

Overgrown bushes cleared in crime fight

ELFAS TORERAI

OVERGROWN grass and bushes were cleared in Boitekong near Rustenburg to reduce criminal activity in the area.

There was concern that criminals were taking advantage of the cover to waylay people or even hide stolen items.

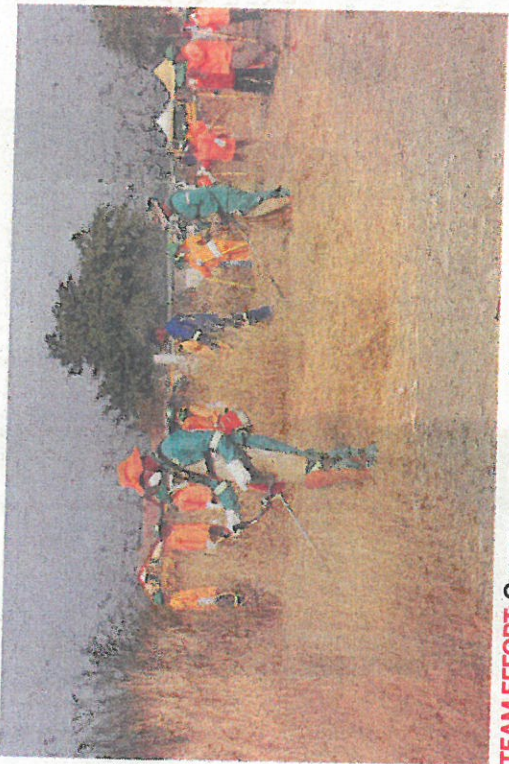
The clearing campaign was led by the community safety and transport management department's crime prevention unit.

Department spokesperson Thabo Sematle said the project was carried out through a de-bushing initiative that was coordinated as a form of a Letsema campaign.

He said community members were encouraged to volunteer their services in the crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) programme.

"This community partnership programme is undertaken in order to prevent or reduce the potential opportunity for criminal activities to manifest and to increase the ease of detection and identification of criminals and their actions.

"The programme is conducted through various activities across all four districts in the Bokone Bophirima province in the form of



TEAM EFFORT: Overgrown grass and bushes have been cleared to reduce criminal activity in the Boitekong area near Rustenburg.

campaigns targeting crime hot spot areas. Examples of such activities include the clearing of bushes (de-bushing), erecting crime spot alert information boards, replacing street light globes and through lobbying municipalities to revive recreational parks," Sematle said.

Sematle said stakeholders like the Boitekong police, the local community policing forum (CPF), the Boitekong taverners forum, business people in the area, community members and the Rustenburg local municipality were all invited to help

de-bush identified overgrown areas. "This area was identified after having observed the crime trends and patterns that were reported to the nearby police station as usual occurrences.

"This bush is used by the community as a shortcut to go to the local mall, the block of flats and residential area on the other side of the location.

"Perpetrators then take advantage of this and hide in the bushes to terrorise community members by raping women and girls, beating and bullying people and robbing people of

their groceries and goods." Boitekong CPF deputy chairperson Solly Kgampe said: "As a member of this community, I am grateful that the department and the police came to help us. These thieves should be scared when they see us working this hard to remove this bush. They should start running away as they have no place in our community."

Community safety and transport management MEC Dr Mpho Motlhabane said he was delighted to see stakeholders coming together for a common goal.

"I would like to thank each and everyone who came to help to de-bush this area which has been a nightmare for the community. Working together as a collective will enable us to achieve a lot, indeed this is 'saamtrek saamwerk' in motion," Motlhabane said.

"This department is guided by the Setsokotsane and the 10 by 10 campaigns launched by the fifth administration led by Premier Supra Mahumapelo which mandates us as a department to create a clean and safe environment, free of crime, greed and corruption."

The team continued with the crime prevention awareness in Hartbeespoort at the weekend.

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This is in addition to R327m spent on printing invoices and postal costs

MAYIBONGWE MAQHINA

FOREIGN companies that procure e-tags for the South African National Roads Agency (Sanral) have pocketed a massive R225 million from the Gauteng Freeway Improvement Project (GFIP).

This is in addition to R327m that has been paid for the printing of invoices and the posting for e-toll collections.

Transport Minister Joe Maswanganyi revealed this in a written parliamentary question from the DA's Christine Hunsinger on Monday.

Maswanganyi said the Swedish company Kapsch Trafficom AB had received R167 220 930 for the provision and maintenance of e-tags to South Africa.

He also said Q-Free ASA, from Norway, had pocketed R58 317 748 for rendering the same service.

"The above parties were contracted for the supply and maintenance of e-tags in accordance with Sanral specifications and in accordance with the required specifications of an international CEN-278 standard.

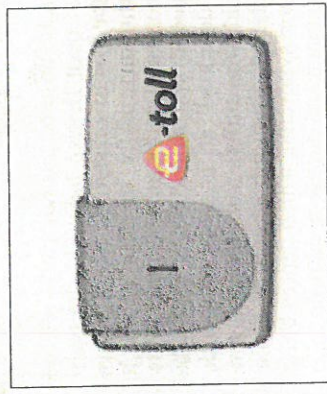
"The e-tags were procured in batches in accordance with demand in terms of the e-toll registration for the GFIP project, and for the conventional toll plazas countrywide," Maswanganyi said.

He said that between December 2013 and December 2014, R124m was paid towards invoice printing and posting for e-toll collections.

In the period between January and December 2015, a further R58m was paid, while R112m was paid between January and December 2016.

A total of R32m was paid between January and May this year, Maswanganyi added.

The money went on the foreign



companies and e-tags comes against the backdrop of Sanral battling to pay off the R20 billion it cost to erect the e-tolls in Gauteng.

As fewer motorists pay their e-tolls bills, R2.9bn in e-toll income was received from motorists as at March 2017 since the e-tolls were introduced in 2013.

As if that is not enough, the civil society group Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse is waging litigation on behalf of its members in response to the summonses Sanral has served on its members.

Last month, Maswanganyi said Sanral was empowered to recover outstanding debt from users who traverse the GFIP network.

He said the recovery of outstanding bills was based on the "user pays principle" irrespective of whether the user was registered.

"Such a recovery process will be embarked upon once all the prescribed legal processes have been followed.

"The owner of a vehicle that passes under a gantry on the GFIP toll roads is liable to pay tolls to Sanral," the minister said.

Maswanganyi added that individuals and companies would be taken to court, based on the merit of the particular case.



The Minister of Transport, Joe Maswanganyi, addresses the media at the Southern African Transport Conference at the CSIR in Pretoria. PICTURE: JACQUES NAUDE

Police donates to needy families

POS

MAHIKENG MAIL-MAHIKENG: The Mahikeng Police, along with its structures of the South African Police Service (SAPS) took pity on the Makokoe and Lefakane families in Ramatlabama after the tragic loss of family members in a shack fire recently.

The Makokoe family lost two children and Lefakane family lost five children after a candle fell and started fire causing the shack to burn down, leaving only one survivor.

Sector 4 Commander, Captain Ramokala was assigned to coordinate between the two families and Mahikeng Police since the occurrence of this tragedy to form a support system from the SAPS organisation in Mahikeng.

The Mahikeng Station Commander, Brigadier Kleynhans and his management led the project that contributed clothing as well as groceries to the two families last Friday. On his address Brigadier Kleynhans made a strong point that in order to deal with crime holistically, the South African Police Service also has the task of giving aid to communities in need.



Mahikeng Police, Women's Network, Men for change and CPF handing over food parcels to the Mokokoe family.



Mahikeng Women's Network, Men for change and CPF handing over food parcels to Lefakane family.

SAPS (Provincia)
**Two nabbed for
kidnap, murder**

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Two men have been arrested in connection with the kidnapping and murder of a 60-year-old man in Mmakau, east of Brits.

Police spokesperson Lieutenant-Colonel Pelonomi Makau said the police probe showed that men aged 22 and 35 entered a funeral parlour in Mmakau on July 8, at 11pm, and allegedly kidnapped a 60-year-old man. They put him inside one of the funeral parlour vehicles and drove away.

The man's burnt body was found in the bushes at Somaphepha village near Middleburg, in Mpumalanga, on July 9. - ANA

The Citizen pg 6
**Police car, truck
torched in protest**

SAPS (Provincia) Ncg
13/07/17

A police vehicle and a truck have been set alight in Ventersdorp during a protest.

Brigadier Sabata Mokwabone said three people were arrested for public violence on Tuesday evening.

"According to information, community members barricaded an intersection of N14 with Klerksdorp Road with burning tyres and other objects.

The incident led to pelting of four vehicles with stones while a police vehicle and a truck were torched," he said.

He said the police restored order after 9pm and dispersed the crowd. - ANA

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Kidnap, murder of man, 60

ELFAS TORERAI

BRITS police reacted swiftly and arrested two men aged 22 and 35 after they allegedly kidnapped and murdered a 60-year-old man in Mmakau village, near Pretoria.

Allegations are that the two men entered a funeral parlour in the village about 11pm on Saturday and kidnapped the man.

North West police spokesperson, Lt-Col Pelonomi Makau said: "The suspects are alleged to have put the victim inside one of the funeral parlour vehicles and driven away with

him.

"The matter was reported to the police who instituted an investigation.

"The man's burnt body was found in the bushes at Somaphepha village near Middleburg in Mpumalanga province on Sunday and the funeral parlour vehicle was also recovered," Makau said.

Investigations led to the arrest of the two who have been charged with business robbery, kidnapping and murder.

Their case will be heard at the Brits Magistrate's Court.

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Rein in Uber - taxi drivers

Rorisang Kgosana

Resentful metered taxi drivers have threatened to put a stop to Uber operations if the department of transport fails to regulate the popular mode of public transport.

Minister of Transport Joe Maswanganyi, pictured, earlier this week said Uber drivers should now apply for licences and operating permits, which would limit them to operate in permitted areas.

Secretary for the Gauteng Provincial Metered Taxi Council Hendrick Ndou said yesterday Maswanganyi should implement the regulations "immediately" to ensure peace between the two conflicting industries.

"It must happen immediately as these people are operating every day. If not, we will stop them by not allowing them to pick up any customers. Uber is an app. They shouldn't refer to themselves as a taxi. If they do not have permits and are regulated, why must they operate?" he said.

Maswanganyi had recognised Uber's fair pricing as its main selling point, but Ndou said the regulation of Uber taxis should include pricing, saying the gap of costs between the two similar services should be narrowed.

"If a metered taxi charges R50, then Uber should also charge R50. Regulating them means regulating their prices. People are using this illegal service as their prices are reasonable," he said.

In response to Maswanganyi's call for regulation, Uber Africa spokesperson Samantha Allenberg said driver-partners using the app have completed the required steps in applying for operating licences under the current National Land Transport Act.

Following recent attacks in Pretoria, Allenberg said the taxi service partnered with multiple security response services.

"We are deeply committed to the safety of both riders and drivers and have a dedicated team working 24/7 to support our commitment to safety."

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