




Friday 19 June 2026
FREE//MAHALA

JOURNAL

News Network



9 Henri Van Rooijen St, New East End, Bloemfontein, 9300 / Tel: 051 430 0129 / www.journalnews.co.za

PUPIL SURVIVES SCHOOL BULLYING TERROR

Rouxville learner survives near fatal assault by bullies at school, while Free State Education admits system failed the young victim

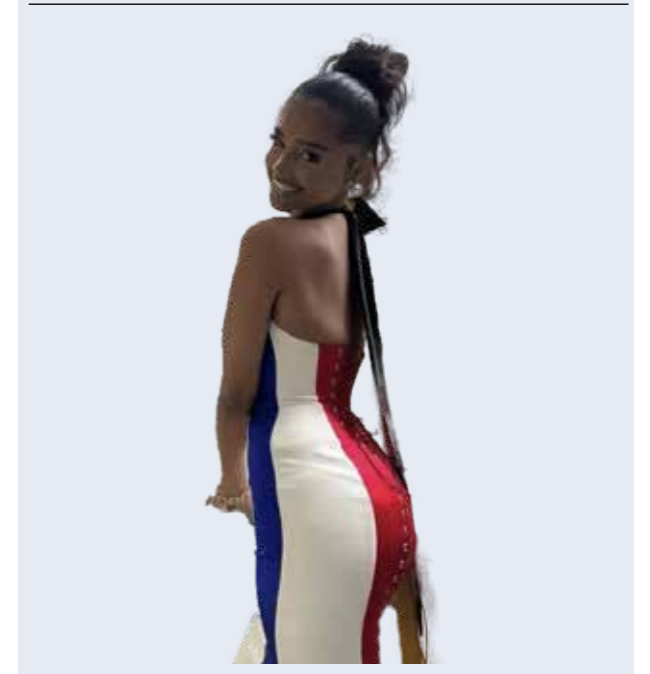
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Near Fatal Bullying ... A medical report confirms that the young learner was admitted with a fractured skull on the back-left side of his head following a severe impact. Pictures: Supplied




Bafana Battle Back Against Czechia

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Inside Tyla's Custom 'RSA' Concept Dress

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Tragedy Strikes as Water Tank Truck Kills Girl

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Court Sinks ANC Eastern Cape PTT Appointment

...Rules Oscar Mabuyane-led interim structure was unlawfully installed, invalidating all decisions taken since May
By Matshidiso Selebeleng

The African National Congress (ANC) in the Eastern Cape has suffered a major legal blow after the Makhanda High Court declared the appointment of its Provincial Task Team (PTT), led

by convenor and Premier Oscar Mabuyane, unconstitutional and unlawful. The ruling casts uncertainty over the party's leadership arrangements in the province and hands a significant victory to ANC members who challenged the legitimacy of the interim structure imposed by the National Executive Committee (NEC). The PTT was appointed in May to administer the ANC in the Eastern Cape after the Provincial Executive Committee (PEC), the party's elected leader-

ship structure in the province, was deemed to have reached the end of its term. In a judgment delivered by Judge Vuyokazi Pamela Noncembu, the court further ruled that all decisions taken by the PTT since its appointment are unlawful, invalid, and of no force or effect. The court found that the installation of the PTT breached the applicants' contractual rights as governed by the ANC constitution, rules, policies, and directives. It also held that the appointment violated ANC guidelines governing branch general meet-

ings, branch biennial general meetings, and regional, provincial, and national conferences as adopted by the NEC. Judge Noncembu stressed that the case was not about whether the NEC had the authority to establish a PTT, but whether the Eastern Cape PEC's term had automatically expired, thereby justifying the installation of an interim structure without first dissolving the elected leadership. "It was the applicants' submission that the PEC was never dissolved, and therefore the NEC acted unlawfully, contrary to its **Continues on Page 2**



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Court Sinks ANC EC PTT Appointment



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powers as provided for in terms of Rule 12.2.4, when it installed the PTT," the judgment states. The applicants further argued that, should the court find that the PEC had been dissolved, such dissolution ought to have been carried out through a lawful process before a PTT could be appointed. The PTT, however, maintained that the PEC's four-year term had already lapsed by the time the interim structure was installed, making the appointment both necessary and lawful.

KZN Hawks sheds light on storage of cocaine that was later stolen

Senior KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Hawks official Brigadier Campbell Nyuswa has confirmed that he suggested a cocaine consignment be stored at the Hawks Port Shepstone offices, which was later broken into.

The entire shipment was later stolen from the premises.

Nyuswa, the Hawks provincial commander for serious organized crime investigation, took the stand at the Madlaga Commission on Wednesday.

He is testifying on a 514kg cocaine consignment, which was stolen from the Hawks' office.

Previously, the commission heard testimony that it was Nyuswa who suggested the storage location, but he has denied any wrongdoing.

In 2018, all mandrax tablets were seized at the large clandestine laboratories in Harding and was stored in the same safe until exhibits were disposed of without incident."

On Wednesday morning, he explained the decision.

Pupil Survives School Bullying Terror

Rouxville learner survives near fatal assault by bullies at school, while Free State Education admits system failed the young victim

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

A cracked skull, 36 stitches, seven days in hospital, and an emotional scar that may never heal. Bullying in South African schools is no longer the harmless teasing during break time once dismissed as 'boys will be boys'. It has mutated into severe verbal abuse, cyber-attacks, physical assault, and in some cases, death.

Thabang Mogoeng*, a learner from Rouxville Primary School in the south-eastern Free State is one of the latest victims. The 8-year-old pupil was hospitalised for a week after a brutal classroom attack left him with a fractured skull - a tragedy his mother, Maki Mogoeng*, says she saw coming.

"No one listened to me. No one cared, and I kept complaining that my son was being bullied by his classmates," she told Journal News Network this week, in her narration of how her son survived a near fatal ordeal at the hands of his schoolyard tormentors.

Mogoeng told this newspaper how she had duly alerted her son's teacher of the bullying her son was enduring at school last month but was met with a lacklustre response. This blatant inaction by the school provided a gap for the situation to escalate rapidly.

"On Monday 26 May (this year), I wrote a letter to the teacher asking her to reprimand the bullies because my child was afraid to go to school.

"On Tuesday 27 May, when he came back from school, he told me that he had a headache and I just gave him medication. The following day he went to school but was sent back home because he had been vomiting the whole day. When he arrived at home,



An 8-year-old learner from Rouxville Primary School almost lost his life due to extreme bullying. Pictures: Supplied

he told me that he had been beaten up by his classmates," Mogoeng detailed.

According to Mogoeng, the severity of Thabang's injuries required immediate medical intervention and transferrals between provincial health facilities.

"I took him to the Smithfield hospital, but when we arrived there, we were taken to Pelonomi Hospital in Bloemfontein, and that is where the scans revealed that his skull was cracked and he had to undergo an emergency surgery," she said.

An official Pelonomi Hospital discharge summary, shown to us by Mogoeng, revealed the terrifying extent of eight-year-old Thabang's injuries. The medical report confirms that the young boy was admitted with a fractured skull on the back-left side of his head following a severe impact.

The report further details that the trauma caused extensive internal bleeding between his skull and brain, resulting in life-threatening pressure and severe swelling.

To save Thabang's life, neurosurgeons performed an emergency craniotomy - a surgical procedure where the skull is opened for work to be done to halt the active bleeding and relieve the pressure on his brain.

Following a stint in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU), Thabang made an exceptionally strong recovery and was later discharged fully alert, responsive, and walking independently. He, however, remains on strict anti-seizure medication and close monitoring at home as his surgical wounds continue to heal.

Department Admits to System Failure Spokesperson for the Free State Department of Education, Howard Ndaba, says the department is deeply taken aback by Thabang's incident.

According to Ndaba, the education department relies heavily on teachers to supervise school premises, but the educator in question was entirely absent from the classroom when Thabang faced the near-death experience.

Whilst conceding that the system failed the young learner, Ndaba appealed to the parents to return the child to school, committing fully to his ongoing physical safety.

"Unfortunately the teacher was not in the classroom when the incident hap- **Continues on Page 5**

NC records sharp decline in Violent crimes



Northern Cape Premier Zamani Saul. Picture: Supplied

By Bernell Simons

The Northern Cape police are celebrating significant progress in the fight against crime after recording a sharp decline in violent offences during the fourth quarter of the 2025/26 financial year.

The crime statistics were announced on Monday morning by the Northern Cape Premier Zamani Saul alongside the Provincial Commissioner Lieutenant General Koliswa Otolu.

During this quarter, police arrested 4,180 suspects, shut down 265 illegal liquor outlets, and increased crime detection through police action by 16.3%. They also made 140 arrests related to illegal mining. However, there were increases in attempted murder, commercial crime, kidnappings, and property-related crime, highlighting that serious challenges remain.

These statistics come in the wake of several brutal cases involving women and children that have shocked communities across the province. This reinforces concerns that many victims continue to face the greatest danger in places where they should feel safest.

Otolu acknowledged this reality, stating that communities "continue to fail to protect the vulnerable in society—women and children." She noted that many of these crimes occur within homes and involve family members or acquaintances of the vic-

tims. Furthermore, she revealed that most murders took place at the residences of either the victim or the perpetrator, underscoring the persistent threat of domestic and interpersonal violence.

Advocate Inez Bezuidenhout of the University of the Free State's Faculty of Law emphasised that crime statistics should be interpreted beyond mere numbers of arrests or reported reductions.

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

She said that the true measure of public safety is not simply whether crime figures decline, but whether women, children, and other vulnerable individuals can live free from fear.

Bezuidenhout also says lasting success hinges on effective investigations, successful prosecutions, early intervention in domestic violence, stronger victim protection, and sustained community involvement.

Saul praised the province's progress and credited improved policing, intelligence-led operations, and community partnerships for the decline in crime, he also acknowledged that sexual violence and abuse involving women and children remain some of the province's greatest concerns.

CRIME REPORTS

Heidedal Drug Raid Turns Violent as Mob Attacks Police

A routine anti-gang operation in Heidedal erupted into violence, leaving two police officers injured, several SAPS vehicles damaged and four suspects arrested after an alleged drug dealer reportedly unleashed pit bulls on officers and an angry crowd turned on police.

The South African Police Service (SAPS) in the Free State said officers were conducting a raid at a house suspected of being used for drug dealing when the situation quickly escalated.

According to police, the 45-year-old homeowner allegedly set two pit bulls on officers as they attempted to enter the property. Despite the attack, police gained access to the house and seized crystal methamphetamine and cash believed to be the proceeds of crime.

Tensions flared when a crowd gathered outside

the property and allegedly began attacking police officers and stoning state vehicles.

Police were forced to use stun grenades and rubber bullets to disperse the mob and restore order. Two officers sustained injuries during the confrontation, while several police vehicles were damaged.

SAPS confirmed that the homeowner and a 20-year-old male were arrested inside the house on charges of dealing in drugs. The homeowner also faces an additional charge of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm (GBH) for allegedly setting his dogs on police officers.

Two more suspects, aged 26 and 51, were arrested for malicious damage to property and assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. All four suspects are expected to appear in the Bloemfontein Magistrate's Court soon.

Deported Fraud Accused Back in Court Over R27m Property Scam

A man accused of orchestrating a R27 million property fraud involving dozens of City of Johannesburg-owned properties will remain behind bars after his case was postponed for a formal bail application.

Peet Jacobus Viljoen appeared briefly in the Pretoria Specialised Commercial Crimes Court on Thursday, where the matter was postponed to June 26 for bail investigations and a formal bail hearing.

Viljoen faces 400 charges, including fraud, corruption, theft, forgery and uttering, linked to the alleged fraudulent sale of 46 City of Johannesburg (CoJ) properties between January and March 2010.

According to the State, Viljoen and five other suspects, who are yet to appear in court, allegedly sold municipal properties to individuals and companies without the knowledge or consent of the City.

Investigators allege that forged documents were used to facilitate the transfers, including sale agree-

ments, City of Johannesburg and Johannesburg Property Company resolutions, powers of attorney, affidavits and applications submitted under the Deeds Act. The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) further alleges that Viljoen paid gratification to a deputy registrar employed by the Department of Land Affairs to register the transfer deeds.

The alleged scheme was uncovered after the City of Johannesburg conducted an audit of its immovable assets and identified discrepancies. The Johannesburg High Court later ordered that the properties be returned to the municipality.

According to SAPS, Viljoen was arrested in 2010 but allegedly left South Africa in May 2025 before the matter could be re-enrolled before a new magistrate. He was re-arrested on Tuesday at OR Tambo International Airport after being deported from the United States. The State has indicated it will oppose bail.

Man Nabbed in R10,000 SIU Bribery Sting

A 44-year-old man accused of attempting to derail a corruption investigation by bribing a Special Investigating Unit (SIU) investigator has been remanded in custody following his arrest in a Hawks-led sting operation. Ntshivhumbhe Gumani appeared in the Mmabatho Magistrates' Court on Thursday on a charge of corruption after being arrested on Wednesday by members of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (DPCI).

His arrest followed a joint operation involving the Serious Corruption Investigation, Serious Commercial Crime Investigation and the Mahikeng Tactical Response Team (TRT). According to SAPS, Gumani allegedly offered gratification to an SIU investigator in

connection with an ongoing investigation involving the Mahikeng Local Municipality.

"The accused allegedly arranged to pay the SIU investigator R10 000 to stop the investigation," police said. The alleged bribery attempt was reported to the Hawks' Serious Corruption Investigation unit, which launched an operation that culminated in Gumani's arrest after he allegedly handed over the R10 000 payment.

Gumani made a brief court appearance and the matter was postponed to June 29, 2026, for a formal bail application.

He remains in custody pending his next appearance.

Zastron Woman Killed in Brutal Home Robbery

Police in Zastron have launched a manhunt for a suspect who allegedly stabbed a 40-year-old woman to death during a house robbery in Kanana location. Officers were called to the scene shortly after midnight on Monday following reports of a murder. Upon arrival, they were met by a woman identified as Nandipha, who led them to where the victim's body was lying.

The deceased, identified as Nomayeza Botha, was found in a pool of blood with multiple stab wounds. She was wearing a black long-sleeve vest and black tights and was declared dead at the scene.

Police discovered a black Samsung 32-inch flat-screen television next to a fence near the body, while the television remote lay on the ground nearby. Inside the house, officers also found a decoder left on a table.

According to information gathered at the scene, the attack occurred at about 23:30. A neighbour told police that Botha was allegedly attacked by an unknown male suspect who fled after she called out for help. The motive is believed to be robbery, and police are appealing to members of the public to assist in tracking down the suspect.

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MEC Delivers Long-Awaited School Upgrade

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

As South Africans commemorated the June 16 Soweto Uprising, North West MEC for Education Viola Motsumi delivered a long-awaited boost to education in Sethlwathwe Village by officially handing over the upgraded Kgosi Shope Secondary School to the community.

The handover marks the culmination of years of lobbying and engagement by community members, traditional leaders, the School Governing Body (SGB) and local authorities for safer and better learning facilities.

According to the Department of Education, the school was prioritised after assessments revealed that the previous infrastructure had become dilapidated and unsafe for teaching and learning.

Department spokesperson Vuyo Mantshule said the project forms part of the department's programme to eradicate inappropriate school infrastructure across the province.

"The previous infrastructure was dilapidated and unsafe for teaching and learning. After assessments by the Department's Infrastructure Unit, it was prioritised under our programme to eradicate inappropriate school infrastructure. The handover ensures learners of Sethlwathwe Village have access to safe, dignified and quality learning spaces that meet national norms and standards," said Mantshule.

Although the official handover took place this week, learners have already been using the new facilities since the beginning of the 2026 academic year. Mantshule said the department worked closely with the school principal and SGB to ensure a smooth transition without disrupting teaching and learning.

Kgosi Shope Secondary School currently serves about 400 learners from Grade 8 to Grade



The community of Sethlwathwe Village receives an upgraded, modern school. Picture: Supplied

12 drawn from Sethlwathwe Village and surrounding communities. The upgraded facilities have been designed to accommodate current enrolment numbers while providing room for future growth over the next five to ten years.

Construction and rehabilitation work began in 2023 and was completed in 2025 through funding from the department's infrastructure grant programme. The project was implemented under the supervision of departmental project managers and community liaison structures, while also creating employment opportunities for local residents.

Mantshule said Sethlwathwe was prioritised because learners previously had to travel long distances to access secondary education and the existing school buildings had been declared unsafe.

"Building the school there brings education closer to the community, reduces transport costs for parents, improves attendance and retention, and supports the Department's mandate of equal access to opportunity regardless of geography," he said.

Addressing the community during the handover ceremony, MEC Motsumi said the project

restores dignity to both learners and educators.

"Today, we are restoring the dignity of both learners and educators of Sethlwathwe Village. No child should learn under the fear of collapsing walls or leaking roofs. Kgosi Shope Secondary School now stands as proof that the Department keeps its promises. Infrastructure is the foundation for quality teaching and learning, and we will not rest until every learner in the North West has access to safe, modern schools," she said.

The Department of Education said the handover forms part of a broader infrastructure rollout aimed at tackling unsafe schools, overcrowded classrooms and limited access to secondary education in rural communities.

Ratlou Local Municipality remains one of the department's priority areas, with plans for additional schools, classrooms, science laboratories and libraries expected to be announced once planning and budgeting processes have been finalised.

For the learners and educators of Sethlwathwe, however, the completion of Kgosi Shope Secondary School represents more than just a new building—it is a long-awaited investment in the future of the community.

Tragedy Strikes as Water Tank Truck Kills Girl



By Gomolemo Winkel

An eight-year-old girl was killed after she was allegedly run over by a municipal water tank truck in Botshabelo, leaving her family and the Ward 33 community devastated and demanding answers about the circumstances surrounding the tragedy.

The incident occurred on Duma Nokwe Road in A-Section, Botshabelo, at approximately 20:00 on Friday, 12 June. The child's father, Lehlohonolo Seale, said he was informed about the accident and rushed to the scene, only to discover that his daughter had already died from her injuries.

"When I arrived, the child had already been run over by the truck. People told me the lorry had left the scene. It was nowhere to be found when I got there," said Seale.

The grieving father alleged that community members told him a municipal water tank truck was involved in the incident. He further claimed that the vehicle later returned after police intervened.

"The police followed the truck and instructed it to return to the scene. They also told the driver to report to the police station," he said.

The tragedy has sparked widespread discussion in the community, with allegations circulating on a local WhatsApp group that a ward councillor was inside the truck at the time of the accident.

However, Ward Councillor Tshidiso Mohono has strongly denied the claims.

"I am deeply saddened by the loss of a child's life. However, allegations that I was in the lorry when the incident happened are not true. Those spreading such claims are not considering the family's pain and are only seeking attention," Mohono said.

In a statement, Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality expressed its condolences to the Seale family and the broader Ward 33 community.

"Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality expresses its deepest condolences to the family, friends and community following the tragic death of a child in an incident involving a water truck in Ward 33, Botshabelo," the municipality said.

The municipality confirmed that the circumstances surrounding the accident are under investigation and said it is cooperating fully with law enforcement authorities.

"It would therefore be inappropriate to speculate on the cause of the incident until the investigation has been concluded," the statement read.

Meanwhile, Free State police have opened a culpable homicide case at Botshabelo Police Station. Police spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Thabo Covane said officers responded to the scene on Friday evening.

"It is alleged that the water tank truck hit the eight-year-old girl, causing severe fatal injuries to the head and knees. Emergency Medical Services personnel declared the child deceased on the scene," said Covane.

No arrests have been made, and police investigations are continuing.

FS Rolls Out 14 New Ambulances



Free State Health MEC Monyatso Mahlatsi, Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae, and MEC Jabu Mbalula hand over 14 ambulances at Bongani Regional Hospital in Welkom. Picture: Supplied

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

The Free State Department of Health handed over 14 brand new ambulances at Bongani Regional Hospital in Welkom on Wednesday, as part of a wide rollout to strengthen emergency services (EMS) in the province.

Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae, Health MEC Monyatso Mahlatsi, and Community Safety, Roads & Transport MEC Jabu Mbalula led the handover.

In his keynote speech, during the handover, Mahlatsi called on residents and road users passing through the province to help curb road carnage and violent conduct that place an enormous burden on EMS resources.

Mahlatsi also added issues of gender-based violence, femicide (GBVF), and interpersonal violence, which he says not only harm families but also strain the EMS system and contribute to unexpected delays when emergency care is most needed.

"We are investing in EMS response capacity so it is available when needed, not to create conditions for its needless use.

"As a society, we must commit to preventing injury and disease, take care of our lives and communities, and promote healthy lifestyles

so we rely less on ambulances and hospitalization," he said.

He said doing so allows the health system to invest more in prevention and reduce the burden of disease.

Letsoha-Mathae applauded these departments for working together to improve service delivery for the province's residents and said that health remains the province's most sensitive portfolio.

"This is about saving lives. Communities must feel a capable state where they live.

"Health cannot fail it must save lives," she said.

Mbalula also added that inter-departmental work is turning service delivery directives into "results communities can see and rely on". The Department said the rollout signals progress toward a modern EMS with shorter response times and stronger public trust. Spokesperson for the Department of Health Mondli Mvambi said 103 ambulances are expected to be delivered by the end of the 2026/27 financial year.

Mvambi says this is the third leg of a larger rollout, which started last month in Mangaung and Xhariep districts.

He says so far, seven ambulances have been delivered in Lejweleputswa, three in Fezile Dabi, and four in Thabo Mofutsanyana.



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ANC Limping Towards November Polls



By Bernell Simons

The African National Congress (ANC) in Sol Plaatje Local Municipality is heading into November's local government elections weakened by bitter internal divisions, disciplinary battles, and growing uncertainty over its electoral fortunes.

The party's latest crisis erupted with the expulsion of five councillors in a sweeping disciplinary crackdown, a dramatic move that has sent shockwaves through Northern Cape politics and laid bare deepening fractures within the governing party.

The expulsions, which have sparked fierce debate within ANC ranks, come at a critical time as the party seeks to consolidate support ahead of the November polls.

The move will also leave five vacancies in the Sol Plaatje Municipal Council that cannot legally be filled before the elections, according to provincial electoral officer Alkin Topkin.

He told Journal News that "it does not mean that functions within the municipality come to a halt. Vacancies arise through resignations, deaths, and expulsions. In this instance, we simply may not fill those vacancies before the elections".

Councillor Magret Molatudi, John Diphahle, Itumeleng Lekoma, Christopher Lephoh, and Yvonne Tau were expelled from the organisation after being

found guilty of conduct that brought the party into disrepute and violated its constitution, values, and disciplinary code.

The expulsions have now become final after none of the affected councillors exercised their right to appeal within the prescribed 21-day period.

In a statement, the party's provincial secretary, Deshi Ngxanga announced that the ruling of the Regional Disciplinary Committee is now "final and binding", effectively terminating the councillors' membership in the party and disqualifying them from serving as ANC public representatives in the Sol Plaatje Local Municipality.

"The affected individuals are no longer members of the ANC and are therefore not permitted to represent the organisation in any capacity, including as public representatives deployed by the ANC," the party said.

While the ANC has not publicly disclosed the specific charges that led to the disciplinary action, a senior party source - familiar with the matter - said the councillors were sanctioned for repeatedly defying ANC caucus decisions during the controversy surrounding Municipal Manager Thapelo Matlala.

"They persistently defied the ANC's position regarding comrade Matlala. That defiance included absconding from critical council meetings, which the organisation regarded as a direct affront to ANC discipline," the source said.

The expulsions have also fuelled speculation about the councillors' political future with multiple sources close to them revealing their intention to contest the November local government elections as independent candidates, potentially posing a challenge to the ANC's support base in the municipality.

"It is common knowledge that the five are preparing to stand as independents, and their source of funding is known," another source claimed.

However, these allegations could not be independently verified. None of the expelled councillors had responded to requests for comment by the time of publication.

Political analysts say the mass expulsions are likely to intensify scrutiny of governance and stability in Sol Plaatje, one of the Northern Cape's most strategically important municipalities and home to the provincial capital, Kimberley.

The ANC defended the decision, describing it as evidence of the organisation's commitment to accountability and internal discipline.

Provincial leaders said the party would continue to act decisively against members whose actions undermine the organisation's principles and the trust placed in it by communities.

"The ANC remains steadfast in upholding its constitution, values and organisational discipline without fear or favour," the statement said.

The party further stressed its commitment to strengthening governance, protecting its integrity, and ensuring that elected representatives remain accountable to both the organisation and the communities they serve.

The expulsions are expected to trigger a process to fill the vacancies left by the affected councillors, while municipal and electoral authorities consider the legal and administrative implications of the decision.

The development marks one of the most significant disciplinary interventions in recent years within ANC structures in the Northern Cape and could have far-reaching consequences for the balance of power and political dynamics in Sol Plaatje Municipality.

With five seats now effectively vacant and questions lingering over the circumstances that led to the expulsions, attention is turning to how the ANC will manage the fallout and whether the dramatic purge will restore stability or deepen divisions within its local ranks.

Mayor Flags Neglected Municipal Assets



Maluti-a-Phofung Executive Mayor, Tumelo Thebe. Picture: Supplied

By JN Reporter

The deteriorating state of key municipal facilities in Harrismith has come under the spotlight after Maluti-a-Phofung Executive Mayor, Tumelo Thebe conducted an inspection that revealed vandalism, neglect and infrastructure decay at several strategic sites.

The mayor visited the municipality's electricity warehouse, MAP Water storehouse and municipal motor repairs workshop as part of an ongoing assessment of municipal assets and service delivery infrastructure. The inspection exposed worrying conditions, with some facilities showing clear signs of vandalism and prolonged deterioration.

Thebe said the condition of the facilities was a matter of serious concern, as they play a crucial role in supporting municipal operations and ensuring efficient service delivery to residents.

"The state of these facilities highlights the urgent need for intervention, restoration and improved security measures to protect public infrastructure," he said.

According to the mayor, municipal assets must be rehabilitated and properly maintained to maximise their value and contribution to service delivery. He stressed that restoring these facilities could improve operational efficiency while creating opportunities for economic growth and job creation.

"These facilities, if properly utilised, can strengthen our operations and even create jobs. These and other facilities across the municipality will be closely monitored and visited as we unleash our true potential in creating opportunities for small businesses," said Thebe.

The inspection forms part of broader efforts by the municipality to identify challenges affecting infrastructure and develop solutions aimed at improving service delivery. The municipality is expected to prioritise the rehabilitation of the affected facilities and strengthen security measures to prevent further vandalism and damage.

Municipal officials believe that protecting and restoring public assets will be critical in rebuilding capacity, enhancing service delivery and unlocking development opportunities across the municipality.

Impeachment committee to fight Ramaphosa's court bid



President Cyril Ramaphosa. Picture: iOL

Parliament's impeachment committee has resolved to oppose President Cyril Ramaphosa's urgent interdict application to halt its work while he challenges the report that found he has a case to answer regarding the Phala Phala saga.

The committee will join the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) and African Transformation Movement (ATM), which have already indicated they will oppose Ramaphosa's application. The committee will also lobby Speaker Thoko Didiza to oppose the interdict.

The interdict case will essentially determine whether Ramaphosa can delay his impeachment hearing, possibly for years if appeals are considered, and avoid tough and potentially embarrassing and damaging questions regarding his response to the theft of at least \$580,000 from his Phala Phala farm in 2020.

'Irreparable damage'

On 12 June, Ramaphosa filed his urgent application in the Western Cape High Court seeking an interdict to stop the impeachment committee from conducting any work until his review application of Parliament's Section 89 panel's findings is finalised.

In November 2022, the panel found prima facie evidence that Ramaphosa may have violated the Constitution and committed serious misconduct, saying there was a deliberate intention not to investigate the theft openly.

The ANC used its majority in Parliament at the time to ensure the Section 89 panel report didn't lead to an impeachment hearing, but in May 2026, the Constitutional Court ruled that the National Assembly's December 2022 vote was irrational, unconstitutional and invalid. It also struck down Rule 1291 that let MPs override the panel's recommendations.

The President has now taken the Section 89 panel report on legal review, arguing that it misunderstood its mandate by failing to properly consider the evidence against him.

While the review application is due to be heard in September,

Ramaphosa's interdict application argues that allowing the inquiry process to proceed while the Section 89 report's legal validity is still disputed could cause "irreparable" political and reputational harm. He also argued that he has the right not to face impeachment unless it's preceded by a lawful and valid independent report.

In a meeting of the impeachment committee on Thursday, 18 June 2026, the majority of the 31-member panel favoured opposing Ramaphosa's interdict application.

The committee sought an independent legal opinion from advocate William Mokhare SC, who laid out his options, but recommended opposing the President.

Mokhare advised the committee to either oppose the application or to file an explanatory affidavit setting out the significant matters the committee wished to bring to the court's attention, without opposing it outright.

Mokhare cautioned that the impeachment committee was appointed to be impartial and fair, arguing that since it hadn't yet tested the Section 89 panel's findings, it should avoid expressing a view on the merits or demerits of the underlying case. It can, however, assert what the Constitutional Court has directed it to do — proceed with the impeachment hearing.

While Ramaphosa claimed he would suffer "irreparable harm" if the committee proceeds while his review application is under way, Mokhare said all the evidence before the committee would be scrutinised and the President would have an opportunity to put his case forward.

Chairperson Makashule Gana, from Rise Mzansi, asserted that the impeachment committee would focus on what was within its control and continue "until a court of law tells us otherwise". It will, therefore, meet as planned on 24 June to draft its terms of reference and elect leadership. **DM**

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IEC ready to welcome South Africans for voter registration this weekend



The Electoral Commission says it is ready to welcome South Africans of voting age at all its 23 706 voting stations across the country during the registration weekend on 20 and 21 June 2026.

"We call on all eligible South Africans to take full advantage of the voter registration weekend to register, verify, or update their details on the voters' roll," said the Commission's Chief Electoral Officer, Sy Mamabolo, on Thursday.

The Commission also welcomed the Department of Home Affairs' decision to operate during the registration weekend, providing identity document services to ensure eligible citizens have the necessary documentation to register to vote.

Addressing the media on the state of readiness in Pretoria today, Mamabolo told media that the voters' roll currently stands at 28 million registered voters, despite ongoing monthly reductions of approximately 34 000 due to mortality.

"The voters' roll stood at 27.7 million during the 2024 General Elections. The online registration platform is proving to be a crucial element in the growth of the voters' roll," he said.

He said the Commission remains committed to delivering free, fair and credible elections. Mamabolo urged all eligible citizens to play their part in strengthening South Africa's constitutional democracy through active voter registration and participation.

He called on every voter to update their details, especially their address, as this will place them in the correct ward segment of the voters' roll.

"Therefore, the voter registration weekend offers an opportunity to ensure that voters' details are accurately captured and updated. There is no statutory mechanism to vote outside of the voting district in which voters are registered.

"Over the two-day registration weekend, all 23 706 voting stations, comprising 22 718 permanent stations, 960 temporary stations and 28 mobile stations for remote communities, will be operational. Registration stations will operate from 08h00 to 17h00," Mamabolo said.

According to the Commission, KwaZulu-Natal has

the highest number of registration stations at 5 021, followed by the Eastern Cape with 4 984, Limpopo with 3 317, Gauteng with 2 832, Mpumalanga with 1 846, North West with 1 730, the Western Cape with 1 623, the Free State with 1 614 and the Northern Cape with 739.

Mamabolo said the increase in the number of stations from 23 151 during the 2021 Local Government Elections is driven by the five-yearly review of wards by the Municipal Demarcation Board and the Commission's efforts to expand accessibility to voter registration services.

Touching on voter registration materials, Mamabolo said the Electoral Commission has successfully delivered all essential voter registration materials across all provinces.

"A stock of 39 641 voter management devices is available to service registration stations across the country. These devices have undergone the necessary maintenance to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

"These devices are central to modern voter registration operations, enabling real-time citizenship verification, accurate capture of voter details and seamless integration with the voters' roll," Mamabolo said.

With regard to staffing, Mamabolo said the Commission has appointed and trained 48 212 registration staff members, who will be deployed to ensure a smooth and efficient voter registration process across all registration stations.

"Of the appointed staff members, 37 994 are women and 10 218 are men. Furthermore, 22 599 staff members are under the age of 35, while 19 806 are between the ages of 36 and 50. The remaining 5 807 staff members are aged 51 years and older.

"Significantly, 34 404 of the appointed staff members are unemployed qualified persons. This highlights the important contribution that electoral events make towards temporary employment opportunities and skills development.

"The recruitment criteria for registration staff were developed in consultation with the National Political Liaison Committee. The names of appoint-

ed staff members were also shared with the Local Political Liaison Committees to allow for objections against any individuals deemed unsuitable for appointment," he said.

Mamabolo said the Commission reaffirms its commitment to advancing the aspirations of young people as voters and candidates in the forthcoming elections.

"Given that youth in the 18-19 age category have not had multiple opportunities to enlist on the voters' roll and have only recently become age-eligible, more than 70% in this age cohort are still to register.

"The Electoral Commission urges all eligible youth, especially first-time voters, to seize this opportunity to register and participate in these elections," Mamabolo said.

Boosting youth participation
Mamabolo said the Commission's Tertiary Institutions Campaign (TIC) continues to strengthen youth participation.

"By 31 March 2026, the campaign had reached 269 552 students nationwide, of whom 158 446 (59%) were newly registered voters," he said.

On 11 and 12 June 2026, the Commission trained more than 70 members of Blind SA on the use of the Universal Ballot Template (UBT) as part of its efforts to promote inclusive electoral participation.

Mamabolo explained that the initiative aims to empower blind and visually impaired voters to confidently cast their ballots independently and with dignity during the forthcoming elections.

"Workshops with additional disability groups are planned and ongoing to ensure that the Commission engages across the full spectrum of disabilities and incorporates diverse perspectives into its electoral programmes and services," he said.

Mamabolo said the Electoral Commission's Contact Centre is also fully equipped to support voters and stakeholders through a multi-channel service offering assistance via voice, email, live chat and social media in all official languages.

To date, it has successfully managed 51 400 citizen interactions, reflecting its capacity to provide accessible and responsive voter support. — *SANews.gov.za*

Home Affairs launches upgraded online booking system



The Department of Home Affairs has launched an upgraded online booking system on the MyHomeAffairsOnline platform, introducing enhanced security measures to prevent the abuse of booking slots and improve access to services.

Users are now required to create a MyHomeAffairsOnline profile linked to their South African ID number and email address before making a booking, helping to ensure that appointments remain available to legitimate clients.

The upgrade follows years of abuse of the previous booking platform by syndicates and other unscrupulous individuals who exploited vulnerabilities in the system to block appointment slots and sell them to desperate citizens.

As a result, many ordinary South Africans struggled to secure appointments for essential Home Affairs services. The upgraded booking system is available

at myhomeaffairsonline.dha.gov.za and marks another milestone in Home Affairs' digital transformation journey to improve service delivery, combat fraud and deliver dignity for all.

"For too long, ordinary South Africans were disadvantaged by criminals who exploited weaknesses in the previous booking system to hoard appointment slots and sell them for profit.

"The migration of our booking system to MyHomeAffairsOnline directly addresses this abuse by linking bookings to verified user profiles, strengthening the integrity of the system and protecting citizens' access to services.

"This reform advances our vision of Home Affairs @ home by making services more secure and convenient for citizens," Home Affairs Minister Dr Leon Schreiber said in a statement on Thursday. — *SANews.gov.za*

Mashatile calls for firm, fair and compassionate approach to migration



Deputy President Paul Mashatile says migration forms part of South Africa's historical and contemporary story and must be addressed with firmness, fairness and compassion.

Guided by the spirit of Ubuntu, the Deputy President emphasised that migration should unite rather than divide communities, helping to build a South Africa that is safe, inclusive and prosperous.

He made the remarks during a special meeting with the National House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders, led by Kgosi Seathlolo, alongside the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Migration chaired by Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development Mmamoloko Kubayi.

The meeting reaffirmed government's commitment to the Comprehensive Approach for Migration Management introduced by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The five-pillar plan seeks to curb irregular migration, strengthen border security, and enforce labour and immigration laws, while upholding constitutional values and human dignity.

Presidency Director-General Phindile Baleni outlined the work under way to address the challenges posed by undocumented migrants.

The presentation highlighted coordinated government action, improved border management and lawful enforcement measures that respect both sovereignty and human rights.

"Traditional leaders highlighted their critical role as custodians of heritage and guardians of community integrity, particularly in rural and borderland communities.

"In this regard, they have pledged to continue supporting efforts to register businesses, keep records of foreign nationals, and mediate tensions in communities affected by migration pressures," the Presidency said. The meeting expressed strong support for the President's call to implement the five-pillar plan, noting that migration must be managed in a way that protects South Africa's sovereignty while strengthening democracy and fostering social cohesion. — *SANews.gov.za*

Pupil Survives School Bullying Terror

Continues from Page 2

pened, but we have given her a written warning for failure to supervise the class," Ndaba revealed.

He further stated that administration has also initiated interventions for both the victim and the aggressive perpetrators.

"The perpetrators have been enlisted with the support of a social worker to assist them with behavioural change.

"We are doing something about this, and we are trying to put these learners in a program and hoping that they will get assistance.

"We will also assist the victim to get the psychological support that he needs," Ndaba continued.

A Systemic National Crisis

Thabang's experience is not an isolated case. In April last year, 13-year-old Mbali Mlaba, a Grade 7 learner from Vulindlela Primary School in Harrismith, committed suicide after being repeatedly targeted by a classmate who accused her of cheating during a test.

The teenage girl left a heartbreaking letter to her mother expressing the severe emotional distress she experienced daily at school.

Research conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) indicates that in the first month of the 2025 school year alone, 548 incidents

of bullying had already been officially reported.

The data paints a grim picture of the scale of the problem nationally:

- 3.2 million learners are victims of bullying annually.
- 67% of targeted children choose not to report the abuse.
- 160 000 learners skip school daily specifically to avoid being synthesised into targets.
- 1 in 10 learners will eventually drop out of school entirely due to ongoing harassment.

The review of 28 separate studies further established that victims experience increased depression, anxiety, severe peer rejection, and a complete lack of connectedness at school.

Additionally, South African bullying experiences correlate directly with significantly lower academic achievements in primary school learners.

Sidebar: Critical Warning Signs for Parents

If you suspect your child is being targeted by bullies at school, monitor them closely for these behavioural changes:

- Sudden decreased interest in school (wants to stay at home)
- Loss of interest in favourite school activities
- Drop in academic performance or the quality

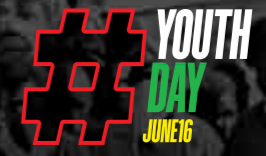
of school work

- Demands parents to take her to school instead of taking scholar transport
- Seems happy on weekends, but unhappy, preoccupied, or tense on Sundays
- Suddenly prefers the company of adults
- Frequent illnesses such as headaches and stomach aches
- Sleep issues such as nightmares and sleeplessness;
- Comes home with unexplained scratches, bruises, and/or torn clothing
- Talks about avoiding certain areas of the school or neighbourhood
- Suddenly becomes moody, irritable, or angry and starts bullying others (for example: siblings, children in the neighbourhood, etc)
- Seeks the wrong friends in the wrong places (e.g., drug users, gangs, etc)
- Talks about being sad, anxious, depressed or having panic attacks
- Wants to stay home on weekends
- Talks about suicide

(Source: Department of Basic Education)

*Names changed to protect the identity of the minors.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1976 SOWETO UPRISING



Youth Take Centre Stage

As South Africa marked the 50th anniversary of the June 16 uprising, municipalities across the country turned Youth Day 2026 into a powerful platform for empowerment, recognition and opportunity. From sports tournaments and community dialogues to skills development programmes, local leaders ensured that young people were not only celebrated but also equipped to shape the future of their communities.

By Katlego Mashwabi

Ngwathe Rallies Behind Youth



Sports, empowerment and community dialogues took centre stage as municipalities commemorated the Jubilee of Youth Day 2026.

With all roads leading to the national celebration of the 50th anniversary of June 16, mayors and councillors across local municipalities and district municipalities made concerted efforts to ensure that no young person was left behind.

In the Free State, Ngwathe Local Municipality hosted an awards ceremony at the Vrededorp Municipal Hall to honour community youth who successfully completed a Project Management Training Programme implemented in partnership with the National Development Agency and the National Youth Development Agency.

Addressing the graduates, Councillor Victoria de Beer-Mthombeni congratulated the young participants and urged them to become ambassadors of development within their communities.

She encouraged the recipients to use the skills they had acquired to create opportunities, inspire other young people and contribute meaningfully to local economic growth.

The event formed part of broader Youth Month activities aimed at honouring the legacy of the 1976 generation while investing in the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs and professionals.

Municipal officials said the programme reflects government's ongoing commitment to youth development, skills training and community empowerment.

Across various municipalities, Youth Day celebrations featured sporting activities, educational engagements and discussions on challenges affecting young people, including unemployment, substance abuse and access to opportunities.

As South Africa reflected on five decades since the historic student uprising, local government leaders emphasised that the future of the country rests in the hands of an empowered, skilled and active youth.

Youth Month Sparks Talent and Hope in Moqhaka Municipality



Young people across Moqhaka Local Municipality took centre stage during Youth Month celebrations as sport, arts, health awareness, and community engagement combined to showcase the talent, potential, and resilience of the municipality's future leaders.

Moqhaka Executive Mayor, Ramasimong Tau spent Youth Day engaging with young people at a series of events designed to inspire, empower, and create opportunities for personal growth. The celebrations highlighted the importance of investing in youth development while honouring the legacy of the 1976 generation.

The mayor joined the Mankeng Mall Youth Day Celebration, where participants took part in a fun walk, sporting activities, creative arts programmes, health awareness sessions, and empowerment initiatives. The event was made possible through a partnership involving Mankeng Mall, SEDFA, the Bolekehang Cancer Foundation, and Papzen & Mozolo Fitness.

Tau later attended the Kasi Talent Show at Tshepalo Hall in Rammulotsi, where young people showcased their talents in poetry, drama, traditional music and dance. Organised by Rammulotsi Youth in Development, the event provided a platform for emerging performers to express themselves and celebrate local culture.

The celebrations continued with the Mohutsiwa Foundation's second Annual Rammulotsi High Schools Soccer Spectacular, which brought together learners from various schools in a display of sporting excellence, teamwork and discipline.

Addressing participants, Tau commended organisers for investing their time and resources in young people. "The fact that these organisations continue to create opportunities for young people shows that they believe in you and your potential. They want to see you succeed because you are the future of this municipality," he said.

The mayor urged young people to stay away from drugs and crime and instead focus on education, skills development and leadership.

Youth Day Goals Beyond the Field



Youth Day celebrations in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District extended far beyond commemorative events this year, with sport taking centre stage as a tool for youth development, unity and empowerment.

At Mantsopa Local Municipality, Mayor Mamsie Tsoene joined young people at a Youth Soccer Tournament, where she donated two soccer balls and contributed R500 towards the successful hosting of the event.

The tournament brought together aspiring footballers from across the municipality in a spirit of healthy competition and community pride.

Elsewhere in the district, Executive Mayor Councillor Conny Msibi marked the 50th anniversary of the June 16 uprising by attending the annual inter-schools sporting competition at Harrismith's Intabazane Stadium. Learners from various schools participated in different sporting codes, showcasing their talent and teamwork.

Municipal leaders said the events were aimed at encouraging young people to embrace positive lifestyles while honouring the legacy of the youth of 1976. Through sport, the district celebrated not only the past but also the potential of a new generation.



Kgetlengrivier Puts Youth on the Move



Upon arrival at the stadium, participants took part in an aerobics session designed to promote physical fitness and overall wellness. The Department of Health further engaged the youth through an informative awareness talk, highlighting the importance of healthy living, disease prevention and responsible decision-making.

The day then shifted into high gear as soccer teams competed in a spirited tournament that showcased talent, teamwork and sportsmanship. The matches drew enthusiastic support from spectators, creating an atmosphere of excitement and camaraderie.

Municipal leaders said the event was about more than sport. It was an opportunity to honour the sacrifices of the youth of 1976 while inspiring today's generation to lead healthy, productive lives and play an active role in shaping a better future for their communities.

The municipality thanked government departments, stakeholders, community members and participants for contributing to the success of the celebration.

Kgetlengrivier Local Municipality marked Youth Day with a vibrant programme focused on health, fitness and youth empowerment, bringing together young people from across the municipality for a day of activity and reflection.

Led by Mayor Thabo Jacobs, the celebrations began with a health walk from the municipal offices to Reagile Stadium. The initiative encouraged young people to embrace active lifestyles while promoting community unity and social cohesion.

Tseki Challenges Youth to Shape Tomorrow

Fifty years after the youth of 1976 changed the course of South African history, Dihlabeng Local Municipality Executive Mayor Tseki James Tseki has challenged young people to honour that legacy by becoming active architects of their own future and the future of their communities.

In a Youth Day message directed at the young people of Dihlabeng, Tseki said the legacy of June 16 should serve as a reminder that young people have the power to influence change and drive progress in their communities.

He urged the youth to exercise the rights guaranteed by the Constitution responsibly, while recognising the sacrifices made by previous generations to secure those freedoms.

"Our Constitution guarantees your rights as children, young people, students and South Africans. Stand up and claim those rights responsibly," said Tseki.

The mayor en-

couraged young people to use Youth Day and Youth Month as an opportunity to reflect on their role in shaping the social, economic and political future of South Africa. He challenged them to become agents of positive change and work collectively towards building stronger and more prosperous communities.

Tseki said the future of Dihlabeng rests in the hands of its young people and urged them to take ownership of the opportunities before them. He called on the youth to embrace education, leadership and community involvement as tools for personal growth and development.

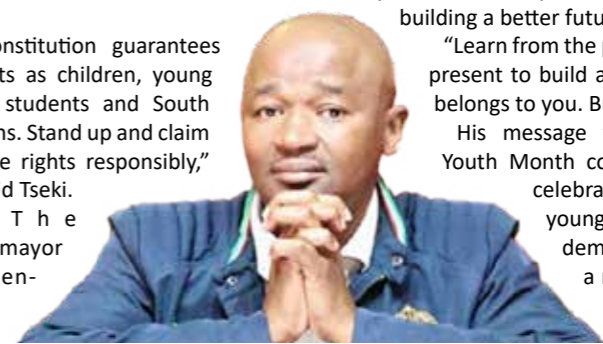
At the same time, he warned against social ills that continue to affect many young people, including drug and alcohol abuse. He urged the youth to celebrate Youth Day responsibly and avoid destructive and anti-social behaviour that could derail their ambitions and undermine their potential.

The mayor stressed that honouring the legacy of 1976 requires more than remembering the past. It requires action, responsibility and a commitment to building a better future.

"Learn from the past. Make good use of the present to build a better future. The future belongs to you. Build it now," he said.

His message formed part of broader Youth Month commemorations aimed at celebrating the contribution of young people to South Africa's democracy while encouraging a new generation to take up the mantle of leadership and development.

Hector Pieterse, 16th June 1976. Pictures: Sam Nzima



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Opinion

Dr Gcina Mtengwane
Centre for Gender and Africa Studies,
University of the Free State



#YouthMonth: Empowering South Africa's Youth From 1976 to 2026

As South Africa observes Youth Month in June 2026, the official theme, as declared by the Minister of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, "RESET@50 – The Future Calls" sets a powerful tone for reflection and action. The theme marks the 50th anniversary of the 1976 Soweto Uprising. It calls on the nation to honestly assess the past five decades, reset approaches that have not delivered, and respond decisively to the aspirations, energy, and leadership potential of today's youth. "RESET@50" is both a commemoration of the courage shown in 1976 and a forward-looking challenge to create genuine opportunities so that the youth of 2026 can shape a better future.

Since 1994, South Africa has made notable strides in youth development. Access to basic education has expanded, with millions more young people enrolled in school and completing matric. Tertiary participation has grown significantly. Dedicated frameworks, including the National Youth Policy, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), the Youth Employment Service (YES) initiative, and Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) reflect a commitment to placing youth at the centre of national development. These achievements have opened doors previously closed under apartheid and established important foundations for inclusion.

However, significant challenges remain. Youth unemployment continues at alarming levels, the quality of education in many schools remains uneven, and economic opportunities, particularly in townships and rural areas are still limited. These gaps show that policies and good intentions alone are insufficient. The real measure of progress lies in effective, consistent implementation that produces tangible results.

As the adage reminds us:
"We ought to move beyond asking if it's a dog at



the piano and ask if it can play the piano".

Practical Solutions with Real Potential
A critical area for reset is student funding. While the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) has expanded access, it has been plagued by chronic inefficiencies: repeated payment delays and mid-year disruptions, massive administrative backlogs, governance failures, data inaccuracies, corruption risks, and budget shortfalls running into billions. These problems have caused immense hardship, forced students to drop out, and eroded public trust. We must move beyond patching the current system and introduce a better, more sustainable model.

A proposed alternative is a decentralised, institution-led funding system supported by a hybrid grant-loan mechanism. Universities and TVET colleges should receive ring-fenced, formula-based allocations directly from the national fiscus and manage disbursements themselves. This would enable faster verification, timely payments aligned

with academic calendars, reduced bureaucracy, and greater accountability at the point of delivery. A hybrid component that combines targeted grants for the poorest students with income-contingent loans for others would promote sustainability while protecting access for the most vulnerable. Stronger public-private partnerships and digital verification tools can further improve efficiency and minimise leakage.

Other key interventions include:

- Strengthening the education pipeline: Invest in raising teaching and learning standards in underperforming schools, expand quality career guidance from early grades, and scale bridging programmes that prepare matriculants for tertiary education, vocational training, or employment.
- Local government-led youth economic programmes: Municipalities should drive tailored local economic development through skills hubs, small business incubators, township and rural enterprise support, public-private partnerships,

work-integrated learning, and apprenticeships.

- Genuine youth participation in governance: Ensure young people have influential roles in municipal planning, ward committees, and budget processes — shifting from symbolic seats to real co-creation of solutions. We must equip them to actually "play the piano" through targeted capacity-building and mentorship.

- Integrated support ecosystems: Combine funding and skills development with psychosocial support, mentorship, and entrepreneurship training to build resilient, capable young citizens.

The Urgency of Now
2026 is a local government election year, making this moment particularly significant. Youth development must rise above annual speeches, photo opportunities, and half-measures. Young people and their families will be watching closely to see which parties and candidates deliver credible plans and proven results at municipal level.

Supporting youth agency is not mere benevolence. It is essential for inclusive economic growth and democratic vitality. When young people gain real skills, access to opportunity, and influence in decision-making, entire communities and the nation advance. Local governments, closest to the people, have a pivotal role in turning national policies into visible local impact — and voters will hold them accountable in the upcoming elections.

The 50-year milestone is both celebration and an accountability moment.

Let us measure success not by the number of policies written or youth desks created, but by falling unemployment, rising entrepreneurship, better education outcomes, and authentic youth participation.

Our youth are ready to answer the future's call. Leaders and citizens must now respond with urgency, integrity, and sustained delivery.

The Informal Economy is a solution to youth unemployment in South Africa



Refilwe Mochoari
Editor-in-Chief

The South African informal economy employs three million people and contributes towards 20% percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

These include spaza shops, street vendors, home-based businesses such as hair salons, and the taxi industry.

The informal sector is a sector that is not taxed and is not monitored by the government.

A sector rich in opportunities, often overlooked but it employs individuals who are unable to secure employment in the corporate sector.

Hi everyone my name is Refilwe Mochoari, let's talk about how the informal sector is an integral part of the SA economy yet undermined and overlooked.

Where I come from, many young people have tertiary qualifications and are found to be working in the informal sector.

I know many men and women who struggled to find employment in the formal labor market.

Today they are part of the 3 million people who contribute to the 20% of the country's GDP through the informal economy.

Because of all the challenges faced by individuals in this sector, which amongst others include inconsistent income, inadequate infrastructure, and probably the lack of resources, they end up not getting the support that they seek from the government.

Most of them are non-registered cash businesses. Although these individuals are considered unemployed, for them, this is a job because the formal job market fails to employ them.

How I see it is that maybe this means that South Africa does not really have a crisis of unemployment, maybe the crisis is the policy and regulations.

Although the Department of Small Business introduced the Spaza Shop fund, I still believe that more can be done to support these SMMEs.

The government needs to make an effort to support the informal sector.

The informal economy needs a supportive government so that it can move beyond survival and contribute to development.

In January 2025, the World Bank, Finmark Trust, Swiss Confederation, and the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education, and Research, produced a report that outlines policy recommendations for the South African informal sector.

The Department of Small Business Development, the National Treasury, and the project steering committee also provided feedback at various stages of the report preparation.

Some policy recommendations for the informal sector in South Africa to harness the potential of small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in the South African sector were included:

The report's priority recommendation is the policy approach, in order to lead and align the government's approach to informal businesses it is recommended to issue a standalone policy statement from the Office of the Presidency that articulates a policy approach that prioritises informal businesses.

The statement emphasises the importance of the informal sector and the need for cross-ministerial cooperation as well as guide and align the actions of all actors in the informal ecosystem towards supporting the informal sector.

The report states that the messaging should set out the framework for coordination and reporting anticipated outcomes and timeless, it should not be seen as discouraging formalization or supporting enterprises that break the law.

The statement should emphasise the need for entrepreneurship and skills development to address past injustices and promote reform to ease informal business compliance with local and national laws.

Another priority recommendation from the report is to reshape the SMME registration and licensing process to be more integrated and streamlined. Given that some informal businesses wish to transition into formal entrepreneurship in their growth journey, it is recommended to review the formalization process and make it as effortless as possible.

A fully integrated business registration system with a one stop process is proposed digitally with links to all appropriate authorities including tax, employment and labour business support programmes and local authorities.

And lastly a priority that caught my attention is to promote digital payments by informal SMMEs which are an essential step towards financial inclusion of informal SMMEs who primarily operate as cash only business. Innovation, especially around digital payments is needed to address this situation, however the landscape is dominated by banks that are focused on the formal sector.

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

Living a Value-Based Life: The Ultimate Framework for Clarity and Fulfillment

In a world driven by external metrics—likes, job titles, bank balances, and societal expectations—it is incredibly easy to build a life that looks good on paper but feels empty on the inside. We often find ourselves running on a treadmill of endless tasks, wonder why we feel chronically exhausted, or experience a persistent sense of misalignment.

The antidote to this modern malaise isn't better time management or higher productivity. It is value-based living.

Living a value-based life means identifying what matters most to you at a core level and intentionally aligning your daily actions, decisions, and relationships with those principles. It is the shift from reacting to the demands of the world to proactively anchoring your life in truth.

Understanding the Foundation: What Are Values?

Values are not goals. A goal is a destination you reach and cross off your list—like buying a house, getting a degree, or hitting a revenue target. Values, however, are a compass. They represent how you want to behave, what you stand for, and the qualities you choose to bring to your endeavors. Competence, integrity, family, community restoration, leadership, and faith are examples of core values.

You never "achieve" a value; you embody it.

When your daily calendar and long-term decisions align with your values, you experience psychological harmony. When they clash—for instance, if you value family but work 100-hour weeks without boundaries, or if you value authenticity but stay in environments where you must wear a mask—you experience internal friction, stress, and eventual burnout.

The Pillars of a Value-Based Life

Transitioning from an autopilot existence to an intentional, value-driven one requires a conscious framework.

1. Radical Self-Discovery

You cannot live by your values until you clearly define them. This requires looking past what culture, your upbringing, or your professional peer group tells you should matter.

Ask yourself:

What principles, if compromised, leave me feeling deeply unsettled?

When in my life did I feel the most fulfilled, and what values was I honoring in those moments? What legacy do I want to leave behind in my com-

munity and profession?

2. Ruthless Prioritization

Once your core values are established (ideally narrowed down to a non-negotiable list of three to five), they become your ultimate decision-making filter. If a new business venture, a social obligation, or a personal commitment does not serve or align with those core pillars, you must develop the courage to say no. True productivity is not about doing everything; it is about doing what is meaningful.

3. Integrity in Action

A value is merely a concept until it costs you something. True value-based living is tested when choices are difficult. Honoring a value like integrity means choosing honesty even when a shortcut is more profitable. Honoring leadership or community development means stepping up to serve even when your schedule is demanding. Alignment requires your daily habits to reflect your deepest convictions.

The Compounding Benefits of Alignment

Living a life dictated by internal values rather than external pressures yields profound shifts in your personal and professional reality:

- * Decisional Clarity: Decision fatigue vanishes. When choices are filtered through your values, the "right" path becomes immediately apparent, saving immense psychological energy.

- * Resilience in Hardship: When challenges arise, a value-based person doesn't break. If your anchor is an internal principle rather than an external circumstance, you can endure seasons of intense pressure because you understand the deeper purpose behind the struggle.

- * Authentic Influence: People are naturally drawn to clarity and conviction. When you live authentically, your leadership, writing, and speech carry weight because there is no gap between who you are and what you do.

Designing Your Blueprint

Living a value-based life is an active, ongoing practice. It requires regular audits—looking at your calendar, your finances, and your relationships every quarter to ask: Is my current layout reflective of my core blueprint?

Ultimately, success is not defined by how much you accumulate, but by how closely your daily reality matches your internal truth. By anchoring your life in your values, you transcend the noise of the world, building a life of profound impact, deep fulfillment, and lasting legacy.

MRM Condemns Gruesome Murder Of Mahikeng Woman, Calls For Justice



The Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM) in the North West on Wednesday condemned in the strongest terms possible the gruesome murder of the 39-year-old woman whose body was discovered over the weekend by a relative at her marital home in Lonely Park village outside Mahikeng.

The civil society led movement promoting the Charter of Positive Values called for justice declared that the heartrending gender-based violence and femicide incident that occurred on Friday 12 June 2026 has left the Christian community, teaching fraternity as well as the broader society across the Northwest Province and the country reeling with shock.

The deceased woman has since been identified as Masego Mosweu, née Moile, an assistant teacher at Maggie's Millennium Private School in Gof View.

Convener of the MRM Provincial Committee, Pastor Lesiba Kgwele said that it is beyond imagination that the deceased victim's husband, Papi Moses Mosweu (47) who was subsequently arrested in connection with the heinous crime mercilessly bludgeoned the mother of his two children to death with a hammer and screwdriver as alleged.

"We are deeply saddened and disappointed that the victim died from such an atrocious and ghastly act of betrayal in the sanctuary of her home, supposedly at the hands of a man who had vowed to love and protect her who also happened to be a former policeman, a respected church leader who was assumed to be a role model as well as a mentor to those under his Apostolic ministry and pastoral care," remarked Pastor Kgwele.

According to a police statement, the couple had allegedly been involved in a confrontation on the morning of the tragic incident.

Police spokesperson Sergeant Siphon Taliwe indicated that the husband who was later involved in a collision with a truck on Nelson Mandela Drive, near a shopping mall is currently hospitalised and under police guard. Kgwele conveyed condolences to the Mosweu and Moile families as well those who are mourning the traumatic death of their loved one, their colleague, neighbour and friend.

He pointed out that denying the children the love of their mother is the worst cruelty they were not supposed to experience in their lives.

"Whatever strain that the couple might have been experiencing within their 18 years of marriage did not warrant such a violent reaction which does not mirror the bliss that characterized their relationship as well as partnership in ministry which had also achieved remarkable milestones through their SA Life Changing Network and Northwest Gospel Artists Association," stressed Kgwele.









He urged men that are experiencing challenges in their relationships to seek urgent professional help instead of taking matters into their own hands.

We challenge the church to confront patriarchy, which is prevalent within religious as well as cultural institutions, to break its silence on abuse within families and to take the lead in the national effort to mobilise communities for united action against the scourge of GBVF, he underscored.

The mother of two revered within the Christian community is to be buried on Saturday in Dithakong village after a funeral service to commence as from 7:00 at her marital home.

Business

Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	16.42	-0.14%	
Rand/Pound	21.68	-0.19%	
Rand/Euro	18.81	-0.07%	
Platinum	1 693.01	-0.12%	
Brent Crude	79.17	-0.78%	
Gold	4 195.60	-0.34%	
Ethereum	1 707.28	0.10%	
Bitcoin	62 819.93	-0.11%	

Khalipha Strengthens China Ties, Youth Investment Agenda

Matjhabeng uses Youth Day platform to pursue investment, technical training, scholarships and export opportunities for local young people



Matjhabeng Local Municipality Executive Mayor, Thanduxolo Khalipha addressing China-South Africa Youth Exchange Night and Book Launch. Picture: Supplied

The Executive Mayor of Matjhabeng Local Municipality, Thanduxolo Khalipha, used South Africa's Youth Day commemoration to advance the municipality's growing partnership with Chinese institutions and position Matjhabeng's young people for opportunities in education, technical training, investment and international trade.

The Executive Mayor attended The Future We Share: China-South Africa Youth Exchange Night and Book Launch at the CSIR International Convention Centre in Pretoria on 16 June 2026.

The gathering brought together senior government leaders, diplomats, youth organisations, business representatives, academics and development partners to commemorate Youth Day and consider the future of relations between South Africa and the People's Republic of China.

Among the senior leaders present were His Excellency Wu Peng, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to South Africa; Deputy Minister in the Presidency for Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities, Mmapaseka Steve Letsike; Nomvula Mokonyane, First Deputy Secretary-General of the African National Congress and President of the South Africa-China Friendship Association; Speaker of Tshwane Metropolitan municipality Mncedi Ndzwanana and Luyanda Jonas, President of the China-South Africa Youth Federation.

The programme also included the launch of The Future We Share: Xi Jinping and China-South Africa Relations: The Gen Z Youth Perspective, authored by Michael Mayalo and Thabiso Mthembu.

Building on the Federation's visit to Matjhabeng

The Pretoria engagement followed the visit of a China-South Africa Youth Federation delegation to Matjhabeng in April 2026.

The delegation, led by Federation President Luyanda Jonas, met with Executive Mayor Khalipha, the municipal administration and executive management to explore cooperation in manufacturing, agriculture, renewable energy, property development, skills development and youth empowerment.

During that engagement, the Federation highlighted scholarship opportunities for South African students and indicated that young people from Matjhabeng would be considered among potential beneficiaries of study opportunities in China.

The municipality subsequently established a dedicated team to work with the Federation and convert the discussions into implementable programmes.

The relationship has since gained further relevance following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the China-South Africa Youth Federation and the Nanjing Research Institute of Hydrology and Water Conservation Automation in China.

According to the Federation, the partnership is expected to create approximately 1,500 work opportunities for young South Africans in the water sector.

The programme will focus on water treatment, water monitoring, data-management systems, high-performance computing and the use of artificial intelligence in water-resource management. It will also provide opportunities for young engineers and water technicians to receive specialised training in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province.

These areas are particularly relevant to Matjhabeng.

The municipality is working to improve its water and wastewater infrastructure while simultaneously preparing for new industrial, energy, agricultural and logistics investments. This requires a new generation of

engineers, technicians, artisans, data specialists, environmental practitioners and infrastructure managers.

Matjhabeng will therefore continue engaging the Federation to pursue opportunities for suitably qualified young people from the municipality to participate in future phases of these programmes.

Preparing young people for Matjhabeng's emerging economy

The municipality's investment programme cannot succeed without a skilled and properly resourced local workforce.

The proposed Matjhabeng Special Economic Zone is intended to support highly technical industries linked to energy, gas and helium, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, agro-processing and logistics.

The development of the Welkom Airport and logistics platform, the municipality's growing renewable-energy portfolio and its industrial-development initiatives will also require specialised technical, commercial and entrepreneurial capabilities.

The Mayor's international engagements are therefore intended to secure more than physical investment.

The municipality is pursuing partnerships that can provide scholarships, technical training, vocational education, technology transfer, enterprise development and international exposure for young people.

Young residents must be prepared to participate as engineers, artisans, technicians, researchers, digital specialists, project managers, entrepreneurs and owners of enterprises within the new value chains emerging in Matjhabeng.

Without deliberate investment in people, major infrastructure projects may be constructed without producing lasting transformation for the communities surrounding them.

The municipality's approach is therefore to connect every major investment initiative with skills development, local supplier participation and youth enterprise opportunities.

Positioning Matjhabeng for China's zero-tariff opportunity

Ambassador Wu also emphasised China's decision to extend zero-tariff treatment across 100 percent of tariff lines to African countries that maintain diplomatic relations with China.

The policy creates an important opportunity for African agricultural products, manufactured goods and other value-added products to gain improved access to the Chinese market.

For Matjhabeng, the opportunity is particularly relevant to agro-processing, food production, manufacturing and future industries expected to be located within the proposed Special Economic Zone.

However, tariff-free access alone will not automatically result in local products reaching China.

Matjhabeng must develop enterprises capable of meeting Chinese product standards, producing at sufficient scale, maintaining reliable supply, packaging products competitively and moving goods efficiently through national and international logistics systems.

The municipality will therefore explore how its relations with Chinese institutions can support export-readiness programmes for local businesses, market-access information, standards compliance, product certification and connections with Chinese buyers and distribution partners.

The proposed Welkom Airport and logistics development, together with the municipality's central location, forms part of this longer-term ambition.

Matjhabeng means "where nations meet."

The municipality wants to transform that meaning into a modern economic proposition by becoming a place where investment, skills, energy, agriculture, manufacturing and international markets meet.

From people-to-people relations to economic opportunity

The engagement also took place during the 2026 China-Africa Year of People-to-People Exchanges.

The initiative was agreed upon by Chinese and African leaders to deepen cooperation in education, culture, science, technology, tourism, youth development and exchanges between institutions and communities.

For Matjhabeng, people-to-people cooperation must produce measurable benefits.

It must connect young residents with universities, technical institutions, scholarships and workplace opportunities.

It must connect local entrepreneurs with international markets. It must connect the municipality's investment pipeline with credible development institutions, companies and financiers.

It must also support structured cooperation between Matjhabeng and suitable Chinese cities that have experience in industrial development, renewable energy, manufacturing, logistics, water management and economic diversification.

The municipality appreciates the participation of the South Africa-China Economic and Trade Association, the China-Africa Development Fund and Chery in the 2025 Matjhabeng Investment Summit.

The next objective is to take these relationships to a higher level by moving from introductory engagements to structured discussions around Matjhabeng's investment projects, skills requirements and export opportunities.

Investment and youth development must move together

Executive Mayor Khalipha's participation in the Youth Day programme was therefore guided by a clear municipal objective: to attract investment into Matjhabeng while ensuring that young people are equipped to benefit from the opportunities created.

The municipality will continue working with the China-South Africa Youth Federation, the Chinese Embassy, educational institutions, development organisations and companies to identify practical programmes for Matjhabeng.

These engagements will support the municipality's broader efforts to develop the proposed Special Economic Zone, renewable-energy industries, agro-processing, manufacturing, logistics, water infrastructure and youth-owned enterprises.

The Mayor's message is that investment and youth development cannot be pursued separately.

Matjhabeng requires investment to create industries and employment, but investors also require a skilled, innovative and productive workforce.

By preparing young people through education, training, scholarships, entrepreneurship and international exposure, the municipality is building the human foundation required to sustain its economic transformation.

The Youth Day engagement was therefore both a commemoration of the past and an investment in the future. It reaffirmed Matjhabeng's intention to build international partnerships that result in real opportunities for its people and to ensure that the youth are placed at the centre of the municipality's journey from economic potential to implementation. **MLM**

Indonesia Link Offers Mangaung New Path to Growth



Mangaung Mayor, Gregory Nthatsi hosts Indonesian Consul-General Tudiono. Picture: Baagedi Sethlora

By Bernell Simons

After years of battling landfill crises, service delivery failures and mounting public frustration, Mangaung Metro is looking beyond South Africa's borders for solutions that could transform one of its biggest challenges into a catalyst for economic growth. City leaders believe a proposed partnership with Indonesia's Surabaya could help turn waste into jobs, attract investment and provide practical answers to problems that have long plagued the municipality.

The Metro this week hosted Indonesian Consul-General Tudiono as both parties moved closer to signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that will formalise cooperation in waste management, agriculture, education, skills development and investment.

Executive Mayor Gregory Nthatsi described the agreement as more than a diplomatic exercise, saying it represents an opportunity to learn from a city that has successfully addressed many of the environmental and infrastructure challenges Mangaung continues to face.

"We are on a journey to work on critical aspects that will enrich the metro," Nthatsi said.

"We have chosen to work with a city in Indonesia because that city is similar to Mangaung in terms of agricultural and agri-processing background and our mutual love for sports. Today marks a series of meetings that have been taking place for the past couple of months and we hope that soon we will finalise our Memorandum of Understanding and working relations."

For a municipality under pressure to restore public confidence, the proposed partnership offers the prospect of tested solutions rather than theoretical plans. One area that has particularly impressed city officials is Surabaya's internationally recognised approach to waste management and landfill rehabilitation. Responding to a question from Journal News Network about what Mangaung stands to gain from the partnership, Nthatsi reflected on lessons learnt during a recent visit to Indonesia.

"The area of landfills that you know we've got a problem with, they are so good. We saw, we visited, and we said we need that," he said.

The Mayor described how former landfill sites had been transformed into vibrant public parks and recreational spaces.

"The park that we saw that they created out of a landfill site is one magnificent utilisation of resources that shocked most of us."

Perhaps even more significant was Surabaya's ability to derive economic value from waste. Instead of treating landfill sites as costly environmental burdens, the city has developed systems that commercialise recyclable materials and generate income from products recovered from waste streams.

"What we also saw is an active landfill site where they are now commercialising all the products that are dumped there. The manner in which they could

turn that into a business entity is part of what we actually would want to be part of," Nthatsi said.

He added that officials were surprised by the simplicity of some of the methods being used. Organic waste is converted into compost through labour-intensive processes that create jobs while reducing environmental impact.

"We thought we were going to see some complex machinery. All what we saw is people hard at work." Nthatsi believes similar initiatives could help Mangaung rehabilitate neglected landfill sites, create employment opportunities and support local agricultural production through the use of compost and other recycled products.

The proposed collaboration extends far beyond waste management. Officials from both cities have identified agriculture, agri-processing, industrial development, innovation, education and skills transfer as sectors where cooperation could stimulate long-term economic growth.

"Our exchange programme with regard to making sure that we send our expertise and students, and they also send some to come and help us, will be what informs the relationship between city to city," Nthatsi said.

Indonesia's Consul-General Tudiono said the partnership is founded on mutual benefit and shared learning.

"Through this City-to-City programme, we will exchange best practices and identify areas where we can learn from one another," he said.

According to Tudiono, Surabaya's strengths in environmental management and waste services complement Mangaung's agricultural, educational and innovation capabilities.

"I believe it fits very well between Surabaya and Mangaung." Nthatsi also highlighted the historical ties between South Africa and Indonesia, noting that both countries share histories of resistance against colonial rule. He said Surabaya's reputation as Indonesia's "City of Heroes" mirrors Mangaung's own significance as the birthplace of the African National Congress. "There are common denominators between the two in terms of the wars of resistance and the liberation of this country," he said. "So we share common futures."

If finalised, the MoU is expected to unlock investment opportunities, technical expertise and knowledge-sharing programmes that city leaders hope will strengthen Mangaung's capacity to tackle long-standing challenges.

For residents accustomed to headlines dominated by political instability, labour disputes and service delivery failures, the proposed partnership offers a different narrative — one focused on innovation, economic opportunity and sustainable development. As local government elections draw closer, Nthatsi says his administration is determined to leave behind more than promises, laying the foundations for a city that can learn from global success stories while building a more resilient future.

SARS pledges smoother tax filing season

The South African Revenue Service (SARS) says it has taken note of the difficulties faced by taxpayers in the previous filing season and plans to enhance the experience this season.

SARS has officially launched the filing season with the auto-assessments expected to start on the 1st of July.

The rest of the taxpayers will be able to start filing for their returns from the 13th of July.

Briefing the media in Pretoria this afternoon, SARS Commissioner Johnstone Makhubu highlighted areas they plan to work on to enhance taxpayers' experience this season.

"You'll remember last year, some provisional

taxpayers had to opt in. This year, there are about 200-thousand that have simple matters. They've got income, monthly income, but they also have got interest income that we are aware of. We've decided that this class of taxpayers is important for us to auto-assess because our view is that, increasingly, you'll recall when we started with auto-assessment, we said that we'll start with simple taxpayers and, increasingly using data and expanding data, we'll move towards those that are complex.

We think in the that journey by adding these 200-thousand taxpayers that are provisional taxpayers that will be auto-assessed during this particular year."

DJ Thuto Tladi Eyes the World Stage



By Bernell Simons

For 32-year-old Thuto Morena Tladi, music has never been just a passion, it has been a life-long calling. With eight years of experience behind the decks, the Bloemfontein-born DJ has steadily built a name for himself as one of the city's dedicated ambassadors of deep and soulful house music.

Born into a family where music was an integral part of everyday life, Tladi's love for the art form began at an early age. From the moment he arrived home from primary school until he woke up the next morning, music was a constant companion. His journey into DJing started when established local DJ Varti introduced him to the craft before connecting him with Drumkid Music, whose mentorship helped shape his career and refine his skills.

Years of hard work and consistency have seen Tladi share stages with some of South Africa's biggest names in house music, including Christos, Vinny Da Vinci, Pierre Johnson, Da Capo, Chronical Deep, and DJ Thobs. He has also become a familiar face at Bloemfontein nightlife hotspots such as 128 Bar and Lounge, Capello Bloemfontein, Ekhayeni, and FNT, earning respect for his smooth, soulful sets.

Despite his growing profile, Tladi admits that building a career in Bloemfontein's deep house scene has not been easy. With a relatively small audience for the genre and the ongoing challenge of negotiating fair performance fees, breaking through has required resilience and determination.

Looking ahead, Tladi hopes to establish himself on the international stage within the next five years while securing partnerships with leading brands to help fund and grow his career through endorsements and strategic investments.

While his musical taste stretches across soul, R&B, and hip-hop, deep house and soulful house remain the heartbeat of his performances.

As this week's DJ of the Week, Tladi also has an inspiring message for young people chasing their dreams.

"You don't need to be perfect—you just need to be willing. Be willing to try, to fail, to learn, to rise, and to keep moving, even when the path isn't clear. Every skill you develop, every good habit you build, and every challenge you overcome becomes part of your strength."

He encourages young people to surround themselves with positive influences, protect their mindset, and never allow anyone to limit their ambitions.

"Protect your mind because it is your greatest asset. Surround yourself with people who genuinely want to see you succeed, and never let anyone convince you that your dreams are too big. Stay committed to your journey, because success belongs to those who refuse to give up."

GET TO KNOW THE DJ

ARE YOU A DJ AND WANT TO BE FEATURED ON JOURNAL NEWS
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WEEKEND Gig Guide
ALL OVER BLOEMFONTEIN FROM 19 - 20 JUNE 2026

- GROOVY FRIDAYS (FRIDAY - 19 JUNE 2026)
- STARBOY'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION (SATURDAY - 20 JUNE 2026)
- CENTRAL LIFESTYLE (FRIDAY - 19 JUNE 2026)
- VEGAS FRIDAY (FRIDAY - 19 JUNE 2026)
- VEGAS CLUB (FRIDAY - 19 JUNE 2026)
- IZA SATURDAY (SATURDAY - 20 JUNE 2026)
- ART BEATS FRIENDS (SATURDAY - 20 JUNE 2026)
- ART CAFE (SATURDAY - 20 JUNE 2026)
- COFFEE WITH THE DJ PART 2 (SATURDAY - 20 JUNE 2026)
- 128 LOUNGE & BAR (SATURDAY - 20 JUNE 2026)

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Angela Linda lands SABC 3 World Cup Gig

By Katlego Mashwabi

In 2022, Angela Linda (23) told her friends, "I'm going to be big, bro, there's no other option."

Four years later, the Free State is watching that promise play out.

Linda started her career on a campus radio station, CUT FM as the host for the afternoon show.

Working as a corporate MC, digital content creator, model, billboard girl, television and radio broadcaster, Linda was born to be a star.

Now a presenter on SABC 3 FIFA World Cup Newsroom, #FromAfricaToNorthAmerica which she anchors alongside media personality Lerato LKG Kganyago, Linda in an interview with

Journal News said she is proud of the 2026 girl.

"But I think I can still appreciate where I am now while still striving for more.

"So bigger me is coming" said Linda.

Linda says she has always felt that the Bloemfontein industry has left room for more, which is a need to try out a new post code for bigger opportunities.

She says this was an opportunity for her to get out of the city as she has opened doors to realise her dreams and although she feels Johannesburg is a hub for media, she has more to take back to strengthen what we already have in Bloemfontein.

After completing of her degree at the University of the Free State, in April 2026, Linda continued to pursue her career in the media industry.

She says the thought of studying media did not even cross her mind, she felt she wanted to do Law or something close to it because it felt more real life to her younger self but she is looking to broaden her media education horizons.

"The 2022 me would definitely be proud of me, but I can still appreciate where I am now while striving for more.

"So bigger me is coming," Linda said, reflecting on the declaration post she made four years ago.

Though she calls herself a "Bloem girlie", Linda said the local industry left room for more.

"I always felt I needed a new postcode for bigger opportunities.

On joining the SABC 3 World Cup team, Linda says the platform exceeded her expectations.

"I can't even say it is a dream come true because never in my wildest dreams would I have thought I would be on such an incredible platform.

"All the work I put in led to this moment, but seeing it materialise is a different feeling.

"Everyone is so supportive and I'm really grateful to be part of the show," she said.



When perfect domestic life is just a mask for total brokenness: inside 'The Polygamist'

"The Polygamist" will have you wondering whether commitment was ever meant to survive human behaviour, because what unfolds here feels like a case study in emotional damage dressed up as domestic life.

It's giving "Diary of a Mad Black Woman" energy; it's giving "Who hurt these people?" and somehow, we can't stop watching.

Based on Sue Nyathi's novel, the Netflix series throws viewers straight into the world of Joyce Gomora, played by Gugu Gumedede, a woman who starts off looking like she's got life perfectly packaged.

Beautiful home, powerful husband and polished image. The kind of life that looks good on the outside but is practically rotting beneath the surface.

Her husband Jonasi, played by S'Dumo Mtshali, is the centre of the storm. A successful, smooth-talking businessman who somehow manages to juggle multiple lives like it's a sport. On paper, he is the dream provider. In reality, he is the kind of man you do not want to be with.

Credit must go to Mtshali because he plays the role so convincingly that there are moments when you genuinely dislike him. Not because he is loud or villainous, but because he embodies a type of person many viewers will recognise.

The man who believes his money, influence and status can shield him from consequences. The series also highlights something uncomfortable: there will always be people drawn to that lifestyle, willing to overlook the red flags for the promise of luxury, power or proximity to success.

It serves as a reminder that money can sometimes make people believe they are untouchable, right before they make the very mistakes that bring everything crashing down.

When Joyce finally discovers the truth, she does not respond like a quiet, suffering wife waiting for sympathy. She responds like a woman who has reached her limit. There are tears and moments of disbelief, but there is also anger that refuses to stay hidden.

In many ways, she reminded me of Jennifer Lopez's character in "Enough", a woman who eventually realises that surviving betrayal is not the same as accepting it. Both characters reach a point where self-preservation becomes more important than maintaining the illusion.

That is one of the show's strongest decisions. Joyce is not written as a passive victim. She is messy, emotional and sometimes reckless, but she is never invisible. Her pain takes up space, and so does her fight to reclaim her life.

Then there is Matipa, played by Kwanele Mthethwa, the mistress who is not just a side character but a whole parallel storyline of ambition, survival, and questionable choices.

She is not written as simply "the other woman", even though the show occasionally slips into that trap. Instead, she exists in that uncomfortable space where power, money, and emotional vulnerability collide. And naturally, it all gets complicated fast.

What "The Polygamist" does well is drama - I mean, it is a telenovela after all. This is full-volume, doors-slamming, emotional-burnout storytelling. And like most things I tend to review, it's not for the faint-hearted.

Certain scenes can be triggering, particularly for anyone who has experienced betrayal, manipulation or toxic relationships. At the same time, it can be surprisingly eye-opening.

Every episode ends like it is personally trying to ruin your peace. One minute, there's a family gathering that looks almost civil, and the next, there's betrayal being exposed in public like it's a press conference.

The series constantly reminds us that perspective matters. Everyone in this story believes they are justified in their choices. Everyone has their reasons. But having a reason does not mean escaping the fallout.

That was perhaps the biggest takeaway for me. One thing I have often encountered in life is that every decision comes with consequences. They do



not always arrive in the way we expect, and they do not always mirror the original action perfectly.

Sometimes the consequence is public humiliation. Sometimes it is the loss of trust. Sometimes it is living with your own thoughts long after everyone else has moved on. "The Polygamist" understands this well.

Nearly every character spends the series confronting the ripple effects of choices they believed they could control.

So no, "The Polygamist" is not really about polygamy. It is about deception, accountability and the stories people tell themselves to justify their behaviour.

Rating: **** a standout series with exceptional qualities.

STRAMPE DU PLESSIS INC.
ATTORNEYS-CONVEYANCERS & GEORGE ADMINISTRATORS
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Notice is hereby given in terms of regulation 68 of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937, of the intention to apply for the issue of a certified copy of Title Deed number T4846/2017 passed by KEDIEMETSE EVON SEBANE, Identity Number 81105010791084, Unmarried, in favour of FRANCINA GADIHELE SEBANE, Identity number 5912140758088, Unmarried, in respect of Erf 41073 MANGAUNG District BLOEMFONTEIN Province Free State
In extent: 254 (Two Five Four) 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 17 day of June 2026.

CONVEYANCER
NICOLAAS ALBERTUS STRAMPE (LPCM 57743)
STRAMPE DU PLESSIS ATTORNEYS
58C KELLNER STREET
WESTDENE
BLOEMFONTEIN
Email: admin@sdatt.co.za
Telephone no: 051 430 0841

STRAMPE DU PLESSIS INC.
ATTORNEYS-CONVEYANCERS & GEORGE ADMINISTRATORS
REGISTRATION NUMBER 3016/5570/21

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 Title Deed number G3474/1989 passed by Estate late MPHOS FRANS MORAMOTSE, Identity Number 2710245115086 Unmarried, in favour of MAFATE PATRICK SELEKEDI, Identity number 7706205922086 and TSELANE AGNES SELEKEDI, Identity number 8309131031087, Married in community of property to each other, in respect of Erf 588 BOTSHABELO-B District THABA'NCHU Province Free State
In extent: 684 (Six Eight Four) Square Metres

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Dated at Bloemfontein this 17 day of June 2026.

CONVEYANCER
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Telephone no: 051 430 0841

Dancing With the Stars Season 35 Announces Another Celebrity Contestant



Guillermo Rodriguez will tango with the ball trophy on season 35 of Dancing With the Stars as our very own Guillermo!

The beloved sidekick then hilariously shimmied onto stage in a shiny blue dance costume. "Guillermo," Jimmy quipped, "will become the first-ever parking security guard to dance with the stars."

So, how does Guillermo feel about the opportunity? "I'm excited," he shared.

"I'm very happy," before his boss warned, "Don't lose a single adorable pound, okay? Do you promise?"

The 55-year-old replied, "I promise. If I lose 5 pounds, I'm gonna gain 10 pounds back right away."

Menswear put to the heat test: Pitti Uomo street style



Pitti Uomo has always been considered the unofficial start of the menswear season, once again gathering the international fashion crowd in Florence. As a staple in the menswear calendar, the trade fair combines presentation and production like few other formats. It sets the stylistic tone for upcoming collections and street style discussions early in the year. The summer edition regularly brings its own challenges, as Florence in June means one thing above all: intense heat.

This year, temperatures once again rose to over 35 degrees. The attendees, however, seemed unfazed. Away from the exhibition spaces, it became clear that style and summer heat are not mutually exclusive.

Seventies flair

Wide-leg flared trousers, broad lapels, open collars and fabrics in cream white, mustard yellow and deep navy blue were all on display. The influence of the seventies was clearly felt at this year's Pitti Uomo. The references seemed less like deliberate retro nods, instead fitting naturally into contemporary proportions and combinations.

Looks included a cream-coloured double-breasted jacket with an open shirt and wide lapels paired with flared trousers, and a mustard-yellow linen suit complemented by a zigzag-patterned shopper bag. A key must-have was the unbuttoned shirt collar worn over the suit lapels. Overall, the silhouettes recalled the relaxed elegance of the decade without indulging in excessive nostalgia.

Extra sunshine

Yellow appeared at this year's Pitti Uomo not just as an occasional accent, but as a recurring colour theme. From deep mustard tones to light pastel shades, the colour was present in various intensities and combinations. It was seen in full linen suits, as a striped camp shirt, or as a pale yellow jacket worn over a white T-shirt.

Bare legs

Pitti Uomo remains one of the most traditional and tailoring-focused events, particularly for street style. The heat this year, however, provided new inspiration, making shorts the unofficial dress code.

Few attendees opted for jorts or classic sports shorts. Instead, shorts were predominantly worn with structured tops. Examples included a linen blazer with dark shorts; a chore coat over shorts paired with white socks and sandals; or a patterned linen suit co-ord with Bermuda-length shorts.

Denim defies the heat

Even in the summer temperatures, denim-on-denim was a recurring look at this year's Pitti Uomo. The monochrome style was often paired with accessories that added variety.

Sightings included a burgundy tie with a horse motif over a denim shirt, and a denim blazer with a patterned tie and several pins on the lapel. A female attendee's red pillbox hat also provided a distinct pop of colour against the all-blue ensemble.

Carrying it all

In addition to clothing and shoes, bags also took centre stage this season as a standalone style statement for men. The selection was varied. It ranged from a patinated leather document holder featuring a carefully rolled-up "Gazzetta dello Sport" to a printed cotton shopper. Also seen was a generously sized, cognac-coloured leather bag, offering enough space to be prepared for any eventuality. Fashion United



HEALTH

Benzene in CeraVe? Separating skincare science from internet hysteria

CeraVe, a skincare brand renowned for its dermatologist-backed formulas and millions of loyal users, is under scrutiny after a wave of class-action lawsuits alleging benzene contamination in some of its acne products.

L'Oréal-owned CeraVe has become the subject of growing public discussion after reports surfaced on social media that several lawsuits had been filed in the United States following laboratory findings involving benzoyl peroxide-based acne treatments.

The controversy has sparked concern among consumers, particularly as skincare remains one of the fastest-growing sectors in the global wellness and beauty industry.

At the centre of the lawsuits are two acne products: CeraVe Acne Foaming Cream Cleanser and CeraVe Acne Foaming Cream Wash.

The claims stem from testing conducted in 2024 by independent laboratory Valisure, which reported detecting elevated levels of benzene in certain benzoyl peroxide-containing acne products.

In June 2026, a rumour spread online that several class action lawsuits were targeting skin care product line CeraVe, owned by L'Oréal, for exposing its users to a cancer-causing chemical.

Why is benzene raising concerns?

Benzene is classified as a Group 1 carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), meaning there is sufficient evidence linking it to cancer in humans. According to Valisure's findings, some tested products contained benzene levels ranging between 5 and 12 parts per million (ppm).

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) generally recommends that drug products contain no more than 2 ppm of benzene.

Scientists say the issue is not the intentional addition of benzene to products. Rather, concerns centre



on benzoyl peroxide, a common acne-fighting ingredient that can degrade into benzene under certain conditions, particularly when exposed to elevated temperatures for extended periods.

According to "Beauty Ed", dermatologist Dr Nicole Chiang explained that benzoyl peroxide is inherently unstable and may break down when products are subjected to excessive heat during storage or transportation.

What regulators have found

The FDA conducted its own investigation in 2025, testing 95 acne treatment products containing benzoyl peroxide. The agency reported that more than 90% of products tested contained either undetectable or extremely low levels of benzene.

The FDA said a limited number of products from several manufacturers were voluntarily recalled after elevated benzene levels were detected. However, CeraVe products were not included among the products listed for recall.

The agency also stated that even with daily use over many years, the risk of developing cancer from benzene exposure through these products is considered very low.

Health regulators continue to advise consumers to store benzoyl peroxide products at room temperature and avoid exposing them to excessive heat, which may increase benzene formation over time.

What do the lawsuits actually involve?

One of the biggest misconceptions circulating on social media is that all CeraVe products are implicated in the controversy.

That is not the case. According to "Our Cancer Stories", the lawsuits and scientific reports focus specifically on products containing benzoyl peroxide, an active acne-treatment ingredient.

Popular CeraVe products such as the Hydrating Cleanser, Moisturising Lotion, Baby range and other ceramide-based skincare products are not part of the allegations. Experts caution against confusing the lawsuits with the broader brand.

The issue under examination relates to a specific ingredient category rather than the company's entire skincare portfolio.

What consumers should do

At present, health authorities have not advised consumers to stop using CeraVe products, and there is currently no regulatory finding concluding that the products cause cancer when used as directed.

Consumers using benzoyl peroxide acne treatments should follow storage instructions carefully, keep products away from excessive heat and monitor updates from regulatory agencies.

As the legal proceedings continue, the lawsuits will likely examine whether manufacturers adequately addressed potential stability concerns associated with benzoyl peroxide-containing products.

For now, consumers should rely on information from health regulators and scientific evidence rather than viral social media posts, many of which have blurred the distinction between specific acne treatments and the broader brand's product range. **LOL**

FASHION

Inside Tyla's custom 'RSA' concept dress for the World Cup opening ceremony

For a few fleeting seconds, South Africa stood completely still. The opening ceremony of the 2026 FIFA World Cup at Mexico City's iconic Azteca Stadium was always going to be bigger than football.

For Mzansi, it was a moment, 16 years in the making.

After years of collective chest pains, near-misses, and exhausting debates about Bafana Bafana's tactical alignment, we finally had a reason to dust off our national jerseys, revive the chaotic family WhatsApp groups, and willingly risk heartbreak again.

Then, global superstar Tyla stepped onto the pitch... Well, for two seconds.

While the FIFA broadcast director clearly deserves a sternly worded letter from all of us, Tyla made every single millisecond count. The Grammy-winning singer delivered a breathtaking, ethereal rendition of Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika.

Her vocals floated through the stadium with the exact kind of "Pretty Girl from Jo'burg" confidence that has conquered global charts.

Naturally, South African social media went from zero to furious in business hours. "Two seconds? Is FIFA paying for data or what?" cried the X timeline.

But as quickly as the timeline chose violence, the

anger dissolved into pure awe. Before before the football drama started and before South Africans turned Google into a comedy club by searching "Did Bafana Bafana win?", there was the dress.

And what a masterpiece of design harmony it was. Styled by longtime collaborator Lee Trigg, the custom gown successfully transformed raw national pride into sculptural high fashion.

Berlin-based independent designer Naomi Tarazi brought her signature organic aesthetic to the global stage, creating a flawless equilibrium between structural athletic lines and fluid, feminine curves.

Tarazi, globally acclaimed for her volumetric jellyfish and tulip silhouettes, treated the South African flag not as a flat, literal pattern, but as a living canvas.

The harmony of the piece was found entirely in its structural construction: the avant-garde look incorporated the colours and symbolism of the South African flag while blending football-inspired elements with Tyla's signature playful aesthetic.

For many fans, the silhouette felt reminiscent of another iconic South African symbol: the vuvuzela. The dress was high art, youthful and unmistakably mirroring the "Pretty girl from Joburg".

Thanks to a Tyla fan account on Instagram that

uploaded high-definition close-ups, fans finally got the detailed look at the craftsmanship that the official camera crew robbed us of. If there's one thing South Africans know how to do, it's turn disappointment into comedy.

As Bafana Bafana battled through a frustrating opening match, social media did what it does best. The jokes arrived almost immediately. Some suggested Springbok captain Siya Kolisi should have been subbed on.

Others joked that the team looked like they were still playing PSL football while the rest of the world had moved into World Cup mode.

It was peak South Africa: equal parts frustration, hope, sarcasm and unwavering loyalty. **LOL**



FOOD Recipes



Lamb curry with raita

PREPARE
5 minutes

COOK
10 minutes

SERVE
4

Ingredients:

- 600 g Woolworths free-range parcooked lamb curry
- 250 g Woolworths fully cooked white basmati rice
- 1 cup Woolworths double thick full-cream plain yoghurt
- 1 Woolworths Mediterranean cucumber, chopped
- sea salt, to taste
- chilli oil, for drizzling

Method

- Heat the lamb curry and rice according to package instructions.
 - Fluff the rice with a fork and divide between 4 bowls.
 - Mix the yoghurt and cucumber and season with a little salt. Top the rice with the lamb curry, serve with the raita and drizzle with chilli oil.
- Woolworths' parcooked lamb curry is made using free-range leg of lamb, slow-cooked in an aromatic blend of spices with a gentle chilli heat. Rich, deeply flavoured and ready in just 10 minutes, it's the kind of midweek dinner that tastes like it took all day.

Are you looking for a midweek lamb curry that's ready in 10 minutes or less? Sounds impossible, right? But thanks to Woolworths' parcooked lamb curry, you can enjoy it whenever you feel like it. We recommend serving it with white rice and a cooling raita.

Rainbow Seeds hosts high tea for transgender women



By Katlego Mashwabi

Opening the 2026 Global Pride Month, Rainbow Seeds hosted a High Tea and Truth event at Garden's Private Lounge and Restaurant in Bloemfontein.

This closed-group event was aimed at revealing the truth around transgender women's lived experiences and uncovering raw truths around actively avoiding mainstream public health services.

For years transgender women have been systematically sidelined in the mainstream healthcare infrastructure and grouped into broader sexual minority terms.

It has been about just men who sleep with other men instead of a deepened understanding of people whose sense of gender differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

The by-product of this fundamental misgendering creates alienating clinical environments that breed reluctance to seek vital HIV prevention and wellness services, while the HIV prevalence among transgender women in South Africa is alarmingly high.

According to research that was conducted by the National Institute of Health between October 2019 and 2021, a review period on 5636 transgender individuals was conducted through peer outreach services, 86% (4829/5636) of them accepted an HIV test, and 62% (3535/5636) were linked to clinical services.

Among these, 89% (3130/3535) were transgender women, 5% (192/3535) were transgender men and 6% (213/3535) were gender non-conforming individuals.

Of those who received an HIV test, 14% (687/4829) tested positive, and 91% of those initiated antiretroviral treatment.

Viral load suppression was 75% in this cohort.

PrEP was accepted by 28% (1165/4142) of those who tested negative. Five percent (161/3535) reported ever receiving HT through the public healthcare system. Service users who received HT were three-fold more likely to achieve viral load suppression.

The Truth session was led by the Rainbow Seeds centre Manager Jerome Pieterse.

He says the High Tea was aimed at being a catalyst for tailoring healthcare systems that speak to this focus group.

"This structural exclusion goes further than just not being able to walk into a public healthcare facility, it goes even into the effects of global rollouts of health funding initiated under the Donald Trump

U.S administration stripping foreign assistance and PEPFAR accounts dedicated to the LGBTQ+ causing budget shortfalls for advocacy efforts and an abrupt halt of hormone replacement therapies.

Pieterse says discussions at the high tea looked at the current Healthcare Infrastructure accessible to trans individuals and those that are available for free through Rainbow Seeds.

Pieterse who is also known in the community as Sister Jay says the session looked into how the oppression of the sexual minority has shifted from overt illegality to institutional exclusion.

"How public clinics lack the basic background to differentiate gender identity from sexual orientation forcing trans women into male-centric MSM (men who sleep with men) categories and being subjected to dead-naming.

He says the discussions furthermore went into how vulnerable local minorities are to global political shifts.

"When an administration geographically far from the south (such as the Donald Trump rollouts) can fatally wound healthcare budgets for trans-specific health projects in South Africa leaving the community heavily by the sexual majority-led political structures.

"It cuts right through the rubber band of the LGBTQ+ Rights to Health and their Right to Dignity and Equality.

"The resistance of the Public Healthcare system to adapt to the Basic Education of the Sexual Minorities can be seen as simple as a healthcare worker refusing to use a trans woman's preferred name or when a rural trans woman cuts off essential hormone continuity due to systematic bottlenecks around the violation of their constitutional rights.

"In this truth and tea session, a community came together to speak on their current heels and align their wheels for keeping their voices up.

"To address the healthcare infrastructure barriers, Rainbow Seeds will soon be moving into a permanent, state-of-the-art Drop-in Centre (DIC) at Lemo mall.

"This new centralised location will provide an even more accessible, secure and permanent sanctuary for the community to walk in and receive comprehensive care.

"The Lemo Mall DIC Activation will be a count-down of health-specialized pop-ups that raise awareness about the trans-affirming services that will permanently be available at the Lemo Mall Drop-in Centre, he said.

Timeless theatre: catch the historic 'Sarafina!' reunion and 'Peter Pan Jr.' on stage



Guillermo Rodriguez will tango with the Dancing With the Stars pros.

Guillermo Rodriguez will tango with the Dancing With the Stars pros. Jimmy Kimmel's right-hand man on Jimmy Kimmel Live! is set to salsa on Dancing With the Stars, joining Ciara Miller, Maura Higgins and the Savannah Bananas player Jackson Olson as the latest cast member to be confirmed for season 35.

"I have a major announcement to make," Jimmy said during the June 17 episode of his late-night show before dropping some hints to viewers.

"This person is someone you know, someone you love, he is someone we know quite well."

The comedian added, "The star who will be dancing, who will be competing for the Mirrorball Trophy

on season 35 of Dancing With the Stars is our very own Guillermo!"

The beloved sidekick then hilariously shimmied onto stage in a shiny blue dance costume. "Guillermo," Jimmy quipped, "will become the first-ever parking security guard to dance with the stars."

So, how does Guillermo feel about the opportunity? "I'm excited," he shared.

"I'm very happy," before his boss warned, "Don't lose a single adorable pound, okay? Do you promise?"

The 55-year-old replied, "I promise. If I lose 5 pounds, I'm gonna gain 10 pounds back right away."

SPORT



Feeling the Squeeze ... Bafana Bafana have so far secured single point in Group A after their two opening World Cup matches. Picture: Supplied

Bafana Battle Back Against Czechia

The national side remains rooted at the bottom of group A after playing to a stalemate with Czechia on Thursday

By Gomolemo Winkel

Teboho Mokoena's late penalty rescued a vital 1-1 draw for Bafana Bafana against Czechia on Thursday evening to keep South Africa's dream of making it out of the group A and into the knockout stage of the World Cup alive. The crucial equaliser cancelled out an early strike from Michal Sadilek to secure a valuable point in the tense group stage encounter.

Head coach, Hugo Broos, praised his side's immense resilience after dominating large periods of the second half following a tactical halftime adjustment.

The introduction of Orlando Pirates sensation, Relebohile Mofokeng, successfully revitalised the national team's attacking transitions and disrupted the opposition's defensive shape.

"We needed someone like Rele who could ask for the ball between the lines. Therefore we changed during halftime," Broos said after the match.

"Even the first half was good except that moment we conceded. Second half we had chances. Czechia was by moments in our side. The only thing they did

was to kick the ball in the front, and then you have the 'big army' (tall players) - 1.95m, 1.92m - and this is something we have been counting on that they did not play football," he continued.

The European heavyweights had started with aggressive pressure, almost opening the scoring inside the first minute through a Patrik Schick header. Their early dominance paid dividends in the sixth minute when Sadilek found space inside the penalty area to slot home past the South African goalkeeper.

South Africa gradually reorganised themselves as Thapelo Maseko, Oswin Appollis, and Aubrey Modiba began causing structural problems for the robust Czech defence. Despite mounting a commendable response before the interval, the structured Europeans maintained their narrow advantage into the halftime break.

The introduction of Mofokeng instantly transformed the offensive dynamic, allowing the South Africans to dictate the tempo and exploit spaces. Late substitute, Evidence Makgopa, nearly equalised immediately when his powerful header forced a brilliant save from goalkeeper Matej Kovář.

The persistent pressure finally paid off eight min-

utes before stoppage time when Pavel Šulc handled the ball inside the penalty area. Mokoena stepped up under immense pressure to confidently fire his spot-kick into the bottom corner and level the scores.

Broos expressed massive pride in his squad, stating that the resolute performance proves South Africa can comfortably compete against high-quality opposition on the global stage. The Belgian tactician remains highly optimistic about their progression heading into the final must-win group fixture.

"When you see Bafana Bafana playing today, you have to admit that we have a good team."

A frantic finish saw late attempts from Makgopa, Mofokeng, and Modiba almost secure a dramatic winner before the Czechs re-established defensive stability. Bafana Bafana now control their own destiny, knowing that maximum points in their next encounter will guarantee qualification.

"This is, we have a goal now, and we have to count on ourselves so that we do not have to count on someone else. If we win, we are in the second round. And we will do everything, like we did today. Do everything right," Broos concluded.

North West Runners Conquer Comrades

Mothibi shine brightly among thousands at the world's ultimate human race



By Gomolemo Winkel

North West runner, Edward Mothibi, secured an impressive 11th-place finish at the gruelling 99th edition of the Comrades Marathon in KwaZulu-Natal. The Mahikeng-born athlete crossed the finish line in a stellar time of 5:30:03 to lead the provincial charge.

The prestigious event attracted more than 22 000 global participants to tackle the demanding route between Durban and Pietermaritzburg on Sunday. Athletes from running clubs across all four districts of the North West joined the massive field.

Former Comrades champion, Tete Djiana, finished the exhausting race in 49th position with a time of 5:59:36. Other notable provincial performers included Joseph Manyedi, who claimed 32nd place, as well as George

Lesetedi, who captured 38th position.

Multiple provincial government departments, including the Provincial Legislature and the Department of Arts, Culture, Sports and Recreation, supported the local runners. Officials confirmed that the vast majority of the provincial contingent successfully finished the challenging ultramarathon.

Department of Arts, Culture and Sports spokesperson, Shuping Sebolece, lauded the local running contingent for showing immense mental fortitude during the race.

"The majority of the North West athletes managed to complete the 2026 road race. The Comrades Marathon is called the 'Ultimate Human Race' since it is considered a test of endurance and the human spirit which demands the highest level of physical and mental fortitude.

"The terrain between Durban and Pietermaritzburg is very challenging and pushes participants to their limits.

"Mothibi's journey in athletics began in Mahikeng, where he discovered his passion for running at a young age. Despite facing various challenges, he remained determined to pursue his dreams in athletics," Sebolece said.

The iconic ultramarathon was first staged in 1921 and alternates directions annually between the coastal and inland cities. More than 300 000 runners have successfully conquered the world-famous endurance test since its historical inception.

Organisers and athletic clubs are already looking forward to organising the historic 100th centenary edition of the race next year. The highly anticipated 2027 milestone event will feature a traditional down run finishing in Durban.

Sebolece urged all regional athletes to maintain their training momentum ahead of the upcoming milestone celebration.

"We congratulate all the 99th edition participants, as the motto says: 'Ska Fela Moya'. See you next year at the centenary celebration of the Comrades Marathon, which will be a down-run from Pietermaritzburg to Durban," he concluded.

Elite, Mkabadelo Promoted After Thrilling Finale

Double jubilation as teams share promotion success into the ABC Motsepe League



By Gomolemo Winkel

Elite Athletic FC and Mkabadelo Heroes FC staged a thrilling season finale that secured promotion for both teams into the ABC Motsepe league this past Tuesday.

After playing to a dramatic 1-1 draw, both Elite and

Mkabadelo rose into the third-tier league after an intense penalty shootout, which saw the former walk out 4-3 victors. The double promotion served as the ultimate reward for both clubs after a gruelling tournament featuring six regional champions visualising regional dominance.

Despite falling short in the sudden death lottery, Mkabadelo Heroes FC shared the ultimate joy of finalising their ticket to the 2026/2027 league season. The newly crowned champions from the Fezile Dabi Region utilised immense resilience as they navigated a treacherous path to the University of the Free State (UFS) Qwaqwa Campus showpiece.

Elite's grit was crystallised during a highly entertaining 2-2 draw against Mangaung Metropolitan giants, Morojaneng United FC, in Stream B.

Meanwhile, Mkabadelo Heroes FC from the Thabo Mofutsanyana Region had mobilised an ominous run of form to match the champions stride for stride. They expertly neutralised Juventus FC 1-0 in their opening

clash before comfortably dispatching Lejweleputswa champions, Harmony FC, 2-0 to top Stream A.

The local organisers had strategically popularised the tournament layout by splitting the six regional heavyweights into two competitive groups. Stream A featured Mkabadelo Heroes FC, Harmony FC, and Juventus FC, whilst Stream B consisted of Elite Athletic FC, Morojaneng United FC, and Moroka Sweepers.

Stream B progression was eventually finalised when a stubborn Moroka Sweepers held Morojaneng United FC to a frantic goalless draw. This stalemate allowed Elite Athletic FC to capitalise on their superior consistency and book their historical date with destiny.

Elite Athletic FC coach, Tumelo Nhlapo, expressed absolute delight regarding the rapid progress made by the club since its establishment in 2024.

The former Bloemfontein Celtic defender indicated that the milestone marks a historic achievement for the two-year-old team. "The mood is marvellous to watch. The boys are motivated and happy. It was quite

a journey. "Our team was established in 2024, and it is only two years old. The team that won the championship has been together for just a year since last season. We are happy. I think that is the greatest moment that I am proud of. The boys did well in one season," said Nhlapo. The tactical mastermind also paid emotional tribute to two players the club tragically lost during the course of the promotional campaign.

The squad successfully channelled their grief into ultimate motivation on the pitch to secure the coveted championship title.

"The boys started well and we collected points. Along the way during the season we lost two players. I think that was the biggest motivation that made the boys win the league. We are doing it for those players," Nhlapo. The proud coach believes the regional breakthrough belongs to the broader community, particularly the families residing within the Ngwatho local municipality.

The regional triumph marks the first time a local

team has climbed into the professional ranks.

Nhlapo added: "Most of our players come from Tumahole, Parys and surrounding towns. Ngwatho as a whole and Fezile Dabi is our district. What is nice for the families, and everyone is that we are the first team to actually get promotion to the ABC Motsepe League. I think this is history. That is why the boys are so motivated."

The experienced tactician concluded by encouraging upcoming youth to maintain strict personal standards if they wish to reach the professional summit.

"For the boys and girls, they need to be disciplined and mostly they need to pray because God is there for all of us," Nhlapo said.

The memorable promotional showpiece successfully showcased the immense depth of talent currently fighting to modernise football across the entire Free State province. While Elite Athletic FC lifted the official trophy, both teams successfully realised their dreams of moving up the ranks.