ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

ETHEKWINI WEEKLY BULLETIN

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CITY TO HOST R6M JONSSON WORKWEAR DURBAN OPEN

DURBAN will once again host world-class international golf with the launch of the Jonsson Workwear Durban Open, announced yesterday, 20 January at the Durban Country Club.

The R6 million Sunshine Tour and HotelPlanner Tour event will take place from 19 to 22 February, in partnership with eThekwini Municipality.

A strong field of South African and international golfers is expected, reinforcing Durban's growing reputation as a premier stage for rising global talent. Players will also compete on a newly upgraded Durban Country Club course, restored to championship standard.

The tournament forms part of the South African Swing of four events that open the new HotelPlanner Tour season, the main feeder circuit to the DP World Tour.

Sunshine Tour Commissioner Thomas Abt said the event plays a vital role in developing the next generation of champions.

"Through consistent exposure on the HotelPlanner Tour, several of our members have graduated to the DP World Tour. Jonsson Workwear shares our vision of developing greatness on our fairways, particularly in Durban, which has a rich golf heritage."

The Durban Country Club recently hosted the 2025 Investec South African Open, where Dylan Naidoo made history as the first South African player of colour to win the national Open. This was a landmark moment for the City.

EThekwini City Manager Musa Mbhele said Durban is proud to welcome a premier golf event that brings together top local and international talent while driving community and economic growth. The tournament, he noted, will promote Durban as a global sporting destination and showcase its world-class facilities and vibrant culture.

Durban will once again welcome world-class international golf to its fairways as the host city of the Jonsson Workwear Durban Open. The R6 million Sunshine Tour and HotelPlanner Tour event will take place from 19 to 22 February, in partnership with eThekwini Municipality.
EThekwini City Manager Musa Mbhele and representatives from various stakeholders attended the launch of the tournament. Pictured from left is Thomas Abt, Sunshine Tour Commissioner; Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of Jonsson Workwear Nick Jonsson; and Mbhele.

Mbhele emphasised the event's developmental impact, particularly for youth from disadvantaged communities. Golf clinics, school programmes, mentorship initiatives, and community outreach will create opportunities for young athletes to learn from professionals and be inspired to take up the sport.

"This tournament will foster social cohesion and create a platform for diverse communities to come together through the spirit of competition and friendship. It offers local youngsters a chance to gain new skills, discover golf, and embrace a healthy lifestyle," he said.

DURBAN TOURISM SURGES WITH VISITOR GROWTH

Durban welcomed about 1.2 million visitors during the 2025/26 festive season period, which is a 19 percent increase from the previous year.

ETHEKWINI Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba has announced strong preliminary tourism figures, confirming another year of exceptional growth for the sector and its contribution to the local economy.

Speaking recently at a media engagement at the Octavia Boutique Hotel, Mayor Xaba said the City welcomed nearly 1.2 million visitors over the 2025/26 festive season, which is a 19 percent increase from the 998 000 recorded in 2024. Accommodation occupancy rose to 77 percent, up from 72 percent.

Direct tourism spend increased from R2.2 billion to R2.7 billion, a 24 percent rise. The sector's GDP contribution grew from R5.5 billion to R9.6 billion, while more than 14 000 new jobs were created across the Municipality.

With all 23 beaches open for most of the holiday period, Durban saw thousands of holidaymakers enjoying ideal summer conditions. From 1 December to 12 January, the City's beaches recorded over 6.8 million visitors, including swimmers and promenade users. At the City's 43 Municipal swimming pools, more than 1.2 million bathers were recorded.

Mayor Xaba said the results reaffirm tourism as a central driver of Durban's economy.

"The growth we are witnessing is not only a testament to Durban's appeal as a destination but also to the resilience and innovation of our tourism sector. We remain committed to supporting businesses, creating jobs, and ensuring that visitors continue to experience the very best of our City," he said.

He added that the influx of visitors boosted hospitality businesses, transport operators, and small enterprises, reinforcing Durban's status as a leading hub for leisure and entertainment.

The City attributes the season's success to strong safety and security measures, coordinated public services, and a robust calendar of signature and sporting events that attracted both domestic and international travellers.

DR PIXLEY KASEME UPGRADE TO GET UNDERWAY

Following the revamp of Lilian Ngoyi Street, above, the City will now upgrade Dr Pixley kaSeme Street.

THE rehabilitation of roads within Durban's Central Business District (CBD) has reached a major milestone as attention now shifts to the upgrade of Dr Pixley kaSeme Street.

This upgrade forms part of the InterCity Road Rehabilitation Programme, a significant R65 million investment led by the Municipality's Road Infrastructure Management Directorate aimed at modernising the City's ageing transport network.

Following the successful transformation of Sandile Thusi Road and the completion of upgrades on key routes such as Lilian Ngoyi Street, Masabalala Yengwa Avenue, Umgeni Road, KE Masinga Road, and David Webster Street, the City is now prepared to focus on its primary economic artery: Dr Pixley kaSeme Street.

The rehabilitation is scheduled to begin next month.

The Municipality will provide updates to business owners, public transport operators, and other stakeholders to ensure minimal disruption to daily operations.

A FEW DAYS LEFT TO BENEFIT FROM DEBT RELIEF PROGRAMME

RESIDENTS and business customers are reminded that only a few days remain to take advantage of the City's special Debt Relief Programme, which concludes on 31 January 2026.

Customers with accumulated debt up to 31 January 2025 are eligible to apply, including those with waterloss claims.

To qualify, customers can visit any Sizakala Centre, pay 50 percent of their accumulated debt, and the Municipality will write off the remaining 50 percent.

Customers with debt accumulated between February 2025 and 30 June 2025 must also settle that amount. No interest will be charged, but a payment arrangement must be made to settle this portion by 30 June 2026.

Water loss customers also qualify.

- For those who have already claimed and received partial payment, the difference between the amount claimed, average monthly consumption, and the insurance payout will be written off, provided valid supporting documents are submitted.
- For those who have not yet claimed but can prove water loss, the difference between the billed consumption and average monthly consumption will be written off.

Property owners who do not live in Durban may nominate a representative to apply for the Debt Relief Programme on their behalf. However, tenants will not be allowed to enter into a payment arrangement on behalf of the landlord.

For more information, customers are encouraged to visit their nearest Sizakala Centre.

NEW AIRLINE CONNECTING DURBAN TO RÉUNION ISLAND

Deputy Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Philisiwe Ndlovu, speaking during the launch of the new airline route connecting Durban and Réunion Island.

DURBAN's position as a premier international destination is set to be strengthened with the launch of a new direct route between King Shaka International Airport and Saint-Pierre, Réunion Island.

Lift Airlines, in partnership with Global Airways and Fly Vetiv'Air, will assume the service on 26 February, marking a major milestone for aviation and regional tourism.

The new connection forms part of a broader strategy to boost tourism, trade, and cultural exchange between KwaZulu-Natal and the French overseas territory.

The direct link is expected to create easier travel for both business and leisure, while positioning Durban as a key gateway to the Indian Ocean.

Speaking at the launch event held at Dube TradePort, Councillor Philisiwe Ndlovu, Deputy Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee, said the route represents a significant achievement for both Durban and KwaZulu-Natal.

"This route will unlock easier travel for business and leisure, supporting our City's strategic positioning as a resilient, sustainable gateway into Africa.

This is a major milestone for aviation and tourism in Durban and KwaZulu-Natal as we celebrate the pre-launch of the new air service between King Shaka International Airport and Saint-Pierre, Pierrefonds Airport in Réunion Island," said Councillor Ndlovu.

Dr Nkosenye Zulu, Head of the Department for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs in KwaZulu-Natal, said the provincial government expects the route to stimulate two-way tourism flows, strengthen trade in goods and services, and open fresh investment opportunities across key sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, green energy, and the creative industries.

"Every new international connection brings increased tourist arrivals and new opportunities for exporters, especially with the air cargo facility operated by Dube TradePort at King Shaka International Airport. It also creates important business linkages in aviation, hospitality, logistics, and beyond," said Dr Zulu.

The route is expected to benefit both regions through expanded market access, enhanced mobility, and strengthened business, cultural, and tourism ties.

FURNITURE MAKERS CARVE A PATH TO ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

With industry-aligned training and real tools of the trade, seven young people step into jobs and entrepreneurship, showcasing how targeted skills training can alleviate unemployment and stimulate local economies.

SEVEN young people from disadvantaged communities have found renewed hope after completing a year-long Furniture Making Programme, emerging as qualified carpenters equipped for employment and entrepreneurship.

This milestone marks more than a personal achievement; it represents new pathways to economic independence and opportunities to uplift their communities.

For Thembeka Cele, the programme offered a chance to break barriers in a male dominated field. "With the skills I have acquired, I am exposed to many opportunities. I am ready to secure employment and start my own business," said Cele.

Led by the eThekwini Municipal Academy (EMA), the programme equips youth with practical skills while fostering innovation.

EMA Project Coordinator Bright Shabalala said: "This initiative ensures that young people gain expert knowledge and experience."

METRO POLICE RECRUITMENT DRIVE GETS UNDERWAY

The City has commenced the Metro Police recruitment process, with physical assessments currently underway.

THE Metro Police Directorate has officially commenced its 2026 recruitment process, with physical assessments currently underway at Lahee Park in Pinetown.

Due to the exceptionally high number of applicants, assessments are being conducted in phases.

The first phase took place last week, and the next round is scheduled for 5 February.

More than 62 000 applications were received, processed, and shortlisted, with selected candidates now undergoing the mandatory fitness assessment, which is a key requirement in the Metro Police recruitment process.

The 2026 intake was open exclusively to applicants residing within the City, and submissions were accepted via hand delivery only to ensure transparency and fairness.

While the assessment process continues, the Metro Police has confirmed that there will be a balanced intake for the three-month training programme.

Successful candidates are expected to begin duty in May 2026.

The City remains committed to upholding high standards of safety and security across both residential and commercial areas through the strengthened capacity of the Metro Police Directorate.

MAYOR XABA LEADS SCHOOL ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba led a delegation of City officials during the School Functionality Programme, which aims to assess schools' readiness for the new academic year.

AS part of eThekwini Municipality's School Functionality Programme, eThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba, accompanied by the Chairperson of the Governance and Human Resources Committee Councillor Nkosenhle Madlala visited Ukusa Senior Secondary School in Mpumalanga Township. The school achieved an impressive Matric pass rate in 2025. The School Functionality Programme, which evaluates schools on the first day of the academic year, also assesses the needs of learners. Mayor Xaba encouraged the learners to focus on their studies and warned against social ills such as teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, and crime, which often contributes to high dropout rates.

CRIMINALS POSING AS MUNICIPAL WORKERS

RESIDENTS and businesses are urged to remain vigilant following reports of criminals impersonating Municipal officials to gain access to private properties.

This alert follows a recent incident in Chatsworth, where two unknown men posing as Municipal plumbers attempted to enter a home under the pretext of inspecting a water meter.

The Municipality emphasises that all legitimate Municipal employees carry an official identification card, which includes a photo, an employee or ID number, the Municipality logo and validity period.

Residents are encouraged to verify these details before allowing anyone onto their property.

If there is any uncertainty about a person's identity or if suspicious behaviour is noticed, residents should immediately contact law enforcement authorities.

If you would like to submit feedback or contribute to eThekwini Weekly Bulletin

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