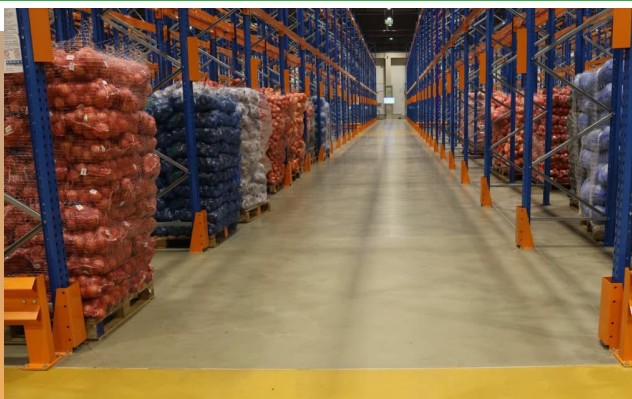




Long-awaited Mpumalanga International Food Market opens, promises thousands of jobs



MEC Khethiwe Moeketsi and Premier Mandla Ndlovu.



The Mpumalanga International FoodMarket in Mbombela.

Kgabu Mahlatji

The long-awaited Mpumalanga International Food Market (MIF) is now operational, marking a significant development for the province's agricultural sector, with thousands of jobs expected to emerge as the facility expands its operations.

Mpumalanga Premier Mandla Ndlovu announced the commencement of trading at the R2 billion facility on Tuesday, October 27, accompanied by the MEC for Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, Khethiwe Moeketsi.

The market has started receiving deliveries from farmers, with trading activities now under way. The provincial government says the facility is expected to strengthen market access for agricultural producers, stimulate local businesses and create employment across the agricultural value chain.

According to Ndlovu, the market has already created 47 direct jobs. Once fully operational, it is expected to generate approximately 156 additional direct jobs, while a fur-

ther 4 033 indirect jobs are projected through farming, value addition, logistics and related economic activities.

"To date, 1 153 jobs have also been created through small, medium and micro enterprises benefiting from the Agrofund programme. These enterprises will supply produce to the market, creating further opportunities for local businesses to participate in the agricultural value chain," said Ndlovu.

He described the facility as the country's first fresh produce market since liberation and called on farmers throughout Mpumalanga to use it as a platform to reach buyers and expand their businesses.

The market is designed to accommodate a wide range of agricultural commodities, including vegetables, fruits, meat, milk and eggs, providing farmers with an opportunity to bring their produce to a central trading facility.

Moeketsi said the opening addresses one of the longstanding challenges faced by farmers: access to reliable markets for their produce.

"We are delivering on one of our

farmers' longstanding demands: market access. This state-of-the-art facility accommodates a wide range of agricultural commodities, including vegetables, fruits, meat, milk and eggs, creating opportunities for farmers and strengthening the agricultural value chain," she said.

She urged farmers to take advantage of the facility and encouraged residents to support local producers by buying fresh, locally produced food.

The market is also expected to create opportunities for businesses involved in transportation, packaging, processing and other services associated with moving agricultural products from farms to consumers. Francois Knowles of the Agricultural Produce Agents Council (APAC) said the council had been involved in preparations for the market in line with its statutory responsibility to regulate agricultural produce agents. Ahead of the market's opening, APAC engaged with MIF management and prospective agencies on registration requirements and regulatory compliance. A presentation in April focused on agency registration,

legal obligations and the readiness of agents intending to operate at the facility.

"Importantly, APAC's role is not to operate the market or manage the commercial relationship between farmers and buyers. Its role is to regulate the agents who act on behalf of producers and to ensure that those agents operate within the statutory framework established to govern the profession," said Knowles.

APAC is a statutory body established under Section 2 of the Agricultural Produce Agents Act 12 of 1992 and regulates fresh produce, export and livestock agents. The market's commencement of operations follows years of delays since it was first announced in November 2018. The facility was initially scheduled for completion by September 2020, but various challenges resulted in several missed deadlines.

The provincial government has called on farmers and consumers to support the market as it seeks to strengthen agricultural production, expand business participation and create opportunities throughout the province's food supply chain.

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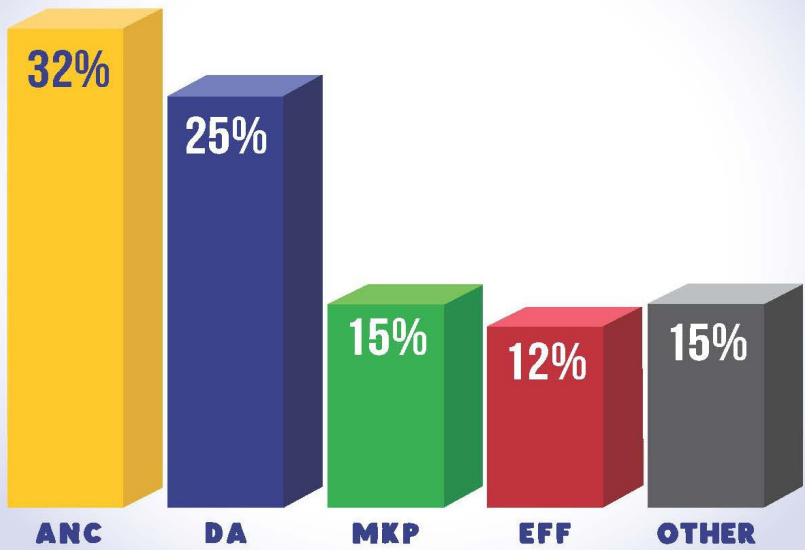
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Fidelity urges voters to priorities safety on Election Day

Kgabu Mahlatji

Fidelity Services Group is urging South Africans to priorities personal safety when heading to voting stations for the local government elections. The security company has outlined seven practical precautions to help voters protect themselves, their homes and their belongings before, during and after casting their ballots. Residents are advised to secure their homes by locking all doors, windows and gates, activating alarm systems and keeping valuables out of sight before leaving. Voters should carry only essential items, including identification documents, and avoid wearing expensive jewelry. They are encouraged to plan their journeys in advance and, where possible, travel with family members, friends or neighbours. Motorists should park in secure, well-lit areas, lock their vehicles and ensure that valuables such as handbags, laptops and cellphones are not visible inside. At voting stations, voters should remain alert in queues and crowded spaces, keep their belongings close and avoid distractions while using their cellphones. Fidelity also advises residents to be vigilant when returning home, particularly when approaching their driveways or gates. Anyone who suspects they are being followed should avoid driving home and instead head to the nearest police station or a busy, safe location before contacting their security provider. Voters should charge their cellphones before leaving and save emergency contact numbers for quick access. Fidelity ADT customers are



encouraged to know how to contact the control room and use their panic buttons when assistance is needed. Wahl Bartmann, group CEO of Fidelity Services Group, said simple precautions could make a difference to personal safety. “Personal safety often comes down to the small decisions we make throughout the day. Remaining observant, securing your property and thinking ahead can make a meaningful difference,” he said. Bartmann encouraged South Africans to exercise their right to vote while taking sensible precautions to protect themselves, their families and their property.



Elukwatini mall project gains momentum as stakeholders seek way forward

Kgabu Mahlatji

The proposed Elukwatini shopping mall project has taken a step forward, with the South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) approving a new intersection to provide access to the development.

However, the project's progress remains dependent on outstanding technical requirements, with the Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality (CALM), developers and other stakeholders engaging to establish a way forward. Municipal manager Ephraim Thabethe said the municipality was awaiting an updated civil engineering report from the developer's new technical team. "The holding point now is for the developer's new technical team to provide an updated civil engineering report to the municipality," said Thabethe.

He explained that the civil contractor initially responsible for submitting the report had stopped responding, prompting the developers to take over the work and assign it directly to their technical team. Thabethe said the report was expected



to be submitted on Thursday, November 5, 2026.

"We don't know if the goalposts will shift again, since they have been shifting for the past six years," he said. The latest developments follow a community protest that resulted in the closure of the R541, as residents demanded that the mall be built, citing the jobs and economic opportunities it could bring to Elukwatini and surrounding

communities.

The protest highlighted growing frustration over delays to the development, with residents calling for concrete progress on a project they believe could create employment, particularly for young people.

The mall is expected to offer opportunities in construction, retail, security, cleaning and other services, while potentially benefiting local businesses and suppliers.

SANRAL's approval of the new intersection addresses a key road-access requirement, although the outstanding technical processes must still be completed before the project can advance. Residents will now be watching closely to see whether the updated report is submitted as scheduled and whether the ongoing engagements translate into tangible progress towards construction. For the community, the priority remains seeing the long-awaited development move beyond promises and deliver jobs and economic opportunities.



CALM confirms receipt of Mayor Mbuso Magubane's resignation

Kgabu Mahlatji

Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality (CALM) has confirmed receiving the resignation letter of executive mayor Mbuso Magubane, who stepped down from the position days before the November 4 local government elections.

Municipal spokesperson Thapelo Phetla said the municipality received Magubane's resignation letter on the evening of October 27.

"The municipality confirms that it received his resignation letter on the evening of October 27. In the letter, he indicated that he was resigning as executive mayor while remaining an ANC Proportional Representation. Further processes will be communicated through the municipality's official chan-

nels in due course," said Phetla.

Magubane also confirmed his resignation to Chief Albert Luthuli News. However, the reasons for his decision have not yet been established. His departure comes at a crucial time as residents prepare to vote in the local government elections, raising questions about the municipality's leadership transition and who will assume the mayoral responsibilities.

Magubane was elected unopposed as executive mayor of CALM during a special council meeting held in Carolina on July 16, 2024. He succeeded former executive mayor Cllr Daniel Nkosi, who went on to serve in the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature as chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Human Settlements, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

During his tenure, the municipality pursued various service-delivery initiatives, although backlogs and community needs remained areas requiring attention.



Mbuso Magubane.

The municipality has indicated that further details about the next steps will be communicated through its official channels.

Carolina land dispute erupts as R38 road blocked

Gugu Mathebula

Tensions boiled over in Carolina on Monday, October 26, when frustrated residents temporarily blocked the R38 road leading into town after a promised meeting with Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality (CALM) officials failed to materialise.

The protest followed a dispute over vacant land that residents want to occupy, citing a shortage of residential stands in Carolina. Community members said they had been expecting municipal officials to meet them at 08:00 to discuss their concerns and provide clarity on the land issue.

According to residents, a meeting was held on October 23 with representatives from the office of municipal manager Ephraim Thaabether and Member of the Municipal Council Simphiwe Nkosi. Residents allege that during the meeting, Nkosi promised that a municipal delegation would return on Monday morning to engage with the community. However, community members who gathered at the agreed time said the delegation did not meet them as expected, fuelling frustration and escalating tensions.

The situation allegedly deteriorated further when municipal director of safety and community services Sibusiso Malaza confronted community member Mzwakhe Magagula.

According to witnesses, Malaza allegedly told Magagula that he was not afraid of him, threatened to beat him and questioned his role in leading the community. Witnesses further alleged that the confrontation nearly turned physical. The allegations could not be independently verified at the time of publication. Angered by what they described as the municipality's failure to honour its commitment, residents blocked the R38, disrupting traffic into Carolina town. The road was later reopened after community members alleged that they had been intimidated and threatened with arrest for public violence. No injuries were reported during the incident.

The dispute highlights growing frustration among residents over access to residential land, with community members calling for engagement and answers from municipal leadership.

Residents are seeking clarity on the availability of vacant land and the municipality's plans to address the shortage of stands in the area.

At the time of publication, the municipality had not issued an official statement regarding the failed meeting, the alleged confrontation or the residents' land concerns.

Attempts to obtain the municipality's response would be necessary to establish its position on the allegations and whether further engagement with the community is planned.

BPC Client Conference 2026 explores the next decade of payment technology

Freddy Mpangane

The Banking Payment Commerce (BPC) Annual Client Conference 2026, themed “The N.E.X.T. Decade”, brought together more than 300 leaders and experts from banking, financial services, national payment infrastructure and the public sector worldwide for two days of insights, discussions on technological innovation and inspiring conversations.

The conference opened with BPC president and CEO Anatoly Loginov sharing his vision of what the next decade holds for the payments technology industry.

Day one focused on infrastructure modernisation, featuring insights from Avin Ruthipaul of Standard Bank and Zil Bareisis of Celent. Jimmy Sounes of GoTyme also participated in a fireside chat with Colin Iles.

Mulugeta Antewa of EthSwitch, alongside BPC experts, delivered presentations on next-generation issuing and acquiring, exploring how SmartVista enables innovation and growth in the payments sector. South African rugby legend Bryan Habana delivered an inspiring session on leadership and resilience,



The delegates who attended the BPC Client Conference 2026.

sharing lessons from his career. Ali Imran Khan, general manager and chief information officer of Meezan Bank, later highlighted the bank’s successful modernisation journey with BPC.

Day two explored digital innovation, artificial intelligence in payments and fraud prevention. Panels featuring leaders from Union Bank, IFIC Bank, JKB, Payce Digital and Exim Bank examined digital ecosystems, customer experience and innovation across different markets.

Fraud prevention took centre stage, with Nguyen Trung Anh, deputy head of the Policy Division in the Payment Department at the State Bank of Vietnam, sharing insights into the institution’s vision for the development of fraud prevention over the next decade.

A subsequent panel featuring representatives from Meezan Bank and Habib Metro Bank explored strategies for combating modern fraud through advanced prevention



BPC president and CEO Anatoly Loginov.

techniques.

The conference concluded with a keynote address by Brett Johnson, known as “The Original Internet Godfather”, who offered the audience insights into how modern fraudsters think and operate.

Across the two days, the conference provided a platform for industry leaders and experts to exchange ideas on the future of payments, technological advancement, customer experience and the evolving fight against financial crime.

BPC expands South African footprint as banks embrace digital innovation

BPC is accelerating its expansion in South Africa after recording significant growth over the past 18 months, partnering with major financial institutions to modernise banking services, improve digital payment acceptance and strengthen fraud prevention.

Craig Albertson, managing director of Banking, Payments and Commerce (BPC) Sub-Saharan Africa, said the company was focused on helping financial institutions reduce operating costs and deliver more accessible, secure and efficient services.

BPC provides banking, payment processing and commerce software solutions to more than 500 banks, financial institutions and governments across 150 countries.

“We have seen incredible growth in South Africa over the last 18 months, working with some of the biggest financial institutions in the country,” said Albertson.

He highlighted BPC’s partnership with GoTyme Bank, which offers zero monthly account fees and free money transfers within specified limits, as an example of how technology can help reduce banking costs.

“Anyone in South Africa can open a bank account. Cost is not the issue anymore,” he said. “The challenge is en-



The managing director of BPC Sub-Saharan Africa, Craig Albertson.

suring that people can actually use their accounts and trust digital payments as much as they trust cash.”

Albertson said South Africa had a relatively high proportion of banked people compared with other African countries, but wider acceptance of digital payments remained a challenge. He pointed to PayShap as an important initiative for encouraging electronic transactions. He also identified agency banking as an opportunity to bring banking services closer to communities through local agents who can assist with account opening, identity verification and cash deposits or withdrawals.

“The answer to this problem has already been demonstrated across our borders and elsewhere in Africa. It is called agency banking, where people can access full banking capabilities through an agent in the field,” he said. Albertson added that SoftPOS technology, which enables merchants to accept

contactless payments using smart-phones, could benefit rural businesses unable to afford traditional payment terminals.

Drawing on BPC’s experience in Latin America and Southeast Asia, he said the company was exploring ways to adapt international innovations to South African conditions, including improving the security of older technologies such as USSD.

“There are some very exciting announcements that will hit the market in the first quarter of 2027,” he said.

Fraud prevention is another priority. BPC’s SmartVista Fraud Manager uses machine learning and artificial intelligence to identify potential threats in real time. Albertson said major South African financial institutions were implementing the solution.

“Modernisation is becoming essential, not just something that is nice to have. We have the technology, but we also have the people and experience to help financial institutions move forward,” he said.

Albertson added that BPC was planning further customer announcements in 2027 and developing the BPC South Africa Academy to nurture local talent and equip the next generation with skills for the country’s growing financial technology sector.

Home Affairs extends office hours ahead of local government elections

Samkelisiwe Mhlanga

The Department of Home Affairs will extend operating hours at its front offices to help eligible voters obtain the identity documents needed to participate in the Local Government Elections on November 4.



In a statement, the department said its offices would operate from 08:00 to 18:00 from November 2 to 4, allowing citizens to collect completed identity documents, apply for identity documents or obtain Temporary Identity Certificates (TICs), where applicable.

On Election Day, November 4, Home Affairs offices will remain open from 07:00 to 21:00, in line with the Electoral Commission of South Africa’s (IEC) operating hours. “The extended hours will enable eligible voters to collect their identity documents or apply for identity documents and Temporary Identity Certificates (TICs),” the department said.

It urged South Africans who had applied for identity documents to collect them in time to exercise their right to vote.

The department also called on stakeholder forums, community structures and community leaders to work with residents and encourage eligible voters to collect their identity documents or obtain the necessary temporary documentation before Election Day.

The extended hours are intended to help ensure that eligible voters who require identity documents have an opportunity to obtain them ahead of the polls.

Mpumalanga police arrest 1 319 suspects, recover 23 firearms in weekend operation

Kgabu Mahlatji

Mpumalanga police arrested 1 319 suspects for various offences and recovered 23 firearms during the Safer Festive Season Operation Shanela II conducted across the province from October 22 to 25.

Police spokesperson Sergeant Thulile Magagula said the integrated operations involved high-visibility patrols, roadblocks, vehicle check-points, stop-and-searches, searches of premises, compliance inspections and tracing of wanted suspects. The arrests included 20 suspects for rape, nine for murder, six for attempted murder, four for carjacking, 15 for aggravated robbery, 11 for business robbery and five for house robbery.

Police also arrested 186 suspects for assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, 68 for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, 69 for possession of suspected drugs and seven for dealing in drugs.



The dagga that was confiscated from the suspects.

A further 17 suspects were arrested for illegal possession of firearms, 14 for illegal possession of ammunition, 23 for possession of gold-bearing material and 11 for illicit mining. Ninety-four undocumented persons were also arrested.

Detectives arrested 30 suspects while tracing wanted persons. Other



The police that executed the Operational Shanela.

arrests related to offences including burglary, theft of motor vehicles, malicious damage to property, illegal liquor dealing, possession of illegal cigarettes and counterfeit goods. The operation also resulted in the recovery of eight rifles, 13 handguns and two shotguns, as well as 137 rounds of ammunition.

Drug seizures included 2 131.34kg of dagga, 80.5g of suspected crystal methamphetamine, commonly known as Tik, 146.41g of suspected nyaope, also known as whoonga or wunga, and 27 suspected Mandrax tablets.

Mpumalanga provincial commissioner Lieutenant General Aphia Modise commended police members and participating stakeholders for their efforts in combating crime and protecting communities. She emphasised the importance of continued cooperation among law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders in addressing criminal activity across the province. The arrested suspects were expected to appear in various magistrates' courts from October 26, however by the time of going to press the Court outcome was not available.

Two men jailed for 2023 farm murder in Ermelo

Freddy Mpangane

Two men have been sentenced to effective prison terms of 25 and 23 years respectively for the murder of 63-year-old farmer Jannie Weideman during a farm attack in Ermelo in December 2023.

The Mpumalanga Division of the High Court, sitting in Delmas, sentenced Mbongeni Walter Nkosi (36) and Mxolisi Sibusiso Mnisi (38) on October 22, after they pleaded guilty to murder and robbery with aggravating circumstances.

Mpumalanga police provincial commissioner Lieutenant General Aphia Modise welcomed the sentences, describing them as a significant outcome in the pursuit of justice for Weideman.

“The sentencing sends a strong message that violent crimes, particularly those that claim innocent lives, will not be tolerated,” said Modise. The court heard that the incident occurred at about 22:00 on December 22, 2023, at Roodepoort Farm in Ermelo.

Ermelo police were dispatched to the property following a complaint. On arrival, they found security officers who reported seeing a suspect fleeing from the house while they were patrolling the premises.



Upon entering the residence, the security officers discovered Weideman lying motionless on the lounge floor. Police found that he had sustained multiple gunshot and stab wounds. Several empty 9mm cartridge cases were recovered at the scene, and emergency medical personnel declared him dead.

Further investigations revealed that a red Toyota Hilux, firearms, ammunition and jewellery had been stolen. The vehicle was later recovered abandoned in Breyten. The case was assigned to the SAPS



Provincial Murder and Robbery Unit. Four men were arrested in Ermelo in January 2024, and firearms and ammunition were recovered during the arrests. Nkosi was sentenced to 20 years for murder and 10 years for robbery with aggravating circumstances. With five years of the robbery sentence ordered to run concurrently with the murder sentence, he will serve an effective 25 years.

Mnisi received 20 years for murder, of which two years were suspended for five years on condition that he

is not convicted of a violent offence during that period. He was also sentenced to eight years for robbery, with three years running concurrently. He will serve an effective 23 years. Modise commended the investigating team for its work in securing the convictions and sentences. “The SAPS remains committed

to ensuring that those responsible for serious and violent crimes are brought before the courts to face the consequences of their actions,” she said.

The matter against Bongani Khoza has been postponed to November 20, 2028, for trial in the Mpumalanga Division of the High Court, which will sit in Breyten. The fourth accused was granted indemnity under Section 204 of the Criminal Procedure Act, and his identity has been withheld.

Ndlovu Choir collaboration with Queen drummer enters two Grammy categories

Freddy Mpangane

The Ndlovu Choir has reached another international milestone after its collaboration with legendary Queen drummer Roger Taylor was entered for consideration in two categories at the 2027 Grammy Awards.



The Ndlovu Choir with legendary Queen drummer Roger Taylor.

The Limpopo-based collective features prominently on Taylor’s latest single, Come On Summer (It’s Party Time), the first release from his 2026 album, Violence Insane In A Beautiful World. The song has been entered for Grammy consideration in the Best Rock Song and Best Rock Performance categories, bringing the choir’s distinctive South African vocal sound to a global audience of

music lovers. The collaboration marks an important opportunity for the group, previously known as the Ndlovu Youth Choir, to strengthen its international profile through its association with one of rock music’s most recognisable musicians. Taylor, best known as the drum-

mer of the iconic British rock band Queen, brings his musical legacy to the project, while the choir contributes its trademark harmonies and powerful vocals to the song’s anthemic energy. Ndlovu Choir founder and conductor Ralf Schmitt said working with Taylor had been a memorable experience for the entire group. “Working with Roger Taylor has been such a special experience for all

of us, and something we’ll remember for a long time. Having our song entered for two GRAMMY® Awards is incredibly exciting, and we’re just so proud to be part of it,” said Schmitt. Although entry for Grammy consideration does not guarantee a nomination or award, the development places the choir’s work before the recording industry’s international awards process and further highlights the global reach of South African musical talent. The announcement also comes as the choir prepares for its year-end production, African Christmas, scheduled to take place at Emperors Palace in Johannesburg from December 11 to 13. The show is expected to give audiences an opportunity to experience the group’s celebrated vocal performances as it continues to build on its international achievements. Tickets for African Christmas are available through Webtickets. The Grammy consideration adds to the choir’s growing international journey, demonstrating how collaborations across musical genres can connect South African performers with audiences around the world. For the Ndlovu Choir, the partnership with Taylor represents both a significant artistic experience and an opportunity to introduce its distinctive sound to more listeners globally.

MTPA workshop strengthens labour relations and dispute resolution

Gugu Mathebula

The Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) Labour Management Forum (LMF) attended a two-day training workshop at the Mercure Hotel in Mbombela from October 20 to 21, aimed at strengthening labour relations and improving the handling of workplace



Nomcebo Kunene.

disputes. According to MTPA spokesperson Simphiwe Shungube, the workshop focused on equipping LMF members with the knowledge and skills to interpret and apply labour legislation effectively, while deepening their understanding of dispute resolution mechanisms. “These include the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), Labour Court, Labour Appeal Court and Constitutional Court. The training highlighted the importance of applying labour legislation correctly to promote fairness, discipline, mutual respect and cooperation in the workplace,” said Shungube. “Understanding labour laws also helps safeguard the rights of employers and employees, minimise workplace disputes and contribute to organisational stability,” he added. Shungube said the knowledge gained during the workshop is expected to empower representatives of management and organised labour to engage constructively, strengthen collective bargaining processes and improve the management of workplace challenges. “Through the initiative, the MTPA seeks to promote sound labour relations and encourage cooperation between management and labour representatives in addressing workplace matters,” he said. He added that the agency remains committed to fostering a harmonious, productive and inclusive working environment in which the rights, duties and responsibilities of all parties are respected.

Affordable everyday foods can support mental well-being



Omy Naidoo.

By making small changes to daily meals, people can nourish their bodies and support brain health without putting extra pressure on their budgets. With busy schedules and rising living costs making convenient meals an attractive option, nutrition experts are encouraging people to pay closer attention to what they eat and how it contributes to their overall well-being. As October marks Mental Health Awareness Month, Omy Naidoo, director of Newtricion Wellness Dieticians, says affordable, everyday foods can play an important role in supporting brain function, maintaining energy levels and promoting general health. Although no single food can prevent or cure mental health conditions, a balanced diet provides essential nutrients that help the body function properly. “Convenience should never come at the expense of our well-being. Even when

life gets busy, making practical food choices can help us take better care of our bodies and minds,” said Naidoo. He recommends incorporating five affordable food options into everyday meals. **1. Fish** Sardines, pilchards and salmon contain omega-3 fatty acids, which support brain cell function. Fish also provides protein and contributes to heart health. Naidoo recommends including a palm-sized serving two to three times a week. **2. Leafy vegetables** Spinach, kale and cabbage provide vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants. They also contain folate, which supports normal brain function, while their fibre helps maintain digestive health. **3. Beans and lentils** Beans and lentils offer affordable sources of plant-based protein, fibre and iron. They support digestive health, help regulate blood sugar and promote fullness, making them useful additions to meals throughout the day. **4. Oats** A bowl of oats provides complex carbohydrates and fibre that support sustained energy. Oats also contain nutrients such as B vitamins, magnesium, zinc and iron, which contribute to normal bodily functions.

5. Nuts Peanuts, almonds and walnuts provide healthy fats, protein and other essential nutrients. A handful can serve as a convenient snack between meals. The World Health Organisation recommends a healthy diet that includes a variety of foods from different food groups. Balanced eating does not have to be expensive or complicated. Meals such as oats with banana, beans served with rice and vegetables, or pap accompanied by spinach and eggs can provide a variety of nutrients. Naidoo stressed that nutrition should form part of a broader approach to well-being rather than being viewed as a replacement for professional mental healthcare. “Good nutrition can support your well-being, but it should not be seen as a treatment or cure for mental health conditions. Anyone experiencing persistent emotional distress should visit their healthcare practitioners,” he said. Naidoo added that people did not need to overhaul their lifestyles to start eating better. “Small, consistent changes using affordable, everyday ingredients can help people build healthier eating habits while supporting their physical and mental well-being,” Naidoo said.

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Mpumalanga men strip down for 2026 Hollard Daredevil Run



Daredevils running for the good course.

Freddy Mpangane

Men across Mpumalanga joined thousands of participants nationwide for the 2026 Hollard Daredevil Run, swapping traditional running gear for purple speedos to raise awareness of prostate and testicular cancer.

Runners in Ermelo, KwaMhlanga and Mbombela kicked off the province's activities earlier in the day, while eMalahleni, Secunda, Standerton and Malelane joined the purple movement later in the afternoon. Beyond the fun and eye-catching outfits, the annual initiative encourages men to prioritise their health through regular cancer screening, early detection and open conversations about male cancers.

Adél Kriel, Hollard South Africa's head of experiential marketing, said the event continued to attract participants because of its meaningful purpose and the sense of brotherhood it creates.

"Every year, the support from Daredevils across South Africa has been truly remarkable. While the run is undoubtedly fun, it's the meaningful cause, the sense of brotherhood and the shared purpose of creating

awareness of male cancers that keeps Daredevils coming back year after year," she said.

This year's campaign carried the tagline "Lekker Balls. Lekker Life", encouraging men to take responsibility for their wellbeing and seek medical advice when necessary. Kriel said the initiative aimed to challenge stereotypes surrounding men's health and encourage early screening.

"At Hollard, we want to help men and their families navigate uncertainty with greater confidence by challenging stereotypes and encouraging screening and early detection," she said.

Over the past 17 years, the Daredevil Run has raised millions of rand for the Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA) and the Prostate Cancer Foundation (PCF), support-



ting education, screening programmes and services for men. Prostate cancer remains a major health concern, with an estimated one in eight men expected to develop the disease during their lifetime. Black African men face a higher risk than other population groups.

Testicular cancer is less common

but predominantly affects younger men, particularly those aged 15 to 49. Both cancers are more treatable when detected early.

In Johannesburg, actor and entertainer Siv Ngesi brought energy and humour to the event, while CANSA offered prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing and the PCF engaged participants.

Last year's run raised R1.2 million. Hollard hopes to increase its impact this year, encouraging South Africans to support the cause through donations on the Hollard Daredevil Run BackaBuddy page.

Although the run has ended, organisers urge men to keep prioritising regular health checks.



Daredevils running for the good course.