

'Booze ban is killing us'

'My finances are so bad that I am R136 000 behind on my rent and cannot pay my employees,' says only one of many local liquor store owners hit by the government's ban on alcohol sales.

Sinesipho Schrieber

"My employees are not getting any pay while we are closed, yet they have families to take care of."

This was a common lament among local liquor store owners who spoke to *Rekord* recently.

Tough financial times for small-medium liquor businesses continued under level 3 lockdown regulations after the sale and transportation of alcohol was banned by the government in response to ever-increasing numbers of Covid-19 cases.

"Having not traded since late December, I do not know how I can help my employees," said Silverton liquor store owner Marius Pretorius. He said he had little hope of potential economic recovery of his business.

Pretorius said he was now R136 000 in arrears on his rent as a result of the instability of alcohol sales during the lockdown period, which has lasted almost for a year.

"Schools are about to reopen while the ban remains to be reviewed on 15 February. How are these people going to take their children to school? Things are really bad, we are suffering."

Pretorius said relief measures announced by the government for businesses such as the Covid-19 temporary employer/employee relief scheme (Ters) have been of no help to his business.

"We applied for Ters, but only one person received the money for a month, but nothing for the others; so I was expected to pay, but I had no cash flow."

"These measures announced have not alleviated the bad times which we are going through as small-medium businesses."

With several closures of the alcohol industry under the Covid-19



lockdown regulations, Pretorius said he was thinking of selling his business.

"We are still going to have this Covid-19 virus with us maybe for the next few years. Having the sector continuously closed, we are constantly running at a loss, the businesses are no longer sources of revenue but that of loss, that's why I'm thinking of selling."

Pretorius said that the closure of businesses was not only affecting the alcohol sector but other small businesses as well.

Byekorf liquor store owner Ernest Hlongwane agreed with Pretorius, saying chances of his businesses ever

recovering were bleak.

"I am very disappointed with the ban. We took all the money we had left and bought stock in December for the holidays, thinking that we could recover from the year's losses but that was not the case," he said.

"As the business is closed there is no income, the cash-flow is dry, the stock is expiring and we will have to throw it away, which is another loss."

Hlongwane said although there were no statistics to show the amount of illicit trading of alcohol, he believed it was on the high while the stores remain closed. "The issue of safety is a concern, there are people selling alcohol illegally and we ask ourselves

where they are getting it from.

"I also wished we could be allowed to open to render other services. I for example, sell airtime, cool drinks and electricity but I cannot open because the police will think I am breaking the rules, leaving my cash flow dry."

Hlongwane appealed to the national government and alcohol sector association to review the ban.

Meanwhile, the Beer Association of South Africa (BASA) said that the extended alcohol ban would be the death knell for many more small craft brewers.

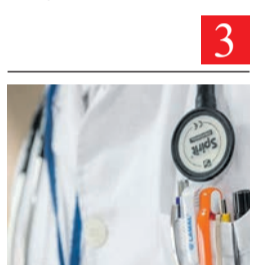
BASA's Patricia Pillay said many small businesses in the sector would not survive the extended ban.



Mortuaries fall behind



Covid: 'Worst is yet to come'



'Begging me not to die'



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Undertakers can't keep up with virus deaths

Sinesipho Schrieber

"Absolutely heartbreaking" is how a local funeral parlour owner described the recent sharp increase in Covid-related deaths, which was seeing multiple deaths in the same families.

This as the number of virus-related deaths continue to rise in Gauteng as well as Tshwane and funeral parlours report feeling the pressure of back-to-back burials.

A funeral parlour group, owner of several parlours in Pretoria, Sonja Smith said her parlours experienced a sharp increase in deaths, of which about 50% were Covid-related in late December.

It was worse this month, she said.

On 4 January, Tshwane Covid-19 related deaths were 1 532. On Tuesday, they climbed to 1 835. This means more than 300 deaths were reported over the past eight days.

Smith said the unprecedented outbreak has challenged their sector like many other sectors.

She said securing the necessary protective personal equipment to protect staff and the public was expensive.

Another problem was the Department of Home Affairs not coping with the registration of death numbers.

Last week Tuesday, home affairs minister Dr Aaron Motsoaledi admitted it was causing delays in burials.

"We are now only allowed to visit the Department of Home Affairs once a day;

so we drop off on the one day and collect the printed death certificates the next day. This results in delays and affects our service delivery," Smith said.

Calls coming in simultaneously with all their vehicles being on the road; backlogs at medical practitioners; and hospitals with documentation of the notification of death were also some of the issues faced by funeral parlours.

Smith said none of her several parlours in the region has faced space constraints yet.

"We have made the necessary provision in advance when the lockdown was first implemented. This resulted in us coping with the numbers thus far. However, our staff is tired and working non-stop to keep up with the pace.

"Crematoriums are also under pressure," she added.

While some parts of the country have reported dealing with shortages in coffins, Smith said their parlours had not experienced such a shortage of supplies yet.

Joas Phala, from Phala funerals in the east of Pretoria, also said the outbreak placed pressure on mortuaries and funeral parlours.

"From only having burials during weekends to now having burials almost every day has put a lot of pressure on us," Phala said.

Phala said the mortuary facilities were constantly full, adding that working with a group of parlours ensured space availability.



Photo only for illustration purposes. As the death toll continues to mount in the region it has put some strain on funeral parlours. **Photo: Mike from Pexels**

"The issue of coffins is a national issue, but it's better now. Last year, we even experienced the discontinuation of certain class domes," he said.

Phala said he was relieved that home affairs

extended hours for registering deaths.

Funeral Industry Reformed Association, Johan Rousseau, said he was concerned about adequate personal protective wear at small funeral parlours.

Department of Health predicts developing east hotspots

The dashboard showed that areas such as Faerie Glen, Die Wilgers, Wapadrand and Equestria are developing hotspots for the virus.

Noxolo Sibiya

Tshwane might have other emerging Covid-19 hotspots in the east of Pretoria if residents do not adhere to regulations.

This was according to the Gauteng Department of Health's online dashboard which provides data on active clusters and hotspots of Covid-19 cases throughout the province.

The dashboard showed that areas such as Faerie Glen, Die Wilgers, Wapadrand and Equestria were developing hotspots for the virus.

According to the department's Head of Policy Research & Advisory Services Unit Mduduzi Mbada a hotspot is defined as a

cluster of positive cases [if] the density of clusters (number of clusters or area of the cluster) is high enough.

"In epidemiology terms a hotspot refers to a spatial cluster of cases.

"Hotspot areas have a high number of cases (new or active cases)," he said.

"An active cluster is defined when the number of cases is growing and has not yet reached the peak."

Mbada said the hotspot analysis was based on clusters of positive cases down to the street level.

"You can view a cluster and a hotspot as a mini-pandemic, where the number of cases first grows slowly, then grows fast, then reaches a peak and then drops."

An active cluster is an area where the peak has not yet been reached.

Areas that have not previously had cases, but were at risk of becoming a hotspot due to high transmission, would be referred to as emerging or developing hotspots.

A developing hotspot is an active cluster whose density (number of clusters or area of the cluster) is growing and will soon become a hotspot.

Other developing hotspots in the east of Pretoria were Woodhill, Constantia Park, Monument Park, Waterkloof, Waterkloof Heights, Waterkloof Ridge, Erasmusrand, Elarduspark, Moreleta Park, Rietvlei and Wingate Park.

He said when a citizen saw that their neighbourhood was a part of a hotspot or was developing into one, it was very important that social distancing measures be applied rigorously and strictly.

"This is the only way to reduce and stop transmission in your area."

On the online dashboard, hotspots have a risk index.

This is a calculation that takes into account how fast the number of cases is growing in recent days compared with how the numbers have been growing in the past and how far away the cluster is from reaching the peak.

"A hotspot that has an index greater than 20 needs to be attended to.

"The higher the index, the more dangerous it is," he said.

"Let's take for example a hotspot in Atteridgeville, Tshwane with an index of 54.

"What makes this hotspot dangerous, is not only that the risk index is very high (which is the result of the number of cases growing very fast in the past week) but also, because it is right next to other hotspots."

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Gauteng Premier David Makhura at a media briefing last week Tuesday.
Photo: Gauteng media team

'Worst yet to come' as Tshwane is now epicentre of virus

Municipality negotiates with Doctors Without Borders for assistance as availability of hospital beds is limited, says health MMC.

Sinesipho Schrieber and Noxolo Sibiyi and Eliot Mahlase

The worst is yet to come – this was the dire prediction of health modellers advising the government on Covid-19 infections in Tshwane.

According to them, the Gauteng province has not yet reached the peak of infections.

"We must not relax because we have not yet reached the peak," said Professor Bruce Mellado during the provincial command council's media briefing last week.

The week before last, there were 15 931 active Covid-19 cases in Tshwane, when six days prior there were only 11 009.

This means there was an increase of 4 922 active cases last week.

Mellado said the number of cases over the past weeks increased due to holiday-goers returning to the province.

He predicted the broad peak of Covid-19 infections would happen around mid-February.

It was expected to be 65% higher than the first wave of high infections – unless there was a change in the dynamic on how the virus spreads.

He said that the anticipated increase was also due to rapid growing Covid-19 infection hotspot areas in the province not having reached their peak.

"If level 3 restrictions would be released, we would see a high rate of infections."

Gauteng premier David Makhura, speaking at the Steve Biko academic hospital last week, also said the province expected to get even higher cases over the following few weeks.

"The road ahead is still going to be very tough," said Makhura.

"We saw the virus causing havoc in the coastal provinces during December, and we have to face up to this challenge now, especially in the next two weeks we are going through the eye of the storm."

"People have just come back to

Gauteng; some of them have just arrived, immediately go to hospitals because they got infected.

"Our health care facilities are very busy at the moment.

"Given the nature of the new variant and (predicted) intensity of the second wave, we are expecting that we are going to shoot through the roof," he said.

He believed that the surge in positive cases was also due to social gatherings held during December.

"Young people were the drivers of these high cases. They had parties, and the gatherings at R80 Mabopane highway in Pretoria is just one example of these. We identified that the largest number of matriculants who went to Durban for the Rage party came from Tshwane.

"The hospitals are reporting to us that the Covid-19 second variant is affecting young people a lot, we are calling on young people to take care of themselves."

Although, Steve Biko Academic hospital was reported last week to be experiencing an increase in Covid-19 hospital admissions, overall hospitals in the province had not reached a point yet where they were packed to the rafters.

Makhura was also worried about the number of people succumbing to Covid-19. He said between the last week of December and the first of January deaths increased by 155%.

"We had about 69 deaths per week, but now we have more than 400 people reported to have died."

As part of the government's response to the surge, Makhura pledged that the health department would ramp up health responses, such as having more beds at hospitals and more Covid-19 testing.

Meanwhile the metro has entered into negotiations with international medical humanitarian organisation, Doctors Without Borders (MSF), for assistance over the alarming increase in cases.

"Many of the new cases need hospitalisation and the availability of beds is limited," said health MMC Sakkie du Plooy.

Health minister says more vaccine education needed

Sinesipho Schrieber

No one would be forced to take the Covid-19 vaccine, according to health minister Dr Zweli Mkhize.

Mkhize was responding in a televised interview last Tuesday to divided views on social media regarding people's thoughts on taking the vaccine.

Several people said they would be willing to take the vaccine once available and some said they would not take it.

Mkhize believed that many of those who voiced opposition to the vaccine was due to not enough information published addressing health and safety concerns people had about the vaccines.

"There are people who are concerned about the vaccine."

"There is a lot of stuff circulating on social media with people saying these vaccines are bad."

"In addressing this, we intend to roll out enough information to reassure the public on the safety of the vaccines and the fact that we all need it to protect one another."

"It is important to indicate that a lot of safety issues have been dealt with through the trials."

"We will also be monitoring if there are any side effects associated with the vaccine," he said.

Mkhize said it should be noted that his department has avoided a large spread of diseases, thanks to vaccinations.

"It is important to know that as we talk about the vaccines that it is not something new which has never happened before."



Health Minister Dr Zweli Mkhize
13 July 2020.
Photo: GCIS

"The mechanisms of prevention used before in response to diseases actually start with immunisation so that people can build immunity against the virus," he said.

"Those who say they would refuse vaccination [...] need more information and that's where we would like to start."

Mkhize said although he believed once more awareness should be done, people would not be forced to take the vaccine owing to the constitution.

"At the end of the day, we will not be able to force individuals to take the vaccine."

"However, people need to also understand that by so doing they are actually risking lives, of being exposed to an infection that could have been prevented."

"People need to be informed on why they should take the vaccine and based on that they can make a positive decision out of the goodwill to the community."

In efforts to share this awareness, Mkhize said the department was to work with community stakeholders.

"We have met with religious leaders and traditional leaders and they have indicated that they would work with us in creating community awareness of the vaccine."

"I am sure that by the time we have sent the information out, we would have been able to assure many members of the public about the safety of the vaccine."

Legal Resources Centre researcher Edwin Makwati said South Africa's constitution prevented a person from being forced to be vaccinated against his or her will.

School reopening postponed to February, thanks to Covid-19

Sinesipho Schrieber

Due to increasing Covid-19 infections, the Department of Education has postponed the reopening of schools by two weeks.

Basic education deputy minister Dr Reginah Mhaule announced this during a media briefing on Friday, saying that public schools and private schools learners were now expected to head back to school on 15 February.

School management teams were expected to report in on 25 January and teachers on 1 February.

"Given the pressure experienced by the health system in the past few weeks, occasioned by increased Covid-19 infections which have led to the second wave, the council of education ministers in conjunction with the national coronavirus command council and cabinet, has taken the decision to delay the reopening of both public and private schools with two weeks."

"This includes private schools that have reopened already. They will need to postpone their reopening to a later date. This is done to provide relief to the health system which is already struggling to cope with the current demands," Mhaule said.

Mhaule said the department's decision-making process had become difficult under constant changes of Covid-19 infections.

"The coronavirus has turned our lives upside down. The Covid-19 infection rate has increased and more people are getting infected by the virus. We are seeing more deaths to the extent that almost everybody knows somebody who has been affected by it. In some instances, Covid-19 has wiped out entire families. It has left massive devastation in its wake, and for many people, their circumstances have changed for the worse forever," Mhaule said.

Mhaule said stakeholders such as the

unions and heads of education department committee were united in supporting the delay in the opening of schools.

The council of ministers took this difficult decision having considered all factors as backed up by research and statistics, regarding the current state of the health system. The priority remains saving lives.

"The DBE will work closely with all nine provincial education departments to establish the true extent of the impact of the virus, resulting from the unfortunate demise of educators, workers and leaders in the sector, especially during the December/January holidays."

Mhaule said her department felt the impact of Covid-19 pandemic during the marking of the 2020 national senior certificate examination scripts.

"Some of our markers have passed away, while others withdrew from marking due to fear and anxiety. Some of their own family members have tested positive."

She said this would not affect the release of matric examination results.



The deputy minister of education, Dr Reginah Mhaule. Photo: Twitter

How Covid-19 affects our medical workers

'The hardest thing is hearing patients begging not to die, and begging to wake up from the sedation to ventilate them; watching as they tire themselves out trying to just breathe.'

Danielle Garrett

As the second wave of Covid-19 ravages our communities, people at the frontline are spearheading the fight against this deadly virus.

Many are putting their own lives at risk, while many have lost their lives.

Rekord spoke to a few medical workers in different fields who have had direct contact with Covid-19.

Many of these medical professionals have had mild experiences with the virus, while others have witnessed miracles.

Elizca Coertze, a pharmacist in Pretoria North, tells of her second time being infected with Covid-19.

"My husband and I both contracted Covid-19 in July 2020. We recovered and continued with our lives. This time around, we have both been infected for a second time, and my eldest daughter, my father, mother, sister and her fiancé have tested positive as well.

"We are doing a record amount of Covid scripts these days."

Coertze said that the most frustrating thing is that people still don't take the pandemic seriously.

"The symptoms are much worse this time around. I have body aches, fever that goes up and down, headaches, neck pain, chest pains, a scratchy nose and I'm very tired," she said.

"My 11-year-old daughter on the other hand shows absolutely no symptoms."

Coertze said her father has been admitted to hospital with extremely low oxygen levels, but that he improved significantly since he started treatment.

"I get frustrated when we still see people entering the pharmacy without masks, or people that know they are Covid-positive, and put other people's lives at risk.

"I urge people who are visiting pharmacies for Covid scripts to rather call or WhatsApp us with the script details and wait for the medicine to be delivered while you wait in your car," she pleaded.

"This is one of the ways in which we are trying to protect ourselves. We still have elderly clients who pick up their chronic medications every month."

Coertze said that people should focus on wearing masks and wearing them correctly.

"In the pharmacy, we take extreme precautions to protect ourselves and still we're exposed to this virus. We use face masks and protective screens, plus we sanitise the medical aid cards, and wash our hands the whole day."

A paramedic in Pretoria, Dylan Clausing, reiterated Coertze's claims on the severity of the situation.

"I was diagnosed with Covid-19 in July while working. I was rather sick, but



Image for illustration purposes.

recovered to a point.

"The biggest change is that I'm more aware of what is happening during the second wave. I'm able to give my patients a more personal view of the virus," he said.

Clausing said that the lack of available beds in medical facilities puts enormous strain on them.

"The hardest is struggling to find beds for patients, phoning hospitals as far as Potchefstroom to find any beds available. We are sometimes sitting outside certain casualty wards for hours waiting for beds."

Clausing has seen much hardship in his career, but having people beg for their lives takes the cake.

"The hardest thing is hearing patients begging not to die, and begging to wake up from the sedation to ventilate them; watching as they tire themselves out trying to just breathe," he said.

"This has caused many of us to suffer from professional fatigue, as we don't get a break to just relax and reset after all the trauma we keep dealing with."

Clausing is married to Dr Rochelle Lee and the couple shared their daily routine when they get home at the end of each day in an attempt to keep themselves and their loved ones safe.

"Our daily ritual starts at the garage door:

shoes come off and we spray it with sanitizer and leave it outside. We have a red line that our daughter knows she can't pass.

"We then go to the spare bedroom, shower and change into clean clothes. Our dirty clothes then go directly into the washing machine." Clausing said one interesting thing he learned in the past few months is the concept around antibodies.

"We've noticed that people who seem to show more symptoms, tend to have antibodies after having Covid, but people who seem to be asymptomatic, have absolutely no antibodies afterward," he told *Rekord*.

Dr Rochelle Lee, a locum emergency room doctor, said that although not enough studies have been done to prove it but patients appear to be sicker when they catch Covid-19 for a second time.

"I've only had one patient who tested positive for Covid-19 a second time, but she was really very sick. She told me that when she contracted the virus last year for the first time, she was asymptomatic.

"This shows us that if you didn't have that many symptoms the first time, your body probably didn't produce enough antibodies and when you get it the second time, you might get much sicker," she said.

Dr Lee emphasised that no hospital is allowed to refuse a Covid-19 patient.

"I know we face many challenges with regards to available beds, but if no beds are available, we treat our Covid-19 patients in the emergency room until a bed becomes available."

Danielle Pitzer is a radiographer who is currently in a community service position at a state hospital in Pretoria.

"As radiographers, we take the general load of X-rays that come in daily, but we also do chest X-rays in the Covid wards for the patients who test positive."

Pitzer also contracted the virus in July 2020, while she was working.

"I recovered well and only had it mildly, but Covid has however made some of my co-morbidities a bit worse," she said.

"The virus has made my day-to-day life and my job more stressful. We sometimes spend hours on end taking X-rays of the patients affected by Covid in the wards.

"The hardest thing for me is potentially passing the virus on to family members who are vulnerable and I'm also really terrified of contracting it again."

Pitzer said that in all that she has seen and experienced, each person's body seems to react to the virus quite differently.

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Tshwane metro Mayor Randall Williams.

Metro is now online with its city planning

'This will include an escalation process for lapsed applications so that they can be speedily addressed.'

Noxolo Sibhiya

The Tshwane metro is developing a digital and online development application management system (DAMS) to support its city planning processes.

The DAM system will ensure that the metro moves away from receiving and processing hard-copy applications in its offices and towards an online system that can be tracked and continuously improved.

This was announced by Mayor Randall William who said they have made progress in getting the system ready for use.

"We are starting phase one in the development process that aims to automate a number of city planning processes on the e-Tshwane application," he said.

"The platform has become a successful central point for residents to interact with the metro. The metro has now started the process to include city planning processes on the e-Tshwane application.

"This has been a priority of mine since before I was mayor, when I previously served as the MMC for Economic Development and City Planning," he said.

He said this move would streamline processes, create new and more effective operating channels and will cut out red tape.

In phase one, the following processes will be prioritised, allowing residents to submit their applications from the comfort of their own homes or offices:

- Rezoning applications
- Removal, amendment or suspension of title conditions
- Township establishments
- Consent applications

He said the system would provide applicants with updates on the milestones achieved during their application process and allow for different submissions of applications with regard to proof of compliance with conditions on land development applications.

"This will include an escalation process for lapsed applications so that they can be speedily addressed," he said.

"The online application part of the portal will provide the ability to calculate and capture the payment of application fees, the issuing of receipts, and receipt numbers.

"It will also feature electronic requests for comments to internal and external departments. Capturing this information will be managed from the administration portal and will provide the option to refer applications to other departments."

The system will go live in phases. The first phase was expected to go live in April.

Williams said these additional features of the e-Tshwane application will go a long way to addressing the current challenges that residents and developers face when it comes to delays in processing applications, managing the costs of doing business.

He added that the features will assist to shorten city planning application processes.



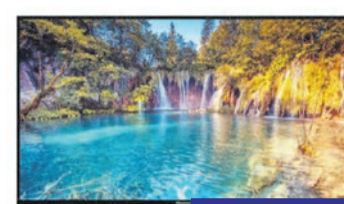
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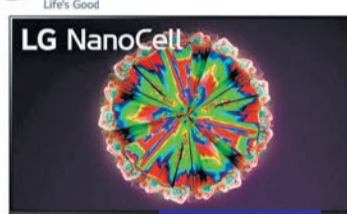
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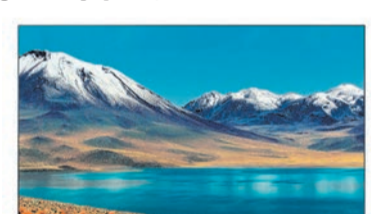
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INTRODUCING!SA

A brand new year and a clean, fresh start!



A seamless coffee affair

Coffee, coffee, coffee! Yes, we just cannot live without coffee ... well, most of us at least. And for Joburg coffee lovers, we introduce Seam Coffee. This really cool, award-winning business offers consumers a new and unique approach to coffee and trust us, it's revolutionary! Instead of looking at coffee as a lifeless commodity, Seam sees coffee as the livelihoods that the crop underpins. The team from Seam visits farms, learns about struggles on these farms and, most importantly, shakes hands on a price that exceeds the cost of production. Their belief is that if coffee can create a community where it's consumed, it should then also build communities where it is grown. Not only is Seam Coffee looking after the farmers, they use eco-friendly cartons for their coffee too. Their gable top cartons are a world first for speciality coffee and have so many awesome benefits that are all environmentally friendly. They even have reusable coffee storage jars, available at cost price, to ensure that your coffee stays fresh and aromatic! You can visit SEAM coffee @ thirdspace at Valley View Centre, Fourways. For more information, visit www.seam.co.za.

Foodie and chef with a 'dash' of class

The colours of fresh ingredients, the aroma of something delicious cooking away on the stove, food memories and conversations with people who are as passionate about food is what truly inspires Dashania Murugas, or better known as Dash! Her business, Food By Dash, offers recipe development, food styling and catering for intimate events. Her skills have grown beyond the kitchen as she writes recipes for people at home to follow, for food brands looking for new ways to promote their products and for restaurants to establish consistency and empower their kitchen staff with skills development and training. True girl power! Dash also loves ... and is simply fantastic at ... food styling! She does food styling for TV commercials, adverts in print and online. To check out more of her phenomenal works, follow @foodbydash on Instagram and Facebook or visit www.foodbydash.com.



Dash's summery salad

A yummy prawn and avocado salad with a ginger dressing we can't wait to try!

Serves 2-4, ready in 30 minutes

For the salad :

1 head baby gem lettuce, rinse and separate the leaves
1 avocado, cut in quarters
300g peeled & blanched prawns
2 sweetcorn cobs, grilled, cut off the cob
80g sugar snaps
2 fresh red chillies, finely chopped (optional)
Handful fresh coriander, chopped

For the dressing:

60 ml olive oil
1 tsp fresh ginger, finely grated
1/2 tsp fresh garlic, finely grated
1 lime, cut in half and squeezed for juice
1 tsp good quality honey
Salt & pepper

Method

Combine the olive oil, ginger, garlic, lime juice, honey with a whisk in a small mixing bowl. Add salt and pepper to taste. Arrange the lettuce leaves, avocado, prawns, sweetcorn & sugar snaps on a large plate. Sprinkle the chopped coriander on top & serve with the ginger salad dressing & fresh red chilli if you'd like the heat.



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Looking for a soap bar that contains no animal products? Look no further! Securex Active Hygiene Soap substitutes animal products with pure vegetable oils and Aloe Vera, ingredients that your skin simply loves. This gentle alternative offers the best of both worlds with 99.9% germ protection and soothing aloe vera. So go on and pick up a bar during your next shop.



Kick-start a healthier eating convenience

It's a new year ... which means new habits to help you on your way to a happier healthier you.

UCOOK offers you the chance to enjoy super healthy meals without the pressure of slogging away for hours (time we'd much rather be using to work out right?) in the kitchen.

Starting this month, UCOOK is challenging you to a UCOOK 21-Day Challenge to encourage healthier habits. All UCOOK menus will boast dishes that will fit naturally into most new year eating plans. Discover menus that are packed with protein power, dishes that celebrate good carbs and how they're great for us, and recipes designed to shine a spotlight on gut health. Working with an in-house nutritionist, they're also excited to launch nutritional information for each and every recipe that can be accessed on-site before you order.

If you're ordering the UCOOK Meal Kits, or just interested in healthier living alternatives, following UCOOK on Facebook and Instagram for more content on forming better relationships with food as well as daily healthy habit content. Take the UCOOK 21-Day Challenge whenever you're ready and get back in the swing of things this new year (without the pressure). For more info and yummy meal options, visit www.ucook.co.za.



Dishes done easy

Take the effort out of washing dishes with MAQ Dishwashing Liquid, South Africa's best performing dishwashing liquid.* Its concentrated high-foam formula contains limonene, a powerful degreasing agent, for dishes that sparkle. *When compared to the best-selling dishwashing liquid in SA.



Get that Insta-glow for your skin

Ladies ... we have the perfect new skincare product for that gorgeous Instagram-worthy glow! Introducing ... Smooch Skincare.

They're all about self-love, authenticity and self-expression and that's what their products help you express.

This millennial-targeted range boasts skincare solutions such as their intensive hydrating serum (H2)OH MY!, brightening serum Honeymoon Glow and the ultimate anti-ageing serum Forever Young. Smooch Skincare offers a range that is natural, cruelty-free and formulated with the most precise ingredient combinations

You can shop Smooch Skincare at: www.smooch.store as well as on www.takealot.co.za and www.zando.co.za. Follow @smooch.skincare on Facebook and Instagram for more skincare tips and product information.



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Dare to Love held a prayer and worship evening at Netcare Pretoria East hospital last week.



The hospital prayer group at a session at Netcare Montana hospital. Photos: Facebook

Prayer sessions, food parcels for Covid-19 frontline workers

Over the past couple of days, several projects have been launched where community members have handed out food parcels to frontline workers as well as hospital staff.

Danielle Garrett, Carli Koch

The Dare to Love and the hospital prayer group have been visiting various hospitals such as Steve Biko, Netcare Montana hospital, Netcare Pretoria East hospital, Kalafong, Eugene Marais and Groenkloof, to name just a few, where they have been praying for patients and medical personnel.

The initiative serves to inspire and encourage health workers during the Covid-19 pandemic and has managed to touch lives from as far as Cape Town.

Since August 2020, volunteers from Dare to Love and community members have held prayer sessions across the city to encourage frontline workers who, daily, face the danger of contracting the virus and transmitting it to their families.

Dare to Love is just one of various such initiatives.

Others are:

The Mancosa initiative

The private higher education institution provides protection to Covid's front-line workers.

They have distributed thousands of packs of personal protective equipment (PPE) to safeguard healthcare workers and food hampers for the poor.

Raees Ebrahim, regional manager of Mancosa in Pretoria, said: "We handed over 400 face shields and masks to the Aurum Institute which is working with healthcare facilities in co-ordinating the supply of PPE to medical staff."

To get involved with Mancosa, visit their website at www.mancosa.co.za.

A Plea for PPE

The organisation donates PPEs to hospitals in Pretoria.

They offer an option where people can donate supplies or funds to purchase supplies to donate.

Their popular Frontline Kit Up consists of a hair cover, a surgical gown, boot covers, a face shield, a KN95 mask, gloves and disinfectant wipes.

For more information on how to get involved, visit www.apleaforppe.co.za.

"Be the Light" project

This group, driven by friends, has donated food parcels to frontline workers at Netcare Pretoria East hospital.

Monica Nienaber, who has been a nurse at the hospital for 25 years, said that they distributed the first batch of parcels last week Monday.

She said that as a social media post was created, and within a short period of time, the group of women received a lot of feedback from the community as to where they can assist and contribute.

"Community members opened their hearts and there are so many people who in the small time we started the drive wanted to be a part of donating something and even make personal items.

"Because I'm a sister myself, I understand the fight being fought against the virus in our hospitals," Nienaber said.

"Thank you once again for showing support, concern and care.

"We want to join hands with our Covid-19 frontline workers and support and spoil them to say thank you and also lift their spirits a bit.

"We are going through a very dark time in our country and we want to be a light of hope for every frontline worker," said Nienaber.

For those who would like to deliver food parcels can do so at Doornkloof Street 741 in Moreletapark.

For enquiries contact Monica Nienaber on 083-493-3204.

The hospital prayer group

Initiated by Cheré van der Schyff, the group has asked community members to come out and pray for frontline workers.

The project is a rapid response vehicle set up to support frontline workers and cleaners at hospitals weekly.

Ward councillor Elma Nel said that they also wanted to pray for the patients and their family members.

"Lord, thank you for sending me the strongest team of super humans," she said.

What to do when you find a snake in your yard

Danielle Garrett

Pretoria is home to many different reptile species like snakes, monitor or rock monitor lizards and sometimes even the odd crocodile.

Residents often go into a complete state of panic when one of these scaly animals are found inside a home or even a garden.

Snake expert Arno Naude spoke to *Rekord* about the sudden increase in snake sightings in and around the city.

"Firstly, do not get bitten by a snake now.

"We are in the midst of a pandemic, and our hospitals are not equipped to adequately help a snake-bite victim now.

"Even if you are admitted, your treatment might take twice as long due to the lack of hospital beds and antivenom available," Naude said.

Naude said that Pretoria has many different types of reptiles.

"I've received three calls just this morning of snake sightings in Pretoria.

"We're back to that time of year, people returning home from their break, and also the rain contributes.

"Most snakes we encounter are harmless.

"They're mostly brown house snakes, but we do sometimes get call-outs to people who find snouted cobras, spitting cobras, the rinkhals, and sometimes puff adders as well."

Naude urged residents to not kill or attempt to move snakes when one is found inside their house.

"When you find a snake in your home, call me or any snake-removal organisation immediately.

"The snake won't harm you if you just leave it alone.

"Try to close windows and doors if it is inside the house, or stand approximately five metres away and keep an eye on it, in case it moves towards another spot," Naude said.

He said that snakes are often attracted to specific things like trash bins, where rats are often roaming.

If you would like to get in touch with Naude for more information or to report a reptile sighting in your area, give him a call on 083-739-9303 or send him a WhatsApp on 062-463-8370.



Arno Naude with an Angolan python (which is very rare).

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Defects to look out for when buying

Purchasing a property is a major investment that should be considered carefully.

On the surface, a home could be stunning, but there might be underlying issues that, if overlooked, could cost you a lot to repair.

According to Adrian Goslett, Regional Director and CEO of RE/MAX of Southern Africa, although sellers are required to provide you with a list of defects of which they are aware, it is best to cover all bases and make sure to ask the right questions before going ahead with any purchase.

"The 'voetstoots' clause largely protects the seller by stating that the buyer needs to prove that information about the defect was deliberately withheld from them," he explains.

To protect themselves, he recommends that buyers ask as many questions as possible.

This includes things such as whether there has been any disputes or boundary issues with neighbours and whether any sort of pest problem exists, with snakes, mice, bats, bedbugs, cockroaches and ants being the most common issues.

Apart from this, Goslett also warns buyers to look out for structural and other damages or defects that could end up costing a



Look out for any broken or missing tiles on the roof.
Photo: Miguel Á. Padriñán from Pexels

The 'voetstoots' clause largely protects the seller by stating that the buyer needs to prove that information about the defect was deliberately withheld from them. Photo: Luis Yanez from Pexels

substantial amount to fix.

RE/MAX of Southern Africa provides the following list of defects buyers should look out for when viewing a home:

Defect 1: Rotting wood

If not maintained properly, wood that is exposed to moisture, such as in kitchens

and bathrooms, will rot over time – so be sure to open all cabinets before signing an OTP. The wood should be painted or treated with a finish that is specifically designed for this purpose. Wooden exterior features such as decks or trims should also be checked as these will be exposed to the elements.

Defect 2: Ventilation issues

Adequate ventilation is required to ensure that any moisture in the home can evaporate. When water or moisture sits in an area for an extended time frame it can cause dampness and mold, which pose serious health risks and are often expensive to fix.

The space between the roof and the ceiling is an aspect that should be paid special attention, as the ventilation in this area ensures the longevity of the roof.

Defect 3: Roofing issues

Look out for any old, broken or missing tiles on the roof that need to be replaced, or rust patches on metal roofs.

A damaged or leaky roof will cause issues inside the home, which could be costly to fix – not to mention cost of fixing or replacing the roof.

Defect 4: Drainage and water control

Poor drainage systems around the exterior of the home can lead to water and damp problems in low lying areas around the property. Waterlogged areas could cause penetrating damp as well as compromise the foundation of the structure.

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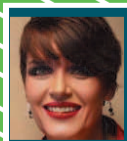
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Owners get a '13th cheque'

Lower interest rates resulted in bond savings of almost a full month's salary last year, according to experts.

With five consecutive repo rate cuts, dropping the prime lending rate from 10% in January last year to the current 7%, the average South African homeowner, who is paying off a variable rate mortgage, saved over R28 000 on bond repayments over the past 12 months, according to Carl Coetzee, CEO of BetterBond.

Coetzee said: "At a time when many South Africans did not receive a 13th cheque, due to financial constraints resulting from the impact of Covid-19, this saving is substantial."

If one considers that the average after-tax income for bond applicants in November was just over R35 000, based on BetterBond's data which shows that the average gross income for bond applicants

was R46 000, the annual savings in bond repayments would be close to a full month's salary. The bond repayment saving over 12 months is calculated using November's bond applications where the average purchase price was just over R1.2-million.

"The good news is that the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) has forecast that the next gradual repo rate increase will only be towards the end of 2021," said Coetzee. "So homebuyers will still benefit from these savings for the next few months."

It was also a good year for homeowners who chose to continue repaying their bond at the prime lending rate of 10%. Working again on BetterBond's average purchase price in November, we see that a homeowner who continued to repay a R1.25-million bond at the 10% it was in January, saved almost R403 000 on interest and will pay

off their home seven years sooner. By paying in the additional amount, the loan repayment period dropped from 20 to just over 13 years.

"Much has been said about the impact of the record-low interest rates, as well as the favourable lending environment, on the recovery of the property market.

But it is only when one looks at how this translates into actual savings for the average consumer – whether they choose to adjust their bond to make the most of the immediate relief the lower interest rate offers or, they opt to pay more to reduce their loan repayment period – that one realises the significance of the SARB's aggressive repo rate cuts last year," said Coetzee.

"These savings will continue in 2021, as the prime lending rate looks set to remain in single digits for several months yet," concluded Coetzee.

A qualified agent advantage for all

While the market is active, sellers should guard against being swayed by charisma and the promise of a high price. They must ensure they do not overlook the importance of ticking all the boxes before awarding a mandate for the sale of their property.

According to Samuel Seeff, chairman of the Seeff Property Group, ensuring the agent is properly qualified and in possession of a valid Fidelity Fund Certificate (FFC) is vital because it offers protection not just for sellers, but also for buyers as well as for the agent.

The importance of a valid Fidelity Fund Certificate (FFC)

In terms of the Estate Agency Affairs Act (soon to be replaced by the Property Practitioner's Act) an agent must have a valid FFC to receive payment or commission from a property sale.

To obtain an FFC, the agent (including intern agents) must be registered with the EAAB who issues these.

FFCs are valid for 12 months and must be renewed by 31 October annually. Sellers are entitled, and it is recommended, to ask to see the FFC of an agent to check its validity on the document itself as well as with the EAAB where you can search whether someone purporting to be an agent is in fact registered as such.



By dealing with an agent with a valid FFC, which confirms that the agent is legitimate and appropriately skilled, the transaction would be covered by the Estate Agents Fidelity Fund (administered by the EAAB) should the need ever arise to lodge a claim with the fund.

Intern vs full status agent

The FFC will identify the status of the agent. Only full status and principal agents may sign legal documents including the mandate and offers to purchase.

An intern agent must disclose their status to the seller and all legal documents must be co-signed by a full status agent or the principal agent.

An intern agent is someone who is working towards their NQF4 and PDE4 qualification. Once qualified, they will be identified as a full status agent.

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SA sprinter is not a quitter



Emile Erasmus does not doubt that he can dip under 10 seconds over 100 metres, but he does not want to be obsessed about it. Photo: Reg Caldecott

Pretoria’s most enigmatic athlete, Emile Erasmus, could also be described as the South African sprinter who got lost in action, but it will be a mistake to forget about the “big man”.

Covid pandemic allowing, 2021 could be the year in which he resumes his battle with the stopwatch in earnest. If he wins this battle, it is guaranteed that he will make headlines.

The last time Erasmus raced was 13 April 2019 – 21 months ago. Few might remember that he could lay claim of being South Africa’s second-fastest over 100 metres in 2018. If he had improved by a mere 0.02s on his best time of 10.01s, he would have made athletics history. Dipping under 10 seconds is one of the elusive milestones for white sprinters.

It was, however, not meant to be. The Tuks athlete got injured. It is sort of the story of his sprinting career. Every time Erasmus seems to be on the verge of a breakthrough, he tends to suffer a setback which means he needs to postpone his goals.

But he is not ever going to allow himself to become despondent. From that very first moment when he settled in the starting blocks to race, only one thing mattered.

It is to run the perfect race, come what may. Erasmus promised himself not to quit until he does so.

The year 2020 will always be remembered as the year in which a virus changed our society, but in some small way, it might have been a blessing in disguise for Erasmus.

For once, he was under no pressure to rush to be able to race. He had 12 months to prepare his body for the challenges that come with continuously pushing the boundaries. Fixing those niggles that tended to bring his career to an abrupt halt in the past.

“When I am adequately conditioned my times over the 100 metres improve,” he explained during a recent interview.

The statistics favour Erasmus’s statement. Before his injury woes started, he was consistently improving his times. In 2015 his best time was 10.43s. In 2016 he ran 10.21s. A year later, in 2017 his time was 10.08s and in 2018 he ran 10.01s.

The Tuks sprinter does not doubt that he can dip under 10 seconds over 100 metres, but he does not want to be obsessed about it.

“I don’t believe in setting a specific time as my goal. Experience taught me when you get obsessed, it is guaranteed that you will end up running one of your slowest races as you tend to tense up. Therefore, my focus is on executing each phase of the race to perfection.

“If I succeed, it will be a fast time,” he said.

According to Frans van Rooyen, Erasmus’s coach, they hoped to start racing in January, but due to the latest Covid-outbreak, they will have to wait.

“To train and to race, come with entirely different challenges.

“An athlete might think he is giving 100% during training, but the intensity is never the same as when racing,” Van Rooyen explained.

Future star Maas seals Nomads title

GolfRSA national squad member Christiaan Maas once again underlined his credentials as one of the game’s future stars when he produced a grandstand finish to defend his Nomads National Order of Merit Inland title last week.

Maas opened with an imposing four-under 68 to match early first round leader Christopher Bagnall at ERPM golf club, but even more impressive was the way he closed the tournament – firing four birdies on the bounce from the 13th hole for a round of 63 and a 13 under par winning total.

It was the second time in as many months that the 17-year-old Pretoria teenager celebrated success at the Boksburg venue.

Having racked up five titles in seven weeks after competitive golf resumed in September last year, including a runaway 12-shot victory in the GNGU Silver Salver at the end of October, Maas rode his red-hot form in the South African Open Championship qualifier at ERPM in December. The Affies learner reeled in seven birdies and an eagle en route to a blistering eight-under-par 64 to secure the first of four spots on offer into the country’s flagship event at Sun City.

Maas did not seem to lose any form over the festive season.

The Pretoria Country Club golfer offset two bogeys on day one with a six-pack of birdies and surrendered just one shot in the final round as he charged his way to victory. A successful title defence also guaranteed that Maas remains firmly planted in fourth place in the GolfRSA u.19 junior rankings.

Maas was justifiably pleased with the winning performance ahead of the South African Swing, which tees off next month.



Christiaan Maas successfully defended his Nomads National Order of Merit Inland title with a runaway six-shot victory on 13-under-par at ERPM Golf Club. Photo: GolfRSA.

“I was very happy with the way I struck the ball during the tournament. I didn’t have a lot of chips, because I hit a lot of greens and I putted really well on the final day,” he said afterwards.

According to the youngster, it was great to walk away with another win.

“If I’m honest, I was annoyed that the 17th got the better of me again. I messed it up during the qualifier and couldn’t birdie the par five in the two rounds during in the Nomads. There is still some work to be done, but I will have a chance to fine-tune my game at the Free State and Gauteng North Opens before the South African Swing,” Maas remarked.

The Free State Open at Maccauvlei (15-17 January) and Gauteng North Open at Pretoria Country Club (22-24 January) will

raise the curtain on what promises to be another exciting South African Swing in February.

The South African Swing comprises GolfRSA’s flagship men and women’s tournaments and kicks off with the South African Stroke Play Championship at Randpark Golf Club from 1-4 February.

The African Amateur Stroke Play Championship follows a week later at Glendower Golf Club.

The 36-hole qualifier for the SA Amateur and the 54-hole South African Stroke Play Championship tee off at Royal Johannesburg and Kensington Golf Club on 14 February.

The SA Amateur and SA Women’s Amateur Championships will then be played concurrently at the Linksfield venue on 19 February, with the 36-hole finals scheduled for the same day.

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In terms of the:
National Environmental Management Act, Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and associated EIA regulations and listed activities.

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT REFERRED TO AS WAPADRAND EXT 52 SITUATED ON A PORTION OF PORTION 79 OF THE FARM THE WILLOWS 340 JR, CITY OF TSHWANE, GAUTENG PROVINCE

PROJECT NAME: Wapadrand Ext 52 Residential Development.
APPLICANT: E M G Ver Loren Van Themaat Trust
PROJECT PROPOSAL: The applicant proposes to develop a density of 80 units per ha, to be zoned “Residential 4”.

Further land uses catered for include public open space and roads. The project will be registered with the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

LOCATION AND SIZE: The proposed Residential Development, will be situated on a portion of Portion 79 of the Farm The Willows 340 JR, Wapadrand (Pretoria), City of Tshwane, Gauteng, and to be known as “Wapadrand Extension 52”. The site is located on the corner of Lynnwood Road (M6) (bordering the site to the east) and Shield Drive (bordering the site to the south). The northern boundary coincides with the southeast facing aspect of the Bronberg Ridge. No development is envisaged for the ridge portion of the development other than private open space. It is consequently foreseen that access to the development will be provided via Shield Drive. The size of the development site is 2,1081 ha in extent.

APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION TO UNDERTAKE THE FOLLOWING EIA ACTIVITIES:
In terms of the National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA), the EIA Regulations of April 2017, a Basic Environmental Assessment Application is required to be undertaken for the proposed project. The following EIA listed activities are triggered by the proposed development: GN R.324 Listed Notice 3, 12(c).

INDEPENDENT ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANT: Batho Earth Environmental Consulting is undertaking the required environmental assessment and public participation processes.

DATE OF PUBLICATION OF ADVERTISEMENT: 21 January 2021

Interested and/or affected parties who wish to participate by contributing comments, or who would like to obtain more information, should please contact Batho Earth Environmental Consulting: Diana Verster - Postnet Private Suit 415, Private Bag x8, ELARDUSPARK, 0047 Fax: 087 807 4536
Mobile: 073 157 7362 (Diana) and E-mail: diana@bathoeearth.co.za

REKORD SPORT

TORIA FAR EAST REK... 22, 2021

INSIDE

Future star Maas seals
Nomads title double
with masterclass



The most action the men of the Titans had in Potchefstroom last week was their warm-up exercises, as three of their four matches were cancelled due to rain and a wet pitch. **Photo: Titans**

Rains bring end to Titans' tournament hopes

Koos Venter

The Titans are out of the domestic Momentum One Day tournament, after three of their four play-off matches in Potchefstroom rained out.

Due to the Covid-19 threat, Cricket South Africa – in their infinite wisdom – decided to stage the play-off phase of this tournament in a so-called “bio-bubble” at one venue. But they apparently made the worst possible choice for those matches when they named Senwes Park in Potchefstroom as the venue.

South Africa's six franchises were divided into two groups of three each.

The two groups have to compete against each other during January at different times by means of a double round robin system.

First, the Titans, Dolphins and Knights would gather in Potchefstroom between 9 and 15 January for these play-off matches, after which the two teams at the top of the group log would then qualify for the semi-finals.

The Lions, Warriors and Cobras will then also gather in Potchefstroom from 22 to 30 January for their part of the play-

off phase, to determine two more semi-final candidates.

The Titans finished last in their group last week, but Mandla Mashimbyi and his team can rightly feel frustrated about the state of affairs, after Mother Nature – rather than their abilities on the field – determined their fate in the tournament.

Due to heavy and persistent rain in Potchefstroom only two of the six scheduled matches in this group stage could be completed.

In this process, three of the Titans' matches were abandoned, while they had

to sit powerless and watch their chances being washed away day after day on the soaking wet outfield of Senwes Park in Potchefstroom.

To top it all, the Titans were penalised with one league point in the first and only game they were able to complete, against the Dolphins, due to a slow over-rate.

The Titans will now have extra time to prepare thoroughly for the continuation of the Cricket SA four-day series, which will resume on 18 February. Mashimbyi's men are currently at the top of the points table in Group A of this series.



Springbok loose forward Marcell Coetzee, who became a superstar in Ireland.

Springbok loose forward Coetzee joins Blue Bulls

The Blue Bulls Company has announced last week that they managed to obtain Marcell Coetzee's signature on a contract and therefore the 29-year-old Springbok will play his rugby at Loftus Versfeld from July 2021.

Coetzee has signed a three-year deal and returns to South Africa after five seasons with the Irish club Ulster, where he quickly became a fan favourite and mainstay in the starting line-up.

The former Port Natal High School scholar also represented the Sharks in Super Rugby and the Currie Cup before a

short stint with Honda Heat in the Japanese Top League before moving to PRO16.

Jake White, director of rugby at the BBCo, was very excited to share the news of Coetzee's recruitment.

“Marcell is a phenomenal player and any team in the world would be ecstatic to have a player of his calibre joining its structures.

“He has grown from strength to strength over the years, and is currently playing some of the best rugby of his life. He's excited about being back in South Africa, and making Loftus his home,” said White.

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T's and C's apply.