

## METRO REPORTER

DURBAN is preparing to host an international maths competition, an event that's already attracted more than R500 000 in sponsorship.

Deputy Mayor Logie Naidoo said it was a privilege for the city to have been chosen as the venue for the

10th Invitational World Youth Mathematics Intercity Competition.

Addressing the competition launch at the Durban City Hall earlier this month, Derek Naidoo, the Deputy City

Manager, Procurement and Infrastructure, said South Africa was in dire need of scientists, doctors and engineers.

It was for this reason that the City had started various

programmes to encourage pupils to develop an interest in maths and science.

The competition takes place from 5 to 10 July and will attract pupils from 35 countries, including Africa.

BP South Africa is the main sponsor, and is contributing R530 000, with the Zenex Foundation, Development Bank of South Africa, Dimension Data and the Department of Education also pledging their support.

The competition has been endorsed by the office of the Presidency.

## Disabled tell of troubles

SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

DISABLED Durbanites complained about feeling sidelined in their attempts to access government services and urged Mayor Obed Mlaba to do more to cater for their special needs.

These and other concerns were raised at a recent Mayoral Imbizo for the deaf and physically disabled.

Officials from the Social Welfare Department, Home Affairs and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) were on hand with information on special voting days for pregnant women, the infirm and disabled.

Speaking through a sign-language interpreter, Siphon Nzama who is deaf said: "Some of us who want to vote may not be able to because when we go to apply for identity documents the Home Affairs staff claims not to understand us."

Nzama said another frustration was that people assumed that all deaf people were literate. "This is not always the case. We sometimes need help filling in forms as some of them are very complicated."

Home Affairs official Nomfanelo Dandala conceded the department did not always have staff on duty who were literate in sign language. "The Batho-Pele guidelines state that everyone must be catered for and we will look into your complaints," she said.

Mlaba said the Municipality had taken steps to include the disabled. "We always have a sign language interpreter at full council meetings so that deaf people can understand what decisions are taken."

He said, the City's Communications Department was busy producing audiotapes and Braille editions of all its publications.

Mlaba said the City was aware that certain Municipal buildings were not wheelchair friendly. "We are working on the problem of wheelchair access. But the challenge is even greater when it comes to buildings of historical importance, like the City Hall, as their structure cannot be modified," Mlaba said.

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# TB: City spreads the word

SIPHOKAZI NTSHANGASE

MARCH is TB Awareness month, and City Health has lent its support to a campaign in eThekweni this week aimed at making people better informed about the potentially fatal disease.

City Health officials, including community health workers, helped stage tuberculosis awareness events at clinics in Umlazi N section, Austerville, Umbumbulu, Dassenhoek, KwaMashu, and at the Prince Cyril Communicable Diseases Clinic. Door-to-door visits were made to residents of the Cato Manor informal settlement to tell people about TB, how to avoid catching it, and how to get treatment.

TB mainly affects the lungs and is caused by a germ called Mycobacterium tuberculosis. Pulmonary tuberculosis is the most common type of TB.

According to the Human Health Development Trust, South Africa has the third highest number of TB infections in Africa. Zimbabwe has the most.

eThekweni Community Health Facilitator Thoko Blöse said TB can kill if treatment is not taken correctly or if the disease is not detected early.

Blöse said: "We need to

encourage people to take their medication. TB is a curable disease and those infected should not be stigmatised."

The disease was commonly spread when people failed to cover their mouths when coughing or sneezing, she said.

### Cured

Sister Fikile Mkhize, a nurse at the Municipal clinic in Umlazi N section, said they treated about 200 TB sufferers a month and there had been cases where patients have been completely cured.

"If you suspect that you have the disease the best way to prevent it from spreading is by having good ventilation and closing your mouth when you cough or sneeze."

Mkhize encouraged people who suspect that they may have TB to come for testing.

Children who are in contact with people with TB should also be tested.

Ntombenhle Mthembu, a Directly Observed treatment supporter at the clinic, said that she had suffered from tuberculosis but was cured in 2001 thanks to taking the correct medication and family support.

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## Election holiday welcomed

PRESIDENT Kgalema Motlanthe has officially declared election day, Wednesday 22 April, a public holiday.

Mayor Obed Mlaba wel-

comed the announcement, saying it would give everyone in eThekweni a chance to go out and vote. - Metro Reporter

## Big sum for maths contest



UNVEILED: Education MEC Ina Cronje opens the R20-million Ohlange Campus of the Elangeni FET College

Picture: SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

## College opens in Ohlange

ZIBUSE NDLOVU

SKILLS development is an important way to tackle unemployment among the young in KwaZulu-Natal, MEC for Education Ina Cronje said this week.

She was speaking at the official handover of keys to the Ohlange Campus of the Elangeni College of Further Education and Training (FET).

Residents of the area and Grade 10 pupils from Ohlange High attended the ceremony.

The R20-million facility brings to six the number of FET colleges in eThekweni.

The Ohlange college offers courses in clothing production, electrical engineering, catering, motor mechanics,

tourism, welding and basic computer skills.

"The building of the facility in Ohlange is significant because Chief Langalibalele 'Mafukuzela' Dube's reputation as an African visionary first took shape in the area," said Cronje.

She said the late ANC leader had a vision of developing the mind, heart and the hands.

"And indeed we are today saying that Dube's dream has come a step closer to reality, the youth now have an opportunity to develop themselves," Cronje said.

Maxwell Mbili, Principal of FET Colleges, said the new campus would bolster the government's plans to promote entrepreneurship.

"Instead of creating employees we are creating

employers who will create jobs, not only for themselves, but for others."

He said there was a definite need for skills like motor mechanics and welding provided at the Ohlange campus.

"Without the necessary skills we cannot grow the economy in the city and province," said Mbili.

The new campus will double as a centre for adult basic education and training.

"This campus has literally opened the doors of learning to all in the community," Mbili said.

Another FET college is soon to be built in Clermont. Other FET colleges in eThekweni include the KwaMashu, Mpumalanga, Ntuzuma, Pinetown and Qadi campuses.

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## SDB makes bid for tourism

METRO REPORTER

THE City has launched a drive to make the South Durban Basin one of KwaZulu-Natal's major tourist destinations.

"Our aim is to make the South Durban Basin a future tourism brand that we can market locally, nationally and overseas," said Puven Akkiah, of the local Area Based Management Office.

"We're going to have to move fast to kick-start interest in advance of 2010, and we're counting heavily on the local community to help us."

He said the area was a microcosm of the Rainbow Nation, with a fascinating history, diverse environments and great cultural significance.

Apart from its well known industrial and commercial strengths, it also offered superlative surfing, fishing, diving and golf.

The project area will include the Bluff, Merebank, Wentworth, Congella, Clairwood, Austerville, Isipingo, Treasure Beach, Moberi, Jacobs, Prospecton, Woodlands, Montclair, Umlazi, Yellowwood Park and the harbour.

It covers a stretch of 40km by 10km and will form part of the Durban stable of community tourism organisations that includes major attractions like Umhlanga, the Valley of a Thousand Hills, and Amanzimtoti.

"We want the community to be involved, from the approval of a name for the area to how we are going to promote and develop it," said local businessman Harry Etheridge.

A meeting of all interested parties was due to be held yesterday to begin the process.

## New start for offenders

METRO REPORTER

YOUNG criminals in the South Durban Basin are to be given a second chance, thanks to a City-backed rehabilitation programme.

The local Area Based Management team has joined forces with non-profit organisation Khulisa, the local community policing forum and various government departments for the initiative, which aims to keep selected young offenders out of prison, where they risk becoming hardened criminals.

The departments of

Correctional Services and Social Development are working with prosecutors to assess offenders and refer suitable candidates to Khulisa's "Breakthrough" and "Silence the Violence" programmes.

### Alternative

Khulisa Area Manager Cindy Delmoney said: "Our organisation looks at crime holistically, diverting youth from the criminal justice system, and provides alternative sentencing to imprisonment."

Senior Public Prosecutor

Sunil Prithipal said: "We are hesitant to introduce offenders, especially petty offenders into the criminal justice system, as there is a risk that they become hardened criminals. Programmes like those offered by Khulisa offer the opportunity to learn from mistakes and for people to move forward with their lives."

Eurakha Singh, Social Development Manager for the South Durban Basin, said: "We are encouraged that the departments have come forward willingly to be part of this initiative."