



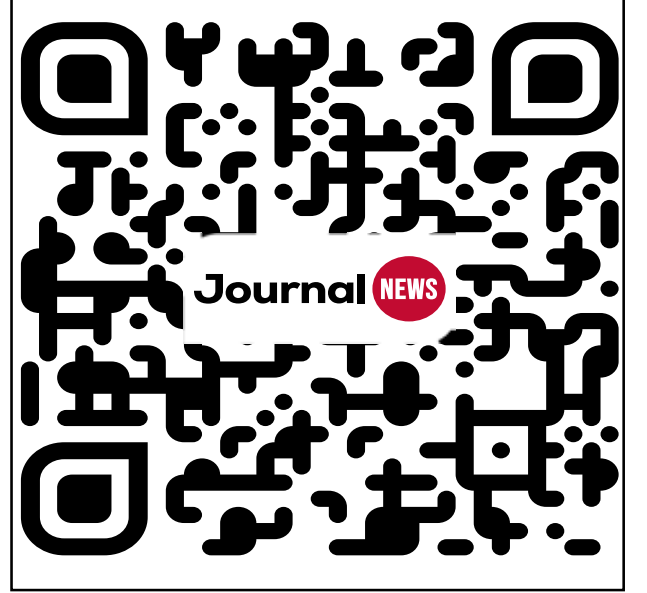
Friday 04 September 2026
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JOURNAL

News Network



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JORDAAN'S RE-ELECTION IMMINENT

Incumbent SAFA president set to secure fourth term as re-election plot aimed to block Zungu-led 'outsiders' gains momentum

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SIU Probe To Target NW Road Contract Amid Corruption Allegations

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

Allegations of serious maladministration, corruption, irregular expenditure and the improper loss of public funds at the North West Department of Public Works and Roads are set to come under scrutiny following the signing of Proclamation 340 of 2026 by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The proclamation authorises the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) to investigate the procurement and contracting of goods, works and services linked to Bid Number PWR 89/13 for the special maintenance of Road P152/1 between Setlagole and Road P34/4 in Delareyville.

The project covers 58km, with Phase II involving 28km of the road. The tender was awarded at a reported value of R150 466 494.68.

The SIU will examine whether the procurement process, contracting and related payments were conducted fairly, competitively, transparently and cost-effectively, and whether they complied with applicable legislation and Treasury prescripts.

The investigation will also determine whether officials, employees, agents, service providers or other individuals or entities engaged in unlawful or improper conduct to secure an undue or corrupt benefit.

Allegations of fraud, as well as any unauthorised,



2026, when the proclamation was published.

In terms of the Special Investigating Units and Special Tribunals Act, 1996, the SIU may institute civil proceedings before the Special Tribunal or High Court and take steps to recover financial loss-

irregular, fruitless or wasteful expenditure incurred by the department or the State, will also be investigated.

The probe will cover the period from 9 March 2021 to 28 August

s suffered by the State.

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure (DPWI) has welcomed the investigation and pledged its full cooperation.

DPWI Director-General Sifiso Mdakane has contacted the North West Head of Department to communicate the national department's readiness to assist and requested access to all relevant documents and information.

The DPWI noted its previous involvement in the Section 100 intervention in the province, saying its focus was to restore normality, strengthen accountability and improve systems for the delivery of essential infrastructure.

The department reaffirmed its commitment to good governance, transparency and ensuring public infrastructure resources are managed in the best interests of communities.



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Journal News Network
ANNOUNCEMENT

Journal News hereby announces the resignation of one of its founding members and Editor-in-Chief, Ms Refiloe Mochoari.

Ms Mochoari has been an integral part of the organisation since its inception, joining the company even before the publication of its first edition. Her contribution to the growth and development of Journal News has been invaluable. Throughout her tenure, she demonstrated exceptional dedication, professionalism and commitment to upholding editorial ethics and standards.

Her leadership played a significant role in shaping the publication and fostering a professional and conducive working environment within the team. We sincerely thank Ms Mochoari for her hard work, dedication and contribution to building Journal News into the organisation it is today.

As she embarks on a new chapter in her career, we extend our heartfelt gratitude and wish her every success in her future endeavours.

At the same time, Journal News is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Mpho Sekharume as the new Editor-in-Chief. Mr Sekharume will oversee the editorial operations of both Journal News and Gauteng Times, a responsibility he has already carried out with dedication and professionalism.

We are confident that his experience and leadership will continue to strengthen the editorial direction and growth of both publications.

Issued by:
Mohanoe Matli
Group CEO

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JORDAAN'S RE-ELECTION IMMINENT

Incumbent SAFA president set to secure fourth term as re-election plot aimed to block Zungu-led 'outsiders' gains momentum

JN Reporter

Journal News Network (JNN) has it on good authority that Danny Jordaan is projected to secure his fourth term as South African Football Association (SAFA) President through a landslide victory at the football body's upcoming elective congress on 12 September 2026.

According to a high ranked source in the organisation, Jordaan has the backing of 36 of the 52 SAFA regions, while challenger, Sandile Zungu, commands support from just a mere 12 regions.

The decision to back Jordaan is said to be a calculated compromise to block external infiltration, with prominent figures within the football governing body viewing Zungu as a conduit for outside forces attempting to seize control of the organisation.

Having mulled his resignation for some time leading to the looming conference, the insider also revealed how Jordaan had intended to resign prior to the looming elective conference but was convinced otherwise by powerful SAFA stalwarts who refuse to surrender control to 'outsiders' - thus preferring structural continuity under the current regime.

"We couldn't allow him to leave before the conference, because they are trying to get into SAFA and start their own things. We can't allow that," the source said.

The source further told this newspaper that Jordaan is standing for re-election merely to bar Zungu from taking over and will subsequently resign to make way for Linda Zwane - who is one of the four incumbent SAFA vice presidents - to ascend the presidential hotseat.



Landslide Victory Looms ... Danny Jordaan is expected to get re-elected as president at the forthcoming SAFA conference. Pictures: Facebook

Zwane does indeed stand as the most logical internal successor due to his dual power base within local structures.

He serves as president of the Mpumalanga Sport Confederation, board member of the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SAS-COC) and leads the Football Transformation Forum

(FTF).

Zwane's deep ties across the 52 regional voting blocs therefore give him vast influence across various relevant local sports bodies.

He also holds continental administrative authority through his executive roles on the boards of SASCO and COSAFA.

Unlike other four SAFA vice presidents, Zwane faces no political or constitutional roadblocks in his path to the top seat.

For instance, Premier Soccer League (PSL) chairman, Dr Irvin Khoza, is legally barred from the role unless he completely divests from professional club ownership.

SAFA Cape Town boss, Bennett Bailey, has isolated himself from the ruling faction after breaking ranks to publicly back Zungu's campaign, while veteran football administrator, Natasha Tschilas, has always kept her focus on specific administrative portfolios rather than command of the regional voter mobilisation machinery.

Zwane, in contrast to the potentials, is well entrenched within the broader South African sports fraternity and commands the grassroots machinery required to wield exceptional influence.

Having consistently linked national footballing milestones directly to Jordaan's continued tenure at the helm, Zwane's unwavering loyalty to Jordaan has functioned as a beneficial political insurance policy.

The elective outcome relies on 265 total votes cast by secret ballot during the national congress. The 52 regional bodies command the vast majority of voting power - holding 208 total votes combined.

The National Executive Committee (NEC) holds 41 individual votes, while associate members and the league cast the rest. Before undergoing strict governance vetting, the candidates must secure a formal regional nomination and a secondment, while the regions must maintain constitutional good standing regarding finances and deadlines to exercise their voting rights.

SAFA handed all candidate nominations to Governance Committee chairman, Victor Mogajane, on 5 August 2026 ahead of the upcoming vote.

By securing Jordaan's re-election first, the ruling bloc guarantees that the loyalist machinery will seamlessly catapult Zwane to the helm.

SAFA has confirmed through a statement that key stakeholders including FIFA, CAF, SASCO, and Sports Minister, Gayton McKenzie, have all been formally invited to the elective congress.

North West School Fires Escalate as Third Blaze Hits Phakisoang Primary



By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

The North West is facing growing concerns over the safety of its schools after three school fires were reported within just two weeks, with the latest blaze destroying a mobile classroom at Phakisoang Primary School in Otsohoop, near Mahikeng.

The fire broke out on Saturday, 29 August, prompting renewed calls for communities to protect public school infrastructure as authorities investigate whether the latest incident was deliberately started.

According to the North West Department of Education, the school's General Assistant received a call on Saturday afternoon alerting him to the fire. When he arrived, he found books burning inside one of the mobile classrooms.

A tyre and plastic hosepipes were also found burning underneath two other mobile classrooms, raising further concerns about the circumstances surrounding the incident.

The South African Police Service (SAPS) and Fire Department were called to the scene and managed to extinguish the blaze before it could spread.

However, the fire damaged the classroom floor, learners' workbooks, educators' files, important documents and the classroom chalkboard.

North West MEC for Education, Dr Desbo Mohono, expressed anger and concern over the incident, particularly as it follows two other school fires in the province.

"Schools are public property. They belong to the communities in which they are situated, and communities must take pride in protecting and preserving their schools," said Mohono.

She warned that the fires were occurring at a critical point in the academic year, as learners prepare for examinations and Grade 12 learners sit for their preliminary examinations.

The Department said the circumstances surrounding the Phakisoang fire raised concerns that it may have been deliberately started, although this has not yet been confirmed.

Mohono said deliberate destruction of school infrastructure, if confirmed, would undermine the Department's efforts to provide learners with safe and conducive learning environments.

The latest incident follows two serious fires reported earlier in August.

On Sunday, 23 August, Sewagodimo Technical School in Pella Village was hit by a fire that destroyed a block containing five workshops and a separate storeroom.

The school had been hosting a camp for matric learners. Classes ended at about 2pm, followed by

a parents' meeting that concluded at approximately 4pm, while educators left the premises around 5pm.

At 5:53pm, school management was alerted to the fire and immediately contacted SAPS and fire-fighters. By the time emergency services arrived, the blaze was reportedly in its final stages.

All five workshops, each consisting of a storeroom and classroom, were destroyed, along with a separate storeroom outside the main block.

The cause remains unknown and is subject to investigation.

"I strongly condemn the burning of Sewagodimo Technical School. The burning of school properties is robbing our future generations of valuable educational resources," said Mohono, urging community members to provide any information to police that could help identify those responsible.

Just two days earlier, on Friday, 21 August, Matlhare Mokautu Secondary School in Monakato Township also suffered extensive fire damage after its school hall was destroyed.

The blaze occurred after school hours, with the cause yet to be established. A case of arson has been opened with police.

The fire damaged the hall's ceiling and roof, kitchen shelves, eight toilet sets, a urinal basin, four basins, books, two fire extinguishers, a hydrant hosepipe, five window frames, eight wooden-glass doors and seven internal doors.

The Department estimates the damage at more than R5 million.

Mohono said the destruction was particularly troubling because the province is already grappling with a backlog in school construction and renovations.

She said the Department was being forced to divert scarce resources towards repairing schools that had previously been in good condition, instead of using the funds to address existing infrastructure needs. Department officials and the MEC visited affected schools on Monday, 24 August, to assess the damage and identify measures to ensure teaching and learning continues.

The Department said it would continue working with SAPS to ensure those responsible are held accountable.

It has also appealed to communities to report suspicious activities, vandalism and other information that could help authorities prevent further acts of arson and destruction.

With three school fires in two weeks, the incidents have intensified concerns over the protection of educational infrastructure in the North West, placing additional pressure on a Department already struggling to address longstanding infrastructure backlogs.

CRIME REPORTS

Drug Mule Intercepted at OR Tambo with Suspected Cocaine

The South African Police Service (SAPS) has arrested a 54-year-old South African man suspected of acting as a drug mule after drugs believed to be cocaine were discovered in his luggage at OR Tambo International Airport.

The arrest followed an intelligence-led operation targeting the suspect, who was allegedly preparing to travel to Hong Kong, China, on Thursday morning.

Police intercepted the man at the airport and conducted a search of his person and luggage, leading to the discovery of suspected cocaine allegedly concealed inside his baggage.

The exact weight and value of the drugs have not

yet been determined and will be confirmed once the necessary forensic processes have been completed.

The suspect is expected to appear before the Kempton Park Magistrates' Court on Friday, where he will face charges relating to drug trafficking.

The latest arrest comes just a week after police intercepted two separate cocaine consignments at the same airport, with a combined estimated value of R200 million. SAPS said it remains committed to disrupting and dismantling organised drug trafficking networks through intelligence-driven operations and targeted interventions, particularly at the country's ports of entry.

Drug Manufacturing Operation Uncovered on North West Farm

A suspected clandestine drug manufacturing operation has been uncovered at a farm in Klipfontein near Jericho, North West, leading to the arrest of a 62-year-old man.

The operation followed information from community members about suspicious activities, a strong unpleasant chemical smell and the presence of three unknown men at the farm.

Members of Brits Crime Intelligence, the Brits Trio Task Team and Jericho Visible Policing responded and searched the premises. Police detected a strong chemical odour and discovered equipment and materials believed to have been used in the manufacture of illicit drugs.

A tactical operation resulted in the arrest of the 62-year-old suspect. Members of the Hartbeespoortdam K9 Unit and an SAPS drone pilot later joined the operation to search for three suspects who allegedly fled into nearby bushes. They remain at large.

Preliminary investigations suggest the operation was involved in manufacturing crystal methamphetamine, commonly known as "cat".

Police seized chemicals, raw materials, manufacturing equipment, tools and suspected finished drugs. A white Mahindra bakkie allegedly linked to the crime was also confiscated.

The investigation has been handed to the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation in Rustenburg.

Murder Accused Rearrested Hours After Daring Escape

North West police have rearrested murder accused Tshepo Lobelo after he escaped from lawful custody while being transported for medical treatment to Maganeng Clinic on Tuesday.

Lobelo was among four detainees transported from Pudimoe Police Station to the clinic. Police said that upon arrival at approximately 10:50, Lobelo allegedly escaped from custody and fled into nearby bushes.

A search operation was immediately launched, with authorities activating the 72-Hour Activation Plan. A multidisciplinary team comprising various SAPS units and specialised resources was mobilised to trace the escapee.

The operation proved successful when Lobelo was

rearrested later that same evening.

Lobelo was initially arrested in connection with a murder case committed in 2024.

Before his escape, the matter had been remanded to 7 December 2026.

He now faces an additional charge of escaping from lawful custody and is expected to appear before the Pudimoe Magistrate's Court on Friday.

Police are also investigating the circumstances surrounding the escape, including issues relating to the transportation, restraint and supervision of the detainee.

North West Provincial Commissioner Lieutenant General Arthur Adams commended the team for its swift response and successful rearrest.

R195 000 Drug Bust Nets Foreign National in Kimberley

A 48-year-old foreign national has been arrested after Northern Cape police seized illicit drugs with an estimated street value of R195 000 during a controlled delivery operation in Kimberley.

Members of the Provincial Organised Crime Unit were summoned to a local business on Thursday morning after a courier parcel was allegedly delivered to the wrong address.

To safeguard the integrity of the parcel and facilitate a controlled operation, a police officer allegedly posed as an agent. The intended recipient was contacted and arrangements were made for the parcel to be delivered to him.

The controlled delivery was successfully executed, resulting in the arrest of the intended recipient. Police also seized a cellphone allegedly used to communicate with the suspect.

A search of the parcel revealed Tik and 300 Mandrax tablets concealed inside a plastic bag. The drugs have an estimated street value of R195 000.

Police further found a substantial amount of cash in the suspect's possession, believed to be proceeds of illicit drug dealing. The money was seized for further investigation.

The suspect was arrested and charged with dealing in drugs. He is expected to appear before the Kimberley Magistrates' Court soon.

Mangaung Turns to R50.6m Smart Water System to Tackle Leaks and Interruptions

By Gomolemo Winkel

Mangaung Metro Municipality is turning to technology in a R50.6 million drive to curb massive water losses, detect leaks faster and improve the municipality's response to water interruptions across the metro.

Executive Mayor Gregory Nthatsi, alongside MMC for Technical Services Vusi Soqaga, launched the Telemetry and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) Project at the Hamilton Park Pump Station in Arboretum, Bloemfontein.

The project will use advanced technology and real-time data to monitor, manage and control the municipality's water network, forming part of Mangaung's broader Water Demand Management Strategy aimed at reducing water losses and improving service delivery.

At the launch, Nthatsi said the SCADA system would help the municipality tackle persistent challenges, including ageing and leaking pipelines, burst pipes caused by cold weather, vandalism and high levels of unaccounted-for water.

"Now, the telemetry that we are installing, it will be a mechanism that will help us to tell us, where is the water leaking," he said.

Nthatsi revealed that Mangaung has reduced its water losses from 56% to 46%, but warned that the figure remains significantly higher than the acceptable benchmark of 20% or less.

He also highlighted the pressure placed on the metro's limited water resources, saying Mangaung has minimal catchment areas while some dams have suffered from significant silt accumulation, reducing their actual storage capacity.

"Our dams are very limited and some of them are silted with a lot of mud," Nthatsi said, explaining that erosion and sedimentation can make dams appear full while their usable water volumes are substantially lower.

He added that Mangaung's growing population was increasing demand for water.

"The community of Mangaung is growing. People are migrating from other small towns for greener pastures. So we need more water," he said.

Nthatsi said the municipality had invested R50.6 million in the first phase of the Telemetry and SCADA project, which is one of 18 priority interventions identified to strengthen water services across Mangaung.

"We have got 18 cardinal points that we must attend to in terms of water services. This is one of them. But we are actually taking the first critical ones forward and then the rest can follow," he said.

MMC for Technical Services Vusi Soqaga said the new system would significantly improve the municipality's ability to monitor reservoir levels, identify leaks and respond to service disruptions in real time.

He said the project would also strengthen the municipality's internal technical capacity by ensuring the system is operated by trained municipal personnel rather than outsourced service providers.

"It will be well controlled by our own trained people. It is not like we are outsourcing. It is an internal capacity that we are employing because the city has been struggling in the past," Soqaga said.

He said the municipality previously faced difficulties in pinpointing the source of water interruptions, often leaving technicians to search for problems across the network.

"With this new system, we will know and we will see that at this reservoir, we are losing water. Not only in Bloemfontein, the whole of Mangaung," he said.

The telemetry system is expected to provide authorities with real-time information on water distribution points and raise alerts when interruptions or abnormal water losses occur.

The rollout will begin in Bloemfontein before expanding to Botshabelo, Thaba Nchu, Soutpan and Wepener as part of an 18-month implementation programme.

Ngwathe Tops SA in Water Compliance

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

Ngwathe Local Municipality has emerged as South Africa's top-performing municipality in Water Service Development Plan (WSDP) audit compliance, recording an impressive 86% and surpassing the previous national benchmark of 81%.

The achievement marks another significant service-delivery milestone for the municipality under the administrative leadership of Municipal Manager Dr Futhuli Mothamaha, with the municipality's latest performance positioning it at the forefront of water-sector compliance nationally.

The recently audited WSDP placed Ngwathe among the country's leading municipalities, with its 86% compliance rating exceeding the highest score recorded in 2025, when a municipality in the Western Cape achieved 81%.

Mothamaha attributed the achievement to the municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP), which prioritises sustainable water and sanitation infrastructure as a key pillar of service delivery.

He said close cooperation with the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), under Free State Provincial Head Dr Tseliso Ntli, had played a crucial role in strengthening the municipality's water-service planning and implementation.

"Ngwathe has weekly engagements with the Provincial Department of Water and Sanitation, and this cooperation has finally borne fruit," Mothamaha said. He also commended residents for their con-



The administrative leadership of Municipal Manager Dr F.P. Mothamaha (Right) and Director for Technical Service Patricia Morokolo Recorded an impressive 86%n Water Service Development Plan (WSDP) audit compliance. Pictures: Supplied

tribution to the municipality's development programmes, saying community input remains central to shaping the municipality's plans and priorities.

The municipality said the achievement demon-

strates the value of sustained collaboration, strategic planning and continued engagement with both provincial authorities and the communities it serves.

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POST REF. 2. DIRECTORATE: OFFICE OF THE CEO
MANAGER: RISK MANAGEMENT - ONE (1) POST

(INTERNAL /EXTERNAL)

Qualifications:

Grade 12 and an NQF 7 qualification in Risk Management /Auditing / Accounting with specialisation in Audit and/or Risk Management. Post Graduate qualification in Risk Management or Auditing will be an added advantage.

Experience:

Minimum of five to seven (5-7) years' relevant experience in Enterprise Risk Management, with at least two (2) years of supervisory or management level.

Core description:

The successful candidate will report directly to the Chief Risk Officer and be responsible for the following functions:

- Manage the implementation of the approved Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Framework, Policy, Strategy and annual risk management programme.
- Coordinate the execution of risk management activities across business units and ensure alignment with approved methodologies and organisational objectives.
- Facilitate enterprise-wide, strategic and operational risk assessments with relevant risk owners and management.
- Review and challenge risk assessments, risk ratings, control assessments and risk treatment plans submitted by business units.
- Monitor the organisation's overall risk profile and identify significant changes in risk exposure requiring management attention.
- Oversee the monitoring of Key Risk Indicators (KRIs), risk trends and emerging risks.
- Coordinate the implementation and monitoring of risk treatment plans and ensure that overdue or ineffective actions are appropriately escalated.
- Provide technical advice to management and risk owners on the identification, assessment, treatment and monitoring of risks.
- Coordinate risk management workshops, awareness initiatives and capacity-building activities.
- Identify opportunities to improve the maturity, effectiveness and integration of the organisation's risk management practices.

Contribute to Enhancing the Control Environment:

- Coordinate the identification and assessment of control weaknesses arising from risk assessments, monitoring activities and assurance findings.
- Review the adequacy of management's proposed actions to address significant control weaknesses.
- Monitor the implementation of actions aimed at strengthening the control environment and escalate material delays or unresolved weaknesses.
- Analyse recurring control deficiencies and risk trends to identify systemic control weaknesses requiring management intervention.
- Facilitate collaboration between risk owners and relevant assurance functions to promote an integrated approach to control improvement.
- Provide management with risk-based recommendations aimed at strengthening internal controls and reducing exposure to material risks.
- Monitor whether significant control weaknesses are appropriately reflected in the relevant risk registers and risk treatment plans.

Management of resources, budget, employee performance and development:

- Manage the effective utilisation of human, financial and other resources within the Risk Management function.
- Participate in the preparation and management of the Risk Management function's annual budget.
- Monitor expenditure against the approved budget and identify potential variances and resource requirements.
- Ensure that resources are allocated appropriately to support the delivery of the Risk Management programme.
- Manage and monitor the performance of employees within the Risk Management function in accordance with approved performance management processes.
- Conduct performance reviews and provide regular feedback to employees.
- Identify employee development and training needs and facilitate appropriate development interventions.Promote continuous professional development and technical.
- Competency within the Risk Management function.
- Provide coaching, guidance and support to employees to improve performance and capability.
- Ensure compliance with applicable human resource policies, procedures and delegated authorities.

Liaison and communication:

- Serve as a key point of contact between the Risk Management function and business units on ERM matters.
- Engage with management and risk owners to facilitate the effective implementation of risk management processes.
- Provide guidance to risk owners on risk assessment, risk treatment, risk monitoring and reporting requirements.
- Coordinate responses to external requests from Executive Management, government structures and relevant stakeholders.
- Facilitate risk management meetings, workshops and consultations with relevant stakeholders.
- Communicate changes to risk management policies, methodologies, procedures and reporting requirements to relevant stakeholders.
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with internal assurance and governance functions to promote coordinated risk management.
- Escalate significant risk matters, unresolved issues and material delays to the appropriate level of management.

Assist in the compilation and submission of reports:

- Manage the consolidation and preparation of periodic enterprise risk management reports for Executive Management and relevant governance structures.
- Review risk information submitted by business units to ensure accuracy, completeness, consistency and compliance with approved reporting requirements.
- Analyse changes in risk exposure, risk trends, KRI performance, mitigation progress and control weaknesses for inclusion in management reports.
- Ensure that material risk, significant changes in risk exposure and overdue mitigation actions are appropriately highlighted and escalated.
- Review risk dashboards, risk profiles and supporting analysis before submission to relevant management and governance structures.
- Coordinate the timely submission of risk management reports in accordance with approved reporting requirements and reporting calendars.
- Provide commentary and analysis on the organisation's risk profile to support informed management decision-making.
- Maintain appropriate records and supporting evidence for information presented in risk management reports.

Salary Grade: 003 - R 919 932 - 1 011 156

POST REF. 4. DIRECTORATE: OFFICE OF THE CEO
ASSISTANT MANAGER: RESEARCH AND INNOVATION - ONE (1) POST

(INTERNAL /EXTERNAL)

Qualifications:

National Diploma/B Tech in Electrical Engineering / Data Analytics / Economics /Financial Management/ Technology Management, or a related discipline (NQF Level 7).Eligibility for Professional registration or active registration as a Professional Engineer/Technologist with ECSA is preferred.

Experience:

Minimum of three (3) to seven (7) years of progressive experience in research, innovation, techno-economic evaluation, or technology management within the energy or utility, or Corporate sector.Demonstrated experience in managing complex technical projects, data analysis initiatives, and cross-functional teams.

Core description:

The successful candidate will report directly to the Manager: Research and Innovation, and be responsible for the following functions:

Techno-Economic Modelling & Investment Oversight:

- Direct the development of comprehensive financial and engineering models to evaluate the lifecycle costs, return on investment (ROI), and capital expenditure requirements of emerging technologies (e.g., micro-grids, energy storage systems, and advanced metering infrastructure).
- Oversee rigorous cost-benefit analyses, sensitivity testing, and risk assessments for pilot projects and capital innovation proposals.

Data-Driven Customer & Operational Research:

- Spearhead quantitative and qualitative research studies examining customer energy consumption patterns, behavioral responses to tariff structures, and adoption metrics for digital platforms (such as mobile outage apps and prepayment upgrades).
- Leverage operational data, customer feedback loops, and meter management databases to extract actionable insights that drive demand-side management and improve service delivery.

Research & Strategic Foresight:

- Conduct horizon scanning on global and national energy trends, regulatory shifts (e.g., NERSA frameworks), renewable energy integration, and smart grid architectures.

Innovation & Design Thinking Integration:

- Translate strategic frameworks such as design thinking, systems thinking, and innovation diffusion models into practical, scalable utility projects and human-centric pilot programs.

Policy, Governance & Framework Development:

- Formulate, review, and implement corporate research and innovation policies, guidelines, and governance structures aligned with municipal mandates and regulatory requirements.

Stakeholder Collaboration & Strategic Partnerships:

- Forge strategic alliances with academic institutions, research councils (such as the CSIR), industry bodies, and funding agencies to drive collaborative R&D projects and secure alternative funding streams.

Project Leadership, Mentorship & Knowledge Management:

- Manage cross-functional innovation project teams, oversee pilot implementations, and establish a centralised repository for organisational learnings, technical reports, and innovation metrics.

Salary Grade: 005 - R 715 212 - 780 576

POST REF. 2. DIRECTORATE: OFFICE OF THE CEO
RISK MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST - ONE (1) POST

(INTERNAL /EXTERNAL)

Qualifications:

NQF 4 qualification recognised by SAQA in Auditing or NQF 7 qualification recognised by SAQA in Risk Management.

Experience:

Minimum of two (2) to five (5) years' relevant experience in Enterprise Risk Management.

Core description:

The successful candidate will report directly to the Manager: Risk Management and be responsible for the following functions:

Provide support for enterprise risk management:

- Support the implementation of the approved Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Framework, Policy, Strategy and annual risk management programme.
- Conduct risk assessments within allocated business areas in accordance with the approved risk management methodology.
- Assist business units in identifying risks, assessing inherent and residual risk exposures, and documenting existing controls and mitigation measures.
- Maintain and update assigned risk registers, including risk descriptions, causes, consequences, controls, risk ratings and treatment actions.
- Monitor risk treatment plans and obtain progress updates from responsible risk owners.
- Collect and analyse risk information and supporting evidence to facilitate informed risk monitoring and reporting.
- Monitor assigned Key Risk Indicators (KRIs) and other risk indicators and escalate material changes or emerging concerns to the relevant supervisor.
- Conduct research on emerging risks, industry developments and other factors that may affect the organisation's risk profile.
- Provide technical and administrative support during risk assessments, risk workshops and risk awareness activities.
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date risk management records and supporting documentation.

Contribute to Enhancing the Control Environment:

- Assist in identifying control gaps, weaknesses and areas of control improvement arising from risk assessments and monitoring activities.
- Assess whether identified controls are appropriately documented and aligned with the risks they are intended to mitigate.
- Monitor management actions aimed at addressing identified control weaknesses and report outstanding actions.
- Support the documentation and monitoring of control improvement initiatives.
- Assist in promoting awareness of effective internal controls and risk management practices across the organisation.
- Support the identification of opportunities to strengthen preventive and detective controls within assigned areas.
- Maintain evidence of control improvement activities for monitoring and reporting purposes.

Liaison and communication:

- Liaise with designated risk owners and business units to obtain risk information, progress updates and supporting documentation.
- Provide guidance to business units on the completion of risk management templates and submission requirements.
- Communicate risk management processes, procedures and reporting requirements to relevant stakeholders.
- Coordinate information requests between the Risk Management function and designated business units.
- Follow up with stakeholders on outstanding risk assessments, mitigation actions and reporting information.
- Participate in risk workshops, meetings and awareness sessions and provide technical support where required.
- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with internal stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of risk management activities.
- Escalate unresolved matters, significant risk issues and delays in required submissions to the appropriate level of authority.

Assist in the compilation and submission of reports :

- Collect and validate risk information from business units for inclusion in periodic risk management reports.
- Assist with the preparation of quarterly and other risk management reports in accordance with approved reporting requirements.
- Consolidate updates on risk treatment plans, KRIs, risk exposures and control improvement actions.
- Perform quality checks on risk information submitted by risk owners to ensure completeness, consistency and accuracy.
- Prepare supporting schedules, dashboards, statistics and analysis for risk management reporting.
- Assist in identifying significant changes in risk exposure, overdue mitigation actions and emerging risk trends for escalation.
- Maintain reporting records and supporting documentation to substantiate information included in risk reports.
- Submit completed reports and supporting information within prescribed timelines and to the required standards.

Salary Grade: 006 - R 586 920 - 693 396

POST REF. 6. DIRECTORATE: OFFICE OF THE CEO
MEDIA LIAISON PRACTITIONER - ONE (1) POST

(INTERNAL /EXTERNAL)

Qualifications:

Grade 12 Certificate, N. Diploma in Communications Science / Journalism/Marketing Management/ Media Studies/ Public Relations/Public Management.

Experience:

: Minimum of three (3) to five (5) years' relevant experience in Communication or Media related environment.

Core description:

The successful candidate will report directly to the Manager: Communications and Marketing, and be responsible for the following functions:

- Assist in the development and implementation of media strategies to promote the organization's goals and objectives.
- Compiling media releases/statements on CENTLEC projects, programmes, events, functions, processes for distribution on external and internal media platforms.
- Identify media opportunities to enhance the organization's public image and visibility.
- Monitor media trends and advise on potential impacts to the organization.
- Collaborate with cross-functional teams to gather information and ensure accurate communication of projects and initiatives.
- Coordinating media alerts about unplanned service interruptions, including arranging media support in times of emergency/disasters.
- Monitor media coverage and analyze the impact of media activities.
- Provide on-site support during media events to manage media interactions.
- Establish and maintain relationships with journalists, reporters, and other media professionals.
- Serve as the primary point of contact for media inquiries and coordinate responses.
- Ensure all media communications comply with legal, ethical, and organizational.

Salary Grade: 006 - R 586 920 - 693 396

Qualifications:

BSc Degree/B Tech in Electrical Engineering/ or a related field (NQF Level 7) in Technology and Innovation Management. Postgraduate qualification (Master's or Doctorate) in Management of Technology, Innovation, or Electrical Engineering will be an added advantage. Eligibility for Professional registration or active registration as a Professional Engineer/Technologist with ECSA is preferred.

Experience:

Industry Experience: A minimum of five (5) to seven (7) years of professional experience in the energy, electricity utility, or technology management sector, with at least 3 years in a managerial or supervisory capacity.

Technical Expertise: Proven track record in managing research projects, pilot testing new technologies, or implementing smart grid/renewable energy solutions.

Innovation frameworks: Demonstrated experience applying design thinking, systems engineering, or structured innovation methodologies.

Core description:

The successful candidate will report directly to the GM: Strategic Support and be responsible for the following functions:

Strategic Research & Technology Scouting

Emerging Trends:

- Monitor global and local technological, regulatory, and market trends in the energy sector (e.g., decentralised generation, wheeling frameworks, electricity trading reforms, and smart grids).

Feasibility Studies:

- Conduct comprehensive technical and economic feasibility studies for prospective innovations, ensuring alignment with CENTLEC's long-term corporate strategy.

Knowledge Management:

- Establish a centralised repository for research papers, industry benchmarks, and technological insights to guide executive decision-making.

novation Management & Pilot Projects

Proof of Concept (PoC):

- Design, execute, and manage pilot projects for cutting-edge solutions (such as microgrids, waste-to-energy initiatives, advanced data analytics, and digital customer interfaces).

Design Thinking:

- Apply human-centred design thinking and systems thinking frameworks to solve complex operational challenges and improve service delivery.

Project Scaling:

- Seamlessly transition successful pilot projects from the research phase into operational deployment across the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality and surrounding service areas.

Stakeholder Collaboration & Partnerships

Academic & Industry Linkages:

- Forge strategic partnerships with academic institutions, research councils (e.g., CSIR, WRC), industry associations, and technology providers.

Funding & Grants:

- Identify and secure external funding, grants, and strategic partnerships to support research and innovation initiatives.

Internal Change Management:

- Collaborate cross-functionally with engineering, IT, finance, and customer service departments to foster an organisational culture open to innovation.

Policy, Regulatory Alignment & Circular Economy

Regulatory Compliance:

- Ensure all research and innovation initiatives comply with National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA) guidelines, the Electricity Regulation Act, and municipal bylaws.

Circular Business Models:

- Champion sustainability initiatives, focusing on resource efficiency, waste reduction, and circular economy practices within utility operations and supply chains.

Policy Inputs:

- Contribute technical insights to the formulation of internal policies and national regulatory submissions regarding future energy markets.

Salary Grade: 003 - R 919 932 - 1 011 156



Applications must be sent to the email address provided and reference must be made against a particular post, be accompanied by a Curriculum Vitae, Certified Copies of Qualifications, a Driver's License, (where applicable) and Identity Document. Certification must not be older than six months. An applicant MUST complete the prescribed CENTLEC (SOC) LTD Employment application form (Website / HR office), failure to adhere to the contents of this advert will lead to applications being disqualified. ALL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH AN APPLICATION WILL BE BORNE BY THE APPLICANT.

CENTLEC (SOC) Ltd is an equal opportunity Employer, therefore will take into consideration the objectives of Sec. 195 (1) (i) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108/1996) and the Employment Equity Act, 1998 (Act 55/1998) in filling of these vacancies. The Entity is an equal opportunity affirmative action employer. All appointments will be made in line with CENTLEC (SOC) Ltd.'s Employment Equity plan. CENTLEC (SOC) Ltd support the recruitment and advancement of individuals with disabilities. For us to fulfil this purpose, candidates can disclose their disability information on a voluntary basis. The Company will keep this information confidential unless we are required by law to disclose this information to other parties.

APPLICANTS MUST NOTE THAT FURTHER CHECKS WILL BE CONDUCTED ONCE THEY ARE RECOMMENDED AND THAT THEIR APPOINTMENT WILL BE SUBJECT TO POSITIVE OUTCOMES ON THESE CHECKS, WHICH INCLUDES SECURITY CLEARANCE, SECURITY VETTING, QUALIFICATION VERIFICATION AND CRIMINAL RECORDS VERIFICATION. APPLICANTS WILL BE REQUESTED TO GIVE THEIR INTRITY CONSENT TO VERIFY THEIR QUALIFICATIONS. FAILURE WHICH THEIR APPLICATION WILL BE DISQUALIFIED. Please note that if you do not receive any correspondence from the Entity, regarding your application, within 30 days after the closing date of this advertisement, you should regard your application as unsuccessful. CENTLEC RESERVES THE RIGHT NOT TO FILL ANY OF THESE ADVERTISED POSTS. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ENTITY WILL UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES REQUEST APPLICANTS TO PAY MONIES IN ORDER TO BE APPOINTED TO THE ADVERTISED POSITIONS. NO HAND DELIVERED APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

The closing date in respect of these positions will be **10 September 2026 @ 16H00**.
PLEASE NOTE THAT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE CLOSING DATE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.

Email: Employ4@centlec.co.za
Telephonic Enquiries: 051 - 412 2629 / 2626/ 2630



Sardine Beaching Scrutinised ... The cause of the sardine washout along the Eastern Cape Coast is being looked into by the forestry, fisheries and environment department. Pictures: Ronelle Friend

EC Sardine Die-Off Investigated

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

Ongoing laboratory testing and ecological monitoring in Algoa Bay are shedding light on the mass sardine mortality event that swept onto Eastern Cape coastlines in late August 2026. Researchers from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) are analysing the long-term ecological fallout of the pilchard herpesvirus detected in Gqeberha and Nelson Mandela Bay. While initial testing confirmed the presence of viral genetic material, officials stress that infection alone may not explain the sheer scale of the wash-up.

“Scientists are examining whether the virus is the primary cause or whether it is infecting fish already weakened by environmental stressors, such as harmful algae, low oxygen, or unusual oceanographic conditions.” Investigators are shifting their primary focus to these compound environmental factors while assessing the broader impact on the general marine ecosystem. The long-term threat now also focuses on the region’s critically endangered African Penguin population, as marine biologists track the immediate impact on their foraging grounds. “The DFFE recognises the concerns raised by con-

servation organisations regarding potential ecological impacts on species that rely on sardines, particularly the endangered African Penguin.” Because sardines serve as a fundamental food source, the sudden crash in fish availability risks widespread starvation and severe weight loss across Algoa Bay colonies. Monitoring efforts by the department further confirm that the virus poses no direct infection risk to bird health, confirming that the ongoing crisis remains strictly ecological. Field teams remain deployed along the coastline to assess fish stocks and monitor vulnerable penguin populations as laboratory assessments continue.

Hlalele Promotes Women Empowerment



Encouraging Women Development ... Social Development MEC, Mathabo Hlalele. Pictures: Supplied

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

Under the theme Breaking the Barriers of Patriarchy in the Workplace, Free State Social Development MEC, Mathabo Hlalele, engaged female officials at Grassland Hall in Bloemfontein on 1 September 2026. The event formed part of the department’s Women’s Month programme and celebrated the legacy of the 1956 Women’s March. Bringing together female officials from across the province, the session focused on creating a more inclusive and supportive working environment. The engagement aimed to address gender inequality and patriarchal practices while promoting professional development and equal opportunities. Hlalele noted that the department wanted to provide a platform for meaningful dialogue. She explained that officials with salaries from levels 2 to 12 were brought together to address workplace challenges and opportunities for growth. Hlalele emphasised that issues affecting women should be addressed throughout the year rather than solely during dedicated commemorative months. “Issues of women are supposed to be highlighted 365 days of the year. This time it is very important because we are celebrating the 1956 women’s march anniversary. We must take courage from those women because they did not have a support system like we do today. “We have a government today that has policies on

gender equality and mainstreaming gender. My message to women is that development starts with you,” Hlalele stressed. The programme also tackled critical issues including gender bias, inclusive leadership, fair workplace policies, pay equity, and sexual harassment. Officials were given an opportunity to openly share their personal experiences and discuss structural barriers affecting them in the workplace. Hlalele encouraged officials to address workplace conflicts directly and respectfully while supporting one another. “People are not perfect, and mistakes and misunderstandings will happen,” said the MEC. She stressed that employees spend a significant portion of their lives at work and should never have to endure a toxic environment. She therefore urged officials to utilise established internal processes when dealing with challenges, adding that they could approach her directly when necessary. Hlalele pointed out that bursaries are available to assist officials in gaining additional qualifications. Hlalele further expressed pride in leading a department largely composed of women and acknowledged their contributions to the communities they serve. She also reminded officials that their ultimate responsibility is to the public and that their work must remain service-driven. Closing her address, the MEC urged women to draw continued inspiration from the brave leaders of 1956 who stood up for basic human rights.

Writers Workshop Unleashes Local Scribes

By Katlego Mashwabi

Local author, educator, and entrepreneur, Unice Moshwang, has successfully turned her personal triumphs into a stepping stone for aspiring writers by hosting the Discover Your Story: How to Write Your Book writer’s workshop. The community event took place at the Mangaung Resource Centre in Bloemfontein, drawing an audience eager to transition from dreaming about writing to putting pen to paper. Moshwang, who is the author of the inspirational book Breaking Out of the Cycle, draws from personal struggles to guide others. “I realised that if I kept those lessons to myself, they would only help me. “But if I wrote them down, they could potentially inspire someone else,” she stated. Her literary journey began during the COVID-19 lockdown, where perseverance turned raw thoughts into a published book despite early self-doubt. “That experience taught me something very important - you don’t have to feel ready to start, you just have to start,” she added. Reflecting on the turnout, Moshwang highlighted that the true success lay in the quality and intent of the crowd. “It was great, it was the relevant people who attended.Unlike events where a multitude of people attend and many are just there because they had to be, the people who attended had interest in writing. They came with a mindset of ‘I have been having a dream of writing,’” she explained. Among the attendees were individuals who had already started their manuscripts but found themselves completely stuck. To address these roadblocks, Moshwang assembled a diverse panel of published authors from dif-

ferent genres to guide the audience through the publishing process. Panelist, Keabecoe Boakye, guided participants through structuring a manuscript and drafting impactful book titles. Taking a creative angle, Lerato Kabelitsha focused on children’s literature, encouraging attendees to invent riddles and nursery rhymes. Recognising the importance of cultural preservation, published author, Kgotsana Lethabo, shared insights from writing poetry in native mother tongues. Having published a book written entirely in Sesotho, Lethabo emphasised the immense cultural value of writing in indigenous languages. Moshwang anchored the sessions by breaking down different formats, from Christian literature and devotional books to memoirs and autobiographies. She outlined the specific research writers must conduct when targeting each distinct genre. “I was encouraging everyone to know that they have the ability to write,” said Moshwang. The initiative garnered significant local support, with the Central University of Technology (CUT) bringing a student delegation alongside local schools sponsoring teachers and aspiring student writers. Popular master of ceremonies, Mongameli De MC, kept the programme dynamic throughout the day. The practical sessions yielded immediate results, with work groups realising they already possessed the ability to create. “They left there feeling that ‘you know what, we are starting now, we are not going to wait’. “It was a successful event,” Moshwang said with pride. For the attendees, the collaborative platform proved Moshwang’s ultimate belief that every local story deserves to be told.

METRO MUNICIPALITY

METRO MUNISIPALITEIT

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PUBLIC NOTICE

BIDS BULLETIN NO: 214 (28 August 2026) – BIDS TO BE DEPOSITED IN BID BOX A

BID NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	SPECIAL CONDITION AS PER SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT POLICY SECTION 23.13.7	EVALUATION CRITERIA	CIDB GRADING	COMPULSORY BRIEFING SESSION	PRICE (Non-refundable)	CONTACT PERSON (TECHNICAL)	SCM CONTACT PERSON	CLOSING DATE AND TIME
MMMBID 788 (A): 2026/2027	MASELSPOORT UPGRADE PHASE 1: MASELSPOORT RISING MAIN RIVER CROSSING AND REFURBISHMENT OF PIPELINES (READVERTISEMENT)	1% of contract value be set aside for employment of interns/learnership	90-Price 10-Specific Goals Specific goals and Functionality Details in the document.	8CE/7CE PE or Higher	Date:09 September 2026 Venue: Indaba Auditorium, Bram Fischer Building Cnr. Maakraf & Nelson Mandela. Time: 11H30am.	R1 749.00	Kopano Moshanyana @051 410 6767 Email:kopano.moshanyana@mangaung.co.za Mametsing Borole @ 078 009 6332 Email:mametsing.borole@mangaung.co.za Llewellyn Biggs @ 051 430 1423 Email:Llewellyn.Biggs@bigengroup.com	Portia Mollo @ 051 411 3219. Email:portia.mollo@mangaung.co.za Lindiwe Ndebele@ 051 411 3234. Email:lindiwe.ndebele@mangaung.co.za	Date:29 September 2026 Time: 11:30am
MMM/BID 789 (A): 2026/2027	HAMILTON AND DAN PIENAR WATER PUMP STATION REFURBISHMENT CONSTRUCTION AND COMMISSIONING OF MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT (READVERTISEMENT).	1% of contract value be set aside for employment of interns/learnership	80-Price 20-Specific Goals Specific goals and Functionality Details in the document.	7ME/6ME PE or Higher	Date:09 September 2026 Venue: Indaba Auditorium, Bram Fischer Building Cnr. Maakraf & Nelson Mandela. Time: 10H00am.	R1 749.00	Kopano Moshanyana @051 410 6767 Email:kopano.moshanyana@mangaung.co.za Mametsing Borole @ 078 009 6332 Email:mametsing.borole@mangaung.co.za Llewellyn Biggs @ 051 430 1423 Email:Llewellyn.Biggs@bigengroup.com	Thabo Mkuzangwe @ 051 411 3219. Email:thabo.mkuzangwe@mangaung.co.za Ntombikayise Makhina @ 051 411 3234. Email:ntombikayise.makhina@mangaung.co.za	Date:30 September 2026 Time: 11:30am
MMM/BID 821: 2026/2027	APPOINTMENT OF A SERVICE PROVIDER TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICES (PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT) TO MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORK (IPTN) PROJECT	Not Applicable.	80-Price 20-Specific Goals Specific goals and Functionality Details in the document.	None	Date:11 September 2026 Venue: Floreat Hall, Bram Fischer Building Cnr. Maakraf & Nelson Mandela. Time: 10H00am.	R1 749.00	Tiso Makoloane @064 663 0759. Email:tiso.makoloane@mangaung.co.za	Portia Mollo @ 051 411 3219. Email:portia.mollo@mangaung.co.za Lindiwe Ndebele@ 051 411 3234. Email:lindiwe.ndebele@mangaung.co.za	Date:01 October 2026 Time: 11:30am
MMM/BID 822: 2026/2027	APPOINTMENT OF COMPANIES FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDING MOBILISATION TO TRAIN MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES AND UNEMPLOYED RESIDENTS ON VARIOUS PROGRAMMES OR INTERVENTION.	Not Applicable	80-Price 20-Specific Goals Specific goals and Functionality Details in the document.	None	Date:11 September 2026 Venue: Floreat Hall, Bram Fischer Building Cnr. Maakraf & Nelson Mandela. Time: 11H30am.	R436.00	Nzimeni Maswabi @051 405 8910 Email:Nzimeni.Maswabi@mangaung.co.za	Thabo Mkuzangwe @ 051 411 3219. Email:thabo.mkuzangwe@mangaung.co.za Ntombikayise Makhina @ 051 411 3234. Email:ntombikayise.makhina@mangaung.co.za	Date:02 October 2026 Time: 11:30am
MMM/BID 823: 2026/2027	APPOINTMENT OF A PANEL OF EXPERTS TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES TO THE MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY ON AN AS AND WHEN REQUIRED BASIS.	Not Applicable.	80-Price 20-Specific Goals Specific goals and Functionality Details in the document.	None	Date:14 September 2026 Venue: Floreat Hall, Bram Fischer Building Cnr. Maakraf & Nelson Mandela. Time: 10H00am.	R454.00	Boitumelo Kortjaas @051 405 8131 Email:Boitumelo.Kortjaas@mangaung.co.za	Portia Mollo @ 051 411 3219. Email:portia.mollo@mangaung.co.za Thapelo Mothibi @ 051 411 3234. Email:thapelo.mothibi@mangaung.co.za	Date:06 October 2026 Time: 11:30am

NO PAYMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AT SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT OFFICES. PAYMENTS ARE PERMISSIBLE AT THE FOLLOWING MUNICIPAL PAY POINTS:
• BRAM FISCHER BUILDING BLOEMFONTEIN,
• RE -A-HOLA SHOPPING COMPLEX – BOTSHABELO,
• THABA – NCHU CIVIC CENTRE, HOSTEL ONE – BLOEMFONTEIN (DR. BELCHER ROAD),
• MANGAUNG REGIONAL OFFICES – CNR. MOSHOESHOE & GEORGE LUBBE ROADS BLOEMFONTEIN.

THE AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS: **28 AUGUST 2026.**

ALTERNATIVELY, DIRECT OR ELECTRONIC DEPOSITS CAN BE MADE TO THE MMM BANK ACCOUNT:
FIRST NATIONAL BANK(FNB), ACCOUNT NO:63162512694, BRANCH CODE:230134, REF NO: 4302142551029ZZZZZT:
PROOF OF PAYMENT MAY BE SENT TO: vinolia.sekoati@mangaung.co.za TELEPHONE NUMBER: @ 051 411 3200

• ALL BID DOCUMENTS ARE AVAILABLE AS HARD COPIES ONLY FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY, DURING BUSINESS HOURS, 07H45-16H15
• ALL BID DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE COLLECTED AND SUBMITTED AT: SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT OFFICES, NO.6 MANNION ROAD, ORANJESIG, BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301

Issued By MMM Communications

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Mangaung Metro Municipality

Call Centre: 0800 111 300

Operation Basadi

Yields Results

NSFAS Disburses Millions To Universities

Women’s Month SAPS campaign upscales law enforcement while raising GBV awarenes



Valiant Police Women ... A successful instalment of Operation Basadi was carried out in Heidelberg. Pictures: SAPS

By Lukhanyiso Khanyile

The crackdown on lawbreakers through Operation Basadi initiative proved a huge success this year’s Women’s Month. The annual nationwide campaign, led by the South African Police Service (SAPS) in collaboration with other law enforcement agencies, targeted criminal elements by conducting numerous vehicle searches and identity verification tests across different provinces.

In Gauteng’s Sedibeng District searched 435 vehicles were searched, while 24 person identification and verification tests were conducted

“Traffic fines totalling the value of R29 360 were issued to motorists on the N3 Weighbridge in the Heidelberg policing area,” Sergeant Thembeke Maxambela from the Sedibeng SAPS.

The campaign delivered similar high-impact outcomes in the Eastern Cape through strategic road-blocks and visible patrols. Authorities arrested several suspects, while netting around R20 500 in traffic fines.

The aim of the Operation Basadi initiative was to also encourage impactful change in societies, while creating awareness about gender-based violence and fmicide.

R222.7 million payment to six institutions brings relief to thousands of teaching students facing allowance delays

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

The National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has paid R222.7 million to six universities under the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme, benefiting nearly 3 000 students.

Higher Education and Training Deputy Minister Yusuf Cassim confirmed the R222 688 894 payment during a meeting with senior NSFAS officials and the bursary team in Cape Town.

The institutions receiving funds comprise the Central University of Technology (CUT), North-West University (NWU), University of Fort Hare (UFH), University of Limpopo (UL), University of Pretoria (Tuks), and the University of South Africa (Unisa).

Benefiting 2 927 bursary recipients, the funds are now with the respective universities to process and disburse directly to affected students.

Cassim urged NSFAS to engage the institutions immediately to secure firm timelines on when students will receive their outstanding allowances.

“These payments must now reach students without delay so they can focus on their studies and not have to worry about outstanding allowances that have been pending for months.”

Funded by the Department of Basic Education, the Funza Lushaka Bursary Programme provides financial support to students pursuing teaching qualifications at participating universities.

NSFAS serves as the programme’s disbursement agency, transferring approved funds directly to higher education institutions.

For the 2026 academic year, 23 universities received a combined R1.3 billion allocation covering tuition, accommodation, meals, learning materials, and living allowances.



Cassim’s intervention follows numerous complaints regarding delayed allowance disbursements submitted to his official helpdesk by affected students.

During the engagement, NSFAS officials provided an update on outstanding institutional claims across the country. Officials noted that a significant volume of university claims remains pending, with processing taking roughly four weeks to complete verification checks. “Institutions must submit their claims on time to prevent further delays in students receiving their allowances.”

Claims totaling R295.9 million for 3 095 students were uploaded in August for processing during the September payment cycle.

However, more than R500 million in allocated funding remains unclaimed by higher education institutions. Universities have until 13 September 2026 to submit their outstanding claims for inclusion in the upcoming October payment cycle.

Cassim directed NSFAS to write to institutions to confirm that beneficiaries will receive their allowances without interruption.

The directive also requires institutions to confirm whether they will meet the submission deadline.

To address systemic bottlenecks, NSFAS proposed hosting a joint workshop with key stakeholders ahead of the 2027 academic year in November 2026.

The session will focus on automating manual tasks, enhancing student communication, and aligning payment timelines to prevent future allowance delays.

Advertorial

Ngwathe in Good Hands

A Sit-Down with the Administrator of Ngwathe Local Municipality

Dr Solly Montingoe



It has been weeks to months since you were appointed the Administrator of Ngwathe Local Municipality. How has the experience been so far, and what have been your initial observations and priorities since taking up the role?

The experience has been both challenging and rewarding. I found the Municipality with committed staff, but burdened by historical financial and administrative challenges. Since certain key milestones had already been achieved, my priority was to verify and consolidate these gains while strengthening areas requiring attention, particularly financial management and service delivery.

What were the most pressing challenges you encountered when you assumed office?

The most pressing challenges included historical debt to Eskom and Rand Water, ageing infrastructure and service delivery pressures. I nevertheless acknowledge the work already undertaken by the administration, including strengthening revenue collection. Restoring public trust remains an ongoing priority, particularly given the Municipality’s history of instability and service delivery protests, but this has not been an insurmountable challenge.

You speak a lot about historical challenges. Please share with us, what are your immediate priorities to stabilise and improve the municipality?

My immediate priorities have been:

- Strengthening the ongoing focus on financial discipline and ensuring timely payments to service providers.
- Assessing and strengthening debt recovery measures to enhance revenue collection.
- Monitoring progress in addressing infrastructure backlogs, particularly in water and electricity supply.
- Strengthening a culture of accountability and transparency within the Administration.

You have just mentioned service pressure as one of the challenges, and residents have raised concerns about service delivery, including water, electricity, roads, and waste collection. What steps are being taken to address these issues?

We have initiated targeted interventions:

- Water supply has stabilised with fewer interruptions. Key projects are underway including the refurbishment of the old Parys and Vredefort Water Treatment Plants and the Koppies–Edenville pipeline. Heilbron, supplied by Rand Water, has generally experienced stable service.
- Engagements with Eskom continue in order to effectively manage the electricity debt and minimise the risk of disruptions.
- Road maintenance and rehabilitation have commenced, prioritising high-traffic areas such as Parys and with other areas to follow.
- Waste collection schedules have been strengthened with improved monitoring. Additional refuse removal truck has been unveiled to supplement existing capacity across all the towns constituting the Municipality.

Financial sustainability remains a challenge for many municipalities. What is your assessment of Ngwathe’s financial position, and what measures are being implemented to improve it?

Ngwathe’s financial position remains constrained by historical debt, but progress is being made. We are implementing strict expenditure controls, enhancing revenue collection and negotiating structured repayment plans with Creditors. Importantly, we have achieved consecutive years of full capital budget expenditure which reflects improved financial discipline. The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has also announced debt relief for the Municipality.

How are you working to restore public confidence in the municipality and strengthen accountability?

Transparency is key. We have strengthened public reporting on service delivery, internal audit and accountability while ensuring that decisions are clearly communicated to residents despite the dissolution of Council. Community feedback mechanisms are also being strengthened, including through recent engagements with various stakeholders in the IDP Representative Forums.

The NCOP Select Committee on Cooperative Governance and Public Administration recently visited the municipality. How would you assess the outcome of the visit, and what key issues or recommendations emerged from the engagement?

The visit was constructive. The Committee considered reports on the Municipality’s current state of affairs and the measures being implemented to address the identified challenges and restore the Municipality to normality.

What progress has been made since your appointment, and what milestones should residents expect in the coming months?

Since my appointment, we have stabilised water supply, improved revenue collection and ensured timely payment of salaries, despite some minor unforeseen challenges affecting supplier payments. In the coming months, residents can expect accelerated road maintenance, enhanced waste management and continued engagements with Eskom, DWS and Rand Water to secure long-term service sustainability.

How are you engaging with communities, businesses, and other stakeholders to ensure their concerns are heard and addressed?

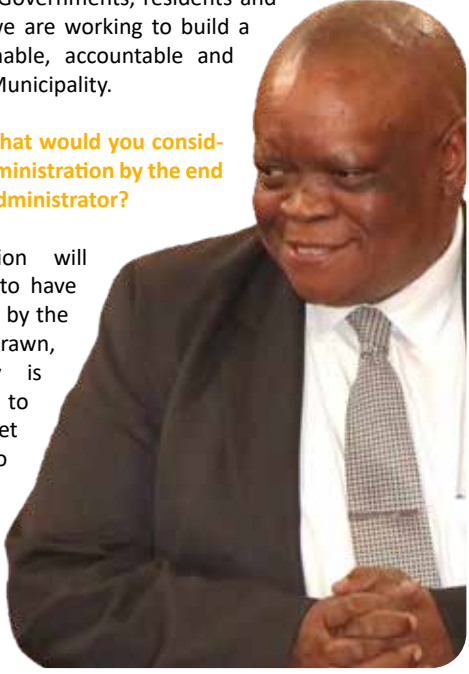
We have strengthened communication with local businesses and civil society, creating platforms for concerns to be heard and solutions jointly explored. We are also using technology, including social media and the municipal website, to provide regular updates on service delivery progress.

What message would you like to share with the residents of Ngwathe Local Municipality regarding the municipality’s future?

My message is one of cautious optimism. While challenges remain, Ngwathe is firmly on a path to recovery. Through continued collaboration between the Administration, Provincial and National Governments, residents and civic structures, we are working to build a financially sustainable, accountable and service-oriented Municipality.

Looking ahead, what would you consider a successful administration by the end of your term as Administrator?

The intervention will only be deemed to have been successful if, by the time it is withdrawn, the Municipality is able, on its own, to sustainably meet its obligations to provide basic services and honour its financial commitments. We are firmly on course to achieve this.





MEC Elzabe Rockman: Drivin

Protecting Livestock and Strengthening Biosecurity



Protecting the economic viability of the Free State's livestock and dairy industries remains a critical priority. The department has strengthened veterinary surveillance and rapid-response capacity in affected districts to respond effectively to animal diseases and protect the agricultural economy.

In the fight against Foot-and-Mouth Disease, the department has successfully vaccinated more than one million cattle. The programme is progressing towards an ambitious target of vaccinating approximately three million cattle by December 2026 — representing around 18% of the national herd.

This intervention demonstrates the department's commitment to safeguarding livestock, protecting farmers' livelihoods and strengthening agricultural biosecurity.

Driving Farmer Support and Commercialisation



The department's farmer development programme goes beyond basic support. It is designed to equip farmers with the skills, resources and opportunities required to participate meaningfully in the commercial agricultural economy.

MEC Rockman has led more than 100 direct engagements with farmers in towns and communities across the province. These engagements created a platform for producers, including commonage farmers, to raise concerns, share successes and participate in identifying practical pathways towards full commercialisation.

The engagements have also enabled the department to provide immediate assistance where possible, while developing sustainable long-term interventions where more comprehensive support is required.

One of the key long-term interventions was the launch of a major Food Security Programme in March, through which garden tools and seeds were distributed to various institutions across the province.

Empowering Youth to Shape the Future of Agriculture

Youth development remains central to the department's agricultural transformation agenda.

In its ongoing efforts to address poverty, inequality and youth unemployment while developing the next genera-

tion of farmers, the department organised consultative and district youth dialogues across the province, culminating in the Provincial Youth Farmers Summit.

Held under the theme, "An Integrated Approach to Youth Participation in Sustainable Agricultural Production, Food Security and Economic Growth," the initiative brought together young farmers and key stakeholders to engage on challenges and opportunities facing the future of agriculture.

The dialogues created an important platform for discussions around access to land, funding and infrastructure, agricultural management and marketing, innovative and smart farming practices, land acquisition and allocation, and the establishment of regional task teams.

The importance of youth participation in agriculture was strongly emphasised, particularly in light of the ageing farming population. With the average age of a farmer estimated at 62, the sector faces the risk of losing valuable agricultural skills and expertise if younger generations are not actively brought into the industry.

While young people make up a significant portion of the rural population, many remain excluded from agriculture because of challenges such as limited access to land, finance, infrastructure and skills development.

MEC Rockman has consistently emphasised the Free State government's commitment to expanding opportunities for young people in agriculture. Youth participation has become increasingly important within broader government strategies, including the National Development Plan, District Development Model and the Agricultural and Agro-processing Master Plan.

Young people, she believes, are essential drivers of innovation, productivity, entrepreneurship and risk-taking in the agricultural sector.

Celebrating Women and Young Agricultural Entrepreneurs

The department continues to create platforms that recognise and celebrate excellence among women and young people in agriculture.

The Women Entrepreneur Awards (WEA), facilitated in the Fezile Dabi District, promote the active participation of women in agriculture, agro-processing and agribusiness, contributing towards sustainable social and economic development.

The 2025 overall winner was Mme Puseletso Lipali of Samjoy Legacy in the Senekal District, whose success represents the growing contribution of women entrepreneurs to the agricultural economy.

Similarly, the Youth in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Awards (YAFF), hosted in QwaQwa, recognised the contributions and achievements of 13 young farmers across five different categories.

The overall winner of the 2025 YAFF Awards was Mr Tumelo Pedi, a farmer from the Wepener District. Through its partnership with the programme, VKB awarded each category winner with a laptop, further supporting the development of young agricultural entrepreneurs.

Investing in Skills and Farmer Development



Under the leadership of MEC Elzabe Rockman, the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs (DAEA) is focused on safeguarding the province's agricultural sector and creating opportunities for growth.

From emerging and smallholder farmers to established producers, the department's focus remains on inclusive and economically viable agricultural development. The department has intensified its support through targeted interventions designed to help farmers transition from subsistence to successful commercial farming.

Strengthening Border Security Through Collaboration

Agricultural development cannot thrive without secure farming communities. Recognising the serious challenges faced by farmers along the Free State-Lesotho border, MEC Rockman joined MEC for Community Safety, Roads and Transport, Jabu Mbalula, for an inspection of critical border areas.

The MECs were accompanied by representatives from the Free State Farmers' Union, the South African National Defence Force, Border Management Authority, South African Police Service and other relevant stakeholders.

The inspection was prompted by numerous concerns raised by farming communities along the border, including deteriorating border infrastructure, impassable roads and transnational crimes such as livestock theft, farm attacks and human trafficking. The delegation inspected approximately 485 kilometres of the border between the Free State and Le-

Building a Resilient Agricultural Future

From strengthening livestock biosecurity and supporting farmer commercialisation to empowering women and young people, investing in skills development and building strategic partnerships, the Free State Department of Agriculture and Rural Development continues to pursue an agricultural sector that is inclusive, sustainable and economically competitive.

Under the leadership of MEC Elzabe Rockman, the department's work reflects a clear commitment to turning challenges into opportunities and ensuring that agriculture remains a powerful driver of economic growth, food security and rural development.

The department remains steadfast in its commitment to progressive agricultural development — empowering farmers, strengthening partnerships and cultivating a prosperous agricultural future for the Free State.

Free State MEC Elzabe Rockman for the

g Change, Delivering Results



ockman, the Free State Department of Agriculture, Rural
RDEA) continues to drive a bold and progressive agenda aimed at
sector, accelerating transformation and creating sustainable
across the agricultural value chain.

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Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environmental Affairs (DARDEA).



Opinion

Kelebogile Boleu
Lecturer, Department of Criminology, University of the Free State

Beyond the school gates: Belonging begins with community

A language I thought I'd left behind

Parenting is rarely about having all the answers. More often, it is about learning to enter worlds we never expected to inhabit. For parents of Deaf children, that journey extends beyond learning how to parent. It often means learning a new language, discovering a rich cultural identity, and finding ways to respectfully participate in a community that ultimately belongs to our children more than it does to us.

During my undergraduate studies, I chose South African Sign Language (SASL) and Deaf Studies as an elective. I fell in love with both the language and the Deaf community. Unfortunately, I only had one year to study before other academic commitments took over. Like many things we intend to return to, my signing gradually faded into the background of everyday life. I never imagined that years later, what had become a distant memory would become central to my son's life and, in many ways, to mine.

Like many hearing people who have learnt a little SASL, I enjoyed the occasional opportunity to greet someone and apologise for the limits of my signing. Those brief interactions always reminded me of the generosity of the Deaf community. What I nev-

er anticipated was that this would no longer be an occasional encounter. It would become part of my family's everyday reality.

Why community matters

As parents, we all want the same things for our children. We want them to experience meaningful relationships, to discover opportunities, to develop confidence in who they are, and to find places where they genuinely belong. For my son, that means ensuring he has opportunities to spend time with Deaf children, Deaf adults and Deaf families, not only within his school, but beyond it.

It is necessary to highlight the importance of Deaf role models, not only for Deaf children but also for hearing parents. Meeting Deaf adults who have navigated education, employment, relationships and family life offers something I never can: lived experience.

Their stories replace uncertainty with possibility and demonstrate that deafness is not something to overcome, but an identity through which rich and fulfilling lives are lived.

Belonging beyond school

I have come to accept that no matter how committed I am as his mother, I cannot fully understand

my son's lived experience as a Deaf person. I can learn, advocate, create opportunities and walk alongside him, but I cannot speak from the perspective of someone who has lived that experience.

That understanding belongs to Deaf people themselves, which is precisely why their presence in his life matters so deeply.

Recently, someone suggested that it is natural for my son's sense of community to be centred on his school. While school is undeniably important, I believe his community should be much bigger than the classroom.

So, I intentionally seek opportunities to build relationships beyond the school gates. We spend time with Deaf children and adults in ordinary spaces such as playing sport, sharing ice cream in the park, enjoying picnics and simply spending time together as families. These moments may appear unremarkable, but they are where belonging is nurtured.

Equally important are the Deaf young people and adults who quietly expand what my son believes is possible.

Every conversation, every shared experience and every example of a life well-lived helps him imagine his own future with greater confidence. Representa-

tion is not simply about seeing someone who looks like you; it is about recognising that your aspirations are both valid and achievable.

Just being parents

Parenting a Deaf child is not a heroic act. Parenting any child rarely is.

What makes parenting extraordinary is the ordinary commitment to love the child in front of us, to nurture who they are rather than who we imagined they might become, and to hold onto hope for a future we cannot fully predict. Parents of Deaf children are no different.

We are simply doing what parents have always done: loving intentionally, learning continuously and hoping fiercely.

The HEARTS Project was born from that understanding. It exists because parents need community too. It is built by parents, for parents, recognising that while no one has all the answers, none of us should have to navigate this journey alone.

At its core, HEARTS is about relationships, belonging and hope through creating spaces where families are supported, children are affirmed in who they are, and every parent is reminded that they are not walking this path on their own.

Letter to the Editor

The editor reserves the right to edit and reject letters and all correspondence must include your full names, address and phone numbers. Write to: editor@journalnews.co.za



Pastor
Motsamai Kareli
Empowerment Ministries
International

Talent vs Hard Work: What Really Determines Success?

There is a popular belief that successful people are simply gifted. We look at a great musician, a brilliant entrepreneur, an outstanding athlete or an exceptional leader and say, "They are talented." Sometimes that is true.

Talent matters. Natural ability can give a person an advantage, allowing them to learn faster, perform better or see opportunities that others may not immediately recognise. But talent, by itself, is not enough.

In fact, one of the greatest mistakes a talented person can make is to believe that talent eliminates the need for hard work.

Talent can open the door, but hard work determines whether you remain in the room. Consider two people. One is naturally gifted. They learn quickly, have exceptional ability and often perform better than others without putting in much effort. The second person has very little natural ability. They are not the most gifted in the room, but they are disciplined. They arrive early. They practise. They study. They ask questions. They make mistakes, learn from them and try again. While the talented person is relying on what comes naturally, the hardworking person is deliberately developing what does not.

At the beginning, the talented person may be ahead. But give it time. The hardworking person begins to close the gap.

Eventually, they may overtake the talented person. This is one of the most important lessons about success: natural ability may determine where you start, but your work ethic has a significant influence on where you finish.

1. Talent without discipline is wasted potential

Talent creates possibilities. Hard work turns possibilities into results. There are countless people who possess remarkable potential but never fulfil it because they are unwilling to put in the necessary work. They have the intelligence, the creativity, the connections or the natural ability, but they lack discipline.

Talent can make you comfortable. It can make you believe that because you have always been good at something, you will always be good at it.

But the world does not reward potential indefinitely. Eventually, potential must produce results. A talented employee who refuses to develop themselves can be overtaken by an ordinary employee who continuously learns. A naturally gifted entrepreneur who does not work on their business can be overtaken by someone with less business acumen but greater consistency. A gifted athlete who stops training can be defeated by an athlete who may have started with less ability but refuses to stop improving.

2. The danger of talent is that it can make you dependent on what comes easily.

Hard work, on the other hand, teaches you how to keep going when things do not come easily.

3. Hard work develops what talent cannot

Hard work does more than produce results. It develops the person producing those results.

When you work hard, you develop discipline. When you practise, you develop competence. When you persist through difficulty, you develop resilience.

When you repeatedly fail and try again, you develop courage.

When you remain committed when nobody is watching, you develop character.

These qualities are invaluable because success is rarely sustained by talent alone. At some point, every talented person encounters a challenge that talent cannot solve. They will face competition, failure, disappointment, changing circumstances and seasons when their natural ability is simply not enough. That is when discipline becomes more

important than giftedness.

The person who has learned to work hard has an advantage because they know how to continue when motivation disappears.

4. The hardworking person has a powerful advantage

There is something remarkable about a person who knows they are not the most talented but decides to work anyway. They do not have the luxury of depending on natural ability.

So they prepare more.

They practise more.

They read more.

They learn more.

They ask for help.

They improve.

They keep showing up.

And while they are doing this, they are quietly becoming better. This is why we should never underestimate the person who is willing to work.

They may not be the smartest person in the room today. They may not be the most experienced. They may not have the best connections. They may not even have the natural ability of their competitors.

But consistency compounds.

One hour of learning today may not transform your life. One day of practice may not make you exceptional. One business meeting may not make you successful.

But thousands of small efforts, accumulated over time, can produce extraordinary results.

5. Hard work does not mean working blindly

There is, however, an important distinction to make. Hard work is not simply being busy. You can work hard in the wrong direction. True hard work must be combined with wisdom, learning and strategy.

The hardworking person must be willing to ask: Am I improving? Am I learning? Am I becoming more effective? Is there a better way of doing this?

The goal is not merely to work longer. The goal is to work better, work consistently and keep improving. This is where hard work becomes powerful. It is not about exhausting yourself to prove that you are committed. It is about developing the discipline to consistently do what needs to be done.

5. Do not envy talent; develop discipline

If you are naturally talented, be grateful for your gift—but do not become dependent on it.

Your talent is a responsibility.

Develop it.

Sharpen it.

Invest in it.

Work on it.

And if you believe you are not particularly talented, do not use that as an excuse to remain where you are. You may not be able to control how much natural ability you were born with, but you can control your attitude towards development.

You can decide to become disciplined.

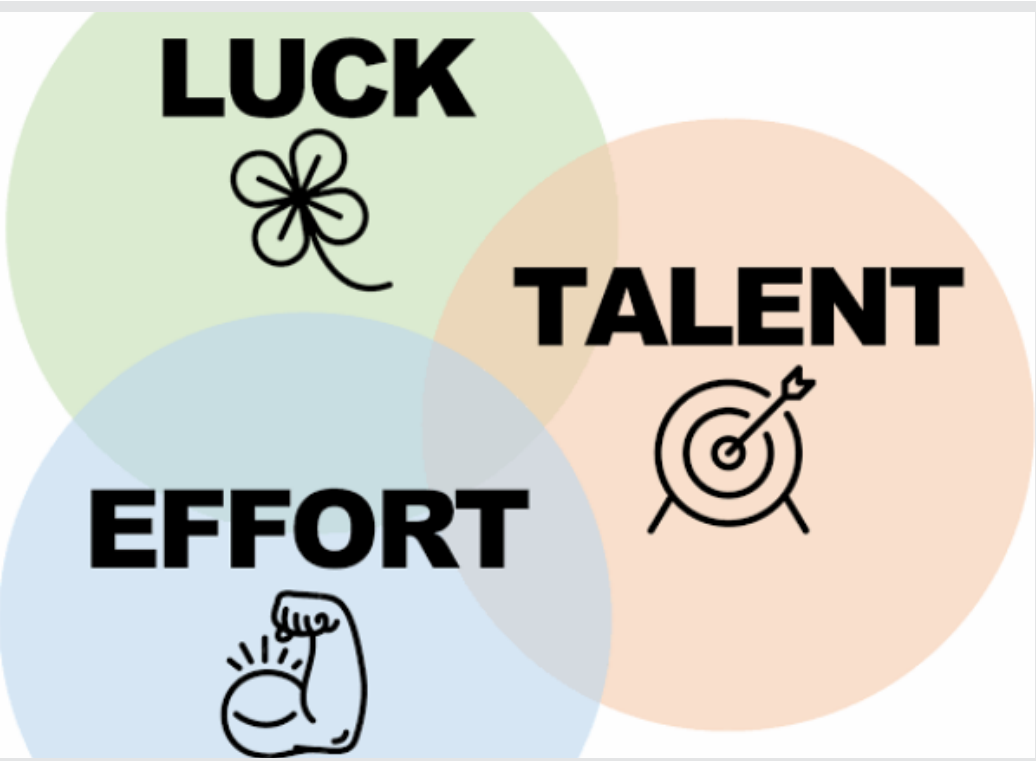
You can decide to learn.

You can decide to practise. You can decide to persevere. You can decide to show up when others have stopped.

And sometimes, that decision is enough to change the trajectory of your life.

6. The race is not always won by the person who starts ahead

Imagine a race where one runner starts with a significant advantage. They are naturally faster, while another runner starts behind. If the gifted runner becomes complacent and stops training while the other runner trains every day, improves their technique, strengthens their body and develops greater endurance, the advantage will eventually disappear. The person who started behind may finish ahead. Life often works the same way.



7. Talent can give you an advantage, but hard work can close the gap.

And when talent is combined with hard work, something even more powerful happens.

Talent gives you capacity.

Hard work develops that capacity. Discipline sustains it. Experience refines it. And consistency turns it into excellence. That is why I believe we should stop asking only, "How talented are you?"

Perhaps the more important question is: "How willing are you to work?" Because talent may determine your starting point, but hard work, discipline and perseverance can profoundly influence your destination. Do not waste your potential waiting for success to recognise your talent. Work. Develop yourself. Keep improving. Keep showing up. Because somewhere out there is someone with less talent than you, fewer advantages than you and fewer resources than you—but they are willing to work harder.

And if you are not careful, they will eventually overtake you.

8. Hard Work Builds Confidence That Talent Alone Cannot Give

There is a particular kind of confidence that comes from knowing you have prepared. It is different from confidence based on talent. A talented person may think, "I know I can do this because I am good at it." A disciplined person thinks, "I know I can do this because I have prepared myself for it." That confidence is powerful. When you have worked, studied, practised and prepared, you do not have to depend entirely on natural ability. You know that you have invested in yourself. Hard work therefore does not only improve your performance; it changes how you see yourself.

Every time you overcome something difficult, you prove to yourself that you are capable of more than you previously believed.

9. Hard Work Creates Opportunities

People often wait for opportunities before they start preparing. But preparation should come before the opportunity. The person who works consistently is often ready when the opportunity arrives.

An entrepreneur who has spent years learning their industry is better prepared when a major investment opportunity appears. A young professional who has spent years developing their skills is better positioned when a leadership position becomes available. A preacher who has spent years studying, developing and preparing is better equipped when a larger platform opens.

Opportunities do not always announce themselves in advance.

Sometimes the opportunity arrives suddenly, and the question is not whether you are talented enough but whether you are prepared enough.

Hard work prepares you for opportunities that talent alone may not be ready to handle.

10. Talent Gives You an Advantage, but Hard Work Can Close the Gap

This may be the most important lesson of all.

Talent can give you an advantage. But hard work can close the gap. Someone may have started ahead of you, but that does not mean they will finish ahead of you.

Someone may have more natural ability, but that does not mean they will develop it better than you. Someone may be more gifted, but they may not be more disciplined.

Someone may have more resources, but they may not be more committed.

Someone may have greater potential, but potential without execution remains potential. And when talent is combined with hard work, something even more powerful happens. Talent gives you capacity. Hard work develops that capacity.

Discipline sustains it.

Experience refines it.

Consistency turns it into excellence. That is why I believe we should stop asking only, "How talented are you?" Perhaps the more important question is: "How willing are you to work?" Talent may determine your starting point, but hard work, discipline, perseverance and consistency can profoundly influence your destination. Do not waste your potential waiting for success to recognise your talent.

Work.

Develop yourself.

Keep improving.

Keep learning.

Keep showing up.

Keep going when the results are slow.

Because somewhere out there is someone with less talent than you, fewer advantages than you and fewer resources than you—but they are willing to work harder.

And if you are not careful, they will eventually overtake you. The lesson is not that talent is irrelevant. It is that talent must be developed.

The gifted person who works hard can become exceptional.

The average person who works hard can become extraordinary.

And the person who refuses to work, regardless of how talented they are, can eventually be overtaken by someone who simply refuses to quit. Talent may open the door. Hard work keeps you prepared to walk through it. Talent may give you a head start. Hard work can carry you to the finish line. In the end, success does not always belong to the person who had the most talent. Very often, it belongs to the person who was willing to keep working long after everyone else stopped.

AfriForum's revival of apartheid legacy raises fears for South Africa's future

In a moment that starkly illuminates the fragility of South Africa's democratic project, the lobby group AfriForum will host a sold-out theatre event featuring Dr. Wouter Basson, the notorious architect of the apartheid state's chemical and biological warfare program, Project Coast.

The event, held in a 380-seat venue in Pretoria, saw tickets priced at R180 vanish, as the man dubbed "Dr Death" prepared to give his "personal account" of a programme that developed poisons, toxic substances and covert assassination methods.

This is not merely a historical curiosity; it is a powerful manifestation of a deeply troubling trend: the mobilisation of a white minority around a narrative of victimhood that fundamentally undermines the project of non-racial nation-building in South Africa.

The Ethnicist Movement and Its Symbols

The celebration of a figure like Basson, whose actions were condemned as "so serious" by the Pretoria High Court just this year, must be understood within the broader political strategy of AfriForum. As former Constitutional Court Judge Edwin Cameron recently noted, AfriForum is an "ethnicist movement."

This ethnic nationalism operates by constructing a besieged Afrikaner identity that requires its own parallel institutions, from "community safety" structures to a separate university. By providing a platform to Basson, AfriForum is not exploring history; it is sanctifying a particular version of it, one that recasts the architects of apartheid's darkest operations not as criminals or ethical pariahs, but as soldiers who deserve a hearing. This is a clear act of white mobilisation, a rallying around a figure who symbolises a past that the nation's foundational ideals equality, human dignity and reconciliation, were meant to overcome.

The Manufactured Threat

This mobilisation gains its power not from nostalgia alone, but from a manufactured sense of existential threat. The myth of "white genocide," a lie that has been aggressively propagated by AfriForum and its sister organisation Solidariteit, is a cornerstone of this strategy.

This narrative, now weaponised in international campaigns that have even led to segments of white South Africans being granted refugee status in the United States, serves a clear purpose. As political analyst Roelf Meyer argued, beneath the noise of the "white genocide" claim is a "worldview that still cannot accept the moral logic of a democratic South Africa."

The appeal to victimhood is a political tool designed to maintain racial privilege in a society where structural transformation has been slow. It is a cynical deflection from the deep, unresolved inequalities of the country, using identity as a "vessel for grievance" when the promise of a shared, prosperous future has not been delivered to the majority.

A Dangerous Realignment

The danger is compounded by the political realignments this grievance politics is enabling.

The recent collaboration between AfriForum and the March & March movement, a group mobilising largely Black South Africans against African and Asian migrants, is a devastating illustration of this trend. This "unholy alliance" demonstrates how grievance politics can erase historical responsibility.

Both movements are organised around a similar grammar: a community under threat, an outsider to blame and a demand for protection over universal rights. By presenting itself as an "AfriForum for black South Africans," March & March is normalising the very logic of ethnic and racial balkanisation that apartheid sought to entrench.

It accepts the model of a society divided into "bounded communities, each organising to defend its own interests against others," which is "the road to balkanisation."

A Profound Political Act

The sold-out Basson event, therefore, is a profound political act. As a recent analysis from the Heinrich Böll Foundation concludes, AfriForum is now at the heart of an "emboldened, globally networked far-right project" that has modernised racism and "recasts white privilege as persecution." When a movement that champions the architect of a programme that tested deadly chemicals on human beings, including the San people, and plotted the assassination of anti-apartheid activists can fill a theatre, it signals a retreat from the values of a shared future.

The Failure of Follow-Through

The tragedy is that this retreat is a direct consequence of the nation's failures. As Roelf Meyer put it, South Africa "did not fail the handshake. It failed the follow-through."

The failure to deliver economic justice and structural transformation has created a vacuum of despair and anger. In that vacuum, identity politics flourishes, and yesterday's oppressor can find common cause with anyone offering a narrative of protection. When we retreat behind a laager and blame the foreigner for our own governance failures, we slowly become irrelevant as the rest of Africa trades around us.

The AfriForum event is not just a celebration of "Dr Death"; it is a funeral dirge for the "rainbow nation" ideal, a potent symbol of the immense challenge that faces any effort to build a common society in South Africa. It proves that without a radical, shared commitment to justice and material equality, the ghosts of apartheid will continue to be resurrected, not to be reckoned with, but to be revered.

Chris Maxon is the head of policy at Rise Mzansi
The views expressed do not necessarily represent those of Journal News Network

Business

Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	16.01	0.38%	▲
Rand/Pound	21.65	0.10%	▲
Rand/Euro	18.61	0.06%	▲
Platinum	1,829.90	3.56%	▲
Brent Crude	95.72	0.86%	▲
Gold	4,475.49	2.00%	▲
Ethereum	2,509.45	5.00%	▲
Bitcoin	81,562.85	5.57%	▲

Digital Shero Goes Global

Provinces Sign Historic Tourism Pact

By Katlego Mashwabi

If you caught the dazzling runway action at the 2026 Free State Fashion Week (FSFW), you saw Bolawana ‘Mags’ Shivanda lighting up the stage.

Co-hosting the event with her signature flair, the media mogul proved that no matter how global your hustle gets, you never forget your stylish roots.

As the founder and CEO of DigitalShero Media Group, Mags operates a 100 percent Black female-owned creative agency across South Africa and Kenya.

She approaches both style and business with a fierce personal mantra: bold, intentional, and unapologetic.

“Whether it’s a campaign, a business idea, a platform or a conversation, I am interested in creating things that make people feel, think and ultimately see what is possible,” she said.

Iconic master of ceremonies for the Lemo Fest SMME Expo and Business Masterclass, Shivanda remains deeply passionate about purposeful innovation. She credits the raw beauty of growing up in a small town with giving her the foundational mindset that guides her lifetime milestones.

That environment ignited her passion for media, driven by a childhood desire for authentic representation.

Even her agency’s name stems from her childhood love for superheroes, inspiring young women to lead in tech and creative industries.

She views her evolution across Thaba Nchu, Bloemfontein, and international markets as chapters of the same woman rather than separate identities.

“The girl from Bloemfontein still walks into every international room with me.”

Her leap from corporate stability into entrepreneurship in 2015 required building an empire brick by brick without financial cushions or investor checks.

“Looking back, those operational challenges were painful at the time, but they forced me to build resilience into the DNA of the business.”

Today, that resilience has powered a highly strategic expansion into East Africa, relying heavily on partnership and local market integration.

Shivanda firmly rejects treating Africa as a single market, opting instead to collaborate with local talent to respect different consumer cultures.

Through her beloved Bloem Girls/Guys Rock Foundation, she pours energy into local youth development and township digital skills programs.

“Sometimes the first thing you have to give someone is not an opportunity.

“Sometimes you have to give them permission to believe that they belong in the room when the opportunity arrives,” Shivanda said.

Fiercely loyal to the city that built her, she acknowledges that many of her career milestones started in the Free State.

“The projects closest to my heart are BloemGirlsRock and BloemGuysRock Foundation. Period!

“I love home so much and I will continue to be one of the people who helps to push it forward,” she concluded.



Landmark Tourism Confluence ... The Northern Cape, Free State and Eastern Cape province came together to officially launch the Tri-Provincial Tourism Month. Picture: Katlego Mashwabi

By Katlego Mashwabi

There was electricity in the crisp Karoo air on 31 August 2026 as the wooden deck of the Chargo River Lodge became the stage for a historic tourism revolution.

With Lake Gariep shimmering in the background, the Northern Cape, Free State, and Eastern Cape officially joined hands to launch the Tri-Provincial Tourism Month 2026.

Free State MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism in Ketso Makume, MEC for Economic Development, Environmental Affairs in the Eastern Cape, Nonkqubela Pieters, and Northern Cape MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, Venus Blennies-Magage, came together alongside top tourism leaders under a soaring theme: One Destination, Three Provinces, a World of Possibilities!

The energetic launch officially kicked off a shared vision to dissolve old border lines and showcase the region’s hidden gems through digital innovation.

The landmark moment was sealed with the official signing of a Tri-Province Memorandum of Understanding by the visionary chief executive officers of the provincial tourism agencies.

The ceremonies kicked off with an uplifting opening prayer from Pastor Mabanga, setting a tone of unity and promise.

Attendees were treated to dynamic promotional videos showcasing the monumental spots, wildlife, and sweeping landscapes each province boasts.

Northern Cape Economic Development Agency (NCEDA) Chief Executive Officer, Shawn Modise, took the podium, instantly captivating the crowd by asking them to imagine a future where boundaries vanish.

He urged everyone to look at tourism as a journey where the three provinces become the ultimate connectors.

As the host MEC, Blennies-Magage emphasised the direct impact of the pact during her address. “Our presence here represents our commitment to collaboration, developing joint tourism offerings, and cross-selling our destinations, ensuring a visitor entering one province has every reason to discover the other two,” she stated.

Pieters, on the other hand, reminded attendees about the true nature of travel.

“Provincial boundaries matter for administration but should never limit our imagination because tourists don’t plan their memories around border signs.

“They follow landscapes, stories, food, culture, wildlife, and adventure,” she said.

Makume drove the point home by declaring that tourism must become the engine of regional growth.

“If South Africa is serious about inclusive economic growth, job creation, and rural development, then tourism must be placed firmly at the centre of our economic strategy.

“Our provinces must stop competing where we can collaborate,” said Makume.

The crowd’s enthusiasm peaked as local tourism entrepreneurs openly celebrated what this means for grassroots businesses.

Sakhisizwe Tours founder, Mbulelo Kafi, highlighted how the new agreement unlocks immediate potential for operators.

“As a tour guide, this tour of the Gariep is the one I have always been craving because it challenges me to tailor incredible new itineraries that flow right through the Free State, Eastern Cape, and Northern Cape.

“So far I have already developed some because there are a lot of hidden gems in the Karoo, like this one and its sister lodge, the Chargo Boutique Lodge,” added Kafi.

With prominent leaders present, the message leaving Colesberg was clear, unified, and packed with momentum. Tourism Month 2026 has officially arrived, and the Karoo has never looked more inviting.



MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

PUBLIC NOTICE

FINAL IDP/BUDGET AND PMS PROCESS PLAN 2027-2032

Notice is hereby given in terms of section 28(1) and (3) and section 29(1) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, No. 32 of 2000 as amended, read with the provisions of the Local Government Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003 as amended, that Matjhabeng Local Municipality has adopted its final IDP/Budget and PMS Process Plan for 2027-2032 financial years at the council meeting that was held on the 27th of August 2026.

Copies of the final IDP/Budget and PMS Process Plan are herewith made public and can be accessed and viewed at the following municipal offices:

1. Head Office- Matjhabeng Local Municipality-main building
2. Odendaalsrus unit office
3. Hennenman unit office
4. Virginia unit office
5. All libraries within Matjhabeng Local Municipality
6. Municipal website: www.matjhabengmunicipality.co.za

For more information, please contact the Acting Senior Admin Officer Me. Xoliswa Sejane at 057 492 0573 during office hours.

Dr. Vuyo Adonis
Acting Municipal Manager

Mmoho - Together - Sisonke - Tesame

R1.9 Million Scandal: Former AgriSETA CEO Fined for PFMA Breach

By Katlego Mashwabi

Former Agriculture Sector Education and Training Authority (AgriSETA) Chief Executive Officer Jeremiah Sello Madiba, 62, has been fined R30 000 after pleading guilty to contravening the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA).

Madiba appeared before the Kimberley Serious Commercial Crimes Court, where he was sentenced on Monday, 24 August 2026, to pay a R30 000 fine or serve 12 months’ imprisonment.

The court ordered that Madiba pay R20 000 by 31 August, while the remaining R10 000 will be paid in instalments of R2 500 until the amount is settled by 7 October.

Madiba was arrested in June 2022 by the Hawks’ Serious Commercial Crime Investigation team.

The case relates to R1.9 million in funding awarded by AgriSETA in 2016 to Business Against Crime (BAC), a non-profit organisation that allegedly misrepresented itself as being in partnership with Dipalemo Strategic Trading Services, an AgriSETA-accredited service provider.

According to the investigation, BAC used Dipalemo’s credentials to secure the contract, despite the two organisations not having a genuine joint venture. AgriSETA also failed to follow the required procurement procedures when awarding the contract.

The matter formed part of a broader investigation into the alleged fraudulent use of AgriSETA funds.

The Special Investigating Unit (SIU) was authorised in 2018, under Proclamation R4 of 2018, to investigate allegations of corruption and maladministration at AgriSETA and recover financial losses suffered by the State.

The SIU investigation found that Bloemfontein pastor Lerato Raphael Mokoteli and Anthony Dywili had fraudulently applied to AgriSETA for R1.9 million in March 2015 to provide food-garden training and mentoring in Kimberley.

The application claimed to be a joint venture between Business Against Crime and Dipalemo Training Strategic Services. However, Dipalemo was reportedly unaware of the application and did not receive any of the funding.

After receiving the money, Mokoteli and Dywili entered into a memorandum of understanding between Business Against Crime and the Northern Cape Empowerment Academy, which was allegedly led by Dipalemo. The SIU found that the academy existed only on paper.

Between June and November 2016, invoices totalling R1.3 million were submitted to Business Against Crime on behalf of Dipalemo, despite Mokoteli allegedly having no relationship with the organisation.

The investigation also found that a close-out report was submitted to AgriSETA on behalf of Dipalemo, despite the organisation not having provided the training.

The funding was reportedly used to train 50 learners in food-garden operations, with R219 000 paid in learner stipends. A further R381 564.86 was claimed as administration costs, while R600 000 remained unspent.

The SIU found that Dywili failed to disclose the unspent funds to AgriSETA, allegedly in breach of the funding agreement.

In July 2016, R317 000 of the funding was also paid to Christian for Peace in Africa, a non-profit organisation chaired by Dywili. The organisation’s bank account had been opened only a month earlier.

The SIU referred evidence of possible criminal offences to the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) in 2019.

Mokoteli, Dywili and Madiba were subsequently charged with various counts of fraud and money laundering. Madiba was accused of awarding the tender without the required decision by AgriSETA’s Board of Directors, allegedly contravening the PFMA. In May 2023, Mokoteli entered into a guilty plea agreement with the State. He pleaded guilty to two counts of fraud and two counts of money laundering and agreed to repay R1.9 million to AgriSETA.

He was sentenced in June 2023 to 10 years’ imprisonment for two counts of fraud and five years for two counts of money laundering. The sentences were suspended for five years on condition that he was not convicted of similar offences during the suspension period.

The SIU and NPA have since welcomed the recovery of the R1.9 million, which Mokoteli paid to AgriSETA on 15 June as part of his plea agreement.

Madiba’s guilty plea and sentence bring another development in the long-running case involving the alleged misuse of AgriSETA funding.

Disney star Carla Jeffery (33) dies



Actress Carla Jeffery, best known for her role in the Disney Channel franchise *Zombies*, has passed away at the age of 33.

Her agent Carla Alexander confirmed that she died on Tuesday, 1 September.

In a statement posted to the star's social media, she was described as "a beautiful, vibrant, and incredibly talented woman whose radiant smile could light up any room".

"For more than 20 years, we had the privilege of watching her grow... As Bree in Disney's hit *Zombies* franchise, Carla shared her joy, humour, and bright spirit with audiences.

"Our hearts are with Carla's family and loved ones during this devastating time. Rest beautifully, Carla. Your light will never be forgotten," the statement continued.

Born in Houston, Texas, Jeffery made her acting debut in the 2006 comedy *Phat Girlz*, as the 10-year-old version of Mo'Nique's character, Jazmin.

She went on to appear in several television shows such as *iCarly*, *Good Luck Charlie*, *Shake It Up!*, *Scream Queens*, and Netflix's *American Vandal*.

In a statement, Disney Entertainment Television described Jeffery as an "extraordinary talent".

"She had a rare gift for connecting with audiences, and her performances brought joy to millions.

"We will remember Carla for her generosity, her humour and the genuine light she brought to those around her."

Never miss a major story. Get breaking news and the latest developments from South Africa and beyond as they happen. **EWN**

Black Coffee Turns Global Spotlight Into A Vision Of Hope

Katlego Mashwabi

When global music icon Black Coffee takes centre stage, he is usually behind the decks commanding thousands of fans. But on a warm evening at Phi Beach in Sardinia, Italy, the man born Nkosi-nathi Maphumulo stood before a very different audience—and for a deeply personal cause.

Hosting his foundation's star-studded Charity Gala Dinner, Black Coffee used the glamorous international platform to reflect on a 15-year journey dedicated to restoring dignity and creating opportunities for vulnerable communities in South Africa.

The evening focused on raising funds and global awareness for the expansion of the Gift of Sight by Black Coffee initiative, which aims to provide children with access to vital eye-care services.

Maphumulo shared that his commitment to children's vision care stems from his own childhood experiences.

Having grown up in an underserved community and struggled with eyesight problems himself, he understands how poor vision can become an invisible barrier to a child's education,

confidence and future.

"Every child deserves the chance to see what is possible for their future," he said, linking his extraordinary global success to his enduring commitment to South African communities.

The gala attracted entrepreneurs, corporate leaders and prominent guests, with an auction featuring artworks donated by internationally acclaimed artist Mr Brainwash and celebrated South African artist Nelson Makamo.

The evening's emotional highlight came when Nungu Diamonds CEO and diamond cutter Kealeboga Pule announced a donation of \$50 000 to the foundation, praising Black Coffee's commitment to uplifting communities.

The Gift of Sight programme has already reached hundreds of pupils, beginning at Thabisang Primary School in Soweto and recently expanding to Zenzeleni Primary School in Alexandra, where more than 500 children received eye and dental care.

With mobile clinics now set to reach rural communities, Black Coffee is proving that while his music has conquered the world, his heart remains firmly focused on changing the lives of South Africa's children.



Heidi Giokos joins SABC as Fullview weekend presenter after eNCA dismissal



Just weeks after her reported dismissal from eNCA, award-winning journalist and broadcaster Heidi Giokos has secured a new role at the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), where she made her debut as a presenter on the weekend edition of Fullview on Monday.

The public broadcaster confirmed her appointment on Monday.

According to reports, Giokos was dismissed from eNCA for appearing in a commercial in which she played a TV reporter.

She joined eNCA in 2017 as a general reporter.

Giokos was reportedly suspended pending an eNCA disciplinary hearing, in which she was found guilty and immediately dismissed.

Track record of excellence

The SABC said Giokos's appointment as a presenter on the weekend edition of Fullview further strengthens the public broadcaster's commitment to delivering credible, insightful and impactful journalism to audiences across the country.

SABC spokesperson Mmoni Ngubane said Giokos is an award-winning journalist, television presenter and broadcaster with an established reputation in business, financial and current affairs reporting.

"Throughout her career, she has built a strong track record of excellence founded on credibility and a passion for telling stories that matter.

"Known for her ability to translate complex economic, business and social issues into accessible and engaging content, Giokos has become a trusted and respected voice within the South African media."

Ngubane said her journalism is characterised by a commitment to accuracy and balanced reporting which is meaningful to the audience.

"As a presenter, interviewer and facilitator, she brings a unique combination of journalistic truth, authenticity and a confident on-air presence. Her ability to connect with audiences and the people are at the heart of every story and that has earned her recognition across the broadcasting industry."

"Her experience and expertise will further enhance the SABC's mission of serving the public with trusted news and information."

Strong academic foundation

Giokos holds a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Journalism and an Honours Degree in Communications.

Ngubane said her educational background provides a strong academic foundation to complement her vast professional experience.

Meanwhile, Deidre Uren, Group Executive for SABC News, said they were delighted to welcome Giokos to the SABC family.

"Her extensive experience, professionalism and commitment to impactful storytelling align strongly with our mandate of informing, educating and empowering South Africans. We look forward to the contribution she will make across our news platforms." **!oL**

Hugh Masekela's son, Selema, opens up about father's addiction and estrangement



Selema Masekela recently opened up about the relationship he had with his father, legendary musician Hugh Masekela, and the impact the artist's addiction had on his life and their relationship.

Selema appeared on the podcast *One54Africa*, where he spoke about the difficult phase he and his father went through.

Also see: Zuluboy speaks out after Mzansi reacts to viral Hugh Masekela cover.

Selema Masekela's experience with his father's addiction

The late artist's son spoke on how consuming Masekela's addiction was. He states that in his mid-20s, he decided to emotionally withdraw from the relationship altogether. Selema explained that Masekela's addiction got so bad that he felt the need to treat him as though he were dead, so

when the news inevitably came, he had an emotional head start.

The two then became estranged for five years.

Also see: A Week with a Legend: How Hugh Masekela Inspired J'Something's 'Heaven In You'

The life-changing intervention

The estrangement was then interrupted by Selema's uncle, who organised an intervention for the trumpeter.

Selema explained that his uncle practically "kidnapped" Masekela and took him to London, where he was taken to a rehabilitation centre that one of the Beatles members owned. This was the rehabilitation that changed his life.

The sports commentator further explained that it was because of the foreign land, where Masekela could not rely on his charisma and charm, that helped him focus on his rehabilitation and heal his

addiction.

However, Masekela stirred up conflicting emotions within his son. Selema shared that Masekela's success made him angry because he had to deal with the false hope of Masekela recovering and subsequently relapsing more than once. Watching his father actually succeed kept him on his toes, waiting for the other shoe to drop.

The reunion

Selema, born in the United States, recounted knocking on his father's hotel room door in New York after rehab.

He shared that upon seeing him after the five years of estrangement, instead of old wounds reopening, the two found their way back to the relationship they once shared.

Their once distant relationship blossomed into one of the best for Selema. **Bona**

Lebo M ordered to pay comedian R640,000 over 'The Lion King' song

Music producer Lebohang Morake, also known as Lebo M, has been ordered to pay \$39,560 (approximately R640,000) to comedian Jonasi Learnmore Mwanyenyeky.

This is after the musician sued Jonasi over the popular "Nants'ingonyama bagithi Baba" chant, which is performed at the beginning of the iconic 'Circle of Life', the first song on the Billboard 200-topping 1994 soundtrack to 'The Lion King'.

The dispute came after Jonasi appeared on *One54 Africa* podcast and sang the chant. He was then asked what it meant. He jokingly said it meant, "Look, there's a lion. Oh my God," instead of the true meaning, "All hail the king, we all bow in the presence of the king."

Following his appearance on the podcast, Lebo M opened a case against the comedian, accusing him of defamation and calling the interpretation a "fabricated, trivializing distortion, meant as a sick joke for unlawful self-profit." He sued the comedian for \$27 million in damages.

However, following months of deliberation, Judge Josephine Staton ruled in favour of Jonasi on Friday, and Lebo M was ordered to pay him \$39,560 in attorney's fees.



Billboard reports: "Jonasi's attorneys argued that it targets core First Amendment protections by trying to 'punish' a comedian simply because he had been offended by a joke. Because the First Amendment is so important in our society, the court should... not allow plaintiff to twist trademark law to suppress free speech."

The ruling brings an end to the legal battle between Lebo M and Jonasi, with the comedian successfully defending the joke as an exercise of free speech. **Jacarandafm**

WEEKEND

Gig Guide

ALL OVER BLOEMFONTEIN FROM
04 - 05 SEPTEMBER 2026

THE EATERY - ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND
FRIDAY - 04 SEPTEMBER 2026
THE EATERY (REIZIS SQUARE)

COMEDY IS LIFE
SATURDAY - 05 SEPTEMBER 2026
UPS MAIN CAMPUS

MEET & GREET INFLUENCER BRUNCH
SATURDAY - 05 SEPTEMBER 2026
IZA - BLOEMFONTEIN

VEGAS SATURDAYS
SATURDAY - 05 SEPTEMBER 2026
VEGAS CLUB

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Little Nontsi's BUSINESS TIP OF THE MONTH

BUSINESS TIP: Start where you are with what you have.

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Little Nontsi says: Don't wait until you have everything. Start small and grow!

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Tourism

TourLife Scoops Top Business Award

By Katlego Mashwabi

TourLife Travel Group has officially solidified its place as a powerhouse in South African tourism after winning the Top Travel and Tourism Brand award at the 5th Annual Top 16 Youth-Owned Brands Awards (YOBA).

The ceremony took place on 2 September 2026 at Summer Place in Hyde Park, Sandton, where the vibrant tour operator beat out a highly competitive field of finalists to claim the industry title.

Before taking the crown, TourLife founder, Kgoietsile Thubisi, turned heads on the red carpet in a striking black and white tuxedo. He arrived with a high-profile entourage, later posting stories of his grand arrival with Jay-Z's Legacy playing in the background as the ultimate soundtrack to his success.

Curating his winning look was a top-tier styling team, including his stylists Tladi and Sir Ngesihle. Also by his side was TourLife ambassador Zanele 'Za' Ntseto, who noted on his social media pages that the evening was about celebrating young people building from the ground up.

Legendary radio jock and serial entrepreneur, Sbusiso Leope, popularly known as DJ Sbu, was also in attendance, delivering an inspiring keynote address that set an ambitious tone for the continent's brightest young minds.

Later in the evening, Thubisi proudly posted a close-up of his newly acquired silverware - a beautifully crafted trophy featuring a round globe resting on a spiralling body, symbolising TourLife's global ambitions.

For Thubisi, who hails from the Free State town of Thaba Nchu, the victory is an emotional milestone



built on seven years of passion and family sacrifice. Taking to the glass podium, Thubisi delivered a moving acceptance speech.

"I never thought I'd be here today. I would firstly like to thank my parents, they sacrificed everything for me to be here today.

"I remember my dad having to sell one of his cars for me to buy one of my first taxis to start my business. This is God's timing and it is perfect for me," Thubisi said. Speaking after the win, Thubisi admitted the reality of the achievement was still sinking in. "I woke up today feeling more grateful and so deserving because of the hard work that I have put into this brand. This is not only my award, it's a lot of people's award in the travel group," he said.

Known for its highly aesthetic, Instagram-ready itineraries and epic group dynamics, TourLife has built a massive digital following.

Thubisi noted that seeing the internet rally behind the win has been completely overwhelming.

"The support means everything to me, from the people who can afford to come on the trips, to people who are still planning to come, to people who can't afford to come but still speak so highly of the

travel group," he continued.

The road to the YOBA stage wasn't without hurdles, including navigating the pandemic right after launching in 2019 and managing recent logistical border delays during an AfriSki getaway. However, the brand bounced back stronger, focusing on premium consumer experiences.

Rather than functioning as a standard travel agency, TourLife strictly operates as a specialised tour operator delivering fully curated, affordable experiences.

Originally designed for the youth, its unique social networking atmosphere has now captured the attention of travellers of all ages.

Looking ahead, the company is preparing for an MSC Cruise and a getaway to Mpumalanga, culminating in a victory lap in Knysna to celebrate the prestigious award.

Thubisi is confident that this recognition will permanently elevate the brand's profile.

"Based on the credibility of the awards, this will set TourLife apart from competitors, solidifying our place in the market and creating more consumer trust," he concluded.

Fashion

SPRING INTO STYLE: Romantic Silks, Bambi Prints and Bold Accessories Take Over

By Katlego Mashwabi

The winter layers are packed away, and South Africa's wardrobes are ready for a seasonal revamp. The Spring/Summer season brings a striking duality to local shores, blending ancient European romanticism with sharp, avant-garde tailoring. From local streets to international runways, this season is defined by fluid movement, unexpected prints and statement accessories.

Silk and frills are making one of the biggest impressions this season. If you have spotted people strolling around in pyjama-inspired sets, rest assured—you are witnessing one of fashion's hottest moments. The Romantic Victorian aesthetic draws inspiration from European classicism, prioritising sheer halterneck dresses, fluid silk skirts, ruffles and ribbons.

Designers are balancing this softness with structured elements such as epaulettes, oversized tailored jackets and balloon skirts. Keep your capsule wardrobe versatile by pairing loose solid-coloured skirts with oversized cashmere sweaters, or layering an oversized shirt over a maxi skirt, finished with a casual NY cap.

And if you are reaching for leopard print, stop right there—the wildlife trend has evolved. The forest has taken over the runway with "Bambi prints", inspired by Disney's animated classic. Trendsetters are trading traditional animal spots for rich chocolate-brown garments adorned with delicate white deer-speckle patterns. Often mistaken for polka dots, Bambi prints offer an earthy, whimsical and



sophisticated alternative.

Alongside bold prints, the timeless fringe staple has returned, shedding its cowboy connotations. Infused with high-fashion influences, this season's fringe focuses on fluid lines and movement. Look for textured hems and subtle accents, or embrace the trend with a statement fringe handbag paired with a long dress or H-line fringe skirt.

Accessories are equally important this season, starting with the humble silk scarf. For a waist-cinch-

ing effect, tie it in a triangle around your waist over a maxi skirt and T-shirt. Alternatively, channel an upscale resort aesthetic by wrapping it around your hair and finishing the look with oversized sunglasses.

No summer wardrobe is complete without dramatic eyewear. For bold, thick frames, look to Sun-glass Hut ambassador Khanya Mkangisa, while Zinziwa Mayekiso offers inspiration for those drawn to butterfly-shaped styles. When in doubt, channel Victoria Beckham by pairing massive oversized sunglasses with a sleek front-parted hairstyle.

Local style leaders are proving that these international trends translate effortlessly onto South African streets. Outerwear favourites such as halterneck and mandarin jackets are championed by Bloemfontein influencer Bonolo "Softie" Maloka.

Below the waist, fashionistas are embracing stirrup pants and the ever-popular capri pants, famously favoured by Khloe Kardashian. Alicia Makuna, popularly known as Italy Yacht Doll, effortlessly styles capris for social outings, sporting occasions and date-night looks.

For footwear, Audrey Hepburn's timeless ballet flat is making a major comeback. Fashion Nova ambassador Lethabo Mathatho, widely known as Happy Lethabo, showcases mesh and camel-toe flats as versatile options for everyday styling.

When building your new-season wardrobe, anchor your looks in rich chocolate brown, layer in carefully curated Pantone-inspired tones and finish with sharp flashes of icy blue to master the defining palette of Spring/Summer.

FOOD Recipes

Perfect Roast Chicken



Ingredients:

- 1 (5 to 6 pound) roasting chicken
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 large bunch fresh thyme, plus 20 sprigs
- 1 lemon, halved
- 1 head garlic, cut in half crosswise
- 2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) butter, melted
- 1 large yellow onion, thickly sliced
- 4 carrots cut into 2-inch chunks
- 1 bulb of fennel, tops removed, and cut into wedges
- Oil

Method:

- Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.
- Remove the chicken giblets. Rinse the chicken inside and out. Remove any excess fat and leftover pin feathers and pat the outside dry. Liberally salt and pepper the inside of the chicken. Stuff the cavity with the bunch of thyme, both halves of lemon, and all the garlic. Brush the outside of the chicken with the butter and sprinkle again with salt and pepper. Tie the legs together with kitchen string and tuck the wing tips under the body of the chicken. Place the onions, carrots, and fennel in a roasting pan. Toss with salt, pepper, 20 sprigs of thyme, and olive oil. Spread around the bottom of the roasting pan and place the chicken on top.
- Roast the chicken for 1 1/2 hours, or until the juices run clear when you cut between a leg and thigh. Remove the chicken and vegetables to a platter and cover with aluminum foil for about 20 minutes. Slice the chicken onto a platter and serve it with the vegetables.





SPORT



Vumazonke to Clock 50 Caps for Cheetahs

By Gomolemo Winkel

From post-school uncertainty to becoming a key figure in the Free State pack, Toyota Cheetahs star Sisonke Vumazonke will reach a special milestone in a Currie Cup clash against the Airlank Pumas this Sunday at the Toyota Stadium.

Born and raised in Welkom, the 24-year-old loose forward began his rugby career at Grey College as the first black player to captain the first team.

He also represented the Free State at several levels in his early days, including the Under-16 Grant Khomo Week and Under-18 Craven Week.

Vumazonke polished his ball-carrying skills within the Lions' forward-oriented game before joining the Cheetahs in March 2024.

He notes that reaching his 50th appearance on home turf is an embedded milestone after his love for the game almost vanished.

"I think personally for me it means a lot. I always revert to my story of me leaving Bloemfontein after school and then having to come back. I do not think a lot of people understood why I actually came back.

"I went there, not everything worked in my favour the way I hoped it would work, and coming back was just by the grace of God, man. So for me to be earning my 50th cap at home means a lot to me. It is really a big honour and privilege," Vumazonke said in an exclusive interview with Journal News Network.

He has shifted positions multiple times before settling into his current role, having started in the backline during his rookie years.

"I played centre and then I got too slow to play with the backs. So I just went to the forwards to figure it out, and that's where I found my right position," he said. Reflecting on his journey from primary school in Welkom to Grey College, he considers every stage an essential learning curve.

Vumazonke's eagerness to master the game was boosted by seasoned Cheetahs stalwarts such as Teboho Moheje and Ruan Pienaar.

"I think every moment stood out for me. In every stage that I went through, there was something happening," he stated.

Vumazonke indicated that reaching this milestone was no walk in the park given the heavy competition

within the squad.

"We had 12 or 13 guys in my position, and in a matchday squad, they can only pick four. So it was pretty hectic. Some of the guys were playing big rugby in the URC, and some were in Japan. So I just had to work very hard in order to reach this milestone. You take some learnings from the more experienced guys, as I'd love to call them. I'm never too good or too old to learn."

Plying his trade for the Free State fills him with pride due to the passion displayed by Bloemfontein supporters. As one of the team's most capped players on the field this weekend, Vumazonke remains focused on the primary objective.

"It has never been about pressure. I have always lived in pressure moments and had to find a way through. For me, it is another game where I have to be my best self, which is how I take it week by week. It's a big milestone, but it's just about serving the team."

"The main goal was always to lift the Currie Cup, but I can't look beyond this weekend. My main focus is on Sunday, the semi-finals," he concluded.

Tenpont Off to Champ of Champs



By Gomolemo Winkel

Bloemfontein outfit Tenpont United FC's Under-19 team is poised to represent the Free State at the upcoming Engen Knockout Challenge Cup of Champions tournament from 1 to 4 October 2026 at the Tuks High Performance Centre in Pretoria.

The team claimed their place in the national showpiece after progressing through all three qualifying stages, advancing from the local rounds to the regional stage before securing provincial honours while representing SAFA Mangaung Metropolitan unbeaten.

Bloemfontein Local Football Association General Secretary, Reolebogile Senago, lauded the club for the impeccable achievement.

"This achievement is a testament to the dedication and hard work of the players, technical team, management and everyone associated with Tenpont United FC. As the Bloemfontein Local Football Association (LFA), we are proud to have Tenpont United FC carry the name of Bloemfontein LFA, SAFA Mangaung Metropolitan and the Free State Province onto the national stage," Senago said.

Club chairman, Teboho Martin Matlejoane, described the qualification as a historic milestone for the entire community.

"This is a big achievement to the entire TenPont United FC community and the supporters at large, because we happen to be the first team in Bloemfontein to rep-

resent Free State in Gauteng on this Engine Knockout Challenge," Matlejoane revealed.

He added: "This is a GOD reward after we passed through difficulties for the team to survive."

Matlejoane admitted that while initial preparations were not intensive, the squad's talent and faith carried them through.

"Preparation was not so intense but because of the exceptionally talented boys we have (sic). My brother, this is the work of the Almighty, we always call upon him when we start the game and thank him when we end the game."

Preparations for the national finals in Pretoria are currently underway as management aims to build on this momentum.

Matlejoane expressed hope that the squad's success will serve as a blueprint for the club's development ranks.

"Coming back they will encourage under-11, under-13 and under-15 that respect, discipline, dedication, love and prayer will make you climb (the) mountain of success."

Tenpont enters the tournament following an impressive Interstate Bus Lines league campaign, where they finished as runners-up with 14 wins, four draws, and three defeats.

Matlejoane believes his side can build on that consistency to make a strong impression in Gauteng as they seek national glory.

Heidedal to Host Baseball Trials

By Gomolemo Winkel

The Free State Baseball Union will conduct provincial trials at the Heidedal Cricket Oval on Saturday, 5 September 2026, to select teams for the national baseball championships on 3 October 2026.

Open to players across multiple age groups, the trials mark the start of the province's preparation for the national tournament.

Free State Baseball Union media liaison, Donovan Pieterse, confirmed that selectors will assemble squads across several divisions.

"We are just going to select teams from under-12's, under-15's, and then I believe under-23's and our senior teams for men and women. We need to select the teams for the national baseball championships."

Selectors will focus on identifying players with sound technical skills, including strong hand-eye coordination, accurate throwing, and overall athletic commitment.

"For the hitters, we are looking at players that have a very good eye, a strong and skilful swing as well. But above all that, in all sporting codes, you require individuals that are passionate, individuals that are hungry, individuals that are willing to grow and go above and beyond."

While experienced players will be assessed on technical execution, the union views the younger divisions as a chance to unearth new talent.

Baseball continues to gain momentum across the



province, boosted by growing participation levels in local schools.

Ntateleng Primary School in Botshabelo was recently named School Team of the Year at the Free State Sports Awards for its achievements in the sport.

Pieterse noted that this recognition demonstrates the growing impact of baseball since the formal establishment of the provincial union.

"I think baseball is making an announcement. Finally, five years that it is been around in the Free State, it is starting to pick up, especially in the townships and in the rural schools. Because sporting opportunities in our schools, in the townships and ru-

ral areas are very limited. So, baseball has become a very refreshing and exciting alternative to football."

The sport provides accessible athletic pathways for young people from underdeveloped communities to engage in organised competition.

Pieterse added that strong performances at the provincial trials can open doors to elite representation. "In the past, players that have been selected for our provincial teams have found themselves competing against other provinces and being selected for national teams."

The union is encouraging learners from across the province to attend, with schools assisting in arranging transport for interested participants.