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2011 CAXTON'S BEST FREE NEWSPAPER (PAGINATION 24 AND LESS)

Week ending 25 May, 2012

CONCERNS mount over the roll-out of paid parking in Melville **SEE PAGE 3**

CYCLISTS celebrate the end of a long journey **SEE PAGE 24**



A happy ending

Burn victim Jose Mvula returns home to the DRC

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BURN victim Jose Mvula (12) returned home to the Democratic Republic of Congo after receiving treatment for two years at Children of Fire in Auckland Park. "I am excited to go home but will also miss all my friends here," said a tearful Mvula.

She said she missed her family very dearly and could not wait to be reunited with them.

"I am very grateful to everyone who has helped me here in South Africa and I will miss all of you," she said.

Mvula, who hopes to become a singer, said that she wanted to come back one day.

She has also learnt to speak fluent English, has studied at the Johannesburg School for Blind, Low Vision and Multiple Disability Children in Auckland Park and has toured various cities across the country.

Mvula was brought into the country for treatment by a junior paramedic who was in the DRC on a medical outreach project at the time. She was one of more than 200 severely burnt children screened by Children of Africa.

Tristan Jones the paramedic who helped her did not rest until he obtained all the necessary permission for her to receive treatment in the country.

Mvula survived with horrific burn wounds, which left her right arm immobile for five years and her right upper eyelid inside-out.

After almost two years of successful re-constructive surgeries, occupational therapy and physiotherapy, she is now able to return home.

A volunteer at the organisation Mitta Lebaka (22) who is also an adult burn survivor accompanied Mvula back home to educate her family and doctors about what treatment was still needed.

Lebaka cautioned parents to be more vigilant with their children, especially with winter just around the corner. "There is a significant lack of safety education and parents should not leave children unsupervised especially around burning candles or gas stoves," she said.

Children of Fire aims to reach out to children like Mvula and will continue to pioneer safety campaigns and ways to prevent injury.

Details: 011-726-6529



OVERJOYED: Jose Mvula at her farewell party last week.

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