

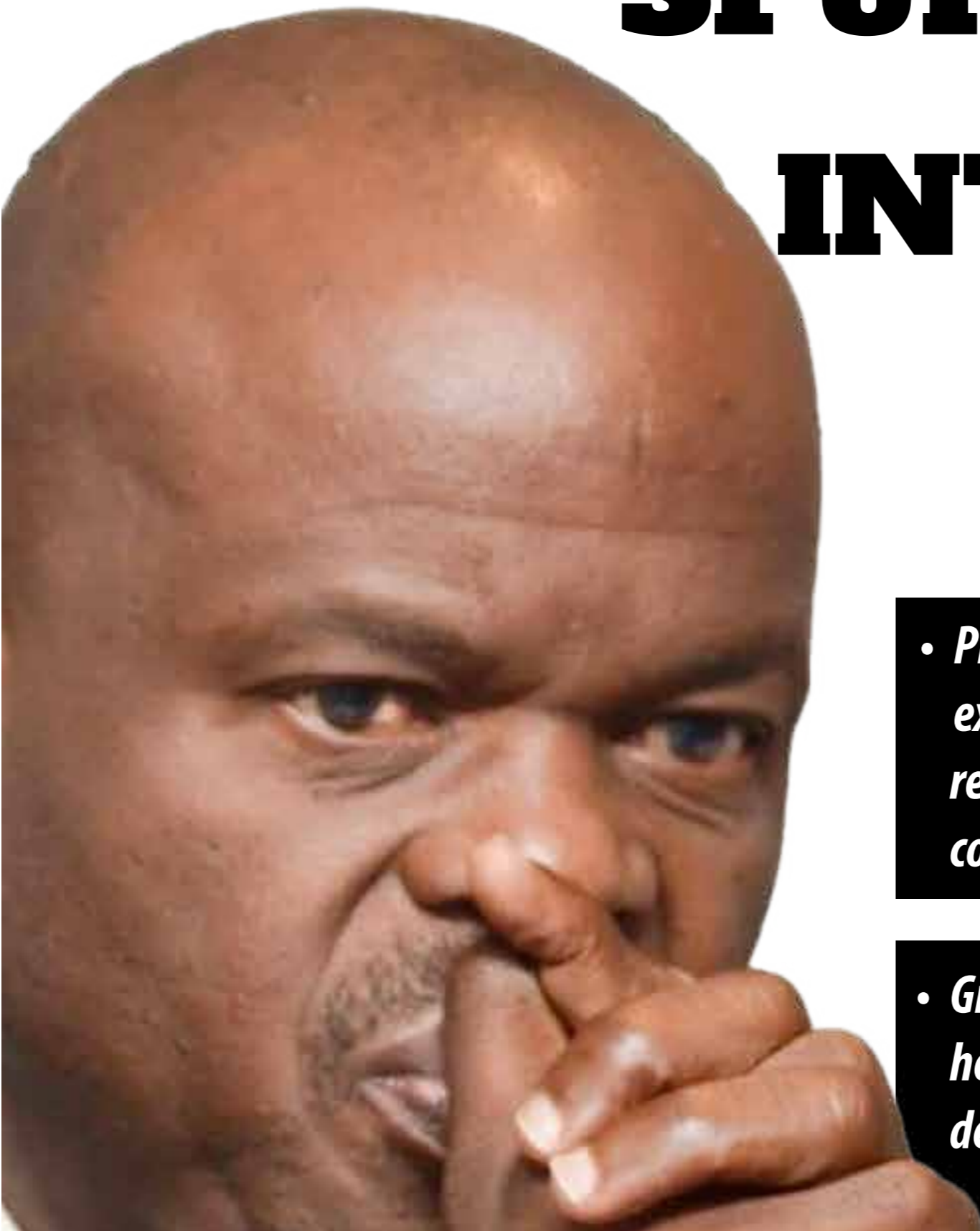


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SPURIOUS PROBE INTO MOKGOSI CONTINUES



- *Provincial Legislature Ad Hoc Committee set to submit extension request as new witnesses emerge and thus required to testify in probe into Premier's improper conduct allegations*

- *Groep's wild allegations dismissed as pure gossip and hearsay, while Mokgosi is focused on amplifying service delivery to struggling municipalities*

Page 2

North West Legislature established an Ad hoc committee to investigate North West Premier Lazarus Mokgosi Picture: Supplied



OUR EDITOR, OUR PRIDE: A SWEEP OF TOP AWARDS

The Chief Editor of Journal News, Refilwe Mochoari, has achieved a remarkable double victory as she was honoured with the *Journalist of the Year Award* for Best Features Documentary, a testament to her powerful storytelling across the Free State, North West, Northern Cape, and Limpopo region.

In a remarkable double achievement, Refilwe has also been named a finalist for the Best Finance Article in the same region.

Iconic Blue Train Attacked



By: Matshidiso Selebeleng

South Africa's famed luxury Blue Train suffered an unexpected attack on Friday near Green Point in Kimberley, Northern Cape.

The incident occurred while the train was stationed in Kimberley for a scheduled visit to the Mine Museum. According to Transnet spokesperson Ayanda Patela, stones were thrown at the train during a shunting process, shattering windows on one of the coaches.

"We can confirm that there were no injuries to passengers or train crew," Patela said.

The world-renowned five-star tourist attraction was immediately attended to, with staff ensuring passengers' safety and making arrangements to proceed with the journey. The Train Management team swiftly reassured travellers and organised the replacement of damaged windows before departure.

Patela noted that Transnet coordinates safety efforts with Transnet Security and the South African Police Service, particularly in identified hot-spot areas. "This area had not previously been classified as a hotspot for The Blue Train. We also conduct ongoing safety awareness campaigns in schools and communities to educate the public about the dangers and consequences of such actions," she said.

"The Blue Train maintains high safety standards and treats such incidents with the utmost seriousness. We remain committed to ensuring passenger safety and comfort while delivering a world-class experience," Patela added.

Spurious Probe into Mokgosi Continues



North West Legislature established an Ad hoc committee to investigate North West Premier Lazarus Mokgosi. Picture: Supplied

By: Matshidiso Selebeleng

The North West Legislature Ad Hoc committee probe into allegations of improper conduct levelled against Premier Lazarus Mokgosi will continue beyond the 27 November 2025 deadline, with a pending extension request by the committee set to be submitted.

Established by the North West Legislature to investigate Naledi Local Municipality Mayor John Groep's allegations against the premier, the committee's extension request comes because of the emergence of more witnesses that are expected to give testimony in front of the committee.

Committee spokesperson, Vuyisile Ngesi, tells Journal News that there are additional witnesses that were not initially expected to appear in front of the committee, but were later identified and drawn into the proceeding through recent testimonies from the four witnesses that have already appeared before the committee.

"According to the terms of reference of the Ad hoc committee - in line with the standing rule 187 of the legislature, not just the provincial legislature, the Ad Hoc committee is empowered to summon witnesses for testimony.

"The evidence leaders interacted with identified witnesses, and the witnesses that were able to deposit their testimony were the ones that were identified as the complainants - which is Groep and other identified and implicated parties," he said.

Groep's allegations against Mokgosi broke ground during the oversight visit of Parliament's Joint Portfolio Committees to the various municipalities in the province. He alleged that Mokgosi had instructed a former employee of the municipality to alter a report regarding the appointment of Modisenyane Segapo as their Municipal Manager.

On Monday, 24 November 2025, Groep faced thorough interrogation by the committee and made provision of evidence that supported his allegations. He further pointed out that some documents even had vivid signs of having been tampered with.

"Mr Segapo did not have the required qualification, but from the letter we received from the MEC con-

firmed that his qualifications, the municipal finance development program, and the compliance qualifications are consistent with annexure B to the regulations, five years' experience at a senior management level, more than five years' experience senior management experience, Mr Segapo is compliant," he told the committee.

Groep added that the letter submitted to the office of former Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs MEC, Nono Maloyi, is riddled with inconsistencies and was created to deliberately cast doubt on the process that was followed.

On the contrary, Thabo Appolus, the fourth witness who appeared in front of the committee yesterday, rebutted Groep's allegation further dismissing his allegations as gossip.

"The committee is here to investigate men's gossip (sic). I had thought that it was women who were often accused of gossip, but I was wrong ... men gossip too, and so does Groep.

He added: "He involves himself in other men's business and reveals them with confidence as though it were his own articulation, and as though he was present. That is why he came here as a witness."

Appolus further reminded the committee that the chairperson, Nathan Oliphant, asked Groep if his evidence was hearsay, to which Groep dubiously replied with an emphatic 'yes'.

Despite the allegations Mokgosi maintained his focus on actively pushing the service delivery programme around the province called Thunsa Lerole. The programme is aimed at ensuring that the communities receive all services due to them from the provincial government.

One of the areas that was targeted was the Tswaing Local Municipality, which forms part of the Ngaka Modiri Molema District.

Tswaing, which continues to face serious service delivery challenges, was identified as one of 10 local municipalities that were prioritised for the more intense fifth phase of this accelerated service delivery programme.

Part of the ongoing endeavour to improve the state of local road infrastructure, the provincial government embarked on pothole patching from Delareyville to Ototsdal, and blading was conducted in some of the few identified internal roads across the local municipality.



The Sentinel Primary School learners who will be participating in the World Robotics Olympiad. Picture: Supplied

Qwaqwa Learners To Compete At World Robotics Olympiads In Singapore

By: Matshidiso Selebeleng

Six learners from Sentinel Primary School in Qwaqwa will represent their school, province, and country at the upcoming World Robotics Olympiad taking place in Singapore from 26 to 28 November in the category of Future Innovators.

They earned this opportunity after winning the national championships in Pretoria.

Two of the participants, Mosa Motsoeneng (12) and Molokeng Makgohlo, finished third at the Eskom International Science Fair competition that took place at Emperors Palace in September this year.

Motsoeneng, who hails from Chris Hani Park in Qwaqwa, expressed her gratitude for the opportunity she was given to represent South Africa at the prestigious event.

She says she aims to make her country and, most importantly, her parents proud.

"I am happy and proud to be representing our country at the World Robotics Olympiad, and hopefully, we will bring home medals.

"My parents are happy with our achievements, and I hope to make them even more proud when I arrive in Singapore, said the Grade 7 learner. Makgohlo, who dreams of becoming a robotics engineer, also shared her excitement.

"I am looking forward to the competition, and I hope we perform well. This is a great opportunity for us, and I am very happy to be part of such a significant event," she said.

Their teacher, Letlaka Mphuti, who teaches Coding and Robotics, expressed the excitement and pride he has in students.

He said he knows how hard they have been in this journey together since the beginning.

"Winning the national championships in Pretoria and qualifying for the World Robotics Olympiad is an incredible achievement. "We will compete against learners from many countries, and it is truly an honor to teach such a dedicated group of young girls," Mphuti said.

Free State Premier MaQueen Letsosa-Mathae also expressed her gratitude towards the learners, saying that they have brought pride to the Free State Provincial.

Letsosa-Mathae, congratulated the learners and wished them success in the competition.

"The Free State province has made education fashionable. "While we have excelled in matric results over the past several years, we have also prioritised education at primary school level, as it lays a solid foundation.

"As the Free State Provincial Government, we are immensely proud of these young girls and wish them the best," Letsosa-Mathae said.

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Mokgosi Accelerates Service Delivery in Rural North West

New water systems, housing units and high-mast lights form part of the province's coordinated service delivery push

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

The Thunsa Lerole Phase 5 Accelerated Service Delivery Programme was rolled out on Friday, 21 November 2025, in the Kagisano Molopo Local Municipality, as part of the province-wide service delivery drive championed by North West Premier Lazarus Mokgosi.

The initiative brings together provincial departments, state-owned entities, and local and district municipalities to address service delivery backlogs through a coordinated, integrated approach.

Premier Mokgosi was joined by MECs, the District Executive Mayor, and the Kagisano Molopo Local Municipality Mayor for the official handover of the Rural Water Supply Project in Matlabatlabla village, where residents have long been without a reliable source of clean and safe water.

As part of efforts to stabilise the North West's water supply systems, the leadership also conducted oversight visits to several other water infrastructure projects nearing completion, including the Bona Bona, Tlapeng, and Mabone Rural Water Supply Projects. Once fully operational, these projects are ex-



Premier Lazarus Mokgosi during a municipal service delivery drive. Picture: Supplied

pected to provide an uninterrupted water supply to households, businesses, and public facilities.

"As a member of the community, we are relieved that the Premier is hearing all our cries and concerns," one resident said.

The programme also marked progress in addressing stalled housing developments. Five houses were

handed over in Tlapeng village, part of a larger batch of 73 units from a previously blocked housing project.

"We are aware of the complaints coming in - some houses are only at foundation level, others at window or roof level. We cannot abandon old projects and start new ones. We must correct what is

incomplete, unblock these projects, and fix supporting infrastructure like water, sanitation, and roads," Premier Mokgosi said.

In addition, three Solar High Mast Lights were officially handed over at Tsoege Village - part of 50 installed across the broader Kagisano Molopo area, including Ganyesa, Austrey, Moswana, Setabeng, Makabole, Bona Bona, and Morekweng villages.

Schools and health facilities were also visited to assess whether medical and educational needs are being adequately met.

Community engagements were held, food parcels were distributed to the elderly, and ten households received agricultural support packages. Local SMMEs received on-site assistance from the Centralised Supplier Database team, which helped entrepreneurs with business registrations and updates to their information.

However, not all community sentiments were positive. "We are waiting in Pitsedisulejang. We have said it - your officials are useless, that's why they even give out wrong times for feedback sessions. In fact, they will cost the ANC serious votes come next year's municipal elections," Teboggo Dithale wrote on Facebook.

The Thunsa Lerole Accelerated Service Delivery Programme is the fifth instalment of the initiative and is being viewed as a potential model for a broader province-wide rollout.

Government estimates suggest it will benefit more than a thousand residents in Kagisano Molopo and may cut average service wait times by up to 60%.

Borwa Clinic Launch Brings Hope, Jobs and Better Healthcare

With six consultation rooms, a pharmacy and modern facilities, the newly opened Borwa Clinic signals a fresh chapter of dignity and accessible healthcare for Tweespruit residents



FS Premier Maqueen Letsoha-Mathae unveiling the plaque of the new Borwa Clinic with Health MEC Mahlatse Monyatso. Picture: Thabo Ketele

By: Abigail Visagie

Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae has officially opened the long-awaited Borwa Clinic in Tweespruit, marking what she described as a national milestone for the community.

The event was attended by Deputy Minister of Health Dr Joe Phaahla, Health MEC Mahlatse Monyatso, and Mantsopa Local Municipality Mayor Mamsie Tsoene.

Mathae said the opening represents “a chapter of dignity, care and hope” for the people of Tweespruit. “We are here to fulfil a promise. When the 7th Administration took office last year, my colleague MEC Mahlatse stood before the Legislature and presented a vision—one anchored in our mandate to build a resilient, equitable and quality healthcare system that leaves no one behind,” said Mathae.

She added that the 2024 budget speech made it clear that universal, premium healthcare must extend to all communities, including small towns like Tweespruit.

“As a child of Tweespruit, it brings me great joy to see our community finally blessed with such a beautiful clinic. I am immensely proud of this historic moment,” she said.

24-hour services on the horizon

Mathae announced that efforts are underway to convert the new facility into a 24-hour clinic, noting that Tweespruit experiences heavy traffic during peak periods such as the festive season.

“Tweespruit forms part of the R709, connecting travellers to the Eastern Cape. We are also within the N8 junction, which increases traffic and accident rates. It would be advisable to have a 24-hour clinic—and you know when we speak of something, we come with action,” she said.

Job creation

The Premier confirmed that construction of the clinic created over 492 local job opportunities, including 247 for young people. She acknowledged community concerns about current staff shortages and recommended that recruitment prioritise Tweespruit residents.

“The filling of critical posts, investment in our nursing colleges and the Free State College of Emergency Care, and the aggressive push toward digital health—these are the building blocks of a system we can all be proud of,” Mathae said.

Emergency Medical Services praised

Mathae commended the province’s Emergency Med-

ical Services (EMS) for their swift response to the recent N8 IBL accident that claimed 11 lives.

“On behalf of the Free State provincial government, I express my gratitude to the EMS staff, Botshabelo and Pelonomi Tertiary Hospital for their unwavering support and assistance,” she said.

Mayor’s remarks

Mantsopa Mayor Mamsie Tsoene expressed joy that the long-promised clinic was delivered during her term. She added that the opening also symbolises broader progress for Tweespruit, which recently regained access to water after prolonged challenges.

The Borwa Clinic features six consultation rooms, a pharmacy, ablation facilities, a children’s playroom, nappy-changing room, water tanks, e-lockers, a security office and a storage facility.

In closing, Mathae said:

“Let the story of the Borwa Clinic be the story of the new Free State: a province that builds, that cares, and that forges ahead with determination.

“Let us move forward together—with compassion, innovation and an unwavering belief in a healthier, stronger future for all who call this beautiful province home.”



Members of the community at the opening of the Borwa Clinic in Tweespruit. Picture: Thabo Ketele



Kidney Health Wellness Day event attendees at the Eagle Christian Church in Bloemfontein. Picture: Supplied

Kidney Wellness Day Draws Hundreds in Bloemfontein

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

The Eagle Christian Church in Bloemfontein, was a vibrant hub of health education and community spirit on Saturday, 22 November 2025, as Kidney Health Talks with Onthatile Wesi hosted its annual Kidney Health Wellness Day. The event, dedicated to promoting early detection and prevention of kidney disease, drew an impressive crowd of between 200 and 250 residents for free health screenings, expert talks, and family-friendly activities.

The Kidney Health Wellness Day is a community-driven initiative designed to raise awareness about kidney health, early detection, and overall wellness. It aims to educate, empower, and inspire people to prioritise their health, recognise early signs of kidney failure, and adopt a lifestyle of hope and prevention. This year’s lively theme, “Life Beyond Diagnosis,” encouraged participants to embrace the message that a diagnosis does not define their future — wellness, joy, and purpose remain possible.

The event is deeply rooted in the journey of kidney-failure survivor Onthatile Wesi, who is living with Stage 5 kidney failure and continues to advocate for accessible kidney health education. Diagnosed in 2021 and having started dialysis in 2022, Wesi experienced first-hand the physical, emotional, and lifestyle challenges that come with the condition. Her journey revealed a crucial gap in community awareness — particularly when early detection can save lives.

With many South Africans living with kidney failure and limited public awareness campaigns available, Wesi has made it her mission to ensure that communities receive the education they need.

According to the International Society of Nephrology, kidney disease is a major global public health concern. Both acute kidney injury (AKI) and chronic kidney disease (CKD) are associated with high healthcare costs, reduced quality of life, and serious health complications. In South

Africa, the prevalence of treated kidney failure stood at 169 cases per million population — lower than the global average but still significant.

Participants at the wellness day took part in a wide range of activities, including a 5km Fun Walk & Fun Run, free health screenings (blood pressure, glucose, BMI, kidney-risk checks), a Zumba and aerobics session, and an informative health talk featuring Prof.

Bisiwe (Nephrologist), Sr. Sebina (Dialysis Nurse), and Mr. Phoshoane (Transplant Coordinator).

The event was widely celebrated as a success. One attendee shared:

“The event was very enjoyable and very educational. I am thankful to the different speakers for being honest about things we often shy away from. I’m also grateful for the testing stations — it was beautiful seeing both young and old participating and showing concern for their health and wellbeing.”

The initiative was supported by several key stakeholders, including Busamed Hospital, the Department of Health, Pick n Pay, CUT FM, the Organ Donation Foundation, Millicent Motingoe Clinic, Netcare 911, the South African National Blood Service, Amanzi and Vaalwater, T-Fitness, AD.Fitness, Veronica Planning, Sggede Visuals, MyCityBFn, local health professionals, and dedicated volunteers.

Reflecting on the event, Wesi said:

“This event was a beautiful reminder of why I started Kidney Health Talks. I hope to continue creating spaces where people can learn, feel supported, and choose their health with confidence. Next year, we’re aiming for even greater impact — more screenings, more movement activities, stronger partnerships, and a bigger community. This is just the beginning.”

As the day concluded, attendees left not only with informational pamphlets and refreshments, but with a renewed commitment to caring for their kidneys — a mission that continues to filter health and hope straight into the heart of the community.

Workers Blow Whistle on FSGLTA



Members of NEHAWU protesting against unlawful practices at FSGLTA. Picture: Baagedi Sethlora

By: Abigail Visagie

Employees of the Free State Gambling, Liquor and Tourism Authority (FSGLTA) this week down tools in protest against what they describe as deepening mismanagement within the entity.

The striking workers, who are members of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers’ Union (NEHAWU), allege widespread nepotism, claiming senior managers are hiring family members and friends as external consultants and inflating budgets intended to compensate those consultants.

The FSGLTA confirmed it had been notified of NEHAWU’s intention to embark on a seven-day protected strike, following the CCMA’s issuance of a certificate of non-conciliation on 14 October 2025. The entity has urged employees, stakeholders, and the public to report any allegations of corruption to relevant law-enforcement agencies for proper investigation.

NEHAWU Provincial Secretary, Khauhelo Mqibisa, said a long-standing dispute over the non-implementation of salary increments for two consecutive years has fuelled worker frustration.

“There is no way that we can survive for two consecutive years without an increment. The price of petrol and food keeps increasing, while employees’ salaries remain stagnant,” said M-

qibisa.

Mqibisa further alleged that the FSGLTA is engaging in nepotism through the appointment of relatives and associates as consultants, and accused senior management of inflating consultant-related budgets. He also accused the authority’s board of running a liquor-licence fraud scheme where licences are allegedly sold to the highest bidder.

FSGLTA spokesperson Tshediso Lerumo dismissed the allegations, stating the entity is fully cooperating with law-enforcement agencies on all ongoing investigations.

Mqibisa additionally claimed that wasteful expenditure amounting to R186 million and R21 million has taken place within the authority.

In response, Lerumo noted that the FSGLTA had been audited by the Office of the Auditor-General for the 2024/25 financial year between March and July 2025, and that its Annual Report—detailing service delivery, compliance, and financial performance—had been tabled at the Provincial Legislature and is publicly accessible.

Acting CEO Obakeng Seseane assured the public that services remain uninterrupted and said the authority remains committed to addressing employee concerns through constructive engagement.

“We call for calm and cooperation from all parties as we work towards a fair and sustainable resolution,” said Seseane.

Grounding Development: Community Voices Take the Lead in FS Gathering



HOD for Social Development Nelisiwe Ntombela at the community development conference in Qwaqwa. Picture: Supplied

By: Refilwe Mochoari

“Grounding the Future: Community Voices and Practice Pathways for Inclusive Development”, was the theme at the community development conference that took place last week at the Golden Gate in Qwaqwa.

The theme, chosen to highlight the importance of community voices, ethical practice, and professionalisation in the sector.

According to a press statement issued by the Free State Department of Social Development, the gathering served as a strategic lead-up to the National Community Development Conference set to take place in 2026.

Jointly organised by the University of the Free State, University of Johannesburg, University of KwaZulu-Natal, and the University of the Western Cape, attendees included the Head of the Free State Department of Social Development Nelisiwe Ntombela, DSD officials, senior managers, leaders from non-profit organisations university officials, students, and representatives from other provincial departments, including the department of co-operative governance and traditional affairs.

In her keynote address during the event, Ntombela said, “This theme captures the essence of what genuine development should be — rooted in people, driven by local knowledge, and shaped by inclusive participation.

“I must also applaud the organisers of this event and thank them for choosing the Free State.

“It could not have been a better choice. I am aware that the UFS is the first institution to offer a four-year

Bachelor of Community Development Degree. It’s no coincidence that you chose the Free State. Most importantly, being among the people who share a passion for building strong and vibrant communities in South Africa,” she said.

Ntombela also highlighted the department’s efforts in professionalising community development, and said, “We are meeting at a time when Community Development is embarking on the Professionalisation Drive.

“The Department of Social Development has developed a National Framework for Strengthening Community Development, and the Professional Board for Community Development will soon be helping to formalise the profession — setting ethical standards, accrediting qualifications, and giving community development practitioners the recognition they deserve.

“Across our universities, things are moving too. Institutions such as the University of the Free State, UKZN, UJ, and UWC, among others, now offer qualifications in community development, ranging from undergraduate to postgraduate levels.

“That means a new generation of practitioners is emerging — people who combine solid academic training with a real understanding of how communities work.

“This conference, therefore, is a testament to how we seriously take community development and recognise it as a profession, an academic discipline, and a driver of social change in its own right, she said.

She shared her gratitude that the National Department and all provincial departments are supporting

CDPs with bursaries to upgrade their qualifications and providing opportunities for new graduates in community development as well.

She highlighted the department’s efforts in the Free State, stating that earlier during the year, the department promoted ten employees who attained a Bachelor of Community Development degree to become Community Development Practitioners.

“In November 2025, we have just increased the workforce by appointing 71 Assistant Community Development Practitioners (ACDPs).

“Fifteen of our staff were assisted with financial assistance to acquire a Post-graduate Diploma in Community Development. I am told that they will be graduating next month, she said.

Ntombela also mentioned the “Molo Makhelwane” initiative and said,

“On Molo Makhelwane, MEC Mathabo Hlalele, during November 2024, right here in Thabo Mofutsanyana, launched the Molo Makhelwane Household Profiling Intensification Campaign, which is championed by the Community Development team in the Province.

“Through this initiative, we want to profile at least 2000 households in all 319 wards in the province.”

In conclusion, Ntombela stated,

“As we gather practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and community leaders, our shared task is to bridge theory and practice.

“We must move from good intentions to tangible pathways that ensure no one is left behind, said Ntombela.

NW Municipalities Under Fire for Violating Human Rights



SAHRC report reveals that North West municipalities are in violation of human rights. PHOTO: SAHRC

By: Matshidiso Selebeleng

Fourteen North West municipalities are under intense scrutiny for violating the human rights of residents, the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) revealed last week.

According to the Commission’s report, 14 of the province’s 19 municipalities have failed to deliver essential services, citing systemic failures in water supply, electricity provision, sanitation, refuse collection, and road maintenance—failures that collectively infringe on residents’ basic constitutional rights.

The municipalities implicated include the City of Matlosana, JB Marks Local Municipality, Maquass Hills Local Municipality, Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompoti District Municipality, Lekwa-Teemane Local Municipality, Kagisano Molopo Local Municipality, Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality, Mahikeng Local Municipality, Ditsobotla Local Municipality, Kgetlengrivier Local Municipality, Madibeng Local Municipality, Moretele Local Municipality, Moses Kotane Local Municipality, and Rustenburg Local Municipality.

These findings follow a series of complaints lodged by individuals, civic organisations, and political parties, all raising concerns about deteriorating service delivery across the province. The SAHRC says the pattern of failures reflects deep systemic issues within local governance, requiring a comprehensive response that addresses political, administrative, and social shortcomings.

“The complaints revealed deep and recurring challenges in the delivery of essential services, particularly water and sanitation, sewer management, waste collection, road maintenance, electricity supply, and stormwater infrastructure,” the report states. “These failures have directly violated residents’ rights to dignity, access to sufficient water, sanitation, housing, movement,

and an environment not harmful to health and well-being. They also undermine related rights such as access to basic education and personal security.” Political analyst Professor Sethulego Matebesi from the University of the Free State says political parties leading these municipalities now face significant accountability pressure, as the revelations erode public trust in their capacity to govern and uphold constitutional obligations. He adds that the crisis has fuelled instability within coalition-run councils and warns that continued deterioration could worsen living conditions, particularly for vulnerable communities.

“The erosion of democracy becomes the order of the day as citizens lose faith in local government, weakening democratic participation and accountability,” said Matebesi. “South Africa already has a high prevalence of social protests. Expected economic decline and governance failures can lead to additional protests, violence, and instability.” Matebesi described the SAHRC’s findings as a wake-up call for all stakeholders to prioritise human rights and restore effective governance. The report stresses the need for stronger oversight, improved accountability mechanisms, greater capacity within municipalities, and collaborative efforts to address deepening socio-economic challenges.

In response, the SAHRC has instructed all implicated municipalities to deploy operational teams to resolve sewage spillages within 24 hours of reporting and to submit 30-day progress reports on remedial actions taken.

Municipalities must also develop and implement costed, time-bound action plans within 90 days to permanently address service delivery failures and repair environmental damage caused by sewage leaks, waste accumulation, and illegal dumping—steps the Commission says are essential to restoring the dignity of residents.

Would you allow your child to attend a “pens down” party? Parents weigh in



As the matric examinations approach their conclusion, students prepares for pens down parties. Picture: Supplied

By: Tshepiso Mokhema

While the end of the 2025 academic year may come as a relief to learners — especially matric learners who are completing their final year exams — some parents and caregivers are faced with the anxiety of whether or not to allow their children to attend the so-called celebratory “pens down parties.”

“Pens down parties,” as they are popularly known, are celebratory gatherings that mark the end of writing final year exams. The events are usually hosted at the end of the academic year. Various places of entertainment, such as clubs or taverns, host “pens down” events and attract scores of young children, welcoming them into their establishments to celebrate the completion of writing exams. In some instances, children that attend these events are too young to be at these establishments and they consume alcohol while underage.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) is currently running a #NoPensDown campaign which aims to discourage learners from attending unsupervised “pens down” parties that may lead to danger. The campaign is appealing to learners/matriculants to say no to the peer pressure and have pride in themselves; to parents and caregivers to continue looking after their children beyond the exam period; to schools to be alert about planned “pens down” parties and to the community at large to be vigilant and protect young children.

Parents gave their views on whether they would allow their children to attend these parties or not. One of

them, Pontsho Madumo, whose daughter is in matric, says “pens down” celebrations are fine if they are well intended.

“I believe in pens down celebrations that are arranged with good intentions and not just an excuse to drink and be reckless. I am taking the girls away for a “pens down” celebration,” said Madumo.

Lizzy Dlamini, whose daughter is also in matric, says she feels pity for parents who are raising children in matric. She says these kids are giving them a really tough time.

“They now tell us that they are 18 years old and can go anywhere. We warn them about the dangers of attending these parties and that we are worried they could end up dead on the streets if they drink alcohol uncontrollably. But, when you show them the dangers and discourage them from going or decline, they tell you that they will attend in groups with their male cousins and male friends and that there’s nothing to worry about. They force matters and simply don’t listen. They want to be at these events,” Dlamini said.

“I once declined when mine asked me to go to a school party,” Bathabile Nkabinde says. This incident was before her daughter attended matric.

“When I followed up with the owner of the venue, she warned me that it’s only school kids who will attend and that they’ve paid and hired the hall by themselves. I still declined but then I felt bad and made it up to her by taking her out on the same day,” Nkabinde said.

She says she would never allow her child to attend a

“pens down” party unless there is adult supervision.

“I would only allow it if there is someone I can rely on or call if I need to know their whereabouts. I speak to her about such parties and what I think, but she does not like my decisions. Oh well, she has no choice because she is still under my care,” Nkabinde said.

From a psychological point of view, it seems these children may believe that they have earned the right to attend these parties.

Roshni Parbhoo-Seetha from the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (SADAG), says she understands why learners are drawn to these parties.

“After months of pressure, anxiety and studying late into the night, the fear of failing and the emotional roller coaster of the exams, they just feel like they want to breathe. They want to feel free and celebrate with their friends to mark the end of a long and stressful journey. Their desires make sense,” Parbhoo-Seetha.

She says unfortunately, the mental health benefit is very temporary and that personally, she does not believe that parents should allow their children to attend because the environment they find themselves in, is unsafe.

“As parents, saying no isn’t always a punishment, but sometimes it’s protection. There are safer, more meaningful ways to celebrate. The risks are too high and no celebration is worth a child’s safety. We love our young people, we see their stress, we see their hard work and we see their resilience and exhaustion. But, we want them to end the year with joy and not trauma,” she said.

FS Open For Business - Premier Mathae



Premier Maqueen Letsoha-Mathae at the Free State Public Property Summit. Picture: OTP

Government Plays Its Hand At the Free State Public Property Investment Summit

The Free State Provincial Government has taken a decisive step to unlock economic opportunities by showcasing more than sixteen (16) prime land properties earmarked for public-private partnerships. This formed the core of the first-ever Free State Public Property Investment Summit, held on Thursday, 27 November 2025, at PACOFS in Bloemfontein.

The Property Summit represents the province’s commitment to fostering collaborative governance, strengthening partnerships, and, crucially, stimulating economic growth through sustainable infrastructure development.

To advance prudent financial management and promote inclusive economic growth and prosperity, the Executive Council (EXCO) resolved to repurpose dormant state property assets to drive development and attract investment. This strategic move will allow government to shed the financial burden of maintaining underutilised and abandoned properties, which place a significant strain on the public purse. It will also help curb criminal activity commonly associated with neglected buildings.

“We’re committed to strengthening partnerships with the private sector. We call on the sector to join hands with us. Bring your expertise and capital to leverage the public property assets

available. Nonetheless, we must take cognisance that investment without transformation is not development. Therefore, transformation cannot be an afterthought; it must be embedded in our thinking and be the foundation as we build together,” said MEC Dibolelo Mance.

Delivering the keynote address, Premier Letsoha-Mathae emphasized the central role of partnerships in development and inclusive economic growth:

“The solution to realise our key priorities lies in the power of partnerships. Every empty building, every vacant piece of land represents a missed opportunity—for a business to start, for a student to find accommodation, for a factory to create jobs, and for a community to thrive. The construction, refurbishment, and eventual operation of these properties will create thousands of jobs for our people.

This is direct action to sustain the positive momentum in our unemployment figures. As we build, we will be creating opportunities for our SMMEs, artisans, and labourers.

She concluded: “Through innovative models such as Public-Private Partnerships, Build-Operate-Transfer, and Refurbish-Operate-Transfer, we are inviting you to co-create value. We bring the asset and the mandate for development; you bring the capital, the expertise, and the innovation.” OTP

'Maybe FNB Should Be Charged,' says Matlala on R500k Bribe to Cele



Vusumuzi 'Cat' Matlala Implicates FNB and Former Police Minister Cele in Bribery Scandal. Picture: IOL

In a damning testimony before the Ad Hoc Committee investigating systemic corruption in South Africa's law enforcement agencies, alleged murder suspect Vusumuzi 'Cat' Matlala made explosive claims implicating not only senior politicians but also financial institutions. Matlala told the committee that First National Bank (FNB) must be held accountable and charged for money laundering after allowing his sister to withdraw R300,000 - funds that were allegedly used to bribe former Police Minister Bheki Cele.

The Ad Hoc Committee was established in October following incendiary accusations from Lieutenant General Mkhwanazi, who charged that senior police officials

and politicians deliberately sabotaged investigations to protect drug cartels implicated in politically motivated killings, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal.

On July 6, 2024, Mkhwanazi accused suspended Police Minister Senzo Mchunu of intentionally disbanding the Political Killings Task Team (PKTT) at the end of 2024 to shield Matlala and other politically connected criminals from prosecution.

Pressed by ANC MP Thokozile Sokhanyile whether this amounted to money laundering, given the large cash sum involved, Matlala retorted sharply.

"If it is money laundering, then why did FNB allow us to withdraw the money? Maybe they should also be

charged for allowing us to do that."

"I sent my sister to withdraw the money on my behalf, then I went to the bank to pick it up from my sister and walked back with the money in a Woolworths bag to my penthouse," Matlala recounted during Thursday's hearing.

His testimony centers on allegations that Cele demanded a R1-million bribe, of which Matlala admitted paying only R500,000 in two cash payments of R300,000 and R200,000 concealed in Woolworths bags.

On Wednesday, Matlala testified about how former police minister Bheki Cele intervened to stop a series of aggressive raids and harassment by the South African Police Service (SAPS) targeting him in late 2024 through raids on his Waterkloof Ridge residence in December 2024. He stated that masked officers reportedly stormed his home in the early hours of December 12, ordering his family - including four of his children - to lie on the floor.

This contradicts Cele's earlier denials of any involvement or connection to Matlala.

Matlala, who has been detained at Kgosi Mampuru Correctional Centre since his arrest in April, faces a litany of serious charges, including conspiracy to commit murder and attempts to capture high-ranking police officials.

His testimony sheds light on possible collusion between political heavyweights and criminal syndicates.

Adding further weight to the allegations, Matlala disclosed that Cele frequently visited and stayed at his Menlyn penthouse for extended periods. This intimate association raises questions about the depth of their relationship.

Matlala's testimony is a crucial piece in this growing corruption puzzle, potentially exposing the complicity of top officials in shielding criminal enterprises.

As the Ad Hoc Committee continues its inquiry, the nation eagerly awaits clarity on the fate of institutions entrusted with upholding law and justice amid the cloud of alleged corruption. IOL

Matric Exams Conclude, Results Set for 13 January 2026



Matric results for the class of 2025 will be released on 13 January 2026. Picture: SABCNews

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has successfully concluded the 2025 National Senior Certificate examinations.

DBE spokesperson Terence Khala says rewrite opportunities for selected subjects are being offered to eligible candidates who missed papers due to valid reasons, with additional sittings scheduled under the Second Chance Matric Programme. Results will be released on 13 January 2026, following marking and moderation over-

seen by Umalusi to ensure fairness and credibility.

DBE's Terrence Khala, "This reflects the Department's commitment to protecting opportunity, ensuring equity and maintaining the academic integrity of the NSC. The Department of Basic Education does also confirm that marking will commence from Monday the 1st of December across all designated centers in South Africa with more than 52 000 markers having been appointed nationally."

NW issues SA's first-ever Certificate of Debt



Auditor-General, Tskakane Maluleke. Picture: Jacaranda FM

By: Abigail Visagie

Various stakeholders have united in applauding Auditor-General (AG) Tskani Maluleke's decision to issue her first Certificate of Debt (CoD) to the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality's manager, Allan Losaba - making him the first public official in South Africa to be held personally liable for financial losses.

Losaba now faces repayment of R4.6 million lost due to irregular expenditure, marking a historic enforcement of powers granted to the AG through the amended Public Audit Act of 2019.

The CoD stems from an inflated tender linked to the municipality's water tanker services during the 2018-2020 drought relief programme. Although the tender was originally set to run from June 2018 to June 2020, it was extended twice - in May and again in August 2020 - each time for three months. An audit later found that the appointed service provider had grossly inflated claims, including travel costs and hours worked while delivering water to

communities.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) have both welcomed the AG's decision, urging Ngaka Modiri Molema Mayor Khumalo Molefe to ensure that Losaba repays the money from his own pocket.

The mayor has reportedly been instructed to provide a follow-up report to the AG by the end of the year.

In a statement, the DA commended the directive for the mayor to formally notify Losaba of the intention to suspend him, with seven days granted for his response.

"We will also formally request that the investigation be expanded to scrutinize the roles of the CFO and other senior officials, as well as the oversight responsibilities of Mayor Khumalo Molefe, to prevent any possible cover-ups. Public resources must be protected, and those who betray the public trust must face the consequences," said Freddy Sonakile, DA spokesperson on the Provincial Public Accounts Committee in North West.

COSATU echoed this sentiment. Parliamentary Coordinator Matthew Parks said the federation strongly supported the Auditing Amendment Act, which empowered the AG to hold politicians and officials accountable for mismanagement of public funds.

"This includes empowering the AG to issue Certificates of Debt for corruption or wasteful expenditure against such parties," Parks said. He urged the AG to ensure that the municipality enforces the CoD and "not simply blue-tick" accountability.

"Similarly, the AG must wield this sjambok across the many other delinquent politicians, municipal and SOE managers who have treated the public's hard-earned taxes as their personal slush funds," he added. When contacted for comment, municipal representative Lethohonolo March said Losaba is currently seeking legal advice.

"Once all necessary processes have been concluded, a formal determination will be communicated in due course," March said.



INVITATION FOR COMMENTS & SUBMISSIONS

DIVISION OF REVENUE AMENDMENT BILL [B28 - 2025]



Hon. M.A. Dukwana
Speaker of the Free State Legislature



Hon. M. D. Khoabane
Chairperson: Portfolio Committee Public Accounts & Finance

The Portfolio Committee on Public Accounts and Finance led by Hon. M. D. Khoabane, invites inputs from members of the public and stakeholders to comment or make written submissions on the public hearing scheduled as follows:

Date	Time	Platform
Friday, 5 December 2025	09h00	Microsoft Teams Virtual Platform

The objective of the Bill:
This Bill seeks to amend the Division of Revenue Act, 2025, in accordance with the Money Bills and Related Matters Act, 2009; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The Free State Legislature and Public Accounts and Finance Portfolio Committee, invites all stakeholders in particular communities, institutions of higher learning, non-profit organisations, civil servants' organisations and interested parties to submit written and/or oral submissions on the aforementioned Bill by no later than **Thursday, 4 December 2025**.

The stakeholders that are interested to present their submissions virtually, can contact Committee Coordinators for further details.

Please submit to:
Ms Jacqui Tsikoe or Mr. Stephen Morometsi
 Committee Coordinators
 Cell: 074 360 0698 or 072 382 3204
 Office: (051) 407 1249 / (051) 407 1176
 E-mail: JacquiT@fsl.gov.za or StephenM@fsl.gov.za



Scan the Code to Access the Bill

For Further enquiries, contact: Mr. Jongi Ndakana, Spokesperson
Free State Legislature, Tel: (051) 407 1100 or Cell: 062 484 5682

www.fsl.gov.za

National Entrepreneurship Month

FOCUS ON SMALL, MEDIUM, AND

AI is creating a new divide: South African entrepreneurs must adapt to survive

As South Africa concludes its Entrepreneurship Month under the thought-provoking theme “Together We Build,” a pressing reality emerges for the nation’s small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs): artificial intelligence (AI) has created an economic chasm, leaving those hesitant to adapt at grave risk of being rendered obsolete.

“AI won’t replace entrepreneurs – but it will expose those who can’t adapt,” warns Petro Magos, a serial entrepreneur and founder of Magos Media and Venter Capital. “We’re past the point of debating whether to use it. The question now is: will you evolve, or will you disappear?”

The new business battlefield

With SMMEs contributing approximately 34% to South Africa’s GDP and employing nearly 60% of the workforce, the urgency for action is undeniable. As Magos puts it, “Every SMME owner I speak to is asking the same question: ‘Was this written by AI?’ That uncertainty tells you everything.”

South African businesses that have embraced AI tools are experiencing transformative productivity gains. However, the alarming reality is that adoption rates remain perilously low among entrepreneurial ventures, threatening the very backbone of job creation and economic growth that the country desperately requires.

Adapt or die: no middle ground

Magos issues a stark ultimatum to entrepreneurs: “The AI cat is out of the bag. You have exactly two choices: ignore it and fall behind, or learn to use it intelligently without sacrificing what makes your business human.” His experience across multiple ventures has provided him with unparalleled insights into real-world AI integration.

At Venter Capital, for instance, an AI-assisted application system rapidly processes founder data, drastically reducing initial screening time and allowing the team to concentrate on critical due diligence and investment decisions. Meanwhile, in Magos Media, AI has taken over mundane tasks like concept generation and data gathering, thus liberating valuable hours that can be better spent on creative pursuits.

“It’s not replacing creativity,” Magos emphasizes, “it’s giving us the headspace to interpret, refine, and create work that actually moves people.” The results—quicker turnaround times, better decision-making, and enhanced human capital—speak for themselves.

Together we build – but build smart

This year’s Entrepreneurship Month theme resonates deeply in an age dominated by AI. Entrepreneurs are not merely constructing businesses; they are crafting the very infrastructure that will support the country’s economic future.

“SMMEs are our innovation engine, our job creation machine,” notes Magos with conviction. “But if we don’t equip entrepreneurs with the tools to compete in an AI-enabled world, we’re building on sand.” He advocates for a measured approach: “Start slow to go fast. Pilot one process. Learn from it. Iterate. The goal isn’t to automate for efficiency’s sake—it’s to build processes that make you better at what you do.”

The real risks – and how to manage them

Magos lays out the harsh realities and potential risks: from data leaks and intellectual property exposure to AI “hallucinations” and complacency within teams. Yet, he identifies the major threat as being cultural. “The biggest risk isn’t technical, it’s cultural,” he asserts. “If your team stops questioning, they stop thinking. If they stop thinking, innovation dies.”

His recommendations are clear: establish robust data policies, restrict uploads of sensitive information, prioritize team training, and maintain human oversight throughout the process.

Pivot or fall behind

As the landscape changes, the message is unequivocal for entrepreneurs: “The entrepreneurs who will win the next decade aren’t the ones who resist AI or worship it,” Magos declares. “They’re the ones who test, learn, adapt, and never stop questioning. AI won’t replace those people. But it will expose everyone else.”

In a world where adaptability is the ultimate entrepreneurial skill, those who strategically embrace AI while preserving their human essence will flourish. Conversely, those who refuse to change risk becoming cautionary tales.

“You can’t hold onto outdated processes forever,” Magos cautions. “That’s not failure to change – that’s choosing extinction. And South Africa’s economy can’t afford that choice from its most vital business sector.”

Call to action

As South African entrepreneurs celebrate their achievements this Entrepreneurship Month 2025, the challenge before them is crystal clear: adopt AI thoughtfully, uphold human judgment, and construct businesses poised for success in an accelerated future. The divide is palpable, the choice immediate. Together, South African entrepreneurs must strive not only for survival but for preeminence in an AI-driven world. - IOL



Qhoane Elliot Makamole at his fruit and vegetable stall. Picture: Baagedi Sethora

Turning Pain into Profit

From rejected job applications to running a busy stall in Heidedal, Makamole proves that resilience can grow into success.

By: Abigail Visagie

Qhoane Elliot Makamole (29) is a street hawker in Bloemfontein – and a sociology graduate from the University of Lesotho who turned hardship into opportunity.

Six years ago, after struggling to find employment in his field in both Lesotho and South Africa, Makamole carved a new path for himself.

He began selling fruits and vegetables behind the Leemarc Centre in Heidedal in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic – and has never looked back.

He says giving up has never been an option and hopes the Mangaung Metro Municipality will assist informal traders like himself to register their businesses.

“I have been struggling to obtain a hawker licence for years now, and at this point, I don’t know what to do.”

“I had high hopes while studying at the University of Lesotho but faced challenges securing employment in my field due to the high unemployment rate.

“So, for me to be able to make an income, I started selling fruits and vegetables.”

“I bought my first stock with less than R1 000, and it is bearing fruit.”

“My vision for the business is to be one of the go-to fruit and vegetable markets in Bloemfontein,” he said.

Makamole says one of the biggest challenges he faces as an unregistered trader is the constant harassment from municipal officials, who he alleges continue to damage their stalls and products.

“Instead of constantly damaging our products and stalls, I wish the municipality could assist us in legalising and registering our businesses, because this is my livelihood.”

Despite the hurdles he faces as an informal entrepreneur, Makamole encourages the youth, graduates, and the unemployed to develop practical skills they can rely on even when job opportunities are scarce. “I urge the youth to rise from the ashes and look within themselves for solutions,” Makamole concluded.

Cooking Up Khutlang’s Journey

Armed with nothing but authentic flavours, Mantwa Khutlang’s life — and the city’s taste of Bokamoso’s

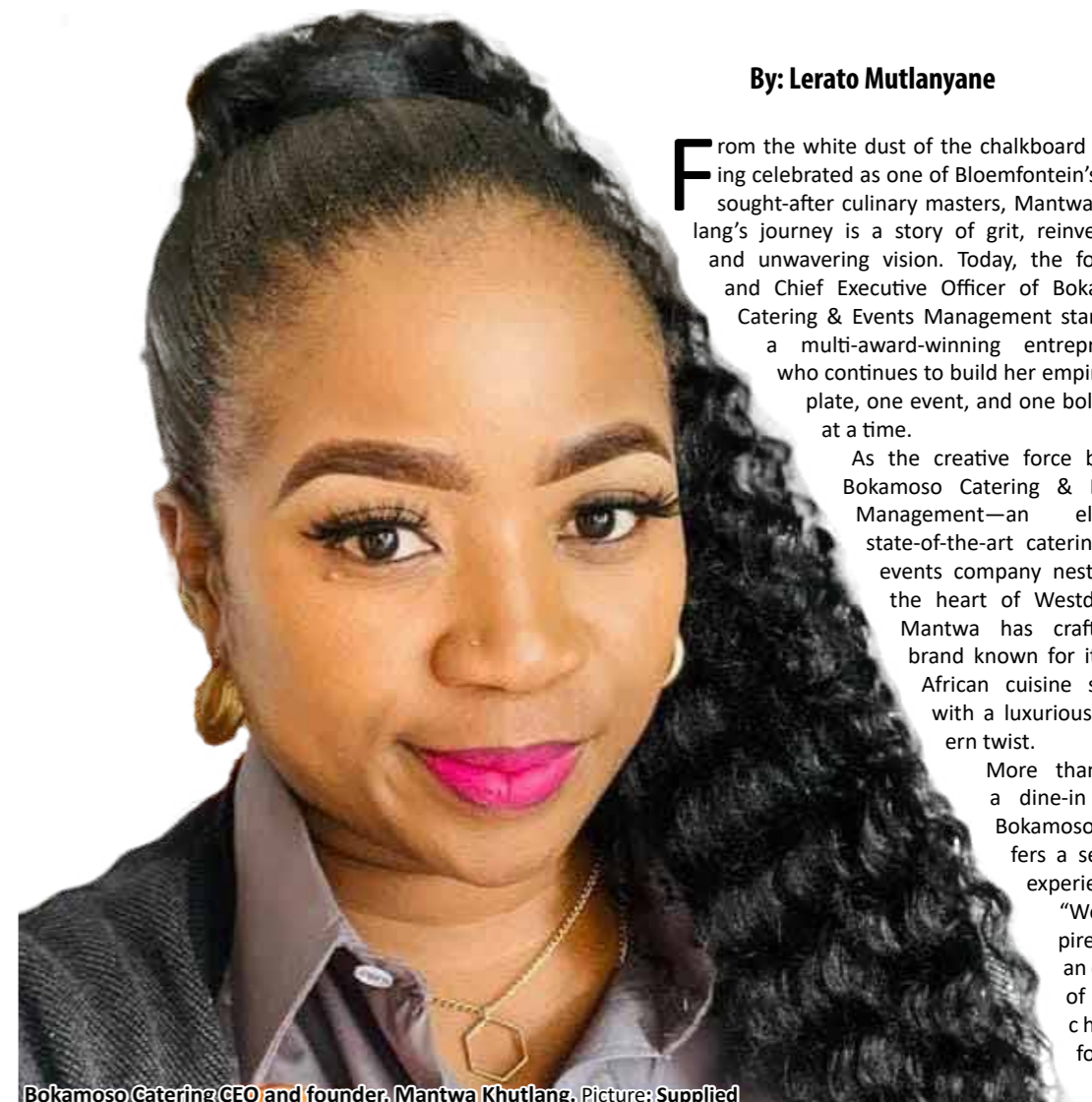
By: Lerato Mutlanyane

From the white dust of the chalkboard to being celebrated as one of Bloemfontein’s most sought-after culinary masters, Mantwa Khutlang’s journey is a story of grit, reinvention, and unwavering vision. Today, the founder and Chief Executive Officer of Bokamoso Catering & Events Management stands as a multi-award-winning entrepreneur who continues to build her empire one plate, one event, and one bold step at a time.

As the creative force behind Bokamoso Catering & Events Management—an elegant, state-of-the-art catering and events company nestled in the heart of Westdene—Mantwa has crafted a brand known for its rich African cuisine served with a luxurious modern twist.

More than just a dine-in stop, Bokamoso offers a sensory experience.

“We aspire to be an eatery of first choice for anyone



Bokamoso Catering/CEO and founder, Mantwa Khutlang. Picture: Supplied

“My hands are my miracle workers” – Strauss

From long shifts at a courier company to creating a global beauty brand, Fezakiah Strauss turned her gifted hands into a thriving business that’s transforming lives in Heidedal and beyond.

By: Abigail Visagie

Fezakiah Strauss, the owner and founder of Mrs Strauss Beauty Parlour, has become a rising sensation in the Heidedal community – leaving many residents asking, “Where does she come from?” Born and bred in Kimberley in the Northern Cape, Strauss manufactures a range of hair-growth and skin-care products, including hair-growth oil, hair-growth butter, shampoo, conditioner, face-wash soap, and skin-repair cream.

She says she always knew she was destined for far more than what her hometown could offer, and decided to relocate to Bloemfontein to pursue her ambitions. She founded her business two years ago and officially registered it in April this year.

Her best-selling Mrs Strauss hair-care range has transformed the lives of many men and women. Strauss says she has helped clients who struggled with dandruff, lupus, eczema, and other conditions affecting healthy hair growth.

Reflecting on her journey, she says that just two years ago she found herself questioning her purpose.

“In January 2023, I envisioned owning a therapeutic hair parlour dedicated to braiding and styling clients’ hair. However,



I was offered employment at a courier company in February 2023. Although I worked strenuous hours, I still found the time and strength to braid one client after work, because I found so much comfort in using my hands while earning a second income,” she said.

Four months later, her braiding business began gaining attention, but she continued working at the courier company. She says the job became an opportunity to acquire business skills and build a client database while remaining employed. “My manager at my previous employment trained and equipped me, and years later, I was inspired to finally take a leap of faith by opening my own salon.”

As a mother of three, Strauss says she faced many challenges balancing work and motherhood, yet she continued braiding hair – even up to Christmas Eve in December 2024. “I would start my day at seven in the morning

because a winner does not quit. I continued doing both jobs until I eventually resigned from the courier company to pursue my ambitions. I started experimenting with hair-care products and eventually discovered the winning recipe – the beloved Hair Growth Mist,” she said.

In April this year, Strauss expanded her product line to five manufactured items and officially registered Mrs Strauss Beauty Parlour.

She says one of the greatest advantages of being her own boss is setting the pace for her work.

“Hair-care products and braiding hair come naturally to me. I can travel and spend quality time with my husband and our children while still making a profit,” she said.

Today, her hair-care line ships products around the world – from Bloemfontein to clients as far away as Dubai.



Beautician, Fezakiah Strauss. Picture: Supplied

D MICRO ENTERPRISES (SMME)

Theme: Together We Build
Growth, Innovation, Courage

an Empire: y to Culinary Fame

With a dream and a love for food, a Khutlang transformed her passion for stekebuds. This is the story of an unstoppable rise.

with an appetite for our scrumptious menu," she says. "Our meals include lamb, beef and chicken stew, mogodu, chicken feet, wings, sheep head, trotters, and more—served with dumpling, pap, and sides."

Targeting consumers who crave authentic African flavours with contemporary flair, Mantwa believes her food reconnects people with their roots while giving them a break from the fast-paced world. "In our meals, they connect with the essence of who they are," she shares.

A mother and a teacher by profession, Mantwa left the classroom to pursue her lifelong passion for culinary arts—one that began with catering weddings and high-profile events. Her family, she says, has been her backbone throughout this transition.

"My family is very helpful in the running of the business, and that makes life easier for me... I don't have to do this alone. The support structure is my strength," she says.

Beyond the kitchen, Mantwa serves as chairperson of Women in Tourism for the Mangaung Region. Her leadership, discipline, business acumen, and dynamic personality have earned her recognition across the province.

Starting with zero capital—armed only with determination and creativity—she has built Bokamoso into a thriving five-figure enterprise.

"Our story is proof that with resilience, hard work, and creativity, nothing in the business world is impossible," she says.

Bokamoso's customer base spans young professionals, corporate clients, government officials, travellers, and families seeking authentic South African flavours. But Mantwa's vision extends beyond catering. She rents out luxury garments, offers curated lunchbox packages, owns a men's grooming studio, and provides massage and retreat services. She is also a skilled hair and nail specialist—an embodiment of multi-dimensional entrepreneurship.

Over the years, Bokamoso Catering & Events has earned widespread acclaim, including being crowned the winner of the 2018 Coca-Cola DStv Food Festival and receiving nominations at prestigious culinary events across the province.

Underpinned by values of teamwork, continuous learning, creativity, innovation, and active community engagement, Mantwa leads with intention and excellence.

Watching Bokamoso grow is witnessing the tangible expression of Khutlang's journey—constructed piece by piece with courage, skill, and an unshakable belief in her dreams.

She is not only reshaping the city's culinary landscape but also inspiring a generation of young women to dream audaciously and build boldly.



Nonceba Bott, owner and founder of Chrino Juice. Picture: Supplied

Juicing for Change: Kathu Entrepreneur Champions Healthy Living

By: Abigail Visagie

In a country where the rising cost of living often makes healthy choices feel out of reach, one Northern Cape entrepreneur is changing the narrative—one bottle at a time.

Chrino Juice, founded in 2016 by Nonceba "Nonny" Bott from the mining town of Kathu, is offering families an accessible, affordable, and nutritious alternative to sugar-laden beverages.

Bott describes her health and wellness juice range as a product "made for everyone to enjoy," including children and elderly people with specific dietary needs.

Packed with natural ingredients to support energy, hydration, and overall wellness, Chrino Juice has quickly become a popular option for those seeking healthier lifestyles without stretching their budget. Made from real fruit and produced with a focus on freshness and quality, the juices are sourced from trusted local suppliers.

"While our juice is not certified 100% organic, we ensure we use high-quality fruits and ingredients," Bott explained.

Chrino Juice's mission is simple: to provide natural, nutritious, and affordable drinks to the communities

it serves. The brand prides itself on transparency and strives to offer products free from unnecessary preservatives, additives, or excessive sugar.

"Our focus is on giving customers honest, healthier alternatives they can trust," Bott said.

The company currently offers nine flavours, includ-



ing favourites like mango, orange, and pomegranate.

Running the business has come with challenges, Bott admits, but the journey has strengthened her resilience, discipline, and patience.

"There have been days the business moved slowly, days when resources were limited, and days when I

had to learn something new very quickly.

But every challenge pushed me to grow," she said.

What inspires her most is the visible impact on the community—parents choosing healthier drinks for their children, customers returning for taste and quality, and the loyalty that continues to grow.

To keep prices low, Chrino Juice offers both juice and water refills, helping customers save money while promoting eco-friendly practices through bottle recycling.

The brand has also introduced diabetic-friendly options.

"We don't just sell juice; we build relationships, listen to our customers, and adapt to their needs. It's about giving our community better choices that are both delicious and good for them," Bott added.

For Bott, building Chrino Juice has been a journey of learning and self-discovery.

"I am proud of the progress we've made, but I'm still hungry for more. I believe in continuous improvement, and we want to expand, open more branches, and introduce new healthy products," she said.

With determination and a product rooted in community wellness, Bott is proving that positive change can start with something as simple—and powerful—as a bottle of juice.

Building a Legacy for Women in Construction

From selling food to fund her first project to leading a thriving construction company, Kutala Tshangela is rewriting the script for women in mining and construction

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

Kutala Tshangela, from Khuma Township just outside Klerksdorp in the North West, is the co-founder of L&L Innovations (Pty) Ltd — and she is on a mission to transform the construction industry while empowering women along the way.

L&L Innovations is a construction company that specialises in supplying goods to the mining sector. Tshangela says the company plays a significant role in the sustainable growth of the supply chain within the mining, industrial, agricultural, and corporate sectors. The business operates across several divisions, including supply and demand, travel and leisure, as well as

security services.

She knows first-hand what it means to be a woman navigating traditionally male-dominated spaces.

"Entering the mining and construction sectors at a young age came with challenges I had not anticipated. As a woman in a male-dominated environment, I often had to prove my capabilities beyond what my male counterparts were expected to do. Earning respect, navigating technical expectations, and finding my voice in labour and operational spaces were some of the earliest obstacles," she says.

"But entering these sectors was tough — and it made me tougher. I had to prove myself time and again, but that is what drives me to create change."

Tshangela attributes her resilience to her background.

"My upbringing in Khuma and the mining community of Buffelsfontein instilled in me courage. Becoming a young mother while still in high school strengthened my discipline and determination. These experiences prepared me to face intimidating environments with confidence."

Through continuous learning, professionalism, and consistency, she built a reputation anchored in competence and integrity.

Her roles at AngloGold Ashanti, as well as her involvement in labour structures and political leadership, taught her to stand firm, speak up, and lead with purpose.

One of her greatest milestones came in 2010, when she co-founded L&L Innovations with nothing but determination and a shared vision.

"We raised funds by selling food in our community, and our first road construction subcontract proved that success is not about starting with resources, but with purpose," she shares.

Tshangela is also the founding chairperson of the Tshangela Foundation, launched in 2024.

The foundation is a community-driven organisation dedicated to improving the lives of vulnerable children, empowering families, and addressing systemic socio-economic challenges across the North West and beyond.

There are already long-term plans in motion to ensure the sustainability of both the business and the foundation.

"The Foundation aims to become a leading force for social relief, youth empowerment, and community

transformation. Our goal is to break cycles of generational poverty, support vulnerable learners, expand mental health interventions, strengthen drug rehabilitation partnerships, and extend outreach to rural and farming communities," said Tshangela.



Businesswoman,
Kutala Tshangela.
Picture: Supplied

Beyond Black Friday: Confronting the Real 'Black Gap' in Retail Leadership

The South African retail sector is celebrated as a bellwether of the economy visible, efficient, and central to everyday life. Yet it remains a mirror of our unfinished transition. The real test is not whether progress exists, but whether that progress is structural, durable, and proportionate to the demands of a 31-year democracy.

Two realities define the sector. Boards across major retailers show some improvement in racial and gender representation. But executive leadership the true centre of operational power remains out of step with South Africa's demographics and development needs. This signals a transformation model built for optics, not for changing how organisations actually function.

The Illusion of Transformation

Retail is stuck in a two-speed reality: boards that look transformed and executives that look unchanged. Across leading retailers, operational power remains overwhelmingly White and male reflecting a system designed to display representation at the top while keeping authority at the core.

Institutions reproduce themselves through routines and incentives. When executive teams remain predominantly White and male, organisations inherit: Narrow recruitment pipelines, Risk frameworks biased toward legacy suppliers and Reward systems that favour tenure over transformation.

This is "diversity at the edges and continuity at the core." It also represents a missed strategic opportunity, the most reliable demand growth lies in Black urban markets, women-led households, and micro-entrepreneurs. Leadership that does not reflect these markets will misallocate capital.

Some of the most influential retail groups still operate executive leadership structures that would be unacceptable in any society serious about transformation.

These companies shape supply chains, pricing, labour practices, and capital flows. When executive power is this concentrated, transformation becomes choreography visible at the surface, stagnant at the centre.

Thirty-one years after 1994, it is unacceptable that South Africa's most consumer-facing sector still excludes the majority from real power. The work ahead is to reverse the transformation gradient, shift accountability to the executive level, and make transformation an operational reality.

Turning Compliance Into Capability

Boards with balanced representation provide a foundation, but the next leap requires operational change:

- Tie executive scorecards to measurable transformation outcomes.

- Make succession planning a quarterly discipline.

- Rebuild pipelines through historically Black institutions and professional bodies.

- Link long-term incentives to executive-level transformation milestones.

Why This Matters

Retail is the public face of the economy. When leadership reflects the nation, inclusion becomes normalised; when it does not, exclusion becomes systemic. In today's low-growth environment, this is not symbolic it is a driver of demand, innovation, and legitimacy.

Transformation must no longer flatten where power concentrates.

The work is to make the executive the sharp point of change. Transformation is not an HR exercise it is industrial policy inside the firm.

Retailers who recognise this will secure social permission, unlock new markets, and outperform.

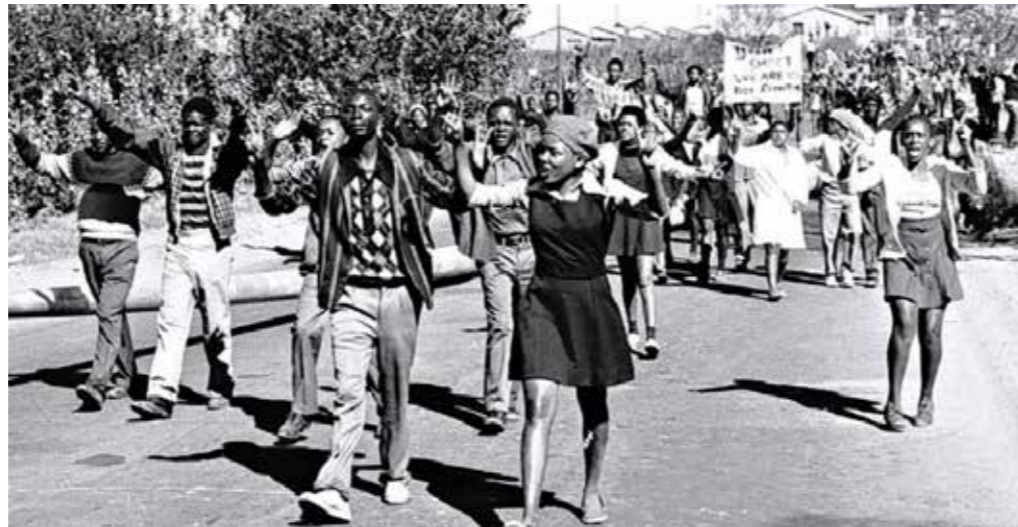
Those who do not will find that the South African market remembers who showed up. **-Article from Office of the Presidency**

Opinion

Dr Nombulelo Shange
Lecturer in the Department of Sociology,
University of the Free State



Is South Africa's youth going down an alt-right pipeline?



Following the championing of the Democratic Party in the US, with the winnings of democratic candidates in Virginia, California and New York, ululation and celebration spread through the social media space. It was not only in the US but also in South Africa's social media space, particularly by left-leaning South Africans. One of my mutuals on Instagram even noted their happiness that "woke is back". This raised a question in my mind whether woke (which refers to the leaning towards more egalitarian and leftist values) is really back. It is also a vital that we review the socio-political landscape of South Africa, given the upcoming municipal elections in 2026.

South Africa's social media has been riddled with tension and online political warfare as a rise in conservative values has crept into South Africa's youth culture. There are many events in recent years that indicate this conservatism, particularly among the "young and online" of our country. The online discussions that have emerged around these events and pages have caused quite a stir on social media with varying opinions. It seems in instances where women's rights, LGBTQIA+ inclusivity, diversity and multiculturalism come into play, conservative values are expressed more frequently than they used to be. A noticeable unfolding example is the Women for Change campaign, where many are changing their profile pictures purple to create awareness around gender-based violence (GBV) in South Africa. Different forms of resistance have been planned around this campaign, including nationwide marches on Friday 21 November 2025. The goal is to declare GBV a national disaster. An alternative campaign has also emerged, mostly led by men, who are changing their profile pictures to green. These individuals feel oppressed by women and society that is calling for justice for rape, abuse and murder victims. These and many other actions raise the questions: are we moving into an age of conservatism? Is the South African youth entering its own alt-right pipeline? How deep into the pipeline are we?

The alt-right pipeline

The alt-right or alternative right refers to a political and social movement active in the US, which is white supremacist in nature. It is a movement that consists mostly of young white nationalists, neo-Nazis and extremist libertarians. They

make use of digital platforms such as websites (8chan, Gamergate, Discord, etc.) and social media such as X and Reddit to spread their message and harass their opponents. The alt-right used to exist on the periphery of American politics, but the age of Trumpism has brought them more to the mainstream. Luke Munn, a media studies scholar, makes an important assertion and states that the individual journey towards alt-right ideology is not one that is instant nor spontaneous. Munn outlines three stages that exist within this alt-right pipeline, namely normalisation, acclimation and dehumanisation.

Normalisation refers to a period in the pipeline in which humour and irony play pivotal roles. Alt-right ideology and conservative values need to be restructured and delivered in the visual lingo of the internet, such as memes, animated GIFs and clever references. This stage of the alt-right pipeline seems to be a true reality in South Africa, as dark humour and anti-intellectual reasoning are rampant in South African online spaces such as X and TikTok. The rhetoric of "it's not that deep", or "it's just a joke, just laugh and continue", accompanied with various offensive and highly discriminatory memes, GIFs and posts, provides a site for the slow-burning spread of alt-right values in South Africa. The use of these repackaged forms of misogyny, queerphobia, racism etc, are justified by the safety net of anti-intellectualist and denialist reasoning.

The next stage is acclimation, a term that highlights how users become continuously conditioned to a series of environments. Acclimation occurs through psychological conditioning rather conscious, logical affirmation. At this stage, oversaturation of content and online environments that provide less extreme forms of alt-right often tend to irritate the baby alt-right or the newly "converted". The individual begins to move further down the pipeline, looking for more extreme alt-right values. This most of the time is initiated by the algorithmic features of social media, that also exist in normalisation. However, in acclimation one moves away from the charismatic and covert allure of memes and GIFs and gravitates towards more outright expressions of discrimination. For example, charismatic podcasters and influencers like MacG and Andrew Tate, whose discriminatory

jokes about women are shared, and great harm is caused.

Dehumanisation is characterised by alt-right ideologies that position certain demographics, particularly those that are not alt-right, as lesser forms of humans. This usually relinquishes others as less deserving of basic human rights. This is quite evident in recent South African online discourse. On top of the notion that queerness is unAfrican, which is a belief held by many South Africans. Ngizwe Mchunu went on an online rampage, calling the queer community various derogatory terms, even referring to them as dogs. Many men on social media stood in agreement with his sentiments. It seems that Mchunu's outrage was triggered by an image that was circulating the country's social media sphere, that consisted of two gay men who were partaking in a traditional wedding ceremony, which to Mchunu's disdain was disrespectful to the Zulu nation. The two gay men's right to matrimony and right to free expression, particularly that of cultural expression, was ignored because they were not seen as human beings. The LGBT community are not the only ones having their humanity questioned. Africans from all over the continent are brutalised and denied basic human rights in South Africa. Xenophobic/ Afrophobic rhetoric has also plagued the country, with the rise of demonstrations of discontent towards foreigners, particularly those that are undocumented. These demonstrations have been aided by the work of organisations such as that of Operation Dudula. Xenophobic rhetoric also tends to view foreigners as humans that are lesser than South African citizens. Basic healthcare, which is a fundamental universal right for all humans, is one that gets threatened in these demonstrations and there have been recent instances of immigrants being chased out of public health institutions by Operation Dudula sympathisers. These actions clearly mark a perspective of immigrants as less human than South Africans. This on top of the many violent displacements of immigrants from vendor stalls and their homes, highlights how lingering alt-right views turn violent.

Make the informed decision

It is important that we are wary of the socio-political choices we make and views we take in before our local government elections in 2026. This is a time for more than just listening to what our favourite influencer says or does not say about elections or any social and political discourse. One must make an informed decision on one's own, not as an extension of one's favourite influencer's opinion. If South African youth is undergoing a shift towards conservative and alt-right ideation, it is best to tackle it and address in its earliest stage which seems to be a prominent stage in our online sphere. Globalisation and a rapidly digitalising world brought these harmful ideologies to our land. We must turn to our rich diverse cultures, histories and experiences to remove the alt-right opinions that threaten our very survival as Africans.

Lubone Lisakhanya Manda is an honours candidate in Sociology at the University of the Free State, a Social Sciences graduate from UFS, social commentator on TikTok (@xhosa.dyan_lisa) and LGBTQIA+ rights activist. Dr Nombulelo Shange is a Sociology lecturer at UFS.

South Africa must leverage their natural resources



Refilwe Mochoari
Editor-in-Chief

Firstly, let me take this opportunity to congratulate President Cyril Ramaphosa on the successful execution of the G20 throughout the year.

The G20 theme this year was Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability.

Hi everyone, my name is Refilwe Mochoari, and anyone who knows me knows that the topic of sustainability is very close to my heart.

Sustainability is a crucial step towards addressing the pressing global challenges we face today.

As a country rich in natural resources, South Africa has a unique opportunity to lead by example and showcase its commitment to sustainable development.

Our country is blessed with an abundance of critical minerals, including gold, platinum, and rare earth elements, which are essential for the production of renewable energy technologies.

The demand for these minerals is expected to increase in the coming years, driven by the global transition to a low-carbon economy.

However, the extraction and processing of these minerals pose significant environmental and social risks if not managed sustainably.

This is where the G20's focus on sustainability comes in, to promote responsible and inclusive growth, ensuring that the benefits of mineral extraction are shared equitably among all stakeholders.

It's heartening to note that countries have pledged fi-



ancial support to help South Africa tap into its mineral wealth, including gold, while ensuring that the environment is protected and local communities benefit from the extraction process.

By leveraging its mineral resources, South Africa can create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and improve the lives of its citizens, while also contributing to the global effort to combat climate change.

G20 theme of sustainability is a call to action for countries like South Africa to leverage their natural resources to promote sustainable development.

The G20 theme of sustainability is a crucial step towards addressing the pressing global challenges we face today.

The theme, "Solidarity, Equality, Sustainability," emphasises the need for collective action to achieve a more equitable and environmentally conscious world.

Sustainability is no longer a buzzword, it's a necessity. The G20's focus on advancing sustainable solutions to tackle high structural deficits, liquidity challenges, and debt relief for developing economies is commendable.

It's essential to prioritise the needs of vulnerable communities and ensure that the transition to a green economy is just and inclusive.

Over the weekend the world leaders who gathered in Johannesburg, have adopted a new Critical Minerals Framework which should allow African countries to fully benefit from their own mineral.

And this is what President Ramaphosa said about African minerals during the meeting.

"We must stop those countries that count their wealth and their assets in terms of the minerals that reside in the African soil like they did in the past when they counted their wealth.

"They used to count their wealth in the number of slaves that they owned that were taken from the African continent.

"Respect and mutual benefit should underpin what we as Africa do as we relate to other countries in the world.

"African countries should as sovereign states be able to also pursue their own independent foreign policy approaches that are not beholden to any other major global power or blocks".

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 Task of Reframing

I've seen plenty of people who endured long seasons of discouragement, even depression, because they didn't know how to reframe failure or heartache. The painful events consumed their thinking and soon eradicated all the joy in their lives. In this negative, discouraging mind-set, even great success gave them no more than momentary relief. They were in a long winter of discontent, but without hope of spring.

When we're in a season of hard times, it's easy to lose perspective. We need to do something that is the opposite of our natural inclination—we want to isolate and hide, but instead we need to find a couple of people who will walk through it with us.

We need people who exhibit three vital characteristics: competence, candor, and commitment. They need to be experienced and skilled in helping people who are struggling.

We don't call Uncle Harold because he's the only one we can think of. We make a short list of people

who have a track record of providing true wisdom. We look for people who will tell us the truth—the positive truth about our strengths and God's love, but also the hard truth of where we've drifted off true north. And we need people who are committed to us even when we're resistant, even when we avoid them, and even when we're so slow to change. These are people who, as one leader described them, always let us in but never let us down.

Many people in this dark season feel overwhelmed by stress. Sometimes, the pressure and loss happened in a flash, but more often, it accrued slowly... so slowly the leader didn't notice until the damage was done. Stress is the perception of helplessness in dealing with serious demands. It doesn't exist in isolation; it's always the product of difficulties with people and events.

The response to those difficulties depends on the leader's sense of adequacy to deal with them. That's

why some leaders become stronger by going through hard times and others falter. Popular culture says the answer is to retreat, escape, and avoid the stress. That may be helpful for a temporary respite, but it won't address the underlying problem. Leaders need to think better so they can act better and then, sooner or later, they'll probably feel better. Losses are a fact of life. As long as we're above ground, we'll suffer heartaches, betrayal, and failure of one kind or another. One of our challenges is to accurately assign responsibility.

Many people feel guilty over things they didn't control and many deny responsibility for wrongs they committed. We can't move forward until we sort these things out, grieve what we couldn't control, forgive those who wronged us, and ask for forgiveness for the wrongs we've committed.

We're all deeply flawed, but we can have a new identity as God's loved, forgiven, and adopted children. As Winston Churchill said, "We are all worms, but I do believe I am a glow worm."

If we look hard enough, we'll realize there is redemptive value in every failure—whoever caused it. If we learn to think rightly about it, we'll have realistic expectations, we'll learn to see stresses through a hopeful lens, and we'll live with more peace and security. This will give us the platform to help those around us reframe the seasons of difficulty they endure. Those we view as heroes today aren't considered great because of unbroken success, but because they overcame crushing failure and adversity.

Bystanders for how long? Ending Violence against Women and Girls

More than just a date, 25 November serves as a stark reminder of the urgent need to end all forms of violence against women (VAW), commemorated globally as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. It is also a call for decisive action to ensure justice for women who have been killed and to hold perpetrators accountable. The United Nations (UN) reports that nearly one in three women worldwide has been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence at least once in their life. Even more worrying is that despite ongoing efforts by civil society organisations and states, VAW is increasingly overshadowed by a global rise in femicide, with one woman or girl being killed every 10 minutes. This alarming trend underscores the urgent need to strengthen our collective efforts, mechanisms and legal frameworks, which remain insufficient to protect women today. **By Davina Murden**

Business

Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	17.16	-0.16%	▼
Rand/Pound	22.70	-0.13%	▼
Rand/Euro	19.88	-0.06%	▼
Platinum	1 611.30	1.49%	▲
Brent Crude	63.22	1.40%	▲
Gold	4 157.19	-0.15%	▼
Etherium	3 017.42	-0.08%	▼
Bitcoin	91 255.4	1.22%	▲

Ramaphosa Slams Trump For Dropping SA From G20



President Cyril Ramaphosa and the US President Donald Trump. Picture: UWC

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa called the action by the United States regrettable for not inviting South Africa for the G20 Summit 2026 which will take place in Miami next year.

He said that despite the efforts and numerous attempts by President Ramaphosa and his administration to reset the diplomatic relationship with the US, President Trump continues to apply punitive measures against South Africa based on misinformation and distortions about our country.

Calling the Summit hosted by South Africa this year as one of the most successful summits, he said, "The summit produced a declaration that affirmed the indisputable strength and value of multilateralism in response to the most pressing challenges facing the world."

Addressing the remarks by Trump, President Ramaphosa said, "South Africa will continue to participate as a full, active and constructive member of the G20. We call on members of the G20 to reaffirm its continued operation in the spirit of multilateralism, based on consensus, with all members participating on an equal footing in all of its structures. It is regrettable that despite the efforts and numerous attempts by President Ramaphosa and his administration to reset the diplomatic relationship with the US, President Trump continues to apply punitive measures against South Africa based on misinformation and distortions about our country."

He added, "Its G20 membership is at the behest of

all other members. South Africa is a sovereign constitutional democratic country and does not appreciate insults from another country about its membership and worth in participating in global platforms. South Africa respects the sovereignty of all countries and will never insult or demean another country or its standing and worthiness in the community of nations."

The South African President said in the post that as the United States was not present at the summit, instruments of the G20 Presidency were duly handed over to a US Embassy official at the Headquarters of South Africa's Department of International Relations and Cooperation.

"As one of the founding members of the G20, South Africa has always valued the spirit of consensus, collaboration and partnership that defines the G20 as the premier forum for international economic cooperation. In keeping with this approach, the United States was expected to participate in all the meetings of the G20 during South Africa's Presidency but unfortunately, it elected not to attend the G20 Leaders Summit in Johannesburg out of its own volition."

He appreciated the participation by US entities such as businesses and civil society organisations in large numbers in G20 related activities such as the B20 and the G20 Social.

Earlier, US President Donald Trump has said that South Africa will not be invited to the 2026 G20 Summit in Miami, announcing the decision while sharply criticising the South African government over what he

described as "horrific Human Rights abuses."

In a post on his social media handle Truth Social, Trump wrote, "The United States did not attend the G20 in South Africa because the South African Government refuses to acknowledge or address the horrific Human rights abuses endured by Afrikaners and other descendants of Dutch, French, and German settlers."

"To put it more bluntly, they are killing white people and randomly allowing their farms to be taken from them," he added.

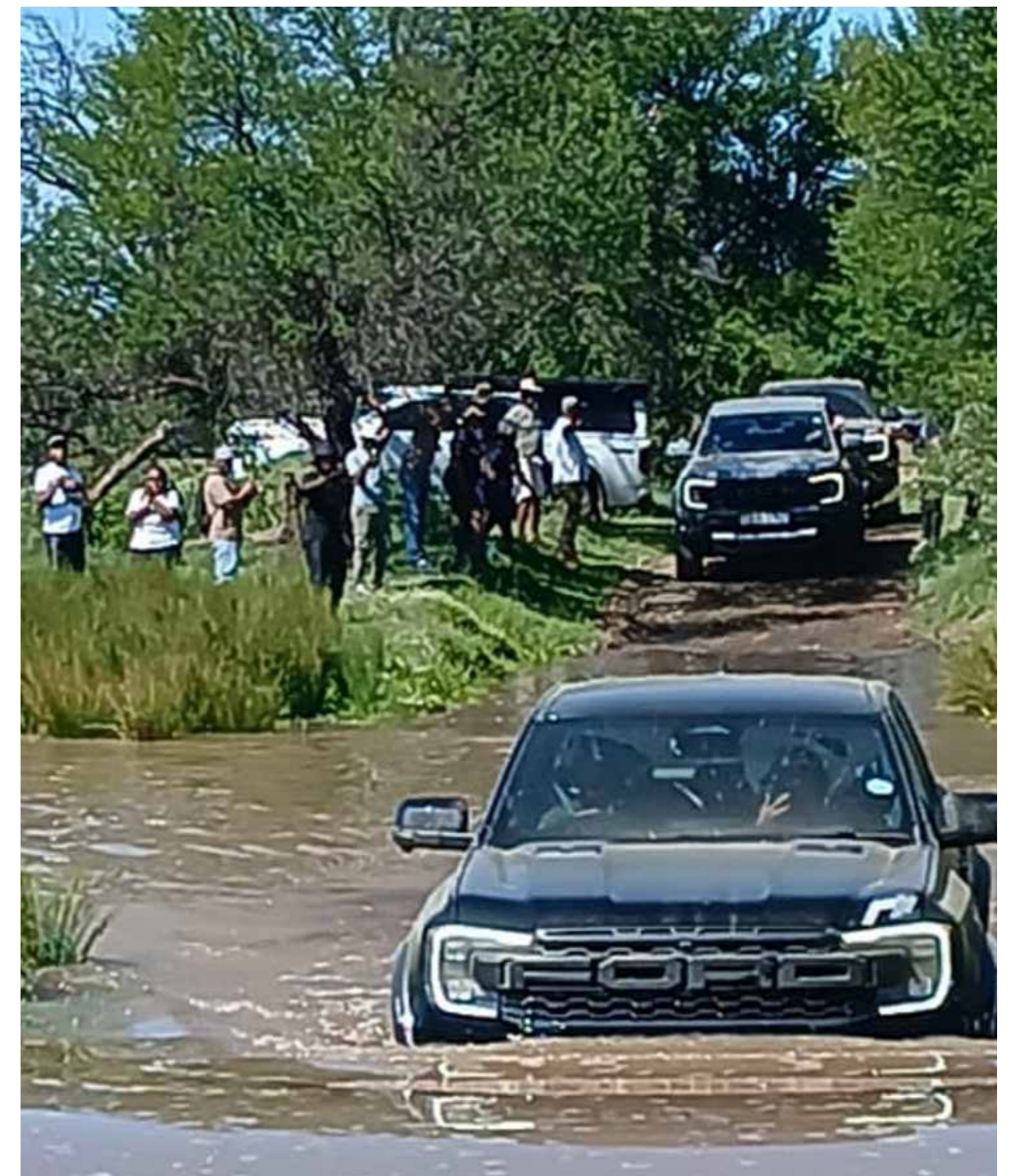
Trump also criticised major US media outlets for not reporting on the issue.

"Perhaps, worst of all, the soon to be out of business New York Times and the Fake News Media won't issue a word against this genocide. That's why all the Liars and Pretenders of the Radical Left Media are going out of business!" he said.

"At the conclusion of the G20, South Africa refused to hand off the G20 Presidency to a Senior Representative from our US Embassy, who attended the Closing Ceremony. Therefore, at my direction, South Africa will NOT be receiving an invitation to the 2026 G20, which will be hosted in the Great City of Miami, Florida, next year," he added.

Announcing further steps, Trump added that the US would halt financial contributions to South Africa. "South Africa has demonstrated to the world that they are not a country worthy of membership anywhere, and we are going to stop all payments and subsidies to them, effective immediately," he said. - **NDTV**

Free State Camp-Out Exposes Hidden Gem



Tourists Watch as Cars Are Driven Across the River. Picture: Supplied

By: Matshidiso Selebeleng

This past weekend, the Tussen Die Riviere Nature Reserve, located just outside Bethulie in Xhariep, hosted a thrilling adventure weekend.

To promote Free State as a premier tourism destination, the Department of Small Business and Tourism (Destea) organised a three-day Free State Camp-Out experience and 4X4 Eco Challenge under the theme: "Free State is a place to go to, not just to pass through."

Since the launch of the 2025 Free State Tourism month, the department has been encouraging both local and international tourists to explore the province and uncover its hidden gems.

"We want people to begin exploring and discovering this wonderful region, which is often overlooked. Although it may not be far to reach, it can

be difficult for those unfamiliar with the area.

"That is why it remains a hidden gem," explained, HOD for Destea Mbulelo Nokweke.

The reserve is not only home to diverse wildlife, including black wildebeest, zebra, and blesbok, but also features beautiful plant life such as sour karee, wild olive trees, and blue quarries scattered across the landscape.

Tussen Die Riviere lies at the confluence of the Caledon River, known as the Mohokare, and the Orange River, referred to as the Senqu.

For visitors traveling from afar, the reserve provides self-catering chalets and camping facilities where they can relax and enjoy the stunning scenery. Additionally, adventure enthusiasts will appreciate the 4x4 challenge route, which spans nearly 120 km and passes through unique rock formations along the riverbanks, testing both driving skills and vehicle prowess.

One-year AGOA renewal gains bipartisan support in White House: DTIC



Kenyan workers prepare clothes for export. Picture: SABC.

The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition says there is bipartisan support in the White House for the renewal of the Africa Growth Opportunity Act commonly known as AGOA for one year.

AGOA expired on the last day of September this year.

The department was briefing the oversight committee on the status of trade relations, ongoing trade negotiations as well as update on the tariff negotiations between South Africa and the US.

Deputy Director General for Trade, Xolelwa Mlumbi-Peter says Senator John Kennedy has introduced a

bill signalling an interest to renew the programme for a period of two years.

She says the Ways and Means committee is still to discuss, but the department's understanding is that there is partisan support to support renewal of AGOA.

"There's still bipartisan support for the renewal of AGOA and also the White House has indicated that it is also in support of the renewal for a period of one year. What is expected will be a straight rollover of the existing members, which will mean that as South Africa, once it is rolled over, South Africa will continue to benefit under the programme," she says.

Fuel Prices to Increase on Wednesday

The latest data from the Central Energy Fund (CEF) indicates larger increases to petrol and diesel prices in December than initially expected at the beginning of November.

This is largely due to a rise in oil prices over the past month, with the United States intensifying its sanctions on Russia's largest oil companies and global economic growth expected to surprise to the upside.

As a result, the projected oil surplus may not be as wide as initially anticipated, with increased demand absorbing some of the pickup in supply from major producers.

At the same time, the rand has been largely range-bound between R17.20/USD and R17.50/USD, despite momentarily dipping below R17/USD after the Finance Minister's Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS).

This has resulted in the CEF's projections indicating a larger-than-expected increase in fuel prices in December. Its latest data indicates the following changes

- Petrol 93 – increase of 19 cents per litre
- Petrol 95 – increase of 24 cents per litre
- Diesel 0.05% – increase of 69 cents per litre
- Diesel 0.005% – increase of 86 cents per litre

One of the main reasons why diesel prices are expected to increase more sharply is the lack of refin-



ery capacity in Europe and the United States, putting pressure on supply.

These changes are only projections and are likely to change before the official announcement by the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources at the end of November.

The good news is that the rand has strengthened in recent days, while international oil prices have retreated from their monthly highs. This is likely to translate into lower increases when the official announcement is made.

However, the department uses monthly averages when determining the price of fuel in South Africa, and so these benefits are unlikely to turn the projected increases into cuts.

The oil price has declined in recent days as there

appears to be progress on ending the Russia-Ukraine war, with the United States proposing a 28-point peace plan.

Peace in the region may see sanctions on Russian oil companies lifted, increasing supply amid lacklustre demand, which will push down prices.

This is likely to continue oil's downward trend, with prices already coming under pressure from increasing supply from members of the Organisation for Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Oil prices have fallen by over 20% since the middle of June as OPEC lifted production caps on its members, with supply expected to exceed demand by a record four million barrels a day in 2026.

The decline in oil prices has been coupled with a strengthening rand on the back of expected rate cuts in the United States, increased investor appetite for South African bonds, and improving government finances.

The currency briefly dipped below R17 to the dollar following the MTBPS on 12 November, which projected a wider primary surplus for the current year and a stabilisation in South Africa's debt-to-GDP ratio.

A combination of declining oil prices and a stronger rand, if continued, is likely to translate into further relief throughout 2026. **Daily Investor**

GET TO KNOW YOUR DJ

Crafting The Bloem Music Scene With The Legendary Geemo



Gomolemo Moahlodi aka 'Geemo'. Picture: Supplied

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

Weaver of vibes, energy, and atmosphere. Take a back seat as we walk you through Gomolemo 'Geemo' Moahlodi's journey. If you have been in the Bloemfontein music scene, Geemo is no stranger to you.

Seismic track selector, playlist incalculable as the future, his energy unmatched, his looping rhythmic, his equalizer balanced, his fading untraceable, and the atmosphere he sets is out of this world.

Bars and basses structured accordingly, Moahlodi has been running the decks for a consistent 15 years, and to date, he has made a name for himself.

"My voyage started in the township. I was playing at children's parties then moved to nightclubs.

"I drew inspiration from the local DJs such as U.T.B., to the legendary Poka Moloi, KB Pobe, Vho Hatso, Vindeep, just to mention a few, he said.

All these prominent individuals have helped steer Moahlodi's DJ career in the right direction; now, most event posters in Bloemfontein feature his face.

"Time went by, and I fell in love with cub event hosting and met people like China Mkhwenyana, KayG Clean slate, and Shaxe Khumalo.

"Their events were representing and pushing music rather than lifestyle in the township and that is when I decided I wanted to see more of that going further.

That is how my event, 'FRIDAYS IN THE HOOD' came about, he added.

Moahlodi kept weaving the 'FRIDAYS IN THE HOOD' movement, and he got to host music heavyweights like, Josiah De Disciple, Kabza De Small, DJ Maphorisa, Abidoza, Thebe Lenyora, Cassper Nyovest, DBN GOGO, DJ Tshegu, and many more.

Stages are ignited when he swerves the decks, building great energy in his amapiano sets.

He says he plans to take his craft and talent to higher heights.

"In the coming five years, I want to release my first Album, share my music with the world through tours because there is no better storyteller like music, and basically gravitate towards everything and everyone that wants to hear my music.

"More will be shared as time goes by, not every plan needs to be out there because not everyone moves like you, there will be roadblocks, and everyone wants to be number one in a race that doesn't get to the finish line, he said.

Moahlodi forms part of the architects of the Bloemfontein music scene, and he keeps building up the chaos in the piano melodies. Want to get more of Geemo? Follow him on Facebook, Gomolemo Geemo Moahlodi.

Backdoor's Padel for Charity Tournament

Imagine the crisp sound of a tennis ball hitting the court under the sun, the excitement of a friendly match, and the generous spirit of giving back.

The Black Door is back with yet another experience, this time, it is a Padel for Charity Tournament, a charity tennis tournament designed to support the local community just before the unforgettable Black Door Music Experience takes over Bloemfontein in December.

The Padel for Charity Tournament is set to take place tomorrow at the Ramblers Padel Club in Bloemfontein.

This community-driven initiative is aimed at uniting brands, partners, and individuals in the spirit of sport, collaboration, and giving back.

According to event organiser, Nkokheli Lindaswe the day will be filled with music, light social activities, and networking opportunities, creating an atmosphere where sport, philanthropy, and lifestyle come together seamlessly.

He says each participating brand or team will contribute a registration fee of R1000 which will collectively form the charity price pool.

He added that the winning team will have the honor of donating the proceeds to a charity of their choice, reinforcing the true spirit of giving through healthy competition.

Some of the guidelines are that each team has a maximum of six players and gender representa-



Black Door Padel for Charity Tournament. Picture: Supplied

tion is required.

"The event will also promote team-building, staff engagement, brand visibility, and community alignment, all while incorporating fun into the mix.

"As the final match point is won, the energy doesn't fade it evolves. There will be a transition from the courts to the concert, serving as a prelude to the Blackdoor Experience.

"Don't just attend a show be part of a movement

"Sweat for a cause, connect with the community, and dive into an epic night of entertainment, he said.



Musician, Lucille Slade. Picture: Supplied

Kimberly Diamond Announces New Album 'RESURFACED'



Kimberly Diamond Announces. Picture: Supplied

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

The Kimberley-born vocalist and songwriter Lucille Slade has unveiled her new album titled 'Resurfaced', which offers a bold and layered journey of rediscovery.

Produced in collaboration with Tru Hitz, the project is characterised by a rich texture, depth, and emotional honesty.

Slade skillfully carries forward her legacy through her storytelling.

Throughout 'Resurfaced' Slade proudly honors her roots.

She says the opening track, D.Y. is an ode, a love letter to Kimberley introducing her hometown to the world with a blend of English and Afrikaans. It invites listeners into the spirit, pride, and rhythm of her origins.

Another key moment on the EP is "Rescue Me," a reimagined version of a track from her 2018 album, 'Scratch the Surface' Re-recorded in 2025, this updated version boasts a more current and refined sound, showcasing the idea that music never ages; it can continually be reshaped and rediscovered.

The EP begins with a spoken word introduction by Kimberley's cultural commentators, Sip and Kwati, which grounds listeners in the local vernacular and cultural identity before the musical journey begins.

From there, the sound expands to incorporate global influences while maintaining South African elements. No matter how far the music travels, the essence of home remains.

"Kimberley taught me that real treasure lies beneath the surface. I am proud to be from a small city with a big spirit. Tru Hitz helped me share my story in a way that feels authentic to who I am. Through this EP, I want the world to understand my influences, my upbringing, and how deeply South Africa lives in my sound," Slade said.

'Resurfaced' merges the landscapes of township life (Kasi) with refined soundscapes. Slade emerges not as who she was, but as who she has grown to be.

"I think it's essential to communicate the journey behind the title *Resurfaced*, to help people understand how much effort goes into making music. It's not simply a matter of dropping a project, especially when you're passionate about your music. For the past two to three years, I have created a vast amount of music, and I needed to clarify what I truly wanted to release and why. I want to resurface, like a diamond does—showing you some songs you've heard before in a new light, while also introducing new music that you haven't yet experienced. I embrace being seen again and am confident in what I have to share with the world, knowing you will love it," she explained in an Instagram post.

The Kimberley Diamond resurfaces with intention, clarity, and courage.

Slade explained that "Rescue Me" is pivotal on the EP.

"It is a reimagined version of her earlier work, now arriving with a modern sound, proving once again that music can be continuously reshaped and rediscovered.

"Kimberley is known for its historical significance in diamond mining and its stunning dryland landscapes.

With *Resurfaced*, Slade honors her roots, providing the world with a glimpse of Kimberley through a blend of English and Afrikaans, welcoming listeners into the spirit, pride, and rhythm of her hometown.

"Kimberley taught me that real treasure lies beneath the surface. I am proud to come from a small city with a big spirit. Tru Hitz helped me express my story authentically. Through this EP, I want the world to understand my influences, my upbringing, and how deeply South Africa lives in my sound," Lucille shared.

Bucie headlines Take A Child To School charity event in Khuma, NW



By: Lerato Mutlanyane

Global Award nominee and music superstar Busisiwe 'Bucie' Nqwiliso will be performing at the "Take A Child To School" charity event taking place at Parker Chillas in her hometown Khuma outside Klerksdorp tomorrow.

Also known as the Princess of House and for her hit song Superman featuring Black Coffee, the R&B and house musician, will be headlining the Take A Child to School charity event alongside local DJs.

The main aim of the event is to raise essential school resources for children between the Grades 1 and 3 in Khuma.

In a social media video, Nqwiliso expressed her excitement saying that she cannot wait to go perform at the event and urged that patrons attend in numbers to support an initiative that will elevate the child development at the Khuma Primary School.

"This initiative goes beyond entertainment. It's a meaningful investment in the future of young learners.

"By providing school uniforms, the event helps to restore dignity, boost confidence, and remove barriers to regular school attendance.

"For many families in Khuma, this support will ease financial pressure and ensure that children start the school year prepared and motivated, said CEO and founder of the Kuthala Foundation, Kuthala Tshangela.

Tshangela says the event will also strengthen community unity by bringing local artists, businesses, foundations, and residents together for a shared purpose.

"It sets a positive example of what collaborative action can achieve and inspires a culture of giving, and upliftment," she said.

GIG Guide

Saturday 29 November 2025
Jameson Distillery on Tour
Botanical Garden
Bloemfontein

Saturday 29 November 2025
Singles Braai
Sandy's Bar
Bloemfontein

Sunday 29 November 2025
Leboteng Comes Alive
Leboteng The West
Bloemfontein

Monday 01 December 2025
Mondays are the new Saturdays
Ekhayaneni
Bloemfontein

BJJ NOTICE OF LOST OR DESTROYED TITLE DEED

Notice is hereby given in terms of Regulation 68 of the Deeds Registries Act 1937, of the intention to apply for the issue of a certified copy of Deed of Transfer No. TE13461/2016 passed by MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY in favour of APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF CHRIST IN ZION in respect of certain ERF 610 BOTSHABELO-A, DISTRICT THABA'NCHU, PROVINCE FREE STATE, which has been lost or destroyed.

All interested parties having objection to the issue of such copy are hereby required to lodge same in writing with the Registrar of Deeds FREE STATE: at BLOEMFONTEIN within two weeks from the date of publication of this notice.

SIGNED at BLOEMFONTEIN on this 27th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2025.
BEREKA MOSADI CONSULTANTS (PTY) LTD
874 PANYANE STREET
BATHO LOCATION, MANGAUNG
9323
E-MAIL: matshedisoramolula@gmail.com
CONTACT: (+27) 65 862 3469

MOTOLEK
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OPEN POSITION BLOEMFONTEIN

Workshop Manager/Qualified Diesel Mechanic

REQUIREMENTS

- 5+Years Experience Valid driver's license (code 8 & 10)
- Diesel Mechanic Red Seal trade test

DUTIES

- Overseeing all workshop operations, productivity, workflow and safety.
- Supervising & coaching technicians; ensuring high quality repairs.
- Troubleshooting complex mechanical & diagnostic issues.
- Ensuring customer satisfaction & adherence to Truck shop standards.
- Managing job cards, quality checks and workshop compliance

CONTACT
051 065 0388
E-mail CV to: sales.motolek@gmail.com

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REQUIREMENTS

- 5+Years Experience as workshop manager
- Technically minded or have Red Seal Qualification
- Strong business accum.
- Qualification: Spray painting, Panel beater.

DUTIES

- Manage the entire workshop from A-Z
- Achieving Panel & Mechanical Workshop targets
- Manage project to completion & within set deadlines.
- Set up labour sales targets & weekly goals for workshop staff.
- Streamlining & Implementing systems & procedures to improve workflow.

CONTACT
051 065 0388
E-mail CV to: sales.motolek@gmail.com

MOTOLEK
AUTO ELECTRICAL SPECIALISTS

WE ARE HIRING

OPEN POSITION BLOEMFONTEIN

Qualified Auto/Assistant Electrician

REQUIREMENTS

- Matric
- Qualified Auto/Assistant Electrician.
- 3 years experience as Auto/Assistant Electrician.
- Trade test certificate beneficial.
- Driver's license and reliable transport.

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Sport



CHAMPIONS!!!



Knights end silverware search with composed victory and a trophy for the province

By: Mpho Sekharume

After a 3-year spell without a major trophy to call their own, the Flexbrands Knights have emphatically ended their silverware drought by clinching the CSA T20 Knockout title in a dramatic and rain-affected final at the Mangaung Oval in Bloemfontein.

The 11-run victory over the determined Eastern Cape linyathi on Monday, which was forced into a reserve day due to poor weather, was a testament to the team's balance, individual brilliance, and, crucially, the deep well of experience within their ranks.

This championship confirms the Knights' resurgence and sends a clear message that they are a force ready to challenge again at the highest level of South African domestic cricket.

The foundation of the victory was laid by a calculated batting display that saw the Knights post a respectable total of 155 for seven.

This score, achieved after resuming their innings on the reserve day, might have seemed twenty runs

short to some, but it owed everything to the patience and composure of opener Isaac Dikgale.

While the high-risk T20 format often demands aggression, Dikgale provided the indispensable anchor, batting through the entire twenty overs to finish unbeaten on 57 runs from 51 deliveries. His innings was a masterclass in controlled aggression, ensuring that wickets did not tumble in clusters and providing a launchpad for the middle-order hitters.

Partnering him to inject much-needed pace was the explosive Gerrit Snyman, who thrashed a vital 26 runs off just 14 balls, setting an aggressive tone that lifted the scoring rate just when the linyathi bowlers were beginning to find rhythm.

Despite the solid total, the final was far from over. The Eastern Cape side began their chase with confidence, led by Nathan Roux, and the match remained on a knife-edge well into the second half of the innings.

It was here, in the pressure cooker of the chase, that the individual heroics merged seamlessly with collective experience to turn the tide.

Snyman, not content with his batting contribu-

tion, stepped up to deliver a decisive spell of off-spin with the ball in hand. In the 13th over, Snyman engineered a monumental swing in momentum, trapping two set batsmen leg-before-wicket (LBW) with just two deliveries.

This double strike was the moment the linyathi's momentum was broken, collapsing their run rate and forcing the remaining batsmen to take high-risk chances against a tightening field.

The effectiveness of this breakthrough was cemented by the added composure of the bowling attack in the death overs, where the experience of veterans like Malusi Siboto proved quite invaluable.

Having faced countless high-pressure situations throughout his career, Siboto led the charge, ensuring that even as the opposition tried to scramble for runs, the lines and lengths remained disciplined. He received excellent support from the pace of Sisanda Magala, who kept the run scoring in check with tight figures, proving that in a final, wickets and control are equally important.

The Knights might have felt they could have posted more runs on the day, but it was the collective

experience of the bowling unit that truly shone through under extreme pressure. This allowed them to execute their plans precisely when the contest was at its most critical phase.

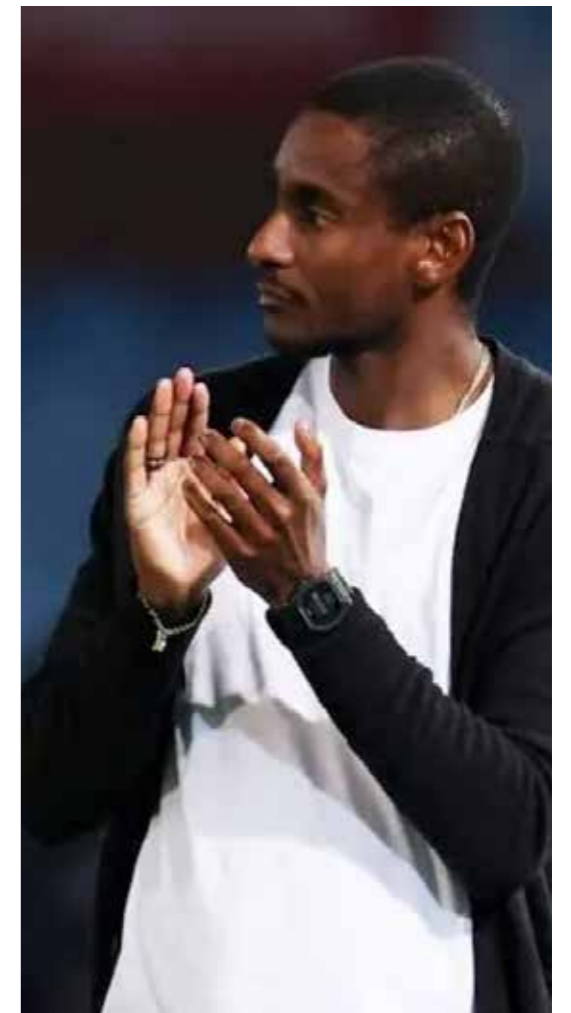
The linyathi ultimately fell short, finishing on 144 for six, leaving the Knights to celebrate an 11-run win that was thoroughly earned through balanced teamwork, a great collaborative effort from Dikgale and Snyman, as well as the calm guidance of their experienced leadership.

This victory is not just a trophy, but a powerful statement of intent for the coming seasons.

After the momentous triumph, the Knights will now enjoy a short break before their focus immediately shifts back to the CSA 4-Day Series. The long-format competition is their next major goal as it provides them the platform to pursue promotion back to top flight cricket in Division One.

The Mangaug outfit returns to action on Thursday, 11 December 2025, when they travel to the Diamond Oval in Kimberley to face their provincial rivals, the Northern Cape Heat, in what is sure to be a fiercely contested match.

Sundowns Eye Showdown with Former Boss



Former Sundowns head coach Rulani Mokwena. Picture: SuperSport

Mamelodi Sundowns are set to reunite with former head coach Rulani Mokwena as Masandawana travel to the Ali la Pointe Stadium in Douéra, Algeria, to face MC Alger in the CAF Champions League on Friday. Kickoff is at 9pm CAT (SA, GMT+2)

MC Alger's CAF Champions League group stage opener did not go to plan, with Mokwena's side losing 2-1 to Al-Hilal Omdurman at the Amahoro Stadium in Kigali last Friday.

The club sits third in group C with zero points and a goal difference of minus one.

In domestic competition, MC Alger are unbeaten in the Algerian Ligue Professionnelle 1 having registered seven wins and one draw in the 2025/26 campaign.

Along with their unbeaten start, MC Alger have conceded only three goals in the league this season.

Mamelodi Sundowns began their group stage campaign with a 3-1 victory over Saint-Éloi Lupopo at Loftus Versfeld in Pretoria on Saturday.

The club's Portuguese stars combined well as Nuno Santos bagged two goals and Miguel Reisinho provided two assists.

The Brazilians sit in first place in group C, narrowly edging Al-Hilal Omdurman on goal difference.

Domestically, the Brazilians are atop the Betway Premiership standings, having claimed four wins and one loss in their last five league games.

The reigning league champions are level with Orlando Pirates on 25 points but are ahead on goal difference.

They could be bumped from top spot as Pirates have a game in hand.

WHAT WAS SAID

MC Alger head coach Rulani Mokwena, who helped Sundowns win four consecutive league titles in his tenure, stated the upcoming clash presented a great opportunity for his side.

"Football is football and there's a reason why we have to play Sundowns and it's from a football context, a great opportunity for the club. It's a great opportunity for the players to test themselves against a team that was at the [FIFA] Club World Cup, a team that was in the final of the Champions League and that is how I look at it," said Mokwena, speaking on the African Five-a-Side Podcast podcast.

The former Masandawana manager emphasised that the match-up has little to do with him and his history with the South African Champions.

"I'm the least important person at a football club. The coach is the least important person at a football club. Some coaches believe they are more important but my opinion is that I'm the least important, the game belongs to the players."

Sundowns head coach Miguel Cardoso stated that he and his side are approaching the fixture as usual, with little concern for the opposition bench.

"Next match, a Champions League match. We will analyse the team behaviour, prepare ourselves as we go there, make the best and hope the best is enough to win three points. Normal," he said. **SuperSport**

Nine changes in Bok squad to face Wales

By: Matshidiso Selebeleng

Springbok scrumhalf Cobus Reinach will earn his 50th test cap when he takes the field against Wales at the Principality Stadium in Cardiff on Saturday.

The starting XV for the final match of the Castle Lager Outgoing Tour – which kicks off at 5:10pm (SA time) and will be broadcast live on SuperSport – will feature nine changes from the team that defeated Ireland 24-13 in Dublin last week.

Several players have returned to their clubs and provincial unions, as the match falls outside the international window, which required coach Rassie Erasmus to make eight personnel changes and one positional switch to his run-on team, while his bench has a new look to it, with three players who played last week being named among the replacements.

With World Rugby Men's 15 Player of the Year Malcolm Marx, Thomas du Toit, Boan Venter, Lood de Jager, RG Snyman, Pieter-Steph du Toit, Grant Williams, Handre Pollard, Manie Libbok, Jesse Kriel, Cheslin Kolbe, and Edwill van der Merwe out of contention for selection, Erasmus drafted several key "Bomb Squad" members into the starting team, alongside seven players who started in Dublin. The players who retained their places in the start-



ing line-up are Ruan Nortje (lock), captain Siya Kolisi (flanker), Jasper Wiese (No 8), Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu (flyhalf), Canan Moodie (wing), Damian de Allende (centre), and Damian Willemse (fullback).

Erasmus named the strong front row combination of hooker Johan Grobbelaar and props Wilco Louw and Gerhard Steenekamp – who will start a test for the first time – with Jean Kleyn and Nortje taking charge of the engine room, while the loose trio of Kolisi, Franco Mostert, and Wiese will complete a powerful forward pack.

In the backline, Morne van den Berg and Fein-

berg-Mngomezulu will dictate play with at halfback, while hybrid Andre Esterhuizen will man the midfield with De Allende, Moodie and Ethan Hooker will start on the wings, and Willemse retains the No 15 jersey.

Cobus Reinach will become the second player on the team's November tour to strike 50 test caps, following RG Snyman's 50th against Ireland last week.

Reinach requires only five more test points to reach 100 in the green and gold.

Eben Etzebeth will extend his Springbok record as the most capped player to 141 caps if he takes the field off the replacements bench.

This will mark Damian Willemse's 49th test match, leaving him only one game short of joining the select group of players to earn 50 test caps, while Damian de Allende will require only two more test appearances after this weekend to join the exclusive group of players to reach the 100 test mark.

The Springboks have lost only five of their 24 matches away from home against Wales dating back to 1994, with their last defeat in Cardiff being in 2018. This match will mark the first time the Springboks face Wales since the 2024 November tour – a match South Africa won 45-12.

Should the Springboks win the match, it will mark the second season in a row that they complete a clean sweep of victories on their traditional end-of-the-year tour.

The most test matches the Springboks have won in a season is 14, meaning a victory this weekend will see them register 12 victories in 14 tests – the second highest number of tests won in a season. The total test caps for the Springbok starting line-up is 525.

There are 223 caps in the backline, with 302 caps among the forwards. On the bench, there are a further 374 caps.

The average caps per player in the backline is 32, the forwards 38, while the players on the bench average 47. **SuperSport**