

NW Roads heavy weights suspended

MAFIKENG - Messrs Nic van Staden - HOD of the North West Directorate of Public Works, Roads and Transport and Kwekwu Odami-Takyi (Chief Financial Officer), have been suspended with immediate effect on Monday this week following the announcement of a multi million rand roads scandal in the North West Directorate of Public Works, Roads and Transport on Thursday last week.

Both men will remain on precautionary suspension pending the completion of further investigations into their alleged role in the awarding of road tenders and the management of resources.

The duo has been on forced leave since Wednesday, December 2, until Monday this week when they were served with notices informing them of their pre-cautionary suspensions.

The investigation against Van Staden and Odami-Takyi which sprang into action immediately after they were served with notices, would centre on their alleged role in the awarding of a number of road contracts.

MEC Mahlakang Mahlakang has confirmed that the department "may have been hit" by a multi million rand road scandal following a two month investigation by forensic experts, PriceWatershouseCoopers,

into the patterns of expenditure and procurement procedures in respect of the appointment of consultants and contractors by the directorate roads.

The roads directorate has depleted by 100 percent, their allocated budget of R525 million in the first three months of the current financial year.

The suspension of Van Staden and Odami-Takyi brings to three, the number of senior officials of the department to be suspended and investigated in less than three months.

During the first week of September, the Chief Director for roads, Eddie Thebe, was also slapped with an immediate suspension.

While on precautionary suspension, he was officially charged with misconduct and mismanagement. There is yet to answer in total to 11 charges on a date which is yet to be confirmed. His first appearance before the DC was on November 16 when he asked for a postponement.

* Meanwhile, Ms Motlapele Ntshabele (Chief Director: District Operations) and Mr Patrick Setshedi (Director: Finance) have been appointed Acting HoD and CFO respectively. Chief Director Infrastructure, Mr Sandile Mabanjwa has also been acting as Chief Director: Roads. (See full report on p1...)

Important Ratepayers meeting to be held

RUSTENBURG - Rustenburg's Ratepayers are alive and well and are looking forward to a constructive and very busy 2010. Groundbreaking events for the Rustenburg Ratepayers Association (RRPA) of 2010 will kick off on a high note with an important meeting on Monday, 18 January 2010.

The meeting will take place at the well-known Old Rustenburg City Hall in Beyers Naudé Drive and will promptly begin at 18:00. All concerned Rustenburg residents and

of course, taxpayers, are invited to attend.

In addition to the association's Chairman, Mr Johan Schoeman, the meeting will be addressed by Mr Jaap Kelder, Chairman of the National Ratepayers Union (<http://www.nabuntu.org/>) and Ms Carin Visser, Chairperson of the Sannieshof Ratepayers Association who were repeatedly in the news recently. Great news is that two new websites for use by the Rustenburg Ratepayers Association and its members has been designed and registered by Mr Johan de Klerk, a local software specialist. The addresses of these websites are www.rbbv.co.za (Rustenburg Belastingbetalersvereniging) and www.rrpa.co.za (Rustenburg Ratepayers Association). Prospective members of the Ratepayers Association and/or interested members of the public are invited to click onto the designated buttons to register and to participate in discussions and debates on the websites. It is absolutely essential that Rustenburg ratepayers take note of our important meeting on 18 January 2010 and attend in large numbers, Mr Johan Schoeman, Chairman of the Rustenburg Ratepayers Association, told Rustenburg Herald. Rustenburg Herald hopes to be present at the meeting and to report back on the outcome. Do not miss your copy of Rustenburg Herald on 22 January 2010.



Messrs Johan Schoeman - Chairman of the Rustenburg Ratepayers Association (left) and Johan de Klerk, a local software specialist who designed and registered two new websites for use by the Rustenburg Ratepayers Association.

Hijacker shot dead

HARTBESPOORT - A gunman was shot dead after a botched hijacking here, police said on Monday. A plot owner who was an eye witness of the incident allegedly shot one of the hijackers and wounded another.

A motorist was driving along Hartbeespoortdam road on Friday afternoon when five men stopped him pretending to have car trouble,' said Superintendent Lesego Metsi.

The motorist handed over his car keys after being ordered to and then fled into a nearby plot. It is said that the owner of the plot saw what was happening. At this point, the hijackers were still struggling to start the car.

A shootout ensued between the would-be hijackers and the plot owner. One hijacker was shot dead and another wounded. Three others were arrested - Sapa.

North West shocked by roads scandal

(Continued from page 1) reaches the court of law".

PWC was appointed by Mahlakang in the same week wherein the Chief Director for roads, Eddie Thebe, was suspended. Thebe is still on precautionary suspension and is yet to answer to 11 charges of misconduct and mismanagement.

PWC was asked by Mahlakang to determine and make recommendations, on whether there were any contraventions of

procurement rules and regulations. This also related to the prudent management of resources in the roads directorate.

The scope of their investigation included the appointment of consultants or contractors for various road capital projects, beyond this current financial year and to establish whether there were any contraventions of the rules in the manner in which variation orders were managed for various road capital projects.

A variation order is a difference between an approved tender amount and the amount to be paid caused due to unforeseen circumstances.

It is an amount usually not exceeding 20 percent - which is not built into the original tender amount, but an additional cost payable to a contractor and it is permissible by law.

Mahlakang said he was "itching" to give answers to the public about what monies were allocated to his department. He described as "utter nonsense and rubbish" the suggestions that he has back tracked from making the report public because he may be implicated.

"They (public) have the right to know. Come rain, come shine, come high water, that report will be made public. It is just a matter of time. It will never ever gather dust somewhere.

"We are called to act decisively against corruption at all levels of government. We must be seen to be doing just that. To deal ruthlessly with the rampant scourge of corruption and the pilfering of state coffers. We will be failing in our duty if corruption goes unpunished in this province", Mahlakang concluded.



North West MEC for Public Works, Road and Transport - Mahlakang Mahlakang.



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