

THE HERALD'S North Western Bonus

Free

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YOUR GLOBAL DIGEST

New in Bonus:

- Hot news from Africa
- Tax shocks coming?
- Budget news
- North West highlights
- Sport, horse racing

PREMIER TELLS MUNICIPALITIES:

'Pay your bills!'

RUSTENBURG - Municipalities in the North West must immediately pay their water and electricity bills, premier Maureen Modiselle said recently

The provincial government said Modiselle wanted municipalities to pay Eskom, Rand Water, Botshelo Water and Sedibeng Water "as a matter of urgency".

All three water boards and Eskom have indicated that municipalities in the province are not paying for the water they are being supplied with and then charge communities more and this, at times lead to water shortages," it said in a statement.

This followed a meeting between the premier and the three boards and Eskom aimed at alleviating water shortages in the province.

Modiselle wanted to discuss how Eskom and the boards would help government to alleviate these problems, in rural areas particularly.

SA Local Government Association deputy chairperson in the province and mayor of the Tlokwe Municipality, Maphetle Maphetle, said cash flow problems were the main reason behind failure to make payments

"This goes back to the lack of payment by communities," he said. "It's not only communities who don't pay, it's also government departments who are provided with service by the municipalities."

Another difficulty was the low budget municipalities had for maintenance, leading to ailing, poorly maintained infrastructure. This, in turn, led to leaking pipes and dripping taps, increasing the repayments required.

The economic downturn and the job losses which accompanied last year's recession in the mining province also saw payments from customers slowing, said Maphetle. He said provincial government should realise that the North West had many "poor municipalities" and even if you "go on top of a mountain and shout", it would be difficult to make required payments without help.

Perhaps the biggest single problem is that municipalities still do not seem to realise that they have manage the town concerned on the same principles as any business concern, or go down.

The policy of party political management of local government structures has been a total financial disaster this far.



Premier Maureen Modiselle... no nonsense approach to municipal bungling. Recently several mayors were given marching orders.



The soccer World Cup is expected to add 0,5% to RSA's growth rate this year.

Economy to grow 2,3% in 2010

The South African government expects the country's economy to grow by 2.3% this year, helped in part by the football World Cup in the summer.

The prediction of a return to economic expansion after last year's recession was given by Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan as he delivered the budget.

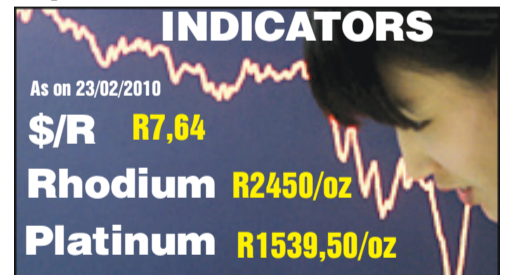
He expects the World Cup to add 0.5% to the country's 2010 economic growth, led by visiting football fans' spending.

Mr Gordhan added there would be a new effort to boost youth employment.

The budget comes as South Africa is mired in an overall unemployment rate of about 25%, and an increasing gap between the rich and poor.

Mr Gordhan said the government aimed to reduce its budget deficit in the medium term, but its immediate focus was on helping the continuing economic recovery.

He also pledged to maintain a grip on inflation, and said there would be no moves to fix the price of the rand.



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**"SPECIALS" vanaf
Februarie 25ste - 3de Maart '10**

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