

Beggars with babies arrested

IN BRIEF
ROMITA HANUMAN

STOP exploiting our children. That was the tough message behind a recent City-led "Street Beggars Operation".

Adults who use babies and young children to beg at intersections were arrested and the children were taken to places of safety.

The operation took place on 19 September at identified hotspots including Sandile Thusi (Argyle) Road and Stalwart Simelane (Stanger) Street.

The Safer Cities Department led the operation, and was helped by Metro Police, South African Police Service, Family Court, National Prosecuting Authority, KZN Department of Social Development, KZN Health Department, eThekweni Health and Durban Children's Society.

The aim was to protect children, as required by the Childcare Act, and to improve road safety.

Motorists were encouraged not to support the beggars as their parents or guardians were exposing them to harsh and dangerous conditions.

On the day of the operation, it was bitterly cold, with heavy rain. Despite this, there were many adults using young children to beg.

A total of 21 children were


LET'S GO:

Police remove a child who was being used for begging to a place of safety

Picture: ROMITA HANUMAN

removed, and eight adults were arrested and detained at the Central Police Station.

Kamini Pillaye, of Safer Cities, said the operation had been a success. "These intersections are now devoid of

beggars. We will be monitoring them and taking action to eradicate this problem. The operation has contributed to the safety of children and motorists. Other hotspots will be identified

and the same will happen there," Pillaye said.

Lungisile Mpetshwa, Safer Cities Acting Manager, said: "These kids are now in places of safety where they are getting an education. The

important thing is that they are safe."

The places of safety involved in the initiative were, Zakhe, Umlazi Place of Safety, Ocean View and Valley View.

hanumanr@durban.gov.za

Tree planting poverty plan

THE City and the Art of Living Foundation have started a tree planting campaign which will culminate in a Stand up Take Action Against Poverty Campaign from 17 to 19 October.

The campaign encourages the planting of indigenous fruit trees, herbs and medicinal trees or shrubs.

Trees will be planted in housing developments, schools, homes, places of worship, and places of work. The aim is to help create a safe, healthy and beautiful environment.

Planting has begun in Welbedacht low cost housing development in Chatsworth. With the help of the Sarva Dharma Ashram, children in the area are involved in planting and nurturing trees.

Call 072 456 2612.

Truckers to get clinic

THE City will officially open a roadside wellness centre clinic in Westmead, Pinetown, on 8 October.

It will provide health services to truck drivers who are at risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, especially HIV.

A survey at the Engen truck stop in Pinetown earlier this year, followed by a workshop involving trucking companies, led to the decision to set up a clinic to provide health services for freight industry workers. The clinic is well located – 200 to 250 trucks use this truck stop daily.

Road safety campaign

A ROAD safety programme is being introduced in South Durban Primary schools.

"Pedestrians, especially children have been identified as the most vulnerable of all road users," said Sandra Graham of the eThekweni Transport Authority.

She said the authority was concentrating on schools with the most child pedestrian accidents.

The programme will be extended to Umlazi, Ntuzuma, Sydenham, Verulam, St Wendolins, Tshelimnyama, Dassenhoek, Kwadabeka, Newlands West, Besters and Chatsworth, targeting 26 primary schools.

Cancer tea fundraiser

A TEA in aid of a cancer charity will be held at the Greyville Racecourse tomorrow (4 October).

Tickets are R50 with the proceeds going to a trust which supports cancer patients who do not have medical aid.

Call 031 202 3082.

Heritage Month keeps mayor busy

REPORT AND PICTURE BY SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

MAYOR Obed Mlaba had a busy time this past weekend.

With September having been Heritage Month, the Mayor's weekend diary took him to the north of the city, to the J L Dube stadium at Inanda on Saturday.

The INK (Inanda, Ntuzuma, and KwaMashu) urban renewal office and Durban Africa, the City's tourism arm had organised a fun day which included traditional music, a fun run and a stand-up comedy show.

"The aim is to remind the people of this area about the importance of celebrating our collective heritage which defines who we are," said Linda Mbonambi who leads the INK team.

Also on the bill were talks by Durban Solid Waste officials aimed at educating INK residents about the relationship between a clean environment and tourism.

Mlaba said Inanda is rich with tourism opportunities. "You have the Inanda Heritage

Route, an area rich in the history of our struggle."

Mlaba said the lives of ANC founders Pixley ka Seme and Langalibalele Dube, as well as Mahatma Gandhi were intertwined with the history of Inanda and its surrounds.

"We should strive to keep a clean environment to attract tourism," he said.

The next day Mlaba headed south to Umgababa where celebrations were in progress too. The Mayor reminded locals that the area was once a popular getaway and it needed to be restored to its former glory.

"I remember back in the day people from Johannesburg used to come to this very spot for their holidays. The City has plans to ensure we once more bring back those days to

Umgababa where people used to come and have fun," he said.

Local Councillor, Stanley Xulu, said Umgababa should claim its share of the tourism opportunities presented by the 2010 World Cup. Kwaito artists Tizozweni Professa, beach soccer and traditional dance provided the entertainment.

maphumulosiya@durban.gov.za

MASAKANDI:
Mfiliseni
'M'qabulasheshe'
Magubane
entertains Inanda



MONUMENTAL: The unveiled statue of King Dinuzulu Picture: THEMBA KHUMALO

Dinuzulu sees light of day

ROMITA HANUMAN

LONG under wraps, the statue of King Dinuzulu in Durban's Botha Gardens was finally unveiled as part of Heritage Month celebrations.

Berea Road, which runs alongside the park was also officially renamed King Dinuzulu Road at the September event.

And just as Mayor Obed Mlaba completed the renaming ceremony, the heavens opened – a sign of good luck – putting a sheen on the likeness of Dinuzulu, standing proud in military uniform.

Dignitaries who attended included King Goodwill Zwelithini, KwaZulu-Natal

Premier Sibusiso Ndebele, IFP Leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, and Sport and Recreation MEC Amichand Rajbansi.

Ndebele gave a brief history of King Dinuzulu and explained why his statue has been erected near Gen Louis Botha's in the park.

"The statue is next to Gen Louis Botha, the first prime minister of the Union of South Africa in 1910.

"Botha had befriended Dinuzulu during the 1880s and released him from prison in 1910. The two giants of our history are symbols of the beginning of the journey towards reconciliation in this country."

Ndebele said it was important for all South Africans to acknowledge and celebrate our heritage.

"Heritage is at the core of our identity, and plays a pivotal role in reconciliation. To reconcile is to come to peace with the past. You cannot reconcile unless you know what happened.

"This statue is a part of continuous recognition of traditional leadership by the democratic government, and in particular, recognition of a king who saw and experienced it all, but kept on fighting for the dignity of his people, their land and the royal house of Shaka."

hanumanr@durban.gov.za