

Child Welfare SA facing closure threat

'We will have to close if we don't improve our financial situation'

A of funding could see Child Welfare South Africa closing shop, leaving hundreds of thousands of children with nowhere to go.

Executive director Peter Cloete said since he took over the 93-year-old non-profit organisation in 2015, it had faced a R4 million shortfall every year.

Cloete said that of the nine provinces in which Child Welfare had offices, and 154 countrywide offices, KwaZulu-Natal was best placed and was "showing life", although the long-term future was uncertain.

KZN had 42 offices, handling about 120 000 cases annually.

"This has been coming for a long time. We have been going back and forth asking for money on the one hand, and national government has been taking away money on the other," Cloete said.

"We will not be able to continue to operate like this. Eventually, we will have

Chris Ndaliso

to close down if we don't improve our financial situation," he said.

To keep afloat, the organisation must raise R6m in the next two months, while waiting for a decision of the National Lottery review committee into the R5m which was withdrawn in October. Cloete said the funds were withdrawn because of a financial disclaimer "of previous years".

"We appealed against the Lottery decision in November, and last week we received correspondence that the committee was looking into the matter.

"In 2015/16, we received a clean audit, and this should count in our favour.

"It must be noted, though, that our problems cannot be blamed squarely on the withdrawal of funds by international donors. It is for the local community and corporates to take ownership of the

organisation," he said.

The organisation has 69 staff in the nine provinces, with the KZN office allocated five senior social workers – who visit all their offices – a secretary, co-ordinator, the provincial head and volunteers.

"KwaZulu-Natal is doing very well, thanks to the dedication of volunteers and the staff. At the moment, we are solely dependent on social development subsidies. In other provinces, social workers are paid a third of their salaries, but they soldier on," he said.

The Times reported yesterday that the organisation lost funds from international donors because of a lack of financial transparency, reporting and accountability.

Kumar rejected this, saying: "People should bring evidence to back such allegations."

Anne Slatter, iCare chief executive, said it would be sad if Child Welfare

closed down.

"This organisation is needed in the communities because it forms part of the solution to child abuse and neglect.

"They have a vital role to play in dealing with troubled children," Slatter said.

The Department of Social Development funds 56 Child Welfare offices in the province through a service level agreement.

Ncumisa Ndelu, the department spokesperson, said the funding was used towards salary payments for social workers.

"This organisation provides family preservation and reunification services, with statutory services including foster care, adoption, child abuse prevention and early intervention services.

"They also provide help with child and youth care centres.

"We are not aware of any child welfare organisation that is facing closure," Ndelu said.

40th Cycle Tour ready to roll

Leletu Gxuluwe

THE Organisers of the Cape Town Cycle Tour have assured cyclists the roadworks in the Kalk Bay area will not affect the tour. The CTCT is turning 40 on Sunday, March 12.

CTCT's Nicole Felix said they were excited to commemorate the milestone of South Africa's most iconic cycling event.

From humble beginnings in 1978 when just 525 riders took part, 2017's 40th event will see 35 000 cyclists line up in Hertzog Boulevard to tackle the spectacular 109km loop of the Cape's peninsula.

"They will not only participate in the world's largest timed cycling event, but be part of a special day," Felix said.

In an effort to be more environmentally responsible, the organisers of the CTCT MTB Challenge, which starts on Saturday, have taken initiatives to save water during the current water crisis.

There will be a grey water system to recycle and reuse water along the route and at the start and finish areas, and there will not be showers for cyclists as in previous years.

Management of bottled water allocation has been improved and any that is unused will be distributed.



Cape Argus Sport Show has something for everyone

Theolin Tembo

THE Cape Argus Sport Show is back and it promises to be a weekend of fun for all involved.

From March 24 to 26, Sandringham will host the three-day sporting showcase that includes live performances, sporting celebrities, clinics, exhibitors and games for young and old.

The event has a variety of thrilling and informative activities aimed at all levels of sport enthusiasts. There'll be tag rugby, cricket, golf, netball, paintball, watersports, BMX biking, obstacle courses and even drone racing.

According to event organiser Stephan Jooste, the Cape Argus Sport Show promises fun for the entire family.

"Too many sporting events exclude moms and dads and daughters," says Jooste. "But the Sport Show is wholly inclusive, and pleases casual fans and hard-core sports fanatics alike.

"We've made a special effort to cater to every sport lover's game of choice."

Clinics and seminars will help players hone their game, while the Gary Kirsten Cricket Academy will also take part this year to share valuable tips for aspiring cricketers.

The event will also include action sports, a tag rugby and paintball tournament where the Western Cape Provincial Cup will be contested. The freestyle stunt arena will be on show, while South African



TAKING AIM: Paintball at the Cape Argus Sport Show, which features games for all age groups.

PICTURE: CHRIS HITCHCOCK

free-diver Hanli Prinsloo will demonstrate how to hold your breath under water.

"South Africans live and breathe sport and it's fantastic to be able to put together an event that champions the fun of competition," Jooste added. "Whether you're after the craft beer and grub or want to get active, there's something for everyone."

Cape Argus editor Aziz Hartley is equal-

ly excited and proud to be involved with the event, which is expected to draw about 20 000 people over the three days.

"We are excited to be associated with the Cape Argus Sport Show," Hartley said.

"The paper is about the people, and we call on our readers and subscribers to come out for this year's show which promises to be a cracker of an event.

"We want to thank all those participating and giving Capetonians a good return on their money."

Tickets for the event are available at www.sportshow.co.za as well as at Computicket. Gates are open at 9am. Entrance cost R150 (adults), R80 (children) and R200 for a weekend pass. Toddlers under-3 enter free.

Guess who's back on air?

CONTROVERSIAL radio personality Phat Joe returned to his *Afternoon Drive* slot on East Coast Radio (ECR) this week. He was taken off air last week after saying he was feeling "Down syndromish".

It was reported that Phat Joe, real name Majota Kambule, had forgotten his words during his show when he made the comment.

Janus Horn, whose 2-year-old son, Nicholas, was born with Down syndrome, expressed outrage. Horn, along with other parents and Down Syndrome KZN then wrote to ECR and the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of SA.

Zane Derbyshire, ECR programming manager, said management decided to take Kambule off the air. Kambule's co-hosts, Zaba Simbine and Rory Petzer, were also off air until Monday. Derbyshire said neither Simbine nor Petzer had done anything to upset listeners. "The station has agreed with Joe and the team that they will be more cautious and considered in their approach to content and comments," said Derbyshire. – Staff Reporter



CLEARED: Phat Joe

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Survivor tells of family's night of hell

Nosipho Mngoma

A RELATIVE, who survived a shooting spree by three men in uMlazi at the weekend that left four members of his family dead, was told to look away while one of the men raped a young woman who was in the house at the time.

Nathi Mzila, 43, said he would not wish the horrific ordeal on his worst enemies, including his attackers.

His mother, S'bongile, 59; two brothers Mlungisi, 35, and Lungisani, 27; and 34-year-old sister Hlengiwe were killed when the gang stormed their home in G-section uMlazi early on Saturday, after attacking patrons at a nearby tavern.

"The gang entered the tavern just after 1am and robbed patrons of cellphones and money. They then shot eight victims. The injured, aged between 20 and 50, were rushed to hospital," said provincial police spokesperson Colonel Thembeke Mbhele.

Minutes later, the gang broke into Mzila's home.

"The suspects fatally shot three family members and injured one. The injured victim was taken to hospital and later died. During a shoot-out with police, a suspect was killed and a 9mm pistol was found next to him," she said.

Yesterday, police officers from the Provincial Task Team arrested a 25-year-old suspect in N-section uMlazi.

uMlazi residents torched three houses



'SENSELESS': The Mzila family lost four members at the weekend after a gang went on a shooting spree in uMlazi. Mourning from left are Nokulunga, Mhlonishwa, Nokwazi and Khulekani Mzila.

PICTURES: GCINA NDWALANE

believed to belong to the suspects. The mob was dispersed by police.

Transport, Community Safety and Liaison MEC Mxolisi Kaunda called on residents to remain calm.

"We understand their frustration and that is why the government is increasing the deployment of the police," he said.

He said the department intended holding a community meeting to discuss how to "claim back the streets from criminals".

Speaking at his home yesterday, Mzila could not understand the motive for the "senseless act" and blamed the drug problem in his community.

"When you rob somebody of their belongings, what more do you want from them? What do you have to kill them for?" Mzila asked.

He said the gang aimed for their victims' heads when shooting, "which means the intention was to kill".

Mzila's relative, Thulani Mchunu, said the Mzila family were God-fearing people. "This is very hard to accept. The children haven't eaten since this happened."

Mchunu said the family wanted to hold the funeral in Empangeni but needed help with the planning and payment.

eThekweni mayor Zandile Gumede and Social Development MEC Weziwe Thusi visited them yesterday and echoed Kaunda's call for the community not to take the law into their own hands. He urged them to work with police to identify drug hot spots.

Thusi said Health MEC Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo was asked to speed up the post-mortems so the victims could be buried.