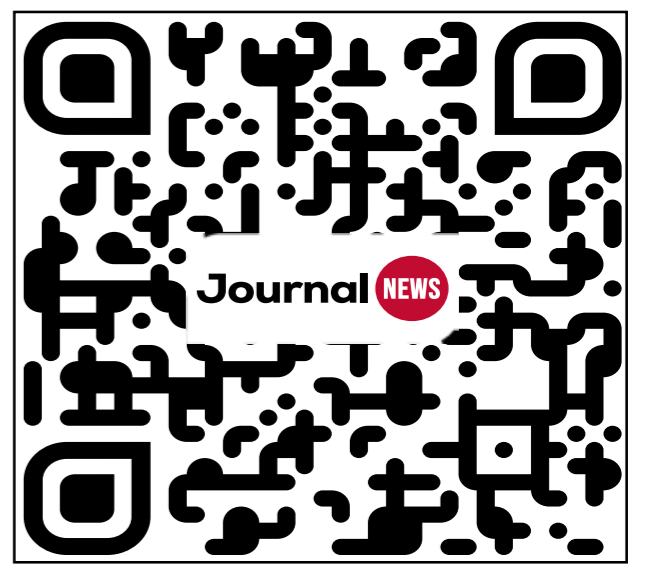


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THE FINAL SHOWDOWN

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FREEDOM DAY FIREWORKS ROCK NORTH WEST LEGISLATURE

Premier under pressure as lawmakers grill government, extend probe, and confront service delivery failures

By Bernell Simons

Freedom Day in the North West was anything but symbolic, as the Provincial Legislature turned commemoration into confrontation — a live test of democracy marked by sharp debate, oversight, and critical decision-making inside the Mmabatho chamber.

Opening proceedings, Speaker Dr Desbo Mhono set a solemn tone with a moment of silence before announcing a key institutional breakthrough — the appointment of Advocate Nelsie Pucci as Public Service Commissioner, ending a vacancy that had lingered for more than four financial years. The move was framed as a step toward restoring governance stability and strengthening oversight mechanisms.

But the focus quickly shifted from ceremony to scrutiny. Premier Lazarus Mokgosi and his Executive Council faced intense engagement from lawmakers, with pressing concerns raised on service delivery failures, environmental sustainability, and crumbling infrastructure.

A pivotal moment came with the approval of an extension for the Ad Hoc Committee probing allegations against the Premier, signalling the Legislature's intent to prioritise due process and thorough investigation before conclusions are drawn.

Debate also stretched beyond politics into everyday realities. Lawmakers engaged on the Matlakal-akizaka clean-up campaign, broadly supporting the initiative while cautioning that environmental programmes must create tangible economic opportunities.

Youth empowerment featured strongly, with initiatives like Miss Naledi praised for blending personal development with leadership training — reflecting a shift toward practical, visible empow-

erment platforms.

However, the sitting took a sombre turn when members confronted a tragic incident involving a young learner who reportedly fell into an open pit toilet at a primary school during construction. The debate reignited urgent concerns over unsafe sanitation and the slow pace of eradication programmes, with government confirming that investigations are underway.

Across all discussions, one theme dominated — accountability.

Freedom Day, in this chamber, was not treated as a historical reflection, but as a real-time measure of governance, where leaders were questioned, policies tested, and democracy actively exercised.

Happy **WORKERS' DAY**

Known internationally as May Day, an opportunity for rest and appreciation, while also encouraging reflection on the value of every kind of work, the importance of safe and fair working conditions, and the ongoing journey toward economic justice for all South Africans.

Mangaung Initiation Committee Challenges State Over Sacred Traditions



By Matshidiso Selebeleng

As the winter initiation season approaches, teachers, parents and learners are preparing for a life-changing rite of passage into adulthood.

In many traditional communities, initiation remains a sacred custom. But in Mangaung, tensions are rising over who gets to regulate the practice.

Members of the Mangaung Initiation Schools Committee have approached the Bloemfontein High Court, arguing that those who have not undergone initiation should not govern or legislate on the custom.

The committee previously staged marches in Botshabelo and Bloemfontein, stressing that their aim is not to confront government, but to ensure their concerns are heard.

Chairperson Litaba Maphisa, the first applicant in the case, said the Customary Initiation Act (CIA), passed by Parliament in 2021, was adopted without proper consultation.

"This law regulates traditional initiation, yet we as practitioners were not meaningfully consulted," he said.

Maphisa argues that the Act undermines the dignity of initiation by failing to provide suitable land and infringing on the community's constitutional right to privacy.

He also criticised the composition of the Provincial Initiation Coordinating Committee (PICC), which is appointed by the Premier.

"It is problematic that we are guided by people unfamiliar with initiation processes. This practice is sacred and its details are known only to those who have undergone it," he said.

The committee believes the PICC should include individuals who have participated in initiation, to preserve its dignity and strengthen cooperation with government.

They are calling for the CIA to be set aside until broader consultation with traditional initiation communities takes place.

The matter has been postponed to 18 June.

Saul Hands Over Homes as R1bn Housing Drive Gains Ground



Northern Cape Premier Dr. Zamani Saul led the final handovers of homes in Ganspan. Pictures: NC/Facebook

By Bernell Simons

The promise of dignity through housing became a lived reality this week as Northern Cape Premier Dr. Zamani Saul led the final handovers of homes in Ganspan and Jacksonville, marking key milestones in the province's R1 billion housing programme.

In Ganspan, Saul, alongside MEC for CoGhSTA Bentley Vass and Phokwane Mayor Willem Harmse,

handed over 31 newly completed houses, bringing the Ganspan 71 Housing Project to full completion. This follows the earlier delivery of 40 homes, ensuring all 71 qualifying families now have access to secure shelter.

The project is a significant step toward reducing the province's housing backlog, restoring dignity and stability to long-waiting residents.

Momentum continued in Jacksonville, under the Sol Plaatje Local Municipality, where Saul joined MEC

Vass and Executive Mayor Cllr Barbara Bartlett to hand over five houses in the final phase of the Jacksonville 139 Housing Project. In a major boost, 110 title deeds were also issued, giving beneficiaries not just homes, but legal ownership and long-term security.

Officials confirmed that the remaining 22 houses will be handed over in the coming days, bringing the project to completion.

Both projects form part of the Northern Cape gov-

ernment's R1 billion housing initiative, launched in 2024 to fast-track delivery and tackle long-standing housing challenges.

Beyond the numbers, the impact is deeply personal. For many families, this marks the first time they hold the keys—and the title—to a place they can truly call home.

As rollout continues, government's message is clear: delivery is no longer a promise, but a visible reality transforming lives—one home at a time.

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Task team deployed to probe Mahikeng double murder

The acting North West police commissioner, Ryno Naidoo, has deployed a task team to investigate a double murder and business robbery in Mahikeng.

A businessman and his wife were killed on Friday. Police Spokesperson Kelebogile Morake says the woman died on the spot, while her husband died later in the hospital.

Morake says, "It is reported that the couple rushed from their main residence after being alerted that their son was being robbed at their business. Upon entering the business premises, located not far from the house, they encountered the suspects at the entrance."

She says, "According to one of the robbery vic-



tims, six unknown suspects wearing masks and armed with firearms had entered the premises while they were inside the lounge. The suspects allegedly forced the victims to lie on the floor, threatened and assaulted them, and proceeded to rob them of several cellphones, an undisclosed amount of cash, a laptop, and the keys to a Ford Ranger, which was later used as a getaway vehicle." -SABC

Ntanzi wraps up testimony, maintains innocence in Meyiwa trial



Accused 2 in the Senzo Meyiwa murder trial, Bongani Ntanzi, has concluded his testimony at the High Court in Pretoria. Ntanzi and four others are on trial for the 2014 murder of Senzo Meyiwa, who was shot and killed at the parental home of Kelly Khumalo in Vosloorus in Gauteng's East Rand.

He first took the stand in February this year. Ntanzi, who is said to have made two confession statements, spent months on the witness stand denying any involvement in Meyiwa's murder.

He distanced himself from the signed statements that allegedly detail the roles played by all the accused in the killing.

The statements also claim that Kelly Khumalo ordered the hit on the former Bafana Bafana captain. However, responding to his legal counsel Siph-

Ramosepele, Ntanzi refused to be drawn into the contents of the statements.

Ramosepele: Now every time you appended your signature on the pro forma and on the statement, is it your own freely expressed account of how things unfolded during the murder of Meyiwa on the 26th of October 2014?

Ntanzi: No, my lord. There is nothing that I said. I know nothing about the death of Senzo Meyiwa.

Ntanzi says, as a citizen, he is also seeking answers on who is really responsible for the death of the national captain.

"As a person that follows soccer and as a South African citizen, I would also like to know who killed Senzo."

A new witness is expected to be called when the trial resumes on Monday morning. **SABCNews**

Nketoana Local Municipality remains on Eskom interruption list



By Refilwe Mochoari

Three municipalities in Free State, namely Nala, Masilonyana, and Ngwathe, have avoided the implementation of electricity supply interruption measures due to non-payment of their bulk electricity accounts by agreeing to enter into Distribution Agency Agreements (DAAs) with Eskom.

According to the Senior Advisor to Stakeholder Management in Free State, Stefanie Jansen Van Rensburg while the process to complete the DAAs is underway, it remains the responsibility of the municipalities to pay their current accounts.

"As such, the interruption and reduction of bulk electricity supply are currently suspended, provided the municipalities continue to pay their current accounts during the finalization of the DAA," she said.

However, Nketoana Local Municipality has not made any effort to enter into such an agreement. As a result, it will experience twice-daily electricity supply interruptions in Lindley, Petrus Steyn, and Reitz from 07:00 to 09:00 and 18:00 to 21:00, starting on May 8, 2026.

Jansen Van Rensburg explains that notices that are published under the Promotion of Administra-

tive Justice Act (Act 3 of 2000) on 6 March 2026, warned that failure to settle electricity accounts by these four municipalities could lead to interruptions in bulk supply unless the municipal council concluded a DAA with Eskom.

"After reviewing public representations submitted regarding Eskom's intention to interrupt Nketoana's supply, we found that the submissions did not offer viable solutions for sustainable bulk electricity supply to the municipality," she said.

"Furthermore, the municipality has failed to either pass a council resolution to enter into a DAA with Eskom, set up a prepayment agreement where Eskom supplies only the bulk electricity that the municipality can afford, or create a system where the municipality's customers pay Eskom directly for their electricity usage," she said.

She says a letter notifying the municipality of Eskom's intention to interrupt supply was sent on April 23, 2026. A notice regarding this issue was published in the Journal News on 24 April 2026, and a repeat notice which will appear in the Vrystaat Kroon newspaper on 29 April 2026.

Jansen Van Rensburg urged all stakeholders who may be materially and adversely affected by Eskom's decision to take the necessary precautions to mitigate the impact of the supply interruptions.

The Final Showdown



ANC Mangaung chairperson, Lawrence Mathae, Deputy Regional Secretary, Lulama Titi-Odili and deputy chairperson, Vusi Soqaga. Pictures: Supplied

By JN Reporter

The final showdown for control of the ANC in Mangaung is set to unfold, with a fiercely contested leadership race expected to draw sharp factional lines and high-stakes political manoeuvring.

As delegates converge at the Bloemfontein City Hall for the party's regional elective conference, all eyes will be on the outcome of a bruising contest that is widely seen as a decisive moment — not just for regional leadership and control of the Metro Municipality's resources, but for the balance of power at a provincial level.

The party's highly anticipated regional gathering is set to get underway today, with current deputy chairperson, Vusi Soqaga, poised to topple the incumbent chairperson, Lawrence Mathae, for the region's top position.

A source close to the developments says Deputy Regional Secretary, Lulama Titi-Odili, has also entered the race for the chairperson post, adding further pressure on Mathae's bid for re-election.

According to the source, this conference will be unlike any seen before, with fierce contestation expected across all top positions.

Three candidates are set to battle it out for the chairperson seat, with Soqaga reportedly holding the upper hand.

"Unlike the previous conference you have seen, this is a different gathering with fierce contestation in all positions. Three candidates will contest for the chairperson position, and comrade Vusi is leading the numbers... most branches are rallying behind him since comrade Lawrence broke alliance with him and joined the opposing faction," said the source.

Mathae was previously tipped for a smooth return to the office with Soqaga as his deputy. However, Journal News reliably understands that his recent change of slate has thrown him out in the cold.

"He (Mathae) enjoyed a significant support from branches in the past few months but all that has changed as the same support is now behind comrade Soqaga," said a source.

Journal News further understands that regional

spokesperson Ncamile Nxangisa is being tipped for the regional secretary position under Soqaga's slate. However, Nxangisa has played down the speculation.

"I do not nominate myself, but I will serve anywhere the branches of the ANC or delegates want me to go," he said.

Nxangisa is expected to face off against incumbent regional secretary, Sabelo Pitso, regional treasurer, Siphon Mzembe, and former provincial secretary, Paseka Nompondo — who is making an ambitious return bid for the position.

Despite six disputes currently before Luthuli House's National Dispute Resolution Committee, the region is believed to have met the required threshold and is set to proceed with its Regional Executive Committee elections.

Endgame battle to determine who controls the province

The outcomes of the regional conferences are set to shape the broader balance of power at the provincial level, as leaders position themselves for the elective provincial conference expected in January next year.

It is understood that rival provincial factions — the Kaizer Sebothelo grouping, which runs the organisation from the provincial headquarters under chairperson Mxolisi Dukwana and provincial secretary Pol-ediso Motsoeneng, and the OR Tambo grouping, aligned to the provincial government led by Premier Maqeen Letsoha-Mathae and Cogta and Human Settlements MEC

Saki Mokoena — are both vying for control of the province.

Both factions are lobbying for support from the Mangaung region, widely seen as a kingmaker following the conclusion of elective conferences in Thabo Mofutsanyana, Fezile Dabi and Lejweleputswa last week.

In Thabo Mofutsanyana — Mokoena's home region and the largest in the province by membership — the entire Top 5 leadership was retained unopposed, in what sources interpret as a strong show of support for the OR Tambo faction.

Former regional chairperson Thabo Mokoena, his deputy Conny Msibi, regional secretary Jeff Mohapi, deputy regional secretary Phoka Mofokeng and regional treasurer Malekula Melato all returned to office after no nominations were received from the floor.

A similar outcome unfolded in Lejweleputswa over the weekend, where former regional chairperson Xolile Toki and his Top 5 were re-elected unopposed at the 9th Regional Conference.

However, the picture differs in Fezile Dabi, where Ngwatho Executive Mayor Victoria de Beer-Mthombeni — now elected regional chairperson — is believed to be aligned with the Kaizer Sebothelo faction.

Asked whether such factions exist within the provincial leadership, Motsoeneng dismissed the claims as "gossip".

"No... the strategic centre of power, in terms of our understanding in our organisation, is the ANC. Those deployed in government derive their authority from the ANC, account directly to it, and implement its mandate.

There are no factions in the PEC that define themselves outside organisational processes. All comrades account to the ANC in this province," he said on the sidelines of the Fezile Dabi conference in Parys.

He added, however, that the party recognises the role of those in government, whose initiatives can help advance the ANC's broader objectives.

ANC North West conference to take place despite some disputes



The African National Congress (ANC) regional conference is expected to commence in Christiana in the North West tomorrow despite being marred by disputes and allegations of irregularities.

ANC Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula issued the final verification report, and gave the region the go-ahead to continue with the conference.

Some branches still maintain that there are issues of material irregularities, unresolved disputes, and procedural inconsistencies.

The party's Youth League Regional Secretary Kagiso Gqobo has called for the conference to be postponed.

"We object and reject the 10th regional conference from proceeding. We are equally vehemently opposed to rigging and manipulation of processes. The process is currently a gross violation of ANC guidelines, particularly on branch general meetings and conferences. According to the ANC constitution, the final verification report must be signed off by the Secretary-General at least 14 days prior to a provincial or regional conference. The report for Dr RSM (Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality) was only signed off on the 28th of April 2026. This provides only three days before the start of the conference. There must be a cool-off period that must also be observed. We hereby demand that the conference be postponed."

The ANC's National office referred the SABC to its provincial counterparts for comment. They were however not available. **SABCNews**

Cosatu urges unity amongst workers to defeat challenges



Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) President Zingiswa Losi has highlighted job losses and the rising cost of living as primary challenges facing South African workers.

Cosatu is finalising preparations for Friday's 140th anniversary of International Workers' Day rally in Polokwane in Limpopo.

Losi has called for the unity of workers in order to defeat the challenges they face.

"I think Cosatu has learned throughout its 40 years of existence that fragmentation is not what is gonna take us to the liberation of workers. We think that to liberate workers, workers must liberate themselves by being united beyond political affiliation. And so the focus that we have for this year is the unity of workers." **SABCNews**

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Further information is available from the Director Corporate Services telephone 051 924 0654

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The Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality is pleased to announce the official transition from manual to **electronic building plan submissions and inspection requests**, marking a significant milestone in the modernization of service delivery within the MMM Building Control environment.

From 6 May 2026, the Municipality will introduce an online digital platform, AFLA BPAMS, which will enable applicants to submit building plans electronically. This initiative forms part of a broader strategy to improve operational efficiency, reduce administrative delays, and enhance transparency in the building plan approval process.

The electronic submission system will streamline internal operations by reducing paper usage and physical storage requirements, while allowing for faster circulation of plans between key departments, including Building Control, Town Planning, Centlec and Fire Safety. Applicants will benefit from the ability to submit plans remotely, upload supporting documents digitally, make online payments and track the progress of applications in real time. The system will also enable users to request foundation, sewer, and occupancy inspections online.

Manual building plan submissions will be fully phased out from 1 June 2026, after which all new applications must be submitted electronically via the AFLA BPAMS platform.

For more information, kindly contact Marlise Boshoff: 0514058342, marlise.boshoff@mangaung.co.za

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Severe thunderstorm and flooding warning for parts of Northern Cape on Thursday



A warning was issued for the likelihood of thunderstorms accompanied by heavy downpours which may result in localised flooding and damage to vulnerable infrastructure across parts of the Northern Cape on Thursday 30 April.

The MEC for Roads and Public Works, Fufe Makatong, is calling on all road users, motorists, and communities to exercise extreme vigilance following the warning for severe thunderstorms issued by the South African Weather Service (SAWS) for especially Thursday.

Affected municipalities include Dikgatlong (including Barkly West, Windsorton and Delportshoop), Gamagara (including Kathu, Sishen, Dibeng, Dingleton and Olifantshoek), Ga-Segonyana (including Batlharos, Kuruman and Mothibistad), Joe Morolong (including Hotazel, Batlhaping and Van Zylsrus), Kgatelopele (including Daniëlskuil), and Magareng (including Warrenton).

This alert on the late afternoon of Wednesday 29 April comes as parts of the province's road network are already severely affected by recent torrential rains.

Forecast for Thursday

For Thursday, the SAWS issued the following forecast for areas in and bordering the Northern Cape:

- Mahikeng: Cloudy and windy with scattered showers and thundershowers. Minimum/Maximum: 14/21
- Vryburg: Cloudy and windy, with widespread showers and thundershowers. Minimum/Maximum: 14/20
- Bloemfontein: Cloudy and windy, with widespread showers and thundershowers. Minimum/Maximum: 10/14
- Kimberley: Cloudy and windy with widespread showers and thundershowers. Minimum/Maximum: 11/14
- Upington: Cloudy and windy with widespread showers and thundershowers. Minimum/Maximum: 14/16

Routes already affected in JTG, Namakwa and ZF

Mcgawu District

On Monday 27 April, the MEC visited the John Taolo Gaetsewe District to assess the extent of flood damage.

Some roads have already been graded, while departmental teams remain on-site repairing washed-away sections and restoring access.

Affected roads in the ZF Mcgawu District. Continuous rainfall has caused significant damage to gravel roads, many of which are currently wet, muddy, and experiencing water ponding.

Heavy-duty vehicles, particularly trucks, are strongly advised not to use these roads to prevent accidents, further damage, and vehicles becoming stuck, especially in Kalahari areas.

Road damage assessments are currently underway, with response and relief efforts being coordinated in affected areas.

Utmost caution advised

Makatong urges all road users, motorists and communities to exercise the utmost caution during this period. Members of the public are strongly advised not to attempt crossing flooded roads, bridges or drifts.

During thunderstorm conditions, residents are encouraged to stay indoors and keep away from metal objects, trees and tall structures.

Members of the public are encouraged to report any road damage or hazards to the Department of Roads and Public Works via the WhatsApp Hotline on 066 581 5626.

Furthermore, the MEC has directed that urgent and comprehensive assessments be conducted across all affected road sections. A dedicated response team has been established to consolidate field reports, coordinate interventions, and accelerate recovery efforts.

Departmental teams have been placed on high alert, and continuous monitoring of the situation is underway. Communities will be kept informed as restoration work progresses, said Zandisile Luphahla, media liaison officer.

32 years of democracy, 35 years of Orania



Orania launched its 500 ora bank note I-series on 10 April, making it the only community in SA with a commercial note of this value.

While South Africa celebrated its 32nd Freedom Day after its first democratic elections on 27 April 1994, the Afrikaner-only enclave of Orania also celebrated its 35th year of existence this month.

The white separatist enclave on the Orange River in the Northern Cape was founded by Carel Boshoff, who purchased the farm in 1991.

Orania prides itself on being a self-sufficient and independent home for Afrikaners. On 10 April, Orania celebrated its establishment on 6 April 1991, with a party hosted in front of the town's office.

The town also launched its 500 ora bank note I-series on 10 April, making Orania the only community in South Africa with a commercial note of this value.

The ora is a coupon system that is linked one-on-one to the rand and used in Orania together with rands as a monetary trading unit.

Orania does not consider the ora as a currency and said it functions much like one, while also strengthen-

ing the community.

Being designed, printed and distributed by the Orania chamber of commerce, local artists competed to draw the sketches for the new series.

The icons on the notes include Jan van Riebeeck on the 10 ora, Andries Pretorius on the 20, Piet Joubert on the 50, Marthinus Theunis Steyn on the 100, Totius (Jacob Daniël du Toit) on the 200 and Carel Boshoff on the 500 note.

But political analyst Piet Croucamp said people have to question the heart and the soul of people who lived and do what they do in Orania.

"One can ask all sorts of questions about the morality of having a white person enclosed on land that belongs to South Africans, but that's a completely different question," said Croucamp.

"One can wish them away and I wish them away, and I wish they weren't there, but that doesn't mean because I wished them away and many other millions of South Africans do, [people can] question their existence."

Croucamp added as long as people in Orania don't

do anything illegal, there is no reason to interfere with them.

They have the support of AfriForum and Solidarity and wouldn't be able to exist in South Africa without that support, the analyst said.

They will need broader support in South Africa to maintain what they do, Croucamp added.

Another political analyst, René Oosthuizen said the existence of Orania reflects a deeply uncomfortable contradiction in South Africa's democracy.

"It suggests our democracy has been more successful in accommodating differences than in confronting the structural inequalities and historical divisions. In my view, that is the uncomfortable reality of our democracy," she added.

Senior political lecturer at North-West University, Benjamin Rapanyane, said democracy has opened the space for Orania to exist.

"It is democracy that allowed them to exist in that part of their own in our democratic space. And since they have not bothered anyone for such a long time, I guess we should let it stay that way," Rapanyane said.



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Mbalula Tables R3.58bn Safety Budget to Tackle Crime Head-On



Free State MEC for Community Safety, Roads and Transport, Jabu Mbalula Budget Prioritises Safer Communities and Stronger Policing Systems. Picture: DCSRT/Facebook

By Bernell Simons

Community safety, crime prevention and improved policing coordination took centre stage as the Free State tabled its 2026/27 Budget Vote for the Department of Community Safety, Roads and Transport in Phuthaditjhaba.

The R3.58 billion budget outlines a multi-layered approach to tackling crime, strengthening law enforcement and building safer communities, while investing in systems that support long-term stability and public trust.

Presenting the budget, MEC for Community Safety, Roads and Transport, Jabu Mbalula, stressed that crime cannot be addressed by police alone, calling for a coordinated societal response.

“A safer Free State requires a whole-of-society approach. Government, communities and law enforcement must work together to confront crime and restore public confidence,” he said.

Of the R3 583 188 000 allocation, R26.6 million is earmarked for the Provincial Secretariat for Police Services to strengthen oversight, community engagement and accountability. A further R633.9 million is allocated to Transport Regulation, including traffic law enforcement and road safety operations.

Central to the province’s plan is the Free State Inte-

grated Crime and Violence Prevention Strategy, which aligns government departments across six key focus areas. The strategy recognises the link between crime and socio-economic challenges such as poverty, unemployment and substance abuse.

Investment in proactive policing continues, with 5 381 frontline officers trained in Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) response. Authorities have also rolled out 10 Victim Empowerment Programmes and 36 outreach initiatives in high-crime areas including Mangaung, Botshabelo, Welkom and Sasolburg.

School safety remains a priority, with programmes active in 22 schools and 1 026 schools supported by Safer School Committees, targeting issues such as bullying, violence and substance abuse.

Community involvement is also expanding. Community Policing Forums are active in 109 police stations, while the Community in Blue programme has deployed 2 347 patrolrollers to boost visibility and support policing efforts.

Law enforcement operations are showing results. Under Operation Shanela, SAPS recorded 21 223 arrests for community crimes, 7 588 for illegal immigration, and additional arrests linked to illicit mining and related offences.

Rural safety efforts have also led to arrests and livestock recoveries in areas including Heilbron, Phutha-

dijhaba and Wesselsbron.

Efforts to combat gender-based violence have been strengthened with the establishment of the Botshabelo Sexual Offences Court, designed to provide a victim-centred and child-friendly environment.

The province has also welcomed the deployment of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) under Operation Prosper (2026–2027), aimed at supporting SAPS in tackling gang violence, illegal mining and high-risk crime hotspots.

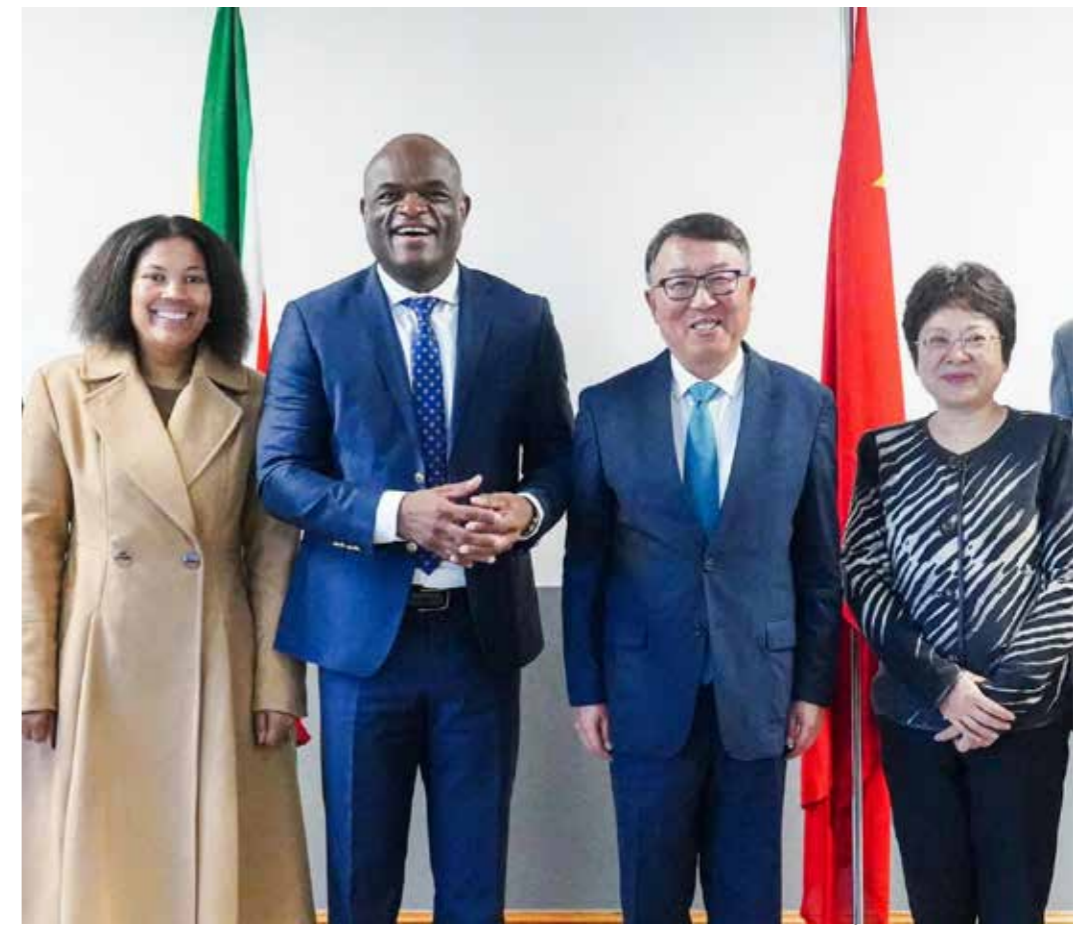
Technological upgrades are being introduced, including Smart Environment Units at traffic testing stations, allowing real-time identity verification linked to Home Affairs and SAPS databases to reduce fraud and improve efficiency.

Despite progress, Mbalula acknowledged ongoing challenges, including crime hotspots across 30 priority police stations and the need to rebuild public trust in law enforcement.

“The struggle for safer communities is ongoing, but we are making meaningful progress. Together, we can build a province where people feel safe, protected and empowered,” he said.

As implementation begins, the province’s focus remains on integrated safety strategies, stronger policing partnerships and community-driven solutions—offering renewed hope for a safer Free State.

Northern Cape Courts China for Mega Investment Deals



Saul steps onto the global stage as Northern Cape courts billions in Chinese. Picture: NC/Facebook

By JN Reporter

In a decisive move to unlock new economic frontiers, Northern Cape Premier Dr. Zamani Saul has taken the province’s investment drive onto the global stage, meeting Chinese Ambassador to South Africa Wu Peng in a high-level engagement aimed at attracting billions into one of the country’s most resource-rich regions.

The meeting, held this week, brought together key provincial leaders, including MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Venus Blenies-Magage, in a focused effort to strengthen ties between the Northern Cape and China—one of the world’s most influential economic powers. The goal: position the province as a prime destination for large-scale investment, industrial expansion and long-term economic partnerships.

Central to discussions was the province’s vision to transform its economy—shifting from raw mineral extraction to beneficiation, infrastructure development, renewable energy and advanced industrialisation. With vast reserves of iron ore, manganese and zinc, alongside world-class solar and wind potential, the Northern Cape is uniquely positioned to become a hub for both traditional and green industries.

Saul’s approach signals a shift toward active economic diplomacy—taking the province directly to global investors rather than waiting for opportunities to emerge.

This strategy is already underpinned by a robust investment pipeline exceeding R100 billion, including catalytic projects such as the Boegoebaai Port and the green hydrogen corridor, a mega-development valued at over R120 billion.

These initiatives are more than plans on paper—

they represent a coordinated push to unlock export capacity, stimulate local industries and create thousands of jobs, particularly for young people in a province seeking economic renewal.

Media Liaison Officer Bronwyn Thomas-Abrahams said the engagement reflects a deliberate and forward-looking strategy.

“This forms part of Premier Saul’s broader vision to position the Northern Cape as a globally competitive investment destination. We are actively building relationships that will translate into sustainable economic opportunities, job creation and long-term growth for our communities,” she said.

She added that the province is pursuing not just investment, but partnerships that will drive inclusive development and ensure benefits reach local communities.

China, with its strong track record in large-scale infrastructure and mining investments, is seen as a strategic partner capable of accelerating the province’s ambitions at scale and speed.

The meeting also sets the stage for the next phase—technical engagements, feasibility studies and ultimately binding investment agreements—where groundwork for future economic breakthroughs is laid.

For Saul, the message is clear: the Northern Cape is no longer waiting on the sidelines. It is stepping forward, competing globally and actively pursuing the partnerships needed to reshape its economic trajectory.

If these talks translate into tangible deals, this moment could mark more than a diplomatic engagement—it could be the spark that ignites the Northern Cape’s rise as one of South Africa’s next economic powerhouses.

Madlanga Commission | Brown Mogotsi looks to block Advocate Matthew Chaskalson from leading his testimony

The alleged political fixer and North West businessman Brown Mogotsi, is set to block Advocate Matthew Chaskalson SC, the Madlanga Commission of Inquiry’s chief evidence leader, from leading his testimony when he reappears before the commission on May 15.

Mogotsi, who briefly appeared before the commission on Tuesday, has instructed his legal representatives to file a substantive application to recuse Chaskalson from leading his evidence.

His lawyers are expected to file their substantive application outlining their reasons for wanting Chaskalson recused from handling Mogotsi’s evidence by midday on April 29, 2026 in line with Justice Mbuyiseli Madlanga’s order.

Mogotsi’s legal representative Makaula Sekgatja confirmed an intended application for Chaskalson’s recusal from leading their client’s testimony.

Chaskalson said Mogotsi was due to be recalled on April 28, 2026 but Mogotsi’s legal team informed him that they plan to apply for his recusal.



The Madlanga Commission, led by Justice Mbuyiseli Madlanga (centre). Picture: Independent Newspapers

“We haven’t seen the application yet but we have seen the affidavit which we are told is going to form the basis of the application. We will have to consider our position once we have seen proper application. I have my own view but we will obviously have to discuss it with the full evidence team and we do so once we have seen this application,” he said.

He said that if a response is necessary, he may seek

permission from a bar council to file an affidavit, which will take some time.

Chaskalson said he may respond by May 6, 2026 and by May 11, 2026 Sekgatja would have consulted with his client to file his replies.

In March the commission threatened to initiate legal action against Mogotsi for contempt of its regulations after he failed to appear before the commission.

The commission, however, stated that legal action was pending if Mogotsi failed to furnish it with a medical certificate. Mogotsi promised to provide the medical certificate after consulting a doctor, which he did.

The commission’s tough stance follows Mogotsi’s notification to the commission before his scheduled hearing, stating he was unable to attend due to illness. Chaskalson previously said there were several top-

ics that the commission wanted to canvass with him, topics that have not been discussed either at the commission or in Parliament.

During his last appearance in November last year Mogotsi claimed to be a contact agent working for crime intelligence. He also claimed that KwaZulu-Natal SAPS Commissioner Lieutenant-General Nhlamhla Mkhwanazi and King Misizulu KaZwelithini were agents for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

However, Mogotsi retracted the claims about Mkhwanazi and KaZwelithini during his recent appearance at the Ad Hoc Committee in Parliament.

Mogotsi also defended his access to sensitive information from the SAPS and crime intelligence, disputing claims that it stemmed from dubious relationships with senior police officers or government officials.

Last year, he told the commission that he learned about the December 31 letter penned by suspended Police Minister Senzo Mchunu to disband the Political Killings Task Team through social media, not via any connection to Mchunu. *iol*

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SALGA-led project places municipalities at the heart of South Africa's climate action

By Marcia Moyana

From the concurrent floods in Kwa-Zulu Natal, to the heat waves in the Western Cape or the recent floods in Mpumalanga and Limpopo.

Climate disasters have become more frequent and the damage leaving communities devastated while municipalities battle to keep up with the growing demand for services as infrastructure buckles under pressure.

As predictions of a rainy season in the eastern parts of the country and extremely dry conditions in the west are made by meteorologists, the launch of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) and the African Climate Foundation (ACF) project that aims to implement the country's climate action strategies.

Launched on 21 April in Pretoria, the SALGA-ACF Climate Action Planning Project, convened under the theme Advancing Local Climate Resilience, is a 22-month initiative targeting 35 district municipalities spread across all nine provinces.

Besides highlighting the urgent need for municipalities to actively participate in the country's climate response, the project also prioritises the implementation of South Africa's Climate Change Act (CCA) by local government as mandated in the act.

"Climate action is no longer optional, project-based, or peripheral. It is a legislated governance responsibility that must be embedded in municipal planning systems, budgets, infrastructure investment, and service delivery decisions," said Programme Director Councilor Kenalemang Phukutsi in her opening remarks.

Present at the launch were commissioners from the Presidential Climate Commission (PCC), the National Planning Commission (NPC), the Deputy Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, and mayors from some of South Africa's most climate-exposed municipalities.

Communities the infrastructure damage

Municipalities can no longer ignore the impact of climate change and the Tshwane Executive Mayor Dr Nasiphi Moya described the lived experiences of Tshwane residents as characteristically direct.

"When drainage systems fail, it is poorer communities that flood first. When temperatures rise, it is households without cooling or reliable electricity that suffer most," she said.



"Climate action at the local level must be about resilience, dignity, and fairness."

According to Moya, the municipality's response involves everything from stormwater maintenance and wetland protection to urban tree planting, energy efficiency upgrades, and water conservation.

Which she admits is a burden that no city can carry on its own.

"We need climate finance that reaches cities faster. We need better technical support, shared data, and planning systems that speak to one another."

Climate vulnerability is an economic issue

The ACF as a partner in the project has been instrumental in supporting the PCC in establishing the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) and identifying funds that can be mobilised behind it.

A philanthropic foundation established in April 2020 and now operating across 10 countries, the ACF has long argued that climate vulnerability is inseparable from economic fragility, the foundation makes a case for climate change to be seen as an economic issue because climate vulnerability is a result of a lack of poor economic resilience.

"We have an interest in finding ways in which we can work a lot more at a sub-national level, because we recognise that the solutions can't come just from the national government, although the national government is very important," said Salim Fakir, Executive Director of the ACF. The project aims to turn the 35 targeted districts into proof of concept which can then be used to demonstrate to South Africa and the world that locally-grounded climate planning can work.

Operationalising the CCA at a municipal level will further strengthen SALGA's capacity to implement South Africa's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs), added Fakir.

The NDCs are the country's climate action plans to be implemented over a period of five years under the Paris Agreement.

Time to Act

Dorah Modise, Executive Director of the Presidential Climate Commission, said that climate change conversations were no longer exclusive to scientists and environmentalists. Various sectors including the insurance and financial sectors have joined the conversation as they get affected by climate-related disasters.

In June 2025, Toyota South Africa filed a R6.5 billion lawsuit against the Department of Transport and the

eThekweni Municipality for flood damage following the 2022 floods that claimed 400 lives and damaged infrastructure.

Analysts at the time said the lawsuit could set a precedent for companies to claim for damages from the state for failure to maintain public infrastructure like roads and drainage systems which contributes to the damage of their businesses.

This called for all known plans to be put into action, she emphasised.

"We are done doing needs analysis. We know what municipalities need and the municipalities themselves know what they need. You need to locally contextualise what you already know, rather than spending a lot of time diagnosing the problem. I think we've reached the point of fatigue," said Modise.

Key to these actions is ensuring that disaster risk management such as clearly and communicated and easy to understand early warning systems are in place.

"The PCC is currently working with the SA Weather Service and the CSIR to redesign early warning mechanisms for local relevance," she added.

Environmental science graduates for municipalities

On top of supporting SALGA with the implementation of the CCA, the DFFE is also going to support district municipalities and municipalities to come up with their implementation plans of the act.

According to the Deputy Minister of the DFFE, Narend Singh, the department has also provided municipalities with the human resources where up to 3 000 graduates have benefited from the department's Youth Graduation Programme.

Under the programme, the environmental science graduates have been placed at municipalities for six-months to 24-months across the country as part of a strategy to include young people in the country's climate strategies. Up to R200 million has been set aside to fund the programme which includes monthly stipends for the graduates.

"We hope that some of the municipalities will keep these young people in a permanent capacity and create posts within their establishment. And we also want to work with the private sector to see how they can support this programme because it's employment," said Singh. At the end of the 22-months, selected municipalities will be part of the 'anchor' initiatives that will receive further support to continue with their implementation of the CCA, added Fakir.



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58 PROJECTS AIM TO RESTORE WATER, SANITATION IN MATJHABENG

Matjhabeng Local Municipality says steady progress is being made in restoring reliable water and sanitation services, as large-scale infrastructure works continue across the municipal area under the Ministerial Directive programme.

The intervention, implemented in partnership with Vaal Central Water, the Department of Water and Sanitation, COGTA and other stakeholders, is focused on repairing ageing infrastructure, improving water supply systems and tackling long-standing sewer and sanitation challenges affecting communities.

According to the latest Command Centre Dashboard, 58 projects are currently under construction across Matjhabeng. These aim to improve the efficiency of the municipal water network, strengthen pressure management, reduce water losses and enhance overall service delivery.

Municipal officials say the visible progress on the ground signals that the turnaround strategy to rebuild and modernise water infrastructure is gaining traction.

Several projects have already been completed, while others are advancing steadily.

Ongoing work includes upgrading pump stations, drilling and refurbishing boreholes, installing pressure-reducing valves, rehabilitating reservoirs, replacing pipelines, optimising networks, and carrying out electrical and mechanical upgrades at water facilities.

These interventions are expected to stabilise water supply in high-demand areas, improve pumping capacity and fast-track the handover of completed infrastructure for full municipal operations.

In Thabong and surrounding areas, contractors are working simultaneously to replace damaged and ageing sewer lines. Officials noted that some processes require the temporary plugging of manholes to install new infrastructure.

This has led to sewer backflows and flooding in certain wards, affecting homes, schools and businesses. The municipality has acknowledged the inconvenience, stressing that the disruptions are temporary and directly linked to ongoing upgrade work.

Officials remain confident that once the sewer replacement programme is completed, pump stations are restored and wastewater treatment works are fully operational, communities will experience fewer spillages, cleaner envi-

ronments and improved living conditions.

To keep the programme on track, Executive Mayor Thanduxolo Khalipa, municipal management, the Department of Water and Sanitation, COGTA, Vaal Central Water and contractors hold fortnightly progress meetings to assess each active project.

These sessions help identify delays, resolve technical challenges, monitor contractor performance and ensure coordinated implementation. They also support quicker decision-making, improved accountability and better planning to meet deadlines.

Residents have been urged to help safeguard infrastructure by avoiding the dumping of foreign objects into manholes and sewer systems. Authorities warn that vandalism and misuse often cause blockages, spillages and costly delays.

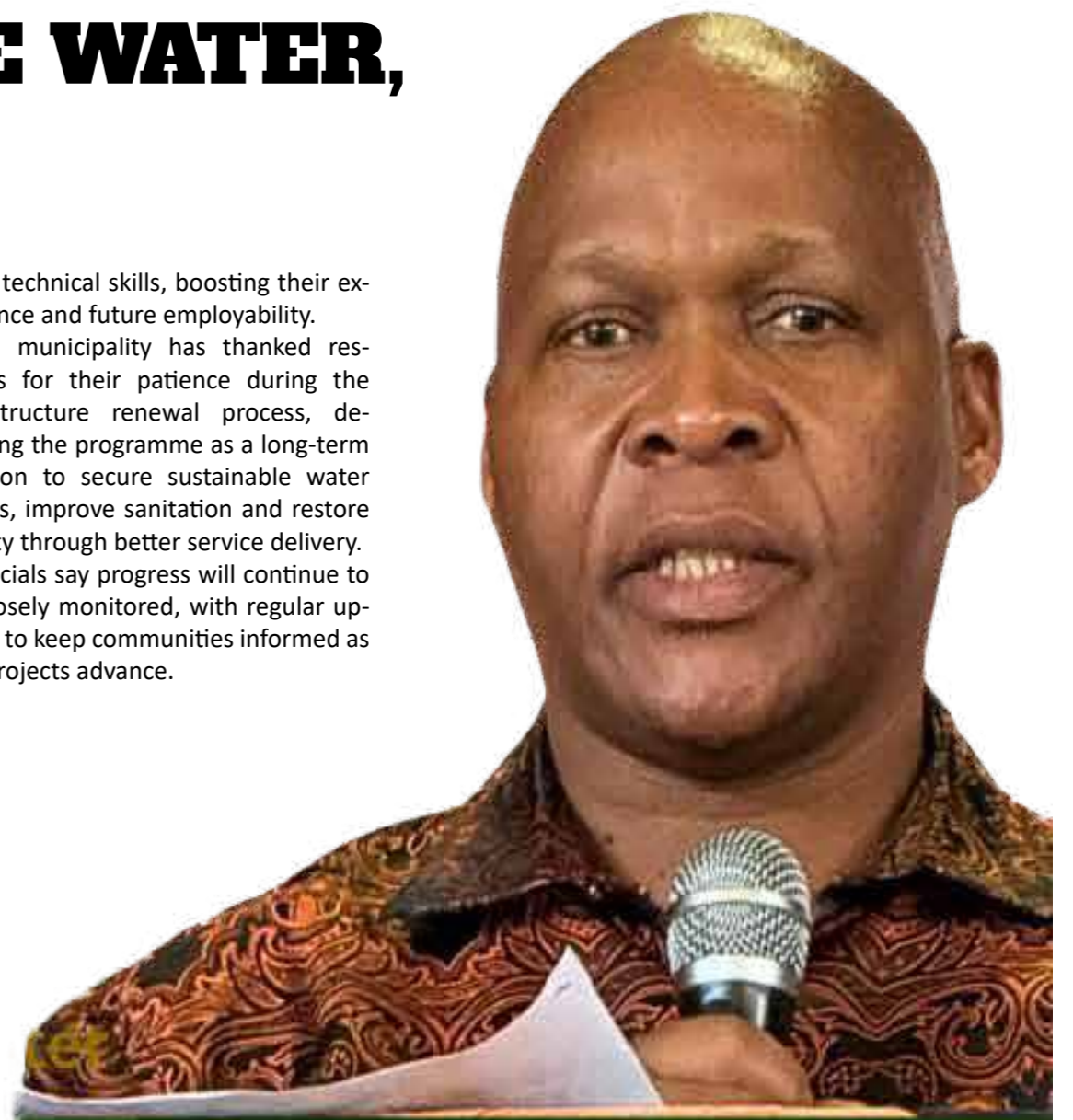
Beyond improving services, the programme is creating local economic opportunities. A total of 107 SMMEs have been appointed, while 348 local labourers have been employed — including 135 men, 58 women, 154 youth and one person living with a disability.

Workers are also receiving on-site training in civil works, first aid and re-

lated technical skills, boosting their experience and future employability.

The municipality has thanked residents for their patience during the infrastructure renewal process, describing the programme as a long-term solution to secure sustainable water access, improve sanitation and restore dignity through better service delivery.

Officials say progress will continue to be closely monitored, with regular updates to keep communities informed as the projects advance.



Cllr Thanduxolo Khalipa
Executive Mayor of Matjhabeng

Opinion

Author Dr Dorcas Basimanyane is a development lawyer and legal scholar specialising in international trade and investments law, business and human rights, technology law and economic governance based at the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria.



OP- ED: From Paris to the Niger Delta: Why Human Rights Due Diligence Has a Geography Problem

Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence, Legal Pluralism, Corporate Accountability, Africa, Human Rights-Based Approach, Endogenous Governance.

Global discourse on corporate accountability is witnessing a fundamental reorientation. For decades, the governance of transnational corporations (TNCs) regarding human rights and environmental standards was relegated to voluntary initiatives and the frequently indeterminate concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The limitations of this voluntarist approach have precipitated a decisive turn towards “hard law,” as continued corporate impunity for environmental degradation, labour exploitation, and community displacement necessitates stricter regulation. The rapid proliferation of Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence (mHRDD) legislation epitomises this shift.

Leading this legislative wave are instruments such as the French Duty of Vigilance Law, the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG), and the European Union’s Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD). These regimes statutorily mandate companies to identify, prevent, mitigate, and account for adverse human rights and environmental impacts throughout their global value chains.

While this transition represents a significant and timely advancement in the field of Business and Human Rights (BHR), it remains underpinned by a distinctly Western regulatory imaginary. This model envisions accountability as a linear product of formal state legislation, bureaucratic corporate reporting, and judicial remedy through formal state courts. What is implicit in this framework is a diffusionist assumption that; effective regulatory innovation flows from the “developed” legal systems of Europe to the “under-regulated” zones of the Global South. Consequently, the global BHR agenda often focuses on how to “transplant” these Western models into African legal systems to fill a perceived regulatory vacuum.

Decoding Legal Pluralism in the African Context

Legal pluralism is the condition in which two or more legal systems coexist within a single social field. In the African context, it constitutes a defin-



ing reality of the post-colonial legal order emerging from the historical imposition of colonial law alongside resilient indigenous legal orders.

Accountability for a transnational corporation operating in Africa is therefore shaped by overlapping normative orders. These include state law (formal statutory frameworks enforced by state courts, such as Mining Codes); customary law (indigenous laws governing land tenure and family, legally recognised by many African constitutions and serving as the primary source of law for the rural communities); regional law (supranational norms generated by the African Union and regional economic groupings); and living law (actual social norms and practices accepted as binding by communities.)

The Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)

Building on the above, the integration of the Human Rights-Based Approach, transforms these pluralistic normative practices from a technical exercise to a rights-centric framework. In this way, applying the HRBA to corporate accountability shifts the analytical lens from risks to the business to risks to rights-holders. It frames participation not merely as a stakeholder management tool but as a sub-

stantive human right. In doing so, the HRBA reveals the due diligence functions are already embedded in African administrative procedures and traditional institutions, even if the form differs from the European model.

The Pitfalls of Western Models in an African Context

To understand why an endogenous African approach is necessary, we must unpack the assumptions embedded in Western mHRDD models. Frameworks like the French Loi de Vigilance represent normative progress but they are grounded in legal and institutional foundations that struggle to translate to the African reality. In particular, the Western frameworks are fundamentally designed as supply chain laws. They are premised in the idea that accountability cascades vertically from a Global North buyer down to a Global South supplier. In Africa however, the corporate presence is often not distant but proximate. The multinational corporations frequently operate as local actors such as the mine operators or agribusinesses occupying ancestral land. This means core governance challenge remains territorial, not merely supply chain based.

Moreover, while laws such as the German Supply Chain Due Diligence Act (LkSG) rely heavily on risk mapping and reporting as compliance mechanisms, in Africa, this frequently manifests as a “tick-box” exercise. Companies tend to produce elaborate vigilance plans and reports in Europe that bear little resemblance to the lived realities on the ground, an example is in like in the DRC or the Niger Delta (Nigeria).

Evaluating -Existing African Practices: De Facto Due Diligence

Turning to Environmental and Land Governance, African statutory frameworks for environmental and land management embed robust procedural mechanisms. Unlike early Western environmental laws that focused purely on biophysical impacts, most African Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) regulations explicitly require human rights-aligned social impact assessments. An example is the South Africa’s National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), it compel companies to identify affected communities, consult through public hearings, and mitigate harm. Additionally, many African states codify the “Social License to Operate.” Through Community Development Agreements (CDAs) especially in Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Guinea, where mining companies must negotiate binding benefit-sharing and risk-mitigation contracts with communities as a strict condition for licensing.

Civil Society Monitoring role

African civil society has pioneered methodologies for monitoring corporate conduct. These include the use of “shadow reporting” to document abuses, as well as Community-Led Impact Assessments (CLIAs) which empower affected communities to conduct their own counter-assessments. These approaches generate independent, community driven data that challenge official narrative and compel companies to address overlooked human rights risks.

**Author Dr Dorcas Basimanyane is a development lawyer and legal scholar specialising in international trade and investments law, business and human rights, technology law and economic governance based at the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria.*

The SIU Recovered Billions, So what? Or rather what’s next?



Refilwe Mochoari
Editor-in-Chief

As long as the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) does not launch a probe into the Phala Phala scandal, my doubts about its impartiality will persist.

The SIU is on a mission to recover missing state funds. It has been exposing everyone and everything that seems to have their bank accounts in suspicious order.

Hi everyone, my name is Refilwe Mochoari, let’s talk about the SIU’s probes on stolen and missing state funds.

I belong to an SIU media WhatsApp group, and every time a message drops from the communications team, I know that the country is about to get shook.

#SiyabongaNkosi #HangwaniMumela #NakoMangTrading #RubiconCommunications #Ndoweni-Makutu

In the past nine months alone, the SIU has helped recover over R6 billion that was stolen from state-owned entities, and according to the 2024/25 financial year annual report, the entity helped recover R1.3 billion in cash and assets.

The SIU has preserved R250.3 million in assets including 11 luxury cars and eight properties that are linked to the Tembisa hospital corruption, the #ThembisaHospital-Capture

From the National Lotteries Commission (NLC), in April alone R3.2 million was recovered for misappropriated NLC funds that were meant for community development, the #LottoHeist

At the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) the entity recovered over R2 billion in unallocated funds from universities and TVET colleges.

It is currently in the process of recovering over R19 million linked to Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) TERS fraud.

UIF TERS is the COVID-19 temporary employee-employer relief scheme, which was designed to provide income replacement to employees who lost income or could not work due to COVID-19 lockdowns.

It also preserved 17 immovable properties worth over R76 million and seven luxury vehicles linked to Eskom, the #EskomProbe

This order granted by Judge Ngoepe prevents these assets from being sold, transferred, or hidden while it seeks to set aside irregular contracts and recover public funds.

Most recently, the SIU welcomed a tribunal to block an R85 million South Africa Mozambique border wall tender in KwaZulu-Natal that was awarded to a company that submitted a fraudulent B-BBEE certificate, an expired Letter of Good Standing, and is non-compliant with financial capacity requirements.

The SIU also revealed that only 5.29km of the planned 8km wall was erected with significant associated works left unfinished, and says it will now pursue the recovery of monies that have already been paid.

The work of the SIU is clear. It is to recover what was stolen, preserve what can be recovered, and expose corruption wherever it hides.

It starts with the Auditor-General (AG) who tells us that the money is wasted through an AG report.

You know how it talks about wasteful and irregular expenditures.

But here is my question?

What happens after these reports have been released, money returned and all assets are recovered?

Is the SIU targeting individuals or are they simply reinforcing their commitment to protecting public funds?

Is the SIU running a Public Relations campaign, or can justice prevail?

Remember how it issued a whole media statement naming and shaming media personality Minnie Dhlamini for accepting a payment of R50 000 that she was paid for by a company that hired her. That raised some eyebrows, because how did Minnie know that those were stolen public funds?

Does the SIU sometimes just seek attention?

Is the SIU holding individuals accountable or is it trying too hard to push its Public Relations at the expense of individuals who are innocent?

Are all animals equal while some are more equal than others?

As an entity that was set up to investigate allegations of corruption and maladministration in the affairs of government departments, municipalities, and state-owned entities.

For me, the real test for the entity would be if it dares to probe the President himself over the Phala Phala scandal? Will they dare?

Their boss?

The official who is supposed to authorize the investigations to be launched?

This for me, remains the biggest elephant in the room...

Letter to the Editor

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Pastor Motsamai Kareli

Empowerment Ministries International

All That Glitters is Not Gold

Differentiate between emerging technologies that are just hype and those that can lead to business impact.

When’s the last time you had a truly futuristic learning experience? The kind that made you lean in, blink twice, and think, “Wait—did that just happen?”

Maybe it was an artificial-intelligence chatbot that nailed your tone so well you wondered whether it had been reading your texts. Or perhaps it was a fully immersive headset demonstration during which you leaned away from a virtual cliff because your brain said, “Nope, that’s too real.”

Here’s the truth: The future of learning isn’t just around the bend. It’s already at your desk, in your onboarding programs, and probably on your learners’ phones.

Every year, forces far outside our L&D bubble reshape workplace learning—for example, shifting workforce expectations; hybrid and remote work; and the way consumer technology has trained people to expect instant, visual, personalized experiences. We’ve all felt that subtle shift where yesterday’s “wow” feature suddenly becomes today’s baseline expectation.

Emerging technologies—such as AI, immersive tools, and wearables—are here, delivering scalable, personalized learning that meets both business goals and learner needs. The challenge is that between hype videos, vendor promises, and sudden leadership drive-bys (“Why aren’t we doing this yet?”), it’s easy to feel as if you’re constantly recalculating your route with a mix of excitement and trepidation. The answer isn’t to try everything. Instead, it’s to know what’s worth your L&D team’s time, how to test the technology, and when to go all in for results that matter.

Technology now moves faster than old-school

L&D cycles. What once took years to evaluate can happen in months or weeks. That pace demands sharper decision-making tools and the courage to experiment.

The organizations thriving today aren’t the ones stockpiling every tool but rather those that are aligning new capabilities directly to measurable business results. Tools don’t drive transformation—people do, and the smartest individuals know exactly where they’re headed.

Driving vs. drifting

Adoption of emerging technology doesn’t just happen—real pressures and opportunities drive it forward. Picture this: You are midproject, everything’s on track, and suddenly a shiny new tool drops. Leadership says, “Let’s try it.” You test it, it tanks, and now you’re untangling the mess. That’s the concept of drifting. Let’s examine some examples in comparison to driving the effort.

Skills gaps and digital transformation pressures.

Driving entails spotting where capabilities need to grow and using technology to close the gap before it hurts performance. Drifting involves waiting until the gap starts costing you results and then scrambling.

Hybrid work and remote onboarding challenges.

Driving entails designing rich, interactive experiences that build culture and capability from anywhere. Drifting involves sending new hires a PDF and hoping they figure it out.

Learner expectations shaped by consumer technology.

Driving entails matching the intuitive, personalized feel learners get from their favorite apps. Drifting involves offering clunky, outdated systems that frustrate and disengage.

The need for scalable, data-informed, engaging solutions.

Driving entails using analytics to refine, improve, and prove value. Drifting involves counting completions and smile sheets and calling it a win.

Most L&D practitioners have had experiences driving as well as drifting—sometimes in the same quarter. The difference between the two is whether you’re steering with purpose or simply letting the current push you around.

For instance, consider a global logistics company that saw a 30 percent surge in seasonal hiring, most of which for fully remote roles. Instead of letting chaos take the wheel, the L&D team rolled out a 360-degree virtual onboarding tour paired with mobile microlearning. The result? Time to competence dropped 25 percent compared to the previous onboarding process. That’s driving.

And after you’ve felt that kind of result, it’s hard to go back to PDFs and crossing fingers.

The Gartner Hype Cycle

Once you know what’s pushing a technology tool forward, the next big question is when to hit the gas and when to tap the brakes—because timing matters just as much as direction.

Every new technology comes with a hype wave. At first, there are glossy videos, breathless headlines, and that one person in a meeting who swears the tool is going to change everything. Gartner’s Hype Cycle model is a great way to see where a technology sits on its journey from shiny idea to stable, valuable tool.

Since 1995, the Gartner Hype Cycle has been the map for navigating new technology from “wow” to “works.” Created by analyst Jackie Fenn, it draws on innovation research and theories—such as Everett Rogers’s Diffusion of Innovations and Amara’s Law (“We tend to overestimate the effect of a technology in the short run and underestimate the effect in the long run”)—to track how emerging technol-

ogies mature over time. The resource is a simple curve that maps a technology’s maturity, marking the route of everything from the early days of cloud computing to the blockchain boom to today’s generative AI, helping leaders decide when to explore, pilot, or fully adopt a technology.

Using Gartner’s Hype Cycle is like checking the weather before a road trip—you’ll still make your moves, but you won’t get caught in a storm you could have avoided. It plays out in five phases:

1. Innovation Trigger. A breakthrough, big announcement, or prototype gets everyone buzzing.

2. Peak of Inflated Expectations. This is when over-the-top promises emerge, such as “We’ll all be working in the metaverse by next Tuesday.

3. Trough of Disillusionment. The tool doesn’t deliver, adoption slows, and critics pile on.

4. Slope of Enlightenment. Teams figure out what the tool is indeed good for and start using it effectively.

5. Plateau of Productivity. The technology becomes a normal, reliable part of work.

Remember the first corporate chatbots? Most launched at the Peak phase, with generic, irrelevant answers and low adoption. Fast-forward a few years, and AI-powered bots, trained on real company data, reached the Slope of Enlightenment. Now they’re delivering helpful, contextual answers and saving people time.

The Hype Cycle isn’t just a theory—it’s a risk management tool. It helps you research what your L&D team could do so you can budget for exploration and keeps you from scaling too soon. Prior to investing in a technology, ask yourself: Where is it on the Hype Cycle, and are we ready for it at this stage? If it’s still in phases 1&2, brace for a few wrong turns before you find your lane.

Business

Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	16.84	-1.93%	▼
Rand/Pound	22.71	-1.81%	▼
Rand/Euro	19.68	-1.73%	▼
Platinum	1 888.50	-3.06%	▼
Brent Crude	118.68	7.80%	▲
Gold	4 534.63	-1.34%	▼
Ethereum	2 240.45	-2.11%	▼
Bitcoin	75 137.04	-1.59%	▼

Ramaphosa Signals Recovery and Reforms

As structural reforms take root and investment surges, the President outlines a clear path toward inclusive growth and national renewal



President Cyril Ramaphosa. Picture: GCI5

By JN Business Reporter

In a landmark address marking three decades of the National Business Initiative, President Cyril Ramaphosa presented a compelling case for a South African economy that is finally turning a corner.

Moving beyond the stagnation of previous years, Ramaphosa painted a picture of a nation where the prospects of growth are no longer just a hope but a measurable reality.

This shift is grounded in a deliberate structural reform agenda that has institutionalised change, making it more resilient to the fluctuations of the global market. At the heart of this transformation is Operation Vulindlela, which has gained significant momentum and provided the necessary foundation for growing confidence in the country's economic trajectory.

Central to this recovery is the remarkable stabilisation of the national energy grid and the restoration of

sound governance within key state-owned enterprises

The President noted with particular emphasis that the energy crisis is largely a thing of the past as the state lays the groundwork for a transformed, competitive, and sustainable electricity market.

"We have restored sound governance to a number of our state-owned enterprises, including to Eskom, that last year returned to profitability for the first time in eight years."

A standout achievement in this regard is the return of Eskom to profitability, a milestone that signals a departure from the era of state capture and mismanagement. Ramaphosa also highlighted a surge in investor appetite, evidenced by the record-breaking R890-billion in investment pledges secured at the sixth South Africa Investment Conference.

This influx of capital is being met with a massive state commitment to physical renewal, including a R1-trillion infrastructure build over the next three years.

This programme, described as the largest in the country's history, aims to fix the logistics and water sectors while modernising the rail and port systems.

"Growth is improving, investment is expanding and more jobs are being created."

Looking ahead, the Government of National Unity (GNU) is prioritising inclusive growth and the reduction of the high cost of living. By focusing on implementation at scale, the state intends to deepen collaboration with the business community to achieve economic transformation that benefits all levels of society.

Ramaphosa's tone remained resolutely optimistic, calling on all partners to seize this window of opportunity as national debt has stabilised and the sovereign outlook has improved.

By staying the course and focusing on a capable, ethical, and developmental state, South Africa is positioned to complete the bridge from the promise of its Constitution to a thriving economic future.

Analysts warn fuel hike will hit economy despite extended levy relief

Analysts have pointed out that the anticipated fuel price hike in May will deal a blow to the economy despite the fuel relief measures extended by the government.

This week, the National Treasury announced an extension of the general fuel levy relief in May.

Motorists using petrol cars will continue to receive a R3 per litre relief, while those using diesel will benefit from a R3.93 cents per litre discount.

Independent Economist Elize Kruger says the upcoming fuel price increases are likely to trigger a widespread upward price shock in the economy.

She says inflation could average up to 4.6% if fuel prices remain elevated.

"On the petrol price, the April increase will be followed by another increase of around R2 per litre next week on the 6th of May, and this is excluding any potential increase in the slate levy. Similarly, for the



diesel price, the April increase of R7,37 will be followed by another increase of around R3.60 on 6 May. So, cumulatively, if you look at April and May, the petrol price

is up by about R5 per litre, and cumulatively the diesel price will be up by about R11 per litre, so this remains a notable shock to the economy." **SABC News**

Gungubele Strengthens Digital Ties with Huawei



Deputy Minister Mondli Gungubele. Picture: Supplied

By JN Reporter

The Department of Communications and Digital Technologies has reaffirmed its commitment to South Africa's digital transformation through continued collaboration with global industry leaders. This follows an official visit by Deputy Minister Mondli Gungubele to the Huawei Office Park in Woodmead.

The visit, conducted at the invitation of Huawei Technologies South Africa, served as a strategic engagement to align government priorities with industry capabilities. Gungubele emphasised that partnerships of this nature are essential for fostering innovation and accelerating digital inclusion across the country.

During the engagement, the Deputy Minister

met with the newly appointed CEO of Huawei Enterprise South Africa, Mr. Kui Zheng. The meeting provided a platform for the department to gain insights into Huawei's latest ICT developments and its ongoing contributions to the local digital landscape.

The department noted that strengthening ties with major technology providers is a critical component of its agenda to build a more connected South Africa. By engaging directly with industry experts, the government aims to better navigate the rapidly evolving ICT sector and ensure that technological advancements translate into tangible benefits for all citizens.

These discussions are expected to play a vital role in shaping future digital policies and infrastructure projects, as the department continues to seek practical solutions to bridge the digital divide.

Standard Bank Breach Spurs Security Overhaul



By JN Reporter

The recent data breach at Standard Bank has moved the conversation regarding South African cybersecurity from a corporate concern to a matter of national economic security.

This incident, involving Africa's largest lender by assets, has significantly strengthened the case for a centralised national cybercrime hub to coordinate responses between the private sector and state security agencies.

The breach was first identified on 23 March 2026, when unauthorised access was gained to internal administrative and document filing systems. A threat actor using the alias 'ROOTBOY' claimed responsibility, asserting they exfiltrated approximately 1.2TB of data after spending three weeks undetected inside the network.

By mid-April, the situation escalated when the bank acknowledged that more client credit card numbers and personal details had been shared online.

Threat intelligence reports confirmed that the leaked cache included ID numbers, phone num-

bers, physical addresses, and in some cases, driver's licence and passport numbers.

"Based on what we know (at this stage) the affected information involved includes: Names, ID numbers or registration numbers, Contact details... and account numbers."

Despite the severity of the data leak, the institution has remained firm regarding the safety of client funds.

"Our transactional banking systems were not accessed, remain secure and operational, and available to all our clients and employees."

Industry analysts and the Business Day report suggest that the current fragmented approach to digital threats is no longer sufficient.

A unified cybercrime hub would allow for real-time intelligence sharing and provide law enforcement with the technical capacity to track sophisticated actors.

This would streamline reporting under the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) while ensuring that the Information Regulator and security services act in unison to safeguard the integrity of the South African financial system.

Nomzamo Mbatha to host 2026 Africa Magic Viewers' Choice Awards



South African powerhouse Nomzamo Mbatha is set to take centre stage once again—this time as one of the hosts of the 2026 Africa Magic Viewers' Choice Awards. The award-winning actress, producer and humanitarian will co-host the prestigious ceremony alongside Nigerian comedian and actor Bovi Ugboma.

The 12th edition of the AMVCAs will take place on 9 May 2026 in Lagos, Nigeria, at the iconic Eko Hotel and Suites, bringing together the continent's biggest names in film and television for a night that celebrates African storytelling at its finest.

This year's hosting announcement signals a major shift for the awards, with Mbatha and Bovi stepping into a role long held by veteran presenter IK Osakioduwa, who has fronted the ceremony since its inception in 2013. The change marks what many are calling a "new era" for the AMVCAs, one that blends fresh energy with established excellence.

For Mbatha, the moment adds yet another milestone to an already global career. From her breakout role in *Isibaya* to international recognition in *Coming 2 America* and her executive production work on *Shaka iLembe*, she has steadily positioned herself as one of Africa's most influential cultural figures.

Beyond the screen, Mbatha continues to expand her impact as a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador and global advocate, while also earning recognition on platforms like the TIME100 Next list, further cementing her status as more than just an entertainer.

Her co-host, Bovi, brings a different but equally powerful dynamic. Known for his sharp wit and commanding stage presence, the comedian has promised to bring "energy, laughs, and magic" to one of Africa's biggest entertainment stages. -non

Somizi joins the chorus of critics opposing Cynthia Erivo's Miriam Makeba casting



The casting of Cynthia Erivo as South African music icon Miriam Makeba in the upcoming musical drama, "The Road Home", has sparked widespread debate across South Africa.

The R300 million production will explore the lives of Makeba and fellow jazz legend Hugh Masekela, focusing on their experiences during apartheid and their connection to Paul Simon's historic "Graceland" tour.

The film is set to be shot in Cape Town and will also star Thabo Rametsi and Guy Pearce.

Mixed reactions to Erivo's casting while Erivo is an award-winning performer known for her portrayal of Harriet Tubman, her casting as Makeba has divided public opinion.

Many South Africans have taken to social media to express disappointment, arguing that the role should have gone to a local actress or singer who can authentically capture Makeba's linguistic and cultural identity.

Below are a few of the online reactions: @comfy86 said: "Cynthia playing Miriam? That's interesting. That woman was a pure Xhosa woman. Those clicks will be hectic."

@MaKhumz33 said: "This will be as ridiculous and hilarious as that time Jennifer Hudson and Idri-ri Elba tried to speak Xhosa and do a South African accent... Americans MUST stop this nonsense. We have perfectly capable actors in Africa who can embody Mama Makeba with the right language and accent."

Critics have particularly highlighted concerns around language, noting that Makeba was a proud isiXhosa speaker.

Others feel the casting reflects a broader trend of

international productions overlooking local talent.

However, not all reactions have been negative. Some social media users have expressed confidence in Erivo's ability to deliver a compelling performance:

@its_judina said: "Cynthia played Harriet so perfectly for Americans, and she's British. I'm sorry, guys, I don't know why I have so much faith in her killing this role. We are going to be praising her."

Somizi Mhlongo weighs in Media personality Somizi Mhlongo also joined the conversation, acknowledging the frustration felt by many South Africans while offering a broader industry perspective.

He said: "Most South Africans are not happy, including myself. I'm not happy about these Hollywood, overseas producers taking our stories and telling our stories. I understand the frustration - it is valid, it is warranted."

"But we must also consider that these things have been happening forever. The person funding the project calls the shots - they decide who plays the lead, where it's filmed and how the story is told."

"From a business perspective, the person investing wants a return on their investment. We have the best actors in this country, globally competitive, but do they always make business sense? I love Cynthia, I think she's amazing."

"So if you're looking at it from a business perspective, don't stress yourself."

A recurring debate in global storytelling The controversy highlights an ongoing conversation about representation in global cinema - particularly who gets to tell African stories and portray African icons.

As anticipation builds for "The Road Home", the discussion around authenticity, opportunity, and commercial viability continues to resonate both locally and internationally.

Whether Erivo's performance will win over sceptics remains to be seen, but the casting has undeniably reignited important conversations about ownership and representation in storytelling. - THT

DJ Ash's 16-Year Hustle Pays Off



By Bernell Simons

The spotlight was bright on the runway at the South African Fashion Week (SAFW) for the Spring/Summer 26 collection (SS26), with SA's fashion trailblazers unveiling bold, forward-thinking, show-stopping designs that reflected the evolving identity of SA fashion.

SAFW took place between 22 and 25 April in Johannesburg.

Top designers whose garments dominated the runway amongst others include Gert-Johan Coetzee, Black Coffee by Jacques van der Watt, and House of Ole by Ole Ledimo, who each delivered show-stopping looks that pushed creative boundaries.

After a brief hiatus, following 28 years of driving the SA designer fashion industry, the SAFW returned with an explosive production, delivering a three-day fashion extravaganza that brought together the fashion community in one room for a celebration of creative collaborations.

During its strategic pause, SAFW delivered two digital campaigns which included a key October rollout that extended designer collections through curated content and sustained engagement.

According to SAFW, the campaign achieved strong visibility with an average AVE of approximately R1.27 million per designer.

This month the SAFW returned with new energy and opened the runway on 22 April with the first look coming from Gert Johan Coetzee where he brought back to life "Behind The Crimson Door", a theatrical fusion of couture, aerial performance, and storytelling in collaboration with CIRK at CirK.

This collaboration was a blend of culture, aerial performance, and storytelling, and the showcase became a powerful narrative about courage, ambition, and the transformative power of pursuing one's dreams.

On 23 April Hellen Gibbs opened the day at VR-TUOSUS film studio in Hyde Park with her distinctive Helon Melon collection themed "Follow the Journey, Know the Source" which was followed by a two-day designer show, Van der Watt's Black Coffee off-grid collection which explored the tension between order and imperfection "Perfect order is impossible - beauty lies in the distortion".

Talented Emelia Dorcas of Emela D from Cape Town is the winner of the scouting menswear competition while on the third day, Something Good Studio, House of Ole, and Funduzi by Craig Jackobs showcased for "The Best Seat in the House".

The House of Ole collection opened its first look with their signature wearable art.

Founder, Olebogeng Ledimo says he believes that he was born to be a fashion designer, and that fashion is a destiny deeply rooted in his heritage.

"Looking back at my old family photo albums filled with sharp suits and meticulous tailoring, I realized that my parents saw my artistic spark early and dressed me accordingly," Ledimo said.

Chief Commercial Officer at Primedia Kelvin Storie says the SAFW has long been the cornerstone of a designer-led local fashion industry.

"We are excited to amplify the stories and work of the country's style trailblazers, and to play a meaningful role across our Primedia platforms in inspiring and supporting a new generation of creatives."

"Designers who are shaping culture, driving innovation, creating jobs and contributing to South Africa's GDP", said Storie.

A New Dawn for SAFW26



By Refilwe Mochoiari

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'Keep your eye on the prize': Somizi's message to Zee Nxumalo after Metro FM awards snub

The Metro FM Music Awards night did not go the way Zee Nxumalo and many of her fans expected. Hosted by media personalities Lerato Kganyago and Lawrence Maleka, the prestigious awards took place at the Durban ICC on April 25. Despite going into the award ceremony with seven nominations, Nxumalo walked away without bagging a single win, leaving both her and her fans questioning the outcome.

The rising star took to social media shortly after the ceremony to share her disappointment. She wrote: "God, you're confusing me. I just lost 7 awards, but my new ep is doing WELL, what must happen?"

Among those who showed support was fashion designer and media personality Somizi Mhlongo, who offered words of encouragement following Nxumalo's tough loss. "Two things, and I'm going to be honest with you. In life, there's something called

your journey. You need to keep your eye on the prize, and your prize is who you are now and who you're going to become moving forward," he said.

He went on to frame the moment as a bigger career decision rather than a single night's outcome. "If the universe told you one day, I'm giving you the option: do you want seven awards and to be overexposed, only for it to diminish next year? Or do you want me to sustain you so that your career lasts long term?" He also pointed out that accolades don't always translate to longevity.

"Because there are people who have 40 awards, but the last time they performed was four or five years ago. So you are proof that awards are great. They're a booster, a pat on the back, a 'well done'." Mhlongo added, "If you say you're doing this for fame, you've already lost. You have to do it for the passion, because when fame fades, what's going to keep you going?" IOL

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Notice is hereby given in terms of regulation 68 of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937, of the intention to apply for the issue of a certified copy of Deed of Transfer T18339/2006 passed by PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF FREE STATE in favour of MOTHUSI AUBREY BAEPANE, Identity Number 7211225855085, Unmarried in respect of ERF 12320 HEIDEDAL EXTENSION 26, DISTRICT BLOEMFONTEIN, PROVINCE FREE STATE IN EXTENT 350 (THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY) Square metres

HELD BY Deed of Transfer T18339/2006 All interested persons having objection to the issue of such copy are hereby required to lodge the same in writing with the Registrar of Deeds: FREE STATE at BLOEMFONTEIN within two weeks from the date of the publication of this notice.

Dated at Bloemfontein this 29 APRIL 2026

CONVEYANCER
ABEL JACOBUS DU PLESSIS BENADÉ (LPCM-57419)

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GIGGuide

Friday 01 May 2026
My we Chill
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Bloemfontein

Saturday 02 May 2026
Fam Fest
Bloem Show
Bloemfontein

Thursday 30 April 2026
Ashby
Sechaba Lounge
Bloemfontein

Monday 04 May 2026
Monday are the new Saturdays
Ekheneni
Bloemfontein

Minister Ndabeni leads Freedom Day Marathon



By Refilwe Mochoari

The Mangaung community celebrated a vibrant and joyful Freedom Day with a successful marathon held on Saturday 25 April 2025, at the Mangaung City Hall, featuring over 500 enthusiastic runners.

This year marked the 8th annual Mangaung Athletics Club (MAC) Freedom Day marathon.

This year the club in collaboration with the Department of Small Business Development as well as the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDEFA), the marathon was delivered to empower all communities.

The event was graced by the Minister of Small Business Development, Stella Abrahams Ndabeni, the MEC for Sport, Art, Culture and Recreation, Zanele Sibuba, Executive Mayor of Mangaung Metropolitan

Municipality Gregory Nthatsi and the Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Community Safety and Police, Sibongile Tsoaeli.

The marathon featured five race categories, a 42.2 km full marathon, a 21.1 km half marathon, a 10 km race, a 5 km fun run, and a family-friendly 1.6 km fun walk.

Additionally, this race served as an official qualifier for the Comrades Marathon, scheduled for 14 June between Durban and Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal.

During a media interview, Ndabeni, who also participated in the 42 km race, emphasized that the main aim of the day was to commemorate Freedom Day while promoting community wellness, social cohesion, and economic participation.

"The sports economy presents real opportunities, yet many entrepreneurs are not fully tapping into

this space. "From runners and coaches to those producing goods and offering services, sport itself is a business that can create jobs and sustain livelihoods", Ndabeni said.

Beyond the race, the event provided a platform for 20 entrepreneurs to showcase their small businesses through exhibitions.

It also delivered a vibrant family-friendly experience with a designated children's area, live entertainment from local DJs, aerobics sessions, judo and self-defense demonstrations, and a sip-and-paint activity.

The marathon served as a lead-up to the country's Freedom Day celebrations on Monday 27 April, where President Cyril Ramaphosa delivered his Freedom Day speech at the Dr Molemela Rantai Stadium under the theme was "Freedom and the Rule of Law: Thirty Years of Democratic Citizenship."



HEALTH

Seasonal Affective Disorder explained: The science behind winter depression and how to spot it

As the crisp air settles over South Africa and the sun dips behind the horizon a little earlier each evening; many of us feel a familiar shift.

We often refer to this as the winter blues. It is that specific sluggishness that makes hitting the snooze button feel irresistible and makes a quiet night on the couch far more appealing than a social gathering.

But for some, this seasonal shift is more than just a passing mood. It is a biological hurdle that can deeply impact mental well-being.

According to the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG), while many of us struggle with the change of season, there is a distinct difference between feeling a bit "off" and experiencing Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Understanding this distinction is the first step in reclaiming your vitality during the colder months.

Beyond the winter blues It is easy to dismiss seasonal fatigue as a lack of discipline, but the numbers suggest a significant portion of the population is physically struggling.

Dr Bianca Brandt, a referring doctor to Mediclinic Hermanus, notes that about 10 per cent of mood disorders follow a seasonal pattern. "True Seasonal Affective Disorder rates are only 2 to 3 per cent in the general public, but winter blues affect about 15 per cent of people," Dr Brandt explains.

She points out that in South Africa, our baseline depression rate is already high, with over 25 per cent of people reporting moderate to severe symptoms.

When you add poorly insulated homes and the spike in joint pain and muscle aches that come with the cold, it creates a perfect storm for a dip in mental health.

Recognising the red flags SADAG emphasises that recognising the warning signs is vital for early intervention.

Unlike general depression, SAD often presents with very specific physical and behavioural cues.

You might notice a persistent "heavy" feeling in your arms or legs, or find yourself oversleeping yet still waking up exhausted.

A hallmark of the condition is a change in appetite, particularly intense cravings for carbohydrates and sugary foods, which often leads to seasonal weight gain.

Emotionally, the red flags include a loss of interest in hobbies you usually love and a strong urge to "hibernate" by withdrawing from friends and family.

The science of sunlight The primary culprit behind these heavy feelings is often the lack of morning sunlight.

The Vitamin D dilemma In South Africa, we often take our sunshine for granted, but during winter, especially in the Western Cape, the angle of the sun means UVB rays are much less intense.

From June to August, Vitamin D levels can drop significantly as we spend more time indoors.

While ten minutes of sun a few times a week is enough in summer, winter requires a more conscious effort.

Dr Brandt suggests 20 to 40 minutes of sun exposure on the legs, arms, and face at least three to five days a week.

Clinical steps and treatment Before jumping to a diagnosis, it is important to rule out other physical conditions..

For those diagnosed with SAD, SADAG highlights several effective treatment pathways.

Phototherapy, or light box therapy, involves sitting in front of a specialised light for about 30 minutes each morning to reset the circadian rhythm.

Moving through the cold It is no secret that exercise is a powerful antidepressant, but when the rain is lashing against the windows, the motivation to move often evaporates. JN_IOL



Food Recipes

"Een Man Skottel" (One Man Dish) The Coloured "Moer alles by"



Recipe by Beverley Simons
A hearty, all-in-one oven dish loved in many Coloured homes — simple, flavourful, and perfect for feeding a crowd with minimal fuss. It's especially ideal on those busy days as a mother when there's no time to stand and stir a pot — easy, convenient, and still packed with taste.

Ingredients:

- Oil (for frying)
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2-3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 thumb-sized piece ginger, chopped
- Salt and pepper (to taste)
- Six Gun Grill seasoning (to taste)
- Meat of your choice (chicken, beef, lamb, or mixed)
- 1-2 cups rice (depending on servings)
- 1 beef stock cube
- 1 mutton stock cube
- 1 oxtail stock cube
- Water (enough to cover ingredients)

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 250°C.
 2. Heat oil in a large oven-safe pan or roasting tray.
 3. Add chopped onion, garlic, and ginger. Let it sauté until fragrant.
 4. Add your meat of choice, then season with salt, pepper, and Six Gun Grill spice.
 5. Allow everything to braai and simmer together, letting the meat cook partially and absorb the flavours.
 6. Add the uncooked rice (1-2 cups depending on how many you're serving).
 7. Crumble in the beef, mutton, and oxtail stock cubes.
 8. Pour in enough water to cover everything in the pan.
 9. Cover with a lid or foil and place in the oven.
 10. Bake for about 45 minutes, or until the rice is cooked and the liquid is absorbed.
- Tips
- Check halfway through and add a bit more water if needed.
 - You can add vegetables like carrots, peas, or potatoes for extra bulk.
 - Let it rest for a few minutes before serving so the flavours settle.

FASHION

S.P.C.C Collective Takes Over SA Men's Fashion Week, Introduces Future Protocol

By Refilwe Mochoari

Winter 2026 has landed with a disruptive layering, an edgier palette, and a brand-new label to watch.

Yesterday the City of Cape Town could feel the shift the moment the lights dropped.

S.P.C.C Collective, South Africa's most consistently forward-thinking menswear denim brands which designs and produces contemporary streetwear, tailoring, and accessories from its Cape Town base, with Future Protocol joining its roster of in-house labels in 2026 returned to SA Men's Fashion Week with a Winter 2026 collection that did exactly what the streetwear establishment had come to expect from the brand.

The runway was packed, the reception was loud, and the clothes, unmistakably, the sharpest conversation in the room.

This season S.P.C.C leaned into disruption with heavy layers, denim staples, sculptural outerwear, and an unapologetic study in winter that carried the opening looks, each one built around the kind of considered military tailoring-meets-street sensibility that has kept the Collective ahead of the local pack for years.

"The silhouettes felt bigger, looser, more confident and suited for everyone, said Bridgette Makhela of Public Relations company B-Kool Media.

Makhela in a press statement says the night's real surprise, came from the Collective's newest signing. "Future Protocol, is a recent-

ly launched label sitting under the S.P.C.C umbrella, and currently only available at selected S.P.C.C Bases and online, also used its South Africa Fashion Week moment to announce itself with genuine force.

"The label brought a fresh energy and a distinctly new colour palette to the runway, softer tones cut with unexpected brights, washed-out neutrals playing off sharper accent pieces, and reframed what a Collective drop can look like in 2026.

"The cuts are the real headline, relaxed and boxy.

"There is an international polish here that feels cross-continental rather than borrowed, edgy without chasing a trend.

"If you have been waiting for a South African label that reads as comfortable on a Seoul or Berlin Street Cape Town, Future Protocol just gave you one.

"As always, S.P.C.C's mastery of finishing is where the collective pulls ahead.

"Every trim, label, hardware choice, and branding element on the Winter '26 pieces is considered functional, tactile, and built to the kind of quality that rewards close inspection.

"The accessories and footwear, too, carried serious weight with bags, caps, beanies, and sneakers that did not feel like afterthoughts but were fully considered pieces in their own right. "It's the part of the collection that will outlast the season and what the Collective's loyal audience showed us for. "The Winter '26 collection and the debut of Future Protocol drop are available now at selected S.P.C.C Bases and online.

Given the turnout JN_Lifestyle last week, and the speed at which the Collective's previous drops have cleared, "now" is not an exaggeration, added Makhela.



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FIFA WORLD CUP 2026™

GROUP STAGE

A	MEXICO CANADA USA MEXICO	G	BRUNAI INDONESIA MALAYSIA THAILAND
B	CHINA INDONESIA MALAYSIA THAILAND	H	CHINA INDONESIA MALAYSIA THAILAND
C	USA MEXICO CANADA USA	I	FRANCE GERMANY NETHERLANDS POLAND
D	USA MEXICO CANADA USA	J	ARGENTINA BRAZIL FRANCE GERMANY
E	USA MEXICO CANADA USA	K	PORTUGAL CROATIA NETHERLANDS POLAND
F	NETHERLANDS JAPAN KOREA SAUDI ARABIA	L	NETHERLANDS JAPAN KOREA SAUDI ARABIA




Hometown Hero Rises ... Chiefs reject, Tebogo Potsane, reminded his former team of his quality yesterday in Bloemfontein. Picture: Baagedi Sethora

Siwelele Sink Chiefs as Downs Seal Summit Return

Claiming maximum points against Amakhosi sees Siwelele FC inch closer to a top 8 finish, while Masandawana reclaimed top spot with an away win

By Mpho Sekharume

Siwelele FC delivered a clinical performance to defeat Kaizer Chiefs 2-0 at the Free State Stadium earlier this evening. The home side capitalised on early defensive errors to secure a vital victory that halted the visitors' recent unbeaten run.

Tebogo Potsane, who was offloaded by Amakhosi in July 2025, opened the scoring just seven minutes into the first stanza after reacting fastest to a rebound from a saved effort by Chiefs shot stopper, Brandon Petersen.

The hosts maintained their intensity throughout the first half, frequently exploiting gaps in the Amakhosi defensive line and eventually extended their lead to two goals in the 26th minute when Ghampani Lungu orchestrated a swift counter-attack that caught the opposition off guard. His precise pass allowed Sphehsile Jeza to strike firmly into the net, capping off a dominant opening period for the home team.

Kaizer Chiefs struggled to find any meaningful rhythm despite tactical changes made at the half-time interval.

Their attempts to bridge the deficit were thwarted by a resolute defensive effort and alert goalkeeping from Ricardo Goss.

The result leaves the Naturena-based club facing renewed pressure as they struggle for consistency in the final stretch of the season. Fans expressed significant frustration following the final

whistle, highlighting the disconnect between the team's performance and the standards expected by the club leadership.

"We knew that if we remained compact and hit them on the break, we would get our chances today," Lehlohono Seema, Siwelele FC Coach, said in a post match interview.

Kaizer Chiefs Co-Coach, Cedric Kaze, on the other hand, couldn't hold back his disappointment.

"South Africans deserve better, and our performance today did not deliver the standard that is acceptable for this club," he said.

Meanwhile, the race for the premiership title at the top of the log intensified as Mamelodi Sundowns reclaimed the lead with a 1-0 victory over Polokwane City. The match at the Seshego Stadium was a tightly contested affair that saw the Brazilians grind out a crucial result through Marcelo Allende 62nd minute scorcher.

Sundowns controlled the tempo for long spells, though they found it difficult to break down a resilient Polokwane City defense. The deadlock was finally broken in the 62nd minute when Marcelo Allende connected with a cross from Lebo Mothiba to score the deciding goal.

The visitors had a prime opportunity to double their lead shortly after when they were awarded a penalty following a foul on Khulumani Ndumane. However, Polokwane City goalkeeper Lindokuhle Mathebula denied Lebohang Mothiba and produced a vital save to keep his side within

striking distance.

"Reclaiming the top spot was our primary objective today and I am proud of the players' resilience," Downs coach, Miguel Cardoso, stated.

The solitary goal victory sealed Sundowns' return to the summit of the Betway Premiership with Orlando Pirates sinking down to second spot with a two-point deficit.

Despite their disciplined defensive setup, City were unable to trouble the visitors' goal with any significant regularity throughout the 90 minutes.

The tactical discipline displayed by all sides tonight underscores the heightened stakes as the league approaches its conclusion.

Coaches have clearly shifted their focus toward securing points, often at the expense of attacking flair in these high-pressure encounters.

"We gave it our all, but one lapse in concentration against a team like Sundowns is all it takes to lose," said City Coach, Phuti Mohofe, after the home loss.

With only a handful of fixtures remaining, the momentum has shifted back to the defending champions Sundowns as they pursue their record-extending 9th league title in a row.

The chasing pack now also has to regroup quickly for the next round of matches to either keep their top eight aspirations alive or to avoid slumping into the relegation zone.

Teams now face a short turnaround period to recover and prepare for another challenging round of fixtures this coming weekend.

Wolvaardt, Mlaba crown a dominant Proteas triumph



By Mpho Sekharume

South African captain Laura Wolvaardt's magnificent 92 not out laid the platform for a hard-earned 23-run victory for her team in the fifth and final T20 International against India at Willowmoore Park in Benoni on Monday.

Wolvaardt carried her bat with wickets falling regularly at the other to post a competitive but far from daunting total of 155-6 before two wickets apiece from Nonkululeko Mlaba and Nadine de Klerk helped restrict the tourists to 132-8 in reply.

Wolvaardt's remarkable innings came from just 56 balls with the next highest score coming from opening partner Sune Luus who contributed a run-a-ball 23 to an opening partnership of 75 before the wheels came off in dramatic fashion in the second half of the innings.

When Wolvaardt was finally able to get to the striker's end she continued to be devastating with 16 runs coming from the final over and 29 from the last two which gave the home side a chance.

India lost three early wickets at the start of the run-chase with Chloe Tryon claiming three catches at short fine leg, long on and deep midwicket before the excellent Mlaba (4-1-15-2) claimed the vital wicket of captain Harmanpreet Kaur (22) with a top-edged slog-sweep snaffled at mid off by Wolvaardt.

Top-scorer Bharti Fulmali (40) was trapped lbw by Tryon's left-arm spin and Deepti Sharma (8) was superbly stumped by Sinala Jafta off medium pacer De Klerk.

Keeper and big-hitter Richa Ghosh (25* from 15 balls) tried her best to keep India in the game but ran out of balls and partners.

WOLVAARDT AT IT AGAIN

But it was Wolvaardt who once again claimed the plaudits striking 11 fours and two sixes to take her tally for the series to a remarkable 330 runs, the most by any player in a bilateral series.

It included an unbeaten 115 to clinch the series in the third match.

Luus was smartly stumped by Ghosh off left arm spinner Shree Charani (2-22) and Tazmin Brits (2) played over a yorker and was bowled by the same bowler.

Annerie Dercksen (0) reverse-swept off-spinner Deepti Sharma straight to short fine leg and Anneke Bosch (8) missed a straightforward off-break from Sharma (2-37) and was bowled.

The procession of wickets continued with Wolvaardt stranded for too long at the non-striker's end, Tryon (12) slapping a slower ball from outstanding seamer Renuka Singh (2-21) to cover and De Klerk (1) missing a pull shot to be trapped lbw.

Jafta finally offered her captain the support she needed in the last couple of overs contributing 16* from just eight balls with two fours.

The home side completed victory in the series by winning the first three matches but lost the fourth at the Wanderers by 14-runs before completing a 4-1 series victory.

Premier League 2025/2026

CLUB	P	W	PTS
1 Arsenal	34	22	73
2 Man City	33	21	70
3 Man Utd	34	17	61
4 Liverpool	34	17	58
5 Aston Villa	34	17	58
6 Brighton	34	13	50
7 Bournemouth	34	11	49
8 Chelsea	34	13	48
9 Brentford	34	13	48
10 Fulham	34	14	48
11 Everton	34	13	47
12 Sunderland	34	12	46
13 C Palace	33	11	43
14 Newcastle	34	12	42
15 Leeds	34	9	40
16 Nottingham Forest F.C	34	10	39

EPL

PSL 2025/2026

POS	TEAMS	P	W	PTS
1 Mamelodi Sundowns	26	18	61	
2 Orlando Pirates	26	18	59	
3 Kaizer Chiefs	26	13	47	
4 AmaZulu FC	26	12	42	
5 Sekhukhune United	26	10	39	
6 Polokwane City	26	9	37	
7 Durban City	26	10	36	
8 Golden Arrows	26	10	35	
9 Siwelele FC	26	7	32	
10 Stellenbosch FC	26	8	32	
11 Richards Bay	26	7	31	
12 TS Galaxy	26	7	26	
13 Chippa United	26	5	24	
14 Magesi FC	26	4	21	
15 Marumo Gallants	26	4	21	
16 Orbit College FC	26	5	20	

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