

■ TRAUMA

SPCA, shelters count the cost of Diwali aftermath for animals

THOBEKA NGEMA and ZAINUL DAWOOD

DOGS, cats, one tortoise, one hadeda and a dassie were among the animals affected by weekend fireworks in Durban following Diwali celebrations, animal rights organisations reported yesterday.

Brigitte Ferguson of Kloof and Highway SPCA said their staff had worked 24/7 to ensure animals affected by the fireworks were taken care of.

"A total of 24 dogs, five cats, one tortoise, one hadeda and one dassie were admitted as stray animals.

"Thankfully, six dogs were claimed by their owners this weekend," Ferguson

said. "Sadly one dog and one cat were killed in motor vehicle accidents and brought to our SPCA."

The organisation appealed to pet owners to take care of their pets during fireworks season. The SPCA still had to deal with Guy Fawkes on November 5 and New Year's Eve.

Durban & Coast SPCA marketing manager Tanya Fleischer said four dogs were brought to their SPCA on Sunday night. One from Verulam was badly injured.

"We have been receiving lots of calls today (yesterday) for collection of stray animals, as well as calls from people reporting their lost animals,"

Fleischer said.

"No animals have been claimed as yet." She encouraged people to check with their local SPCA and vets for missing pets, and to share the message on their community WhatsApp groups.

Fleischer said microchipping pets helped in finding them should they go missing.

eManzimtoti SPCA manager Tracey Girling said they were called out to one dead dog that had jumped over a fence and been hit by a car.

"Two animals were brought in injured and had to be euthanised, while five have been reported lost," Girling said.

One of the weekend casualties, Bruno, a German Shepherd, is recovering after a firework exploded in his throat in Phoenix.

According to a report by the Kingdom Cats Sanctuary, Bruno belonged to a family living in a housing complex in Phoenix.

"They were having a braai and Bruno was outside with them. A cracker had been thrown but before the family could react, he picked it up and it detonated in his mouth. They immediately rushed him to the vet. The child that threw the cracker was severely traumatised after the incident.

"Bruno is doing well, still sedated with an antibiotic drip in case of infection, and oxygen. Initial X-rays reveal no damage to his throat," Kingdom Cats reported.

Neeri Naidoo, of Phoenix Animal Care and Treatment (PACT), said the effect of fireworks continued for days because injured animals often crawled into bushes and died slowly.

"Children had tied a firework around the tail of a dog. Luckily, the owner had seen what happened and removed the firework before it went off. Another dog was frantic and got stuck between burglar guards. We had to cut open a piece of the burglar guard to free the dog," Naidoo said.

■ HEALTH

Life after stroke: Learning to live again and own your own power

DUKEKA SILEKWA AND KELYN BLACKBURN

AVASHNA Moodley went to bed a successful businesswoman, one who led a healthy lifestyle.

However, she woke up unable to move or speak. She could hear herself speaking clearly to family and friends, but the sounds coming out of her mouth did not match the words formed in her mind.

Moodley had suffered a stroke in her sleep that night, December 24, 2011.

She said she woke up in the morning and quickly realised that she could not move. "I had no time to get my affairs in order, to prepare my husband and children for a person who could no longer walk, talk, read or write. All I could do was cry as I had lost my speech," said Moodley.

From being an active, hands-on businesswoman, she had become someone who could not do anything for herself. "Doctors told me I had had a stroke, and it was one of the serious kind. I owned a paramedical skincare business in City View Centre. I interacted directly with the employees on a daily basis to ensure the business ran smoothly. With the loss of speech, I had to sell the business."

She spent 19 days in a hospital's intensive care unit, recovering her ability to move, sit and speak.

Moodley, who has made a nearly complete recovery, has started a programme to help other stroke survivors - Coming Home Hospital Home. "The reality of my situation hit me the first night back at home and over the next few days I wanted to go back to my new safe place: the hospital! I needed people to treat me as though I would recover completely. To love me not for the person I once was, but for me, as I was then. I needed to still have value and feel valued. I needed visitors to believe in me and bring their positive energy with them. I needed my family and caregivers to allow me to grow and learn at my own pace, with patience, and to own my own power. That's what my initiative is about," said Moodley.

Catholic priest Father Jean-Baptiste Mpuni was 49 and at the pulpit when he suffered a stroke.

While preaching during a Monday morning church service on April 2, 2018, Mpuni felt a sudden numbness on the left side of his body. Ignoring the sensation, he soldiered on through the service, unaware that he was experiencing a stroke.

"I got up in the morning and I was fine: there was nothing wrong with me. I was standing in front of the church, preaching, and then I felt something strange in the left side of my arm and leg. I could feel my body become stiff, but I tried not to show it. I continued despite what I was feeling.

"After the service, I told some of the congregation how I was feeling and was rushed to the hospital immediately," he said.

The priest spent two days in ICU and was operated on.

He then stayed in the hospital for a further two weeks and committed himself to regaining his strength and mobility.



WESTVILLE Stroke survivor and businesswoman Avashna Moodley said her stroke changed her life entirely and she had to sell her business.



FATHER Jean-Baptiste Mpuni with church usher of the Christ the King parish Adriano Naidoo, after his recovery from a stroke.

"It's a sickness like others, but worse because life will never be the same again," he added.

"I decided that I had to be positive at all times within my mind in order for my body to be well. I then began to pray and pushed myself to exercise more," he said.

The therapy consisted of cognitive speech and physical exercises which Father Mpuni still does as part of his recovery.

The priest said he led a normal healthy life and watched what he ate, but did not exercise much.

Due to the stroke, his ministry had to take a back seat, along with the completion of his PhD in Theology.

He cannot drive, walks with a limp and has little mobility in his left leg and arm.

Mpuni believes that stroke survivors need a strong support system, as many become depressed due to the life-altering illness.

Coming Home Support programme:
Website: www.hospital2home.co.za
Email: cho@hospital2home.co.za
Cell: 0835357735
Instagram: @cominghome_sa
Facebook: cominghome
Twitter: @cominghomesa

■ CRISIS

Masterplan for parched country

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THE government will unveil a masterplan next month to deal with the current water crisis which has severely affected Gauteng in the past few months.

Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation Minister Lindiwe Sisulu yesterday announced at Rand Water offices in Glenvista, Joburg, that a plan

had been developed to tackle the crisis which has hit Gauteng, Limpopo and the Eastern Cape.

Sisulu made an appeal to residents to use water sparingly as South Africa was experiencing higher temperatures and low rainfall.

Sisulu added the country was under "water stress".

She said that the earliest that the country could expect the desired amount of rain was in December.

■ COURT



RAYLENE Louw, right, the mother of Miguel Louw yesterday with her mother and a friend. | MOTSHWARI MOFOKENG African News Agency (ANA)

Accused a friend of slain Miguel's mom

He was a co-worker but they were not in a relationship, she testifies

SNE MASUKU

RAYLENE Louw, the mother of kidnapped and murdered 9-year-old Miguel Louw, says she and the man accused of the crime were friends, and she was not in a relationship with him.

Louw took the witness stand yesterday in the trial of Mohamed Vahed Ebrahim, and spoke of the morning she last saw her son alive.

On the morning of July 17 last year she woke up and got Miguel ready for school.

"I got him ready for school, made him lunch and kissed him goodbye as usual, and told him that I loved him," she said while weeping in the witness box.

Ebrahim, a close acquaintance and co-worker of Louw's, is accused of kidnapping and murdering the Rippon Primary School pupil.

Miguel's decomposed body was found in bushes in Phoenix, days after he went missing.

When Miguel went missing, there were allegations that Louw, who was separated from Miguel's father Kirk Louw, was in a relationship with Ebrahim, but yesterday she said they were just friends.

Kirk died in July of a heart attack.

■ CRIME

Senior security officer, 60, shot dead

ZAINUL DAWOOD

POLICE are searching for robbers who shot dead a security officer in oThongathi (Tongaat) yesterday.

Police spokesperson Captain Nqobile Gwala said 60-year-old Jikelela Security guard Dan Pillay (pictured) was shot in the abdomen and chest in Maidstone at Tongaat Industrial Park. His service pistol with 13 rounds of ammunition was stolen.

A case of murder was opened at the oThongathi police station.

Derrick Naidoo of Jikelela Security said Pillay was a senior staff member who had worked for the company for nearly a decade.

"Pillay was a senior inspector who was on a site checking up on the guards,

away from home. He had been to the KFC twice with the kids, but he had asked me for permission," she said.

Ismail Rhyman had testified earlier, saying he had seen Ebrahim and Miguel crossing the road and walking towards the minibus taxis.

After seeing the CCTV footage he remembered seeing Ebrahim crossing the road at the same time as he did that afternoon.

He said he knew Ebrahim from the area and had seen him at the KFC.

He said he worked at the YMK Spares shop opposite the KFC and knew Miguel, as he would see him walking home after school. He remembered seeing him with Ebrahim, whom he pointed out to the court.

Under cross-examination he admitted he could not remember what clothes the man with Miguel was wearing at the time but he could remember that the boy wore a blue school tracksuit.

Ebrahim's lawyer, Jay Naidoo, questioned why Rhyman had paid special attention to the man and boy crossing the busy road. Rhyman said he noticed them because Miguel wore his school uniform and because he would see the two in the area.

The trial continues.

"The KFC is two minutes' walk

were devastated by the murder. "He was a dedicated officer who was nearing retirement. He loved his job and was very energetic," Naidoo said.

In a separate incident, another guard is in hospital after a cash-in-transit robbery in KwaMashu yesterday.

A gang of robbers held up three guards at the Thembalilhe Railway Station. Police spokesperson Colonel Brenda Muridili said the guards had collected cash just after 8am.

"A number of suspects with firearms appeared. One of the guards was shot in the leg. The suspects robbed the guards of two firearms. The injured guard was taken to hospital," he said.

Police appeal to anyone with information to call Crime Stop at 0860010111.

"One person demanded he hand over his firearm. Dan took two steps back as a precaution. The moment he did so, a shot went off. He was shot once in the chest and disarmed of his CZ 83 pistol," he said.

Pillay was taken to hospital where he died. Naidoo said the Pillay family



■ CRIME

Watchdog alarmed at armed cops going rogue off duty

ANELISA KUBHEKA

POLICE watchdog the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (Ipid) yesterday expressed concern at the behaviour of off-duty SAPS officers.

This comes as Ipid is investigating the shooting and killing of Zwakele Hlongwa, 28, in Amaoti on Sunday.

Ipid spokesperson Sontaga Seisa said a constable based at Inanda police station was still being sought.

He said it was alleged that the murder took place in the vicinity of a liquor outlet.

At about 4am the constable allegedly had an argument with Hlongwa about a torch or taser.

"The argument led the constable to fetch his police-issued pistol from his vehicle. On returning, the constable fired five shots, injuring the 28-year-old man. He was taken to the clinic where he was certified dead."

Seisa said the constable then allegedly fled and the investigation was still ongoing.

"Ipid is concerned about how some police officials are conducting themselves, more especially when off duty.

"Some have a tendency of visiting public entertainment areas while having access to their firearms. This should not be the case or practice, as the firearm legislation is clear on how to manage and handle all firearms," said Seisa.

Hlongwa's brother, Lindokuhle, said they had been sitting with a group of friends on the road drinking because there was a birthday party nearby.

"We all knew the girl who was celebrating her birthday, and she had asked us to come as I was also celebrating my 27th birthday.

"We all also know the policeman as he lives in the area. He arrived and began talking with my brother."

Lindokuhle said he could not hear exactly what they were talking about, but the conversation involved a torch.

When asked what type of torch it was, Lindokuhle said it was a torch that could electrocute someone "like a tranquilliser".

When asked whether it was a stun gun or a taser, he said he did not know its proper name.

The constable and Hlongwa were apparently arguing over where it could be purchased and by whom. He claimed the policeman went to his car as they were leaving.

"When the policeman returned from his car he didn't say anything, and shot my brother repeatedly before getting into his car and fleeing," the brother said.



Phumzile van Damme

DA lauds deal for SABC to show final

THE DA is happy the SABC has reached an agreement with SuperSport to broadcast the final game of the 2019 Rugby World Cup between South Africa and England live on SABC 2 on Saturday at 11am, DA MP Phumzile van Damme said.

"We are pleased that the SABC and SuperSport have been able to come to this agreement as many South African rugby fans, who cannot afford DSTV, have been unable to track the Springboks' performance in the World Cup.

"The cash-strapped public broadcaster was unable to afford the purchasing of broadcasting rights for the 2019 Rugby World Cup due to its serious financial challenges," she said.

The DA hoped the country would support the Springboks on Saturday, Van Damme said. | African News Agency (ANA)