

## Association launches for Outer West success

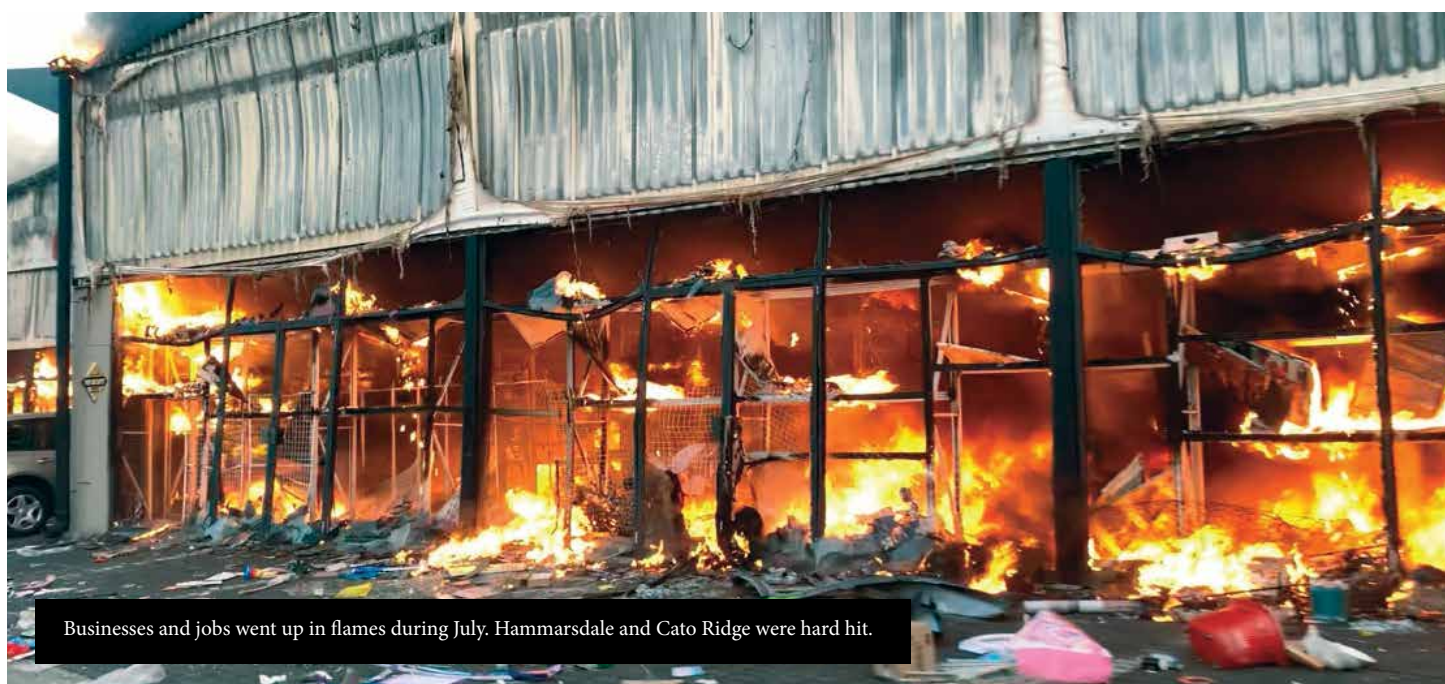
HAMMARSDALE and Cato Ridge companies have come together to form the Hammarsdale Cato Ridge Development Association (HCRDA). The Association is a Not for Profit Company (NPC) and its vision is to make the area a better place to work and live, thereby supporting growth, employment and transformation. Currently the HCRDA is focusing its activity on human resources, work, infrastructure, safety and the environment.

The HCRDA's mandate is based on many companies having a shared vision for the area. By working together with staff, the community, government partners and other important stakeholders, we can find more effective ways of achieving common goals.

With very high unemployment we need to create a stable climate to retain and grow existing businesses, attract more companies to the area and thereby create more jobs.

### ABOUT SEBENZA

HCRDA member companies believe it is important to keep the community up-to-date with developments in the area given how interconnected our futures are. Hammarsdale Cato Ridge Sebenza will be printed every three months and widely distributed. It will also be available online at [www.hcrda.org/sebenza](http://www.hcrda.org/sebenza). Find more stories on our Facebook page and send any stories or contributions to [info@hcrda.org](mailto:info@hcrda.org).



Businesses and jobs went up in flames during July. Hammarsdale and Cato Ridge were hard hit.

# NEVER AGAIN

THE LOOTING of firms in the region started on Sunday 11 July and has caused significant hardship.

- Many lives were lost, especially in warehouses when goods fell on looters.
- Companies had to close for repairs and some cannot pay wages during this time.
- Money otherwise allocated to investment and job creation has for many companies had to be spent on rebuild-

ing and improving security. Other companies have delayed investments and potential jobs.

- The destruction of wholesalers and retailers has meant residents are spending more time and money travelling to buy products from further away.

At the Hammarsdale Junction Mall about 2 000 workers have been at home for over a month. The loss in wages is about R10 million, most of which would be going

back into the local economy.

Up until the looting the area was enjoying unprecedented development, expanding opportunities for job creation and sparking much interest in future projects. Potential investors and new companies need to be assured July's violence will not happen again.

Take the pledge on the HCRDA Facebook page to commit to making the area a better place to work and live.

## Safal Steel family pulls together

SAFAL STEEL has been operating in Cato Ridge for 12 years and provides employment to over 250 people.

Compared to the other Safal Group countries, South Africa was particularly hard hit by Covid-19 and the government's quick imposition of a hard lockdown to contain its spread.

"The many months from total lockdown to phased unlock put the Safal Steel family to the test and I was amazed by the enormous sacrifices made by all employees. I salute you Safal Steel and I extend my gratitude to the entire team," said Willem van Heerden, Business Head.

With fastidious pre-planning and strict health and safety preparations in place, Safal Steel was one of the first companies permitted to start operations during Level 4, and its stringent health and safety protocols were widely adopted and adapted by Group businesses.

Covid-19 also had a dramatic impact on the local economy. Job losses and food insecurity soared in vulnerable communities. With almost no resources to spare, Safal Steel focused on helping its own workers, and the local community.

It also provided immune booster packs for all staff, conducted free Covid-19 testing as required, and assisted needy families with food parcels. At this time, every little bit counted, and Safal Steel held together to see it through as any family would do.

## Mr Price upskills youth

THE MR PRICE Foundation is an NPO supported by Mr Price and other companies to empower youth to reach their full potential through education and skills development. The foundation has been involved in Hammarsdale since 2017.

- Preschoolers at 31 creches receive quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) through a partnership with The Unlimited Child.
- **EduRise** supports principals, management, educators, and learners at 20 primary schools.
- **JumpStart** trains youth for retail opportunities. Upskilled youth are linked to potential retail employment opportunities in the Mr Price Distribution Centre (DC) and surrounding areas.

- The Foundation partnered with a manufacturer in Hammarsdale to develop unemployed youth to become multi-skilled machinists.

- The **HandPicked** programme teaches agriculture and entrepreneurship skills to unemployed youth. It operates on unused plots, including at the Mr Price DC. Rainwater is harvested from the building and the produce sold to the DC's canteen. The DC is also used for training educators and management on the other projects.

The Mr Price Foundation also provided food parcels to the staff of many smaller companies and informal traders who were affected by the looting. [www.mrpfoundation.org](http://www.mrpfoundation.org)



Amagalelo Agri-business members in Georgedale at their HandPicked site.

## Job-seeker support

ETHEKWINI municipality and the HCRDA is supporting the rollout of the SMRT.BIO system. SMRT.BIO is a website that connects job seekers to employers for free. Registration at [www.smrt.bio/durban](http://www.smrt.bio/durban) takes less than 10 minutes and more than 2 000 outer west residents have signed up.

Takalani Ratiyaya, Deputy Head of Economic Development said: "It is expensive to develop cvs, print and deliver them. SMRT.BIO takes away the cost and is simple to use. We are supporting anyone, especially unemployed youth, women, the disabled and military veterans to make a cv on SMRT.BIO. Companies will be encouraged to use the system to recruit."

## SMME directory

THE HCRDA is compiling a directory of black-owned SMMEs in the outer west. This is to help businesses identify which SMMEs exist and what they offer. The HCRDA can then match larger businesses with SMMEs.

Local business owner, Anthony Mkhabela of Erbenzer Business Enterprise, said: "I am looking forward to participating. I have been concerned as to why we don't yet have any structures to empower SMMEs. You can be assured of my full support."

Scott Bader, a global chemicals company based in Hammarsdale and an HCRDA member is supporting the development of the directory. SMMEs can register at [www.hcrda.org/smme-directory](http://www.hcrda.org/smme-directory).





Illegal dumping on Harrison Flats was dangerous for both people walking through the area and grazing cattle.

## Merlog supports conservation and community safety

FRUSTRATED BY watching people having to walk through an overgrown, increasingly dangerous field on Harrison Flats, local firm Merlog partnered with eThekweni municipality to rehabilitate and conserve the plot.

“We noticed the Riet Vallei farm was increasingly being used as a dumping ground and was overgrown with alien invasive vegetation. Cattle that graze here were also in

danger from the dumping and it was more difficult to find grass due to the illegal sand mining. We have successfully engaged with eThekweni Municipality Biodiversity Planning Unit, Cleansing and Solid Waste (CSW), the Metro Police and the councillors, to rehabilitate the area,” said Malcolm Fuller, Operations Manager at Merlog.

Illegal dumping should be reported on 031 311 8804.

## The #DoMore4Hammarisdale community development initiative

IN COLLABORATION with various private, public and non-profit stakeholders the DO MORE FOUNDATION spearheaded the collaborative Greater Hammarisdale Community Development Initiative - #DoMore4Hammarisdale.

This initiative seeks to empower the community and restore hope through a number of enterprise development and early childhood development projects in five wards.

The Ikwezi Bakery, from the Township Economy Programme has been well supported in setting up new premises.

Thanks to AECI and Anchor Yeast, the bakery has been fully fitted with high-quality industrial baking equipment.

Now the entrepreneurs are giving back by supplying 30 ECD centres with freshly baked bread on a weekly basis.

Ackermans has been a key partner in supporting ECD in Hammarisdale by providing over 30 000 meals to children at 30 ECD Centres every month.

The DO MORE FOUNDATION and partners have helped re-open 65 Hammarisdale ECD Centres during the pandemic by contributing PPE starter kits.



From left: Graham Hood (Mr Price DC General Manager and HCRDA Safety Chairperson), Captain Ngubane, Hammarisdale, Captain Ngema (SAPS Inchanga), Richard Shezi (Mr Price DC Head of People)

## Partnering for area safety

THE HCRDA has facilitated a number of meetings with the South African Police Services (SAPS), Durban Metro Police and private security companies. Everyone agreed that more communication and improved infrastructure is needed to deter and apprehend criminals. An area wide camera network is being installed.

Chairperson of the safety work stream, Graham Hood, also General Manager of Mr Price Group Distribution said: “While we have worked well together in the past there has never been an overarching plan to collaborate with law enforcement agencies. Working together is the only way to protect businesses, employees and the broader community and

make this a safer place. This will attract more businesses, create more employment, improve the lives of residents and drive down crime.”

All residents are encouraged to report crimes. Through reporting crime local SAPS stations will be given more resources.

### SAPS Camperdown

031 785 9009 or 031 785 9019

### SAPS Mpumalanga

031 771 8000 or 031 771 8038

SAPS Umsunduzi 031 782 8952

SAPS Hammarisdale 031 736 1191

082 911 can be used for free to reach any SAPS station in the country.



DO MORE FOUNDATION bakers supply fresh bread to 30 ECD centres in Hammarisdale daily.

## Kerry Ingredients donates 15 computers

WHEN KERRY INGREDIENTS heard that both the local libraries had been robbed of many of their computers, it stepped in and donated 15 computers.

Security at both the Hammarisdale and Inchanga library has been improved, the computers are better secured and marked to reduce the risk of more thefts.

Given COVID-19, access to the internet and emails has become even more vital as for people look for information and work opportunities.

Kerry Ingredients, currently located in Pinetown and Hillcrest, will be starting operations in a brand-new facility in Keystone Park in November 2021.

## Swan Plastics empowers the community

SWAN PLASTICS increased its business operations and opened a second manufacturing facility in early 2019 in Cato Ridge.

It manufactures plastic fittings and pipes to support the building industry.

Since opening it has grown to over 140 full-time employees. Swan Plastics also outsources the assembly of some products to a group of women in Bhobhonono. It delivers the product components and packaging materials to the women on a weekly basis.

Once assembled, the products are collected, paid for and replaced with the next batch of products for assembly and packaging.

Thulisile Luthuli, one of the women who works in the project, says: “We are very grateful for this opportunity. Many of us had not had work for a long time so this opportunity is a blessing.”

Swan Plastics is hopeful that with the growth of its business initiatives such as this will grow as well.



**IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY:** While all the new development in the area is positive for job creation, it has meant that some municipal services have been unable to keep up, affecting both companies and residents. eThekweni municipality recognises this, and is working with the HCRDA to improve the roads, lights, water and other services.

