

NO BAIL FOR DAGGA-LAB OWNER

Brits – Russel de Beer (48), who stands accused of running a dagga laboratory, was denied bail when he appeared before the Brits Magistrates' Court on Friday 29 November. He is believed to be a major supplier of dagga and related products in the country.

The suspect was arrested by the Hawks on Saturday 9 November after a tip-off led law enforcement agents to a dagga-processing laboratory in Brits. The Hawks confiscated 500kg dagga estimated to be worth R3 million. Hydroponic tunnels for dagga cultivation as well as various other equipment were seized.

Tlangelani Rikhotso, spokesperson for the Hawks in the North West, said the suspect could face additional charges related to the contravention of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act (POCA), 21 of 1998. "The accused will reappear before the Brits Magistrates' Court on 24 February 2020," she said. The Hawks are still investigating the case.



Various equipment of the drug lab was seized by the Hawks.

SAFETY CONCERNS RESULT IN DARK DAYS FOR RUSTENBURG

Rustenburg – The strong winds and heavy rain during the first week of December has caused multiple power outages throughout Rustenburg and surrounding areas.

A press release by Rustenburg Local Municipality (RLM) dated 4 December stated that due to the heavy rain in various parts of Rustenburg, the electrical department will implement safety measures which will prolong the restoration of power supply to areas, which have experienced intermittent power.

For the safety of the technical teams, work will resume once it is safe to do so, considering that in certain instances, exposed electrical cables have to be mended and or joined to ensure restoration of power. Some areas had to go for more than four days without electricity.

"The safety concerns during the wet weather conditions have caused delays. In order to restore the electricity, technicians have to work in open areas and the faults on the cables need to be located. Electricity and humid conditions have never been a safe combination therefore it compounds the current challenge," said RLM spokesperson David Magae.

David also noted that in addition to the rolling blackouts, there are power failures in the electrical network due to overloading. This leads to power trips that sometimes causes substantial damage and that can take longer than usual to be restored. "Where faults have been located that originates from Eskom's side, we are communicating with Eskom to address the challenge," David said.



A broken Eskom structure that was affecting various RLM intake substations.

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ROBBERY AT WATERFALL MALL

Rustenburg – A robbery occurred at Waterfall Mall on Friday 6 December at approximately 13:00 during load shedding.

Confirming the incident in a statement, mall management said that nobody was injured during the robbery. "Security responded immediately and in accordance with their training. Waterfall Mall are working with the SAPS to identify the criminals," reads the statement.

The safety of tenants and shoppers remains of utmost importance to Waterfall Mall.

Businesses located inside the mall, which is one of the most popular shopping complexes in Rustenburg, have been very busy as the festive season approaches. The management team at the Waterfall Mall thanks the community for their support.



SUBMIT YOUR PROFILE TO RLM

Rustenburg – The Rustenburg Local Municipality (RLM) urges small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs) in the manufacturing industry to submit their business profiles so that their services can be considered for upcoming projects.

During a seminar hosted by the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC) in November, senior municipal employees advised local entrepreneurs to take advantage of procurement opportunities available in the catering and manufacturing industries.

As a follow up to this initiative, the municipality's local economic development (LED) unit intends to compile a database that will be used to register businesses so that they can gainfully participate in the local economy.

RLM director for LED Edward Komane said: "All SMMEs involved in the manufacture of paving bricks, kerbs, road stormwater pipes and other road construction materials within the Rustenburg municipality are advised to submit their business profiles or relevant details." He added that those interested must forward their submissions to the municipality's main offices in Rustenburg before Friday 20 December.

For more information, contact Thato Motsuenyane on 014 590 3528 or email tmotsuenyane@rustenburg.gov.za.



LOAD-SHEDDING TIPS

SA – Homeowners are urged to test their security systems as a matter of urgency and to pay particular attention to the battery backup systems. This message comes from an armed response company, as South Africa finds itself in the midst of wide-spread load-shedding.

"Many people are under the incorrect assumption that their home alarm system is deactivated when the power supply is interrupted. However, if you have a stable and correctly programmed system coupled with a battery that is in good condition, it will continue to protect the premises during a power outage – regardless if the outage is caused by load-shedding or not," said Charnel Hattingh, national marketing and communications manager at Fidelity ADT.

The only time it may not function correctly is if there is a technical issue, or the battery power is low (like for instance in a stage 4 load shedding). "Most modern alarm systems have a back-up battery pack that activates automatically when there is a power failure," said Hattingh.

She added that there are a number of practical steps that can be taken to ensure security is not compromised during any power cuts.

Some of these include ensuring that the alarm system has an adequate battery supply, that all automated gates and doors are secured and lastly to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to your security provider or the South African Police Service.

With the added inconvenience of the lights going out at night due to power cuts, candles and touch-lights are handy alternatives.

The most important tips:

- It is important that your alarm system has an adequate battery supply. Batteries should be

- checked regularly.
- Alarms should be checked during extended power outages to keep systems running.
- Power cuts can impact on fire systems and fire control systems; so, these also need to be checked regularly.
- The more frequent use of gas and candles can increase the risk of fire and home fire extinguishers should be on hand.
- Above all remain vigilant during a power cut; be on the look-out for any suspicious activity and report this to your security company or the SAPS immediately.

"Because of load-shedding, there might also be a higher than usual number of alarm activation signals received by security companies and their monitoring centres," said Hattingh.

"This could lead to a delay in monitoring centre agents making contact with customers. You can assist by manually cancelling any potential false alarms caused by load-shedding, and thus help call centre agents in prioritising the calls needing urgent attention."

Fidelity ADT press release extracts, 9 December



KIDNAPPING CASES SKYROCKET WITH 139%

SA – A stark reality... 16 people are being kidnapped or abducted in South Africa daily.

This represents an alarming increase in abduction crimes when compared to figures recorded by the police during previous years.

Although the kidnappings have been more concentrated in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, there is a significant increase nationally from 2009 to 2019.

This points to a bleak statistic which has been described as 'out of control' by some of the county's top investigators.

According to the statistics, a total of 2,492 kidnapping cases were reported in South Africa between 2009 and 2010. The statistics reveal an increase with 5,693 cases being reported between 2018 and 2019.

In Limpopo, 243 kidnappings were reported for 2018/2019, presenting a decrease from 300 recorded in 2017/2018.

In Rustenburg, 29 kidnappings were reported between 2018 and 2019, representing an increase of 20.8%.

Overall, the statistics show that kidnapping skyrocketed in South

Africa by 139% in the last decade. The police and organisations such as Pink Ladies had to double their efforts in an attempt to curb this crime wave.

While in the past criminals used to target wealthy individuals, they have broadened their scope of victims and now prey on lower-income families. There also appears to be a well-defined pattern of opportunistic abductions in which the criminals demand quick ransom payments, usually through eWallet.

Mike Bolhuis, a renowned private investigator, told news channel ENCA that in an effort to evade being detected, located and arrested, abductors have lately been demanding small amounts of money to ensure faster transactions.

To report a kidnapping or abduction, contact the police on 014 777 3500 (Thabazimbi SAPS), 014 576 9100 (Rustenburg SAPS) or 086 001 011. You can also visit Pink Ladies on their website www.pinkladies.org.za or email admin@pinkladies.org.za, operationspinkladies@gmail.com or missing@pinkladies.org.za. You can also contact them via WhatsApp on 072-214 7439 or SMS on 072-214 7439.

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