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SAUL BREAKS SILENCE ON SG RACE

With ANC race intensifying, provincial chairman quashes early conference claims and pledges loyalty to provincial mandate

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African National Congress (ANC) provincial Chairperson, Zamani Saul. Picture: Facebook

MOKGOSI DENIES NALEDI MISCONDUCT ALLEGATIONS

NW Premier slams 'Mokgosi Must Fall campaign' as he goes on the offensive against ad hoc committee allegations

By Lerato Mutlanyane

North West Premier, Lazarus Mokgosi, appeared before an ad hoc committee on Saturday, 14 February 2026, to address allegations of misconduct and corruption involving the Naledi Local Municipality.

As the final witness in the public hearings, the Premier's testimony concluded a provincial investigation into Executive Mayor, Clifton Groep.

The inquiry focused on claims that legislative processes were manipulated to target political rivals. Specifically, it was alleged that while serving as the African National Congress (ANC) chief whip in the legislature, Mokgosi pressured former employee, Thabo Appolus, to alter an audit report concerning the 2023 appointment of Modisenyane Segapo as



municipal manager.

During the proceedings, Mokgosi challenged the affidavits submitted by municipal employee, Thabo Sejake, as well as those from Appolus and Segapo. Despite evidence presented to verify the allegations against him, the Mokgosi dismissed the testimony and text messages as part of a coordinated political plot. He told the committee.

"Now listening to the discussion of people who made affidavits, I now realise that having not responded to that message was a correct instinct because it proved that Appolus, Segapo and Sejake had been

communicating amongst themselves. They have been plotting the 'Mokgosi Must Fall campaign'. Even the messages that are there are concocted," Mokgosi alleged.

The hearing grew tense during a sharp exchange between the Premier and the evidence leader, Senior Advocate Pule Seleka, who accused Mokgosi of improperly interrogating witnesses who had not directly implicated him.

"If his explanation suits what I explained and the other witnesses, then I'm not sure if that to you is corroboration," Mokgosi retorted.

In response to Mokgosi's assertions, Sejake maintained that the committee simply sought clarity through his line of question, stressing that his queries for whilst also highlight.

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Gallants' PSL Status Under Threat

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Murison Turns Cannabis Legacy into Haircare Innovation

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FS SOPA 2026: All Systems Go



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Court Denies Bail to Bloemfontein Double Murder Accused



Lesotho national Maliehe Maliehe appeared before the Bloemfontein Magistrate's Court in connection with the alleged murder of two women. Picture: Bernell Simons

By Bernell Simons

The man accused of executing two women in what police have described as a cold-blooded killing in Bloemfontein will remain behind bars after the Bloemfontein Magistrate's Court denied him bail.

Thirty-four-year-old Ramokoatsi Leferesane, also known as "Maliehe Maliehe," appeared in court where his bail application was dismissed due to the seriousness of the charges. The court ruled that the gravity of the alleged offences and the interests of justice outweigh his release at this stage.

Leferesane is in South Africa legally, contrary to earlier reports suggesting he was undocumented.

He faces two counts of murder following the discovery of two women in the Namibia Square area in the early hours of Sunday, 9 February 2026. The victims, 27-year-old Tefelo Consolation Monyooe and 26-year-old Malefu Tenei, were found lying in the street near a residential property, both with gunshot wounds to the back of their heads.

The execution-style killings have sent shockwaves through the Mangaung community, with residents expressing fear and outrage over the brutality of the attack.

The matter has been postponed to 19 March 2026 for further investigation as police continue gathering evidence. Authorities are also probing whether the murders are linked to the discovery of another unidentified woman's body in the Bloem-spruit area a day earlier.

Leferesane remains in custody pending his next court appearance.

Saul Breaks Silence on SG Race

ANC race intensifying, provincial chairman quashes conference claims and pledges loyalty to provincial mandate

By JN Reporter

The African National Congress (ANC)'s Northern Cape Chairman, Zamani Saul, has finally addressed swirling speculation about his alleged bid for the organisation's secretary-general position, decisively shutting down claims that he is eyeing the powerful post ahead of the party's highly anticipated national conference next year.

Addressing the party's provincial Legkotla last weekend, Saul dismissed claims of a leadership bid, insisting his focus remains firmly on his current mandate in the province rather than national ambitions.

"I am going nowhere!" Saul declared, making it "very clear" that he intends to complete the task entrusted to him when he was re-elected last year — leading the province into the upcoming local government elections and the 2029 national elections.

"Talks of an early conference in the Northern Cape and me getting elected into the National Executive Committee (NEC) are just hot air. It will never happen because I have a mandate here which I am not going to abandon, up until the bitter end," he said.

His remarks come amid intensifying internal succession debates, with lobbying efforts gaining momentum and fresh polling pointing to a wide-open contest for top leadership positions.

Speculation that billionaire businessman Patrice Motsepe could enter the ANC presidential race has also resurfaced, despite his repeated denials.



African National Congress (ANC)'s Northern Cape Chairman, Zamani Saul. Picture: Facebook

Branded T-shirts bearing the slogan "PM27 Savu-melana" have fuelled talk of a possible campaign ahead of the elective conference.

Motsepe, a mining magnate, philanthropist, and continental sports leader, is widely regarded as one of South Africa's most influential figures. Should he

enter the race, he is expected to face competition from current Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula and Deputy President Paul Mashatile.

Meanwhile, Saul issued a stern warning against factionalism within the province.

He urged delegates to isolate and expose anyone

seeking to divide the party, stressing that unity in the Northern Cape is "sacrosanct" and must be protected at all costs.

He cautioned that without unity, the ANC would struggle to compete effectively in this year's local government elections.

Mangaung Charts New Safety Path

City hosts Safer City Indaba to declare war on crime in a coordinated effort to secure dignity, investment and growth

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

The Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality (MMM) has taken a significant step toward urban renewal by hosting a comprehensive Safer City Indaba at the Bloemfontein City Hall.

Held from 18 to 19 February 2026, the summit gathered key representatives from the Border Management Authority (BMA), the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), and the Community Policing Forum (CPF) to address critical issues including disaster readiness, by-law enforcement, and gender-based violence.

This strategic gathering marked a shift from theoretical planning to a practical, integrated approach to securing the metro's future.

Opening the proceedings, Mangaung Executive Mayor, Gregory Nthatsi, delivered a powerful keynote address, asserting that safety is the fundamental bedrock of dignity and economic growth.

"Safety is not a side function of government. It is not an isolated programme. It is the foundation upon which dignity, development, investment, and social



City hosts Safer City Indaba to declare war on crime in a coordinated effort to secure dignity, investment and growth. Picture: Baagedi Setlhora

stability rest," Nthatsi stated, while challenging officials to move beyond mere rhetoric.

"Where people do not feel safe, opportunity retreats. Where communities live in fear, progress slows. Where lawlessness grows, trust in institutions weakens," he added. Nthatsi's address highlighted a commitment to action over bureaucracy. "Passing policies is easier than implementing them. Drafting

bylaws is easier than enforcing them. Announcing plans is easier than coordinating execution. One of the central tests of this Indaba will be whether we move from fragmented effort to coordinated action."

Free State Premier, MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae, echoed Nthatsi's sentiments while expressing grave concern over the rising tide of housebreakings, murders, and the infiltration of violence into schools.

Taking a firm stance, Letsoha-Mathae committed the full weight of provincial authority to declaring war against violence in the province to ensure that the vision of the National Development Plan (NDP) - a society where citizens live free of fear - becomes a reality. This commitment is backed by strengthened partnerships with the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the ramping up of municipal policing units specifically tasked with dismantling gangs, drug syndicates, and cross-border criminal networks.

The second day of the Indaba transitioned into the logistics of implementation, focusing on the precision of ward-based planning.

Technical expert, Angie Mokasi, explained that safety strategies must be tailored to the specific risks

of each area. "There is no single approach for every ward; the dynamics of every ward are not the same in terms of the risks depending on population density, land use, economic activities, and social conditions," she noted.

By utilising ward profiling and crime pattern analysis, the municipality aims to address the unique vulnerabilities of schools, informal settlements, and business hubs through localized interventions rather than a generic, city-wide approach.

Concluding the summit, the focus shifted toward modernisation and the role of innovation in public safety.

MMC for Economic Development, Manthuse Letawana, introduced the concept of Smart City Development, detailing how digital solutions and technological innovation can be leveraged to enhance urban security and streamline service delivery.

By integrating advanced technology with localised, ground-level policing, Mangaung is positioning itself to build a resilient and inclusive environment where safety is no longer a privilege but a guaranteed right for every resident.

Mokgosi Denies Naledi Misconduct Allegations



Staging push back ... North West Premier Lazarus Mokgosi claims there is a plot to remove him. Picture: Supplied

Continues from Page 1

me. The ad hoc committee wants to hear your version of events."

Mokgosi remained on the offensive, nonetheless, accusing the committee of failing to provide specific proof of the alleged tampering. He argued that he deserved a clear explanation of the charges, as he is the individual placed at the centre of the claims.

"I'm at the centre of allegations. I must respond to the allegations and my expectation was to be told how I tampered, when I tampered or attempted to tamper and also, on what I tampered with," he stated.

The controversy is rooted in a November 14 Supreme Court of Appeal (SCA) ruling which declared Segapo's appointment constitutionally invalid due to procedural failures.

Although eight people applied for the post, only Segapo and Appolus were shortlisted. After Appolus withdrew, the council proceeded with Segapo's appointment despite various irregularities.

While Mayor Groep alleged that Mokgosi attempted to block the appointment, the court's findings added a layer of complexity by revealing that Segapo was not legally qualified for the role. The court noted that "any exercise of public power must be within the confines of the law," concluding that the municipality's recruitment process failed to meet this standard.

The final phase of the inquiry included testimony from a wide range of witnesses, including current and former municipal officials, political office bearers, and provincial representatives.

Committee chairperson, Nathan Oliphant, concluded the hearings by asserting that the process remained independent, impartial, and fair. The committee will now analyse the evidence before submitting its final findings to the Speaker.

Public attention remains fixed on the North West provincial government as the region awaits the outcome of the investigation.

Madlanga Commission grills Sibiya on PKTT disbandment

Madlanga Commission Chairperson Justice Mbuyiseli Madlanga has challenged suspended Deputy National Police Commissioner General Shadrack Sibiya on his assertion that General Fannie Masemola shouldn't have been surprised at the Political Killings Task Team's disbanding.

Sibiya told the commission that many discussions took place on the unit's dissolution.

But Justice Madlanga pointed out the contradiction in Sibiya's statement, as he had also testified that he did not expect the unit to be dissolved.

Masemola previously testified that he was left surprised by the letter from Police Minister Senzo Mchunu, which stated that the PKTT must be disbanded immediately.

Today, Sibiya testified that Masemola's reaction to the PKTT disbandment was suspicious, because he knew that the discussions were happening.

Madlanga: I think the first time you mentioned it, you said we all did not expect the disbandment, and then you said it again later. You've said it four times.

Sibiya: That's correct.

Madlanga: I find it rather odd that you say you were not surprised and that General Masemola should not have been surprised, when all of you — you say four times — did not expect this. I'm just making that observation and to have it on record.

Sibiya returns to the stand tomorrow. General Sibiya was questioned on the Marais report that was used to substantiate the disbanding of the PKTT.

investigations looking into alleged political interference in law enforcement agencies at the Madlanga Commission.

Sibiya, who insisted on a PKTT closing report from General Dumisani Khumalo, testified that the Marais report was used to justify the unit's disbanding. The report has recommended that provincial investigative units must be closed down.

But Justice Madlanga put it to Sibiya that the Marais report did not state that the PKTT must be disbanded.

Madlanga: We see nothing — unless you go back to it and show us — we see nothing that says PKTT, you are being disbanding. We don't see that. Show us. Take us. You said you went through this document overnight and that you did so thoroughly. Show us a decision that says PKTT, you are being disbanding.

Sibiya: All I can say, Chair, is that in all these documents, re-establishment and this one of evaluations of the implementation of...

Madlanga: You will take us to others. Let's not be disorganized. General Sibiya was also questioned on why the PKTT was singled out to be disbanded when other task teams existed.

General Sibiya has previously testified that the PKTT required a huge budget to stay in operation. However, evidence leader Advocate Adila Hassim put it to Sibiya that the PKTT was not the only unit that was allocated a big budget.

Hassim: There are other task teams with big budgets, do you agree?

Sibiya: Yes, I agree.

Hassim: Some with bigger budgets than the Political Killings Task Team.

Sibiya: Yes, I agree.

Sibiya returns to the stand on Friday. **SABCNews**

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Foot-and-Mouth Outbreak Escalates: 344 FS Cases Spark National Alarm



By Lerato Mutlanyane

A fast-spreading livestock disease is tearing through herds, sending shockwaves from farm gates to supermarket shelves. With fears of looming price hikes and possible rationing, what began as an agricultural crisis is fast escalating into a national emergency — and political flashpoint.

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), a highly contagious viral infection affecting cloven-hoofed animals such as cattle, pigs, sheep, goats and several wild-life species, is threatening the backbone of South Africa's livestock industry. The disease compromises animal health, slashes productivity and disrupts trade, placing immense pressure on farmers and the broader agricultural economy.

Symptoms include fever, blisters and lesions in the mouth and on the hooves, lameness, reduced milk production, rapid breathing and loss of appetite. While FMD does not pose a direct threat to

human health, its economic consequences are severe, particularly for export markets reliant on disease-free certification.

The Free State Department of Agriculture and Rural Development has confirmed 344 active cases across municipalities in the province — a figure that underscores the scale and urgency of the outbreak.

Minister of Agriculture John Steenhuisen has announced that a nationwide vaccine rollout is underway to curb the spread of the virus and safeguard the country's FMD-free status, a critical requirement for the resumption of export trade.

Farmers have been urged to comply strictly with control measures, including isolation of infected animals, vaccination, culling where necessary and the enforcement of stringent biosecurity protocols.

For many in the sector, South Africa's return to FMD-free status hinges on the swift distribution of vaccines — and the collective discipline of the agricultural community to contain the outbreak before its economic bite deepens.

FS SOPA 2026: All Systems Go

Premier set to table key policy plans amid renewed push for execution and oversight

By Lerato Mutlanyane

With the spotlight firmly on accountability and delivery, the Free State Legislature has declared its readiness for the 2026 State of the Province Address (SOPA), setting the tone for a financial year expected to test the government's commitment to execution over rhetoric.

The State of the Province Address is scheduled to take place today at 10:00 at the Old Greys Sport Ground in Bloemfontein.

The Premier is expected to outline the province's political and socio-economic conditions, set key policy priorities for the year ahead, and reflect on both achievements and persistent challenges. The address will bring together members of the judiciary, business, labour, religious institutions, academia and other sectors of society.

Addressing members of the media on Wednesday, Speaker of the Free State Legislature Mxolisi Dukwana described the occasion as a carefully structured programme aimed at driving development and reinforcing fiscal discipline.

"It is not a celebration. It is not a spectacle. It is a constitutional accountability platform," Dukwana stressed. "It is not a fashion parade, but a moment for government to account to the people."

Dukwana further reported that expenditure on the official SOPA has been reduced by more than 25% compared to the previous year — decreasing from R4.5 million to R3.3 million.

"This reduction is deliberate," he said, noting that it reflects the Legislature's commitment to fiscal responsibility and strengthening public trust.

Residents have been encouraged to follow the proceedings through available platforms and to remain actively engaged throughout the year.

"The Legislature does not operate in isolation," he added.

Reaffirming the institution's mandate, Dukwana said the Legislature remains committed to protecting constitutional democracy, advancing the rights and livelihoods of citizens, exercising vigilant oversight over the executive, and ensuring responsible stewardship of public resources.

"We look forward to the Premier's address and to the robust legislative process that will follow. Above all, this institution exists for one purpose — to serve the people of the province."



The Speaker of the provincial legislature, Mxolisi Dukwana, and Deputy Speaker, Nolitha Ndungane during a pre-SOPA media briefing. Picture: Facebook

As the briefing concluded, attention turned to a pressing question: will 2026 mark a decisive shift from planning to implementation — translating policy commitments into measurable delivery for the people of the Free State?

Here's what residents expect from the Premier's address

Residents across the Free State say they want this year's State of the Province Address to move beyond promises and focus squarely on service delivery, jobs and opportunities for young people.

Marlene Van Wyk from Heidedal in Bloemfontein believes road infrastructure and healthcare should top the Premier's priorities.

"I will be happy if I can hear the Premier speaking about plans to fix our roads in Heidedal and prioritise the needs of elderly people in our communities. Importantly, improve our local hospital, Pelonomi Hospital, because our people cannot continue to die and be treated like animals. We pay taxes for a reason".

"Fix our street lights, which don't function half the time, and repair our sewerage systems so that we don't have flooded or blocked drains," said Van Wyk.

Bonisoa Mahlasi said unemployment must be addressed decisively.

"As a member of the Free State community, I expect the State of the Province Address to tackle pressing issues like unemployment. The province is facing serious challenges, with youth unemployment exceeding 35%. It's frustrating that this issue is repeatedly discussed without tangible results," she said.

Meanwhile, Msokoli Nyuleka hopes the Premier will address the shortage of local sporting facilities for young people.

"We need to nurture our youth from an early age to prevent what we see now, where young people loiter in the streets daily with nothing to do.

They end up turning to crime because there are no proper sporting facilities and no direction," said Nyuleka.

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Suspect in Court for Councillor's Murder

Accused remanded in custody as police probe tavern stabbing

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

Thapelo Apache Thejane, a 35-year-old suspect, has been remanded in custody until 23 February 2026 after appearing in the Klerksdorp Magistrate's Court on Monday. Thejane was arrested and detained after handing himself over to the police for the murder of City of Matlosana Local Municipality ward 20 councillor, Sello Molefi.

The killing occurred in the early hours of Friday morning outside a tavern in the Klerksdorp Central Business District (CBD).

According to North West police spokesperson, Colonel Adele Myburgh, officers were alerted to an incident in Voortrekker Street where they found the 46-year-old councillor lying on the ground with a fatal stab wound to the neck.

"Emergency medical personnel were summoned and subsequently certified the victim dead at the scene," she said, adding that "a multidisciplinary investigation was immediately launched by members of the Potchefstroom Anti-Gang Investigation Unit, Klerksdorp Detectives, and the Provincial Organized Crime Unit."

Preliminary investigations revealed that the deceased was allegedly stabbed during an argument reportedly linked to a dispute over a girlfriend.

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) in the North West has strongly condemned the brutal killing of the Ward 20 councillor from Kananana.

Following the incident, SALGA called for authorities to intensify visible policing, particularly within central business districts, which they say have become crime havens that threaten the safety of both community members and public representatives.

"Greater law enforcement visibility and proactive crime prevention measures are urgently required to protect residents, businesses, and those entrusted



A 46-year-old Molefi Sello was found dead in Klerksdorp on Friday morning. Picture: Matlotsana Municipality/ facebook

with public office," the association noted.

SALGA further stated that the loss of a public representative under such violent circumstances is a devastating blow to the local government sector and defies the democratic values they are meant to uphold.

The association's provincial leadership emphasised that law enforcement agencies must act swiftly to ensure justice is served, restoring public confidence and safeguarding the integrity of democratic institutions.

Stella Mondlane-Ngwenya, the Speaker of Council in the City of Matlosana, expressed deep sadness and extended heartfelt sympathy to the family and political associates of Molefi.

"We are deeply saddened by the passing of Coun-

cillor Sello and extend our heartfelt sympathy to his loved ones," she said.

She noted the alarming rise in violence, pointing out that this murder took place just one day after two young men from Khuma lost their lives shortly after delivering a memorandum of demands to the municipality.

Mondlane-Ngwenya stressed that communities are not safe and called for the rule of law to reign supreme as the region awaits the next court appearance of the accused.

"We call on law enforcement to strengthen their efforts in fighting crime and violence within our communities," she concluded.

Drug Crisis Grips Free State

Province locked in an intense fight to dismantle resilient drug networks



Major Drug Problem ... The presence of drugs in Free State communities is strongly linked to rampant violence and crime in the province. Picture: Supplied

By Bernell Simons

A recent wave of drug busts across the Free State has heightened concerns among law enforcement agencies and residents regarding the growing threat of narcotics and related violent crime.

Police operations in Bloemfontein, Ficksburg, Phuthaditjhaba, Wesselsbron, and Phiritona have resulted in multiple arrests and the seizure of significant quantities of dagga, cocaine, crystal meth, Nyaope, Mandrax, and Tik.

During a police raid on a farm outside Bloemfontein, officers confiscated dagga valued at R780 000 alongside live ammunition, while authorities in other regions recovered unlicensed firearms and suspected stolen property. These findings underscore what police describe as entrenched links between drug trafficking and broader criminal networks.

Free State police provincial spokesperson, Mahlomola Kareli, noted that these incidents demonstrate a serious threat to communities, stating,

"The drugs we are seizing are often linked to violent crime, and their presence in towns and townships places young people and vulnerable residents at significant risk."

Residents have expressed alarm over the prevalence of Nyaope and Tik, substances widely associated with addiction and social breakdown. Community leaders argue that while enforcement is necessary, it cannot resolve the crisis in isolation.

An anonymous community member from Bloemfontein remarked: "The problem goes beyond policing. We need stronger prevention programmes, education in schools, rehabilitation services and more support for families affected by addiction."

Experts warn that drug abuse fuels a cycle of criminal activity ranging from petty theft to gang-related violence as users struggle to sustain their addictions.

While the police maintain that these operations are part of a provincial strategy to dismantle criminal syndicates, they have urged residents to remain vigilant.

Said Kareli: "The fight against drugs is a shared

responsibility. Law enforcement cannot do it alone; communities must partner with us to protect their neighbourhoods." Analysts caution that sustained enforcement must be combined with social intervention to prevent crime from tightening its grip on the province.

Professor Robert Peacock from the University of the Free State (UFS) acknowledged that visible enforcement can restore public confidence but questioned the long-term impact on supply chains.

"The fact that arrests are taking place is positive. It shows operational activity and a willingness to confront the problem. However, the key issue is whether these arrests disrupt the broader supply chains or merely remove individuals who are quickly replaced," he noted.

Peacock further explained that drug markets are resilient, and removing street-level dealers may not dismantle the underlying structures that sustain distribution.

Advocate Inez Bezuidenhout from the UFS Faculty of Law, argues that effectiveness should be measured by prosecution outcomes rather than arrest numbers.

"Arrests alone do not tell us whether the system is working effectively. We need to look at how many of these cases are properly investigated, prosecuted and concluded in court. Successful prosecution — not just arrest numbers — provides a clearer picture of whether law enforcement efforts are sustainable," she said.

Bezuidenhout emphasised that a holistic approach including rehabilitation and prevention is essential to addressing the root causes of the crisis.

As the Free State intensifies its crackdown, the recent seizures demonstrate that authorities are actively responding to the situation. While these actions offer reassurance to anxious residents, the critical question remains whether these efforts are meaningfully disrupting the drug economy.

Experts argue that without a coordinated strategy involving policing, prosecution, and community engagement, drug-related crime will continue to pose a persistent threat to families across the province.

Porous Borders Fuel Scholar Transport Crisis

By Bernell Simons

The North West MEC for Community Safety and Transport Management, Wessels Morweng, has cast a spotlight on the dangerous intersection of porous national borders and failing provincial oversight following a serious bus accident in Coligny.

The crash, which involved 71 learners from Gamaloka, has shifted the conversation from a simple traffic incident to a broader debate on national security and the integrity of South Africa's borders.

As 31 of these learners recover from the trauma of the accident on a gravel road between Sleepsteun and Gerdau Farms, the focus has turned to how an unroadworthy vehicle, allegedly operated by an undocumented foreign national, was ever permitted to ferry the province's children.

Morweng's visit to More Secondary School served as a reminder of the real-world consequences of inadequate vetting and weak border controls.

While the bus was initially reported as fit for use, preliminary investigations revealed it was entirely un-

roadworthy at the time of the mechanical failure.

This discovery, coupled with the revelation that the driver is a Zimbabwean national whose legal status remains unverified by police, has ignited calls for a total overhaul of how transport contractors are screened.

For Morweng, the incident is a direct reflection of a system where documentation is not properly verified at the point of entry, leaving provincial departments to scramble when things go wrong.

"It is deeply concerning that a bus transporting our children was found not to be roadworthy. Even more troubling are reports that the driver is a foreign national whose legal status in the country is still being verified," said Morweng.

This local crisis echoes the concerns raised by President Cyril Ramaphosa in his 2026 State of the Nation Address, where he prioritised the use of drones and increased personnel to secure the country's 4 470km of land border.

Morweng argued that until these national security gaps are closed, essential services like scholar transport will remain vulnerable to operators who bypass

legal requirements and safety standards.

The failure of the service provider to adhere to the Service Level Agreement (SLA) has already resulted in the immediate termination of their contract.

However, Morweng pointed out that the problem extends beyond a single contractor to the systemic pressure placed on provinces by weak verification systems.

He noted that the inability to guarantee the legal status and professional standing of those working in sensitive sectors is a direct byproduct of borders that remain easily compromised.

Morweng's frustration was further fuelled by the contractor's continued incompetence, including the late arrival of a substitute bus the following day.

"When documentation is not properly verified or when systems fail, provinces are left to deal with the consequences.

"Compliance must be enforced at every level - from our borders to contractors entrusted with transporting our children," Morweng stressed.

Race Against Time as Five Miners Remain Trapped Underground

By Bernell Simons

Rescue operations have entered a critical phase at the Ekapa Minerals mine in Kimberley, where five workers have been trapped nearly 890 metres underground since Tuesday morning.

The miners became trapped in Tunnel 6 following a mud rush incident at the Joint Shaft Mine on 17 February. By Wednesday afternoon, they had been underground for more than 30 hours, with no communication established.

Specialist teams from Mines Rescue Services have been deployed to assist in the search-and-rescue efforts, supported by K9 units on site.

Ekapa Minerals confirmed that five employees remain unaccounted for and are currently inaccessible. Management said the miners have been cut off from communication.

"We still have five people unaccounted for; we have a fair idea of where they are," said Ekapa Mine general manager Howard Marsden.

"We have tried to determine proof of life, but we



Families and community members gathered outside the gates of Ekapa Minerals' Joint Shaft in Kimberley on Thursday night for a candlelight vigil. Picture: DFA

are not there at the moment. We are still hopeful that they are alive."

Marsden explained that rescue efforts are being

hampered by ongoing water inflow underground.

"We still have a lot of water coming at us, so we are pumping and installing additional pumping systems.

We have a multi-pronged approach to try to make contact," he said.

Despite several attempts to establish communica-

tion, no response had been received as of Wednesday afternoon.

The company has asked that the privacy of the affected workers and their families be respected during what it described as a difficult time.

Families have been notified, and support measures are being put in place.

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (Numsa) has called for full transparency as rescue efforts continue, urging management to keep workers and families informed throughout the operation.

The incident has also revived concerns about safety at the site.

Two years ago, a mining development contractor died when part of the old Dutoitspan mine shaft collapsed at the same operation.

As specialist rescue teams work around the clock, the priority remains establishing contact and bringing the trapped miners safely to the surface.

Authorities have not indicated how long the operation may take, but officials say all available resources have been mobilised.

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SALGA Champions Digital Shift in ES



By JN Reporter

In an era of tightening municipal budgets, infrastructure strain and intensifying public scrutiny, the ability to communicate clearly and harness digital tools has become central to effective local governance. Recognising this shift, the Free State office of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) convened a Communication and Digital Masterclass in Bloemfontein aimed at strengthening municipal capacity in an increasingly technology-driven environment. Held at Protea Hotel Willow Lake under the theme "Driving Digital Transformation and Communications Excellence in Municipalities," the session brought together communication and ICT practitioners from municipalities across the province. Strategic partners included the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), MTN and the University of the Free State (UFS), with representatives from CoGTA, Old Mutual and the Road Traffic Infringement Agency also in attendance.

Opening the engagement, SALGA Free State Provincial Director of Operations, Ms Emily Kuzwayo, said the masterclass was designed as a strategic intervention to enhance transparency, rebuild public trust and improve service delivery through stronger communication systems. Facilitated by GCIS Free State Director Ms Yoliswa Blom, the programme focused on practical tools for data-driven communication, digital innovation and improved citizen engagement. SALGA representatives William Moraka and Mukovhe Lumadi led discussions on digital transformation and turning municipal data into actionable insights to strengthen planning and responsiveness. Artificial intelligence formed part of the dialogue, with Professor Natasha Mboti of UFS urging municipalities to approach AI strategically and ethically, while maintaining the core principles of clarity and accountability. The masterclass underscored the growing view that digital competence is essential for municipalities seeking to remain responsive, transparent and future-ready.

Upscaled Service Delivery Push in North West

Province launches 'fix-it plan' as it targets service delivery restoration amid municipal failures

By Lerato Mutlanyane

In a decisive move to address systemic failures and restore service delivery across the North West, Gaoage Oageng Molapisi, the MEC for Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements, and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA), has announced a binding provincial action plan. This initiative follows a two-day Provincial Local Government Kgothakgothe held under the theme: Fixing Local Government – Every Municipality Must Work. The gathering brought together traditional leaders, government officials, and various stakeholders for honest deliberations aimed at transitioning from diagnosing problems to implementing concrete solutions. During the keynote address delivered on behalf of North West Premier, Lazarus Mokgosi, MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Madoda Sambatha, highlighted the essential role of government in driving local economic development to combat poverty and unemployment. This sentiment was echoed by MEC for Finance, Kenetswe Mosenogi, who underscored the importance of clean governance and the need for strong partnerships within the accountability ecosystem to improve financial management and audit outcomes. Further contributing to the national context, the Deputy Minister of CoGTA, Dr Namane Masemola, provided an update on the ongoing review of the White Paper on Local Government. MEC Molapisi described the Kgothakgothe as a turning point for the province, noting that the resolutions passed represent a binding commitment to the people of the North West. Central to this commitment is the formal adoption of a Service Delivery Action Plan, which will be implemented by all municipalities and departments to clear



Restoring Municipal Services ... North West Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements MEC, Gaoage Oageng Molapisi. Picture: Supplied

backlogs and rebuild public confidence. To ensure these promises are kept, a dedicated monitoring mechanism and an integrated performance dashboard will be developed to track deliverables and provide transparent, real-time reporting on municipal progress. The province also intends to strengthen its Inter-governmental Relations (IGR) structures. The North West Provincial Coordinating Committee, led by the Premier, and the Local Government MUNIMEC have been tasked with quarterly oversight of the action plan. Additionally, the District Development Model

(DDM) will be utilised to reduce planning silos and improve coordination. Recognising the upcoming political landscape, the Kgothakgothe resolved to bolster its partnership with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to ensure the 2026 Local Government Elections are free, fair, and well-administered. As the province pushes toward a more sustainable future, the provincial leadership has committed to rigorous oversight and collective accountability. "All hands remain on deck in building a North West province that works for all," concluded Molapisi in emphasis of the urgency of the task at hand.

How Digify GP is Transforming Young Talent in the Northern Cape



By JN Reporter

After successfully launching in Kuruman and Kimberley, the Digify GP program is now expanding its reach in the Northern Cape through a partnership between Digify Africa and Longyuan. Initiative extends to the De Aar region, empowering more young people with future-ready digital skills, all free of charge. Digify GP is a ten-week digital marketing training program aimed at unemployed youth in the Northern Cape province, specifically individuals between the ages of 18 and 35. The program equips participants with practical skills in digital marketing, content creation, paid advertising, and work readiness, preparing them for employment, entrepreneurship, and further opportunities in the digital economy. One of Digify GP's alumni, Makgotso Khubute, shares her journey: "I was eager but unsure of my next step. I knew I had potential, but I lacked the tools and direction to turn that potential into something practical. With limited exposure to digital skills and no formal work experience, accessing meaningful opportunities felt out of reach." Like many young people from smaller communities, she faced uncertainty about her place in the workforce. Today, Khubute is a social media specialist and brand manager, and her turning point was the Digify GP program. She says that the impact was immediate, shortly after completing the program, she stepped into a professional role where she manages social media platforms, builds brand identity, creates and schedules content, engages audiences, and uses data insights to improve performance. The skills she gained through Digify GP now form the foundation of her career.

CEO of the Digify Africa Foundation, Qhakaza Mohare expressed enthusiasm about empowering the youth in De Aar: "We are thrilled to bring the Digify GP program to De Aar, unlocking new opportunities for young talent in the Northern Cape. This initiative will empower participants with practical digital skills and the entrepreneurial confidence needed to thrive in a fast-paced economy. We believe in investing in potential, not just possibilities. Together, we are building a future where ambition meets opportunity," he said. As part of the Digify GP program in De Aar, Digify Africa will host the Digify GP SMME Mixer next week. This mixer will bring together local small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs), partners, funders, and the Digify GP cohort to connect, collaborate, and explore how digital marketing can support business growth. Longyuan, as a founding partner, has stated that the event provides a platform for young digital talent to engage directly with local businesses, strengthening community-based economic ecosystems and unlocking real opportunities. They emphasize that by connecting youth skills with local enterprise needs, the program goes beyond training. Head of Sustainability at Longyuan, Fay Cassin said for Longyuan, sustainability is not just about infrastructure, it's about people. "By investing in digital skills through the Digify GP De Aar program, we are creating real pathways for young people to participate meaningfully in the modern economy. "This partnership reflects our long-term commitment to inclusive growth, local capability building, and ensuring that communities like De Aar are not left behind in the digital transition," Cassin said. To join, support, or for more information on the Digify GP SMME Mixer event, please email digital@digifyafrica.com.

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Opinion

Dr BJ Mthembu

PhDs-UFH and Florida)



Why the BMF at 50 Is a Test of South Africa's Economic Future

In a year where trust in institutions is brittle and transformation stands at a tipping point, the Black Management Forum's 50th anniversary is more than a milestone—it is a moment of national reflection and a litmus test for the future of economic justice in South Africa.

Founded in 1976, a year of fire and defiance, the BMF emerged in a country where exclusion from economic leadership was deliberate, enforced, and systemic. Its founding insight was unapologetic: political change without economic inclusion would leave South Africa's liberation unfinished. Leadership, management, and ownership were never secondary concerns; they were the battleground.

Five decades later, that conviction has not expired. If anything, the necessity of structured, defended inclusion has become more urgent as the frameworks that underpin South Africa's transformation project come under renewed pressure. Economic inequality remains among the world's most extreme. Trust in government and the private sector has frayed. For many, particularly young Black South Africans, transformation feels stalled or worse, even betrayed. The question is not simply whether the BMF has lasted 50 years. The question is whether, in this moment of national reckoning, it can still lead.

The Relevance Test in a Changing Landscape

In 2026, South Africa stands at a crossroads defined by political fluidity, uneven economic recovery, and a growing impatience, particularly among younger generations with symbolism that does not translate into lived improvement.

We see it in the discourse, debates on employment equity reduced to technical compliance; transformation codes applied without confronting who holds capital or makes decisions; social compacts built on consensus, not courage. Representation has expanded, yet authority remains concentrated. Growth has returned in pockets, yet participation in value creation remains limited. There is a dis-



connect between vision and outcomes, policy and practice. And it is within this tension that the BMF's relevance is tested.

The organisation's strength lies in its dual role. The BMF carries the institutional memory of how exclusion was engineered from boardrooms to policies while engaging directly with the contemporary realities of leadership, governance, and reform. This allows it to speak with credibility when transformation is contested, diluted, or reframed, and to insist that inclusion cannot be deferred to market forces or reduced to an administrative exercise. In a climate of fragile trust and rising expectations, that stance is not optional, it is essential.

And yet, relevance today cannot be inherited. It must be earned, in how we respond to shifting power dynamics, generational expectations, and the question many are now asking: "Transformation, for whom?"

Policy, Power and the Future of Inclusion

In this year's State of the Nation Address and national Budget, South Africans will listen closely not

just for promises, but for priorities. Who gets to set the policy agenda? Whose needs are centered? And whose future is being financed?

The answers to these questions are not abstract. They define whether transformation advances or retreats. This is where the BMF must assert its next-generation mandate, not only as a commentator on policy, but as a force that shapes it. The next phase of economic inclusion must go beyond increasing participation; it must demand reallocation of influence, clarity on outcomes, and accountability from institutions that have mastered the language of transformation without disrupting its terms.

This means reasserting the link between equity and growth. It means challenging the assumption that markets will self-correct towards justice. And it means equipping a new generation of Black leaders in business, government, and civil society with the tools, networks, and political will to lead differently. A Vision for the Next Fifty Years

At 50, the BMF is not pausing to commemorate a legacy; it is stepping forward to shape what comes

next. The next frontier of transformation will not be won through representation alone. It will be won by those who can shift architecture of decision-making, capital flows, accountability mechanisms, and strategic ownership. It will require leaders who move beyond occupying space to reshaping institutions. Who not only steward capital but also leverage it for systemic inclusion. Who refuse to be proxies and instead drive reform that delivers progress, not platitudes.

This is not a technical task. It is political. It is generational. And it will be hard.

The BMF's challenge is therefore more exacting than before. It must develop leadership equal to complexity. It must convene conversations others avoid — not for provocation's sake, but to confront uncomfortable truths: that Black professionals can rise in institutions that still resist transformation; that compliance can coexist with exclusion; that metrics can obscure meaning.

Above all, the BMF must remain clear: inclusion is not a concession. It is a prerequisite for legitimacy, for stability, and for a South African economy that can thrive beyond elite enclaves.

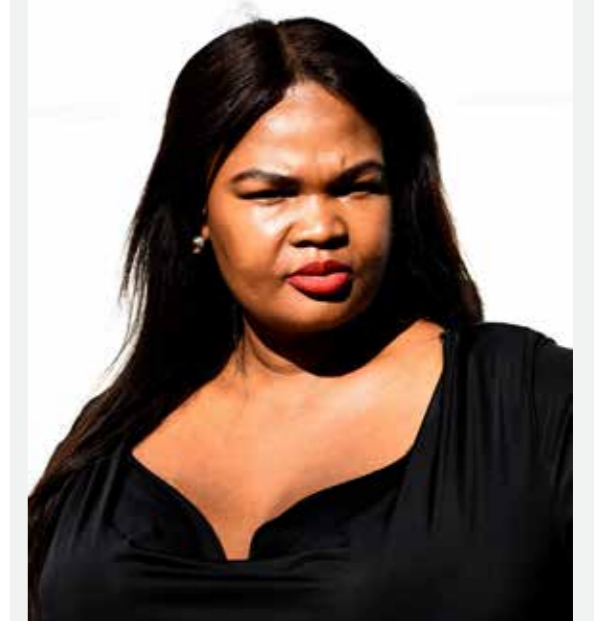
From Custodian to Catalyst

As the Forum marks this milestone, it does so not as a custodian of legacy, but as a catalyst for what's next. That means anchoring its work in the lived experiences of Black professionals and business owners from township entrepreneurs blocked by procurement red tape to executives navigating boardrooms still resistant to structural change.

It also means building coalitions across provinces, industries, and generations to ensure that transformation is not the task of the few, but the demand of the many. And it requires rejecting the temptation to trade vision for access or clarity for comfort.

South Africa does not need more organizations that manage perception. It needs institutions that move the needle.

What do citizens expect from a State of the Province Address?



Refilwe Mochoari
Editor-in-Chief

As Premiers from different provinces prepare to deliver their State of the Province addresses (SOPA) in the wake of President Cyril Ramaphosa's State of the Nation address (SONA) which he delivered last week Thursday, we are waiting in anticipation to see what will be said this year.

Hi everyone my name is Refilwe Mochoari, let's talk about the significance of a State of the Province Address... (SOPA).

When the Premiers deliver their SOPAs, it is to translate broad national commitments into tangible realities faced by communities.

The State of the Province address is an annual speech by the Premier to the province which focuses on the social and economic state of the province as well as to mark the official opening of the Provincial Legislature.

Today the Free State Premier, MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae is delivering her SOPA in Bloemfontein, next week, on Thursday Northern Cape Premier Zamani Saul will be delivering his speech in Springbok and the North West Premier Lazarus Mokgotsi will also deliver his speech on Thursday in Mafikeng.

In his SONA, President Ramaphosa's main priorities this year include positive economic growth and investment, public investment to build and maintain infrastructure, minerals and industrial development, creating employment, intensifying the fight against crime, dealing with the water crisis, and responding positively in the fight against Gender based violence and femicide (GBVF).

The President's promises of employment creation, fighting crime, fighting GBV, investment opportunities, and many others also mean nothing if the different Premiers are not able to articulate how these strategies will be implemented in their provinces because each province has its own dynamics. Provinces have their unique opportunities and challenges.

For instance, in Free State, I expect the Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae to address the issue of dysfunctional municipalities in the Free State especially those which have been flagged by the Auditor General.

I also expect Premier Letsoha-Mathae to address the outbreak of foot and mouth disease which is a nuisance to the province and has also been classified as a national disaster.

In the Northern Cape, I expect Premier Zamani Saul to address job creation, economic growth renewable energy, and environmental concerns.

Generally, the Northern Cape is dominated by acute water scarcity, land degradation, and the toxic legacy of mining.

And in the North West, I expect Premier Lazarus Mokgotsi to address the condition of road infrastructure in the province.

The North West as one of the most attractive tourist destinations in South Africa, sadly has the worst roads that I have ever seen, I expect Premier Mogotsi to address the issue of roads and maybe put a timeline on when the citizens of the province will finally be able to experience smooth roads.

What I do not wish to listen to, are SOPAs that will be a repetition of the President's SONA.

In my opinion, a good Premier will use his or her State of the Province Address to highlight provincial innovations, special programs that distinguish their leadership from the national leadership.

A good Premier will address burning issues that affect their communities from the province to local government.

The address of a good Premier will address ways on how they plan to reduce the problems that are faced by the members of society.

I expect the Premiers in our region Letsoha-Mathae, Saul, and Mokgotsi to deliver messages that address critical issues and have impact and become a force for positive change.

I wish to see how the Premiers will address the issue of winning the trust of communities back, especially because this is the year of elections.

A year where the address has to be extremely convincing to their immediate communities, different from the normal government rhetoric.

What do citizens expect from the SOPAs?

Like myself, the citizens have expectations.

They are looking for employment opportunities, they expect conversations around the reduction of crime, they expect their Premiers to address water scarcity within their communities, they expect to hear about how the issues of potholes will be fixed, they expect their Premiers to address the issues of housing and they expect their Premiers to address the issue of quality healthcare services.

And yes we know that these are the subjects that the Premier's generally touch on, but I believe that the public needs the Premiers to be practical.

In essence, when a Premier talks about employment opportunities, may they talk about work opportunities that are meaningful.

When a Premier talks about economic freedom, let it be that entrepreneurs continue to be empowered fairly.

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 Part Two

Ten Lessons I Learned from Peter Drucker

If you are to read one book on executive self-management, it should be this, Peter Drucker's definitive classic, *The Effective Executive*. It doesn't matter the size of your organization, or even whether you run an organization at all. Anyone who has responsibility for getting the right things done—anyone who seeks how best to self-deploy on the few priorities that will make the biggest impact—is an executive.

The most effective among us have the same number of hours as everyone else, yet they deploy them better, often much better than people with far greater raw talent. As Drucker states early in these pages: people endowed with tremendous brilliance are often "strikingly ineffectual." And if that's true for the exceptionally brilliant, what hope is there for the rest of us? Actually, there is something much better than hope: Drucker's practical disciplines.

I first read *The Effective Executive* in my early thirties, and it was a huge inflection point in my own development. Reading the text again, I'm reminded of how its lessons became deeply ingrained, almost as a set of commandments. Some of Drucker's examples and language might be dated, but the insights are timeless and modern, as helpful today as when he wrote them more than five decades ago. Here are ten lessons I learned from Peter Drucker and this book, and that I offer as a small portal of entry into the mind of the greatest management thinker of all time.

1. Count your time, and make it count

Drucker taught that what gets measured gets managed. So, how can we possibly hope to manage our time if we don't measure precisely where our time goes? Inspired by Drucker's challenge, I've kept a spreadsheet with one key metric: the number of creative hours logged each day, with the self-imposed imperative to stay above a thousand creative hours a year. This mechanism keeps me on the creative march—doing research, developing concepts, and writing—despite ever-increasing demands for travel, team leadership, and working with executives. But you also have to make your time count. The "secret" of people who do so many difficult things, writes Drucker, is that they do only one thing at a time; they refuse to let themselves be squandered away in "small dribblets [that] are no time at all." This requires the discipline to consolidate time into blocks, of three primary types. First, create unbroken blocks for individual think time, preferably during the must lucid time of day; these pockets of quietude might be only 90 minutes, but even the busiest executive must do them with regularity.

Second, create chunks of deliberately unstructured time for people and the inevitable stuff that comes up. Third, engage in meetings that matter,

making particular use of carefully constructed standing meetings that can be the heartbeat of dialogue, debate, and decision; and use some of your think time to prepare and follow up.

2. Prepare better meetings

The oft-repeated quip, "I'm sorry to write you a long letter, as I did not have time to write a short one" could be applied to meetings: "I'm sorry to imprison you in this long meeting, as I did not have time to prepare a short one."

Effective people develop a recipe for how to make the most of meetings, and they employ their recipes with consistent discipline. And while there are many varieties of good meeting recipes, just as there are many recipes for baking tasty cookies, Drucker highlights two common ingredients: preparation with a clear purpose in mind ("why are we having this meeting?") and disciplined follow-up. Those who make the most of meetings frequently spend substantially more time preparing for the meeting than in the meeting itself. To abuse other people's time by failing to prepare shorter, better meetings amounts to stealing a portion of their lives. And while we must all lead or join meetings, they should be limited to those that do the most useful work; if meetings come to dominate your time, then your life is likely being ill-spent.

3. Don't make a hundred decisions when one will do

We're continually hit by a blizzard of situations, opportunities, problems, incidents—all of which seem to demand decisions. Yes. No. Go. No-go. Buy. Sell. Attack. Retreat. Accept. Reject. Reply. Ignore. Invest. Harvest. Hire. It can feel like chaos, but the most effective people find the patterns within the chaos. In Drucker's view, we rarely face truly unique, one-off decisions.

And there is an overhead cost to any good decision: it requires argument and debate, time for reflection and concentration, and energy expended to ensure superb execution. So, given this overhead cost, it's far better to Zoom Out and make a few big generic decisions that can apply to a large number of specific situations, to find a pattern within—in short, to go from chaos to concept.

Think of it as akin to Warren Buffett making investment decisions. Buffett learned to ignore the vast majority of possibilities almost as background noise. Instead, he made a few big decisions—such as the decision to shift from buying mediocre companies at very cheap prices to buying great earnings machines at good prices—and then replicated that generic decision over and over again. For Drucker, those who grasp Buffett's point that "inactivity can be very intelligent behavior" are much more effective than those who make hundreds of decisions with no coherent concept.

Foreign Nationals Must Respect Our Laws



According to the Stats SA report, there are an estimated 4 million foreign nationals in SA, representing about 3.9% of the total SA population of 63.1 million. According to the Border Management Authority, this number is fortunately declining steadily, but it is also burdening the current unemployment rate, which stands at a staggering 43.1%. SA ranks in the top 3 with the highest unemployment rates worldwide.

When SA gained its freedom and became a democratic state in 1994, it adopted a Constitution that is viewed by many as the best in the world. This Constitution became the supreme law of the Republic to "... Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations."

Because South Africa belongs to all who live in it, some foreign nationals with criminal intent have taken advantage of its relaxed criminal justice system. The many years of infighting, corruption, and debilitated law enforcement agencies, laid bare in the Madlanga Commission of Inquiry and the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee to investigate the allegations made by Lieutenant General Nhlhlahla Mkhwanazi, do not help at all. Just because the Constitution protects everyone, including foreign nationals and criminals alike, people think the Constitution is just a father Christmas in a terra nullius, with a shopping basket containing an assortment of rights, handing out power to all and sundry so that people can do as they please with impunity.

According to the Department of Correctional Services, the prison population of foreign nationals stands at approximately 15.8%, making SA one of the countries with the highest percentage of foreign inmates in the entire world. To make matters worse, the detention of foreign nationals in our prisons costs SA around R1.6 billion annually, which is R11 million daily! Just envision how many

RDP houses the government could build with this money, or how many jobs it could create for the unemployed youth. I am just scared that one day we will wake up to a "Gen Z-led" revolution due to poverty, unemployment, and inequality, as recently happened in countries like Morocco, Kenya, and Nepal. What is expected of any foreign national who sojourns in a foreign land is to adopt the principles of peaceful coexistence, which embrace respect for the rule of law, and territorial integrity. In 2022, Judge Thulare, now a Justice of the Constitutional Court, penned a groundbreaking judgment in the matter of Osagiede and Others v State. In his judgment, he reproaches foreign nationals who come into this country with only one mind: to commit a crime. He states, among other things, that although the Constitution protects everyone, including foreign nationals, they must not think that SA is up for auction. To demonstrate how tired he is of foreign nationals who commit crimes, he says this in paragraph 97 of the same judgment, "Against the background of what Postman explained, SA no longer tolerates bullshit, and has its crap-detectors on."

I am not xenophobic. In fact, I do subscribe to the ideology of borderless Africa, as championed by many, including Kwame Nkrumah, Muammar Gaddafi, Ibrahim Traore, to mention just but a few. However, we must not accept lawlessness by foreign nationals who behave as if SA owes them something. Of course, we found sanctuary in some of the African countries during Apartheid, but we did not promise them a South Africa that is a free-for-all.

Foreign nationals must know that SA is not on the market. We shall never tolerate any foreign national, notwithstanding their native land, to do as they wish. They must show reverence for our laws or face the ultimate wrath of the law.

Mzwandile ka Mrabe, an inspiring writer, social commentator, an Advocate and a child of God

Business

Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	16.14	-0.52%	▼
Rand/Pound	21.75	-0.34%	▼
Rand/Euro	19.01	-0.46%	▼
Platinum	2 082.00	-0.28%	▼
Brent Crude	71.75	2.30%	▲
Gold	4 996.70	0.42%	▲
Etherium	1 948.83	0.26%	▲
Bitcoin	66 983.88	0.85%	▲

R1.5 million Boost for NC entrepreneurs



By NJ Reporter

Anglo American's Zimele programme and its partner Sigma have awarded R1.5 million in seed capital to rural entrepreneurs in the Northern Cape, following a 12-week business development initiative that culminated in pitching sessions.

The programme saw 93 businesses from rural communities pitch to a panel of judges.

Winners received prizes ranging between R50 000 and R150 000 to help launch or grow their enterprises.

With women making up 56% of the winners, and approximately 68% are youth, the University of KwaZulu-Natal quality assured programme exemplified the Zimele's commitment to inclusive economic develop-

ment. Larisha Naidoo, Vice President at Anglo American Zimele said this demonstrates what is possible when they invest in people's potential and equip them with the right tools to succeed.

"These entrepreneurs represent the future of economic participation in the Northern Cape. They are building sustainable businesses that will create jobs and strengthen their communities for years to come, she said.

Participants received training in business model canvas methodology, design thinking and artificial intelligence tools, supporting the company's commitment to economic diversification beyond mining.

Some of the winners are Tshepang Pako, the founder of Nelomo, a manufacturing company that specialises

in multipurpose cleaning products, secured seed capital of R150 000 towards the development of her business. "Winning this prize means a lot to me.

"I relied on manual methods to manufacture my products.

"This funding will allow me to produce my products in bulk as I plan on investing in new equipment.

"I aspire to open my own store and expand the brand of my business. Zimele's programme is an eye-opener, she said.

Nine top winners received special recognition at the culmination event, with judges including representatives from Anglo American, Kumba Iron Ore and the University of KwaZulu-Natal assessing the viability and innovation of each business model.

Ngwathe Cracks Down on Illegal Tuck Shops



Ngwathe Local Municipality Executive Mayor, Victoria De Beer-Mthombeni. Picture: Facebook

By JN Reporter

Ngwathe Local Municipality has intensified its crackdown on illegal tuck shops operating across its towns, warning that unregistered businesses flouting health, safety and zoning regulations will face immediate closure.

The operation, carried out in partnership with law enforcement and health inspectors, aims to root out non-compliant traders, protect consumers from unsafe food handling practices and restore order in residential areas increasingly affected by unregulated informal trading.

Accompanied by Municipal Manager Dr Futhuli Patrick Mthamaha and MMC for Public Safety and Transport Noma Moloi, Executive Mayor Victoria De Beer-Mthombeni this week led a multi-agency operation to shut down unlicensed tuck shops and non-compliant businesses in Mokwallo, Vrededorf.

The operation was conducted in partnership with the South African Police Service (SAPS), the Department of Employment and Labour, the Department of Home Affairs, the Regional Disaster Management team and the Local Economic Development Office.

The mayor said the ongoing operations form part of the municipality's commitment to restoring order, protecting infrastructure and enforcing compliance to create safer and fair economic conditions for all residents.

She raised serious concerns about widespread

illegal electricity consumption, particularly among some foreign-owned shops. According to the municipality, several businesses reflected questionable purchasing histories on municipal records, while some operators were allegedly in possession of documents that do not permit them to run businesses.

"The municipality is suffering significant revenue losses, including damage to electricity infrastructure as a result of overloading. Ngwathe currently owes Eskom approximately R2.8 billion, a situation largely attributed to electricity losses arising from illegal connections, tampering with infrastructure and non-compliance with municipal bylaws. These operations are critical in addressing revenue leakages, stabilising the municipality's financial position and ensuring a sustainable electricity supply to our communities," she said.

In Parys, an unlicensed scrap yard was closed after suspected stolen municipal infrastructure, including copper and steel, was recovered.

Authorities also uncovered widespread electricity meter tampering, with many establishments failing to pay for municipal services. The municipality further revealed that some businesses previously shut down had illegally resumed operations.

The municipality said the crackdown will continue as part of efforts to restore order, protect public infrastructure and ensure compliance across all towns under its jurisdiction.

Inflation Eases to 3.5% as Fuel Relief and Stable Food Prices Offset Meat Surge

South Africa's annual consumer price inflation slowed in January, returning to its November 2025 level as lower fuel costs and steady food inflation helped contain price pressures.

Data from Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) on Wednesday showed that the headline inflation rate edged down to 3.5% in January from 3.6% in December 2025, though slightly above expectations of 3.4%.

StatsSA chief director of price statistics, Patrick Kelly, said fuel prices were the main drag on overall price growth while food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation remained steady at 4.4% for a third consecutive month, masking significant divergences within categories.

"The index for fuel decreased by 3.7% in the 12 months to January. The monthly change for petrol was negative 3.1% and diesel negative 5.4%," Kelly said.

"The price of inland 95 octane petrol was R20.75 a litre in January, the lowest in almost four years, that is since February 2022 when we paid R20.14."

Meanwhile, StatsSA data showed that cereal products saw notable easing. The annual rate for the category slowed to 0.6% in January from 2.1% in December.

White rice continued its prolonged deflationary trend, recording an 11% annual decline, its eleventh consecutive month of price decreases. Maize meal inflation cooled sharply from 9.5% in December to 2.6% in January.

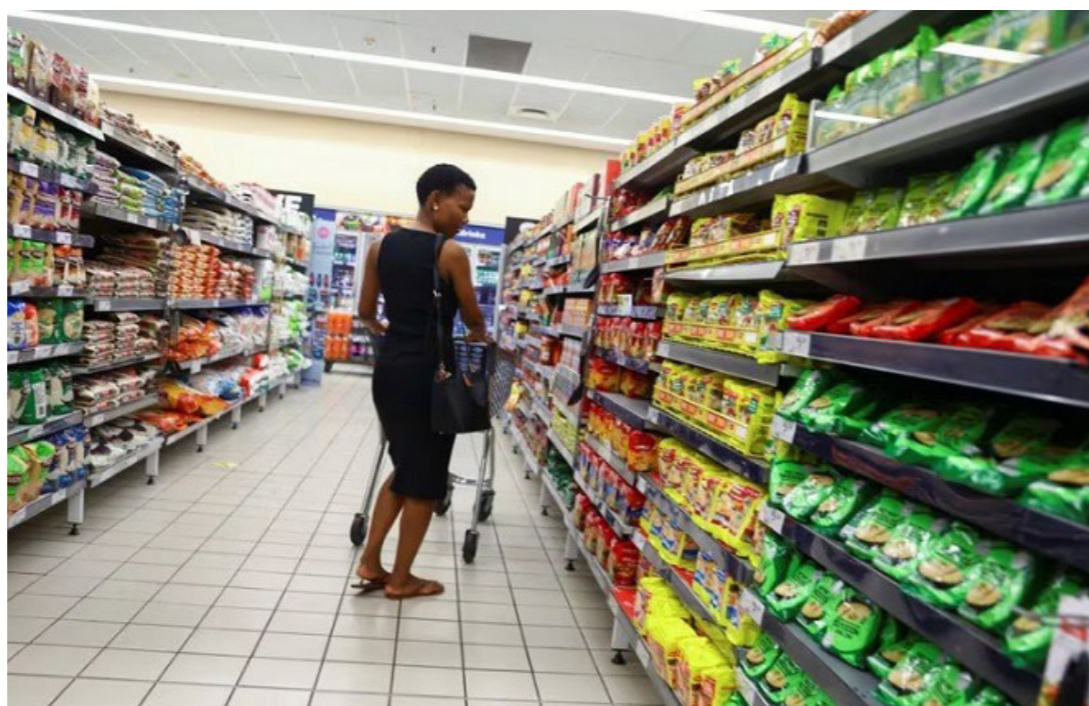
Inflation for oils and fats softened to 4% from 4.6%, with olive oil 7.9% cheaper than a year ago and butter down 0.7%.

Dairy and eggs also remained in deflationary territory. The milk, other dairy products and eggs category recorded an annual rate of -0.5%, compared with -1.1% in December. Fresh full-cream milk declined by 1.4%, low-fat milk by 1.6% and eggs by 7.6% year-on-year.

Egg prices in particular have eased meaningfully. A tray of six eggs cost R22.90 in January, down from R24.51 a year earlier and well below the peak of R25.85 recorded in December 2023.

However, rising meat prices continue to strain household budgets and offset gains elsewhere in the food basket.

The annual rate for meat accelerated to 13.5% in



January from 12.6% in December, the highest level since December 2017, when it reached 13.9%.

"Three beef products recorded the highest annual rates of all 391 products in the CPI basket. These were beef steak rising by 31.2%, stewing beef up to 30.3% and beef mince at 28%," Kelly said.

Even typically cheaper cuts were not spared. Beef offal inflation accelerated to 17.2% from 10.5% in December, while pork prices jumped sharply to 19.5% from 11.5%. Pork also experienced a significant rise, climbing to 19.5% from 11.5%.

On a monthly basis, the CPI rose by 0.2%, maintaining the same pace as December 2025.

Beyond food and fuel, January's inflation dynamics reflected seasonal adjustments and administrative price changes.

Kelly said several banks increased annual fees at the start of the year, pushing the Financial Services Index up by an average of 4.1% month-on-month. This con-

tributed to an annual rate of 4.9% in the category.

The beginning of the school year also brought higher costs for parents. School uniform items included in the CPI basket since January 2025 recorded price increases above the broader clothing and footwear category, which rose by 1.2% annually.

School jerseys increased by 7%, while school skirts and dresses rose 3.2% and school shoes 4.1% compared with January last year.

Stationery, however, offered some relief. Pens were 9.8% cheaper month-on-month in January, writing books declined 5%, and printing paper dropped 3.5% compared with December 2025. Textbook prices fell 1.3% on a monthly basis, taking the annual rate to -3.3%.

Overall, January's data suggest that while headline inflation remains well-contained, underlying pressures persist in key food categories, particularly meat. **BUSINESS REPORT**

Meat Prices Continue to Rise Despite Inflation Easing



StatsSA says rising meat prices continue to put pressure on consumer wallets despite food inflation holding steady for a third consecutive month.

This is after stable food inflation and lower fuel prices contributed to the lower headline rate for January, which came in at 3.5 percent.

The figure stood at 3.6 percent in December.

Chief Director for Price Statistics at Stats SA, Patrick Kelly, said the annual rate for meat accelerated to the highest print for the category since December 2017.

"The annual rate for meat accelerated further to 13.5% from December's 12.6%. Three beef products recorded the highest annual rates of all 391 products in the CPI basket. These were beef steak

(31.2%), stewing beef (30.3%) and beef mince (28.0%)."

The surge in red meat prices can mostly be attributed to the country's worst foot and mouth disease outbreak.

"More affordable beef products were not immune to sharper price increases, with the rate for beef offal accelerating to 17.2% from 10.5% in December. Pork also experienced a significant rise, climbing to 19.5% from 11.5%."

While government is dealing with the FMD pandemic, there's also been a warning that the African swine fever could become a pest to piggeries in KZN, Free State, North West, and parts of Gauteng.

This is expected to keep some meat prices up for longer. **EWN**

GET TO KNOW YOUR DJ

Spirit of Soul and R&B with DJ Nono



By Lerato Mutlanyane

The soul-soothing lyrics resonate deeply, the basslines are crisp, and the warm, crackling soul samples capture your attention—all expertly curated by the Free State's talented Cynthia Makoai (46), also known as DJ Nono.

In the booth, bathed in amber light, she does not just mix tracks, she weaves a tapestry of emotion, soul, and a sense of belonging, drawing the crowd into a collective groove.

Mokoai embodies the essence of 90s and 2000s R&B and soul music, as well as fans of the emerging Afro-pop genre.

"I grew up in a family that loves music, and my uncle used to play a lot of reggae, soul, and jazz. I believe that is where my love of music comes from," she said.

Polished and mentored by renowned disc jockeys, DJ Kgotso and DJ Walter Sefatsa, Mokoai is not only a passionate DJ but also a thriving entrepreneur.

Mokoai is making strides in the construction industry as a civil engineering contractor. She is also an event organizer and hosts soul music events across the Free State province.

Although the industry presents challenges, Mokoai navigates them with courage and resilience.

"Cancellation of gigs and payment delays are common issues I encounter, but they don't stop me from doing what I love," she added.

You can catch the vibrant sounds of soul and R&B from DJ Nono at Destinate Car Wash, Capello, The Zone, and Klak.

This Sunday she will be playing at Destinate Car Wash.

On 7 March she is hosting the All White Soul and R&B music show with an all female line up at Mobjaba Club in Bloemfontein.

Artist loses court battle against Gayton McKenzie over Venice Biennale decision



Artist Gabrielle Goliath has lost her legal bid to overturn a decision by Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture Gayton McKenzie to halt South Africa's participation at the 61st Venice Biennale.

The Gauteng High Court in Pretoria on Wednesday dismissed Goliath's urgent application to reinstate her planned artwork for the exhibition.

Goliath's piece, titled *Elegy*, was selected by an independent committee to be exhibited in Venice. *Elegy* is a performance and video installation made up of eight ritual laments.

It explores interconnected histories of grief, from femicide in South Africa and the erasure of Nama life-worlds in Namibia, to the displacement and killing of Palestinian civilians.

The ruling means Goliath will not represent

South Africa at the international art event.

Highly divisive and politically sensitive In early January, McKenzie cancelled the South African pavilion showing and described the work as "highly divisive".

He said the decision was based on concerns about the piece's content in relation to the ongoing global conflict.

"It would not be wise nor defensible for South Africa to support an art installation against a country currently accused of genocide while we are also fielding unjustified accusations of genocide," McKenzie said.

"The Department of Sport, Arts and Culture cannot support such a highly divisive political narrative on what remains our platform as a country," Gabrielle Goliath disappointed by the ruling

According to Daily Maverick, Goliath expressed disappointment in the ruling.

"These are punitive measures, enacted against those the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture is mandated to support, and will certainly discourage others in the arts community from attempting to defend their constitutional rights in court," a statement from her team read.

She also indicated that her team is considering an appeal.

"We believe this ruling sets a dangerous precedent, jeopardising the rights of artists, curators and creatives in South Africa to freedom of expression — freedom to dissent.

"It goes without saying that we will be contesting this ruling through an appeal," the statement read. **Sowetan**

Teen Trailblazer Breaks Barriers at Red Bull Dance Your Style



By Lerato Mutlanyane

The crowd was loud, the competition fierce and the atmosphere electric as 18-year-old Bloemfontein dancer Relebohile Matiya stepped onto the centre of the dancefloor on Saturday evening. She didn't just win — she shattered records, becoming the first female qualifier in Red Bull Dance Your Style regional history.

As the Red Bull Dance Your Style competition took over Hoffman Square in Bloemfontein, the battleground was charged with anticipation. Young dancers went head-to-head under the blazing sun, each hoping to secure a spot at the National Finals set for 28 March 2026.

When the emcee called her name, Matiya froze in disbelief, her hands flying to her mouth. A split second later, the square erupted — shocked gasps blending into thunderous applause as the crowd realised they had just witnessed history.

Support for Matiya carried through to the final round, with runner-up Vero also delivering a standout performance that earned roaring cheers and unwavering love from the audience throughout the afternoon.

"Winning was never expected, but I did come here wanting to win. I am very happy to have won this Red Bull Dance Your Style regional leg because I always wanted to compete but was waiting to turn 18," she said moments after her victory.

Bloemfontein's excitement doesn't end there. The city will host the Red Bull Dance Your Style National Finals for the first time on 28 March 2026, where regional winners from across the country will battle for the national title and the chance to represent South Africa at the World Finals.

"The energy in Bloemfontein has been incredible," said Ayanda Sotshisa from Red Bull.

For Matiya, the victory is sweet — but the work is far from over. As she prepares for next month's National Finals, she carries with her not only momentum, but the hopes of a new generation ready to take centre stage.

J.Cole is coming back to South Africa

By Refilwe Mochoari

Official ticket sales for the much anticipated J.Cole global tour.

This week started on high with Hip hop lovers who will be in for a spectacular treat this year with Grammy Award-winning rap artist J.Cole announcing that he is heading back to the African soil for 'The Fall-Off Tour' on Saturday 12 December this year after a whole decade.

Entertainment company Big Concerts announced on Monday that the J.Cole global tour spanning North America, Europe, United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and will end with a show stopping live concert at the FNB

Stadium in Johannesburg, South Africa. 'The Fall-Off Tour' is J. Cole's first solo headline tour in five years, following his 2021 'The Off-Season Tour', and his first full global run in 2017 '4 Your Eyes Only' World Tour.

The global run supports J. Cole's seventh studio album, *The Fall Off*, which was released February 6, 2026 via Cole World, Inc., under exclusive license to Interscope Records.

MasterCard cardholders have special access to presale tickets in South Africa, Netherlands, Belgium, France, Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

MasterCard Presale tickets started on Wednesday in South Africa. Big Concert Fan Club tickets started yesterday and official ticket sale starts today.



One Night with Karin White in Sun City

One stage, one night and legendary voices



By Refilwe Mochoari

The much loved international R&B legend, Karyn White, will make an exciting return to South Africa with a special one-night only Magic Music Sessions Sun City show on Saturday, 2 May at Sun City Resort in Rustenburg.

With a fresh, brand new music offering that was released this year titled 'You're Gonna Want Me Back', Karyn White will take the stage to also share her all-time favourite powerful hits that defined a generation which amongst others include 'Superwoman', 'I'd Rather Be Alone', 'Can I Stay With You', 'I'm Your Woman' and more.

The Magic Music Sessions which is an initiative of Vertex Events will also feature SA celebrated artists such as Vusi Nova, Lira and Babalwa M are set to give an unforgettable evening of timeless classics and pure musical elegance awaits.

Executive Director for Vertex Events Thato Segalo says this is going to be more than just a concert.

"Welcoming Karyn White back to South Africa means a lot to the Vertex Events team.

"We are excited to deliver a show that will leave fans wanting more, while creating memories and enjoying timeless music."

"This is more than just a concert, it is a meeting of international greatness and local brilliance. An evening filled with nostalgia, romance, elegance and irresistible rhythm," Segalo said.

FRESHBYCADDY Releases Brand New Single, 'Oh Nah Nah'

By Refilwe Mochoari

Multifaceted South African Entertainer, Teboho "CADDY" Tsotetsi, better known as FRESHBYCADDY, has released his highly-anticipated new music offering titled 'Oh Nah Nah', a perfect blend of different sounds with a dreamy, feel-good and cool message of love, expression and freedom.

Celebrated for his work as a television presenter, actor, musician fashion curator and creative entrepreneur, music is not a foreign concept to Tsotetsi and he continues to explore the avenue with full intent, focus and talent.

Tsotetsi entered the entertainment industry in 2013 and has since cemented his name and brand to undeniable heights.

Now shining a light on his musical strength and love for the art, Tsotetsi blends Trap, Afrobeats, Pop and Street Culture influences - crafting a unique sonic identity.

Tsotetsi says "Oh Nah Nah" is his feel-good Afrobeats and South African pop summer anthem. "It is about that countdown feeling when you cannot wait to see someone you are really into.

"I blend Johannesburg city energy with coastal romance and smooth log-drum rhythms to capture the excitement, flirting and the rush of finally pulling up to your person," he said.



NOTICE IN TERMS OF REGULATION 68 OF THE DEEDS REGISTRIES ACT, 1937, IN RESPECT OF A LOST 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 T10825/2002 passed by Estate Late Danile Ishmael Matsotso Number 11227/2010 and Selina Dimakatso Matsotso, Identity Number 7011300790086, Unmarried, in favour of Amogelang Koketso Makhabe, Identity Number 0110120506081, Unmarried, in respect of Erf 3433 Mangaung Extension 19, District Bloemfontein, Province Free State

In extent: 400 (Four Zero Zero) square metres All interested persons having objection to the issue of such copy are hereby required to lodge the same in writing with the Registrar of Deeds at Bloemfontein within two weeks from date of the publication of this notice. Dated at Bloemfontein this 12 February 2026

CONVEYANCER NICOLAAS ALRBETUS STAMPE (LPCM 57743) STRAMPE DU PLESSIS ATTORNEYS, 58C KELLNER STREET, WESTDENNE, BLOEMFONTEIN Email: aktes@sdtatt.co.za Telephone no: 051 430 0841



JJJ 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 Grant No. TG483/1994QQ passed by ESTATE LATE LINDIWE JOYCE RADEBE in favour of BALENI STEPHEN TOKWE and BONGANI REARABETSWI RADEBE in respect of certain ERF 269 PHUTHADITHABA-N, DISTRICT HARRISMITH, 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 at BLOEMFONTEIN within two weeks from the date of publication of this notice.

SIGNED AT BLOEMFONTEIN on this 04th DAY OF FEBRUARY 2026. BEREKA MOSADI CONSULTANTS (PTY) LTD 874 PANYANE STREET BATHO LOCATION, MANGAUNG 9323 E-MAIL: matshedisoramolula@gmail.com CONTACT: (+27) 65 862 3469

GIG Guide

Saturday 21 February 2026
BrutalFruit
Sechaba Lounge
Bloemfontein

Friday 20 February 2026
Vibes on Main
Sandys Bar and Restaurant
Bloemfontein

Saturday 21 February 2026
SABA MTOUR
Cappello
Bloemfontein

Saturday 21 February 2026
KB THE DJ
IZA
Bloemfontein

Threads of UBUNTU
Clothing Our Community's Future

SCHOOL SHOES
DONATE New/Old/Used School Shoes

Journal The Gauteng Times 078 989 4363 / 051 430 0829 safes2@journalnews.co.za

Threads of UBUNTU
Clothing Our Community's Future

BLANKETS
DONATE Blankets

Journal The Gauteng Times 078 989 4363 / 051 430 0829 safes2@journalnews.co.za

Polish, Precision and Power: Refiloe's Beauty Blueprint



By Lerato Mutlanyane



healthy enhancements. I pride myself on using only premium gel systems, ensuring every set is not only beautiful but also promotes the health of your natural nails," she explains.

Now a salon owner of seven years, Maphalla understands that the profession demands more than creativity. Precision, patience and continuous learning are essential in an industry that evolves rapidly. Staying ahead of trends and techniques has been key to her growth and reputation.

Her journey, she says, began long before she picked up her first nail brush.

"My journey started as a passion for art and beauty, and it has now grown into a career dedicated to making people feel beautiful. I love connecting with clients and creating a safe, welcoming space in my chair."

As a former art student, Maphalla believes her creative foundation shaped her career path.

"Before starting my business, I was an art student in school. I think that's what made me so passionate about my work because I still get to be creative and craft unique, durable nail designs," she shares.

Like many small business owners, her road to success was not without obstacles. She officially opened her first salon in November 2019 — only months before the Covid-19 pandemic brought the beauty industry to a standstill.

"Just a few months in, Covid-19 hit and I was forced to close. I didn't completely shut down, though. I started working from home and doing house calls. Even during the strict lockdown, I kept in contact with my clients. As soon as restrictions were eased, I reopened — and I've been going strong ever since," she says.

Through resilience, adaptability and an unwavering commitment to her craft, Maphalla has built more than a business — she has built a community.

"My goal is to provide a relaxing experience that leaves you feeling pampered and confident," she concludes.

For Refiloe Maphalla, beauty begins at the fingertips — but the confidence it inspires runs much deeper.

With steady hands, a sharp eye for detail and a passion rooted in art, Bloemfontein nail technician Refiloe Maphalla (31) has turned her love for beauty into a thriving business built on confidence, creativity and care.

For Maphalla, nails are more than a beauty treatment — they are miniature canvases. Whether she is crafting classic manicures, intricate gel designs or trendy acrylic extensions, her mission remains the same: to transform ordinary nails into stunning works of art while protecting the health of her clients' natural nails.

"I am a certified nail technician specialising in high gel products. My focus is mainly on creating stunning and

Tempo Africa Launches a Proudly African Platform to Stay, Live and Work across the Continent

By Refilwe Mochoari

Tempo Africa, an all-in-one digital platform that has been designed to simplify how Africans can find accommodation, entertainment and employment was launched at Gran Melia, in Arusha, Tanzania last week.

Tempo Africa is a Pan African digital platform built to support seamless living, working and travel across Africa.

By connecting accommodation, workspaces and hospitality providers within one trusted ecosystem.

It enables Africans to move, stay and work with confidence powered by local insight, African ownership and a deep commitment to the continent's growth.

The App was developed to reflect the realities, rhythms and aspirations of everyday life and work across Africa.

Unlike global booking platforms built for other markets, Tempo Africa is grounded in local context, offering solutions that understand African cities, payment systems, property dynamics and mobility patterns.

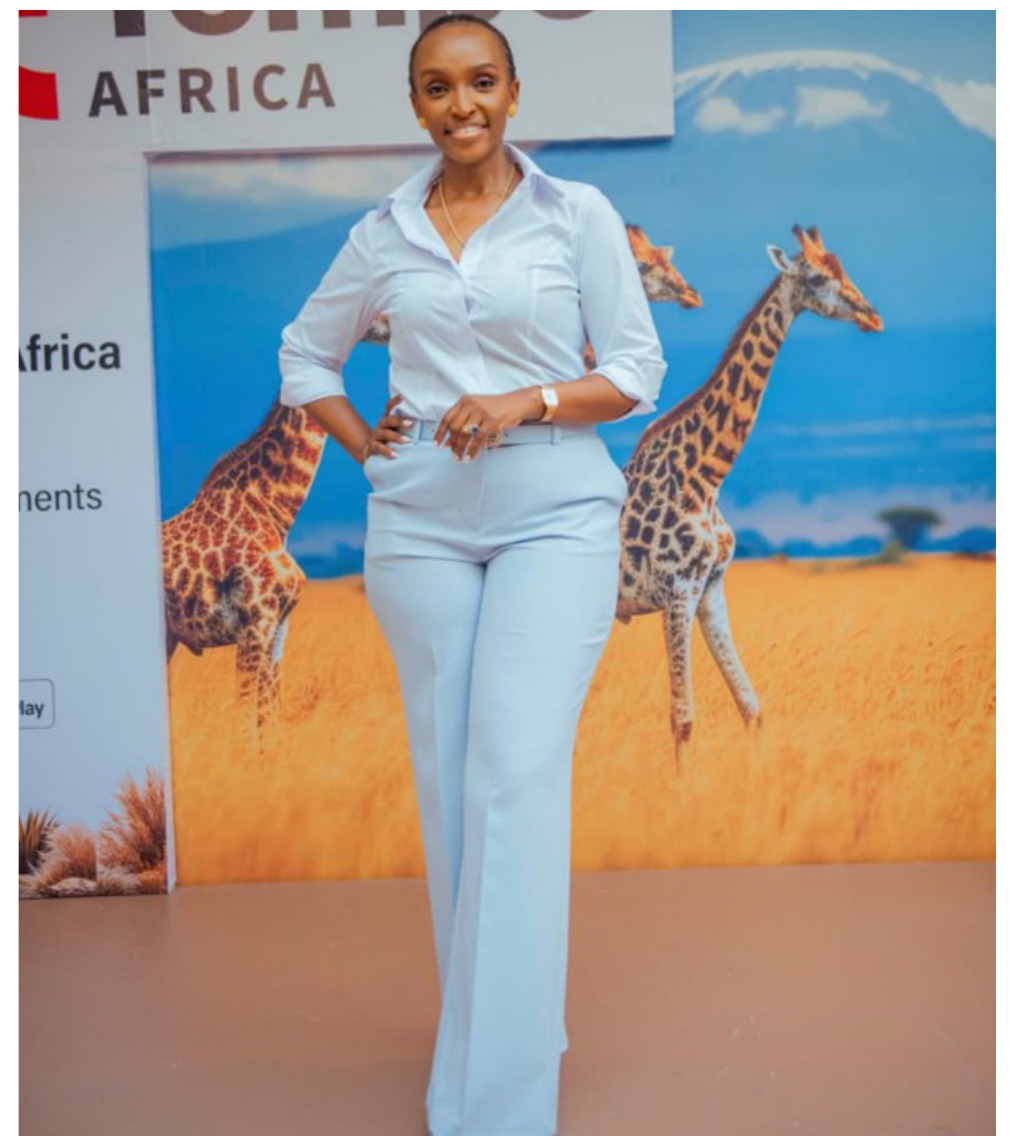
According to the founder and CEO, Pendo Lema, the platform brings together short stays, long term rentals, office spaces and hotels within a single ecosystem designed for Africa's diverse markets.

Users will benefit from verified spaces, secure transactions, local payment options and the ability to engage directly with property providers without reliance on brokers.

She says it operates a contracted wholesale model for hotels and lodges, protecting brand pricing while supporting improved occupancy.

"Property owners and workspace providers will benefit from flexible monetisation of idle spaces, while customers enjoy transparent pricing and trusted access across multiple cities.

"It is positioning itself as infrastructure for how Africans live, move and work today, and how the continent grows tomorrow," Lema said. The launch had representation from Tanzania,



Founder and CEO, Pendo Lema. Picture: Supplied

Kenya, Rwanda, Zambia, Botswana and South Africa. It was held. Tempo Africa is currently live in selected cities, with rapid expansion underway across key African markets.

It has already received listings of hotels and home-owners from Tanzania and South Africa, and is available for download on Google play and Apple Store.

HEALTH

South Africa to launch six-month HIV prevention injection across six provinces

A new, groundbreaking HIV prevention method is set to redefine South Africa's decades-long battle against the virus. This initiative is being rolled out across six of the country's provinces.

Starting between April and June this year, Lenacapavir, a six-month HIV prevention injection, will become available at over 300 healthcare facilities, marking a significant step forward in public health.

Announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa during the State of the Nation Address (Sona) this initiative speaks to South Africa's commitment to curbing new infections and bringing hope to those at risk.

But behind the data and declarations lies the nuanced reality of a nation still grappling with the legacy of HIV.

Lenacapavir isn't a vaccine, nor is it a treatment for HIV-positive individuals. Instead, it's a prevention tool designed for HIV-negative people who are at risk of contracting the virus. Orapeleng Mohlaoleng from the Department of Health explains:

"Lenacapavir is for HIV-negative individuals at risk of contracting the virus. It is not a treatment, and it is not a vaccine, it's an HIV prevention method targeting everyone, including key populations like men who have sex with men, sex workers, and transgender individuals."

This distinction matters. It's a shield, not a cure, and it comes at a time when South Africa is making strides in reducing new infections but still faces the daunting reality of 178,000 new cases annually.

For parents and children, this rollout is more than a statistic; it's a call to bridge generational understanding around prevention and sexual health.

For many, the conversation around prevention is fraught with emotion.

How do you explain to your teenage child that they need to protect themselves from a virus that robbed their grandparents or un-

cles of life? How do you, as a parent, reconcile the need to empower your child with the tools of prevention while battling your own fears about their vulnerability?

Lenacapavir offers a chance to rewrite these narratives. It's not just an injection; it's a symbol of progress and hope. By providing a discreet, long-term prevention method, it removes some of the barriers, like the need for daily pills that have previously made prevention difficult for those most at risk.

South Africa is home to 8.15 million people living with HIV, the largest population globally. This number, paradoxically, is a testament to the success of antiretroviral therapy (ART), which keeps people alive longer.

Yet, the reality remains sobering: while new infections have declined by 40% globally since 2010, South Africa still faces pockets of rising prevalence.

In provinces like Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Eastern Cape, the numbers reveal the complexities of the epidemic:

- Mpumalanga: Now the province with the highest prevalence (17.4%), it's also seeing a significant rise in its total number of people living with HIV.

- KwaZulu-Natal: Home to nearly 2 million people living with HIV, it has shown dramatic drops in new infections but still carries the highest absolute burden.

- Eastern Cape: With prevalence at 13%, it faces some of the largest gaps in treatment coverage, with only 73% of those who need ART receiving it.

For parents, the memories of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1990s and early 2000s are vivid and painful. For their children, HIV may feel like a distant threat, overshadowed by more immediate concerns.

But the truth is, these conversations are essential. Lenacapavir's rollout offers an opportunity to sit down as families and communities to talk openly about prevention, safety, and hope. It's about normalising the idea that protecting yourself is an act of self-love, not shame.



Recipes

Egg Salad Recipe



Eggs are affordable compared to other fresh protein sources. In fact, the International Egg Commission maintains that eggs are currently the most economical way for many people around the world to eat high-quality protein. Join me as we celebrate world egg day and try out my simple quick and easy egg fried recipe below.



Ingredients:

- 1/2 Onion, chopped
- 2 Garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 Eggs, whisked
- 1 cup broccoli, cut into smaller parts
- 100g Bean sprouts
- 2 cups rice, cooked.
- 1 1/2 tsp Sesame oil
- 500g chicken strips,
- 1tsp paprika
- 1tsp salt
- 1tsp pepper
- 2tbsp Soy sauce
- 1tbsp Oyster sauce
- 2tbsp sweet chilli sauce
- 1/2 cup Spring onion, chopped

Method

- Season the chicken strips with paprika, salt and pepper.
- Heat sesame oil on a large skillet over medium-high heat, and fry the chicken strips till cooked through. Remove from the pan and set aside.
- In the same pan add a little more sesame oil and reduce the heat to medium heat.
- Add onion and garlic, and fry until golden.
- Add bean sprouts, broccoli and bean sprouts and fry for a couple of minutes to soften.
- Move your vegetables to the side, and pour your eggs in the free space. In about 15-20 seconds, gently move spatula across pan to make scrambled eggs.
- Once the eggs have scrambled, mix it together with your vegetables.
- Add konjac rice. Pour soy sauce, oyster sauce and sweet chilli sauce and mix together.
- If you have excessive water in your pan, let it evaporate.
- Add the chicken strips and spring onion and combine with the rice.
- Slightly cool down before serving.

FASHION

Murison Turns Cannabis Legacy into Haircare Innovation



By Lerato Mutlanyane

Born and raised in Bloemfontein, entrepreneur Tamsin Murison (39) is carving out a niche in the beauty and cosmetics industry with her proudly local brand, Goldie-Jane Cannabis Hair Products.

Founded in 2020, Goldie-Jane draws on Murison's background in cannabis farming to develop cannabis-infused hair products designed to address common hair concerns for both men and women. The range is vegan, cruelty-free and free from harsh chemicals, positioning the brand as a natural alternative in a competitive market.

Murison says the business was inspired by both heritage and personal experience.

"The business was founded in 2020, leveraging my family's legacy in cannabis farming and my personal quest for effective hair growth solutions," she said.

"During lockdown, I developed canna-

bis-infused products to address my own hair concerns, which led to the creation of Goldie-Jane."

With a strong focus on healthy hair, Murison aims to reshape the market through a sustainable and inclusive approach.

She believes consumers are increasingly drawn to products that are ethically produced and environmentally conscious.

Like many entrepreneurs, she faced early challenges balancing employment and business responsibilities.

"Initially, it was a challenge to balance my full-time job with delivery commitments, which impacted timely order fulfilment," she said, adding that she has since found better ways to manage her time and operations.

Goldie-Jane Cannabis Hair Products are available at selected Trapping Stores.

Customers can also connect with the brand on Facebook and Instagram for product information and updates.

Sport



Multi-talented Bloem Star Scores Scholarship

Romique Smit's journey of grit and excellence has earned him a scholarship at a prestigious Durban School



By Bernell Simons

The multitalented Romique Smit's rise in sport is a story of perseverance, dedication, and sacrifice. From his early days at Fichardt Park Primary, he showed unwavering commitment, spending hours practicing while his friends enjoyed leisure time.

He pushed through fatigue and moments of waning motivation, honing his skills and perfecting his technique to prove that true success demands both discipline and heart.

This relentless hard work has now been rewarded with a full sports scholarship to Durban High School (DHS), the city's oldest high school and a beacon of excellence since 1866.

DHS is renowned for guiding boys on their journey to become confident, responsible men who can take their place in the world. More than a school, it becomes a way of life, nurturing ambition, leadership, and character alongside academic and sporting achievement.

Before securing this prestigious opportunity, Smit excelled in both hockey and rugby, quickly standing out in local Free State team programs.

Coaches consistently noticed his talent, repeatedly selecting him to represent the province in both sports. His exceptional skill, work ethic, and leadership on the field set him apart, earning him recognition at the provincial level long before his scholarship was ever on the table.

Smit's parents, Raquel and Charles Smit, expressed their profound gratitude and pride for their son's achievements.

"We can only thank God for this blessing," they said, acknowledging that although their son will be far from home, they are comforted knowing he has the opportunity to excel further in a safe and supportive environment.

Charles Smit, a former Celtics soccer player, reflected on how his own sporting experience shaped their approach to nurturing his son's talent.

"I guess it runs in the family," he said, "but I also have my wife to thank - she has always been his number one supporter. We've always pushed him to give his best, attend every game, and celebrate every milestone."

Smit's parents, along with his extended family, never missed an opportunity to cheer him on, and their unwavering support has been a cornerstone of his success. As he prepares for this new chapter, they remain his biggest advocates.

"We are so proud of him," they said, "and we wish him a bright and successful journey ahead."

Smit's story is a testament to what determination can achieve. Supported by his coaches and family, he steps into a school with a heritage of excellence, ready to write his own chapter in its long and proud history.

For young athletes like Smit, DHS offers more than just an opportunity; it provides a platform to turn years of dedication into lifelong success.

Gallants' PSL Status Under Threat

- Swallows seek court order to cancel R40 million status sale
- Gallants allegedly failed to pay SARS and player debt obligations
- Bloemfontein side confirm legal action but maintain normal daily club operations

By Mpho Sekharume

The Betway Premiership has been rocked by a dramatic legal showdown as Moroka Swallows move to formally cancel the R40 million sale of their top-flight status to Marumo Gallants.

This unprecedented move seeks to reverse a deal struck in May 2024, with the Soweto-based Dube Birds now petitioning the High Court to direct the Premier Soccer League (PSL) to recognise the franchise as reverting to their initial league status.

At the heart of this explosive litigation is the allegation that Gallants reneged on the critical financial terms of the purchase agreement.

While an initial cash payment of R20 million was successfully processed, Swallows allege that a further R10 million earmarked to settle a SARS tax liability remains unpaid, causing the debt to balloon to approximately R13 million through penalties.

Additionally, Swallows claim that a separate R10 million intended to cover player and technical staff debts was only partially settled via PSL grant deductions, leaving a trail of unresolved liabilities.

Responding to the mounting legal pressure, the Bloemfontein-based outfit issued an official communication seeking to allay fears and stabilise their camp amidst the looming uncertainty.

"Marumo Gallants FC confirms that the Club received court documents relating to a matter by Moroka Swallows last Friday," the club stated in a measured response to the litigation through a press statement.

The club has immediately moved to a defensive media stance to protect its legal interests.

"At this stage, as the matter is now before the court, the Club will not be making any further public comments nor will it be participating in media interviews regarding the issue," the statement continued.

This 'sub-judice' approach highlights the severity of the challenge, as Swallows' legal representatives further allege potential fraud regarding the sale of a National First Division (NFD) status, now known as Leruma United.

Leruma had allegedly been ceded as security for the original debt without the knowledge of the Swallows owners.

Despite the gravity of the High Court application which could effectively strip them of their PSL status, Gallants insist that their internal operations remain steadfast.

"Marumo Gallants FC respects the legal process and will allow the matter to proceed through the

appropriate judicial channels," the club said, while emphasising their commitment to due process.

Gallants have further moved to reassure their internal and external partners that the footballing calendar remains the priority for the squad. This being a clear sign of refusal to let the boardroom battle derail their campaign.

The statement continued: "The Club would like to assure its supporters, partners and stakeholders that operations continue as normal. Management, technical staff and players remain fully focused on preparations and ongoing commitments for the remainder of the season."

As the sheriff of the court prepares to engage both parties, the wider South African football fraternity is left watching a high-stakes game of survival that could reshape the league table overnight.

While Swallows fight to reclaim a presence in the elite division they called home for decades, Gallants are banking on stability and legal defence to maintain their hard-won top-flight position.

The Bloemfontein side is preparing to face Durban City in their next premierships match early next month.

The club therefore also stressed their determination to keep the noise of the courtroom away from the pitch.

"Marumo Gallants FC appreciates the continued support and understanding from its fans and partners during this time.

The team's attention remains firmly on football matters as preparations continue for the upcoming fixture on the 1st of March 2026 against Durban City," the club stated.



Status at Stake...Marumo Gallants are entangled in a legal matter that heavily threatens their premierships status. Picture: Gallants Facebook

PSL		2025/2026		
	CLUBS	P	W	PTS
1	Orlando Pirates	17	12	38
2	Mamelodi Sundowns	16	10	35
3	Sekhukhune United	18	9	32
4	Kaizer Chiefs	15	8	30
5	AmaZulu FC	17	9	30
6	Durban City	18	8	28
7	Polokwane City	17	6	25
8	TS Galaxy	18	7	24
9	Golden Arrows	17	6	20
10	Richards Bay	17	4	19
11	Siwelwele FC	17	4	18
12	Chippa United	18	4	18
13	Stellenbosch FC	16	4	16
14	Marumo Gallants	18	3	15
15	Orbit College FC	18	4	14
16	Magesi FC	17	2	12

Premier League		2025/2026		
	TEAMS	P	W	PTS
1	Arsenal	27	17	58
2	Man City	26	16	53
3	Aston Villa	26	15	50
4	Man Utd	26	12	45
5	Chelsea	26	12	44
6	Liverpool	26	12	42
7	Brentford	25	12	40
8	Everton	26	10	37
9	Bournemouth	26	9	37
10	Newcastle	26	10	36
11	Sunderland	26	9	36
12	Fulham	26	10	34
13	C Palace	26	8	32
14	Brighton	26	7	31
15	Leeds	26	7	30
16	Tottenham	26	7	29

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