the vehicle.

"At the petrol station, they were approached by police officials who had identified the vehicle as being stolen. Cele and the suspects then fired several shots at the police as they fled the scene.

"However, they crashed the motor vehicle and Cele was apprehended. The complainant who was found bleeding in the backseat of the vehicle was taken to the Phoenix Thuthuzela Care Centre, for medical and psycho-social assistance," said Ms Ramkisson-Kara.

In court, Advocate Naushaad



PICTURE: ANELISA KUBHEKA

■ National Prosecuting Authority spokesperson, **Natasha Ramkisson-Kara.**

Harripersadh led the testimonies of the three complainants: the driver, the woman and the police

official who was shot at by Cele and his accomplices.

DNA evidence linking Cele to

the rape; crime scene evidence, and medical evidence (J88 form) were also part of the State's case.

The metered-car driver said that his sole income and livelihood were destroyed as the vehicle was damaged beyond repair.

The woman said that she had suffered physical and emotional trauma during the incident. She also mentioned that she had to leave the area and relocate because she lived in fear, following what had happened to her.

"Cele was sentenced to life imprisonment for rape, 15 years imprisonment for robbery with aggravating circumstances, 5 years imprisonment for attempted murder, and 5 years imprisonment for kidnapping.

"The sentences will run concurrently, resulting in the effective sentence of life imprisonment.

"In addition, the court declared him unfit to possess a firearm and ordered that his details be entered in the National Register for Sex Offenders," said Ms Ramkisson-Kara.

Charges dropped against missing man's alleged kidnappers

DOREEN PREMDEV

Esmael Maulide Ramos Nangy, Stefane Pereira Da Costa Brites, and Samkeliso Honest Mlotshwa appeared at the KwaDukuza Magistrate's Court on Wednesday January 22. The accused face charges of kidnapping, extortion and attempted murder.

Their appearance relates to the September 2024 kidnapping of a KwaDukuza businessman, said National Prosecuting Authority

regional spokesperson, Natasha Ramkisson-Kara.

"After a careful consideration of the matter, including consultations with the relevant stakeholders, the State has decided to withdraw charges against all three accused," said Ms Ramkisson-Kara. "Charges against the accused of kidnapping businessman, Zakariyya Desai, outside a mosque in KwaZulu-Natal have been withdrawn."

Mr Desai who owns Desai's

Cash and Carry, was taken by force in September 2024, after attending a night prayer.

The suspects were driving a silver VW Polo. The assailants fired several shots as others tried to stop the kidnapping, said Ms Ramkisson-Kara.

One of the accused, Mr Mlotshwa is a policeman employed with the South African Police Services.

Mr Desai's whereabouts remain unknown.

Boost for informal traders

From page 1

"This doesn't happen anywhere on the continent where the government freely provides equipment to informal traders. This shows us that our government is taking care of us," he said.

eThekweni Municipality senior manager for the informal economy, Michael Hlangu, said the Mansel Road Market was a hive of activity during weekends.

He said customers come from all over South Africa and other countries on the continent. The retail market offers among others clothing, food stalls, traditional drums, bedding, and traditional attire. About 180 traders operating at the market are expected to benefit from the refurbishment of the facility. This will include a new building with new ablution facilities, electricity, water and a parking area.

"We have 184 container traders. Some of the containers are dilapidated. Our plan is to convert the containers into brick and mortar. Contractors have been appointed for the project and the traders will be relocated this month to a new location so the construction of the project can commence," said Mr Hlangu. "During the construction phase it is anticipated that about 100 people will benefit from job opportunities. All traders that are

operating in this facility have been registered with the municipality."

The majority of traders have business licences and they renew them on an annual basis, Mr Hlangu added. The rental for the food section is R664 per month and they sign a lease agreement with the municipality.

Mr Hlangu added that they regularly conduct training on health and safety to ensure that the vendors comply with the regulations and by-laws.

The municipality is responsible for maintaining the facility, which includes providing security, cleaning services and electricity.

Mr Qwabe said the municipality hosts business summits each year and updates traders on the work being done to uplift the informal economy.

"There is work that has been done to improve the operations of the traders. When this place was opened in 1996, there were no containers. People were selling from their cars under the carport, and this was changed to containers, but the containers have deteriorated over the years," he said. "The municipality has come to assist the traders as they are now building a new structure for traders.

"We have seen the plan and it's good. We will be able to attract tourists with the new building."



PICTURES: MANSEL ROAD MARKET

■ Mansel Road Market in Stamford Hill Road, Durban, was constructed in 1996. There are 180 traders operating in this market, which is a hub for traditional Zulu attire, clothing, bedding, drums and more.



■ Motorists have been warned that criminals are placing objects on the road to damage vehicles, forcing drivers to stop in places where they are vulnerable.

Motorists warned of hijacking tactic

NIYANTA SINGH

Motorists are being urged to remain vigilant after a recent incident on the N2 Freeway in Durban highlighted a dangerous tactic being used by criminals to target drivers.

Reaction Unit South Africa's Prem Balram said last Saturday evening, a nurse travelling with her family between Spaghetti Junction and Westwood Mall reported running over metal debris that appeared to have been deliberately placed on the road. The debris caused extensive damage to one tyre and minor damage to another.

"Shortly after her tyres were affected, a Toyota Corolla pulled up behind her vehicle, and a loud noise was heard, heightening her suspicion. Fearing for their safety, the nurse and her family continued driving with the damaged tyre until they

reached a secure location, at which point the suspicious vehicle stopped following them," said Mr Balram.

He said this modus operandi has been previously linked to hijacking attempts, where criminals place objects on the road to damage vehicles, forcing drivers to stop in places where they are vulnerable.

Mr Balram offered the following tips to drivers to ensure their safety:

- Avoid stopping in isolated areas. If your vehicle is damaged, continue to a safe, well-lit location before pulling over.

- Be cautious of vehicles following closely. If a car behaves suspiciously behind you, do not stop. Instead, drive to the nearest police station or secure area.

- Report road hazards. If you notice debris on the road, report it to authorities immediately.

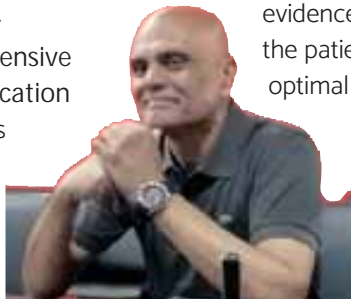
MEDICAL FEATURE

Dr Sonill Maharaj has extensive experience in the field of Physiotherapy, research and rehabilitation. He has the following degrees: B. Paed Sc, B. Education, B. Physiotherapy, Masters in Sports Medicine, and a PhD. Currently appointed as an Associate Professor at the University of Kwa Zulu-Natal, School of Health Sciences.

Dr Maharaj has graduated 10 PhD and 9 Masters students. He and his students have over 53 publications in journals and presented and attended

national and international conferences on health and rehabilitation. He is C-rated with the National Research Foundation and has served King Edward VIII hospital for 33 years and the University of KwaZulu-Natal for 22.

Dr Maharaj's extensive experience and dedication in diverse settings has sharpened his skills in the management of complex rehabilitation



of patients. He knows that good health requires the integration of the skeletal and neuro-muscular systems allowing us to move and engage in activities of daily living. He believes that simple exercises, evidence-based modalities and educating the patient about their condition achieves optimal health.

He has a passion for research-based rehabilitation and only practices research-based treatments. His physiotherapy practice in High Ridge Road, Durban North caters for all ages and conditions requiring rehabilitation. However, his special interest is on older patients with movement difficulties. An example being a cerebrovascular accident commonly referred to as a "stroke". To assist his patients, he has special discounted rates for pensioners and non-medical aid patients.

As his practice is on a part-time basis all appointments and consultations are strictly by appointment.

Dr. Serantha Foolchand: A Trailblazer in Maternal and Fetal medicine.

In the field of maternal and fetal medicine, Dr. Serantha Foolchand has emerged as a pioneering force whose work has touched the lives of countless women and families. With her extensive expertise, unwavering commitment to patient care, and contributions to medical research, Dr. Foolchand has established herself in the world of obstetrics and gynaecology.

In an era when medicine was often one-size-fits-all, she champions personalized treatment plans, advocating for greater customization based on each patient's unique needs, risks, and circumstances. Whether working with high-risk pregnancies or ensuring the optimal care for a low-risk mother, Dr Foolchand is steadfast in her commitment to providing evidence-based, compassionate, and tailored care.

Maternal - fetal services include management of low and high risk maternal and fetal cases and screening for structural and chromosomal abnormalities in the fetus. Dr Foolchand has spent time abroad training in fetal interventions, therapies and surgery which has resulted in her setting up a fetal therapy centre at her practice.

Dr. Foolchand's commitment to patient advocacy goes beyond the clinical setting. She has been instrumental in raising awareness about the importance of chromosomal conditions and works closely with Down's Syndrome South Africa.

She is a member of various national and international committees and organisations dedicated to advancing the field of maternal and fetal medicine.

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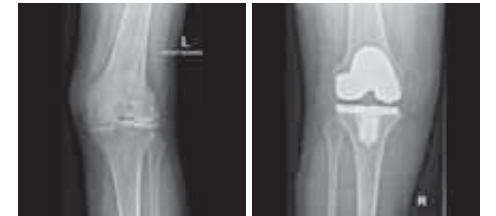
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- Post Hospital
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MEDICAL FEATURE

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DR KRITISH TIMAKIA SPECIALIST NEUROSURGEON



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Dr Timakia is a neurosurgeon that has begun elective Biportal Spinal Surgery at Kingsway Hospital. This innovative spinal intervention is invaluable to patients experiencing a variety of spinal conditions. He has an interest in conditions of the brain and spinal column of all age groups. Please call 035 492 0070 to arrange a review via Kingsway Hospital. [office email-admin@neurosurg.co.za]

Dr Timakia is a dedicated neurosurgeon whose primary focus is on providing compassionate and personalized care to his patients. His personal passion has been head trauma but has expanded to biportal endoscopic spine intervention, a considerably less invasive technique that minimizes patient trauma and promotes faster recovery. This largely replaces intervention to the neck and lower back for the common conditions, also allowing intervention on revision cases [or cases with previous surgery]. He remains able to manage a variety of neurosurgical conditions in both adults and children, including herniated discs and spinal stenosis, using small incisions and advanced visualization to reduce complications and support quicker healing. His holistic approach to neurosurgical care emphasizes understanding each patient's unique needs and circumstances. He values the emotional and psychological impacts of spinal disorders, fostering a collaborative relationship with families to empower them throughout the treatment process. Dr. Timakia believes that effective treatment hinges on a strong patient-doctor relationship built on trust, empathy, and open communication. Committed to continuous learning, Dr. Timakia stays updated on the latest medical advancements by attending workshops and conducting research. He values evidence-

based practice, ensuring he provides the best care possible. His passion for healthcare extends beyond individual consultations; he actively engages in community outreach by conducting seminars and health fairs to promote preventive medicine and wellness. By prioritizing individual experiences and concerns, he enhances patient satisfaction and improves clinical outcomes. Through educational sessions, he equips patients with essential knowledge, enabling informed decisions about their health. Dr. Timakia's dedication to innovative, less invasive procedures combined with a comprehensive understanding of spinal issues positions him as a premier choice for specialized care in neurosurgery. Please contact Dr Timakia's rooms for appointments at Kingsway hospital. In the north of Durban, he co-ordinates his reviews with the neurology team at Mount Edgecomb Life Hospital led by Dr's Irshaad and Nazim gani [these can also be facilitated via Dr Timakia's rooms].

• Office 0354920070
• Email admin@neurosurg.co.za
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WELLBEING IS OUR MAIN CONCERN

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INTRINSICALLY VALUABLE

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WORD OF THE WEEK

Triggers

DEFINITION

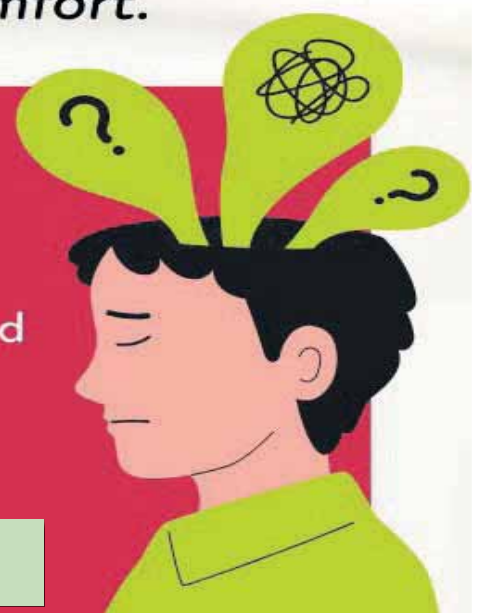
A trigger is an event, situation, or action that can lead to intense psychological or emotional discomfort.

EXAMPLES

Triggers can include:

- Physical reactions, like sweating or heavy breathing
- Emotional reactions, like feeling unsafe or threatened
- Specific times of day
- Smells
- Sounds
- Certain locations
- Media that depicts graphic violence

031 584 8173



MEDICAL FEATURE



RIBUMED MEDICAL CARE

A member of the JMH group

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Nestled in the heart of Ballito, Ribumed Medical Care will give you world-class healthcare and compassion. This state-of-the-art day hospital and behavioural center redefines the healthcare experience, blending advanced medical technology with a tranquil environment that promotes healing and peace of mind.

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Our multidisciplinary approach ensures that patients have access to an extensive range of medical disciplines, tailored to meet diverse healthcare needs. From Cosmetic

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- Free parking facilities
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As healthcare providers, we urge you to prioritize your well-being and not to overlook your health. Early intervention, regular check-ups, and timely treatment can make all the difference in living a healthier and more fulfilling life. At Ribumed Medical Care, we're here to support you, providing a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere where your health and peace of mind take center stage. Step into a future of better health with Ribumed Medical Care.

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Proving quality Education to the nation's children for the last 55 years, the school focuses on the holistic development of every pupil in a warm and friendly environment.

The schools vision is: To improve the learning ability of every pupil within an environment suitable for effective learning and teaching.

The future of the school looks

bright with the application having been made for grades to be increased at school in the new year.

Wishing all our pupil, parents, guardians and well - wishers everything of the best for 2025.



Manor Gardens Primary, situated just below UKZN, (University of KwaZulu Natal), Durban, caters for children from Grade R to Grade 7. Our small, close knit school, places the child at the centre of the learning experience and our innovative approach to the delivery of the curriculum ensures that they are prepared for the 21st Century.

A focus on skills and competencies, married with technology, creates a unique learning programme that supports the development of confident, well-rounded, engaged individuals. Our friendly staff make sure that each child is treated with individual love and care. Our sporting facilities enable us to offer varied activities throughout the year including cricket, netball, hockey, soccer, athletics and swimming. Our Aftercare facility is available daily until 17h00.



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At Alexandra High School quality education is not a luxury, it is in our nature.

A highly qualified and dedicated staff moulds students, promoting their skills,

both in and outside the classroom. We uphold good values in a co-ed, unbiased environment where learners have a place to develop their full potential. Founders House offers boarders a home-away-from-home environment on campus.

Contact us on: 033 394 8252
ALEXANDRA HIGH SCHOOL



Danville Park Girls' High School, situated in Durban North and overlooking the Indian Ocean, first opened its doors in 1967 to just 74 girls and a staff complement of 10. The numbers grew over the years, but the friendliness and warmth that characterized the school in its early years endured and the girls – both past and present – talk of being part of the 'Danville family'.

The school's excellent facilities, well-established infrastructure, and dedicated and caring staff combine to create an environment that enables Danville girls to achieve consistently in all areas of the academic, cultural and sporting curricula. Danville Park Girls' High School boasts an excellent academic record with an unbroken 100% pass rate for the past Thirty years, an exciting range of sporting opportunities, a rich variety of cultural and heritage activities, a vibrant community service programme as well as life and leadership training.

Information and Enquiries:
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SCHOOL: Tel: (031) 560 0350

Manor Gardens Primary

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Equipping children for the 21st Century

2026 OPEN DAY GRADE R - 7

Friday, 31 January 2025
 Starts at 8am - 10am

Manor Gardens Primary School
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- Small classes, co-ed school
- Innovative, effective delivery of the curriculum
- 2023 South African Lit Quiz Champions
- Mathematics taught through Problem Solving
- Reading taught through language experience
- Teaching focuses on skills and competencies
- Thematic teaching, giving context to learning
- Vibrant music department
- International Eco-School status
- Well rounded sports and extra mural programme

ALEXANDRA HIGH SCHOOL

Congratulations Class of 2024!
96.7 % Pass Rate.

FULL OR WEEKLY BOARDING FOR GIRLS AND BOYS GRADES 8 - 12.

Admissions 2026
 Applications open in February 2025
 Contact Ms Sosibo 033 394 8252

HIGH SCHOOL

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2024

- 8 LEVEL 7 As**
 Shreya Sukdeo
- 7 LEVEL 7 As**
 Sian Davis
 Aanya Magan
 Nandika Naidoo
- 6 LEVEL 7 As**
 Shilpa Daya
 Bailey Forbes
 Priyasha Moonsamy
 Iman Nair
 Lara-Nelle van Loggerenberg

TOP 10

- Aanya Magan
 Shreya Sukdeo
 Nandika Naidoo
 Lara-Nelle van Loggerenberg
 Kayla Falconer
 Shilpa Daya
 Brielle Govender
 Priyasha Moonsamy
 Jade Meth
 Sian Davis

140
 WROTE

93.6%
 BACHELORS
 PASS

The Principal, School Governing Body and staff of Danville Park Girls' High School congratulate the Class of 2024 on their excellent results in the NSC examinations.



100% PASS RATE FOR 31st CONSECUTIVE YEAR

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Competition invites citizens to tell water story

DOREEN PREMDEV

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has called on the public to take part in the Citizen Science for Water Photo Story Competition, which is aimed at communicating matters of water action in creative ways.

The South African National Committee (SANC) for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Intergovernmental Hydrological Programme (IHP), in collaboration with the DWS, launched the Citizen Science for Water Photo Story Competition in September last year.

SANC members include the DWS, the Water Research Commission (WRC), Department of Science and Innovation (DSI), University of South Africa (UNISA), and the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), among others.

The department said the competition seeks to raise awareness on the intertwined relationship between water and the various dimensions of culture, value, edu-



cation and the natural sciences. Focusing on demonstrating how citizens, communities and education could effectively support the sustainable use and management of water, among others.

"It is also aimed at activating youth involvement in communicating matters of water action in creative ways. As well as contribute to joint actions in the water action agenda, and to demon-

strate how citizens, communities and education could effectively support the sustainable use and management of water," the department said in a statement.

The department also highlighted that the competition targets citizens from all walks of life with a keen interest on water matters, including citizen science organisations, related civil society groups, as well as visual artists

■ **The Department of Water and Sanitation has called on the public to enter the Citizen Science for Water Photo Story Competition.**

and photographers.

Participants are encouraged to explore and submit photo stories aligned with five themes, including Water and Citizen Science; Water and Partnerships; Water and Education; Water and Culture, as well as Water and Communities.

"The competition is open to South African individuals aged 18 and above.

Participants should submit a minimum of three photographs that tell a cohesive story on one of the five themes, along with title, overall story of 200 to 500 words, names of the author(s) and photograph location in South Africa," the department said.

Entries for the competition is open and can be accessed on the UNESCO website <https://www.dws.gov.za/Projects/UNESCO/cspi.aspx>

The deadline for submission is Wednesday March 26. The winners will be announced in April and receive an award from DWS and SANC-IHP.

"The winning entries will gain visibility through local and international UNESCO IHP platforms, where the top 15 pieces will be featured in an exhibition during the launch of the Photo Story Book in June 2025," the department said.

The department urged participants to familiarise themselves with the submission rules when entering the competition. Anyone with enquiries or struggling with their submission may direct their queries to ihp50photostory@dws.gov.za.

Poetry contest commemorates Madiba's education

DOREEN PREMDEV

This year Poetry Africa will commemorate the centenary of the late former president Nelson Mandela's school year. The "Centenary of Mandela's School Year" theme is education is power and it will commemorate Mr Mandela's first school year, driving the 2025 Poetry Africa programme.

The Nobel laureate and first president of South Africa's constitutional democracy, Mr Mandela, started his primary schooling near his village of Qunu in the Eastern Cape in January 1925, said Siphindile Hlongwa, the curator of the Poetry Africa Festival.

"Mr Mandela grew up to acknowledge education as a powerful platform that could bring about equality and promote tolerance. We are delighted to launch two special projects at a time when young people across South Africa will be returning to school or starting school for the first time.

"The Poetry Africa programmes are our creative response to remind our nation about the important value that Mr Mandela placed on education," said Ms Hlongwa.

She drew on a famous quote from Mr Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."



■ **The 28th Poetry Africa Festival will commemorate one of the South African most iconic leaders, the late former president Nelson Mandela. Andisa Mpisi, an Emerging Arts Manager at the Centre for Creative Arts, said the festival will focus on Nelson Mandela's first school year, in the hope of encouraging young people to follow in his footsteps.**

Ten finalists from the national Slam Poetry Competition will be recorded for a special programme to be broadcast across several radio stations in South Africa in partnership with the Radiocracy project. The 10 finalists will have their poems recorded for

broadcast with a network of radio stations.

They will each receive a royalty fee for their recorded performance and a book voucher.

The Poetry Africa Festival is also kicking off a monthly slam poetry competition aimed spe-

cifically at slam poets from the greater Ethekwini municipality.

The winner of each month's competition between January and August will receive a R1 000 prize. The eight monthly winners will also be invited to a mentorship programme in September follow-

ing which they will be presented in a specially curated programme at the Poetry Africa Festival in October 2025, said Ms Hlongwa.

Published poet, Andisa Mpisi, an Emerging Arts Manager at the Centre for Creative Arts, will co-ordinate the programmes.

Ms Mpisi participated in the centre's literature curator exchange programme with the Bergen Literature Festival in Norway in 2024.

"We want slam poets to use their creative voices to encourage young people to immerse themselves in education by drawing inspiration from Nelson Mandela's commitment to education", said Ms Mpisi.

"In his biography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Mr Mandela said 'the power of education extends beyond the development of skills we need for economic success. It can contribute to nation-building and reconciliation'.

"Mr Mandela also said, 'young people must take it upon themselves to ensure that they receive the highest education possible so that they can represent us well in future as future leaders'."

The guidelines for both the national and regional Poetry Africa's "Centenary of Mandela's School Year" project will be available on the Poetry Africa website: <https://poetryafrica.ukzn.ac.za/>

Comrades Marathon announces new qualifying criteria

NIYANTA SINGH

With just 150 days to go until the 98th Comrades Marathon, the Comrades Marathon Association (CMA) has unveiled an update to the qualifying criteria for the 2025 race.

Effective immediately, the qualifying time for completing a standard 42.2km marathon has been reduced to 5 hours for all participants.

This historic change aims to make the iconic race more

inclusive and accessible, inviting a broader spectrum of runners to take on the legendary challenge.

The race, affectionately known as "The Ultimate Human Race", is set for Sunday June 8.

CMA chairperson, Mqondisi Ngcobo, said he was enthusiastic about the new qualification standard.

"We are thrilled to make the Comrades Marathon more accessible to a wider range of runners.

"This change reflects our commitment to inclusivity and

the growth of the sport," said Mr Mgcobo

He said the enduring spirit of the Comrades Marathon, that celebrates perseverance and camaraderie should extend to as many people as possible.

"We believe that this adjustment will inspire more runners to participate and experience the unique challenge and camaraderie that the Comrades Marathon offers."

CMA acting race and operations manager, Alain Dalais, echoed these sentiments, describing

the change as a "fantastic move" that opens the door for greater participation.

"It encourages a greater diversity of runners to take on this incredible challenge," Mr Dalais said.

The final date for submitting qualifying details is Monday May 5. Runners must submit their qualifying race time, running club details, provincial club licence number, and complete the required medical questionnaire.

The qualifying window for

the 2025 Comrades Marathon spans from June 10, 2024, to May 5, 2025.

Participants can update their details by logging into their entry profile on the official Comrades website at www.comrades.com

This year's race will be a Down Run, beginning at the Pietermaritzburg City Hall at 5.30am and concluding 12 hours later at Durban's People's Park.

Covering an approximately 89km distance, it marks the 49th Down Run in Comrades history.

Local actress lands Bollywood soapie role

DOREEN PREMDEV

It's not every day a South African lands a role in a Bollywood soapie, but lady luck has been generous to TeKayha Anastasia Sukuram.

The 23-year-old Miss India South Africa landed a role in two Bollywood soapies, *Hamara Parivar* (Our Family) and *Bhabi Ji Ghar Par Hai* (Sister-in-law is at Home), which screens on ZEE TV.

Born in Johannesburg, she now lives in Izinga Ridge, Umhlanga, north of Durban.

Sukuram matriculated at Mount Edgecombe Private School and studied a Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting at the University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN).

She spoke to DurbanLocal about her time spend in Mumbai, India, filming for the soapies. She said she got the role thanks to Zee TV and the Miss India South Africa organisation.

"I was crowned Zee TV Miss India South Africa 2023 and Zee TV's prize to the winner was the opportunity to be a part of a Zee TV production.

"I am a professional actress/dancer and I speak Hindi, I was fortunate enough to be sent to Mumbai, India, to star in not one, but two popular Zee TV shows. There were also multiple audition videos that I had to send through before I could make it to Mumbai," she said.

Sukuram will appear in *Hamara Parivar* and *Bhabi Ji Ghar Par Hai* which has been airing for 10 years. In *Bhabi Ji Ghar Par Hai*, she plays the role of a young bride. In *Hamara Parivar*, she appear as herself.

She said being on set was a "surreal experience" for her. She added to be on set, see the world that these shows have created



■ Left: TeKayha Anastasia Sukuram On the set of *Bhabi Ji Ghar Par Hai* with her co-star and seasoned actor, Aasif Sheikh.

■ Right: TeKayha Anastasia Sukuram in her trailer getting ready to shoot her first scene.



and to be part of this was a dream come true for her.

"To watch the shows on TV is one thing, but to see the way the scenes are shot in person is a totally different experience. I had such an amazing experience on set and am so grateful to have worked with such seasoned actors within the Bollywood industry – actors that I have worked with include Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan. I definitely learnt a lot and grew, as an actor, through my experiences being on set," Sukuram said.

She stayed in Andheri East, Mumbai, for the duration of the filming. She spent two weeks in India and returned to South Africa in late November.

Sukuram said speaking Hindi and a little Sanskrit was required for her roles. She said she is able to

speak, read, write and understand Hindi which made the whole process a lot easier for her. She added that it has always been her dream to work in Indian cinema and from a young age she took it upon herself to learn the Hindi language, even though none of her family members speak the language.

Living by her mantra "Dreams don't work unless you do", Sukuram is set for success. She spoke about the relationships she developed during her time spent with the stars.

"Everyone I worked with was so warm and welcoming towards me, from the actors, the crew as well as the directors and producers. They were helpful on set and helped make my experience an extremely wonderful one," she said.

"I can definitely see myself living in India. It's always been my dream to work within the Indian entertainment industry and I definitely feel at home there. As soon as another opportunity arises, I will grab it with both hands."

She said she was proud to have made history, as the first Miss India South Africa ever to have made it within the realms of Bollywood.

She added that winning the Miss India South Africa 2023, was definitely another one of her dream realised. Sukuram said it was a turning point in her life and gave her a platform with which to further use her voice for good.

"My year as the reigning queen was filled with not only glitz and glam, but with giving back, something that I hold very dear to my heart. I founded my

own non-profit organisation, called The Changemakers, and we are currently focusing on combating GBV in SA by hosting self-defence workshops for girls and women.

"It has been such a pleasure working with both Zee TV and the Miss India South Africa organisation during my year of reign and I look forward to any future prospects with them," she said.

Sukuram also represented South Africa in the Miss India Worldwide pageant in USA in September. She was placed in the top five and walked away with the title of Miss Bollywood.

She has also starred in the South African film, *Sugar Cane Boy the Movie*, which will be released next year. *Hamara Parivar* and *Bhabi Ji Ghar Par Hai* airs on DStv –Zee TV channel 452.

Author pens new books and comic

DOREEN PREMDEV

It is evident that Lauren Bianca has a passion for writing. She has penned two new books and a comic.

Lauren developed an interest in writing at high school, and since then she made her dreams come true and became an author.

Lauren lives in Durban and holds a BA degree in Psychological Counselling. She is also a registered counsellor with The Counselling Association of SA, an events coordinator and caregiver.

Her books *His Wolf Her Horse*, *Bring It All Back* and the *The Shadower Comic* have been well received by readers.

"*His Wolf Her Horse* is an adult romance fantasy novel. The main characters, Carson and Vallerie are brought together by their wolf and horse. While *Bring It All Back*, a romance fantasy novel, is set in Durban. Emilia Drifter receives a random phone call that brought back memories of the past, little did she know that the letters given to her would change her life forever. This simple city girl crosses paths with Mr Kentley, Emilia doesn't know that they share a bond," said Lauren.

She said *The Shadower Comic* is a superhero comic book designed, written and published in South Africa. They used actual people's images as characters in the book. The main character, Chasi Aven and her team work together to fight off the dark forces that await



■ Lauren Bianca with her two books, *His Wolf Her Horse* and *Bring It All Back*.

them.

She said she is a huge lover of romance and was always exposed to fantasy while growing up.

"I have written poems when I was in high school and tried to write a fantasy book. My favourite authors are Jane Austen and Ana Huang, they have got me back on track with my writing," she said.

"My mother, father, cousins Stacey and Chloe and my partner have all encouraged me to write. Also watching movies like *Snow White*, *How to Train Your Dragon* and *A Walk to Remember* have inspired many dreams and imag-

inations which I put onto paper."

She said she draws her ideas from personal experiences. She brings to life her characters not only from her imagination but also from life in general. She said there are so many people with different traits and personalities. Adding that each person is special and she uses these traits people have to create her characters.

She added that she has had positive feedback from her books locally and in India and Canada. This has driven her passion and she is currently working on two more books.

Read of the week

Playing Flirty
Shameez Patel
Hatchette
Review: Lauren O'Connor-May

I got very excited when I saw this book. A brown Capetonian author, writing about a leading brown romance character. I wondered, are we finally getting a brown South African romance heroine?

Alas, no we are not. While elsewhere in the world romance characters have become more diverse, in South Africa we are still lagging behind in this department.

This story, set in San Diego, is about Rose, a semi-conservative office worker with a highly-detailed life plan.

Her plan goes off the rails when three months after she had scheduled her engagement on her colour-coded Excel spreadsheet life plan, her relationship with her long-term boyfriend Patrick appears to be going in the opposite direction instead.

She finds solace in game night, a weekly meet-up with her set of quirky friends and archnemesis to play board games.

When a competition to develop a new board game has her digging out and re-evaluating her own unfinished game, she finds a new unmapped life goal that ignites in her a long-



lost excitement.

The only person who can help her get the game competition-ready though is her sexy rival William, whose teasing and dour aloofness has long ago put them at odds.

Throw in a creepy boss, some family drama, wedding plans and pole dancing and you've got the bones of this novel, which is fleshed out quite nicely since the author hasn't sacrificed whole chapters to spicy scenes.

I liked this book, despite my initial disappointment, and South Africa does at least get a mention, albeit only in passing.

Hollywoodbets Dolphins shine in Betway SA20

DOREEN PREMDEV

The Betway SA20 has reached its halfway point, and various Hollywoodbets Dolphins players across the franchises have shone through the first part of the competition that concludes in February.

The competition has come thick and fast with matches daily across the six venues in the country, and Dolphins players have been prominent in a few of the franchises. The bowlers have stood out from a Dolphins' perspective in this campaign with the likes of Ottniel Baartman leading the way with five wickets from his four outings for the Sunrisers Eastern Cape.

Baartman picked up 2/17 in the Sunrisers' last weekend win over Durban's Super Giants which showed how he is coming into some form in the tournament.

Proteas and Dolphins star Keshav Maharaj has also picked up five wickets in the tournament for Durban's Super Giants. His economy rate of 6.93 is up there with the most economical bowlers in the tournament.

Also in the DSG ranks is Prenelan Subrayen who featured in one match at Hollywoodbets Kingsmead where he picked up 2/24 in his only match so far.

After picking up three wickets in his three matches, Daryn Dupavillon has withdrawn from the tournament with a hamstring injury. His Pretoria Capitals teammate and Dolphins all-rounder, Eathan Bosch recently earned a player of the match award when he took 2/18 for the Capitals in their win over the Sunrisers.

The Pretoria Capitals have a handful of Dolphins players in their ranks with Marques Ackerman also in their side. The left-hander has also been in good form with the bat with a top score of 39 not out along with one other not-out score to his name from his three innings that he's played.

David Miller registered his highest score of the competition thus far against the Capitals recently when he made 48 not out as the Paarl Royals chased down 212 at Centurion. Dolphins left-handed opener Bryce Parsons started the competition confidently when he scored a fluent 47 in Durban's Super Giants' opening home match against the Pretoria Capitals.

Parsons has played in two matches so far with scores of 47 and 23 at the top of the order. Young Dolphins seamer Tristan Luus is in the MI Cape Town squad as their rookie pick and is yet to get a match in the competition. Similarly, Okuhle Cele and Andile Simelane are among the Sunrisers Eastern Cape squad still patiently waiting to get their opportunity in the competition.



■ Dolphins stars continue to shine in SA20. Marques Ackerman, a left-hander, has been in good form with the bat, with a top score of 39 not out along with one other not-out score to his name from the three innings that he has played.

Comrades Marathon legacy brought to life at museum



■ Comrades Marathon House in Comrades Road, Pietermaritzburg.

NIYANTA SINGH

The Comrades Marathon Association (CMA) is inviting the public to explore the Comrades Marathon Museum, a treasure trove dedicated to the world's oldest and largest ultramarathon.

Situated in the heart of Pietermaritzburg, this unique museum offers an immersive experience that celebrates the history, milestones, and indomitable spirit of the Ultimate Human Race.

Visitors can expect a captivating journey through time with a variety of exhibits that bring the race's legacy to life. Highlights include original race medals, trophies, and vintage running gear alongside interactive displays that recount the evolution of the race.

The museum pays tribute to the legendary athletes who have left an indelible mark on the Comrades Marathon, including past winners, record holders, and the iconic Green Number runners, whose achievements remain an inspiration to all.

School groups are also welcome, with multimedia exhibits designed to engage learners. These displays showcase the race's iconic moments and share personal stories of determination and triumph, offering valuable lessons in perseverance and the human spirit.

More than just a historical archive, the museum is a beacon of inspiration for future generations of runners. It celebrates the

passion and perseverance that define the Comrades Marathon and the people who participate in it.


"The Comrades Marathon Museum is a testament to the incredible history and legacy of this iconic race," said CMA chairperson Mqondisi Ngcobo. "We invite everyone to visit and be inspired by the remarkable achievements of those who have taken on the ultimate human challenge."

The museum is located at 18 Comrades Road, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg. It is open Monday to Friday, from 8.30am to 4pm, and admission is free.

For more information, contact CMA Museum Curator Elrica Henning via email at elrica@comrades.com.



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Hans is back home after solo seafaring

DOREEN PREMDEV

There is no place like home and this rings true for Hans Hamre. Mr Hamre is an alumnus and former University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) economics lecturer, who swapped his career as an investment analyst for a life of adventure. After retiring he set sail to see the world.

He lived in London for over 32 years. He was inspired to take up sailing as he reflected on how to make the most of his life. Driven by the sobering reality of friends experiencing premature deaths or uninspiring retirements, he decided he was going to do things differently.

At 57, Mr Hamre purchased a 40-foot Dufour yacht, named *Manuka*, resigned from his job, and rented out his house before setting sail across the Atlantic Ocean to the Caribbean Islands. Little did he know that his journey would eventually bring him back to his hometown of Durban three years later.

"I initially spent two years in the Caribbean exploring the different islands, including a five-month stint where I visited Columbia, Panama and Costa Rica," he said.

After reaching Central America in mid-2023, Mr Hamre sailed through the Pacific, making it as far as Fiji.

Toward the end of the year, he continued to New Zealand, where he spent



■ Former UKZN economics lecturer Hans Hamre (on the boat) has sailed to many parts of the world and his journey finally led him back to Durban. His long-time friend John Hart gave him a warm welcome on his return recently.

six months. By July 2024, his voyage took him to Australia, across the Indian Ocean to Mauritius, the Réunion Islands, and finally back home to Durban.

"The journey from Réunion to Durban was particularly gruelling," Mr Hamre said. "It took 12 days to cover 1 450 nautical miles. It was fairly slow, and

after sailing so much over the past four months, I was eager to get home, which made it frustrating."

Mr Hamre faced several challenges during the 12-day voyage, including malfunctioning sliders and a failed water pump. Fortunately, the wind picked up enough for the foresail alone to be suf-

ficient, so he didn't need the mainsail sliders, he said. He added that he relied on 5-litre plastic bottles refilled from 20-litre Jerry cans because the water tanks were out of service.

"I come from a lineage of seafarers. My father, Erik, was a whaler, captain and gunner for the Union Whaling Company, operating out of Durban until it closed in 1975. My grandfather, Hans, served as a war sailor. Reflecting on my journey, I never imagined I would one day follow in their footsteps, sailing solo across the Indian Ocean and into the Port of Durban," said Mr Hamre.

His arrival in Durban was made even more special by the welcoming party of old friends.

He said he was looking forward to a break from the sea with a vacation in the Drakensberg Mountains. "I've had enough of water to last me a while," he said.

3	1	4	6	5	9	8	2	7
5	8	6	7	3	2	9	4	1
2	7	9	8	4	1	3	6	5
7	4	8	3	6	5	2	1	9
9	3	5	1	2	4	7	8	6
6	2	1	9	8	7	5	3	4
1	5	2	4	9	8	6	7	3
4	9	3	2	7	6	1	5	8
8	6	7	5	1	3	4	9	2

Sudoku solution

No 106

Level: 3
Tricky

Puzzle on page 2

Durban's summer sailing season kicks off

DOREEN PREMDEV

It's summer sailing season in Durban and it's going off with a bang.

The Twilight Series kicked off on January 15, launching the summer sailing season after a month-long festive break.

Durban sailors have an eventful calendar ahead leading up to the annual MSC Week in July.

Traditionally, the Durban harbour is a colourful affair with a large fleet stretching their legs with a few laps in a short race set with the backdrop of the larger ships moored in the bay.

Point Yacht Club is hosting five more Wednesday night sailings remaining in this season, said Sophie Thompson of Elf Works, Publicity Matters.

"The first offshore race will be the annual Congella Series with the yacht club organising some action-packed Sail GP type racing around the cans offshore of Durban.

The first day of the Congella Series was on Sunday January 26, with the two-part series concluded on Sunday January 23.

Defending champion, Kevin Rainer and his crew on the L26, Tequilla Sunrise are having a cracker of a season, finishing first in the keeler division of the annual international Bart's Bash regatta. Rainer is a regular top performing competitor, featuring often on the podium, said Ms Thompson.

She added that the more adventurous yachties can test their long-distance skills with an overnight "there-and-back" race on the evening of the March 1.

The Tugela Overnight Race will

start around sunset with the pack charging off to a turning point either up or down the coast, depending on the weather, then making a U-turn and racing back to the finish line.

April's calendar will be taken up by the upcoming Mirror Worlds Championship being hosted by Point Yacht Club.

The final event for the 2024/25 Summer Sailing Season before the annual MSC Week, is the Sunshine Series on Sunday May 18 and Sunday June 22.

"Nearing 50 years since its inception, the MSC Week that began in 1976 is five days of offshore yachting at its finest in Durban's magnificent winter conditions.

"The dates for this year's highly anticipated event are from Monday to Friday, July 7 to 11, with the warm-up in-bay Commodore's Cup taking place on Sunday July 6," said Ms Thompson.

Concluding the year, the opportunity for the top-tier sailors to represent the yacht club in the prestigious Lipton Challenge Cup, which will be taking place in Cape Town from August 26 to 30. The esteemed challenge began in 1911.

Any member of the public wanting to try their hand at sailing can get in touch with the Rear Commodore of Keelers, Anthony Howes.

The "Bums on Boats" initiative invites anyone wanting to learn the ropes, and the opportunity to fall in love with this exciting water sport. Mr Howes will match up the willing participant with a competitive yacht that races on Wednesday nights.

For more information, visit www.pyc.co.za or call 031 301 4787.

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