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MDM MARCH 2023

MAGAZINE



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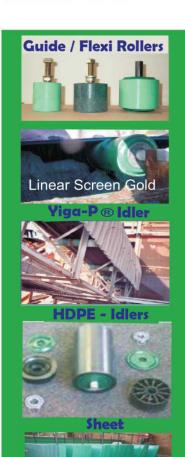
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#### Miners trapped underground after pylons weakened by cable theft collapse, cutting power supply



Workers trapped at Sibanye mine

Sibanye Stillwater miners were trapped underground in Randfontein due to a power supply interruption caused by powerlines that collapsed after being weakened by the vandalism of cable thieves.

According to Eskom, the pylon structures were weakened by the theft of "tower members" and unstable ground caused by digging around their foundations.

Eskom spokesperson Amanda Qithi said the incident happened on Monday, and that they had dispatched a team of technicians to restore supply to the mine.

Qithi said a number of "132kV lines fell during the storm", compromising their "integrity".

"The pylon structures were weakened by the theft of the tower members and the unstable ground caused by digging around the foundation," she said.

Qithi added that the theft of tower members resulted in the instability and collapse of the pylons that carry high-voltage power lines, which posed a severe safety risk to members of the public.





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Pylons connectivity

It had an additional devastating impact on the economy and on Eskom's ability to sustain the provision of electricity, she said.

Qithi said Eskom was spending a fortune on the replacement of stolen pylon parts and other network equipment.

She added that power had been restored to most of the shafts and that Eskom technicians were still working around the clock to restore power to a shaft in Kagiso.

Mashangu Xivambu, Eskom's maintenance and operations senior manager in Gauteng, said

vandalism and theft had extended to include pylons whose tower members were often stolen by "unscrupulous criminal elements", resulting in the steel structures collapsing.

"It is disturbing that this incident happens a week after we raised a concern about incidents of theft and vandalism of pylons," he added.

Xivambu also appealed to the members of the public to "partner" with Eskom by reporting illegal connections, theft, and vandalism of electricity infrastructure to the utility's crime.

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#### Contributions

The editors welcome news items, press releases, articles and photographs relating to the Mining Industry. These will be considered and, if accepted, published. No responsibility will be accepted should contributions be lost, damaged or incorrectly printed.

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# WearCheck training courses boost investment into condition monitoring

"For the best return on your money, pour your purse into your head." These wise words were voiced by the founding father of the US — Benjamin Franklin — in the 18th century, little knowing they would still be highly relevant more than three hundred years later.

Condition monitoring specialist company, WearCheck, has witnessed, over several decades, many clients gaining enhanced return on their investment into the company's condition monitoring programmes, when the maintenance staff 'at the coalface' undergo proper training. Steven Lumley, technical manager at WearCheck, oversees the ongoing development of the training schedule, which has been refined over the last 20+ years.

'As the technology used in the wide range of our testing services is continuously being upgraded and enhanced to accommodate innovation, it is necessary for all players to learn about the upgraded capabilities of the asset management techniques on a regular basis,' she said.

'It is for this reason that we highly recommend that maintenance personnel attend courses which are relevant to their area of operation, to ensure that their knowledge and understanding of the different condition monitoring technology is as advanced as the technology itself.

'Our courses are aimed at staff operating at various levels within a company, from basic oil sampling techniques all the way up to CAT IV, and everything in between. Delegates can earn valuable CPD (continuing professional development) points when they complete many of WearCheck's courses.'

These are some of the customer training courses run by WearCheck, and the duration:

Davs

#### Course

•	Precision	Shaft	Alignment
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- Precision Balancing
- Vibration Analysis ISO CAT I
- Vibration Analysis ISO CAT II
- Vibration Analysis ISO CAT III
- Asset Reliability Practitioner advocate (ARP-A)
- Asset Reliability Practitioner engineer (ARP-E)
- Asset Reliability Practitioner leader (ARP-L)
- Oil Analysis 1
- Oil Analysis 2
- WearCheck Customised
- · Asset Reliability Practitioner (3 courses)

	Days							
	2, incl.							
	practical							
	2							
	5, incl. exam							
	5, incl. exam							
	5, incl. exam							
)	3, incl. exam							
	5, incl. exam							
	5, incl. exam							
	2							
	1							
	2							
	6 months							

THRUSH INDUSTRIAL - DFC M/12/09/4

	Oil Analysis 1:	CPD	Oil Analysis 2:	CPD	
	Understanding oil and its analysis	points	Report interpretation	points	
Course length:	Two-day workshop		One-day workshop		
Richards Bay	March 7,8	2	March 9	1	
Springbok	March 14, 15	2	March 16	1	
Middelburg	April 18,19	2	April 20	1	
Kimberley	May 9,10	2	May 11	1	
Steelpoort	May 16,17	2	May 18	1	
Kathu	June 6,7	2	June 8	1	
Cape Town	Jun2 20,21	2	June 22	1	
Bloemfontein	July 18,19	2	July 20	1	
Durban	August 15, 16	2	August 17	1	
Rustenburg	August 22, 23	2	August 24	1	
Johannesburg	September 12, 13	2	September 14	1	
Kathu	October 17, 18	2	October 19	1	
Nelspruit	November 14,15	2	November 16	1	



WearCheck training consultant, Jan Backer (third from right, front row), conducted two-day training courses in Johannesburg recently.

Course	Wind Turbine Oil Analysis (two-day workshop):	CPD	
		points	
Cape Town	November 8,9	2	

WearCheck offers other on-site courses on request:

\* WearCheck Customised – oil analysis for workshop technicians (full day)
For more details on course content and prices, please view Training at www.wearcheck.co.za.

To book one of these courses, please contact Michelle van Dyk on training@wearcheck.co.za or call 082 381-3321.

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specialists and precision maintenance
technicians.

2023 WearCheck Mobius courses (classroom / online):

Course	CPD points	Mar	Apr	Мау	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Vibration	4			15-19				11-15			
Analysis –											
CAT 1											
Vibration	5				05-				09-		
Analysis –					09				13		
CAT 2											
Vibration	5	13 -				10-14				13-17	
Analysis –		17									
CAT 3											
CAT IV											
Precision	-		17 -				14-				04-05
Balancing			18				15				
(2 days)											
Precision	-		19-21				16-				06-08
alignment							18				
(3 days)											

Pricing for Mobius courses is as follows (excl. VAT):

Classroom Training

CAT1 - R15,706.17

CAT2 - R18,481.74

CAT3 - R22,592.65

Precision Alignment – R10,034.44

Precision Balancing - R10,034.44

Online Training (Four Months)

CAT1 – R20,890.61

CAT2 - R24,258.81

CAT3 - R27,490.72

To book a Mobius course with WearCheck, contact Louis Peacock to book a spot: louis@wearcheckrs.com or +27 82 494 9461. More details are available at https://www.wearcheck.co.za/training/mobiustraining.html

All Mobius courses are presented at various venues throughout Africa. All courses can be presented online or on-site at a customer's premises for a minimum of seven delegates. For on-site training, there may be an additional charge for the lecturer's travel and accommodation.



Shesby Chabaya (centre, blue shirt) of WearCheck Zimbabwe conducted oil analysis training for a team from Masimba, Zimbabwe



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#### Zimbabwe's ban on lithium ore exports triggers stockpile buildup



Zimbabwe's ban on lithium ore exports has resulted in stockpiles of the key battery metal building up in the southern African country.



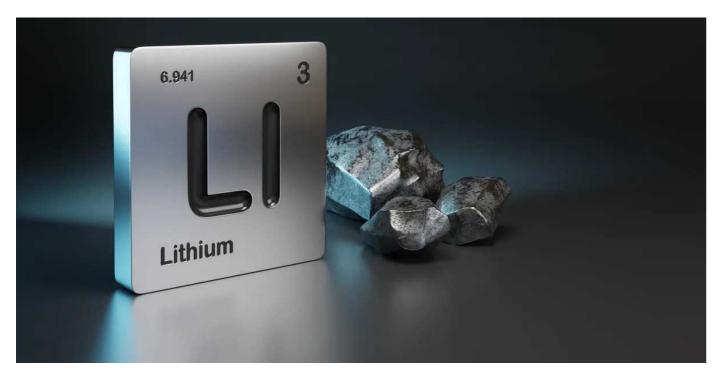
Zimbabwe Miners Federation President Henrietta Rushwaya

The ban – introduced by the government last December in a bid to encourage local

processing of the metal – has resulted in two-million tons of ore being stockpiled, according to Zimbabwe Miners Federation President Henrietta Rushwaya. Now the industry has asked President Emmerson Mnangagwa to review the ban as it threatens the viability of their operations.

"The unexpected ban has prejudiced standing offtake agreements between miners and international buyers, some of whom had taken loans from their respective countries to trade in these minerals," Rushwaya said in the letter to Mnangagwa.

The ban has impacted small- and medium-scale miners, but it's not clear how much lithium is contained in the stockpiled ore.



Most of the lithium from Zimbabwe – which has one of Africa's largest resources of the metal – is usually shipped to China or South Africa, Rushwaya said by phone. Nations from the US to China are rushing to secure supplies of materials necessary for green-energy transition as the world turns away from fossil fuels.

Resource Group are exploring a joint venture to set up a battery metals processing plant in Zimbabwe, while Zhejiang Huayou Cobalt has invested \$300-million to develop a processing plant at its Arcadia lithium mine.

Chengxin Lithium Group and Sinomine



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# Gold holds above \$1 900 as SVB collapse fuels hopes of Fed pause



Gold prices on Tuesday hovered near their highest levels in more than five weeks, and held above the key \$1 900 level, as expectations grew that the Federal Reserve could pause its rate hikes after the collapse of two big US regional banks.

Spot gold was down 0.1% at \$1 910.80/oz, as of 07:26 GMT, after rising more than 2% on Monday to hit its highest since February 3.

US gold futures also fell 0.1% to \$1 915.00.

"Safe-haven flows in the aftermath of the SVB's fallout, along with a pullback in hawkish rate expectations, have been supportive of gold prices' upside over the past few days," said Yeap Jun Rong, a market analyst at IG.

But some profit-taking might be triggered "as the risk environment attempts to stabilise," he added.

US officials have announced several measures to limit the fallout from the now-shuttered Silicon Valley Bank, the largest bank failure since the 2008 financial crisis, and restore investor confidence in the banking system. Regulators closed New York-based Signature Bank on Sunday.

Markets are now pricing in a 51.4% chance of the Fed holding rates in the current range of 4.5% to 4.75%.

Considered a hedge against economic

uncertainties, zero-yield gold also becomes a more attractive bet in a low interest rate environment.

"The short-term outlook for gold looks strong," analysts at ANZ said in a note, adding that the metal had jumped above its 50-day moving average, signalling a change in momentum.

"With investor allocation relatively low, we expect this to continue," they said.

The US consumer price index (CPI) report due at 12:30 GMT will be closely watched for cues on the Fed's rate-hike plan.

The dollar index was up 0.3%, making bullion more expensive for buyers holding other currencies.

Spot silver fell 0.1% to \$21.78/oz, platinum lost 0.5% at \$991.29 and palladium shed 0.7% at \$1 463.54.



Northam gets green light for RBPlats takeover, and slips despite flagging earnings surge

The company expects annual headline earnings per share to increase by as much as 72% per share on the back of a strong operational performance, higher rand metal prices and strong cost control.

But, it also said it may now proceed with an offer for Royal Bafokeng Platinum, after Impala Platinum withdrew a complaint against it

In light of a strong operational performance, which saw Northam produce 11.9% more in equivalent refined 4E metal (platinum, palladium, rhodium and gold) from its own operations, the group expects headline earning per share to increase by between 62.3% and 72.3% when it reports its annual results later

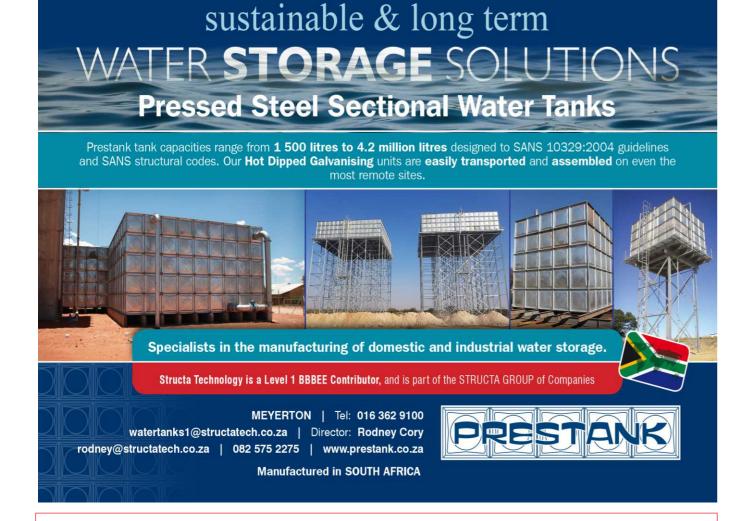
this month.

Sales revenue increased 45% to R20 billion, and operating profit jumped 55% to top R9 billion, Northam said.

The operating margin also increased to 45%, "demonstrating production cost discipline and efficiencies amid a high inflationary environment," the company said.

Notably, Northam's net debt to ebitda (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation) ratio of 0.62 times is "well within Northam's self-imposed target ratio of 1 to 1 in pursuance of the group's growth strategy", it said.

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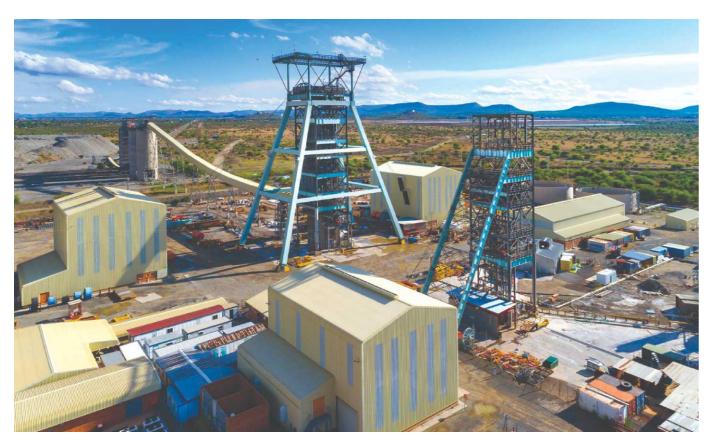












Northam said its strong balance sheet, liquidity position, and credit outlook had enabled it to pursue a possible business combination with Royal Bafokeng Platinum. Northam already held a near 35% stake in the business when, in November last year, it announced its firm intention to make an offer to all RBPlat shareholders to acquire the remaining ordinary shares in the company.

The offer consideration represents an amount of R172.70 per RBPlat share. Northam has committed R17 billion for the cash component of the deal. Northam said this had been fully funded through an appropriate bank guarantee and cash confirmation in favour of the Takeover

Regulation Panel (TRP).

Impala Platinum, a competing bidder for a majority stake in RBPLat, had submitted various complaints to the TRP last year regarding Northam's offer to shareholders, which had prevented the Northam Offer Circular from being posted.

"Northam hereby advises shareholders that Implats has summarily withdrawn [its complaints]," Northam said on Thursday. In light of this, "the TRP has advised Northam that it considers the announcement to be legally valid and that Northam may proceed with the offer."

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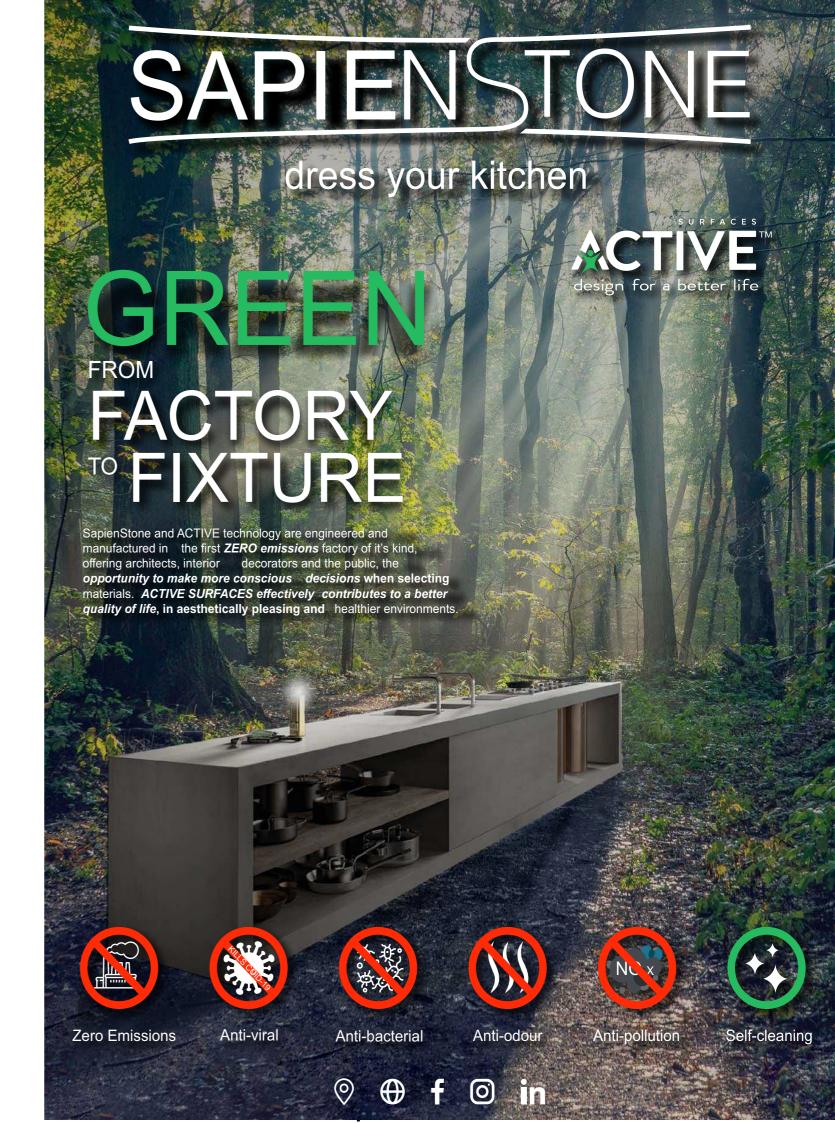
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# hit Sibanye US production

An incident at Sibanye-Stillwater's US Platinum Group Metal operations is expected to shave up to 30 000 ounces off annual production, the group announced recently.

In a recent update to the market, Sibanye said an incident occurred at its Stillwater West mine in Montana during scheduled non-routine maintenance on the winder which services the vertical shaft accessing the deeper levels of the Stillwater West mine.

"This incident resulted in structural damage to the shaft headgear, winder house and winder rope," the company said, adding there were no

Shaft incident to

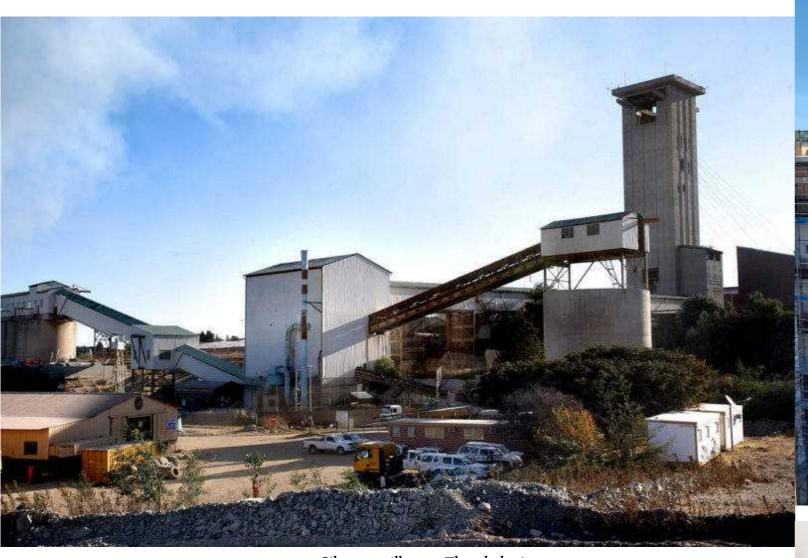
injuries to personnel and investigations into the causes of the incident are under way.

"The damage to the shaft infrastructure will require remediation, and access to the deeper levels of the mine will be impacted while remediation is under way," Sibanye said.

Access to the upper levels of the Stillwater West mine and the Stillwater East mine was unaffected and production from these areas, as well as from the East Boulder mine, will continue.

"Production from the Stillwater West mine





Sibanye-stillwater Thembelani

below 50 level will be suspended for approximately four weeks until the remediation is completed, resulting in approximately 25 000 2E [platinum and palladium] ounces to 30 000 2E ounces less production for the year."

Last year Sibanye produced 420 000 2E ounces from its US operations.

For the year ended in December, Sibanye reported a 44% decline in profit – from R33.8 billion in 2021 to R19 billion in 2022 – as a result of a three-month strike at its South African gold mines, a one-in-200-year flood at its Montana operations in the US, inflation and other macro-economic headwinds.

Sibanye said further guidance would be provided once shaft repair schedules are finalised, and production schedules have been fully optimised given the current shaft constraints.

The company share price was up 5.76% to R40 at the closing trade on Monday. Sibanye's market value has declined 15% in the year to date.









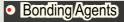
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