

CONTROLLED TRADING UNDER DISCUSSION

Department takes on horn debate

Tony Carnie

DURBAN: South Africa has taken the first step on a long and controversial road to lifting the world ban on rhino horn trading which has been in place for over 30 years.

Earlier this month the Department of Environmental Affairs placed two advertisements on its tenders website to initiate a series of studies which could pave the way for a resumption in controlled rhino horn trading.

The studies will include a detailed assessment of whether there are "options and opportunities available to South Africa to access a legal

The preliminary studies are to guide future decision-making

market". A separate study will look into the feasibility of de-horning thousands of rhinos as a way of saving them from poachers.

Department spokesman Albi Modise told the Cape Times yesterday that no decisions had been taken on the question of trading horns

internationally and the preliminary studies were to guide future decision-making on "various options" to safeguard the rhino population.

International trade in rhino horns was banned in 1977 by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (Cites) after a wave of poaching threatened to destroy rhino populations in Africa and the Far East.

South Africa, which still allows trophy hunting under a permit system, also imposed a moratorium on the domestic sale of rhino products and horns in 2009 following a dramatic upsurge in rhino poaching in this country over the

past four years. Fed by international criminal syndicates chasing sky-high profits, the black market demand for horn has reached the point where more rhinos were killed in South Africa last year than the combined total over the previous decade.

Earlier this week, Environment Minister Edna Molewa also said she was considering imposing a nationwide moratorium on rhino hunting because of the abuse of rhino trophy permits.

And as the death toll continues to climb there have been several calls to re-open the debate on whether the international Cites trade ban remains

an effective tool to combat crime syndicates.

More than a decade ago, former Natal Parks Board chief executive Dr George Hughes said the ban was "understandable and commendable... but was it the right decision?"

Earlier this year, world-renowned rhino conservationist Dr Ian Player also suggested that the time had come for an urgent national debate on the pros and cons of South Africa auctioning horns openly as a way of driving down the price of the black market trade.

The Endangered Wildlife Trust also held a workshop recently to explore the merits and dangers of legal trading.

Conservation economist Michael Sas Rolles of Cape Town and private investment manager Michael Eustace of Johannesburg both argued in favour of re-opening a controlled international trade in rhino horns from South Africa.

However, Colman O'Cruidain of the conservation group WWF International said legislation would require approval by a two-thirds majority of the 175 member countries of Cites.

The next Cites meeting was scheduled for early 2013 and it was unlikely that the South African government could lobby effectively for support or submit a formal proposal until the next meeting in 2016.

Swim in Arctic sea is all part of epic voyage

Staff Writer

A LOCAL teenager has swum in freezing sea water and played soccer with Inuit children during a three-week expedition in the Canadian Arctic.

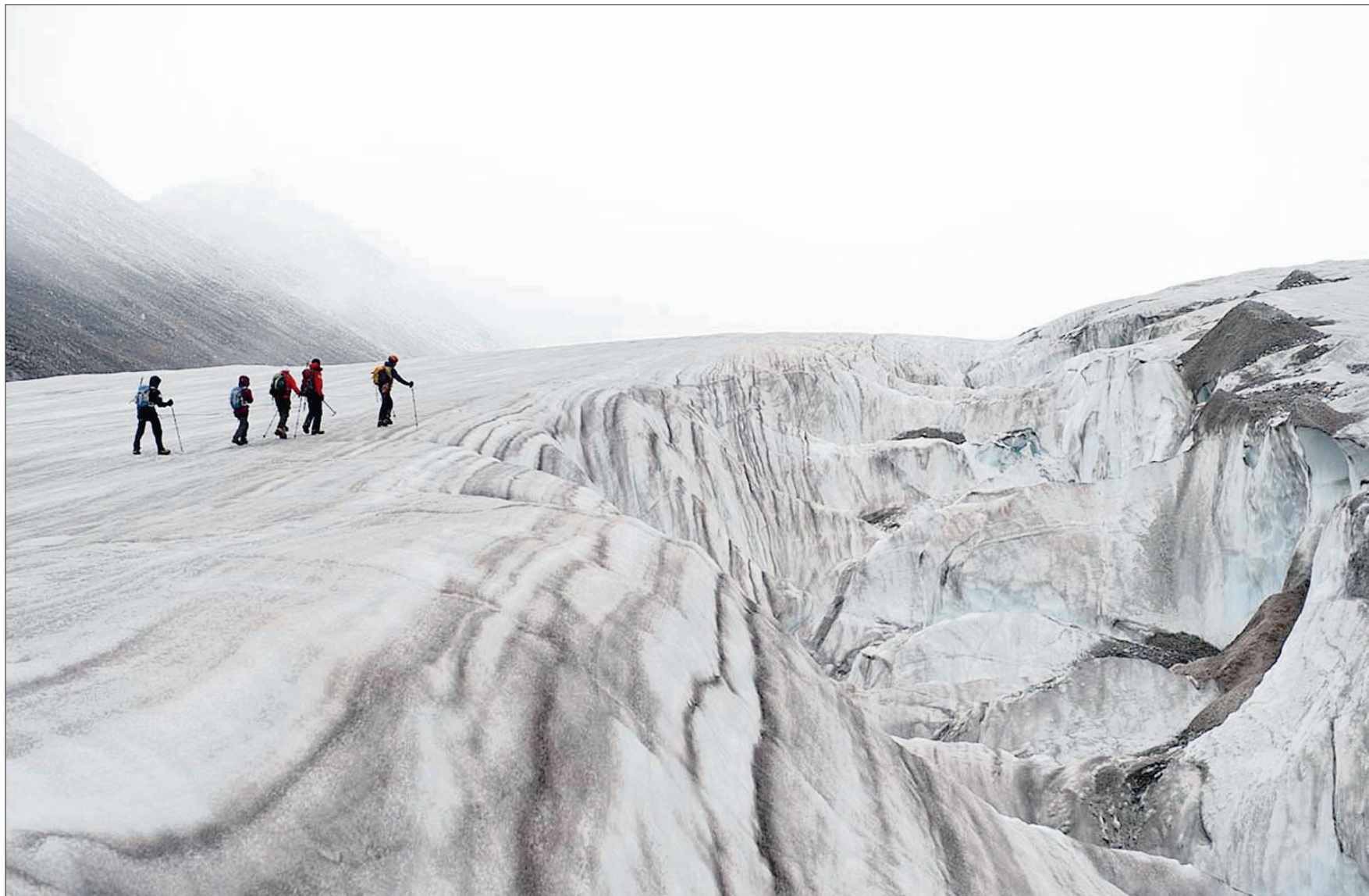
Henko Roukema, 19, of Durbanville, a maritime navigation student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, is one of eight young people from around the world participating in South African explorer Mike Horn's Pan Global Adventure for Environmental Action (Pangaea) Young Explorer Programme.

The group, sailing on the yacht Pangaea, is visiting Nunavut, in the Canadian Arctic.

Roukema described in a blog how he had to be on lookout duty at 2am to watch out for icebergs in the yacht's path.

"Waking up at that early hour of the morning was certainly not an easy task when you know you have to leave your cozy bed and go stand outside in the rain. What made matters worse was the dense fog we were sailing through, but luckily we did not have any encounters... with these massive icebergs drifting all the way from the Greenland ice shelf," he wrote.

Roukema said the group had sailed to Qikiqtarjuaq, an island community. "It looked like the whole town sprung to life as we arrived, with every-



ADVENTURERS: South African explorer Mike Horn's Pan Global Adventure for Environmental Action (Pangaea) Young Explorer Programme undertakes its latest expedition to the Canadian Arctic. Among the group is Henko Roukema, 19, of Durbanville. Picture: DMITRY SHAROMOV

one eager to see the Pangaea!" They had intended handing first aid kits out to the community and explaining what the Pangaea expedition was all about.

"But after walking through the town it proved that we

would be unable to do this. But we made friends with some young Inuit girls to whom we gave soccer balls and had some fun playing soccer with them! The day flew past but the highlight was still to come when Mike told us we could go SUP

(Stand-up paddle boarding) after feeling the water under my feet even though wearing booties you could feel the one degree water!" he wrote.

Roukema had challenged his teammates to swim in the icy water.

"(A teammate) and I ended up swimming around the boat! Then we suddenly felt the effect of the cold water on our hands and feet starting to cramp! It was fun and the locals certainly thought we must be crazy! When everyone

got out of the water everyone was scrambling for their warm clothes!" he wrote.

Last week Roukema dodged a rockfall while climbing a rock wall and ended up in the icy sea when he fell while descending.

briefs

Court weighs up Qwelane's case

Judgment in the rescission application by the South African ambassador to Uganda, Jon Qwelane, is to be given by the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court today.

Qwelane has applied for the rescission of a default judgment against him so he may start afresh with the matter.

In April, he was found guilty of hate speech, but he was not present at the default judgment because of his job in Uganda.

While practising as a journalist in 2008, Qwelane wrote a column in the Sunday Sun that appeared with the headline "Call me names, but gay is NOT okay". The SAHRC deemed the piece hate speech. Qwelane was ordered to apologise through the Sunday Sun and to pay R100 000 to the SAHRC.

The SAHRC's lawyer, Tembeka Ngcukaitobi, told the court that the reasons Qwelane had given for being absent from the previous directions hearing were poor and unacceptable. Qwelane's lawyer, George Kairinos, said an enquiry needed to be convened before a default judgment could be handed down.

Bid to end 'wife' abductions

KwaZulu-Natal police chief Mamunye Ngobeni has launched a drive to end the abduction of girls by men who seek to make them their "wives".

A Bergville high school teacher had reported that about 20 of his pupils had been abducted in terms of the *ukuthwala* tradition, a police spokeswoman said. *Ukuthwala* involves a man setting out to compel a girl or her family to agree to marriage negotiations.

Pik stable, treated for heart failure



Apartheid-era foreign affairs minister Pik Botha is in a stable condition and is currently under supervision at Netcare Akasia Hospital in Pretoria North.

"... he was admitted for heart failure and is still being treated," general manager Priscilla Botha said. His wife Ina said his heart had failed because of his lungs. "Decades of smoking didn't do him any good," she said.

Botha also served as minister of mineral and energy affairs under former president Nelson Mandela. In 2000 he said he would join the ANC.

'SMOKING': Former foreign affairs minister Pik Botha also served under Nelson Mandela.

R12m perlemoen in three vehicles

Illegally harvested perlemoen worth R12 million was found by police in three vehicles stopped on the N1 in Ventersburg yesterday. Free State police spokesman Sergeant Tlalanyane Pakela said a white Nissan X-Trail and a white Nissan Hardbody bakkie from the Western Cape were stopped and searched. Both were loaded with bags of oranges.

"The drivers explained that they were from Cape Town and on their way to Johannesburg to deliver the oranges," said Pakela.

The plastic bags containing the shellfish were found hidden under the bags of oranges. Another vehicle, stopped near Kroonstad, was carrying a similar load. The three drivers are expected to appear in the Ventersburg Magistrate's Court soon.

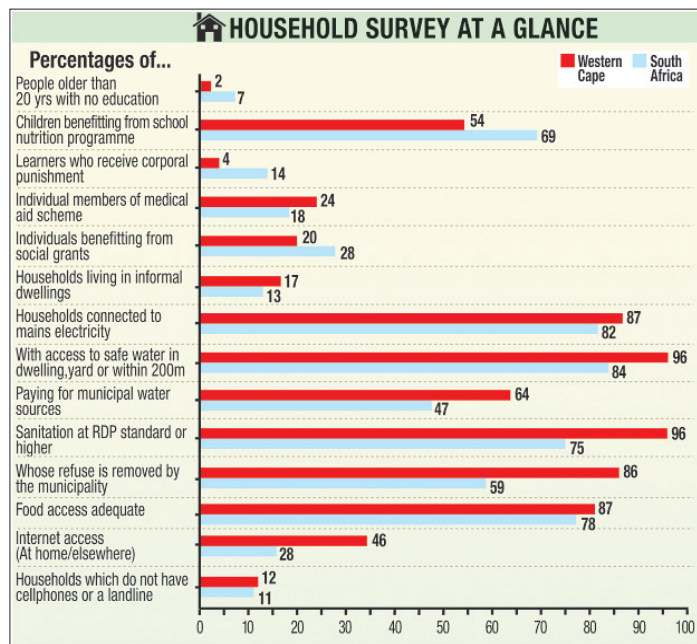
Helicopter pilot lands in court

A helicopter pilot appeared in the Pretoria Magistrate's Court for crashing a helicopter while his licence was suspended, police said.

On December 2 Rainier Prinsloo, whose licence had been suspended by the SA Civil Aviation Authority, allegedly crashed a helicopter at Baltimore in Limpopo, Colonel McIntosh Polela said.

He and two passengers, including a trainee pilot, survived the crash, after Prinsloo had made a steep turn, and the helicopter went into a spin. He was arrested on Monday, while asking the Civil Aviation Authority to lift his suspension.

He faces charges of attempted murder and reckless operation of a helicopter. He will appear in court again on September 16.



Cape best for safe water, sanitation It's about availability, says stats boss

Barbara Maregele

THE Western Cape has the highest number of people who have access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and the fewest without schooling.

However, the quality of service delivery still appears to be a challenge.

A General Household Survey by Stats SA reported 99 percent of Western Cape households had access to safe water in 2010. This did not take into account those who needed to travel more than 200m to reach a tap, pipe or borehole.

In 2010, four in 10 South

African households still used stagnant or dam water as a main source of drinking water. Deputy director-general for Population and Social Statistics at Stats SA, Kefiloe Mafiteng, said service delivery was one of the government's "moving targets".

"People build informal homes on land with no taps or electricity. This makes it difficult for pipes to be installed on each property."

The 59 percent of South African households which used flush toilets in 2010 was an improvement on 56 percent in 2002. At 17 percent, the Eastern Cape had the highest number

of households using bucket toilets in South Africa, compared to the Western Cape which had the lowest at 3 percent.

Activist, Mzonke Poni, said: "Stats mainly rely on reports. When you walk into a disadvantaged community, it stinks because the government only cleans main roads."

The province rated third highest at 87 percent for households with an electricity connection. Eighty-five percent of Western Cape households used electricity to cook, 6 percent used gas and 3 percent paraffin.

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WHAT do residents of gated communities and luxury estates have in common with informal settlement dwellers? Similar numbers of people share a house and they are equally difficult to find at home, according to Statistician-General Pali Lehohla, who is in charge of Census 2011.

"It's not a matter of class, but where they are available and where we can find them," he told MPs yesterday, adding that about half of informal settlement households had only one resident.

But while township residents had come forward to

apply to be enumerators in their areas, the response from "high-walled communities" had been lacklustre, despite approaches to churches and schools there.

Lehohla welcomed a suggestion from MPs that ratepayers' associations also be approached, and said meetings had been set up with ward councillors. Six thousand coordinators had been trained and were already on the ground in each of the 103 000 counting areas to verify information on homes and blocks of flats.

About 30 000 field co-ordina-

tors - at a ratio of one to every four enumerators - were being trained. Within the next three weeks, 120 000 enumerators, preferably counting households in their own areas, would be told that their training would start on September 22.

Each of the enumerators would have his or her picture and cellphone number displayed on posters which would go up in the area they were counting in.

Census night is October 9 when, in a logistical marathon, the enumerators are to count all the estimated 15 million households. - Political Bureau

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Court hears how acting head was gunned down at school

Sandiso Phaliso
West Cape News

A WEEPING State witness told the Western Cape High Court how two people drove up in a white car as she talked to Gugulethu acting principal Nomziwoxolo Ndziba and shortly afterwards she heard two shots.

A second State witness told of squabbles between the school's financial officer, accused Vuyisile Ndzumeka, and Ndziba over missing funds.

Vuyisile, his wife Yoliswa Ndzumeka and alleged hit man Luvo Nketho are standing trial for the murder of Ndziba on August 24, 2009, and 23-year-old Bongani Dingana on June 17 that year.

The State alleges the couple plot-

ted the murder of Dingana to benefit from a fraudulent life insurance policy, and killed Ndziba as she was probing financial irregularities at Sthembile Matiso High School.

In tears, Mandisa Nonjela, an English teacher, told the court how two people arrived at the school in a white car and minutes later she heard two shots. But she could not identify the pair as she had only glimpsed them from the back.

A short while earlier Ndziba, had asked her to show her some marks before they were given to an education department moderator.

She fetched the file and gave it to Ndziba in the car park. Then she saw the two people drive up.

"I went back inside the staff room and while inside the staff room we heard gunshots," she said.