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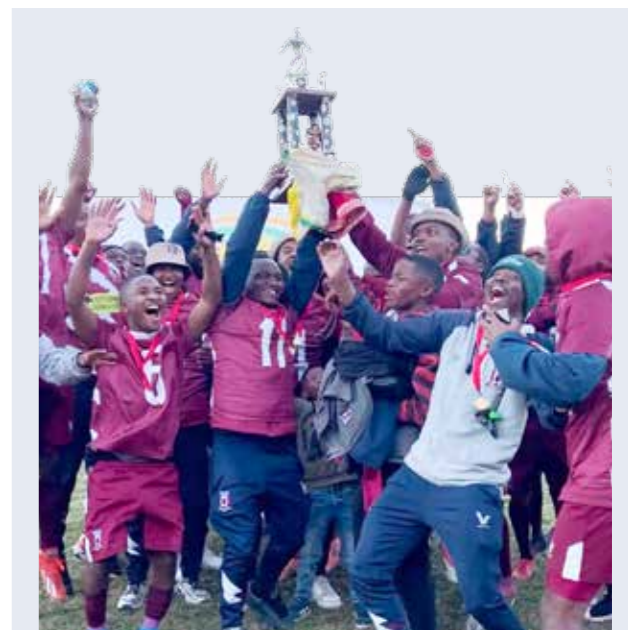
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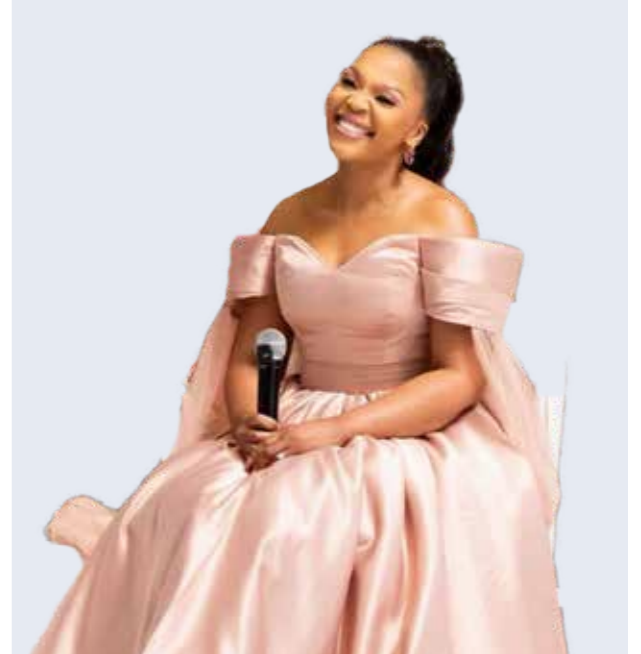
MTHOMBENI SETS COURSE FOR NGWATHE'S FUTURE

The municipality says the new budget prioritises service delivery, infrastructure upgrades, economic growth and restoring public confidence across Ngwathe communities

Page 2,11&12



Fraud Allegations Rock Mangaung Unite **Page 12**



Glitz, Grace as Mayaba Lights Up Bloemfontein **Page 10**



Northern Cape Scores R85m Investment Boost **Page 5**



Mangaung Metro Municipality on the Mend **Page 4**



NGWATHE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Multi-Million Rand Projects Bring Hope to Ngwathe Communities

Major infrastructure upgrades aimed at ending water shortages and improving basic services

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

communities," she added.

The municipality has also moved to address long-standing water losses caused by ageing infrastructure and frequent pipe bursts by replacing old asbestos cement pipes with more durable UPVC pipelines.

According to the mayor, the intervention has already improved water supply reliability and reduced water losses caused by leaks. The project also created 25 local jobs before reaching completion in February this year.

In Heilbron, the municipality is continuing efforts to improve sanitation services and eradicate the bucket system through the rollout of proper waterborne sanitation infrastructure. Officials say the project forms part of broader efforts to restore dignity to affected communities.

"The project currently employs 11 local labourers, with an additional 10 opportunities anticipated through local sub-

contractors. It is currently at 68% completion," said De Beer-Mthombeni.

She acknowledged that delays were experienced after the Free State Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DE-STEAT) temporarily halted the project, resulting in significant construction delays.

The municipality is currently awaiting a revised completion date from the Professional Service Provider (PSP).

Despite the setbacks, the mayor said the project would significantly improve sanitation services and ensure the safe and dignified management of wastewater once completed.

Meanwhile, Vredefort is also benefiting from a major infrastructure upgrade through the refurbishment of the Vredefort Water Treatment Works and the construction of an elevated water tank.

The project is intended to respond to increasing population growth and rising water demand in both Vredefort and Mokwallo.

Currently sitting at 55% completion, the project is expected to be finalised by September 2026 and has already created 32 local employment opportunities.

Upon completion, the municipality says the development will strengthen water supply capacity and improve long-term water security for affected communities.

Mokwallo has already completed one of its key projects — the procurement of a specialised waste management vehicle aimed at strengthening refuse collection services within the municipality.

"The procurement process has been completed successfully at 100%. The vehicle will improve refuse collection services, reduce dependency on hired equipment, and enhance operational efficiency within the municipality," the mayor noted.

Road infrastructure has also been prioritised, with the municipality currently constructing 2km of paved roads and stormwater infrastructure in Ward 15, Mokwallo.

The project aims to improve transport mobility, accessibility and stormwater management while creating jobs for local residents.

A total of 59 community members have already been employed through the project via the main contractor and subcontractors, with construction currently underway.

NGWATHE SPENDING AND COLLECTIONS



The mayor says improved collections and service delivery

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

Ngwathe Local Municipality has tabled a R1.7 billion expenditure budget for the 2026/2027 financial year, with the municipality pinning its hopes on improved revenue collection, tighter financial controls and infrastructure investment to stabilise its finances and improve service delivery.

Executive Mayor Victoria de Beer-Mthombeni said the 2026/2027 annual budget reflects a 14.76% increase in total revenue and a 3% decrease in expenditure compared to the 2025/2026 adjusted budget.

According to the mayor, the adjustments are aimed at correcting previous budgeting approaches while strengthening financial sustainability within the municipality.

"This increase is reasonable and justifiable, taking into consideration several critical factors addressed during the budgeting process, including the correction of budgeting approaches, targeted revenue and debt collection assumptions, alignment with National Treasury Budget Parameter

Guidelines, and the identification of internal operational inefficiencies," she said.

De Beer-Mthombeni revealed that the municipality's revenue collection rate improved significantly from 44% during the 2024/2025 financial year to 65% by the end of the third quarter in the current financial year.

She attributed the improvement to the normalisation of electricity and water meters, as well as stricter enforcement of the municipality's credit control policy.

To further strengthen revenue protection, the municipality has embarked on several measures aimed at reducing water and electricity distribution losses.

These include the installation of bulk electricity and water meters for large businesses, water meters for guest houses and schools, prepaid electricity meters for residential and commercial properties, and a comprehensive electricity meter audit across the municipality.

"The initiative has yielded significant results. In Parys and Tumahole, the high electricity load rotation experienced during winter due to network

"We Will Not Back Down": Ngwathe Mayor Pushes Forward

Mthombeni pledges to intensify efforts to tackle unemployment and improve basic services

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

Ngwathe Local Municipality Executive Mayor Victoria de Beer-Mthombeni has vowed to press ahead with the municipality's development agenda, declaring that her administration will not back down from efforts to create jobs, improve infrastructure and deliver reliable basic services to struggling communities.

Delivering her State of the Municipality Address (SOMA) and tabling the municipality's 2026/2027 budget at the Master Naledi Indoor Centre in Tumahole on

Wednesday, De Beer-Mthombeni said the municipality remains committed to restoring dignity, rebuilding public confidence and driving economic growth despite ongoing socio-economic challenges.

"We fully recognise the socio-economic challenges confronting many households within our municipality, particularly the pressing challenge of unemployment. It is for this reason that the creation of sustainable employment opportunities and the stimulation of local economic growth remain at the centre of our priorities and service delivery commitments," she said.

The mayor acknowledged that the municipality continues to face several challenges, but stressed that the administration remains determined to move forward with "unity, purpose and commitment" in

serving residents.

She highlighted several milestones achieved by the municipality, saying the progress reflected collective effort, responsible governance and dedication from all stakeholders.

Among the achievements highlighted was the successful refurbishment, modernisation and reopening of the municipal headquarters in Parys on 23 September 2025 as part of efforts to strengthen service delivery, improve security and restore institutional dignity.

The municipality has also completed the refurbishment of the Mokwallo Municipal Offices, which are expected to be officially reopened soon.

"The upgraded offices now provide improved working conditions, safer operational environments, enhanced accessibility for residents and more efficient service delivery spaces," said De Beer-Mthombeni.

She added that the project demonstrates the municipality's commitment to occupational health and safety compliance, institutional excellence and restoring dignity for both employees and residents.

According to the mayor, the upgrades will also



improve access to key municipal services, including electricity purchases, municipal bill payments and in-

Pictures: Baagedi Sethora



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MANGAUNG ON THE MEND

Nthatsi targets Mangaung's turnaround and long-term stability with a massive R23-billion infrastructure and energy injection

Page 4



ANC MANGAUNG CONFERENCE HEADS FOR ROUND TWO

Fresh conference bid expected to test Party unity in the Metro

By JN Reporter

The ANC in Mangaung is heading for a second attempt at holding its long-awaited regional conference, setting the stage for another

high-stakes political showdown expected to test party unity, leadership stability and organisational discipline in the metro.

The region suffered a major setback earlier this month when the conference, convened to elect a new regional executive committee, dramatically collapsed at the eleventh hour after national deployee Thandi Moraka announced that her team had uncovered serious credential irregularities after voting had already concluded.

Among the concerns raised were allegations that at least eight additional ballot papers had been inserted into the ballot box by unknown individuals

after the voting process had ended.

ANC Free State provincial spokesperson Thabo Meeko has since confirmed that the conference will reconvene from today.

"As per the directive from the national leadership, all processes of the conference will start afresh. The nullification of the conference was largely due to the ballot not tallying with the voters' roll, and as such, all processes were cancelled, including the credentials. The rerun conference will adopt its own credentials and continue with its business," said Meeko.

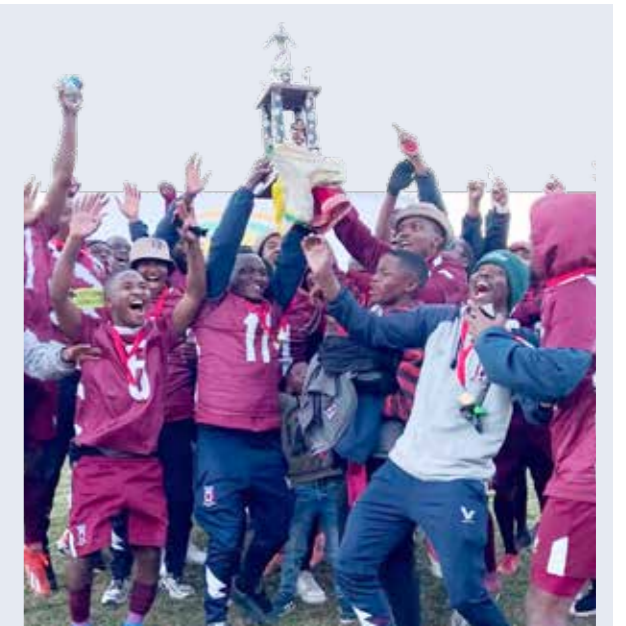
The decision follows an instruction by ANC Sec-

retary-General Fikile Mbalula ordering a rerun of the Mangaung conference after a formal request by the Provincial Executive Committee (PEC).

In a letter addressed to Moraka and provincial secretary Polediso Motsoeneng, Mbalula directed that the conference be rerun on "a re-verified branch base, a re-issued Credentials Report and a properly signed-off voters' roll."

The letter, seen by Journal News, states that all procedural decisions taken during the abandoned conference have been nullified, including the adoption of a credentials report for 260 voting delegates.

Continues on Page 4



Fraud Allegations Rock Mangaung Unite Page 12



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ANC Mangaung Conference Heads for Round Two

Fresh conference bid expected to test Party unity in the Metro



ANC Mangaung delegates during the now-nullified regional conference. Picture: filePhoto

Continues from Page 3

“Every act purporting to flow from the day — the adoption of the Credentials Report (260 voting delegates), the unopposed declaration in respect of the Regional Treasurer, the cast and counted ballots, and every other procedural step — is set aside and of no force or effect. No certificate of outcome shall issue, no MMS update of any purported office-bearer shall be effected, and no public communication shall be made on the strength of those proceedings,” Mbalula wrote.

He said his office found that an unsigned voters’ roll, the failure to reconcile the attendance register with the adopted credentials report, eight excess ballots beyond the 260 accredited delegates, and lapses in venue access control had fatally undermined the credibility of the conference.

Mangaung on the Mend

Nthatsi targets Mangaung’s turnaround and long-term stability with a massive R23-billion infrastructure and energy injection

By Refilwe Mochoari

Mangaung is officially no longer a municipality in freefall, as the City gears up for a major infrastructure and financial rebound.

This projected turnaround is backed by massive multi-billion rand budget injections, as presented by Executive Mayor, Gregory Nthatsi, in his State of the City Address on Thursday at the Bloemfontein City Hall.

Nthatsi unveiled a fully funded 2026/2027 Medium-Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework budget that firmly positions the Metro on a path of institutional recovery and stability.

The centrepiece of the revitalisation plan is a massive R8.2 billion allocation dedicated exclusively to water and sanitation over the next three years. This alongside a substantial R15 billion medium-term boost for electricity utility CENTLEC.

These funds are set to drive aggressive infrastructure recovery programmes, including vital upgrades to the Maselspoort Water Treatment Works, alongside extensive renewals for roads, stormwater systems, and waste management.

Mayor Nthatsi highlighted that Mangaung’s turnaround strategy is already yielding tangible results on the ground, noting that emergency response systems now successfully resolve nearly 90% of reported water leaks within a swift 48-hour window.

This progress is supported by the City’s comprehensive Financial Recovery Plan, which has success-



Mangaung Metro Executive Mayor, Gregory Nthatsi, during his State of the City Address on Thursday. Pictures: Baagedi Sethora

fully stabilised administration through robust revenue collection drives, debt incentive schemes, and billing reforms.

Beyond service utilities, the metro’s growth strategy is expanding into major community developments, with new housing projects officially slated for Botshabelo, Lourier Park, Seloshesha, and Wepener.

While opposition benches, including EFF councillor, Delive Malebo, raised concerns regarding council tariff adjustments and lingering service challenges.

“The ANC wants the people of Mangaung to be-

lieve this is a developmental budget, but the lived reality of our people tells a completely different story,” Malebo said during the Council debate.

Nthatsi, nevertheless, remained resolute that the groundwork for a lasting turnaround has been successfully laid.

Reflecting on Mangaung’s proud history as the heartbeat of South African democracy since 1912, Nthatsi emphasised that his administration chose implementation over rhetoric to secure the city’s future.

“We chose institutional recovery over political grandstanding. We chose stability over chaos. We chose implementation over rhetoric,” Nthatsi stated.

He confidently assured council that the next administration will not inherit a calamity, but rather a stable municipality primed for growth and consolidation.

“The next administration will not inherit an institution in collapse. It will inherit a municipality undergoing recovery and requiring consolidation,” Nthatsi said.

Mangaung Unrest Exposes Deepening Economic Pressure



By JN Reporter

Rising unemployment, pressure on public services and growing tensions around undocumented foreign nationals are fuelling unrest across the Free State, with recent violence in Bloemfontein and Botshabelo exposing the fragile reality facing communities battling poverty and economic exclusion. More than 140 people were arrested during the latest outbreak of unrest in Mangaung, where foreign-owned spaza shops and informal businesses were looted as frustration over crime, joblessness and failing service delivery spilled onto the streets.

Concerns around undocumented foreign nationals, rising crime and worsening unemployment have increasingly sparked protests and community action across the province, highlighting how quickly socio-economic frustrations can escalate into violence. During the recent unrest in Mangaung, several foreign-owned businesses were targeted as parts of Bloemfontein and surrounding townships descended into chaos. Police moved swiftly to restore order, confirming arrests linked to public violence, looting and property damage.

While authorities strongly condemned the violence, the unrest once again exposed deeper structural challenges facing the province, where thousands of households remain trapped in poverty and survival increasingly depends on informal economic activity.

South Africa’s unemployment crisis continues to deepen, with the country’s official unemployment rate climbing to 32.7% in the first quarter of 2026 after more than 300,000 jobs were lost nationally. The Free State remains among the hardest-hit provinces, recording an unemployment rate of 37.8%, the second highest in the country.

Youth unemployment continues to place enormous pressure on communities, with millions of young South Africans still unable to access meaningful work opportunities. Economists warn that this growing economic desperation is intensifying tensions in township economies where competition for limited income opportunities has become increasingly fierce.

In Mangaung and surrounding areas, limited formal job creation has fuelled the rapid growth of informal trading networks, where both South Africans and foreign nationals operate small businesses in retail, food supply and other services.

Analysts say the overlap between economic exclusion, unemployment and informal trade competition has become a recurring flashpoint in many communities.

These growing tensions formed part of a broader national discussion when the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster convened an urgent meeting at the Union Buildings on 25 May 2026.

The meeting brought together senior government and security officials, including Justice Minister

Mmamoloko Kubayi, Defence Minister Ngabisa Nkomo, Deputy Home Affairs Minister Njabulo Nzuza, senior SAPS leadership and representatives from protest movements involved in recent anti-illegal immigration demonstrations.

Government said the engagement aimed to address rising protests while shaping a coordinated national response to immigration enforcement, community stability and social cohesion.

Although no final policy document was adopted, officials agreed on a draft national framework intended to guide future interventions on xenophobia, racism and related intolerance.

The proposed framework focuses on strengthening coordination between Home Affairs, SAPS and intelligence structures on immigration enforcement, establishing clearer rules for public protests and rolling out social cohesion programmes aimed at preventing violence in vulnerable communities.

Political analyst Sanet Solomon described Mangaung as a “pressure cooker environment” where unemployment, weak service delivery and perceptions of exclusion are colliding.

“The issue is not only immigration,” Solomon explained. “It is the broader reality of communities struggling with limited economic access, where informal trade becomes both survival and a source of tension.”

Economist Professor Frederick CvN Fourie, a Research Fellow at the University of the Free State specialising in labour economics and unemployment, said the province’s weak labour absorption capacity lies at the centre of the crisis.

“When unemployment remains structurally high, especially among young people, informal markets expand by necessity,” he said. “That creates competition for limited consumer spending, and in environments already under pressure, it easily becomes politicised.”

Residents in Bloemfontein and Botshabelo describe daily realities shaped by joblessness, rising living costs and inconsistent service delivery. Informal businesses, many operated by foreign nationals, have become deeply embedded in township economies by providing essential goods and services, but they also increasingly become targets during periods of unrest.

Mangaung Executive Mayor Gregory Nthatsi has appealed for calm, warning that violence and looting only deepen economic hardship in already struggling communities. He urged residents to address grievances through lawful channels rather than vigilantism.

As government works toward finalising a national framework on xenophobia and related intolerance, the challenge remains whether policy interventions can move fast enough to respond to the lived realities of communities where unemployment, migration pressures and social frustration continue to collide daily.



Eastern Cape Constable Held After Gunfire Chaos

A 24-year-old SAPS constable has been arrested after allegedly opening fire inside the Majola Police Station in the Eastern Cape, leaving the acting station commander wounded and triggering a dramatic shootout with fellow officers.

The violent incident unfolded on Monday, 25 May, following a series of alleged attacks linked to the constable over the weekend.

According to reports, the officer was allegedly involved in two separate altercations on Saturday, 23 May, and Sunday, 24 May, during which he is accused of stabbing two men. He allegedly also hijacked two private vehicles during the incidents — one of which was crashed, while the other reportedly rolled into water. No formal criminal cases had been opened at the time.

Tensions escalated on Monday when the two complainants arrived at the police station to raise

concerns about the damage caused during the incidents. During a meeting at the station, the constable allegedly forced open a colleague’s safe, took a firearm and opened fire on station management and the complainants.

The acting station commander was shot below the left arm and is currently in a stable condition.

A shootout then broke out between the suspect and other police officers. The constable allegedly fled into nearby bushes but was later tracked down and arrested.

He now faces multiple charges, including four counts of attempted murder, theft of a firearm, unlawful possession of a firearm, as well as charges related to the alleged stabbings and vehicle thefts over the weekend.

The suspect is expected to appear in the Port St Johns Magistrate’s Court on Wednesday, 27 May.

Fear, Grief and Anger After Rustenburg Taxi Shooting

The fatal shooting of a prominent taxi owner at the Rustenburg taxi rank has left the community deeply divided, with some mourning the loss of a man they describe as caring and generous, while others claim his alleged actions caused fear and suffering among e-hailing drivers and motorists.

Refilwe Bogopane was shot and killed on Friday, 22 May, in an incident that has sparked widespread debate across Rustenburg.

While family members and loved ones are calling for justice, several residents and e-hailing drivers have shared allegations that the taxi owner was involved in intimidating Uber drivers and motorists operating near the taxi rank.

It is alleged that drivers were often prevented

from dropping off or picking up passengers unless they paid money. Despite the allegations, Bogopane’s family described him as a friendly, kind-hearted man who was deeply involved in the community.

However, some residents said many drivers had allegedly suffered in silence due to his conduct around the e-hailing business in Rustenburg. North West police have confirmed the arrest of three suspects, aged 21, 21 and 28, in connection with the shooting. The suspects appeared before the Rustenburg Magistrate’s Court on Monday, 25 May.

They face charges including murder, unlawful possession of a firearm and ammunition, as well as defeating the ends of justice. The matter was postponed to 18 June 2026 for a formal bail application.

Police Launch Manhunt for Escaped Rustenburg Suspect

Police in Rustenburg have launched a manhunt for a suspect wanted in connection with a statutory rape case after he allegedly escaped from police custody in Tlhabane over the weekend.

The suspect, identified as Losilo Ngwenya, reportedly escaped on Sunday, 24 May, prompting police to intensify search efforts in and around the area.

According to notices circulating on social media and information shared by law enforcement con-

tacts, authorities are appealing to members of the public to assist with any information that could lead to the suspect’s arrest.

Residents have been warned not to approach or attempt to apprehend the suspect themselves, but instead to immediately report any sightings or relevant information to police.

The circumstances surrounding the alleged escape are still under investigation.

Justice for Baby Girl as Mother Gets 18 Years Behind Bars

A Lesotho national has been sentenced to 18 years’ imprisonment for the murder of her three-month-old baby girl whose lifeless body was discovered dumped near the N12 Road between Stilfontein and Potchefstroom in January 2022.

The Stilfontein Regional Court convicted and sentenced Lerato Valencia Pokonyane after finding her guilty of murdering the infant in a case that shocked communities across the North West Province.

In addition to the prison sentence, the court declared Pokonyane unfit to possess a firearm and unsuitable to work with children in terms of Section 120 of the Children’s Act.

According to police, the tragic incident came to light on the morning of Thursday, 13 January 2022, when officers received information about the body

of a baby lying next to the N12 Road.

Upon arrival at the scene, police discovered the baby girl with her hands and feet tied together with plastic, while her face was covered with material resembling a bandage. A plastic bag containing baby clothes and a hospital booklet belonging to the child was also found nearby.

Emergency Medical Rescue Services (EMRS) were summoned to the scene, where the infant was declared dead.

Police launched an intensive investigation which eventually led to the identification and tracking of the suspect in Kuruman in the Northern Cape.

Pokonyane was arrested while allegedly attempting to flee the country through the Ficksburg Border Post.

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Troika Shake-Up in Nala, Masilonyana Hits Snag Over 'Selfish Interests'



Letsemeng Local Municipality Mayor, Andrew Visagie

Nketoana Local Municipality Mayor, Godfry Nhlapo

Mafube Local Municipality Mayor, Phaladi Matsole

Lejweleputswa District Municipality Mayor, Phindiwe Maseko



Nala Local Municipality Mayor, Unknown



Maqhaka Local Municipality Mayor, Ramasimong Daniel Tau



Masilonyana Local Municipality Mayor, Unknown

By JN Reporter

Political tensions and allegations of selfish interests have emerged as major stumbling blocks in the reconfiguration of municipal troikas in the Nala and Masilonyana local municipalities, threatening efforts to stabilise governance and improve service delivery.

What was expected to be a smooth leadership renewal process has instead exposed deep divisions within party structures, with claims that some leaders are placing personal ambitions ahead of organisational unity and the interests of communities.

This comes despite the ANC provincial leadership, through spokesperson Thabo Meeko, earlier assuring this publication that the reconfiguration of seven struggling municipal troikas "has progressed smoothly", with only a few internal matters still to be resolved in Nala and Masilonyana municipalities.

However, according to the party's Regional Executive Committee (REC), the failure to finalise the process in the two municipalities is being driven by the narrow and selfish interests of certain provincial leaders and members of the municipal troikas.

Addressing a media briefing on Thursday, regional secretary Irvin Riet said the Lejweleputswa region was the only region where the implementation of the reconfiguration process had been selective, inconsistent and unfairly applied.

"Here in the region, only the mayor of the Lejweleputswa District Municipality has been reconfigured, while other components of the political leadership remain untouched despite the collective governance failures confronting this municipality. We are seriously concerned as the REC regarding the continued resistance by certain provincial officials to finalise the process in the district municipality, as well as in Nala and Masilonyana local municipalities," said Riet.

The reshuffle, announced in August last year by ANC Free State provincial secretary Polediso Motsoeneng, was aimed at realigning political priorities, stabilising municipalities and accelerating service delivery.

Riet said even more concerning were allegations that the troika in Masilonyana had indicated that they would not vacate office until certain arrangements and undertakings made between themselves and some provincial officials were implemented.

"We note with concern the conduct of the

troika in Masilonyana, whose refusal to comply with the organisational directive to resign has now escalated into open defiance of the REC," he said. Meanwhile, Meeko maintained that the process was progressing smoothly, with only two of the seven municipalities still expected to elect new mayors.

"The process is going smoothly and should be completed within a week or two. The organisation is currently finalising a few internal issues within Nala and Masilonyana local municipalities," said Meeko.

He welcomed the election of new mayors in Mafube, Moqhaka, Letsemeng, Nketoana and the Lejweleputswa District Municipality.

"We are happy as the ANC that capable leaders are being put in place to fast-track issues confronting the municipalities, including service delivery to the people," he said.

Phaladi Matsole was recently elected as the new mayor of Mafube Local Municipality, while Ramasimong Daniel Tau was appointed mayor of Moqhaka Local Municipality.

Meanwhile, Andrew Visagie, Godfrey and Phindiwe Maseko were elected mayors of Letsemeng, Nketoana and Lejweleputswa District Municipality respectively.

Northern Cape Premier Scores R85m Investment Boost

By Bernell Simons

The Northern Cape has secured an additional R85 million funding boost after stronger municipal spending and tighter financial management unlocked fresh investment for the province, marking a major win for Premier Dr Zamani Saul's push to strengthen governance, improve accountability and accelerate service delivery across struggling municipalities.

The announcement was made during Tuesday's Extended Premier's Intergovernmental Forum in Kimberley, where provincial leaders, municipal executives, government departments and public entities gathered to assess municipal performance, spending trends and long-term development priorities.

At a time when municipalities across South Africa continue to battle financial instability, ageing infrastructure and mounting service delivery pressure, the additional allocation is being viewed as a significant breakthrough for the Northern Cape and further evidence that the province's governance reforms are beginning to produce measurable results.

Accountability and financial discipline dominated discussions at the forum, with provincial leadership making it clear that municipalities demonstrating stronger financial controls and improved spending patterns are placing themselves in a better position to attract further investment and support.

Premier Saul welcomed the progress achieved across several municipalities but stressed that stronger leadership and tougher accountability remain essential if local government is to sustain momentum and restore public confidence.

"Leadership comes with responsibility," Saul told delegates.

"Leaders must occupy their positions fully, ask the necessary questions regarding expenditure and strengthen accountability measures to ensure clean audit outcomes."

The Premier said clean audits should not simply be viewed as administrative exercises or compliance targets but as indicators of ethical leadership, transparent governance and government's ability to deliver meaningful results to communities.

For the Northern Cape, the latest funding boost carries added significance as the province has spent several years working to stabilise municipal administration, strengthen governance systems and improve infrastructure delivery, often while operating under difficult economic conditions and limited resources.

The R85 million injection

is expected to support critical development projects and strengthen municipal capacity to improve service delivery on the ground.

Provincial leaders also used the forum to align priorities between municipalities, departments and public entities, with discussions focusing on infrastructure delivery, municipal financial management, economic growth and improving coordination across all spheres of government.

For municipalities facing growing public pressure over service delivery failures, the message from provincial leadership was direct — better spending and stronger financial controls are no longer simply governance requirements, but essential tools for attracting investment and unlocking development opportunities.

The province's improved financial performance, highlighted during the forum, reinforces the view that stronger governance can directly translate into additional resources and greater flexibility to respond to community needs.

This remains especially important in a province where many communities continue to grapple with infrastructure backlogs, unemployment and rising expectations around municipal performance.

Thursday's meeting also reinforced Saul's broader vision of building what provincial leadership described as a modern, growing and successful Northern Cape, with accountability and responsible public spending remaining central to that strategy.

Provincial leaders believe long-term economic growth will depend not only on attracting investment but also on restoring confidence in public institutions and ensuring government spending produces visible improvements in communities.

For Saul, the latest funding boost is expected to strengthen confidence in the province's current direction.

For municipalities across the Northern Cape, however, the announcement also serves as a reminder that improved governance can deliver tangible rewards and that when financial discipline improves, the benefits can extend far beyond balance sheets into communities struggling for better services and economic opportunities.

In a province determined to prove that disciplined leadership can produce real results, Thursday's R85 million allocation was more than another budget announcement. It was another sign that the Northern Cape's push for accountability and stronger governance is beginning to translate into measurable gains for communities across the province.



Northern Cape Premier, Dr Zamani Saul



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Keys to Hope:

Free State Families Finally Get New Homes



Free State MEC Human Settlements Saki Mokoena turns global housing dialogue into homes on the ground. Pictures: Facebook

By Bernell Simons

From global housing discussions in Azerbaijan to emotional handovers in Botshabelo, Free State MEC for Cooperative Governance, Traditional Affairs and Human Settlements Saki Mokoena spent this week turning housing promises into reality as dozens of families finally received the keys to newly built homes after years of waiting.

Only days after representing the province at the 13th World Urban Forum in Baku, Mokoena returned home to continue the Free State government's "Beke le Beke" housing delivery programme, officially handing over completed Breaking New Ground (BNG) houses to beneficiaries in Bethlehem and Botshabelo.

The programme began on 25 May in old Bakenspark Ward 3 in Bethlehem, where 30 newly completed houses were officially handed over to residents. The initiative then moved to Botshabelo's M-Section before continuing in Section K on Wednesday, bringing relief and excitement to families who had spent years living in overcrowded or ageing two-roomed homes.

For many beneficiaries, the week was about far more than housing delivery statistics or government announcements. It became a deeply emotional moment marked by smiles, tears and relief as families stepped into homes they could finally call their own.

Videos shared on the Free State Department of Human Settlements' social media platforms captured residents embracing relatives and proudly opening the doors to their new homes for the first time.

The handovers came shortly after Mokoena joined South Africa's delegation, led by Human Settlements Minister Thambi Simelane, at the World Urban Forum hosted by UN-Habitat from 17 to 22 May under the theme Housing the World: Safe and Resilient Cit-

ies and Communities.

The international gathering brought together governments, urban planners, academics and development specialists to discuss global housing shortages, rapid urbanisation and infrastructure challenges facing communities worldwide.

For the Free State delegation, however, the focus remained on finding practical and sustainable solutions to challenges affecting local municipalities, particularly housing backlogs, sanitation pressures and ageing infrastructure.

That commitment to finding workable solutions has already begun shaping local delivery efforts.

Mokoena has also embarked on a strategic visit to Jiangsu Province in China, where he is leading a Free State delegation exploring innovative and cost-effective infrastructure solutions aimed at addressing water and sanitation challenges in municipalities across the province.

Accompanied by Executive Mayor Tseki Tseki and Executive Mayor Tumelo Thebe, the delegation visited wastewater treatment facilities and met with local housing and environmental officials as discussions continued around possible future partnerships and infrastructure collaboration.

Back in the province, work within the Department of Human Settlements has continued behind the scenes to improve planning, monitoring and project implementation across districts. Chief Director for Corporate Services T.P. Motsima has been visiting district offices as part of efforts to strengthen systems and improve long-term sustainability in housing delivery projects.

This week's handovers also build on commitments made in November last year when Minister Simelane, Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae and MEC Mokoena launched a major service delivery campaign in Mangaung focused on demolishing unsafe asbestos-roofed two-roomed houses and re-

placing them with dignified BNG homes.

Among the beneficiaries was 74-year-old Nkgono Mosalentja Maria Modiko, whose shack had become unsafe and unsuitable, particularly while living with a disability. When officials first visited last year, only the foundation of her new house had been laid. This week, she finally received the keys to her completed home. The Rakhosi family in Botshabelo Section K also celebrated a major milestone after their old asbestos-roofed house was demolished during last year's visit. While construction continued, the family stayed in temporary accommodation before officially moving into their new home this week.

For beneficiaries, the moment carried overwhelming emotion.

Mathabo Makhokolotso-Willimse said she struggled to put her happiness into words after receiving her house keys.

"I am so happy I cannot even express how I feel," she said. "I will be forever grateful."

Another beneficiary, Adelaide Jonathan, described the impact the new home will have on her family's daily life after years spent in cramped conditions.

"For a long time we lived with very little space," she said. "Now my children and I have freedom and privacy in our own home."

For many residents in Botshabelo, the handovers symbolised more than infrastructure delivery. They represented dignity restored, years of waiting rewarded and a renewed sense of hope for the future. As families crossed the thresholds of their newly built homes carrying keys, furniture and dreams for a better future, this week's handovers became a visible reminder that promises discussed in boardrooms and conference halls can ultimately change lives on the ground.

For dozens of Free State families, a commitment that once existed only in plans and meetings has now become a place to call home.

SA Young Scientists Head to Global Fair in Türkiye

Bright young innovators from Cape Town, Makhanda and Bloemfontein prepare to showcase world-class research on the international stage

By Bernell Simons



South Africa's brightest young scientific minds are preparing to take on the world after three exceptional learners were selected to represent the country at the prestigious 1923 International Mathematics Science and Engineering Fair in Izmir, Türkiye, from 1 to 6 June.

Chosen through the Eskom Expo for Young Scientists following standout performances at last year's Eskom Expo International Science Fair, the learners will showcase proudly South African research tackling real-world challenges through science, mathematics and innovation.

The delegation includes Connor Kinnes, a Grade 11 learner from Elkanah House in Cape Town; Joshua Danilatos, a Grade 11 learner from Graeme College; and Free State mathematics prodigy Rorisang Mohau Mohlobuli, a Grade 9 learner from Bloemfontein High School. They will be accompanied by Eskom Expo Ekurhuleni regional science fair director Palesa Selepe.

The international event presents another major opportunity for South Africa to demonstrate the strength of its emerging scientific talent and the growing impact of science, technology, engineering and mathematics education in schools across the country.

Kinnes will present Project Pathfinder: Design and Optimisation of a Static Test Rocket Motor, an engineering project focused on developing an affordable and scalable rocket propulsion system.

The Cape Town learner said representing South Africa on an international platform is both exciting and humbling.

"It is an incredible opportunity to share something I've worked hard on and to represent South Africa among learners from around the world," Kinnes said. Elkanah House congratulated Kinnes on his achievement, describing his selection as a proud moment for the school and a reflection of his dedication, discipline and passion for innovation.

Danilatos will showcase Catch-and-Release in a Warming Climate: Effects on Reflex Impairment and Stress in Rhabdosargus holubi, a project examining how rising water temperatures affect Cape stumpnose fish after catch-and-release events.

His research highlights growing concerns around climate change and marine conservation.

Danilatos said he hopes the project will encourage greater awareness around environmental sustainability while demonstrating how young South Africans can contribute meaningfully to global scientific conversations.

Graeme College praised the learner for his achieve-

ment, saying his selection reflects both academic excellence and a commitment to research capable of making a practical difference.

Representing the Free State, Mohlobuli will present Quantifying Goldbach: An Analysis of Prime Pairs, a mathematics project exploring advanced number theory linked to Goldbach's Conjecture.

Using logarithmic functions derived from the Prime Number Theorem, the Bloemfontein learner developed a refined predictive model aimed at improving analytical accuracy in the study of prime numbers.

Mohlobuli said he is honoured to represent Bloemfontein, the Free State and South Africa at the global competition.

"I'm proud to represent my school and my country. It is exciting to know that work started in a classroom in Bloemfontein can be shared on an international stage," he said.

Bloemfontein High School welcomed the achievement, saying the learner's selection is an inspiring example of what dedication, curiosity and hard work can achieve.

Acting chief executive officer of the Eskom Development Foundation, Mologadi Motshela, said the learners represent the very best of South Africa's emerging scientific talent.

"The selected projects demonstrate how young South African researchers are developing scalable, data-driven solutions to complex global challenges," Motshela said.

She added that the learners are helping showcase the high standard of science, technology, engineering and mathematics education being developed in South African schools and why continued investment in innovation remains critical for the country's future.

Eskom Expo media liaison officer JeVanne Gibbs said the competition provides an important international platform for South Africa's future innovators.

"These learners are proof that South Africa has world-class young scientific talent capable of competing internationally. Their work reflects innovation, determination and the bright future of science in our country," Gibbs said.

As the delegation prepares to travel to Türkiye next week, South Africa will once again be represented by bright young minds carrying not only groundbreaking research projects, but also the hopes of schools, communities and a nation proud to see its future scientists taking their place on the world stage.

METRO MUNICIPALITY METRO MUNISIPALITEIT LEKGOTLA LA MOTSE

MANGAUNG AT THE HEART OF IT ALL

PUBLIC NOTICE

BIDS BULLETIN NO: 212(29 May 2026) – BIDS TO BE DEPOSITED IN BID BOX A

BID NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	SPECIAL CONDITION AS PER SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT POLICY SECTION 23.13.7	EVALUATION CRITERIA	CIDB GRADING	COMPULSORY BRIEFING SESSION	PRICE (Non-refundable)	CONTACT PERSON (TECHNICAL)	SCM CONTACT PERSON	CLOSING DATE AND TIME
MMM/BID: 807: 2025/2026	PROVISION OF PANEL OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS AS AND WHEN REQUIRED.	1% of contract value be set aside for employment of interns/ learnership	90- Price 10-Specific goals Specific goals and Functionality Details in the document.	None	Date:09 June 2026. Venue: Floreat Hall, Bram Fischer Building Cnr. Maakraf & Nelson Mandela Time:10H00am.	R1 687.00	Bokang Sebouledi @081 498 8932. Email:bokang.sebouledi@mangaung.co.za Mametsing Borole @078 009 6332. Email:mametsing.borole@mangaung.co.za	Thabo Mkuzangwe @051 411 3219. Email:thabo.mkuzangwe@mangaung.co.za Karabo Pilusa @051 411 3234. Email:karabo.pilusa@mangaung.co.za	Date:30 June 2026. Time: 11:30am
MMM/ BID 781(A): 2025/2026	MEDIA ADVERTISING (PRINT MEDIA NEWSPAPERS) FOR MANGAUNG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY. (READVERTISEMENT)	Not Applicable	80- Price 20-Specific goals Specific goals and Functionality Details in the document	None	Date:10 June 2026. Venue: Floreat Hall, Bram Fischer Building Cnr. Maakraf & Nelson Mandela Time:10H00am.	R 437.00	Sele thebane @051 411 3209. Email:sele.thebane@mangaung.co.za	Portia Mollo @ 051 411 3219. Email:portia.mollo@mangaung.co.za Thapelo Motshibi @051 411 3234. Email:thapelo.motshibi@mangaung.co.za	Date:01 July 2026. Time: 11:30am

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 • BRAM FISCHER BUILDING BLOEMFONTEIN,
 • RE -A-HOLA SHOPPING COMPLEX – BOTSHABELO,
 • THABA – NCHU CIVIC CENTRE, HOSTEL ONE – BLOEMFONTEIN (DR. BELCHER ROAD),
 • MANGAUNG REGIONAL OFFICES – CNR. MOSHOESHOE & GEORGE LUBBE ROADS BLOEMFONTEIN.

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FIRST NATIONAL BANK(FNB), ACCOUNT NO:63162512694, BRANCH CODE:230134, REF NO: 4302142551029ZZZZ1:
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Social Grant beneficiaries urged to switch to Black Cards before deadline

Postbank has reminded all social grant beneficiaries currently using South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) Gold Cards to urgently replace them with the new Postbank Black Cards before the 31 August 2026 deadline.

In a statement on Wednesday, Postbank said there was only two grant payment months left before SASSA Gold Cards stop working, and beneficiaries are encouraged not to wait until the last minute as delays and long queues may occur closer to the deadline date.

Failure to replace the SASSA Gold Cards before the deadline may result in beneficiaries being unable to access their social grant payments using the old cards.

Postbank has warned that the deadline to replace SASSA Gold Cards will not be extended.

"The window period for replacing SASSA Gold Cards is closing fast and we are concerned that many beneficiaries may think that they still have sufficient time, or the period will be extended.

"Anyone without a Black Card after the deadline will need to first obtain a new card before they can access payments," Postbank Chief Commercial Officer, Thami Cele, said.

Cele said that Postbank is making a special appeal to social grant beneficiaries to get their new cards while there is still time.

The replacement process is free of charge and can be completed at designated Postbank service points in participating retail outlets nationwide. The agency reminded beneficiaries that:

- The replacement of SASSA Gold Cards with Postbank Black Cards is free of charge.

- Existing Gold Cards will no longer function after the deadline.

- Beneficiaries must carry a valid ID or temporary ID when collecting the new card.

- Black Cards can be collected from any Postbank site inside selected retailers that include Shoprite, Checkers, Usave, Pick n Pay, Boxer and Spar stores. Dial *120*355# to locate a nearby card collection site.

- Cards can be collected from any province, even if that is not the province in which a person's SASSA grant got approved.

- Postbank Black Cards work immediately upon issue, and there is no need to go to a SASSA office once you have received your new card. Any funds balance currently in a customer's Gold Card will automatically be reflected.

- Beneficiaries are urged to remain vigilant against scams and ensure that the Black Card they are being offered is written Postbank in the front. If it's not written Postbank, then it is a scam.

- No forms are required and if you are asked to complete, or sign any form, the card is not a Postbank Black Card. Don't accept it, and call Postbank's toll-free number for help.

- Beneficiaries may contact Postbank on 0800 5354 55 for more information.

- Postbank said it remains committed to ensuring that beneficiaries continue receiving their grants safely, securely, and without interruption. – SAnews.gov.za



Opinion

Dr Zikhona Dlaza
Department of Industrial Psychology,
University of the Free State



When opportunity doesn't even know your address

I will never forget the look on their faces. It was an ordinary Saturday morning at our university's open day. Learners from schools in and around Qwaqwa had made the trip, some of them travelling for the first time to a university campus. They walked in clutching brochures, whispering to each other, pointing at buildings. A few were shy. Others asked questions with the kind of confidence that makes you smile, because you can already see who they are going to become. I stood there feeling genuinely proud. These young people had shown up. They wanted to know about their futures. Then the questions turned to entry requirements. And something shifted. "Miss, I want to do BCom. I am doing Business Studies and Maths Literacy, do I qualify?" The answer, for most of our programmes, was no. Pure Mathematics was required. One by one, the same realisation crossed their faces. Not anger. Not even frustration. Just a quiet, heavy kind of disappointment, the kind that comes when you understand that a door has been closed, and you

are only hearing about it now, when it is too late to do anything about it. That moment has stayed with me. And it has made me ask a question I cannot stop thinking about: whose job was it to tell them sooner? An important decision of their young lives. In Grade 9, learners across South Africa must choose the subjects they will carry through to matric. It is one of the most important decisions of their young lives, and most of them make it with very little guidance. For a 14-year-old in a rural community like Qwaqwa, Mathematics Literacy often feels like the safer road. It is less intimidating. And if no one explains that this choice will close the door to university programmes in health sciences, industrial psychology, and many others, why would you think twice? The problem is not that these learners made the wrong choice. The problem is that they were never properly shown what the choice meant. Here is something we do not talk about enough: parents. Many of the parents of these learners have never set foot at the university. They do not know

the difference between Mathematics and Mathematics Literacy. They trust that the school is guiding their children well. This is not a criticism. It is an acknowledgement that they have been left out of a conversation that directly affects their children's futures. Career guidance must reach into homes and communities, in local languages, in ways that make sense to families navigating all of this for the first time. Imagine if, in Grade 7 or 8, parents received a simple guide explaining what subject choices lie ahead and what each one opens or closes. That kind of early, inclusive conversation could change everything. Every child deserves to know their options. South Africa's unemployment rate sits above 32%. Among young people, it exceeds 60%. Behind every statistic is a sequence of events, and for many young South Africans, that sequence begins with a subject choice made at age 14, without adequate guidance. The link between poor career guidance and unemployment is not always direct, but it is real. When learners are not guided toward subjects

that open university doors, they are quietly steered away from qualifications that lead to decent work. The crisis we see at the end has quiet roots at the beginning. And one of those roots is the absence of meaningful career guidance in the communities that need it most. None of this is impossible to fix. Schools in rural communities need trained people who can guide learners through career decisions before Grade 9, not after. Universities need to go to the communities that cannot come to them, hold outreach events in local schools and community spaces while there is still time to make different choices. Government needs to invest in career guidance as something every child deserves. And most importantly, we need to include parents. They are not the problem. They are one of the most powerful forces we have, if only we give them the information they need to walk alongside their children. Every child deserves to know what their options are, early, clearly, and kindly. That is not too much to ask. It is the very least we owe them.

Entrepreneurs need funding and access to markets not speeches



Refilwe Mochoari
Editor-in-Chief

For the past five months, investment summits have dominated South Africa's business conversations. From Johannesburg to Durban, from Bloemfontein to Kimberley, the country has hosted, to date, not less than 10 investment summits that I can think of, and I have personally attended three, with more to come.

To name a few, the SA Investment Summit where R81 billion was invested, the Gauteng Investment Summit where R205 billion was secured, and the Northern Cape Jobs and Investment Summit where a total of R105 billion was invested.

These gatherings are necessary and provide a great opportunity to learn, network, and meet potential partners and investors.

They also promise to unlock opportunities where funds will be channelled towards empowering the backbone of the economy.

Hi everyone my name is Refilwe Mochoari, let's talk about this.

What do the different investment summits mean for the black brother who is sitting at a street corner selling fruits and vegetables, or the mama who is sitting on the sidewalks during the cold winter mornings to sell coffee and porridge for others to have breakfast on the go, so that she can put her children through education and give them a place that is called home?

For these entrepreneurs, these billions mean little to nothing, if they are not translated into accessible and practical support.

They actually do not understand the language, of GDP and mega projects, but what they do know and understand is that they need funding support, infrastructure, mentorship, and access to markets.

The Department of Small Business Development, through its agency Small Economic Development Finance Agency (SEDFFA), has been active in launching funds and initiatives that are aimed at supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Funds such as the #ImbaliForHer women entrepreneurship fund, the spaza shop funding, the #SEDFFAConstructionFund where R300 million has been set aside to help small businesses in construction to name a few.

Minister Stella Ndabeni-Abrahams, in her budget vote on Wednesday, announced that R2.1 billion has been set aside for the 2026/27 financial year.

She says the department has a bold target of supporting 1 million MSMEs and cooperatives during the 7th administration.

In her budget, she said over 288 000 businesses were supported last year and over 117 000 small businesses received financial backing, and 170 000 benefited from non-financial interventions.

These numbers are encouraging, but they raise a deeper question currently, are summits and speeches enough?

Small businesses are not just statistics, they are the lifeblood of South Africa's GDP, the largest employers in the economy, and the engines of the National Development Plan's vision for growth and jobs.

The NDP positions small, medium, and micro-enterprises (SMME's) as the primary engine of South Africa's economic growth.

It aims for small businesses to generate 90% of all new jobs by 2030.

For the government to be able to combat unemployment, they need to strengthen and capacitate small businesses.

Entrepreneurs don't need any more speeches they need action and money.

Each gathering has promised to unlock opportunities, channel funds, and strengthen the backbone of our economy, small businesses.

Though it may sound like entitlement, the reality is that small businesses need to be empowered to help government tackle the high unemployment rates.

If small businesses are the backbone of our economy, then investment summits need to start focusing on tangible outcomes.

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



Winning The Inner War

In every generation, humanity has mastered the art of healing the outer man while neglecting the wounds of the inner man. People invest in appearance, success, reputation, and achievement, yet silently carry pain, rejection, trauma, disappointment, bitterness, and spiritual emptiness within. The greatest battles many people fight are not external battles, but internal wars hidden behind smiles, titles, and accomplishments. The inner man is the unseen dimension of a person — the heart, soul, mind, emotions, and spirit. It is possible for someone to be physically healthy yet emotionally broken, financially successful yet spiritually wounded, publicly celebrated yet privately tormented. True healing begins when God touches the hidden places of a person's life. **Understanding the Broken Inner Man by MB Kareli**

Life has a way of leaving scars on the soul. Rejection, betrayal, abuse, failure, abandonment, disappointment, grief, and harsh words can deeply wound the inner man. Many people carry childhood pain into adulthood. Others carry spiritual wounds caused by people they trusted. Some are wounded by their own mistakes and failures. **When the inner man is wounded, it manifests in many ways:**

- Constant anger and bitterness
- Fear and anxiety
- Depression and hopelessness
- Low self-esteem
- Insecurity and jealousy
- Unforgiveness
- Emotional instability
- Spiritual dryness
- Difficulty trusting people
- Self-destruction and addiction

A wounded inner man affects relationships, decision-making, leadership, ministry, and even one's relationship with God. Many people pray for open doors while their hearts remain closed due to unresolved pain.

God Cares About the Inner Man

Throughout Scripture, God demonstrates concern for the condition of the heart more than outward appearances. The Bible declares that man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. Heaven is not merely interested in behavior modification; God desires transformation from within. Jesus ministered not only to physical sickness but also to emotional and spiritual brokenness. He healed rejected people, restored the ashamed, embraced the forgotten, and gave hope to the brokenhearted. His ministry revealed that divine healing is not limited to the body — God also heals wounded souls.

The healing of the inner man is essential because what is happening inside a person eventually manifests outwardly. A healed heart produces healthy relationships, healthy leadership, healthy worship, and healthy living.

The Process of Inner Healing

1. Acknowledging the Pain

Healing begins with honesty. Many people suppress pain rather than confront it. Ignoring wounds does not heal them; it only buries them deeper. God cannot heal what a person refuses to acknowledge.

There is strength in admitting:

- "I am hurt."
- "I am disappointed."
- "I have been wounded."
- "I need healing."

Transparency before God opens the door for restoration.

2. Forgiveness

One of the greatest barriers to healing is unforgiveness. Unforgiveness imprisons the person car-

rying it more than the offender. Bitterness poisons the soul and keeps wounds alive. Forgiveness does not justify wrongdoing, but it releases the burden from the heart. Healing begins when people surrender vengeance to God and choose freedom over bitterness.

3. Renewing the Mind

Many people are emotionally trapped because of destructive thought patterns. Inner healing requires the renewal of the mind. Negative words spoken by parents, society, teachers, or even spiritual leaders can become internal strongholds.

A healed inner man learns to replace lies with truth:

- From "I am worthless" to "I am valuable."
- From "I am rejected" to "I am accepted."
- From "I am defeated" to "I am victorious."
- From "God has abandoned me" to "God is with me."

Transformation begins when the mind aligns with divine truth.

4. Allowing God's Presence to Heal the Heart

There are wounds that counseling alone cannot heal. There are pains medicine cannot remove. The presence of God reaches places human wisdom cannot touch.

Prayer, worship, meditation on Scripture, and intimacy with God create an atmosphere for deep inner restoration. Many people have experienced healing not through words alone, but through encounters with God's presence.

Sometimes healing is immediate; sometimes it is a process. Yet every genuine encounter with God brings restoration to the soul.

5. Healthy Relationships and Community

Isolation deepens wounds. Healing often happens in healthy spiritual environments where there is love, accountability, encouragement, and genuine care. God frequently uses people as instruments of healing.

Wise counsel, spiritual mentorship, supportive friendships, and healthy family relationships contribute greatly to emotional restoration.

Signs of a Healed Inner Man

A healed person does not become perfect, but they become whole.

- Signs of healing include:
- Inner peace
- Emotional stability
- Freedom from bitterness
- Joy and hope
- Ability to trust again
- Spiritual passion
- Healthy relationships
- Compassion toward others
- Confidence without pride
- Ability to love genuinely

A healed inner man becomes a vessel through which God can flow freely.

Conclusion

The healing of the inner man is one of the greatest miracles a person can experience. God does not merely want people to survive life; He desires them to live whole, free, restored, and spiritually alive. Many people spend years hiding wounds behind success, ministry, titles, and material possessions, yet heaven is calling for deeper restoration. True strength is not pretending to be unhurt; true strength is allowing God to heal what has been broken. No wound is too deep for God's power. No heart is too shattered for His restoration. The same God who heals bodies also heals souls, restores minds, renews hope, and revives broken spirits.

When the inner man is healed, a person begins to live from wholeness rather than pain — and from that place, they can truly fulfill their divine purpose.

Chinese Masterclass Pragmatism: A Lesson in Dealing with the Rogue US Administration



The Chinese leadership offered President Trump the optics, the fanfare and glamour of a royal reception upon his arrival, while privately extracted significant concessions on substantive matters. This was top-class strategic leadership informed by a pragmatic response to a rogue superpower. Beijing understood that Trump would want to use the state visit to project power through exaggerated optics, as was done in the Middle East. Undoubtedly, the Chinese spoiled him with lavish optics in abundance.

While Trump wallowed in the mistaken belief that optics were a true projection of power, the Chinese quietly and strategically achieved their objectives in each of the five key areas of discussion, popularly known as the '5 Ts'.

Consider the implications if South Africa had hosted such a royal reception for Trump. It would have triggered an ideological backlash against the governing party. Extreme left ideologues and critics would definitely have had a field day, accusing the governing party of selling out and capitulating to an imperialist power. The obsession with optics would have eclipsed sober and intellectual engagements on the visit.

A cursory review of the response from major research institutes, academics, and think tanks in China regarding the US visit reveals their focus remained on the substance of the visit rather than the optics of the reception. As mentioned above, the substance of the visit centered on the '5 Ts': trade, tariffs, technology, Taiwan, and Tehran. On each of these fronts, China outmaneuvered the US to secure major gains, demonstrating a masterclass in diplomatic pragmatism.

Regarding trade, China advocated for easing the trade war and expanding market access. President Xi assured US CEOs that 'China's door will only open wider to US businesses'. China committed to purchasing \$17 billion annually in US agricultural products for 2026–2028, in addition to 200 Boeing aircraft. Both parties agreed to establish a 'US-China Board of Trade' and a 'US-China Board of Investment' to manage economic issues. Furthermore, China addressed US concerns regarding rare earth minerals, agreeing to restore supplies of yttrium, scandium, neodymium, and indium.

On technology and AI, China emphasized the interdependence of the two economies for mutual prosperity and global progress. Trump, accompanied by US tech CEOs including Elon Musk and Jensen Huang, signaled support for this approach and the prospects for cooperation on technology and investment ties. Chinese media framed this as a discussion on 'competition in technology'.

On tariffs, China pushed to extend the trade truce and avoid tariff escalation. The October 2025 truce, which lowered tariffs and allowed for the flow of rare earth minerals, was up for renewal. Xi's delegation emphasized stability, noting that tariffs exceeding 100% had harmed both economies. China also warned that it would 'protect its

rights and interests' should the US impose new tariffs related to trade with Iran.

On the Tehran issue, both leaders agreed that Iran cannot possess a nuclear weapon and called for the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz. China positioned itself as an unofficial mediator in the Iran conflict. Given that China is the primary buyer of Iranian oil, US threats of 25% tariffs on countries trading with Iran risked derailing the trade truce.

On Taiwan, Xi informed Trump that Taiwan is the 'most important issue in China-US relations' and warned that mishandling it could lead to conflict, stating that China opposes Taiwan's independence. Exercising extreme caution, Trump announced that he 'heard him out' but made no commitments and had not yet decided on arms sales to Taiwan. The response by Trump left the Taiwanese confused and deeply disappointed.

Throughout these engagements, the Chinese remained focused on their strategic objectives. They wanted to use the visit to reset their economy towards a high-growth path through the production of high-value goods and to consolidate the US as their key export market. Furthermore, they used the visit to manage the shifting balance of global power. In doing so, they are acutely aware that a dogmatic attachment to ideology would neither grow the economy nor sustain the livelihood of 1.4 billion Chinese.

The Chinese understand that the function of ideology in a revolutionary course lies not in the flowery beauty of concepts but in achieving tangible progress that improves the lives of the people, particularly the poor. The current generation of Chinese leaders are ardent students of Deng Xiaoping, the architect of modern China.

The efforts of Deng in the early 1980s to open the Chinese economy were challenged by conservatives in the Chinese Communist Party; he famously responded; 'It does not matter whether the cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice'. He punctuated this with the timeless assertion that 'China will cross the river by touching the stones'.

The assertion on 'crossing the river' advocated for a pragmatic and practical response to complex development and geopolitical questions. He advised Chinese leaders not to sit on a riverbank, theorising to the point of paralysis on how to cross it. If a common objective of crossing the river is established, they must jump in, without being adventurous, as long as they touch the stones at the bottom to limit the chances of drowning.

This pragmatic approach has been key to the drive for massive and transformative development in China.

The same approach shapes the Chinese response to the shifting global power dynamics, demonstrating that no single ideology can address all complex global issues. Rather, pragmatic approaches informed by national and other strategic interests of a country should serve as the scaffolding of any ideology. *By Dr. Zamani Saul, Northern Cape ANC Provincial Chairperson*

Elegant Vibe Music Spins Legacy of Hope and Opportunity in Bloem's Nightlife Scene



By Bernell Simons

For the past 15 years, Tyron Raymond Machlary, better known by his stage name Elegant Vibe Music, has dedicated his life to music, entertainment and uplifting upcoming talent in Bloemfontein's vibrant nightlife scene.

Born and raised in Bloemfontein, the 33-year-old DJ has become a familiar face behind the decks since starting his journey in 2010. What began as curiosity after his school years quickly transformed into a lifelong passion after Wesley Drude encouraged him to pursue DJing seriously.

From teaching himself how to use CDJs to becoming one of the city's recognised resident DJs, Machlary's story is one of determination, resilience and consistency.

"I'm basically self-taught," he says. "I just fell in love with the craft and wanted to perfect it."

Known for his versatility, Elegant Vibe Music refuses to be boxed into one genre. Whether it is amapiano, hip hop, soul or R&B, he prides himself on connecting with any crowd through music.

"I love good music in general," he explains. "My craft is about creating a vibe and making sure people feel something when I play."

Over the years, he has built more than just a personal brand. Through Elegant DJs, Machlary has created a platform that has helped more than 50 upcoming DJs gain exposure and opportunities within the entertainment industry.

His vision expanded even further with Elegant Visuals, a YouTube streaming platform where he showcases and promotes local DJ talent, helping artists grow their audience and sharpen their skills.

Despite his achievements, the road has not been easy. Funding remains one of the biggest challenges he has faced throughout his career.

"I funded most of this journey myself with the help of friends," he says. "There were many struggles and moments where I had to fight for opportunities, but I never gave up."

Today, his focus is not only on growing his own brand but also on leaving behind a legacy that inspires others in the industry.

Currently, Elegant Vibe Music is a resident DJ at Dala Mala in Westdene, where he hosts the energetic "Crazy Saturdays" every weekend. Fans can also catch him every Friday at Rooftop Lounge & Garden Bar for "Phola Fridays", where he continues to keep dance floors alive with his signature sound and unmatched energy.

The busy DJ's calendar continues to grow with upcoming appearances, including Baseline's One Man Show on 01 August at Ha Makafuwa, as well as performances in Colesberg on 29 August for The Stance & Rugby Addair event.

Looking ahead, Machlary hopes to see Elegant DJs and Elegant Visuals grow into respected brands that continue developing and empowering local talent across South Africa.

"I want to reach a point where I can sit back and be proud of everything we've built," he says. "Music gave me purpose, and now I want to use it to create opportunities for others."

With 15 years behind the decks and an unwavering passion for the culture, Elegant Vibe Music continues to prove that true success is measured not only by fame, but by the impact left on the people around you.

Glitz, Grace and Inspiration as Mayaba Lights Up Bloem

...Hundreds of women gather in Bloemfontein for the sold-out "Let Me Tell You Something" book tour event celebrating faith, healing and empowerment

By Katlego Mashwabi

Bloemfontein was transformed into a hub of inspiration, faith and glamour last weekend as hundreds of women gathered for author, influencer and HIV activist Nozibele Mayaba's sold-out "Let Me Tell You Something" book tour event at the Eagle Christian Church (ECC).

Women from across central South Africa arrived dressed in style and eager to be part of what many described as one of the most uplifting and spiritually enriching gatherings hosted in the city this year.

The Bloemfontein event marked the third stop of Mayaba's nationwide tour following successful launches in other provinces. The tour now heads to Durban on 30 May before concluding in Mpumalanga on 20 June.

The gathering featured electrifying gospel performances, motivational talks and moments of deep reflection, all centred around healing, purpose and faith. Attendees filled the venue with song, prayer and celebration as speakers encouraged women to embrace their journeys and trust in God's direction for their lives.

For many guests, the atmosphere inside the venue left a lasting impact.

Ouma Motaung from Bloemfontein said the event exceeded all her expectations.

"It was well planned and it felt like each one of us was individually taken care of," she said.

"Personally, I stepped into the venue and could feel the atmosphere change. It felt like the presence of a higher power came to hug me. Nozi was so warm and connected with everyone in the space emotionally."

Mayaba, who is widely known for openly sharing her HIV journey and inspiring thousands through her advocacy work, used the event to encourage women to find healing, purpose and confidence through faith.

Her latest devotional book is the third publication in her growing collection, following Positively Me: Daring to Live and Love Beyond HIV and I Am Still Me.

The devotional is a year-long collection of

scripture readings aimed at helping readers rebuild their faith, strengthen spiritual discipline and discover personal healing. It explores themes of obedience, purpose, self-worth and trusting God's plan while encouraging readers to uplift others through love and compassion.

The faith-centred launches have also attracted prominent voices in the worship and motivational speaking space, helping create a strong online buzz around the tour.

Ahead of the Bloemfontein event, Mayaba shared her excitement on social media as she prepared to arrive in the City of Roses — and judging by the turnout and emotional response from attendees, the city welcomed her with open arms.



'I made the decision a year ago': Sizwe Dhlomo opens up about Kaya 959 departure

After six years on Kaya 959, presenter Sizwe Dhlomo is leaving the radio station.

On Wednesday morning's episode of Siz The World, Dhlomo broke the news to his co-hosts Mpho Maboi and Mfundo Mabalane and listeners.

"I remember when I joined, Dr. Sindi, right? May her soul rest in peace. She was like, 'Ah, Sizwe, I know you don't stay long in places. How long are you going to be with us?'"

"I was like, brah, I'm here for a good time, not for a long time, and I'll be honest, it's been a great time. It has been a great time. I think I've spent like six years now, the longest I've ever been in any radio station. But it's come to an end."

It took his co-hosts a few seconds to take the news in and probed Dhlomo about his decision and his next move.

"No, I'm serious. I'm going to be going. I can't tell you where I'm going yet. I'll go on sabbatical for like six months. Then after that, I'll announce where I'm going next."

Dhlomo revealed that he had decided to leave the station a year ago, and that there was nothing wrong with his departure. He hinted that his last day was soon, with his contract ending at the end of June, and there being a possibility of him going on leave.

He shared that he will miss his colleagues, but especially the listeners. "One of the reasons why I stayed here for so long is definitely the colleagues. The people that we work with."

"But also, the Kaya listener, guys. Man, the Kaya listener is awesome. These guys are always welcoming. From the first day I got you when I was doing



Kaya Drive, and then obviously ended up moving on to the breakfast show. I'm definitely, definitely going to miss you."

Dhlomo has built a home studio, which he has spent R2.8 million on, and has a project that he will be

working with Sony on, but he is keeping his cards close to his chest as to what he will be doing with his studio. Listeners did not take the news well and let him know that they weren't too happy about the bomb he had dropped on them. **IOL**

South African documentary 'Our Earth, My Blood' scores major international award nomination



South African cinema is taking center stage on the French Riviera.

The powerful new documentary "Our Earth, My Blood" has officially been nominated for the highly coveted Golden Nymph Award at the upcoming 65th Monte-Carlo Television Festival.

Produced by Anant Singh and Videovision Entertainment, in association with Distant Horizon, the film is stepping into the international spotlight to compete against other documentaries from around the globe, such as "Dacia Vita Mia - Dialoghi Giapponesi" from Italy, "Iran, Israel and the Bomb" from France and the UK's "Into the Void: Putin's Foreign Fight".

The Monte-Carlo Television Festival is one of the world's most prestigious film festivals and will run from June 12 to 16, showcasing 24 films from 13 different countries.

The festival will open with the international premiere of the first two episodes of season 3 of "The Walking Dead: Dead City", in the presence of actors Jeffrey Dean Morgan and Lauren Cohan, alongside showrunner Seth Hoffman.

The winners of the Golden Nymph Awards will be revealed during a star-studded, glamorous Blue Carpet Ceremony at the Grimaldi Forum on Tuesday, June 16.

A voice for the ancestors
At its heart, "Our Earth, My Blood" is much more than just an award contender, it is a deeply moving, vital piece of historical storytelling.

The film shines a harsh but necessary light on the colonial genocide of the San people, exploring their painful history of displacement and their ongoing battle to keep their ancient traditions alive.

Reacting to the news, Singh shared his excitement: "We are delighted that 'Our Earth, My Blood' has been nominated for the prestigious Golden Nymph Award. The film, which tells of the colonial genocide of the San people, the world's most ancient shamanic culture, battling to survive atrocities and displacement, and whose culture and traditions are severely threatened."

The visionary co-directors behind the project, Craig and Damon Foster, echoed this pride, emphasising the importance of bringing these indigenous narratives to the world stage.

"Our Earth, My Blood" celebrates the voices, culture and living heritage of the San people, the world's oldest hunter-gatherer community. We are deeply honoured to share these powerful stories with a global audience and sincerely grateful to the Monte-Carlo Television Festival for creating a platform that recognises diverse African narratives."

History in the making
The documentary's international recognition comes at a deeply poignant time for South Africa. Earlier this year, the nation witnessed a historic moment of healing when President Cyril Ramaphosa officiated the reburial of 63 Khoi and San ancestral remains at the Kinderlê Monument in the Northern Cape.

These remains had been stolen between 1868 and 1924 for unethical, racist research and were finally repatriated from Scotland. This profound act of justice and restoration of dignity perfectly mirrors the core themes of the film.

Praise from Monte-Carlo
The festival's leadership has already taken notice of the film's undeniable emotional weight and cinematic excellence.

Cécile Menoni, CEO of the Monte-Carlo Television Festival, offered high praise for the project and South Africa's filmmaking prowess.

"A nomination for a Golden Nymph Award undoubtedly demonstrates that a production is of the highest caliber, and we congratulate every nominee. Our Festival continues to attract exceptional shows from all parts of the world, and we are extremely pleased to be able to reveal new programs and a best-in-class Official Selection each year."

"South Africa stands out this year with a powerful entry, 'Our Earth, My Blood' which explores memory, land and survival," ended Menoni.

In addition, Dame Kristin Scott Thomas, Kurt Russell, Michel Drucker, Spanish actress Ester Expósito and British actor Matthew Broome will receive awards for their contributions to the industry. **-IOL**

GET TO KNOW THE DJ

ARE YOU A DJ AND WANT TO BE FEATURED ON JOURNAL NEWS? WHATSAPP 083 943 9879

WEEKEND Gig Guide
ALL OVER BLOEMFONTEIN FROM 29 MAY - 01 JUNE 2026

- GROOVY FRIDAYS (FRIDAY - 29 MAY 2026)
- TONIOVILLE SATURDAYS (SATURDAY - 30 MAY 2026)
- CENTRAL LIFESTYLE
- MONATE SATURDAY (SATURDAY - 30 MAY 2026)
- SECHABA LOUNGE
- RADIO BLOEM 4TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION (SATURDAY - 30 MAY 2026)
- 128 LOUNGE & BAR
- VEGAS SATURDAYS (SATURDAY - 30 MAY 2026)
- VEGAS CLUB
- MONDAYS ARE NEW SATURDAY (MONDAY - 01 JUNE 2026)
- EKHAYENI

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HEALTH

Why moving about is key for children's health - and happiness

Children are less physically active than they used to be. Scientists are now finding practical and effective ways to encourage children to move more.

Globally children are less active than they used to be. That could end up having lasting effects on their health, scientists say. This inactivity comes amid rising obesity rates, with one in 10 children and adolescents living with the condition. Increased sedentary time, stress, the quality of food and lower levels of sports participation have all contributed.

The good news is that understanding what makes children less active also presents opportunities to encourage them to move more, which will benefit them now and in the future. In fact, growing evidence now suggests there are practical and effective ways to do so, boosting their physical and cognitive health in the process.

Children should have 60 minutes of physical activity per day according to recommendations. Many do not meet them.

This can have lasting effects, as physical inactivity in childhood is linked to less activity in adulthood. Children that are more physically active are also more likely to be active as adults.

One longitudinal study following 712 World War Two veterans for 50 years found that participation in sports at high school was the strongest predictor for better health outcomes at 70, as well as being more physically active in older years. Those who played sports also had fewer visits to the doctor.

Numerous studies show similar effects. Exercise in childhood is linked to better long-term health too. Those who take part in youth sports have been shown to have a lower body mass index (BMI), smaller waist circumference and better mental health as well as better educational achievements and cognitive performance.

Cognitive benefits Physical exercise benefits children in the moment too, says Nicole Logan an assistant professor of kinesiology from the University of Rhode Island in the US. "It improves body composition but also improves and maintains positive cognitive functions as children develop through adolescence," she says. "If we do more physical activity, we increase our cardiorespiratory fitness and that is good for our brain as well."

Given these benefits, there's an increasing focus among researchers on helping children and adolescents sit less and move more, according to groups like the World Health Organization (WHO).

For instance, in one nine-month after-school exercise programme, Logan and colleagues found that children with obesity had better cognitive scores than those who were not part of the intervention. The activities took place after school and included moderate to vigorous activities five days per week.

This intervention was found

to reduce body fat too, which is one reason cognition improved, Logan explains. That's because fat stored around our vital organs can produce inflammation - which in turn is linked to poorer cognitive function, whilst aerobic fitness and physical activity has been linked to better accuracy on complex tasks, better reaction times, and improved inhibitory control, which helps children resist impulsive reactions and is therefore key to concentration.

Logan proposes that schools should implement 60 minutes of movement per day, which would remove the burden on parents to facilitate access to sports (which can be expensive and time consuming).

Stopping stillness Increasing physical activity doesn't need to involve structured sports either. In a study in Massachusetts in the US, simply increasing the opportunities around physical activity before, during and after school, as well as giving children better access to healthy food, resulted in lower BMIs among elementary school children. About one quarter of these children had not taken part in any sports in the year prior to the study.

"The most effective way to actually help prevent obesity among children is to improve the food environment around children, promote physical activity and have rules around screen time," says Ulla Toft, a clinical professor in the department of health at the University of Copenhagen who is undertaking a large-scale obesity intervention study in Denmark focusing on four key areas: diet, physical activity, screen use and sleep.

School-based interventions have shown promise too. One recent study which encouraged teachers to reduce sedentary time in 30 UK schools found 8% decline in waist-to-hip ratio (a measure of abdominal fat) among the children who took part, as well as a 10% increase in sports participation.

In the study, teachers were encouraged to ask children to stand when answering questions and to move around the classroom.

room more than usual. "It wasn't about exercise, but about sitting down less," says Flaminia Ronca, from the University College London's Institute of Sport, Exercise and Health and lead author of the study. As children sit for large parts of the school day, implementing creative ways of adding movement could improve health, she says.

Parental support It's unclear if this type of intervention will have long-term effects, but Ronca says fostering healthy behaviours early could have lasting benefits. In line with other studies, Ronca's study also suggests that the more active children were, the faster they reacted on cognitive tasks involving attention and inhibitory control.

Follow up research found that a single 30-minute physical activity session also improved children's performance on a cognitive task.

Given that physical activity often decreases among adolescents, especially for girls, parental support can also increase participation. In one US survey of both children and their parents, girls whose parents encouraged them and helped them find opportunities to participate in sports, were more likely to persist.

Similarly, as children often learn from the adults around them, research has shown that children are more likely to be physically active if their parents are active too - as well as if parents exercise with their children. This could be as simple as a bike ride in the local park or a short jog together.

Increased confidence Another way to increase physical activity is to consider how children feel when they are moving. Michaela James from Swansea University's medical school in the UK has found that when children feel confident and competent around movement, it increases their wellbeing.

She has found that many schools focus heavily on structured physical activities, which can leave some children to feel excluded and can affect their confidence. BBC



FOOD Recipes

Easy chicken curry

PREPARE
5 min

cook
15 min

Serve
4

Dietary
Easy



This easy staple chicken curry is a fantastic recipe for family dinners. It's made with just a handful of ingredients and is enriched with creamy yogurt

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 onion
- thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves
- crushed
- thumb-sized piece of ginger
- grated
- 6 chicken thighs
- boneless and skinless
- 3 tbsp medium spice paste (tikka works well)
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 100g Greek yogurt
- 1 small bunch of coriander
- leaves chopped
- 50g ground almonds
- naan breads
- or cooked basmati rice, to serve

Method

step 1 Heat the oil in a flameproof casserole dish or large frying pan over a medium heat. Add the onion and a generous pinch of salt and fry for 8-10 mins, or until the onion has turned golden brown and sticky. Add the garlic and ginger, cooking for a further minute.

step 2 Chop the chicken into chunky 3cm pieces, add to the pan and fry for 5 mins before stirring through the spice paste and tomatoes, along with 250ml water. Bring to the boil, lower to a simmer and cook on a gentle heat uncovered for 25-30 mins or until rich and slightly reduced. Stir through the yogurt, coriander and ground almonds, season and serve with warm naan or fluffy basmati rice.

The women behind Bafana: meet the WAGs supporting South Africa's World Cup stars



As the Bafana Bafana team prepares to represent South Africa at the 2026 Fifa World Cup, curiosity around the women standing beside the players continues to grow.

More than just partners to football stars, these women are carving out identities of their own.

From entrepreneurs and creatives to mothers and fashion lovers, Bafana Bafana WAGs are influencing conversations around style, ambition and modern relationships.

Some enjoy sharing glimpses of their lives online, while others remain almost impossible to trace, even after some deep digital digging.

Roshni Williams is married to Bafana Bafana goalkeeper and captain, Ronwen Williams.

The pair are high school sweethearts who have two adorable children together, a boy and a girl.

Williams maintains a private presence on social media, with a private Instagram account. Despite this, she is a deeply supportive partner, a fact often highlighted by the father of her children, who frequently praises her unwavering presence and support in his life.

We also get to see glimpses of the Williams through the Bafana Bafana goalkeeper's page as he often shares their family pictures.

In terms of her professional life, there aren't any reports about her as she maintains a low profile.

Aqueelah Adendorf

Aqueelah Adendorf is romantically linked to Bafana Bafana midfielder Jayden Adams.

The pair share a five-year-old daughter, and even though she shares glimpses of their lives on Instagram.

She often shares lifestyle and family content while keeping her personal life private. When it comes to her professional career, not much is known about her since she rarely shares anything regarding her profession.

Adendorf recently penned a heartwarming message on Instagram, dedicated to her Adams, shortly after the Bafana Bafana 2026 squad was announced, and congratulated him on this milestone.

She wrote: "Watching you achieve something this big has filled my heart with so much pride. From the hard work, sacrifices, early mornings, disappointments, and moments nobody saw - you kept going, stayed disciplined, and trusted God through it all. And now look at you... Representing your country on the national team."

"I don't think you even realize how inspiring you are. You deserve every single moment of this because I've seen how much you've worked for it."

"Through every challenge, you never gave up on your dream, and that alone makes me so proud to stand beside you and support you through it all. No matter how far this journey takes you, just know I'll always be your biggest supporter, loudest cheerleader, and safest place," she wrote.

Nolofatso Mohono

Nolofatso Mohono is publicly dating Bafana Bafana midfielder Relebohile Mofokeng.

While Mohono is popularly known for being Mofokeng's biggest supporter, she has also built a social media presence with nearly 90,000 Instagram followers.

Although she has a large following on social media platforms, she has also maintained a private life and has privatised her accounts.

Mohono was recently seen celebrating with Mofokeng after Orlando Pirates won the 2025/26 Betway Premiership League after playing with Orbit College at Mbombela Stadium in Mpumalanga.

While fans see the other side of the World Cup, which includes the goals, celebrations and stadium moments, what often goes unnoticed is the emotional support many players receive behind closed doors. In the lead-up to the World Cup, partners can become a safe space amid the chaos and the intense pressure from the fans.

These women often provide comfort and encouragement during the players' most demanding and mentally challenging period of their lives.

Their presence behind the scenes is often a reminder that success on the pitch is also shaped by the support players receive off the pitch. -JL

Yudhika Sujanani celebrates South African heritage through food and storytelling in new book



South African celebrity chef Yudhika Sujanani is celebrating heritage, resilience and family traditions through her latest cookbook, "Madame Curry: Feast Pray Love".

The 200 page release is Sujanani's fourth cookbook and explores the flavours, memories and cultural history that shaped South African Indian cuisine.

Known to many as the "Queen of Curry", the Durban born chef uses the book to honour the generations of Indian families who preserved their traditions while adapting to life in South Africa.

Unlike her earlier self-published books, "Madame Curry: Feast Pray Love" is divided into three emotional sections titled Feast, Pray and Love. Each chapter reflects a different connection to food, family and spirituality.

The Feast section focuses on dishes created for celebrations, weddings, family lunches and Diwali gatherings. Pray centres on vegetarian meals and egg free treats linked to fasting and religious traditions. Love explores comforting home recipes inspired by instinct, family memories and everyday cooking.

Speaking about the release, Sujanani described the process of creating the book as emotional and deeply personal.

"This is not small for me. The first fruit has arrived," she shared.

"When Beverley Dodd from Penguin Books South Africa contacted me, my brain literally froze. I just stared because how do you process something that you have dreamt about while stirring pots and surviving?"

he revealed that writing the book challenged her in unexpected ways.

"The planning nearly broke me. The writing stretched me. The rewrites humbled me. The blank screen mocked me," she said.

"I baby-stepped this book into existence. It is the biggest and most exposing thing that I have ever taken on. It feels like I am handing pieces of my soul to strangers and saying, 'Here. This is how I love.'"

Sujanani also opened up about her personal journey and how food became a source of healing and expression. "Food is my language. It always has been. I do not fake it. I do not measure it. It runs through me," she explained.

"I come from a hungry tummy. From period poverty. From being groomed by society to feel shame. I was angry. I was driven. I was not going to stay small."

The cookbook also pays tribute to Indian ancestors who arrived in South Africa through indenture. Through recipes and storytelling, Sujanani highlights how communities preserved their faith, cooking traditions and identity despite hardship.

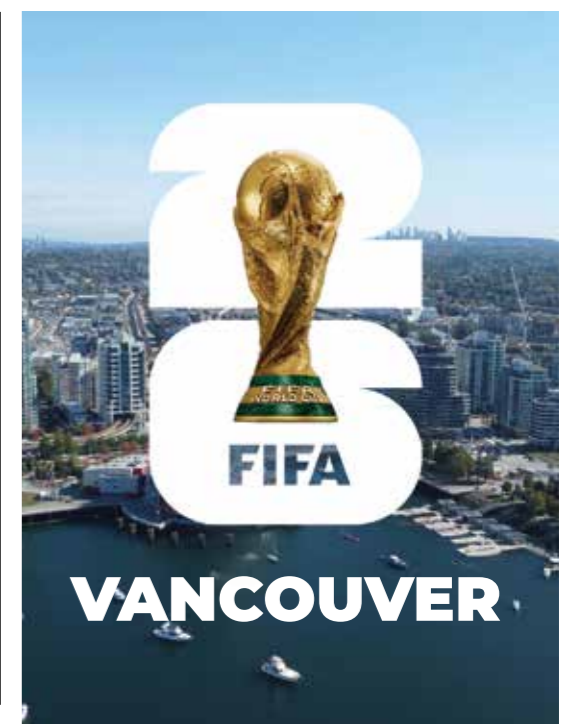
Over the years, Sujanani has built a successful career as a chef, restaurateur, television personality and author. Her previous books include "Curry Me Home", "Curry Me Home Again" and "Memoirs: Yudhika's Treasured Recipes".

With "Madame Curry: Feast Pray Love", she now hopes to inspire women who have built something meaningful despite difficult beginnings.

"This one is for every woman who built something beautiful out of nothing," she said. SA Heritage



SPORT



Mangaung Unite being crowned the Free State ABC Motsepe league for the 2025/2026 season. Picture: Supplied

Fraud Allegations Rock Mangaung Unite

The newly crowned Motsepe League FS champions grappling with legal dilemma ahead of national playoffs

By Gomolemo Winkel

The upcoming ABC Motsepe League national playoffs have been thrown into uncertainty following fraud allegations against Free State champions, Mangaung Unite.

Fellow league competitors Sasolburg United have launched a legal challenge claiming the Bloemfontein-based side registered their club captain using fraudulent documentation.

The dispute centres on the eligibility of Mangaung Unite captain, Alfred 'Katsande' Mosoou, ahead of

Sasolburg United alleges that Mosoou was born in Lesotho and initially registered to play using a passport instead of a South African identity document.

Sasolburg United spokesperson Mabale detailed the club's findings regarding the player's status.

"What transpired is that we got information about the registration of their player captain Alfred Katsande Mosoou. From the information we gathered, he was born in Lesotho and started playing

for Mangaung Unite using his passport."

He added that the situation involves complex legalities regarding citizenship.

"What we understand is that between Lesotho and South Africa there is an issue of dual citizenship, but that is a process that has to be undergone through Home Affairs. From where we are sitting, that was not done."

The protest has escalated after the local football governing body initially threw out the dispute.

Sasolburg United has now forced the matter to arbitration to ensure their grievances are formally tested.

"We laid a complaint with SAFA and they just dismissed it, forcing us to take the matter to arbitration. We are adamant that we need to be heard, or the issue has to be tested," Mabale continued.

In response, Mangaung Unite has strongly denied the accusations, maintaining that the veteran captain is a legitimate citizen.

Club spokesperson, Orapeleng Manopole, dismissed the claims as a baseless distraction.

"The team does not have any response to those

baseless accusations. As you can see, he's been with us all six seasons Mangaung Unite has won the league," said Manopole.

"There is no accuracy in those claims. He's a South African that was born and bred here in South Africa," he added.

The team's management insists that the squad remains fully focused on their training camp in Bloemfontein.

The players are actively competing for spots in the final 23-man squad ahead of their trip to the Eastern Cape.

Manopole continued: "Players are putting in a good effort, and most are raising their hands so that the coach can select the 23-man squad to represent the team. They will go to camp here in Bloemfontein just so they can raise the bar from where it's at."

The national playoffs are set to take place in Mthatha on 7 June 2026.

Free State SAFA and the Lesotho Football Association did not provide comment by the time this publication went for printing.

SAFA Doctor Secures FIFA World Cup Role



By Gomolemo Winkel

The South African Football Association's (SAFA) Chief Medical Officer, Dr Thulani Ngwenya, has secured a prestigious appointment for the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup tournament which will be hosted across the United States of America, Canada, and Mexico.

This global recognition will see the highly respected local expert fly out to serve under FIFA's elite Anti-Doping Unit.

Ngwenya will be stationed in Dallas, United States, from 7 June to 15 July 2026, overseeing critical anti-doping operations.

"It is indeed a huge honour and a privilege to represent South Africa and the continent at large at the FIFA World Cup in the United States of America, Canada and Mexico. You know, I take so much pride knowing that I'm representing the continent in the medical division in the World Cup," he said.

This high-profile role further cements Dr Ngwenya's stellar reputation as a leading light in international

sports medicine. He boasts an incredible track record, having previously served with distinction during the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

The seasoned professional extended his deepest appreciation to SAFA's executive leadership for consistently backing his career growth through global football structures.

He highlighted their unwavering support as vital to unlocking his full potential on the international stage.

"I also want to take this opportunity to thank the South African Football Association leadership under the tutelage of President Dr. Danny Jordaan for always supporting me.

"Things could not have been what they are now without the support from the leadership, and without the eye of the leadership seeing great potential in me," Ngwenya said.

This triumphant appointment stands as a massive victory for South African football administration. It powerfully demonstrates that the country continues to produce world-class sports professionals capable of shining at the highest level.

Bloem Ping-Pong Club Eyes Nationals

By Gomolemo Winkel

The Caleb Motshabi Table Tennis Club has launched an inspiring fundraising raffle to send its talented young players to the upcoming National Championships in Limpopo. This brilliant initiative gives the Bloemfontein community a golden opportunity to rally behind local youth as they prepare to compete on the big stage this July.

Excitement is building across Batho as residents purchase R50 tickets to stand a chance of winning fantastic prizes, including a premium five-litre air fryer. The highly anticipated prize draw will take place on 20 June 2026 at the Caleb Motshabi Centre - celebrating both local sports and community spirit.

"This fundraising project will help the kids to go to Limpopo (in) the first week of July for the National Championships. I am requesting the community to support the initiative by buying the tickets," said Kgabale.

Established in 1998, the historic club has spent decades successfully transforming lives by providing a safe, uplifting environment for boys and girls from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The academy serves as a vital beacon of hope, passionately using sports to unlock potential and keep chil-



dren away from negative street influences.

The club boasts a proud legacy of excellence, regularly producing top-tier athletes who have successfully represented the Free State province at various national tournaments. This current fundraising drive promises to unleash the next generation of local sports stars by ensuring financial barriers do not limit their dreams.

Beyond training champions, the organisation fosters deep community unity by hosting its popular signature tournament every March for the broader Mangaung region.

Residents who are eager to support this wonderful cause and empower the city's future stars can easily contact Shorty Kgabale on 073 712 0048.

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MUNICIPALITY 2026/27 BUDGET VOTE



TIGHTENS AS REVENUE CLIMBS TO 65%



Smart metering key to stabilising finances

overload has been reduced significantly, while also improving network stability in both areas," said the mayor.

She added that ongoing meter audits have already resulted in noticeable increases in electricity revenue.

The municipality has also been invited by National Treasury to apply for an electricity smart meter grant, which is expected to further strengthen revenue protection and assist in eliminating illegal connections.

To support struggling households, the municipality is currently running an indigent registration drive aimed at assisting residents who genuinely cannot afford to pay for services.

De Beer-Mthombeni further disclosed that National Treasury recently assisted the municipality in calculating cost-reflective tariffs. However, she explained that the exercise could only commence after the draft 2026/2027 budget had already been tabled before council.

"The outcomes of the study show that municipal trading services, especially water services, are currently being provided at a loss of more than R106

million per annum," she said.

She added that the municipality plans to introduce gradual tariff increases in future budget cycles following public consultations conducted in line with CPI-linked adjustments recommended by National Treasury.

"These interventions are comprehensively outlined within the municipality's Budget Framework and are intended to strengthen financial sustainability, improve operational performance, and enhance service delivery," she added.

Consistent with previous financial years and aligned to the municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP), the 2026/2027 budget prioritises basic service delivery, infrastructure development, economic development and social support programmes.

The municipality said the budget will continue supporting vulnerable groups through Free Basic Services and community support initiatives targeting the poor, elderly and persons living with disabilities, while also improving access to reliable water, sanitation, electricity and waste management services.

Economic Development Agenda



commitment to creating a professional, safe and welcoming environment for both employees and residents," she added.

On the economic development front, De Beer-Mthombeni revisited last year's announcement regarding the planned development of a 50-unit luxury hotel within the municipality.

"I am pleased to announce that the Vaal De Grace Golf Estate has officially been handed over to the developer, together with the approved building plans. This important milestone signals that the long-awaited development is now moving closer towards implementation," she said.

The mayor said the development would help position Ngwathe as a growing tourism and investment destination while creating jobs, skills development opportunities and economic growth for local communities.

She said the project forms part of broader municipal efforts aimed at attracting investment, unlocking economic potential and building a more prosperous future for residents.

Major Boosts for Emergency Response and Road Safety



By Matshidiso Selebeleng

Ngwathe Local Municipality says it is stepping up efforts to build safer communities, improve emergency response services and invest in youth development as part of its broader drive to strengthen service delivery and community wellbeing.

Delivering an update on the municipality's public safety and development programmes, Executive Mayor Victoria de Beer-Mthombeni said the municipality's Public Safety Directorate continues to play a critical role in protecting lives and property through the work of its Fire and Rescue Services and Municipal Traffic Unit.

Between 1 July 2025 and 30 April 2026, Fire and Rescue Services responded to 602 emergency incidents across the municipality.

According to the mayor, the recent appointment of a Chief Fire and Rescue Officer and a Station Officer has already strengthened operational efficiency and improved emergency response capabilities.

She added that the procurement of two traffic officer vehicles has enhanced law enforcement visibility, road safety and rapid response across communities within Ngwathe.

"During the reporting period, the Municipal Traffic Unit issued 1 319 traffic cases amounting to R1.197 million across Parys, Heilbron, Vredefort, Koppies and Edenville. These enforcement efforts are aimed at improving compliance, reducing road accidents, promoting responsible driving behaviour and ensuring safer communities throughout Ngwathe," said De Beer-Mthombeni.

With winter conditions setting in, the mayor also warned residents against illegal electricity connections, unsafe heating methods and overloaded plug points, saying they pose serious risks to lives, property and municipal infrastructure.

She urged residents to continue purchasing electricity legally and responsibly to support sustainable service delivery and infrastructure maintenance.

"Together, let us protect lives, safeguard public infrastructure, and ensure a safe winter season for all," she said.

"Our vision remains clear — to build a safer, disciplined and well-governed Ngwathe Local Municipality where the safety and wellbeing of our residents remain a priority. Together, we will continue advancing the municipality through accountability, professionalism and committed service delivery," she added.

Beyond public safety, the municipality has also intensified efforts aimed at investing in young people and improving future economic opportunities.

Earlier this year, through the mayoral outreach programme, the municipality assisted several students with registration fees for the 2026 academic year.

De Beer-Mthombeni said education remains one of the most powerful tools for transformation and economic advancement.

"By investing in the academic development of our youth, we are not merely supporting individual dreams; we are cultivating future leaders, innovators, professionals and entrepreneurs who will contribute towards building a skilled, prosperous and self-reliant Ngwathe for generations to come," she said.

The municipality has also launched a new "War on Potholes" campaign in Parys aimed at improving deteriorating road conditions while equipping young people — particularly women — with road maintenance skills.

The programme is expected to be rolled out to other towns within the municipality in the near future.

The mayor also acknowledged strategic stakeholders including Daamlaagte, iLikwa and Solar Sediba for bringing major infrastructure projects into the municipality.

She said the partnerships have helped create employment opportunities and skills development programmes for local youth.

Q&A WITH NGWATHE EXECUTIVE MAYOR, VICTORIA DE BEER-MTHOMBENI

As the new financial year for local government approaches and municipalities across the country prepare plans and priorities aimed at improving the lives of residents, Journal News caught up with Ngwathe Local Municipality Executive Mayor Victoria De Beer-Mthombeni shortly after she tabled the municipality's budget vote this week.

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us, Executive Mayor. You have just presented the municipality's financial plan for the next fiscal year. How would you describe this budget in one sentence, and what does it represent?

Thank you very much for the interview. As Ngwathe Local Municipality, we have just presented our budget, and we understand that it is an unfunded budget mainly because of our very high Eskom debt. However, despite that challenge, this is still a very strategic budget.

Our focus is on basic service delivery, economic development and infrastructure development. Through Local Economic Development (LED), we want to ensure that small businesses receive support as we work to grow the local economy. So, while people may focus on the fact that it is unfunded, it is important to understand that this does not mean the municipality cannot continue providing services.

What is the difference between this year's budget and the one you presented last year?

Initially, last year we presented what we believed was a funded budget, but the Eskom debt issue continued to affect us. This year, we have accepted the reality of presenting an unfunded budget while taking Eskom into account.

At the same time, we have significantly reduced expenditure and shifted our focus towards increasing revenue. Our revenue projections have increased by about 14.7%, which shows there is potential for growth within the municipality. We are also moving more services in-house and reducing outsourcing costs.

How confident are you that this budget will improve the lives of people living in Ngwathe?

I am very confident. One of the first steps we took was introducing a process to write off about 45% of debt owed by residents so that people can start afresh.

We have also strengthened our indigent programme to assist residents who genuinely cannot afford services, while ensuring the municipality receives the revenue it needs. In addition, we have implemented a strong revenue enhancement strategy focused on improving collections.

We have already moved from a 44% collection rate to 65%. By law, municipalities should be collecting around 90%, so the gap is becoming smaller. The more revenue we collect, the more we can improve service delivery.

That sounds like a real positive progress made indeed. But, what are the biggest service delivery challenges currently facing the municipality?

The most pressing issues are water supply, electricity stability and sewer challenges in Heilbron. However, for every one of these challenges, there is already a project underway to address it.

The condition of our roads has also been a major concern. That is why we recently introduced an in-house asphalt project where municipal workers are being trained to produce asphalt themselves. We are also training them to repair potholes properly using more engineered methods instead of temporary fixes.

Why have these issues persisted for so long, and what steps are you taking to address them?

I am not saying everything is perfect. Challenges still exist, especially with water leakages and water losses. But one of the key steps we took was strengthening our

technical capacity by hiring qualified professionals.

We have now appointed four civil engineers, which is something the municipality previously did not have. That alone has already strengthened our ability to deal with service delivery issues.

You have spoken strongly about addressing non-payment for municipal services and, as you said, "progress has been made." What has the reaction from residents been like?

It is moving slowly, but there is progress. Moving from a 44% collection rate to 65% shows that people are beginning to understand the importance of paying for services.

What has also helped is the consistent implementation of cut-offs. We are now conducting cut-offs every month instead of waiting for several months. Communities have realised that there are consequences for non-payment, and as a result, we now have long queues at municipal offices daily from residents coming to make payments.

During your speech, you referred to "legacy issues" within the municipality. Can you elaborate on that and explain how those challenges are being addressed?

One of the biggest legacy issues is Eskom debt. That is why we are exploring a Distribution Agency Agreement (DAA), where Eskom would take over electricity distribution directly. This would mean residents pay Eskom directly instead of paying through the municipality.

At the same time, we are also looking at a Section 78 process to explore whether there are alternative solutions that could assist the municipality without fully handing electricity distribution over to Eskom.

Another issue was the municipality's failure in the past to pay creditors such as water boards, but we have now started paying them consistently.

We also had serious governance and performance management shortcomings. Previously, the municipality did not even have a proper performance management system in place. We have now introduced one, which will allow the Auditor-General to properly assess municipal performance.

Our goal is to move from a qualified audit opinion to an unqualified audit and eventually to a clean audit. Water infrastructure backlogs were also a major legacy issue, but every town in Ngwathe now has a water-related project underway.

With local government elections approaching, do you believe you have done enough to stand for re-election?

Honestly, I believe we have achieved a lot in a short period of time. The first two years were extremely difficult because we were still trying to stabilise the municipality. There were protests, my mother's house was burned down, and we did not even have senior managers in place at the time.

But from 2024 onwards, stability started coming back. We were able to implement projects, appoint senior managers and attract investors into Ngwathe.

I measure our progress through investor confidence more than anything else, because more investment means more jobs for our communities. There are already major projects coming into Ngwathe, including developments along the N1 near Koppies.

No investor will choose a municipality where they do not see improvement, so the fact that investors are showing interest tells us we are moving in the right direction.



SPORT



**2026/27
Budget Vote**



Tumahole's Sleeping Giant Awakens

By Matshidiso Selebeleng

Once left standing silent and vulnerable to vandalism, the Fezile Dabi Legacy Stadium in Tumahole, Parys, is now emerging as a symbol of hope, opportunity and youth development in the Ngwathe Local Municipality.

Built to help fight the scourge of drugs and substance abuse among young people, the multi-million-rand facility is finally beginning to fulfil its long-awaited purpose by bringing sport, entertainment and economic activity back into the community.

The 15,000-seat stadium, named after late anti-apartheid stalwart Fezile Dabi, was constructed more than a decade ago at an estimated cost of R112 million. However, for years the facility remained underutilised and exposed to vandalism, leaving many residents questioning its future.

In 2024, the stadium was revived through refurbishment efforts and has since started hosting events again, including high-school tournaments and community festivals. The renewed activity has restored optimism among residents and young people, with the municipality determined to maximise the stadium's potential.

During her municipal budget vote on Wednesday, Executive Mayor, Victoria de Beer-Mthombeni, said the facility forms part of its broader vision to improve service delivery, stimulate local economic growth and create sustainable opportunities for communities.

"The municipality has already initiated engagements with the external stakeholders to host various professional sporting activities at the Fezile Dabi Legacy Stadium in Tumahole. We remain committed to driving local economic growth, spatial transformation, and sustainable job creation through strategic development initiatives and partnerships," said Mthombeni.

She added that the municipality has already begun engaging external stakeholders with the aim of attracting professional sporting activities to the stadium.

The municipality is also planning a second phase of upgrades and ongoing maintenance to ensure the venue meets professional standards and can safely host larger crowds and professional teams.

Beyond sport, the municipality believes the refurbishment of the stadium will provide a much-needed boost for local businesses, especially informal traders and small enterprises expected to benefit during matches and large community events.

Earlier this year, De Beer-Mthombeni and her team expressed confidence that investing in sport and recreational infrastructure would help uplift families, stimulate the local economy and encourage young talent to pursue their dreams closer to home instead of relocating to larger cities. Municipal leaders believe the revival of the Fezile Dabi Legacy Stadium will not only strengthen community pride but also position Ngwathe as a growing hub for sport, youth development and local economic activity.

Pictures: Baagedi Setlhora



2026/27 Budget Vote In a Nutshell

Key Infrastructural Projects

- Refurbishment of the Parys Water Treatment Plant
- Replacement of 15km Water AC Pipelines in Parys
- Construction of Waterborne Sanitation in Heilbron – 66 Erven
- Upgrading of the Water Treatment Plant and Construction of an Elevated Tank in Vredfort
- Mokwallo Procurement of a Specialised Waste Management Vehicle
- Construction of 2km Paved Roads and Stormwater Infrastructure in Ward 15

2026/27 key priorities

- 1. Basic Service Delivery** – ensuring that communities have access to reliable water, sanitation, electricity, and waste management services.
- 2. Infrastructure Development** – continuing to utilize national capital grants to invest in the development, upgrading, and maintenance of water, electricity, sanitation, and road infrastructure.
- 3. Economic Development** – supporting local economic development initiatives, stimulating job creation, empowering small businesses, and unlocking private sector investment opportunities within the Municipality.
- 4. Social Development** – strengthening support programmes aimed at vulnerable groups through the provision of Free Basic Services and other community support initiatives for the poor, elderly, and persons living with disabilities.