

INSTITUUT VIR EIETYDSE GESKIEDENIS

Die Universiteit van die Oranje-Vrystaat



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Datum
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Onderwerp nr.
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The Star

Jg..... Nr..... P...3..... Dat..... 1988.10.25.

Half of Witbank injured discharged from hospital

Survivors tell of blast ordeal

By Clare Harper 390

WITBANK — Nearly half of the patients injured in yesterday's car-bomb blast had been discharged from Witbank Hospital by late yesterday.

Forty patients were admitted between 8 am and 8.30 am yesterday. One of them, Mr Elias Masina, died shortly after admission, bringing the death toll from the blast to two.

A Natal Building Society employee, Miss Karen Pitzer, who was being treated for a perforated eardrum after the explosion, told The Star yesterday that she was closing the auto-teller machine when the blast occurred.

"It was like Guy Fawkes night. I saw flames and sparks and things started falling down all around.

"There was a black man lying on the ground and I presumed he was dead. There was another man in the ambulance who was in a bad way, his ear was missing," she said.

Mrs Elsie "Tiny" Pinkham (63), who works for an estate agent, had stitches below her left ear after she was hit by flying glass. "I saw a huge flame and then the roof started falling down. I ran out of the bank, I didn't know what had hit me," she said.

Mrs Janette van Heerden (32), was sitting at her desk at the Receiver of Revenue's office. She described how she felt herself being pulled back towards the window before she was flung over her desk away from the shattered windows of the building. She only heard the blast when she was tumbling through the air. She sustained minor injuries to a knee.

Mrs Dina du Plooy, an employee at Jet Stores, was struck on the back and head by pieces falling from the ceiling. "I heard a terrible noise and realised it was a bomb but I was too confused to react." She was helped out of the building and taken to hospital where she was X-rayed for head and neck injuries. She is expected to be discharged shortly.

Mrs Bernadine Vorster (30), a worker at a jeweller's shop, said she usually worked in the front of the shop arranging jewellery in the mornings. "Fortunately it was Monday so we weren't working in the display window"

Mrs Vorster said she and three other women were in the shop when there was a huge flash.

"I found myself at the back of the shop. Then the police arrived and a policeman helped me to put the jewellery in a safe before I went to hospital."

Write-off

The shop, American Swiss, was a write-off and it was a miracle nobody was more seriously injured, she said. Mrs Vorster was being treated for shock.

The superintendent of Witbank Hospital, Dr W Snyman, said none of the women in the "white" wards of the hospital was seriously injured.

He said that only one pregnant woman, a Mrs Booyens, was admitted. Her pregnancy was full-term and she was treated for shock to prevent a premature delivery.

TREFWOORDE

1 Harper, Claire

2 ... Oorsig...

3 ... Pasiente...

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5 ... Bannant...

6 ... Sings...

7 ... Motorvoertuig

8 ... Witbank

9 ... Stedelike

10 ... Tiedors...

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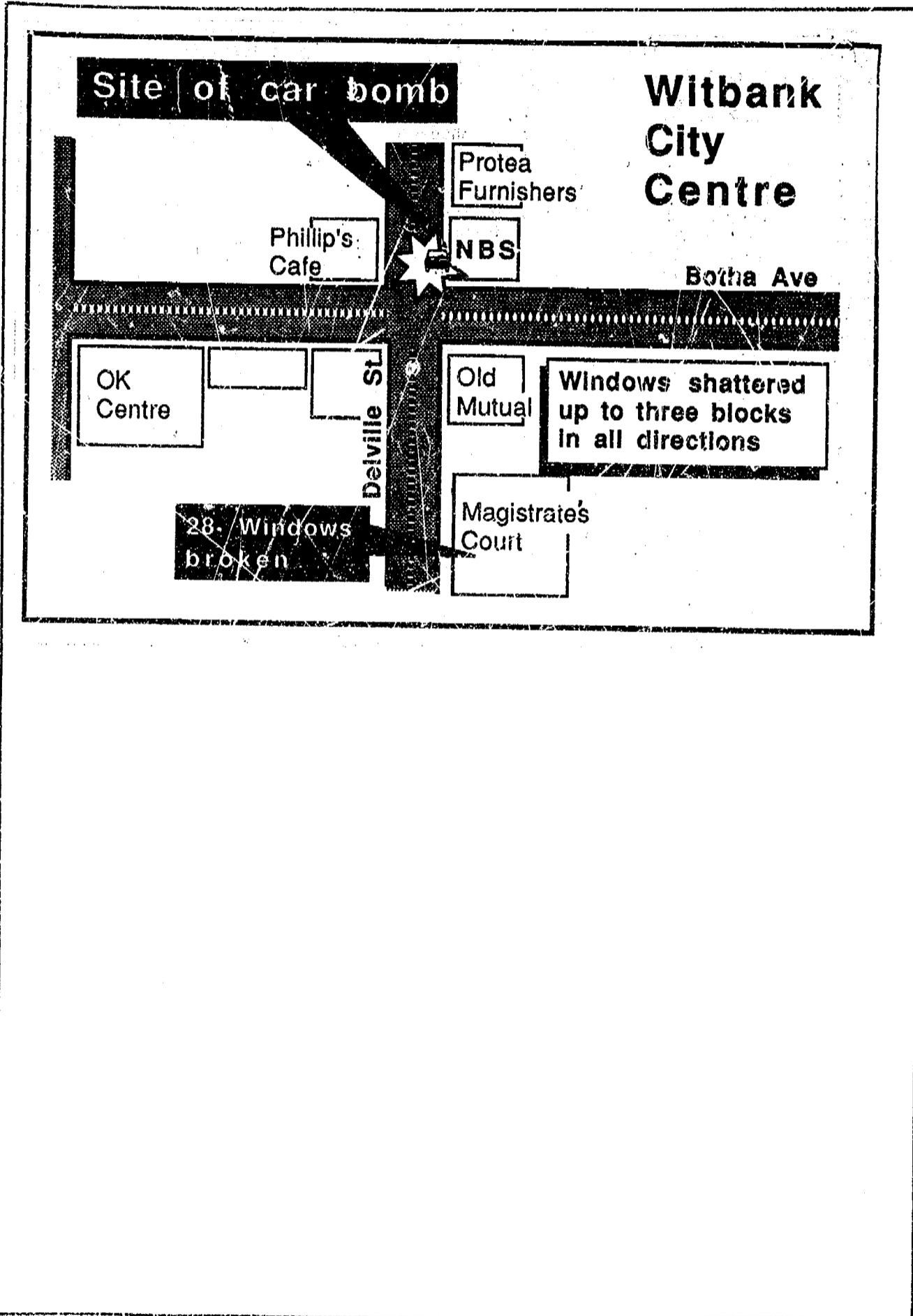
Datum
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The Star

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