

India and Durban sign industry MOU

GUGU BLOSE

THE eThekweni Municipality signed a memorandum of understanding with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) this week, sealing a commitment to promote the interests of the manufacturing industry in eThekweni.

Deputy Mayor, Logie Naidoo, who is also Chairperson of the city's Economic Development Committee said: "The CII is a powerful voice representing some of the biggest conglomerates in the world. "This memorandum will solidify the relationship we

share with Indian industry. The focus is on attracting foreign direct investment that would grow the economy of both our countries, and empower and integrate SMME's in the manufacturing industry.

Shipra Tripathi, Director Head Africa, CII said: "This relationship will help a lot of SMME's and emerging businesses and ensure that Indians learning and knowledge of business is translated into a plan of action for South Africa and the eThekweni Municipality."

The intention is to position eThekweni on the manufacturing map of the world and to develop manufacturing advisory

centers where manufactures could go to for assistance.

Both parties undertook to: strive towards the development of direct contacts and partnerships between business communities and will assist in the identification of potential partners through the organisation of business seminars; jointly develop manufacturing advisory centres and organise training programmes and workshops on a continued basis to promote mentorship, capacity building and skills transfer; and enhance the productivity and efficiency of small business in the municipality by conducting training and carrying out



SIGNING: Shipra Tripathi and Deputy Mayor Logie Naidoo sign a memorandum of understanding. Witnessing the signing is the city's Acting Head of Business Support, Philip Sithole and Indian Consul General Harsh Vardhan Shringla

Picture: KEN MCHUNU

consultancy. Funds have been earmarked by eThekweni for the development of the manufacturing advisory centres and a centre for manufacturing excellence.

CII would serve as an advisory for the effective use of the fund and will also identify and promote relevant schemes to the municipality's manufacturing sector.

IN BRIEF

SMME Fair

THE closing date for SMMEs in the eThekweni Rural areas to register to participate in the Small Business Fair is drawing near. With only a week left to go until the June 8, 2007 closing date, smmes are urged to submit their booking forms and finalise their payments.

SMMEs based in the outskirts of the main centers of business are urged to ensure that they register for the fair as this is one of the main platforms they will get to promote their businesses.

The Rural Smme fairs will be taking place in three areas. These are 30 June at the Mountview Civic Centre, Verulam; on 5 July at the Pinetown Civic Centre, and on 7 July at Umbumbulu Municipal offices.

To participate in the Rural Small Business Fair, contact Ikhono Communications, Tel:031- 266 9937, Fax: 031-266 6054. Registration forms can also be obtained from the internet on www.durban.gov.za.

On the job

THE dog unit is doing a tremendous job for the communities. Last month, about fourteen stolen vehicles were recovered, two firearms (9mmp Norinco and 765 Browning pistol) all in a separate incidents. During these incidents, about ten suspects were arrested and charges were pressed for armed robbery, theft of motor, illegal possessions of firearms and ammunitions.

Awards night

EXCITEMENT is brewing once again as the third KZNonSource Regional Contact Center Awards gets ready to kick off at the IMAX Theatre, Gateway on 6 July.

Businesses are being called on stand in line to be rewarded at the event.

The aim of the initiative is to focus on core issues such as job creation and skills development and to honour key players in the contact center sector.

Entry forms are available on www.bpesa.org.za.

A hot topic

THE 5th of June is World Environment Day. It was initiated in 1972, and has since been commemorated every year. This days seeks to encourage worldwide awareness off the environment and enhance political attention and action.

This years slogan is: Melting ice – a hot topic?.

It focuses on the effects that climate change is having on polar ecosystems and communities.

There will be national and international celebrations with the main one taking place in Norway.

The celebrations are there to make the public aware to preserve and enhance the environment.

For more information visit www.unep.org.

Tough stance on fines

THEMBA NYATHIKAZI

THE municipality's Treasury Unit has achieved an average of 44,2% recovery on outstanding traffic fines and other violations in April 2007 alone.

The overall status as at 30 April 2007 indicates that the total amount of traffic fines owed to Council is R662 471 530. A total number of 1311 424 summonses to the value of R363 088 380 were issued.

The municipality is planning to appoint a dedicated unit to execute warrants within the two year expiry period which is stipulated by the Judiciary.

"There are other initiatives in the pipeline such as calling for tenders for the automatic number plate recognition system that will assist uniform staff in identifying vehicles with outstanding fines or warrants especially at road blocks in Durban," says Krish Kumar, City Treasurer. A tender has been awarded to Syntell Pty Ltd for six months with a view to addressing current red robot camera violations. The proposal is that they engage staff at their own costs to ensure that all Red Robot Cameras are operational, maintenance thereof and processing of images.

Council will implement the process once the legal ramifications have been cleared. "We will be training our own Regional Centre personnel with a view to utilising them for making contacts with companies and individuals with outstanding traffic fines. The implementations of this exercise will be effective before the end of this financial year, 2006/7. As part of our strategy, the number of summons servers has been increased and consideration is made towards hiring a private company," said Kumar.



AFRICAN DREAM: Bafana-Bafana striker Siyabonga 'Bhele' Nomvethle tries to dribble past a team mate during a training session at KwaMashu's Princess Magogo stadium earlier this week. The team also trained at the Chatsworth stadium ahead of their match against Chad at an Africa Cup of Nation's qualifier. The match takes place at the Absa stadium tomorrow

Picture: BONGA MSIMANG

City's pledge for war on drugs

SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

THE battle against violence and drug abuse in schools is not to be fought by law authorities alone.

This was the message delivered to an audience of businesses, school governing bodies, religious leaders, parents and teachers at the launch of the city's Safer Schools Project at the Durban City Hall recently.

Speakers including the Metro Police, SAPS and Correctional services presented disturbing statistics of children as young as 12 years being used as drug peddlers to sell drugs within school premises.

Some of the more common drugs among school kids it was said, included marijuana and "sugars," a mixture of cocaine and heroin.

"But what is it that we as communities are doing to fight crime in schools?" asked Kevin Glen from Business Against Crime.

He said community involvement or the lack thereof would either ensure that schools remained centres of excellence or became drug and firearm havens.

He was echoed by Head of Emergency Services in

eThekweni Lungisa Manzi who said whilst education was not a local government competency, violent incidents like the recent stabbing of an educator in Thornwood Secondary, west of the city, made it important for the city to step in.

"Through our Safer Cities office, we came up with interventions aimed at tackling the growing crime rate in schools."

Manzi said the program, aimed at 36 schools around eThekweni, would encourage scholars to participate in inter-school debates on the challenges they face.

"In this way we would be able to understand what challenges schools are faced with and then come up with the necessary interventions."

Mlungisi Thusi principal of S'thengile Secondary in Clermont said some of the constant frustrations faced by educators was lack of security in schools.

He pleaded with the Education Department to look into providing security personnel in schools as it was outsiders who sometimes disrupted learning. The SAPS said during school searches they sometimes seized guns, alcohol, drugs and knives from learners.

Spotlight on trade fairs and expo

DERRICK DLAMINI AND THEMBA KHUMALO

ALLEGATIONS of fake products, lack of compliance to acceptable business practises and inadequate pricing, dominated as the city's Business Support Unit hosted an information-sharing workshop with trade and exhibition organisers at the Durban Exhibition Centre recently.

The workshop emanated from concerns observed by both the city and local exhibitors in relation to

hosting these fast-growing money-spinners. Among thorny issues tabled, was the influx of foreign exhibitors who sell their products at extremely low prices compared to their local counterparts. It also explored matters relating to risk analysis before the event, security and medical emergencies.

According to the Unit's Acting Head, Philip Sithole, several concerns relating to both trade and exhibition fairs had been observed, and that required the Unit's

immediate intervention. "Some foreign exhibitors come to the country under the pretence of being tourists, when in fact, they are here to trade and not necessarily to exhibit. That destroys our local economy and becomes unfair to local exhibitors hence we stress the significance of adhering to the proposed guidelines and principles. As the city, we are also prepared to accommodate certain concerns of the organisers, but within the ambience of the law," he said.

Edwin Chabayan of the Department of Home Affairs partly placed the blame on organisers for allowing foreign exhibitors to conduct trade during exhibitions.

"Those wishing to trade, must possess a Customs Goods Clearance Certificate," he said. The Business Support Unit is to meet with SARS and the Department of Home Affairs before submitting a draft to Council for possible resolutions. According to Sithole, the draft would have been tabled to Council for adoption by July.