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MOKGOSI PURSUES POLITICAL POWER

Cabinet reshuffle sets off political power play as premier pursues ANC provincial chairperson position

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Banyana edge Nigeria to secure WC spot Page 12



Women's Day Fest Sets the Stage for FSFW26 Page 10

AMCU Flags Safety Concerns at Impala

Miners' union demands answers from Impala Rustenburg following fatal gas leak at Rustenburg mine

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

The Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) is pressing Impala Rustenburg for answers after a 45-year-old plant cleaner died after being exposed to sulphur dioxide at their plant in the North West on 5 August 2026.

According to Joseph Mathunjwa, AMCU president, the man died shortly after being exposed to sulphur dioxide due to a valve failure that caused an uncontrollable gas leak that also led to the hospitalisation of seven other employees.

"The deceased reportedly experienced distress near the entrance clock gates while making his way towards the change house. He later collapsed near the on-site clinic, where emergency medical personnel immediately began life-saving treatment," Mathunjwa stated.



This incident comes about a week after AMCU called for a safety shutdown of all Impala operations, which included handing a memorandum of demands to the mine's management.

Mathunjwa described it as another workplace disaster that could have been prevented, while raising capacity concerns regarding risk management, maintenance practices and emergency preparedness at the plant.

"We are heartbroken, devastated and frankly speechless. Our members are going to work expecting to return home safely to their families, yet we continue to witness preventable incidents that claim lives," Mathunjwa said.

While demanding Impala to establish whether critical safety controls were in place at the time of the incident, the union has further called for a full review of the plant's process safety management systems. This while also urging the Mine Health and Safety Inspectorate to conduct a thorough investigation and subsequently hold responsible parties, if any, accountable for negligence or failures to comply with mine safety laws.

AMCU has also renewed its call for amendments to the Mine Health and Safety Act to strengthen personal accountability for those responsible for mine safety.

"Until the people who make these decisions are held personally and criminally accountable, preventable workplace disasters will continue and mineworkers will continue to pay with their lives," Mathunjwa said.



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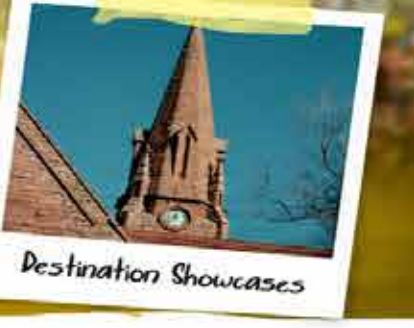
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Mapisa-Nqakula corruption trial postponed as former Speaker seeks discharge

The corruption trial against former Speaker of Parliament Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula has been postponed allowing her to file an application seeking her discharge at the end of the State's case.

The North Gauteng High Court in Pretoria postponed the matter at the request of Mapisa-Nqakula's defence team to allow her to receive the transcribed court records needed to prepare the application.

The Investigating Directorate Against Corruption (IDAC) spokesperson Henry Mamothame said Mapisa-Nqakula placed it on record in court that she intends to apply for a discharge.

Mamothame said the State has closed its case and will now await the accused's heads of argument before preparing its response to the application.

Mapisa-Nqakula is facing charges of allegedly soliciting bribes from a Defence Department logistics contractor, accusations she has consistently denied.

She is facing 12 counts of corruption and one count of money laundering.

She is accused of soliciting R4.5 million from a service provider during her tenure as Speaker of the National Assembly. The State alleges that R2.1 million of the money was received in cash.

The former Speaker has denied the allegations.

The case will return to court next week Thursday August 20, 2026, when the defence is expected to proceed with its discharge application. **lol**

MOKGOSI PURSUES POLITICAL POWER**• Cabinet reshuffle sets off political power play as premier pursues ANC provincial chairperson position****By Gomolemo Winkel**

The recent provincial executive reshuffle by North West Premier and ANC provincial deputy chairperson, Lazarus Mokgosi, is believed to be a veiled strategy to consolidate political power, rather than a means of realigning governance and service delivery strategy.

Political observers believe the rearrangement forms part and parcel of the ANC's factional battles in the province, with Mokgosi believed to be setting himself up to challenge incumbent provincial chairperson, Nono Maloyi, at the party's next provincial elective conference expected in early 2027 after the local government elections this November.

The removal of Viola Motsumi - Mokgosi's political detractor - from the MEC for Education portfolio and ultimately from the provincial cabinet is believed to be a political power play by the premier. Motsumi was replaced by former provincial legislature Speaker, Dr Desbo Mohono, who is believed to be Mokgosi factional ally.

Meanwhile, MEC's Virginia Tlhapi and Wessels Morweng simply switched roles with the former being moved from Sports Arts and Culture to lead the Community Safety and Transport Management portfolio, while the latter moved in the opposite direction. All the other provincial executive members remain in their positions.

The ANC in the North West remains divided between two major factions termed N12 and M26 respectively.

The N12 faction is alleged to be led by Maloyi,



Political Power Play ... North West Premier Lazarus Mokgosi's recent cabinet reshuffle is believed to be a calculated political move rather than a governance strategy. Pictures: Facebook/NC OTP

while the M26 grouping is believed to be led by Mokgosi himself.

Within the ANC provincial top five officials the N12 faction maintains a clear majority through Maloyi, provincial secretary, Louis Diremelo, and deputy provincial secretary, Motsumi.

Mokgosi serves as the sole M26 representative within the top five, while provincial treasurer, Sello Lehari, is believed to be non-aligned - at least not yet. While the ANC maintains strict discretion regarding internal leadership contestation, the N12 and M26 rivalry reflects broader factional alignments with the party's national sphere factions.

The N12 faction is supposedly linked to ANC Depu-

ty President, Paul Mashatile, while M26 is believed to be Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula.

Mashatile and Mbalula are expected to prospectively contest for the ANC presidency at the party's national elective conference in 2027.

Political analyst and Local Governance and Public Leadership Research Fellow from University of the Free State, Dr. Harlan Cloete, highlighted that Premiers can reshuffle their executives on both governance and political grounds.

"It could be that there's underperformance in a department ... that could be the reason. Secondly, there could be a tension between the head of department and the member.

"Thirdly, there could be factional reasons why he or she needs to reward people that have fallen out of favour with him," Cloete added.

Additionally, Cloete said that the latest changes could also be viewed against the backdrop of the upcoming local government elections.

He suggests that Mokgosi could be seeking to strengthen his executive and improve government delivery ahead of the polls.

"It could also be local government elections coming. Maybe there is somebody else he wants to appoint as MEC of local government, to make sure that the resources are used to ensure a continuation," he said.

CUT Student House Nightmare Comes to an End**By Nonkululeko Ngubeni**

About 1,392 students at the Central University of Technology (CUT) Welkom Campus are set to receive their accommodation allowances directly from the university.

This commitment was made during an intervention meeting by the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training Yusuf Cassim who visited the campus to meet affected students and CUT management over the ongoing accommodation allowance delays.

According to Cassim, many of the affected students are living in unaccredited accommodation and have been waiting for their allowances despite assurances from the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) that the matter would be resolved.

Cassim says, a payment plan had previously been agreed after the CUT accommodation issue was raised with NSFAS Administrator Professor Hlangani Mathebula during a meeting in Cape Town on 14 July but further administrative processes resulted in only 260 students having their allowance payments confirmed, leaving the majority of affected students without financial support.

Cassim called for the matter to be resolved without further delays and read out an NSFAS letter approving a deviation for the 2026 academic year.

The approval allows affected students to remain in their accommodations and receive an accommodation allowance of R2500 per student per month.

The allowance will be paid directly to the stu-

dents.

"CUT should pay the allowances directly to the affected students because the institution already has the relevant student information and banking details," said Cassim

The university's vice-chancellor, Professor Pamela Zibuyile Dube, committed to ensuring that the payments are made directly to students as quickly as possible.

"The delays have raised concerns about the welfare of students," said Cassim

He said that it is concerning for students to face possible eviction because of the continued payment delays.

"The accommodation concerns are not limited to the Welkom Campus. Students at CUT's Bloemfontein Campus also reported concerns about some accredited accommodation being in poor condition.

"Some of the student accommodation is located near night clubs and drinking establishments, he said.

Cassim has requested that these concerns be included in a report on the suitability and quality of accredited student accommodation. The report will be submitted to his office and the student accommodation section of NSFAS for further investigation.

He also called on the Student Representative Councils at both campuses to maintain constructive relations with CUT management and work together to resolve institutional challenges.

He thanked Zibuyile Dube and her management team for working to urgently address the accommodation challenges faced by students.

CRIME REPORTS**Missing teen's remains found in a pit toilet**

A missing person investigation has led to the discovery of the body of a 19-year-old male concealed inside a pit toilet at the R61 Rashoop informal settlement in Potchefstroom.

The discovery follows a missing person enquiry registered at Brits police station on Friday.

Police received information about a person of interest, who was allegedly last seen with the missing teenager. The suspect, a 46-year-old Johannes Mokoena, was apprehended, and he volunteered to show police where the missing person could be found.

According to authorities, when they arrived at the R61 Rashoop informal settlement, the suspect allegedly pointed out a locked pit toilet behind his shack.

Upon opening it, police discovered the body of a teenage male, whose hands, legs and neck were allegedly bound.

Two golf clubs suspected to be used in the commission of the crime were also found and seized.

Mokoena was arrested and charged with murder, kidnapping and defeating and obstructing the ends of justice.

He appeared before the Brits Magistrate's Court on Tuesday, and was remanded in custody until his next court appearance.

The North West Provincial Commissioner, Lieutenant General Arthur Adams, commended the police and supporting role players for their swift response and collaborative efforts.

Suspect nabbed for dealing in drugs

The Northern Cape Provincial Management has welcomed the arrest of a 41-year-old man for allegedly dealing in drugs and contravention of the Immigration Act, following the vigilant actions of a police officer in Kimberley on Wednesday.

The arrest forms part of the South African Police Service's (SAPS) continued efforts to disrupt the proliferation and distribution of illicit drugs, which fuel other forms of criminality and pose a serious threat to the safety and wellbeing of communities.

The arrest came after a member of Provincial Operational Response Services was conducting policing duties in Warren Street, De Beers, in Kimberley, discovered packets containing suspected cocaine and Khat, with an estimated street value of R1 500, concealed inside the vehicle.

A further search allegedly resulted in the discovery of cash suspected to be the proceeds of illicit drug dealing.

The suspect was immediately arrested and charged with alleged dealing in drugs. He was also charged with contravening the Immigration Act after he allegedly failed to produce valid identification and immigration documentation when requested to do so.

The vehicle was seized as it was allegedly used in the commission of the offence.

The District Commissioner of Frances Baard, Major General Gabathata Makgari, commended the member for his alertness and vigilance, which resulted in the disruption of the alleged distribution of illicit drugs.

A 50-year-old man nabbed for raping his wife

A 50-year-old man accused of raping his wife has been denied bail by the Calvinia Magistrates' Court in the Northern Cape.

Authorities say on 22 July 2026, the accused raped his wife and due to fear, the victim only reported the matter to the police on 25 July 2026.

The accused was arrested the following day and appeared in the Calvinia Magistrate's Court on 27 July 2026, where he remained in custody.

He made his second court appearance on Tuesday where the victim indicated that she wished to withdraw the case.

However, during investigations, the officer uncovered a history of alleged abuse through hospital records, after which the senior prosecutor directed

that the matter proceed.

The accused subsequently appeared for a formal bail application in the Calvinia Magistrates Court on Tuesday. It is reported that the presiding Magistrate emphasised the constitutional obligation of the courts and government to protect women and other vulnerable members of society.

The court ultimately denied the accused bail and postponed the matter to 14 September 2026 for further investigation.

"As the country observes Women's Month, SAPS in the Namakwa District welcomes the court's decision, which reinforces the principle that no person has the right to exercise power or control over their spouse through violence or abuse.

Immigrant sentenced to six years for fraud

A six year employment fraud scheme involving an illegal migrant, who allegedly used a South African national identity to secure employment, has ended with a six year sentence for fraud, following a detailed investigation by the South African Police Service in Brits.

The court heard evidence that the 44-year-old suspect, Arlindo Fernando Timane, secured employment at a quarry in the Kareepoort area of Brits using a South African identity document, belonging to another person.

The suspect worked for the company for approximately six years and accumulated about R900 000 in salary. Authorities said the fraud came to light when the rightful ID holder approached SARS to submit his tax returns and was informed of an undisclosed

source of income linked to an employer he had never worked for. The matter was subsequently reported to SAPS Brits and was investigated.

"During the investigation, fingerprint verification conducted with the Department of Home Affairs revealed that the suspect was not the legitimate holder of the identity document. Further investigation established his nationality, resulting in an additional charge of contravention of Section 49 of the Immigration Act, Act 13 of 2002."

The Bojanala Sub-District 1 Commercial Crime Investigation Unit, supported by various role players, secured evidence from the employer's Human Resource and Finance departments, SARS and the legitimate identity holder, who was traced to Mpu-malanga.

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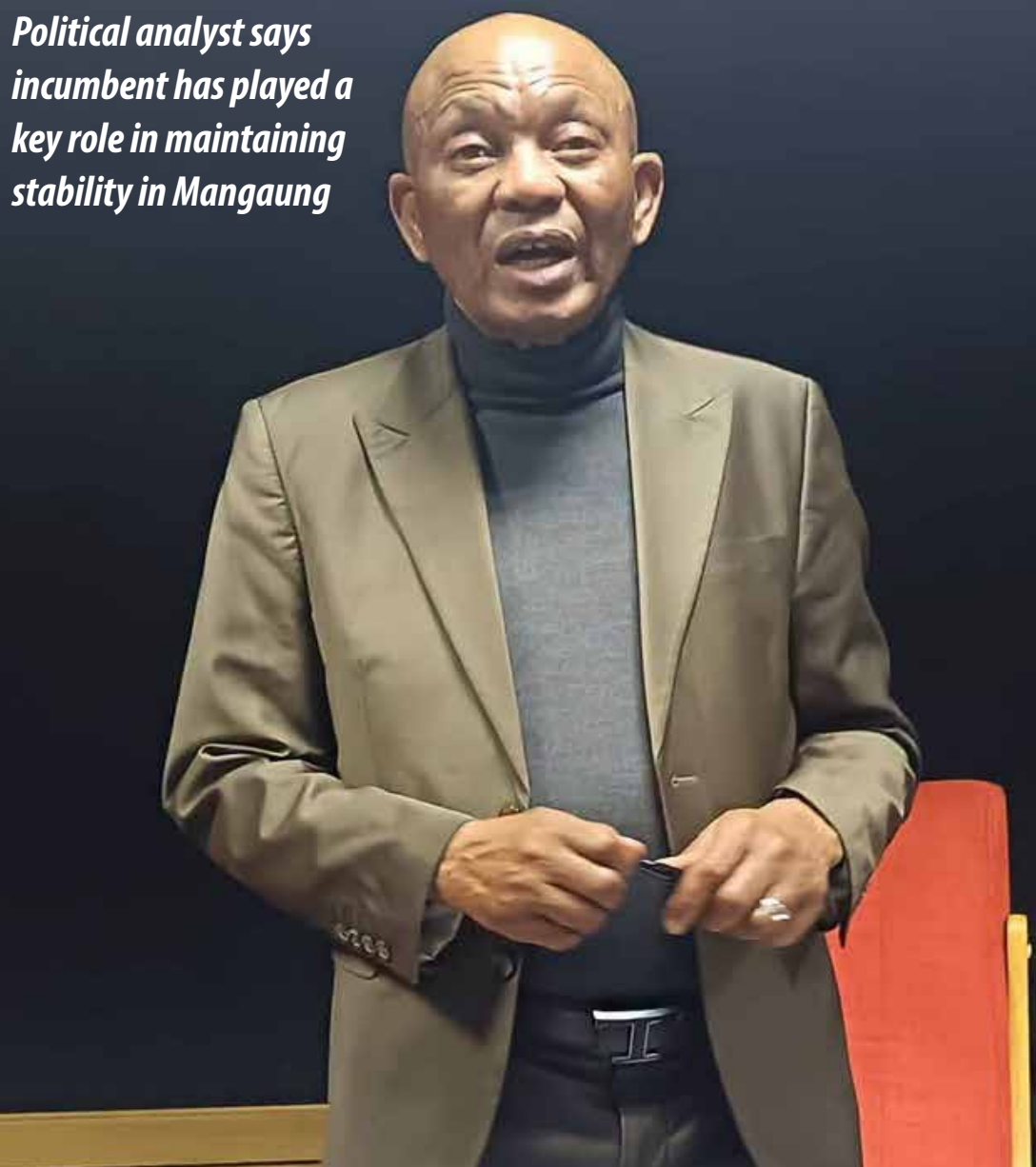
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Nthatsi Credited for Mangaung’s Political Stability

Political analyst says incumbent has played a key role in maintaining stability in Mangaung



By Matshidiso Selebeleng

Mangaung’s political stability has come under the spotlight, with a political analyst crediting the incumbent Executive Mayor and mayoral candidate Gregory Nthatsi for helping to steer the metro through a period of political uncertainty and factional tensions.

The analyst says Nthatsi’s leadership approach, political experience and ability to engage different political parties have contributed to creating a more stable political environment in the metro, particularly as the African National Congress (ANC) prepares for the upcoming local government elections.

The ruling party secured an outright majority in Mangaung during the 2021 local government elections, winning 51 of the 100 council seats after garnering 50.63% of the vote, down from 56.52% in 2016.

This was followed by what many described as one of the most chaotic periods in the metro’s history under then-mayor Mxolisi Siyonzana, who was later removed by the ANC’s interim provincial committee (IPC), led by current provincial chairperson Mxolisi Dukuwana.

Siyonzana’s removal came months after the ANC expelled eight councillors for voting with opposition parties. Those expelled included then-Speaker Stefanie Lockman and Deputy Mayor Mapaseka Mthib-Nkoane.

Speaking to Journal News on the sidelines of a com-

munity high-level seminar hosted by the Free State Legislature on Thursday, political analyst Professor Sethulego Matebesi of the University of the Free State attributed Nthatsi’s success in stabilising the municipality to his humility and political experience.

Matebesi said Nthatsi’s personal characteristics have been beneficial not only to Mangaung but also to the province, particularly because most councillors in the metro belong to the same political party as the mayor. “Sometimes, to guide them, you need a political master. Perhaps it is his quiet diplomacy, which in itself is quite significant in terms of leadership, that has helped reduce conflict within the council and the party,” Matebesi said.

He said Nthatsi’s willingness to acknowledge the municipality’s shortcomings was another positive leadership quality.

“I have also noted that he is quick to accept when the municipality has done wrong. It is just that the nature of our municipality sometimes becomes so difficult, but we should also not accept that,” he said.

Matebesi acknowledged that Mangaung still faces service delivery challenges but said the metro also had notable positives.

“We have access to water. Yes, there are some communities without it, but we have access to water. Our robots are working most of the time. So there are a lot of positives. But I strongly believe that, as a municipality, we can do better,” he said.

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North West attorney faces theft charges

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

A North West attorney was released on R5 000 bail on Tuesday after he was arrested by the Hawks for allegedly stealing R130000 from a dead client’s estate.

A 69-year-old Barend Botha was arrested on Tuesday by members of the Hawks’ Serious Commercial Crime Investigation unit in the North West, and he is facing a charge of theft.

The North West Hawks spokesperson, Lieutenant-Colonel Tinyiko Mathebula, said the charges stem from a case where Botha De Wet and Roodt Attorneys was appointed to assist with the administration of a dead client’s estate in June 2016.

Mathebula said over R130 000 was reportedly transferred from the deceased’s bank account into the trust account of the law firm and that the investigation revealed that Botha allegedly failed to trans-



fer the money to the beneficiary.

Investigation revealed that Botha did not transfer the money to the beneficiary.

Mathebula said following an investigation, Botha was apprehended and charged with theft.

The matter was postponed to 30 September for his next appearance at the Specialised Commercial Crime Court in Klerksdorp.

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MANGAUNG



SIU Investigates NC Projects

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

The allegations of maladministration, corruption and irregular expenditure linked to two major infrastructure projects in the Northern Cape have prompted President Cyril Ramaphosa to authorise the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) to investigate.

The investigations will focus on the construction of the new Kuruman Secondary School in Wrenchville/Kalahari and the rehabilitation of road MR938 between Hotazel and Kathu.

The road rehabilitation project was put out to tender in 2017, but the procurement process was later challenged in court, with the tender award set aside in 2020.

The Kuruman New English Medium Secondary School project was planned in response to a long-standing need for additional school infrastructure in the area. Concerns about school accommodation and learner capacity in Kuruman date back years, with the provincial government previously highlighting pressure on existing schools including Wrenchville Secondary School and Kalahari High School.

By 2023, the new Kuruman school had been identified as one of seven schools being built in the Northern Cape to address infrastructure challenges.

The province's 2023/24 annual report recorded the project as still under construction, while its 2024/25 infrastructure evaluation listed it amongst projects affected by municipal approval challenges.

Under Proclamation 331 of 2026, the SIU will investigate

the procurement of goods, works and services for the Kuruman Secondary School project in the Northern Cape Department of Education.

The investigation covers conduct between 8 December 2016 and 7 August 2026. It may also extend to conduct outside this period where it is relevant to the investigation and involves the same people, entities or contracts.

"The investigation will determine whether procurement processes were conducted fairly, competitively, transparently and cost-effectively, and whether any irregular expenditure was incurred," said Selby Makgotho, SIU Spokesperson.

Makgotho said that the SIU will also examine any irregular, unlawful or improper conduct by officials, employees, individuals or entities linked to the project.

Meanwhile, Proclamation 333 of 2026 empowers the SIU to investigate the rehabilitation of road MR938 between Hotazel and Kathu under Tender DRPW 039/2017.

The investigation period runs from 8 December 2017 to 7 August 2026. The SIU can also investigate related conduct outside this period where necessary.

The investigation follows allegations of maladministration, irregular procurement and wasteful expenditure in connection with the project.

Makgotho also stated that the SIU will investigate the conduct of officials, service providers and other entities implicated in the allegations, including whether procurement and related processes com-

plied with the law.

"The investigations form part of the SIU's broader mandate to identify wrongdoing, recover financial losses suffered by the State and address systemic weaknesses that may contribute to future losses," he added.

Where evidence of criminal conduct is uncovered, the SIU will refer the matter to the National Prosecuting Authority for possible further action.

He stated that the SIU may also institute civil proceedings in the High Court or Special Tribunal to recover losses or address wrongdoing arising from corruption, fraud or maladministration.

The latest SIU investigations come as the Northern Cape government faces growing questions about accountability and the management of public funds.

The Roads and Public Works department has recently been under the spotlight following the resignation of MEC Fufe Makatong.

Makatong resigned after raising concerns about changes being made in the department without proper consultation and communication.

The developments also come as Northern Cape Premier Zamani Saul pushes for lifestyle audits of government officials.

Saul has called for officials to account for their wealth and assets as part of efforts to improve accountability in the provincial government.

The SIU has been conducting lifestyle audits across the province, with Saul previously stating that more than 60% of the required audits had been completed.

Father of slain KZN tow truck operator denies son's drug links at Madlanga Commission



The father of a slain KZN tow truck operator told the Madlanga Commission that his son was never involved in the drug trade, despite some of his friends' involvement in the narcotics business.

The commission is hearing testimony from Gregory Loftus, whose son, Bevan Loftus, was killed in 2023 by police.

Loftus' killing was described as a legitimate police operation; however, his father believes tow truck owner and alleged drug dealer Clive Naiker paid R2.5 million to a police commander for officers to kill him.

The Madlanga Commission heard allegations that some tow truck businesses in KZN were being used as a front for criminal activities, and that some tow trucks are used to transport drugs across the province.

Loftus, whose son Bevan owned a towing business, insists he was not involved in selling drugs.

However, he admits his son was associated with people in the drug trade.

Loftus told the commission, "Bevan had friends and business associates that were allegedly involved in drugs and other criminal activities. The tow truck industry also saw a lot of violent crime. Gang violence involving the tow-truck industry started in Wentworth during 2020. Bevan, his friends and his drivers started being shot at by the members of a drug gang called 'The cartel'."

The commission is investigating allegations that KZN police are being used by criminals to target and kill certain individuals under the guise of legitimate police operations. **EWN**

Municipalities Urged to Get Audit-Ready ...as FS Steps Up Financial Governance



By JN Reporter

Free State municipalities are being urged to strengthen financial controls, improve accountability and ensure accurate, timely reporting as they prepare for the upcoming audit cycle.

The call came at the MFMA Audit Readiness Seminar hosted at Kopano Nokeng in Bloemfontein on Wednesday, aimed at equipping municipalities to meet their legal obligations and restore public confidence in local government.

The seminar was hosted by the Chartered Institute of Audit Governance Oversight and Leadership (CIAGOL(SA)), in partnership with the Free State Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) and the Free State Provincial Treasury. The push for audit readiness

comes as municipalities face growing pressure to demonstrate that public resources are being properly managed and translated into meaningful services for communities.

Sixteen municipalities in the Free State had their July 2026 equitable share temporary withheld by the National Treasury in terms of Section 216(2) of the Constitution, read with Section 38 of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003.

According to Treasury, the decision was taken following persistent and serious non-compliance with the MFMA and its supporting regulations, despite repeated support, guidance and engagements with affected municipalities.

The MFMA remains the backbone of financial governance in South African municipalities, providing a framework for trans-

parency, accountability and sound financial management. It is designed to ensure that public funds are managed responsibly, efficiently and in the interests of communities.

The seminar focused on strengthening municipal capacity ahead of the audit cycle, with particular emphasis on ensuring that financial statements are accurate, submitted on time and fully compliant with MFMA requirements.

In his remarks, HoD of CoGTA, Tshepo Ramakarene, emphasized that this gathering is a critical step toward achieving clean, credible audits across all Free State municipalities.

He said the initiative is not simply about achieving better audit outcomes, but about rebuilding public trust, improving service delivery and changing the narrative around municipal performance.

DWS hosts 2026 Water and Sanitation Competitions

By Marcus Motshegwa

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) in Free State in collaboration with the Provincial Department of Education hosted the adjudications for learners from Primary and Secondary schools that participated in the Water and Sanitation Education Programme (WSEP) competitions in Bloemfontein under Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality on 5 August.

WSEP is a school-based initiative by the DWS designed to build water literacy, encourage resource conservation, and promote careers in the water sector. It also seeks to narrow the scarce skills gap on science and engineering fields in the water sector, and to promote awareness on water use efficiency and care of sanitation facilities.

In the Baswa le Meetse competitions that focuses on intermediate phase, a learner from Ratau Primary School in Thaba-Nchu scooped the first position in poster category and has walked away with R10 000 prize money.

According to an educator at Ratau Primary School, Maria Dimpe, the journey to achieving first place in the poster category was both challenging and rewarding.

"The road to success was demanding and required perseverance, dedication and hard work. With the support of the school, fellow educators and the parents of our learners, we were able to overcome the challenges and stay focused on our goal. Being crowned the winners of the Poster Category is a remarkable achievement and a proud moment for our school. We are excited about the opportunity to represent the province at the National Competitions and will use the valuable feedback and advice provided by the adjudicators to prepare ourselves for the next stage," said Dimpe.

Teboho Primary School from Qwa-Qwa secured a second place and received R8 000 prize, while third place went to Tabola Primary School, also from Qwa-Qwa taking away R6 000.

In the Praise Poetry category, Phomolo Primary School from Villiers claimed the first place and walked away with the top prize of R10 000.

Teboho Primary School once again impressed, earning second place with R8 000 prize. The third place was awarded to Er-



skuld Primary School from Thaba-Nchu, for R6 000 prize money.

In the Music category, Erskuld Primary School from Thaba Nchu emerged victorious, winning first prize and R10 000. Nexus Primary School from Harrismith secured second place and received R8 000, while Moso Primary School from Welkom rounded off the top three, taking home R6 000 for third place. Grade 9 and 10 learners studying Mathematics and Science participated in two competition categories namely Aqua Enduro and Public Speaking. In the Aqua Enduro category, a team comprising five learners from Ithabiseng Secondary School, Lephola Secondary School, Thabo-Vuyo Secondary School, Lindley High School, and Refihletse Combined School demonstrated outstanding teamwork and problem-solving skills to emerge as the 2026 Aqua Enduro Provincial Champions.

In the Public Speaking category, first place was awarded to learners from Lindley High School, Trio Secondary School, Kheleng Secondary School, and Kgorathuto Secondary School. The winning learners impressed the adjudicators with their confidence, eloquence, and insightful presentations on water-related issues, showcasing both their public speaking abilities and their understanding of critical environmental and water conservation challenges.

Winners from Aqua Enduro and Public Speaking competition's will each represent the province at the upcoming National Adjudication competitions where winners will scoop bursary awards to study any career of choice in the water sector.

The Baswa le Meetse winners also stand a chance to win cash prize at the National Adjudications competitions.

According to Ziyanda Xokozela, Director for Water and Sanitation Services Support, a total of 32 schools from the Mangaung Metropolitan, Thabo Mofutsanyana, Fezile Dabi, Lejweleputswa, and Xhariep Districts participated in the 2026 school competitions.

Xokozela highlighted that the programme has experienced significant growth, as reflected in the increased number of participating schools this year. While this encouraging trend demonstrates the programme's expanding reach and impact, she has emphasized that there remains considerable opportunity for additional schools to become involved and benefit from the initiative in future years.

She further emphasised that the Department is committed to contribute towards improving water and sanitation services in the country.

"The DWS is committed to continue to scout for future scientists and engineers in the country through its advocacy programmes on water and sanitation. The Department will in the process, create opportunities for learners to be awarded bursaries to study towards careers within the water and sanitation sector," said Xokozela

Learners, educator and schools who wishes to participate in the Water and Sanitation Education Adjudications for 2027 can feel free to contacts the Free State Coordinators for more information Nkosinathi Zungu at 082 556 0545 or Kelebohile Saha at 073 440 8781.

To the Power of X² national Internship Programme launched in NW

Sambatha says “To the Power of X²” translates education into employment



The North West MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Madoda Sambatha.

The North West MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Madoda Sambatha, has stated that high unemployment rates have left many young people in the country locked out of economic opportunities that could improve their lives.

Sambatha made these remarks last Friday during the national launch of the “To The Power of X²” internship programme, which took place at the Mahikeng Hotel School in Mmabatho.

Speaking on behalf of Premier Lazarus Mokgosi, Sambatha stated that over three million young people in the country are not in employment, education, or training, with young women being particularly affected by this economic challenge.

He pointed out that the North West province suffers from severe joblessness and economic inactivity, despite its considerable mineral wealth.

He also explained that the situation is further complicated by educational outcomes that often do not provide the practical, foundational, or technical competencies required by employers and said that the issue is among several factors, including a lack of experience, low economic growth, and a sluggish economy, which prevent new graduates from entering the job market.

“We are gathered today to mark another significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to address youth unemployment through meaningful skills development and workplace learning,” said Sambatha.

The programme, spearheaded by Services SETA in collaboration with the Department of Higher Education and Training, is designed to provide structured workplace experience for graduates across South Africa.

Sambatha emphasized that this programme reflects the government’s commitment to ensuring that education translates into employment opportunities while strengthening partnerships between government, industry, and the education sector.

“This initiative aligns with the Premier’s flagship programme, which places youth development, skills acquisition, and economic participation at the center of our Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS).”

“Through the PGDS, we are expanding access to workplace learning opportunities, preparing young people to participate in the modern economy, and creating sustainable pathways from learning to earning.

“As the North West government, we are privileged to host the national launch of this programme, which aims to provide structured workplace experiences for graduates. “We will continue to prioritize youth empowerment through strategic investments in education, skills development, and employment creation.

“As a province, we appreciate the efforts of Services SETA, as it plays a critical role in advancing South Africa’s National Skills Development agenda through internships, learnerships, and workplace-based learning opportunities,” said Sambatha.

Converting Workplaces into Learning Spaces

Higher Education minister calls on potential employers to make room for fresh talent as milestone internship programme is launched in Mahikeng



Minister of Higher Education and Training, Buti Manamela.

Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) minister, Buti Manamela, is hopeful that the To The Power of X² internship programme will convert commercial workplaces into vibrant hubs of practical skill acquisition for graduates.

The landmark national campaign, which is being rolled out in partnership with the Services SETA, guarantees that ambitious graduates gain the necessary exposure to thrive in an evolving economy.

Speaking at the launch of this milestone programme at the Mahikeng Hotel School in Mahikeng, Manamela said the internship programme harbours prospects of bridging the critical gap between academic training and sustainable employment for around 20 000 graduates.

To this effect, Manamela urged employers across

all sectors to actively open their operations to absorb emerging talent, while stressing that the expanding workplace exposure remains vital for driving economic growth and empowering young professionals.

“Let’s open up our workplaces as learning spaces. Let’s use the workplaces, the factories, the offices, the hotels, the kitchen, every space where work is happening,” he said.

The To The Power of X² initiative is also a direct pushback against rising graduate unemployment rates across the country.

“This intervention will help us facilitate that process of employment even faster,” the minister added, whilst stressing that aligning graduates’ qualifications with practical experience remains the most effective response to economic demands.

Manamela added that the structured placements will offer young professionals a real platform to demonstrate their capabilities in lieu of them being a temporary relief measure.

While noting that embedding graduates within structured work environments accelerates their transition into the formal labour market, Manamela also advised all participants to approach their internships with absolute dedication and focus.

“Treat this as a job because it’s basically an audition for a job. It’s more than an interview, you’re being let into the workplace to experience what it means to be working,” Manamela said.

Through strategic collaboration with industry partners such as the Services SETA, the department is actively removing traditional entry barriers for young job seekers.

To the Power of X² graduates excited



To The Power of X² Graduate Tebogo Seqhoba.

Graduates selected to participate in the “To the Power of X²” program, launched by Higher Education Minister Buti Manamela at the Mahikeng Hotel School last Friday, are eager to secure their dream jobs.

They are part of 55 000 qualified university and TVET college students who have registered for the programme.

The Power of X² is a R2 billion initiative spearheaded by the Services SETA (Sector Education and Training Authority). It aims to assist unemployed graduates who are struggling to find jobs due to a lack of work experience, which often leads to unsuccessful job applications since many employers require a minimum of two years experience for most vacancies.

Tebogo Seqhoba, 24, a Communications Science graduate from the North-West University, expressed her excitement about being part of the programme, stating that it will open doors for her to secure employment. “Although I do not know where I will be placed, I am determined to give my best effort to ensure that I receive a good reference from the host employer. This opportunity will also allow me to help my parents at home and potentially save my stipend to further my studies. I am so grateful to the Services SETA, the North West government, and the Department of Higher Education and Training for investing in us as young people,” she said.

Services SETA Protects Graduate Interns



Services SETA Administrator, Lehlogonolo Masoga.

Services SETA has introduced a new system to fix past operational problems and protect graduate interns in the workplace.

Following the launch of the To The Power of X² project at the Mahikeng Hotel School in Mahikeng, the organisation confirmed that strong measures will

three parties.

It’s ourselves as Services SETA, it’s the employers on the other side, and the learners, the graduates,” Services SETA administrator, Lehlogonolo Masoga, said at the launch.

Addressing past concerns about unpaid stipends, the Masoga confirmed that money is already set aside for immediate use.

He revealed that a special project team will manage monthly payments, so that interns do not face financial worries.

To stop companies from using interns as cheap labour, Masoga further stated that the Services SETA has created a digital tracking dashboard - an online tool that checks daily attendance and monitors work activities across all host companies.

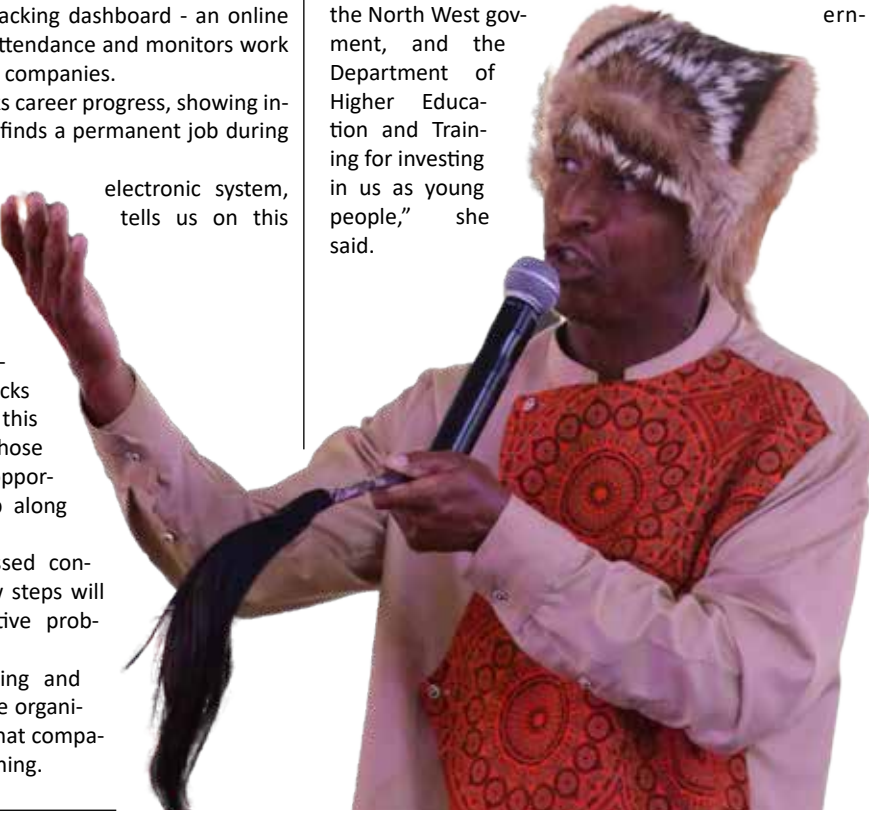
The system also tracks career progress, showing instantly when an intern finds a permanent job during the program.

“We’ve got an electronic system, that tells us on this day a number of learners are absent, a number of learners are at work.

“So, there’s an electronic system that tracks everyone who’s part of this program, including those who will be having an opportunity of finding a job along the way,” said Masoga.

Management expressed confidence that these new steps will solve past administrative problems.

Through clear tracking and guaranteed funding, the organisation aims to ensure that companies offer real skills training.





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A Better Life For All



DATE:
4TH SEPTEMBER 2026



VENUE:
BLOEMFONTEIN CITY HALL



TIME:
18H00



DRESS CODE:
BLACK TIE

PACKAGES

PLATINUM R350 000

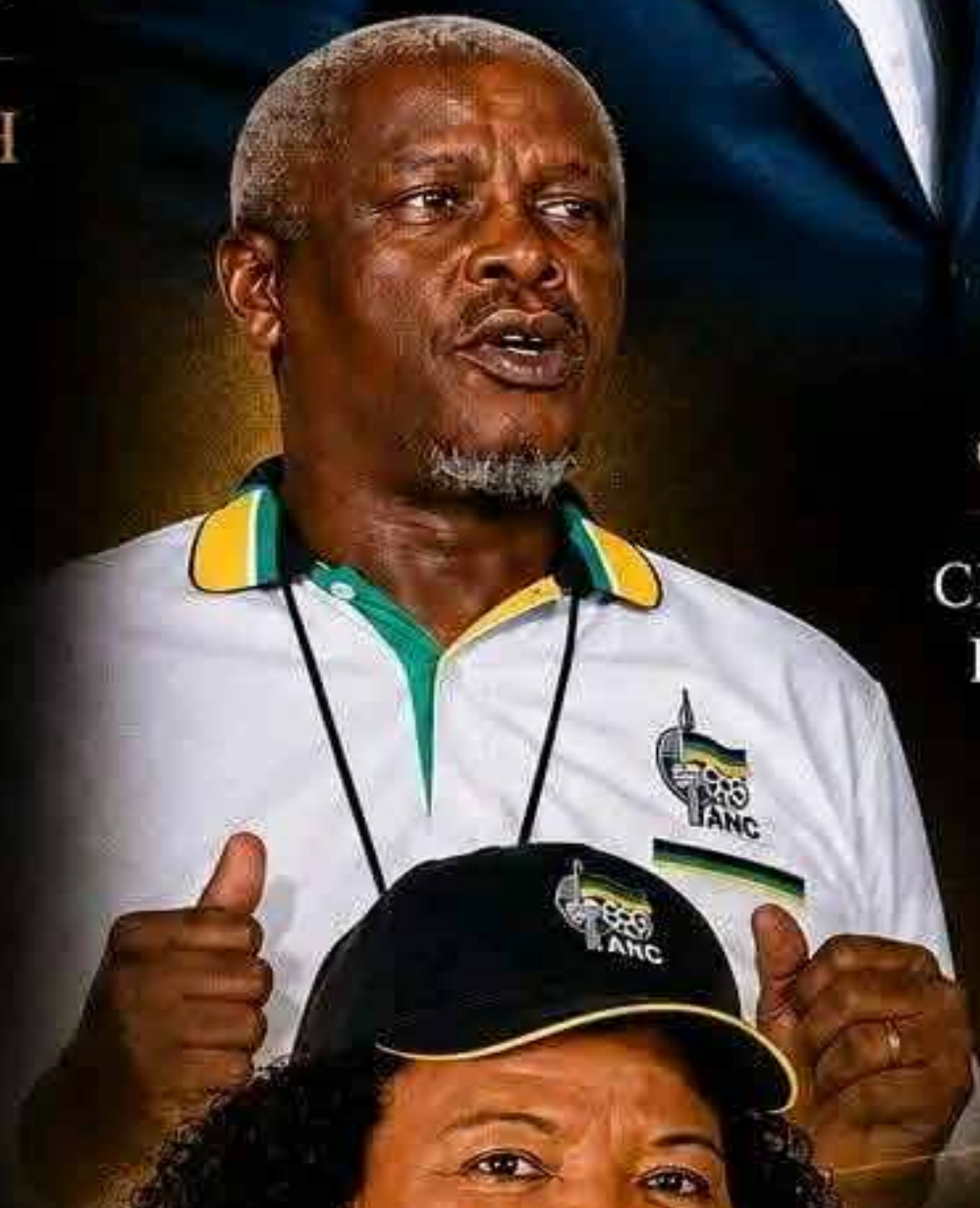
GOLD R250 000

SILVER R200 000

BRONZE R50 000
PER SEAT



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**CDE FIKILE
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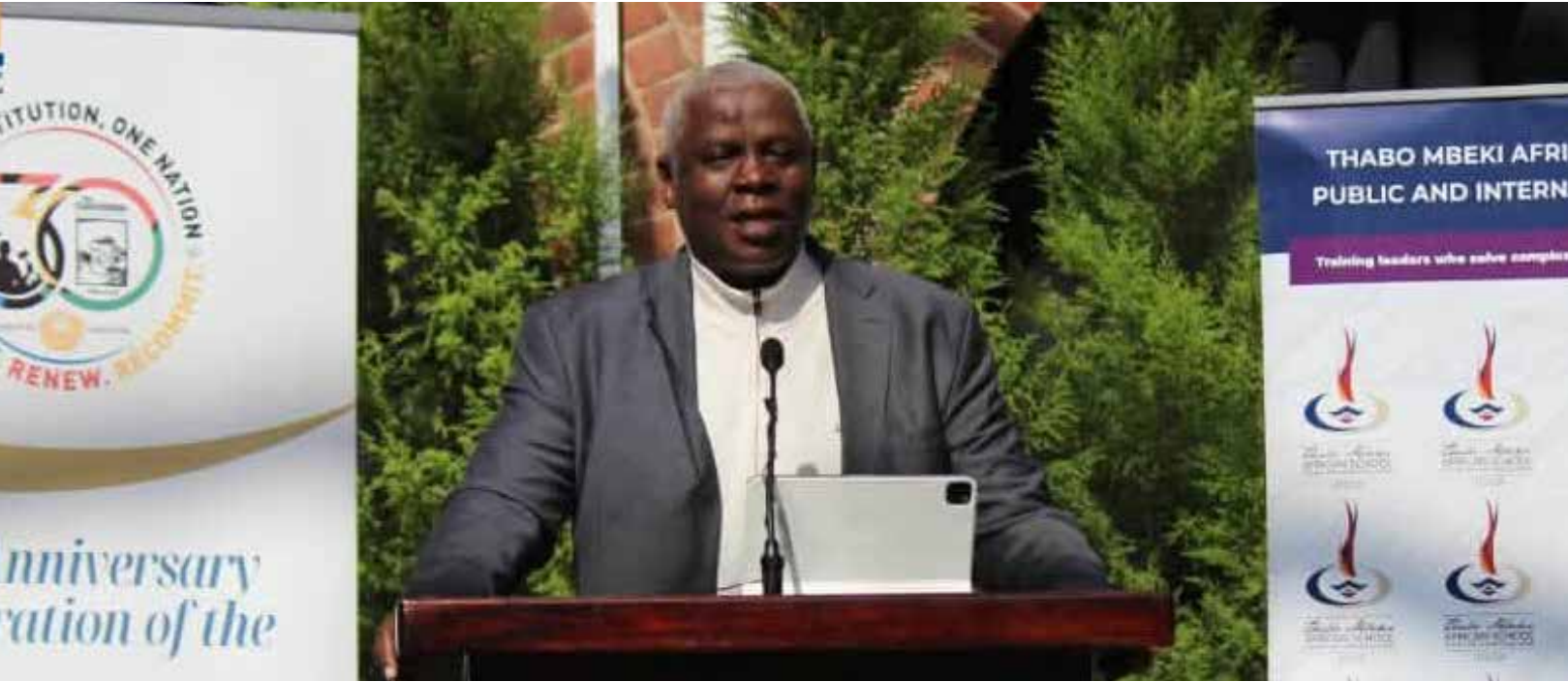


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Let's Grow South Africa Together



FS Legislature hosts seminar to honor Charlotte Maxeke



By Matshidiso Selebeleng

The spirit of Charlotte Maxeke came to life yesterday during a high-level community seminar hosted by the Free State Legislature in collaboration with the Thabo Mbeki African School of Public and International Affairs at the Central University of Technology Hotel School in Bloemfontein.

Held under the banner of the state of local government elections, and the rule of law the seminar was hosted in honor of the over 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria on 9 August 1956 against the extended apartheid pass laws that prevented women from participating in the economy.

The seminar was attended by the Speaker of Free State Legislature, Mxolisi Dukwana, mayors of various municipalities, in the province, delegates from the Mopedi Royal House, business and corporate leaders. Addressing the audience, the Speaker of

Mangaung Metro Municipality Lawrence Mathae said the seminar serves as a powerful affirmation that the future of local government, the integrity of elections, and the protection of the rule of law are matters that concern all sectors of society.

"We are gathered at a moment when communities are asking difficult but legitimate questions about governance, accountability, service delivery, ethical leadership, and the responsiveness of public institutions," said Mathae.

During his speech, Mathae challenged the women to move beyond typical discussions and to confront the moral foundations of public leadership.

He further highlighted that municipal councils must be centers of accountability, administrations must be centers of competence, and communities must not be treated as spectators, but as effective partners in development. "As we reflect on relations and the rule of law, we must protect the integrity of democracy. "Democracy is not sustained by elections alone. It is

sustained by thoughtful conduct, transparent governance, independent oversight, and respect for constitutional institutions, he said.

David Letswalo from the Thabo Mbeki Foundation highlighted that the seminar is held at a time when the psyche of the nation is gripped by the local government elections.

He said elections are a pillar of democracy, which also embodies the rule of law, social justice, human dignity, good governance and ethical leadership.

"It is therefore important to illuminate the points that the notion of democracy is the fulcrum of the various aspects and subthemes of our conversation. In this seminar, for instance, ethical leadership, the state of local government, service delivery, and corruption are tied to the leaders that we elect in the democratic processes," he said.

He added that they cannot exercise and change communities for the better if there is a lack of courage to confront the challenges.

NW launches Law Enforcement Operations commemoration of Women's Day



By Matshidiso Selebeleng

North West Department of Community Safety and Transport activated a month-long Law Enforcement Operations commemoration of Women's Day in Rustenburg on Saturday 8 August.

Through this operation, women will lead special operations that will focus on road safety education and outreach programs, among others.

During the day, women from different law enforcement agencies stamped their authority in the Bojanala District to ensure total compliance on the road.

The officers put emphasis on advocating for safer road usage, with more focus on pedestrian safety, and engaged with both motorists and community members in Boitekong outside Rustenburg, where they handed over reflective jackets for visibility when crossing the road.

The department also highlighted that recent statistics reveal an alarming rate of pedestrian accidents, and Boitekong is among the highest in the Province.

The Chief Director for District Coordination and Government Fleet, Dr George Marindi, said the department encourages women to brave the previously male-dominated professions as they are equally capable of excelling in such fields.

Malindi said they celebrate women who took lead-

ership in law enforcement, the women who are always on the street leading operations to save lives.

"We are proud as the department because it is our mandate to ensure that people are and feel safe, and these women are leading from the front.

"It is a fact that women are not happy when people perish on the street, they are not happy when they hear about Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBV&F) cases and the social illnesses that besiege communities.

"That's why they are here as law enforcers to ensure that they keep our streets and communities safe, and we are rallying behind them as the department," he added.

Malindi reiterated the department's commitment to support women in uniform and create opportunities for them to lead during this year's women's month and beyond.

Several operations are scheduled across the province this month to showcase the commitment of women to enforcing the law and reducing road incidents and fatalities.

The activation clarified public-private partnerships, as not only various governmental sectors participated but the private sector also dispensed services to the communities of Boitekong and the surrounding communities.

Sophie De Bruyn goes back to the Union Building

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

This August marks 70 years since 20,000 women marched to the Union Buildings in 1956 to protest pass laws, and commemorations are underway across the country.

Events this month will celebrate their legacy while addressing issues of violence, poverty, and inequality facing women today.

On Sunday, the National Women's Day commemoration took place at the Union Buildings in Pretoria under the theme: "Empowered Women, Empower Nations," where President Cyril Ramaphosa was in attendance and gave a speech, but the most important person in attendance was Sophie De Bruyn.

De Bruyn was only 18 years old when she helped lead the protesting women to the seat of apartheid

power to deliver their memorandum.

During her speech, she highlighted that seven decades after fighting the injustices of apartheid, women are now confronted with a new reality that is still as harsh.

"We fought to banish the pass laws, yet today our women are prisoners in their own homes. Gender-based violence continues to cast a dark cloud on our society. And every single day I weep for the girl child, the daughters, the mothers and grandmothers who are abused, violated and silenced.

"And yet, even when these clouds [gather], my spirit refuses to break and give up. And my happiness comes back from looking at you, the women of today. You are still the rock, you are still resilient," said De Bruyn.

Adding that women's courage is the beacon of hope



and the light that keeps this country moving forward.

The stalwart urges the law enforcement to have a moral compass and backbone and match the bravery of 1956 with bold, honest, and accountable leader-

ship.

She encouraged citizens to vote, emphasizing that their voice and unity are their weapons to fight whatever they are confronted with.

"To the ordinary citizens of our country, in particular women, do not give up hope.

Your vote, your voice and your unity are your critical weapons. We handed you a free country.

It is now up to you to make it a safe and prosperous one. Let us march forward once more, not against pass laws.

"But this time against crime and insecurity, poverty, corruption, unemployment, homelessness, violence, and the many ills that restrict your future, your safety, your freedom, and your prosperity."

She called for young women to stand up and use their voice and fight for their future, poverty, and abuse, as they did against apartheid.

"Together let us finish the march we began 70 years ago. Let the spirit of the 1956 rise again in each of your hearts," de Bruyn urged.

Makume launches the Free State Women in Tourism Chapter

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

The Deputy Minister of Tourism, Makhotso Soty, together with the MEC for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism in the Free State, Ketso Makume, launched the Free State Women in Tourism Chapter during a two-day strategic engagement session commemorating Women's Month this week at the Aldam Resort and Conference Centre in Ventersburg.

The launch highlighted and celebrated the valuable contributions women make to the tourism sector.

The event was attended by figures including the Deputy Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Mapaseka Letsike, MEC for Public Works and Roads, Dibolelo Mance, representatives of the National Women in Tourism Executive Committee and members of the Free State Women in Tourism Chapter,



among others.

The department said the engagement also serves as a platform to officially relaunch the Free State Women in Tourism Chapter, which will strengthen collaboration between government and industry and develop a clear roadmap for the growth and sustainability of women-owned tourism enterprises in the province.

The National Women in Tourism Executive Committee also had an opportunity to engage directly with provincial stakeholders, share best practices, and support the establishment of a vibrant provincial structure aligned with the National Women in Tourism Programme.

Discussions during the two-day event covered access to finance, enterprise development, digital innovation, tourism product development, and collaboration between government and the private sector, among others. Makume also called on stakeholders to support women in their various ventures.

Women's Caucus Demands Action on Gender Equality

By Katlego Mashwabi

The Free State Legislature's Household Committee, in partnership with the Multi-Party Women's Caucus, hosted a legislative seminar at the Braam Fischer Building's Rose Hall to advance gender-responsive legislation and commemorate the 70th anniversary of the 1956 Women's March.

Held under the theme, "From Commitment to Accountability: Strengthening Gender Equality Through Legislative Oversight and Inclusive Governance," the seminar assessed the status of women and girls in the province and examined gaps in planning, budgeting, implementation and oversight.

Deputy Speaker Mamiki Mkhabela said the dialogue must celebrate progress while confronting systemic inequalities and developing evidence-based interventions. MEC for Social Development Mathabo Hlalele paid tribute to the 1956 marchers before challenging leaders to ensure policies and budgets translate into



tangible improvements for women across communities. The Commission for Gender Equality and South African Human Rights Commission called for stronger, inclusive accountability mechanisms. The CGE also questioned how LGBTQ+ communities are accommodated within existing 40:40:20 legislative targets.

SALGA's Women's Commission advocated for 50:50 gender representation but cautioned against treating

quotas as mere numbers. Premier Maqueen Letsoha-Mathae highlighted the Office on the Status of Women's role in mainstreaming gender equality, while criticising the absence of provincial HODs, except HOD Machabalala. The seminar ended with unanswered questions over leadership representation, HOD participation and implementation of gender-equality commitments.

Opinion

Prof Alice Ncube
Disaster Management Training and Education Centre for Africa (DiMTEC), University of the Free State



Gender-Based Violence: A slow-onset disaster requiring prevention, justice and healing

As South Africa commemorates Women’s Month, we celebrate the achievements, resilience and contributions of women across society. However, this period must also provide an opportunity for deeper reflection on one of the most persistent threats facing women and children: Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF).

GBVF is often described as a social challenge, a criminal justice concern or a public health crisis. While these perspectives are important, they do not fully capture the scale, persistence and devastating consequences of the problem. Gender-based violence can also be understood as a slow-onset disaster, one that unfolds over time, gradually eroding safety, dignity, well-being and opportunities for millions of people.

Unlike sudden disasters such as floods and wildfires, GBVF does not always generate immediate emergency mobilisation. Yet its effects are equally profound. It destroys lives, affects families and communities, places pressure on healthcare and justice systems, and leaves long-term emotional, social and economic consequences. Understanding GBVF as a slow-onset disaster is not a metaphor; it reflects the reality that violence against women and girls is a widespread human rights, public health and societal emergency requiring prevention, preparedness, coordinated response and healing.

Viewing GBVF through a disaster risk reduction lens
Disaster management is built on a simple but

powerful principle: preventing or mitigating hazards is better than responding after devastation has occurred. It focuses on understanding risks, reducing vulnerabilities, strengthening preparedness and building resilience before hazards cause widespread impacts. This approach is highly relevant to GBVF because violence does not occur in isolation nor suddenly like floods and wildfires. It is a culmination of broader social, economic and institutional conditions, including gender inequality, harmful social norms, poverty, economic dependency and weaknesses within support systems. Applying a disaster risk reduction perspective shifts the focus from responding only after violence occurs towards identifying and reducing the conditions that allow violence to happen.

The question therefore becomes not only: How do we respond after violence has occurred? but also: How do we prevent violence before it occurs?

This preventative approach aligns with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), which emphasises understanding risk, strengthening governance, investing in resilience and taking early action. It also complements South Africa’s National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (2020-2030), which recognises that addressing GBVF requires a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach involving government, communities, civil society, researchers and service providers.

From reactive response to anticipatory action
One of the greatest challenges in addressing

GBVF is that action often occurs only after death, or harm has already happened. Society responds after a woman has been assaulted, after a child has been sexually molested, or after a family has lost a loved one. Disaster management has long recognised that effective risk reduction requires prevention, mitigation and early action not only emergency response. The same principle must guide the fight against GBVF.

Modern disaster management increasingly emphasises Anticipatory Action and Early Action, enabling institutions and communities to act before a crisis reaches its peak. Although these approaches have traditionally been applied to climate-related hazards such as floods, droughts and cyclones, the underlying principles offer valuable lessons for addressing GBVF.

In the context of GBVF, anticipatory thinking means recognising warning signs and underlying vulnerabilities before tragedy occurs. These include harmful gender norms, escalating patterns of violence, economic dependency, social isolation, limited access to support services and institutional failures that leave survivors vulnerable.

Rather than waiting for violence to occur, prevention requires investment in education, community awareness, survivor support services, economic empowerment and coordinated interventions that reduce risk before violence escalates.

Just as disaster managers do not wait for a flood to destroy a community before activating prepar-

edness measures, society should not wait until another woman, or child becomes a victim before strengthening protection systems. Integrating anticipatory thinking into GBVF prevention would encourage earlier interventions, stronger community resilience and greater collaboration between government, universities, healthcare providers, justice institutions and civil society organisations.

A call for prevention, justice and healing

Women’s Month provides an opportunity not only to celebrate women’s achievements but also to recommit we to creating safer communities where women and children can live free from violence and fear. The measure of our progress should not only be how effectively we respond after violence occurs, but also how successful we are in preventing violence from happening in the first place. GBVF requires the same urgency, coordination and commitment that society applies to other threats to human life.

Prevention must come before tragedy. Justice must follow when harm occurs. Healing must continue for survivors, families and communities.

By bringing together disaster risk reduction and forensic science, South Africa can strengthen its response to GBVF moving from reaction towards prevention, from fragmentation towards coordination, and from despair towards resilience.

“Every life protected from violence represents a success of prevention. Every life lost reminds us of the work that remains.”

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**

The Power of Contentment: Living a Happy Life Amidst Financial Limitations

We live in a world that constantly tells us that happiness is something we must purchase. We are surrounded by advertisements telling us what we should drive, where we should live, what we should wear, where we should travel and what we should own if we want to be considered successful. Social media has intensified this pressure. Every day, we see people displaying beautiful homes, expensive cars, luxurious holidays, successful businesses and seemingly perfect families. Although we know that social media often shows only the best moments of people’s lives, it is easy to compare our reality with someone else’s highlight reel.

As a result, many people have become dissatisfied with their lives not necessarily because they have nothing, but because they constantly measure what they have against what somebody else has. This is where the power of contentment becomes important. Contentment is not the absence of ambition. It is not laziness, poverty or settling for less. Contentment is the ability to appreciate what you have while still working towards what you desire. It is the freedom to say, “I may not have everything I want, but I can still be grateful for what I have today.”

The Bible gives us a powerful principle through the words of the Apostle Paul:

“I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.” — Philippians 4:11

Notice that Paul says, “I have learned.” Contentment is something that must be learned. It does not automatically come with age, money or success. In fact, some people become wealthier but never become more content.

Contentment Does Not Mean Giving Up on Your Dreams

One of the greatest misunderstandings about contentment is that being content means you should stop pursuing your dreams. That is not true. You can be content and ambitious at the same time. You can thank God for the car you drive while working towards a better one. You can appreciate your current home while believing for a bigger one. You can be grateful for your current income while developing yourself to increase your earning capacity. The difference is that your happiness is not postponed until you arrive at your desired destination. Many people say, “I will be happy when I have more money.”

“I will be happy when I buy a house.”

“I will be happy when I get married.”

“I will be happy when my business succeeds.”

“I will be happy when I can afford the lifestyle I want.” But the danger of this mindset is that when you finally get what you wanted, you simply create another condition for happiness. You become trapped in a cycle of “when.”

When I get this, I will be happy. When I reach that level, I will be happy.

When I have more, I will be happy. Contentment breaks that cycle. It teaches you to enjoy the journey while pursuing the destination.

Financial Limitations Should Not Become Emotional Limitations

There are seasons in life when money is genuinely limited. Bills may be demanding. Opportunities may seem scarce. Your income may not be

where you want it to be. We should not romanticise financial hardship. Poverty and financial stress can be painful, and people should be encouraged to develop themselves, create opportunities, manage their finances wisely and pursue economic advancement.

However, financial limitations do not have to become emotional limitations. Just because you cannot afford everything you want does not mean you cannot experience joy. You may not afford an expensive holiday, but you can enjoy an afternoon with your family. You may not own a luxury vehicle, but you can appreciate the vehicle that gets you from one destination to another. You may not live in your dream house yet, but you can make your current home a place of peace, love and dignity.

You may not be able to eat at expensive restaurants every weekend, but you can enjoy a simple meal with people you love. Sometimes happiness is not found in the price of the experience but in the meaning attached to it.

Stop Allowing Other People’s Lifestyles to Define Your Worth

One of the greatest enemies of contentment is comparison. Comparison makes you despise what you once prayed for. There was a time when you prayed for the job you currently have. There was a time when you prayed for the home you currently live in. There was a time when you dreamed about the opportunities you now take for granted.

But after seeing someone else’s life, suddenly your blessings look like failures. This is dangerous. Your life cannot be measured accurately through someone else’s possessions. Someone else’s success does not make you unsuccessful.

Someone else’s house does not make your home worthless.

Someone else’s car does not make yours embarrassing. Someone else’s salary does not determine your value.

Someone else’s journey is not your journey.

We must learn to celebrate what others have without becoming frustrated by what we do not have. There is enough room in the world for another person’s success without it becoming a declaration of your failure.

Contentment Protects You From Financially Destroying Yourself

Another powerful benefit of contentment is that it protects us from unnecessary financial pressure. When people are dissatisfied with their lives, they can make financial decisions simply to maintain an image. They borrow money to impress people they do not even like.

They purchase things they cannot afford because they are afraid of looking unsuccessful.

They enter unnecessary debt because they want to keep up with people whose financial circumstances they do not understand.

Contentment gives you the courage to say:

“I cannot afford it right now, and I am okay with that.” There is no shame in waiting. There is no shame in saving.

There is no shame in buying according to your means. There is no shame in driving an older car while building your financial future. Financial wisdom sometimes requires you to sacrifice today’s appearance for tomorrow’s stability. The goal

should not be to look wealthy. The goal should be to be financially healthy.

Learn to Enjoy Simple Things

We sometimes complicate happiness.

We think happiness requires expensive experiences, but some of life’s greatest moments cost very little. A meaningful conversation. A family meal. A walk. Watching your children grow. Laughing with friends. Reading a good book. Sitting quietly and appreciating life. Serving someone in need. Going to church. Praying. Watching the sunset. These things remind us that life is bigger than our bank balance. Money can buy convenience, comfort and experiences, but money cannot guarantee peace, meaningful relationships, purpose or contentment. There are wealthy people who are deeply unhappy and people with very little who possess extraordinary joy. This does not mean we should glorify financial struggle. Rather, it reminds us that money is a tool, not the foundation of a meaningful life.

Gratitude Changes Your Perspective

Contentment grows where gratitude is practised. Gratitude forces you to look at what you have instead of constantly focusing on what you lack. When you begin to count your blessings, your perspective changes. You may discover that although your finances are not where you want them to be, you still have people who love you.

You may not have your dream career, but you have an opportunity to work. You may not have achieved everything you planned, but you have survived things that once seemed impossible. You may not have everything you prayed for, but you have many things you once prayed for. Gratitude does not deny reality. It simply refuses to allow the negative aspects of reality to become the whole story.

The Apostle Paul wrote:

“Godliness with contentment is great gain.” — 1 Timothy 6:6

What a powerful statement. The world tells us that great gain means acquiring more.

Scripture reminds us that great gain can also mean learning to appreciate what we already possess.

Contentment and Personal Growth Can Coexist

Contentment should never become an excuse for stagnation. There is a difference between saying, “I am grateful for where I am” and saying, “I don’t need to grow.” The first is contentment.

The second may be complacency. A content person can still study, work hard, build a business, improve their skills, pursue better opportunities and create wealth. The difference is that they are not driven by desperation to prove their worth. They grow from a position of gratitude rather than insecurity. They pursue success because they have a vision, not because they hate their current life. This is an important distinction.

You should want more, but wanting more should not make you hate what you already have.

Build a Life That Is Rich in More Than Money

Perhaps the greatest lesson of contentment is that wealth should be measured more broadly.

What is the value of having money if you have no peace? What is the value of having a beautiful home if your family cannot enjoy living together? What is the value of a successful business if your health, relationships and spiritual life are collapsing? What is the value of impressive possessions if you are constantly anxious about maintaining the lifestyle? True wealth includes peace of mind, healthy relationships, purpose, faith, good health, meaningful work and the ability to make a positive

contribution to others.

Money is important. We should not pretend otherwise. We need money to provide for our families, educate our children, build businesses and contribute to society. But money should serve our lives not become the master of our lives.

Teach Your Children Contentment

Contentment is also something we should teach the next generation. Children are growing up in a culture of constant consumption. They are exposed to influencers, celebrities and advertising that continually communicate one message: you need more. As parents, we must teach our children the difference between need and want. We must teach them that having less does not make them less valuable. We must teach them to appreciate what they have, take care of their possessions and work for what they desire. Most importantly, we must model contentment ourselves.

Children learn more from what they see than from what we tell them. If they constantly hear us complaining about what we don’t have, they will learn dissatisfaction.

If they see us grateful, responsible and hopeful, they will learn resilience.

Your Current Season Is Not Your Final Destination

Perhaps you are currently experiencing financial limitations. If so, do not confuse your current season with your entire future. Your present financial position can change. You can learn. You can develop skills. You can start something. You can save. You can invest. You can build relationships. You can pursue opportunities. You can increase your capacity. Your financial circumstances today do not have to define your financial circumstances tomorrow. But while you are building towards tomorrow, do not sacrifice today’s peace. There is wisdom in saying: “I am not where I want to be, but I am grateful that I am not where I used to be.” That is contentment.

It is the ability to honour the present while preparing for the future.

Choose Peace Over Pressure

We live in an age where people are under enormous pressure to appear successful. But you do not have to live your life trying to impress people. You do not have to prove your worth through possessions. You do not have to compete with people whose circumstances you know nothing about.

You do not have to destroy your finances to maintain an image. You have permission to live within your means. You have permission to take your time. You have permission to build slowly. You have permission to enjoy your current season.

You have permission to be grateful. Contentment is not weakness. Contentment is freedom.

It is freedom from comparison. Freedom from unnecessary pressure. Freedom from the need to impress.

Freedom from constantly chasing the next thing.

And perhaps most importantly, it is freedom to enjoy the life you are living while you continue building the life you desire. The goal is not to stop dreaming. Dream. Build. Work. Grow. Create wealth. Pursue excellence. But while you are doing all of that, remember to live. Do not become so obsessed with tomorrow that you fail to appreciate today. Do not spend your entire life climbing the ladder only to discover that you never enjoyed the journey.

There is nothing wrong with wanting more. But there is great power in being able to say: “I am grateful for what I have, I am at peace with where I am, and I am still believing for greater things.” That is the power of contentment.

The women of 1956 walked so that we could run



Refilwe Mochoari
Editor-in-Chief

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the 9 August 1956 Women’s march where over 20 000 women of all races marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to fight for human rights, gender equality and social justice.

These women were protesting against the extension of the pass laws to black women.

With this year’s theme being “Empowered Women, Empower Nations” this commemoration is an indication that the fight that was put up by the iconic leading ladies Sophia Williams-De Bruyn, Lillian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph and Rahima Moosa seven decades ago chanting “Wathint’Abafazi, Wathint’ Imbokodo” (You strike a woman, you strike a rock”) did not go in vain.

Dear reader, my name is Refilwe Mochoari lets talk about women’s empowerment, gender equality, and the women in motion.

In 2022, I had an opportunity to engage with the last living lady of the iconic four women Sophie de Bruyn.

I will be honest, when Mama Sophie was sitting on that couch on the stage, I had no idea who she was until a friend of mine asked.

“Do you know who that is?”

Me: “No, who is it?”

“That is one of the ladies who led the Women’s Day March in 1956.....”

In true Refilwe style, I approached Mama Sophie asked to take a photo with her, and told her exactly how inspired I am by her courageous effort of challenging the apartheid system for women’s empowerment.

This is a moment that I will cherish forever.

I met one of the women who at only 18 years, shook the system.

Today their footsteps echo in boardrooms, business in parliament and in society in general.

The theme “Empowered Women, Empower Nations”, resonates with my idea of the kind of women I aspire to be. To create a value chain of women who empower one another without thinking twice about it.

The month of August has been successfully doing exactly that. The past two weeks have been a breath of fresh air and seeing women taking up space and reciprocating the love as they should be the first sign to what the 1956 women marched for.

EmpowerHer, SHEInvest, are just some of the women empowerment events that have grabbed my attention this month and ladies as always showed up and showed off.

Although the issue of patriarchy is still rife in households, in workspaces, it is imperative to note that 70 years later, women currently occupy spaces they could never have imagined before 1956.

Today we have black women in powerful positions.

The Public Protector Advocate Kholeka Gcaleka, the Judge President of the Supreme Court of Appeal Judge Mahube Molemela, The Acting National Police Commissioner Lieutenant General Puleng Dimpene.

Women are leading large multi billion rand businesses which they have founded. Women are successfully running entities in male dominated industries such as mining, construction and the energy sectors.

Gender equality is still a challenging phenomenon in South Africa.

According to the Commission for Gender Equality with the establishment of the Ministry for Women, Children and Persons with disabilities, there is a great need to re-structure the national gender machinery.

The commission states that there is a need to amend the gender policy Framework as it does not clarify the role of the Ministry.

According to data issued by the United Nations Women count, globally some progress on women’s rights has been achieved.

In South Africa, 3.6% of women aged between 20-24 years old who were married or in a union before 18, the adolescent birth rate is 1.3 per 1000 women aged 15 – 19 as 2015 down from 76.83 per 1000 in 2014.

As of February 2024, 46% of seats in parliament were occupied by women.

In 2016, 79.7% of women reproductive age (15 – 49) had their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods. Then there is the issue of Gender Based Violence, which the President Cyril Ramaphosa officially declared a national disaster in South Africa.

In South Africa 13.1% of women aged 15 and 49 years reported that they had been subjected to physical and or sexual violence by a current of a former intimate partner in the previous 12 months.

Although the women of 1956 paved the way for us to run, there is still a lot of work that needs to be done in South Africa.

Business

Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	16.18	-0.26%	📉
Rand/Pound	21.82	-0.17%	📉
Rand/Euro	18.65	-0.28%	📉
Platinum	1 719.59	-2.32%	📉
Brent Crude	86.92	-1.27%	📉
Gold	4 350.93	-1.31%	📉
Ethereum	1 886.82	0.31%	📈
Bitcoin	63 391.26	-0.11%	📉

FNB and Boxer to deepen partnership to deliver greater value and meaningful help to South African households



Following the strong customer response to the 99c bread offering, FNB and Boxer today announced plans to deepen their strategic partnership, reaffirming a shared commitment to helping South Africans stretch their budgets further through meaningful rewards, greater financial inclusion, and practical everyday value.

South African consumers continue to face financial pressure, with the rising cost of everyday essentials placing increasing strain on household budgets. As one of South Africa's largest providers of financial services to entry-level customers, FNB understands these challenges and is committed to delivering practical solutions that help customers stretch their money further through meaningful savings and everyday value.

Since launching the 99c bread offering with Boxer a month ago, over 220 000 vouchers have been issued, representing more than R2.2 million in value delivered to customers. To date, customers have realised savings of R73,650, with this figure expected to grow as vouchers remain valid for 31 days and further redemptions take place.

The initiative builds on the success of FNB's broader affordable bread programme, first launched with Pick n Pay in 2024. Since then, more than 7.7 million bread vouchers have been issued, this is a total issued value of more than R77 million. Over the past 18 months redemption rates have tripled indicating that this value proposition is hitting the core needs of our customers. These results demonstrate how customer-focused partnerships can provide meaningful relief on everyday essentials while meeting customers where they live, shop and transact.

"At FNB, our purpose is to be a trusted partner to our customers by helping them achieve financial health and thrive," says Lytania Johnson, CEO of FNB. "The reality is that many South Africans are making difficult decisions every month about how far their income must stretch. This partnership is rooted in listening to our customers, understanding the pressures they face and responding in ways that make a real difference in their everyday lives. We believe help is most meaningful when it is relevant, practical, and delivered at the point where customers need it most."

The expanding of the partnership builds on the success of FNB's ongoing strategy of combining banking, rewards and strategic partnerships to create an interconnected ecosystem that delivers value beyond traditional financial services. Through Boxer's extensive footprint across South Africa, particularly in rural and semi-rural communities, the partnership extends the reach of customer benefits to areas where accessibility and affordability are often most critical.

Looking ahead, FNB and Boxer will continue to evolve, with a focus on enhanced rewards opportunities, greater accessibility and additional customer value initiatives over time. Both organisations view the collaboration as a long-term commitment to helping customers stretch their budgets further while strengthening the role that banking and retail partnerships can play in improving financial outcomes for South Africans.

Marek Masojada, CEO of Boxer, said the partnership reflects a shared commitment to helping customers manage the realities of daily life.

"Our customers are looking for more than low prices

alone. They want brands that understand their needs and provide genuine value. By bringing together Boxer's community reach with FNB's financial expertise, we are creating solutions that support customers in practical ways while making meaningful savings more accessible to households across the country."

The partnership also supports a broader vision of financial inclusion.

FNB and Boxer believe the future of inclusion extends beyond access to financial services to ensuring those services are useful, relevant and embedded in customers' everyday life. Through strategic partnerships, rewards and targeted value propositions, customers are able to access benefits that help improve financial wellbeing while supporting essential household spending.

According to Christelle Pretorius, Chief Operating Officer at FNB Retail and Business segment, customer value remains at the centre of the partnership's evolution. "Customers don't think in terms of banking products. They think about how to put food on the table, get to work, support their families and manage their lives. The opportunity for organisations like FNB and Boxer is to build solutions around those everyday needs. By combining our respective strengths, we can create a more relevant ecosystem that delivers greater value and better outcomes for customers."

"This is the beginning of a broader journey," added Johnson. "As customer expectations evolve, we will continue to look for new ways to bring together trusted partnerships, innovation and practical support that help South Africans navigate their financial lives with confidence," she concluded. **BuaNews**

Wholesale Electricity Market will address high power costs: Ramaphosa



President Cyril Ramaphosa says the South African Wholesale Electricity Market will be a decisive step in diversifying the country's electricity supply.

The electricity trading platform is due to begin its operations in the coming year.

Ramaphosa says it will assist large energy-intensive industries' concerns about the high electricity prices they are paying.

Addressing a business gathering hosted by the Federation for Steel and Engineering Industries (SEIFSA), Ramaphosa highlighted the importance

of public-private partnerships as the country rolls out a 14 000 kilometre mega transmission project and establishes a separate transmission company from Eskom. "Over the past two decades, electricity tariffs have increased far faster than inflation, you all know that. In some cases, the electricity charge is much higher than your labour charge. A number of smelters and other energy-intensive operations have either closed, reduced production or faced the prospect of closure. These are not industries that can simply be switched off today and restarted tomorrow." **SABCNews**

Oil drops on lower demand forecasts despite deadlock in US-Iran talks



Oil prices fell more than \$1 on Thursday as forecasters lowered global oil demand projections for 2026 because of the disruptions from the US-Israeli war on Iran, though the supply constraints from the conflict provided a floor for the market.

Brent futures dropped \$1.29, or 1.5%, to \$87.69 a barrel by 0100 GMT. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude fell \$1.30, or 1.6%, to \$81.97.

The Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries lowered its world oil demand growth forecast for 2026 to 580,000 barrels per day in its monthly oil market report on Wednesday.

On the same day, the International Energy Agency said it expects a 1.6 million bpd contraction in consumption this year, down from a forecast of 1 million bpd last month, because of restricted fuel supplies and higher prices from the US-Israeli war on Iran that have curtailed demand.

Oil prices were also under pressure from a surprise build in US commercial crude oil inventories, which posted their largest weekly gain since January 2023 last week as exports slumped, the Energy

Information Administration said on Wednesday.

Crude inventories rose by 17.4 million barrels to 424.4 million barrels in the week ended August 7, their highest since June 5, the EIA said, compared with analysts' expectations in a Reuters poll for a 1.4 million-barrel draw.

Still, the deadlocked talks between Iran and the US to end the war in the Gulf have kept prices elevated. A senior Iranian source said on Wednesday that there had been no progress in talks to revive the interim deal agreed in June and define a time frame to implement it.

Attacks on shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait on Tuesday, two crucial export routes for Middle Eastern oil and gas, highlight the risks that remain for crude supply from the region.

"The safety situation for navigation in these waters has further deteriorated, forcing vessels to turn off their signals, which reduces transparency in shipping and makes it more difficult for the market to track and assess actual supply levels," analysts at Haitong Futures said in a note. **SABCNews**

Why are 27,092 teaching posts still vacant in SA?

As thousands of unemployed teachers continue to languish at home, 27,092 teaching posts remain vacant across South Africa.

The figure was revealed by Basic Education Minister Siviwe Gwarube in a parliamentary reply to a question from Patriotic Alliance MP Ashley Sauls, who asked for a full breakdown of teaching and non-teaching vacancies across the country.

Gwarube said the figures, based on PERSAL data as at 30 June 2026, showed a national educator vacancy rate of 7%.

The Eastern Cape recorded the highest number of vacant teaching posts at 5 730, followed by KwaZulu-Natal with 4 700 and Gauteng with 3 994.

The Western Cape had 3 562 vacant teaching posts, while Limpopo recorded 3 097.

Mpumalanga had 1 866 vacancies, North West 2 346, Northern Cape 1 521 and the Free State 276.

However, the department cautioned that a vacancy recorded on the system does not necessarily mean that a classroom is without a teacher.

"Provincial Education Departments may, where appropriate, use temporary or acting arrangements pending the filling of substantive vacancies. Accordingly, the existence of a recorded substantive vacancy does not necessarily mean that the relevant class or function is unattended," Gwarube said.

"Any appointment or conversion of an appointment remains subject to the applicable requirements, the availability and funding of the post, and the relevant



recruitment processes". She added that vacancy figures also change continuously as posts become vacant, are filled, appointments are converted, and provincial establishments are updated.

The department also revealed that 2 654 educator posts were recorded as "frozen" on PERSAL.

"As at 30 June 2026, PERSAL recorded 2 654 educator posts with the status "Frozen". This figure reflects

the PERSAL system status and should not be interpreted as establishing that all 2 654 posts were deliberately frozen due to budget constraints," the Minister said.

"The Department has further advised that the current provincial submissions do not yet enable it to provide a complete, verified national breakdown of vacancies deliberately frozen due to budget constraints" **IOI Business**

Tyla Makes History With Second
Billboard No. 1 Album



Uh-oh, uh-oh, she did it again! South African international pop star Tyla puts African pop in the history books.

South Africa (13 August 2026) – The Johannesburg-born superstar has just added another major achievement to a long list of wins, with her latest album, A*POP, reaching No. 1 on the Billboard World Albums chart.

It's one for the history books, as Tyla is now the first African artist to have two albums reach the No. 1 spot on the chart, following her self-titled debut Tyla in 2024.

A*POP, which was released late July, is Tyla's second studio album and sees her building on the sound that first introduced her to the world, while leaning even further into the South African influences that have become such a big part of her identity as an artist.

The 14-track album includes the already-loved singles 'CHANEL,' 'SHE DID IT AGAIN' featuring Zara Larsson and 'IS IT LOVE,' alongside collaborations with South African artists including Babalwa M, MaWhoo and Liquideep.

The album's title is the perfect description of what Tyla is trying to do with it. In an interview with Apple Music, she explained that APOP* is about expanding the idea of what an African pop star can look and sound like.

The No. 1 comes at the end of another huge run for Tyla. Earlier this year, she won her second Grammy Award for "Push 2 Start", becoming the first artist to win the Best African Music Performance category twice. She has since performed alongside Shakirain New York, joined the line-up for the FIFA World Cup opening ceremony and landed astarring voice role in Toy Story 5.

Now she adds another piece of Billboard history to the list.

Her first album, Tyla, made history of its own when it debuted at No. 1 on the World Albums chart in 2024. That album also introduced the world to 'Water', the amapiano-infused global smash that changed everything for the young Jozi artist, earning her first Grammy and helping turn her into one of South Africa's – and the world's – biggest musical stars.

A*POP reflects the confidence Tyla spent the last two years building as an international icon.

Tyla will be celebrating with her South African fans at her Gold Reef City performance this Sunday – goodthingsguy.com



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Women Embracing Women

By Refilwe Mochoari

The Precious Women organisation last week celebrated its 10th anniversary at the Loch Logan Hotel in Bloemfontein.

Founder and CEO Tshepiso Modisenyane welcomed about 100 women in an intimate women empowerment session.

Founded in 2016, Modisenyane says she saw a gap in the market where women and youth businesses did not have enough access to markets and finance.

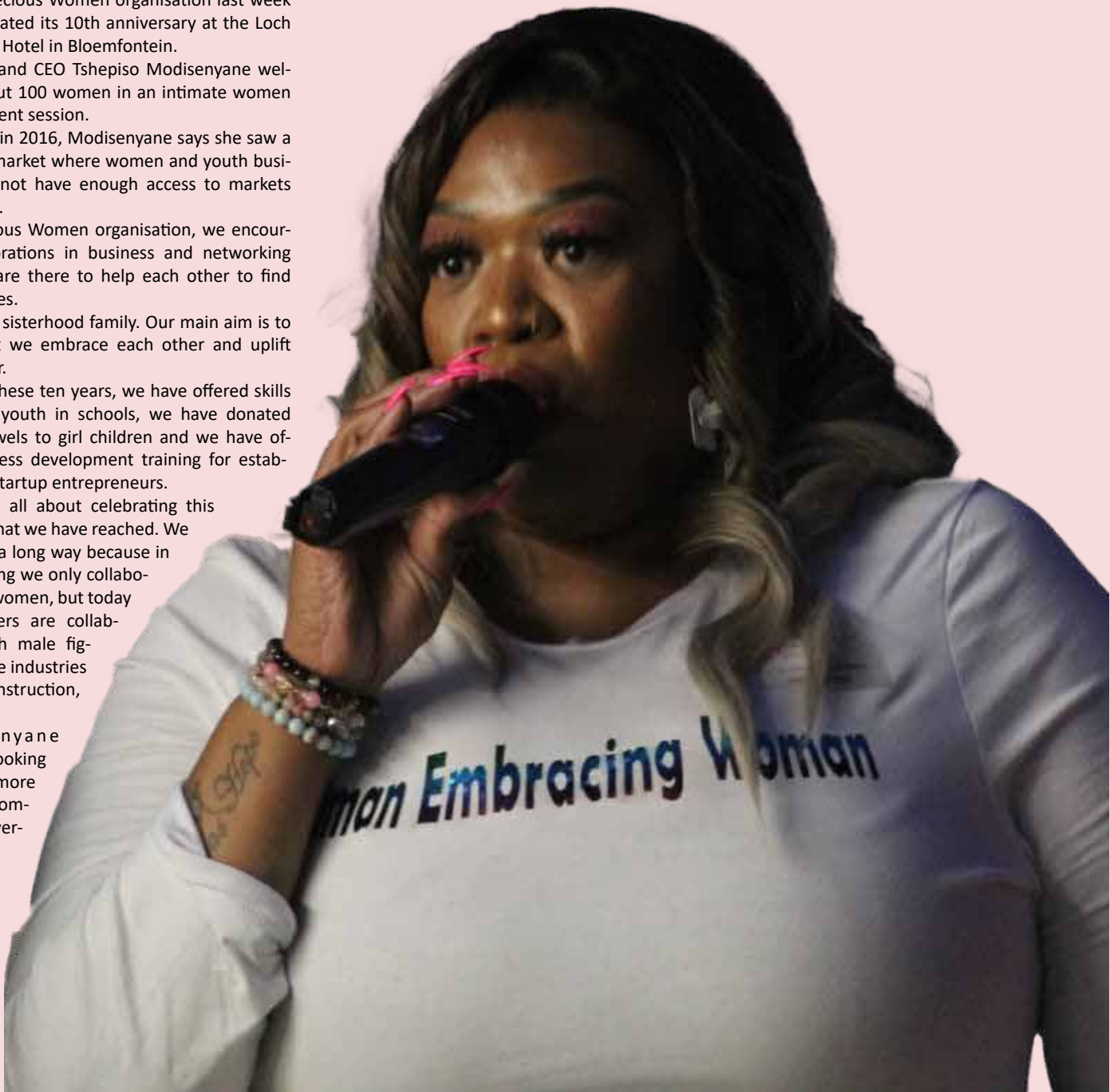
"At Precious Women organisation, we encourage collaborations in business and networking where we are there to help each other to find opportunities.

"This is a sisterhood family. Our main aim is to ensure that we embrace each other and uplift one another.

"During these ten years, we have offered skills training to youth in schools, we have donated sanitary towels to girl children and we have offered business development training for established and startup entrepreneurs.

"Today is all about celebrating this milestone that we have reached. We have come a long way because in the beginning we only collaborated with women, but today our members are collaborating with male figures in some industries such as construction, she said.

Modisenyane said she is looking forward to more years of women empowering women.



SA Heroines Awards Celebrate 15 Years of Resilience and Female Leadership

By Katlego Mashwabi

The crisp winter air of Bloemfontein gave way to an atmosphere of profound warmth and resilience over the weekend as the South African Heroines Awards (SAHA) marked a historic 15th anniversary.

Hosted on Saturday evening, 8 August, at the the Bloemfontein Civic Theatre, the annual national gala brought together trailblazers, community builders, and high-profile dignitaries for an evening dedicated to celebrating fifteen years of female empowerment, leadership, and legacy. With tickets ranging between R700 and R1500, the red-carpet event delivered a sophisticated mix of glamour, powerful networking, and deep emotional resonance.

The true heartbeat of the evening was the prestigious SAHA Blazer Ceremony, affectionately known as Kobo ya Seriti (The Blanket of Dignity). "My greatest highlight of this edition was undoubtedly the Blazer Ceremony — Kobo ya Seriti.

Watching women being clothed in their SAHA blazers was incredibly emotional. Some of these women have served their communities, built businesses, led institutions, and carried families without ever receiving the recognition they deserve" said Masimo. This signature ceremony goes far beyond the typical glitz of traditional award shows, using a specially designed crisp white blazer with

elegant gold trimmings to symbolize the restoration of a woman's dignity and the public recognition of her leadership journey. For SAHA Founder and President Carol Masimo, who steers the national initiative alongside Project Manager Maki Mathaba, this specific moment defined the entire milestone edition.

This year's recipients of the white and gold blazer included a formidable lineup of provincial leaders. Among them was the keynote speaker of the evening, Free State MEC of Public Works, Dibolelo Mance.

Joining them in this high honour were, dedicated women's empowerment activist Theodorah Leeuw-Mosala, Red Cross Provincial Manager Claudia Magwegape, and Mmanehileng Letuka.

The celebration of these phenomenal women was preluded earlier in the week by the SAHA Annual Charity Golf Day on 4 August at the Bloemfontein Golf Course, which featured Dr Gwen Ramokopa on the green, setting a philanthropic tone for the main event.

Despite the undeniable triumph of the gala

evening, Masimo candidly acknowledged that the journey to the 15th anniversary was fraught with behind-the-scenes hurdles.

"The organization faced significant logistical challenges, including having to change the venue three times and navigating limited government support, which threatened to compromise the grand vision for this important milestone, she said.

Reflecting on these trials, Masimo noted that while the event did not unfold exactly as planned, the ultimate survival and impact of SAHA 15 proved that the dignity of the women being honoured could never be compromised by limited resources or changing plans.

"The 15th Anniversary of SAHA did not unfold the way we had imagined or planned.

"Was SAHA15 what I imagined? No. But perhaps it became what it needed to be, a lesson, a testimony of resilience, and a reminder of why SAHA must continue.

"After 15 years, we are still standing, still recognising women, still giving women a platform, and still committed to opening doors for those who come after us, she said.

Founded in 2016 and recently celebrating ten years of impactful operations, the initiative runs special programs for women, children, and SMMEs around the Mangaung region, ensuring that the spirit of the annual awards translates into continuous, year-round community transformation.



The "Ska Phace" Era Unlocked

By Katlego Mashwabi

Free State content creator Gaogakwe Ofentse Moholoagae also known as Ska Phace is rapidly cementing her status as the entertainment industry's ultimate "events fairy godmother."

Born and bred in Bloemfontein, the 28-year-old powerhouse has transformed her passion for style and media into a booming career, recently being named the "New Bestie on the block"

Ska Phace, a name she proudly adopted after choosing to embrace a scar on her forehead, Moholoagae is proving that authenticity resonates. Currently, she is an ambassador for The Foschini Group (TFG) retail store, The Fix, she is in collaboration with Era by DJ Zinhle, and is the official face of Omoda Zee Nation Face 2026.

Her meteoric rise reached a historic milestone in December 2025 when she commanded the stage as the master of ceremonies for SA hip-hop star Cassper Nyovest's "Fill Up Toyota Stadium" concert.

Reflecting on the career-defining moment, Moholoagae shared that when people look back at the historic stadium-filling, her name will be mentioned as the MC who did amazing, "This is one of my biggest highlights yet.

"When they speak about #FillUpToyota Stadium my name will be mentioned, that she...Ska Phace was the MC, and she did amazing" she said.

She stunned the audience at the DJ Zinhle Zee Nation Fest that took place on Sunday in Johan-



nesburg, wearing a striking bohemian denim two-piece outfit. Beyond her fashion statements, she locked in a major moment by introducing the deep house mogul herself at a recent EP listening session.

Moholoagae described the experience as a dream come true, noting that she feels like she is living her dream for real.

Her fashion philosophy remains unshakable. "I mean even if you are going through a lot, never compromise on looking good" she said justifying her undeniable love for fashion.

Moholoagae explained that she deeply understands the Era woman and the lifestyle the brand represents, describing herself as witty, confident, creative, and naturally drawn to spaces that celebrate ambition, self-expression, and style.

She believes that beyond aesthetics, she knows

how to communicate with people in a relatable, engaging way that perfectly aligns with the modern African woman.

Despite her high-profile gigs, Moholoagae keeps her feet firmly on the ground, balancing her glamorous entertainment lifestyle with a regular 9-to-5 corporate job at the Performing Arts Centre of the Free State (PACOFs).

Her dedicated digital community, known as the "Ska Family," actively tunes in for her highly relatable "9-to-5 girlie vlogs" which capture the unglamorous behind-the-scenes realities of her daily routines, running errands, her faith-driven "church girlie" lifestyle, and luxury beauty product reviews.

Moholoagae openly shares that she still applies for traditional 9-to-5 jobs and secures her biggest entertainment bookings through sheer hustle. She revealed that she routinely called and emailed event organisers with her biography, master of ceremonies video links, and rate cards.

"I will send emails to event organisers with my bio, MC video links, rate card and that is how I get my gigs.

"Put in the work behind the scenes as well. Some event organisers will hit you up others you're gonna have to do the job.

She says that most of the big events that MCed she sent out emails pitching her craft.

She emphasised the importance of putting in the work behind the scenes, noting that while some organizers will reach out directly, other times you have to go out and pitch the job yourself.

Women's Day Fest Sets the Stage for FSFW 2026



By Katlego Mashwabi

The Central University of Technology (CUT) was transformed into a vibrant hub of empowerment and high fashion as the annual Women's Day Business and Fashion Fest kicked off under the theme, "Breaking Barriers, Building Legacies"

Held to mark South Africa's Women's Month, the gathering served as a glamorous preview show for Free State Fashion Week (FSFW), which celebrates its milestone 10th anniversary this year.

In partnership with commercial radio Metro FM, the festival blended high-profile runway showcases with critical business panels and a touch of pink clothing on all guests.

The prestigious event was steered by media entrepreneur Mags Shivanda and radio broadcaster Somizi Mhlongo.

Taking the stage, founder and CEO of FSFW Candy Smith shared her inspiring journey as a self-taught designer from Welkom who launched FSFW in 2016 to give local talent a professional platform.

She says her vision expanded in 2017 with the launch of the Free State Fashion Hub, an accredited training institution that mentors 20 to 30 emerging designers annually and famously took local talent to showcase in New York in 2018.

Smith says FSFW was designed as a sustainable economic engine where regional creatives can transform raw talent into viable commercial enterprises.

She says she is proud to have had every woman present and said she feels really thankful for their continuous support in the success of her event.

Beyond the fashion, the festival delivered critical masterclasses on career longevity and digital growth.

Guest speaker and media personality Palesa Chubisi gave a candid address detailing the turbulent ups and downs of the modern media landscape, while SABC General Manager Dr Kina Nhlengentha shared insights on how modern entrepreneurs can leverage digital media platforms to scale local businesses.

DJ and radio broadcaster Lamiez Morule also graced the even and motivated women to accept and love their bodies just as they are.

During the program, Shivanda praised the business breakfasts immediate impact on the local economy, saying that her local makeup artist, Gomolemo Meje had secured multiple bookings that morning alone due to the influx of visitors.

"My make-up artist was mentioning this morning how grateful she is for such events because just that morning she had three other bookings before her.

"So I am honoured to be a part of such a wonderful event, I have seen Candy grow in FSFW over the years, it is amazing to witness, she said.

The day commenced with a powerful opening address by Dr B Mkhize from the CUT Hospitality Department who praised the the organisation behind the event and drew comparisons to the biblical figures of Esther and Deborah, challenging attendees to turn personal resilience into lasting historical legacies.

Meanwhile the runway came alive with breathtaking collections from acclaimed brands By Grace and Shirgrees, brought to life by Miss SA Crown Chaser Palesa Van Rooyen and Free State influencers including Ernest Mfokeng, Zar Ntseto, Bucie Thlokwe, Mbulelo Mbira, and Inno Koloba Sebusi.

Speaking to Journal News, runway model Sbonile Mabitle echoed the sentiment of many participants, stating that such professional platforms are important for providing local models with crucial industry exposure.

Model Nandiyona Tloome took it straight to the appreciation podium and said, "I am honoured to experience Free State Fashion Week this Women's Month celebrating the beauty, confidence and creativity of women.

The celebration concluded with a joyful anniversary ceremony featuring a striking black and pink tiered cake to mark a decade of fashion excellence in the Free State.

Guests enjoyed live music sets by musician Press and gospel singer Puleg Phoofofo, alongside high-energy beats from DJ Amo Afrika.

Closing out the spectacular afternoon, Smith thanked the audience for ten years of unmatched support and officially announced that Free State Fashion Week will take place on 09 October 2026.

WEEKEND

Gig Guide

ALL OVER BLOEMFONTEIN FROM
15 - 16 AUGUST 2026

1ST BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION
SATURDAY - 15 AUGUST 2026
IZA - BLOEMFONTEIN

SATURDAY VIBES UNLEASHED
SATURDAY - 15 AUGUST 2026
NEWS CAFE

SATURDAY SHOWDOWN
SATURDAY - 15 AUGUST 2026
VIBE LOUNGE

EXTENDED SOUL SUNDAY
SUNDAY - 16 AUGUST 2026
SECHABA LOUNGE

MATURED SUNDAYS
SUNDAY - 16 AUGUST 2026
THE ZONE CAR WASH

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Journal News Network



HEALTH

Steven- Johnson syndrome: a rare reaction that can turn deadly

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

As Stevens-Johnson syndrome (SJS) Awareness Month is observed this August globally, health experts are urging the public to recognise the early warning signs of the rare but potentially life-threatening condition, which can cause severe damage to the skin and mucous membranes.

SJS is most commonly triggered by certain medications, although infections can also be a cause; it immediately requires medical attention and hospital treatment.

It can initially resemble the flu, with symptoms such as fever, sore throat, cough, joint pain, headache and general weakness. This may then be followed by a painful or rapidly spreading rash, blisters and skin peeling.

The condition can also affect areas such as the mouth, throat, eyes and genitals. Sores in the mouth can make swallowing difficult, while eye involvement can cause pain, sensitivity to light and vision problems.

According to research, the early signs of SJS are a painful, red or purplish rash that often starts on the face and upper torso, quickly progressing to blisters and raw, peeling skin on the skin and mucous membranes. Certain medicines are more commonly associated with SJS, including some epilepsy medicines, antibiotics and anti-inflammatory painkillers. Examples include carbamazepine, lamotrigine, phenytoin, sulfamethoxazole and some oximac anti-inflammatory medicines. However, the condition remains rare, even among people taking medicines known to be associated with it.

People who have previously experienced SJS after taking a particular medicine may be at increased risk of another reaction if they are exposed to that medicine or similar medicines again. Some genetic



factors can also increase susceptibility.

Once SJS is suspected, urgent medical care is essential. Treatment generally involves hospitalisation, stopping the suspected medication once it is identified as the cause, maintaining hydration, caring for damaged skin, and managing pain and other complications. Severe cases may require intensive care.

The consequences can extend beyond the initial illness. SJS may lead to skin infections, scarring, organ complications, and long-term eye problems, including damage that can affect vision. Recovery can take weeks or months.

Health experts advise people to seek emergency medical attention if they develop a widespread or rapidly spreading rash, particularly if the skin be-

comes painful, blistered, or begins peeling, or if they develop swelling or sores affecting the mouth, eyes, face, or throat after starting a new medicine.

Early treatment of SJS can help prevent the condition from worsening and reduce the risk of severe skin loss, organ damage, and death. Prompt medical care allows doctors to stop the medication causing the reaction, manage fluid loss, and reduce the risk of long-term complications affecting the eyes and skin.

Awareness is important because recognising the early signs and seeking urgent medical attention can make a critical difference when dealing with this rare but potentially life-threatening reaction.

BOOK REVIEW

Jackie Phamotse Sixth Book : The Big Five Cartel

By Katlego Mashwabi

Award winning South African author and social media activist Jackie Phamotse is officially back, and she is as uncompromising as ever.

Following her release from a two-year house arrest sentence in April 2026 for a defamation lawsuit by media moguls couple Romeo and Basetsana Khumalo, the Northern Cape-born author has used her time under correctional supervision to deliver her most explosive work yet.

Released on 3 August, Bare VI: The Big Five Cartel marks the sixth instalment in her famous Bare series and the 13th book in her impressive collection.

Published by Penguin South Africa, this 408-page powerhouse novel carries the chilling fine-print warning: "No honour amongst thieves".

Phamotse, who won the 2020 SA Book Award for Best Fiction, first shocked the nation in 2017 with her debut novel Bare I: The Blessers Game, which exposed the shaded activities of older men exploiting young women.

In The Big Five Cartel, she shifts her lens from personal exploitation to institutional rot.

The narrative plunges readers into the deep intersection of power, capital, and impunity within South Africa.

The plot masterfully circles around pilot Imani

Lebone and businessman Gibson Kente, both of whom find themselves trapped in a high-power struggle involving a figure known only as the



and the ruth-
less Big
Five Cartel. What makes
this novel
truly terrifying is its
cose-fit with
reality.
Phamotse explicitly
notes that her story
draws from months
of rigorous research,
including listening
into the 2025
Madlanga Commission
of Inquiry into the
Gauteng-based drug
syndicate.
She firmly coins the
book as "documentation,
not speculation."

This dedication to real-world systems is unmistakable, particularly in Chapter 18. Here, the book introduces a proud, short-framed but highly commanding Zulu man who loathes criminals, shows zero mercy to corrupt officials, and commands deep respect from both the media and the public. For South African readers, this is a glove-like, unmistakable mirror image of KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Police Commissioner, Nhlanhla "Lucky" Sibusiso Mkhwanazi.

Ultimately, Bare VI: The Big Five Cartel is a vital addition to South African contemporary literature that forces the country into a mirror. It moves past simple fiction to spark urgent conversations regarding relationships, ambition, and the daily survival mode of citizens living under the shadow of hidden criminal networks.

As Phamotse herself powerfully asserts, she says she wrote this book because "silence is complicity" and went on to add "for years, I have observed the intersection of power, capital, and impunity in this country. I studied the systems, questioned the networks and documented what many know but few name in public" said Phamotse.

It is a brave, explicit, and utterly gripping page-turner that proves Phamotse remains an essential, fearless voice in exposing what many know but few dare name in public.



FOOD Recipes

No Pasta, No Problem Spaghetti Squash Recipes to Try Season



Ingredients: Method:

- 3 lb. spaghetti squash
- 1 small red onion, finely chopped
- 4 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 cloves chopped garlic
- 1 15-ounce can chickpeas, rinsed
- 1 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- 2 oz. crumbled feta

STEP 1
Using a large serrated knife, halve spaghetti squash lengthwise; discard seeds. Place both halves cut side down on a large piece of parchment paper, and microwave on high until just tender; 9 to 11 minutes. Use a fork to shred squash strands, and transfer to a large bowl.

STEP 2
In a small bowl, toss onion, lemon juice, and a pinch each of salt and pepper.

STEP 3
In a nonstick skillet, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil and chopped garlic until beginning to turn golden brown. Add chickpeas; cook for 2 minutes. Toss with spaghetti squash, 1 tablespoon olive oil, and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper. Fold in parsley and onion (and juices). Top with crumbled feta.



SPORT



World Cup Bound!

Banyana Banyana edge Nigeria to secure 2027 showpiece spot

By Gomolemo Winkler

Banyana Banyana secured qualification for the inter-confederation 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup play-offs, after a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Nigeria on Thursday evening at Moulay Rachid Stadium in Casablanca, Morocco.

Goals from Thembi Kgatlana and Refiloe Jane were enough to book South Africa's second shot to the global showpiece, despite their earlier exit from the 2026 Women's Africa Cup of Nations (WAFCON).

For Nigeria's Super Falcons, the defeat signified the end of their World Cup ambitions. They failed to qualify for the tournament for the first time in their history. It also capped a disappointing WAFCON campaign, in which they failed to reach the semi-finals for the first time.

The opening half produced few clear-cut chances. Nigeria came closest, when Michelle Alozie's effort from the edge of the area drifted wide of the target.

Banyana enjoyed the better share of possession, moving the ball confidently, but could not translate

their dominance into meaningful attacking chances. Nigeria goalkeeper Chiamaka Nnadozie was tested only by a handful of long-range efforts.

Nigeria emerged after the break with more intent. Veteran striker, Asisat Oshoala, found space on the right side of the penalty area, but her delivery was comfortably saved by Kaylin Swart, with teammates waiting in the box.

Swart then produced one of several crucial saves, when Oshoala was presented with a golden opportunity after the ball dropped inside the six-yard box. However, the Nigerian forward failed to make clean contact, and the chance went begging before she was substituted shortly afterwards.

South Africa broke the deadlock in the 61st minute. Linda Motlhalo threaded a perfectly weighted pass to Hilda Magaia, who burst down the left flank before catching Nigeria's defence off guard with a low cross. Kgatlana arrived unmarked to tuck into the net, with Nnadozie getting a boot to the effort but unable to prevent it from crossing the line.

The goal took Kgatlana's tally to four for the tour-

namment and eight overall at WAFCON, since scoring four times in the 2018 edition.

Shortly afterwards, Nnadozie denied Kgatlana a second goal with an excellent low save, while Swart responded at the opposite end with another outstanding stop to keep out Uchenna Kanu's powerful header.

That save proved decisive, as moments later, Nigeria partially cleared a corner and Jane reacted quickest. Her close-range effort took a deflection off Nnadozie, before finding the back of the net to double South Africa's advantage.

In the stroke of 90 minutes, Nigeria was rewarded a penalty after Jane conspicuously handled the ball in the box, resulting to a red card for second bookable offence.

Christy Ucheibe buried the 12-step spot kick with poise to give Nigeria hope, but they could not prompt the equaliser. As Banyana Banyana held on to seal their place, amongst six nations to compete in the play offs later this year, for the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup spot.

Bloem's Female Football Titans Honoured

Women's Month tourney hosted in recognition of four female football trailblazers who have dedicated a decade or more to the 'beautiful game'



By Gomolemo Winkler

The Bloemfontein Local Football Association (LFA) ladies division sub-Committee hosted a two-day tributary football tournament at Clive Solomon Stadium in Bloemfontein from 8 to 9 August 2026 to celebrate four female football pioneers for Women's Month.

Under the theme Honouring a Decade of Women in Football these esteemed football figures were honoured for their outstanding contribution to the development, management and growth of football in the region for 10 years or more.

Kedilale Senago-Matong of Knowledge Stars FC, Mmakopano Anah Mokhetli of Black Diamonds FC, Royal Palace FC's Maphoka Sarah Maisi (Royal Palace FC) as well as Matshediso Ramafikeng from The Echo FC were duly recognised, with sub-committee chairperson, Heila Abraham, lauding the quartet as leaders that played a vital role in providing aspiring footballers with opportunities while building the sport in local communities.

"Their journeys represent commitment, sacrifice, resilience, leadership and love for the beautiful game," Abraham said.

She added that such tournaments strengthen relationships within the fraternity, provide competitive experience, and increase the visibility of women's football across the Free State.

"We are particularly proud that the tournament provided an environment where teams could compete while sharing experiences, building relationships and celebrating the women, who have contributed signifi-

cantly to the growth of the game," Abraham stated.

Ladies Division coordinator, Hendrick Minnie, echoed Abraham's sentiments further highlighting that the ongoing development of the sport requires collective effort, commitment, and strong partnerships.

"This tournament demonstrated what can be achieved when the football community comes together with a common purpose.

We look forward to building on the success of this tournament and creating more opportunities for women and girls to participate, compete and grow through football," he said.

Minnie added that these types of initiatives aim to celebrate contributors while they are still alive.

"Women in football deserve to be recognised, celebrated and supported, not only for what they have achieved, but also for the doors they continue to open for the next generation," Minnie continued.

On the field, City Ladies were crowned tournament champions after defeating runners-up Queen Ladies FC in the final match.

City Ladies head coach, Tshidiso Diboka, welcomed the victory and praised the initiative for creating vital opportunities for female athletes.

"For the female football fraternity, having a tournament like this is very important. It creates opportunities for women and girls to showcase their talent, gain experience, build confidence and inspire the next generation of female footballers.

"I hope this tournament continues to grow and gives women's football the recognition and platform it deserves," said Diboka.

Free State Celebrates Sporting Stars

By Gomolemo Winkler

The Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation and the Free State Sports Confederation will host the 2025/2027 Free State Sports Awards at Lemo Green Park in Bloemfontein on Saturday, 15 August 2026.

The prestigious event will recognise athletes, coaches, administrators, teams, and officials across 20 categories for their notable contributions to provincial sport.

Key categories include the MEC's Excellence Award, MEC's Lifetime Achiever Award, MEC's Posthumous Award, and the coveted Sports Star of the Year title.

Free State Sports Confederation General Secretary, Lehlohonolo Maduna, said the ceremony aims to inspire local athletes.

"We want to inspire any person who takes part in Sports activities, using his/her talent. So that it build motivation for an athlete.

"As FSSC and the Department of Sports, when a person does good we do things to award that person, to give him/her motivation to work harder," he added. Madonna added that the platform allows athletes to receive recognition in their home province rather than waiting for national events.

"We are making them feel proud. And for our athletes not to think that, recognition comes only at SA sports awards.

They should be proud that even in their home province, they were awarded for the amazing work. This is a token of appreciation. We are saying thank you, to all the sports people in our province," Madonna said.

Public nominations spanned a wide range of codes, including karate, volleyball, rugby, soccer, school sports, and sports for older persons.

"Then a panel analyses, who has done well in their respective fields, then the one who has done the most or won the most, will be awarded," he said. Finalists for Sportsman of the Year include Erich Visser, Kobus Barnard, and Mthi Mthimkulu, while Lael Malherbe, Johanita Scholtz, and Lynette Fischer compete for Sportswoman of the Year.

In the disability categories, Elih Lawrence is nominated for Sportsman of the Year with a Disability, while Naledi Nhlapo alongside Louzanne Coetzee and her guides are finalists for Sportswoman of the Year with a Disability.

MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, Ntombizanele Sifuba, commended the dedication shown by all nominees.

"The Free State Sport awards remain one of the province's most prestigious platforms for recognising sporting excellence, and resilience.

These nominations are a reflection of the strength and richness of sport in our province. We wish every finalist the very best of dedication and hard work have truly paid off," she said.

Madonna encouraged contenders to use their achievements to uplift and guide others in their communities.

"Whoever will be getting the best award for those categories, let that be an inspiration to yourself. And be proud of your province, and proud of your god given talent. So that you can help others and guide them," he said.

The winners will be announced during the gala event on Saturday evening.

Kovsies Eye Victory at TUT



By Gomolemo Winkler

The University of the Free State's men's football team, Kovsies, has shifted its focus to refining defensive concentration and squad fluidity as they take on Tshwane university of technology (TUT) in their next Varsity Football fixture this Friday in Tshwane.

This forward-looking approach comes after the defending champions surrendered a 2-1 lead to ultimately fall 4-2 against the University of Pretoria (Tuks) at the

UFS Stadium in Bloemfontein.

Despite displaying moments of quality, defensive lapses cost Kovsies dearly as they sought to initiate their title defence on home soil.

Kovsies head coach, Mokete Tsotetsi, acknowledged that his side allowed the match to slip away after failing to protect their advantage.

"First game of two halves, we could have won the game. We gave away the game because we were in control. First half, all the goals were sloppy mistakes

and deflections because we wanted to act as a team," Tsotetsi said after their opening defeat.

Tuks initially broke the deadlock in the 23rd minute when Matome Rangata played a sharp through ball to Phiewyinkosi Dube, whose cross created panic before Madela finished cleanly.

Kovsies quickly responded with goalkeeper, Lethokuhle Makhava, converting a penalty to equalise, before captain Jerome Jansen capitalised on a defensive error to give UFS a 2-1 lead at halftime.

The visitors hit back rapidly in the second half, with Rangata punishing another defensive mistake in the 51st minute to restore parity.

Samukelo Ngodela then powered home a header in the 66th minute to put Tuks ahead, before Pabalalo Mamabolo sealed victory with a clever backheel through the goalkeeper's legs.

Notwithstanding the result, Tsotetsi expressed pride in his players' commitment, particularly those making their debuts in the tournament.

"So, it's one of those first games, new boys, they did well. I'm happy with how we played. We gave away easy goals, lack of concentration, but the boys did well. I cannot forget how they did well. I cannot fault them as they did well," he said

To secure their first win of the campaign, the coaching staff will concentrate on tactical discipline and ball retention in training this week.

"To put the ball on the ground more and to work on our defence.

We work on concentration, so that when we have the ball, we create chances," said Tsotetsi.