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A DATE WITH KHAMPEPE

Probe into potential interference
in post-Apartheid justice system
looms

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'Violent' Teacher's Job on the Line

Eastern Cape education department prepares to rule on educator's future following assault charges and bail release

By **Nonkululeko Ngubeni**

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) is set to make a definitive determination regarding the professional status of Jeremy Riekert following his recent release on bail.

Riekert appeared in the KuGompo Magistrate's Court on 25 September 2026 on a charge of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. The court granted the 38-year-old Gonubie High School educator

bail of R1 000 after a video circulated online supposedly showing him in an altercation with a woman near a vehicle.

Although the charges are yet to be fully tested through a proper trial, the Eastern Cape Department of Education spokesperson, Malibongwe Mtima, confirmed that the regulatory council is reviewing the matter to determine the teacher's eligibility to remain in the classroom.

Mtima stated that a final decision regarding Riekert's employment would be handed



down by the council once schools reopen. The educator remains employed by the state for now while the criminal matter proceeds through the judicial system.

The allegations have brought renewed scrutiny to Riekert's professional conduct and his prior criminal record involving an assault conviction. In 2018, he was convicted of assaulting a security guard at the East London district education department offices, receiving a suspended sentence and correctional supervision.

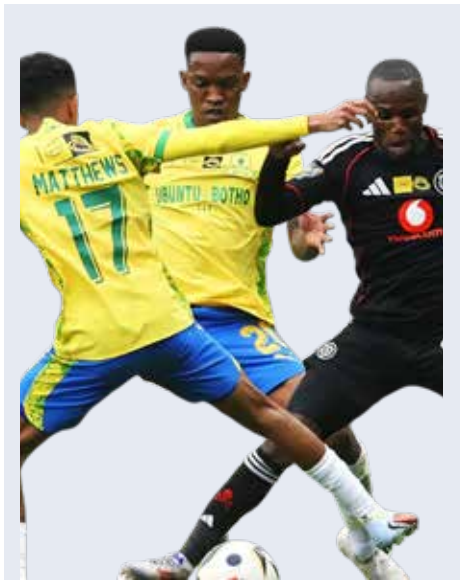
Police confirmed that his firearm has been handed in at the Gonubie police station while investigations continue. Eastern Cape police spokesperson, Brigadier Nobuntu Gantana, noted that further charges could still be added as the inquiry progresses.

"No additional charges have been added at this stage, though further investigation may reveal otherwise," Gantana said.

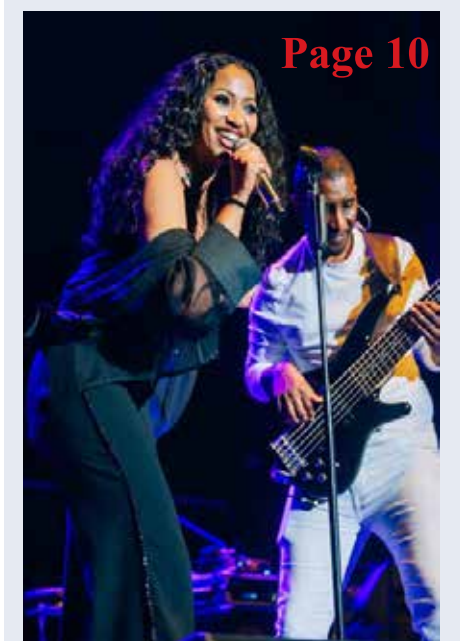
The viral footage has sparked widespread public outcry and intense discussions on social media regarding child safety in schools. Critics have questioned how an educator with a history of violence is permitted to continue interacting with young learners.

"I don't know how this man is working with kids; they should lock him up and throw away the keys," said Elna Haasbroek on social media.

The case highlights mounting pressure on regulatory bodies to enforce stricter professional standards and protect learners from volatile behavior. With the criminal allegations yet to be tested in court, the upcoming ruling by the educators' council remains a critical test of institutional accountability.



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Hill-Lewis Campaigns in Mangaung

DA leader brings the ‘Working for All Tour’ to Bloemfontein ahead of municipal polls

By **Nonkululeko Ngubeni**

Democratic Alliance (DA) national leader, Geordin Hill-Lewis, has taken the party’s Working for All Tour to Mangaung, accusing the local municipality of failing residents through poor service delivery and financial management.

Hill-Lewis addressed supporters in Bloemfontein on Tuesday, 6 October 2026, during the final stop of the national tour, which also visited Tshwane, eThekweni, Ekurhuleni, Nelson Mandela Bay and Johannesburg.

He argued that Mangaung residents should not be expected to accept declining services as normal, pointing directly to staggering water losses, inflated budget spending and missed service-delivery targets.

According to Hill-Lewis, municipal financial statements show that almost half of all purchased water is lost before reaching consumers, amounting to nearly R500-million during the last financial year.

He also referenced damning findings by the Auditor-General, claiming that the municipality spent 113% of its budget while achieving only about half of its service-delivery targets.

“More money spent. But only half the targets were achieved,” Hill-Lewis said.

He insisted that local governments must be judged by whether citizens have access to basic infrastructure, including reliable water and electricity, functioning streetlights, regular refuse collection, maintained roads and safe public spaces.

Hill-Lewis asserted that Mangaung possesses the potential to follow a different path, provided residents participate actively in the upcoming local government elections on 4 November 2026.

The DA leader highlighted Bloemfontein, Botshabelo and Thaba Nchu as regions with immense developmental potential, noting the presence of universities, thriving businesses, entrepreneurs, schools, hospitals, sporting institutions and vibrant communities capable of driving regional growth.

The Working for All Tour forms a core pillar of the DA’s municipal election campaign, with leadership identifying Mangaung as a key strategic target.

Hill-Lewis concluded his address by rallying supporters around the party’s overarching national message.

“South Africa’s decline is not inevitable. Our future can be better than our past. And when our cities work, South Africa works,” he said.

Hill-Lewis was flanked by the party’s Mangaung mayoral candidate Werner Pretorius, DA Free State leader Roy Jankielsohn and the party’s deputy chairperson in the province, Jafta Mokoena.

Ekurhuleni Caregivers Conquer Academic Milestone

Three hundred and sixty-six community caregivers from Ekurhuleni and Sedibeng are graduating today with National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level four credentials in child and youth care work. The Department of Social Development and the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority partnered to host the Benoni ceremony recognising years of service to vulnerable children.

“The graduation marks an important milestone in the professionalisation of the community care workforce and recognises the skills, knowledge and experience that community caregivers have acquired through years of serving vulnerable children and families in disadvantaged communities,” the department noted in a statement.

Recognition of prior learning enabled workers from non-profit organisations to convert practical experience into formal academic certification. Graduates completed rigorous selections and assessments to validate competencies crucial for supporting child- and youth-headed households.

By **JNN Reporter**

A Date With Khampepe

Less than two weeks to go before former Presidents Mbeki and Zuma face Khampepe in probe into potential interference in the prosecution of Apartheid-era crimes referred by the TRC

By **Mpho Sekharume**

Former Presidents Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma are scheduled to appear before the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Truth and Reconciliation Commission cases in just under two weeks.

The looming historic appearances follow a joint failed legal bid by the two former heads of State to remove the commission’s chairperson, retired Constitutional Court Justice, Sisi Khampepe. Mbeki and Zuma had initially launched two separate bids to get Khampepe to step down, but later joined forces claiming that she could not be impartial due to her past positions in government.

On 31 August 2026, the Constitutional Court handed down a ruling that dismissed the review application. Through a narrow 5-4 majority split, the court ruled that Khampepe’s past institutional roles did not create a reasonable apprehension of bias to disqualify her from chairing the inquiry.

Mbeki is now scheduled to present his testimony across two days on 19 and 20 October 2026, while Zuma, who is reportedly in hospital, is set to follow with an appearance on 22 October 2026.

The judicial commission was established by President Cyril Ramaphosa to investigate allegations of executive and political interference in the post-apartheid justice system. Specifically, the inquiry focuses on claims



that state officials deliberately delayed, halted, or suppressed the criminal investigation and prosecution of hundreds of gross human rights violations originally identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Advocacy groups representing anti-apartheid victims have long maintained that political pressure was applied to the National Prosecuting Authority to shield high-profile suspects.

The scope of the inquiry is therefore to examine why judicial inquiries into the disappearances and deaths of activists were

stalled or abandoned during the respective presidential terms of Mbeki and Zuma, both of whom have denied any involvement or knowledge of political interference.

Mbeki and Zuma’s legal objections centered on Khampepe’s extensive history within South Africa’s post-apartheid legal transition, noting she previously served as a Truth and Reconciliation Commission Commissioner on the Amnesty Committee and subsequently held the position of Deputy National Director of Public Prosecutions (NDPP). The former presidents argued that

holding senior roles in both the entity that recommended prosecutions and the state agency tasked with executing them constituted a structural conflict of interest, while Zuma additionally cited past adverse judicial rulings authored by Khampepe as evidence of potential prejudice.

The legal challenge reached its conclusion when the apex court issued its narrow split decision, with the majority ruling determining that institutional expertise and past legal roles do not legally equate to personal bias. Conversely, four dissenting judges noted

that an objective observer could perceive a conflict given her unique historical involvement. The dismissal of the recusal application removed the final legal obstacle preventing the commission from summoning the former heads of state.

The inquiry is mandated to submit its final findings, evaluations, and recommendations to Ramaphosa by 18 December 2026, with Mbeki and Zuma’s public testimonies expected to be the final high-profile proceedings before the commission concludes its investigations.

Inside ACT’s 10-point Plan

Ace Magashule’s political party unveils local government election strategy in Welkom

By **Nonkululeko Ngubeni**

The African Congress for Transformation (ACT) has unveiled a 10-point plan aimed at rebuilding struggling municipalities and improving basic service delivery ahead of the November fourth local government elections.

Party president, Ace Magashule, launched the party’s manifesto in Thabong, Welkom, where he outlined plans to tackle corruption, improve municipal administration and restore essential services.

At the centre of the manifesto is a commitment to what Magashule described as basic civilization standards, including reliable water and electricity supplies, road maintenance and regular refuse removal.

“Public money belongs to the people, and we will treat it that way,” Magashule said.

The former African National Congress (ANC) secretary-generalsaid residents should be able to turn on a tap and expect water to flow, while roads should be maintained to prevent vehicles from being damaged by potholes.

The party also identified safety and security as a basic right and proposed stricter municipal bylaws on alcohol distribution.

These include preventing taverns from operating near schools and prohibiting all-night music. Magashule said the ACT would also target political interference and corruption in municipalities, arguing that political loyalty had contributed to poor local government performance.

The party plans to insource certain municipal services instead of relying on the tender system, with the aim of creating permanent jobs with benefits.

“We will crash corrupt procurement,” he said, adding that municipal appointments should be based on merit, qualifications and competence rather than political connections.

Magashule said the party’s councillors would also be expected to maintain professional standards and remain connected to the communities they represent. The ACT has rejected promises of delivering major changes within the first 100 days in office.



Instead, Magashule declared that his party’s first 100 days would focus on consulting communities, auditing municipal failures and establishing a foundation for long-term change. ACT also does not intend to pre-select mayoral candidates, with Magashule saying mayors should be chosen by councillors and communities after the elections.

The party says it will field 637 councillor candidates and more than 200 proportional representation candidates across 6 provinces, including the Free State, North West, Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, as well as major metropolitan areas.

Magashule also stated that a Matric certificate would not be a compulsory requirement for people seeking to become ACT councillors. Instead, the party would prioritise practical experience, knowledge of local communities and the ability to communicate effectively with residents in their local languages, including sign language.

Youth unemployment was also highlighted during the launch, with ACT members calling for qualified young people to be absorbed into the workforce. Magashule said the party would establish municipal youth employment programmes, apprenticeships and digital hubs.

“Young people, you are not the future. You are the present,” he asserted.

The party also said older workers in their 40s, 50s and 60s should not be excluded from employment opportunities, describing them as important breadwinners. The manifesto launch was attended by representatives of allied political movements, including the newly registered Voice for Change party, which expressed support for ACT’s approach to municipal transformation.

With the local government elections approaching, ACT says its campaign will focus on practical action, improved service delivery, and rebuilding public trust in municipalities.



Infant Found Buried After Ritual

Pretoria - Police have launched a man-hunt for a pastor following the tragic discovery of a four-month-old baby in a shallow grave north of Pretoria.

A four-month-old baby was found dead in a shallow grave near the Hennops River, north of Pretoria, following an alleged rape during a religious ritual. Police stated that a 43-year-old woman had travelled to the area with a pastor and his wife for a cleansing ritual.

The woman allegedly escaped after being raped and restrained, prompting an immediate search for the pastor, his wife, and the infant.

The pastor’s wife later led police to the shallow grave, where the infant’s body was recovered.

She was arrested on suspicion of kidnapping, rape, and murder-related offences, while the pastor remains wanted as investigations continue.

Mother Sentenced for Child Assault

QwaQwa - Phuthaditjhaba magistrate hands down suspended sentence after a young mother physically attacks the young girl by kicking her with booted feet, resulting in a severe eye injury.

A 31-year-old mother from Phuthaditjhaba has been sentenced to six months’ imprisonment, wholly suspended for five years, for assaulting her eight-year-old daughter.

The incident occurred in August 2025 af-

ter the mother allegedly left the child to care for a one-year-old infant while she went out drinking. Upon returning, she assaulted the young girl by kicking her with booted feet, resulting in a severe eye injury.

The mother was convicted of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm and sentenced in the Phuthaditjhaba Magistrate’s Court.

Second Arrest in Dube Murder

Pretoria - Gauteng task team apprehends another suspect connected to the fatal shooting of anti-apartheid activist and EFF member Monica Dube.

A second suspect has been arrested in connection with the murder of 44-year-old EFF member, Monica Dube, who was shot and killed at her Wallmannsthal home in June.

The 39-year-old man was apprehended on Tuesday evening by the Gauteng Political Killings Task Team following an intelligence-driven investigation. He is expected to appear in the Cullinan Magistrate’s Court on Wednesday facing a charge of murder.

This arrest follows the July apprehension of Sipho Mahlangu, who remains in custody following multiple court appearances.

Driver Killed, Passenger Injured in R21 Shooting

Ekurhuleni - Tragedy strikes on the airport highway as motorists are ambushed while assisting a broken-down vehicle.

A driver was shot and killed while travelling on the R21 towards O.R. Tambo International Airport on Monday evening.

Police reported that the victim was travelling in a Fiat when the vehicle broke down, prompting a friend to arrive with two others to assist. Gunshots were fired at the group while they attended to the stranded vehicle.

The driver attempted to flee but lost control, crashing into a Jersey barrier, and was declared dead at the scene. One passenger sustained a gunshot wound and was hospitalised, while another escaped unharmed, and police investigations continue.

Driver Killed, Passenger Injured in R21 Shooting

Hartbeespoort - Law enforcement uncovers illegal drug manufacturing operation and a cache of unlicensed firearms on a Hartbeespoort property.

Four suspects were arrested and four firearms - including a rifle and three handguns - were seized during an intelligence-driven operation at a plot in Scheerpoort, near Hartbeespoort Dam in North West.

Police conducted the operation on Tuesday after receiving actionable intelligence regarding illegal activities at the property. A subsequent search uncovered a functional drug laboratory, processed narcotics, production mixtures, and manufacturing equipment. The suspects - comprising a 39-year-old Zimbabwean national and three women aged between 23 and 29 - face charges of possessing unlicensed firearms and ammunition alongside drug manufacturing and dealing and are due to appear in the Brits Magistrate’s Court.

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Administrators Deployed to Naledi and Mamusa Municipalities

Less than two weeks to go before former Presidents Mbeki and Zuma face Khampepe in probe into potential interference in the prosecution of Apartheid-era crimes referred by the TRC



By JNN Reporter

North West - The North West Provincial Executive Committee has intervened decisively to rescue Naledi and Mamusa local municipalities.

Both councils have struggled under financial recovery plans for over two years without achieving stability. New provincial executive representatives have now been introduced to lead structural and governance reforms.

Shirley Lesupi has taken charge at Naledi while Ellen Moncho oversees operations at Mamusa. These appointed leaders will enforce strict expenditure controls and ensure full legislative compliance.

"The experience of the past two years highlighted that there is need for

stronger coordination and enhanced stakeholder alignment for a more focused implementation approach that prioritises high impact actions within a shorter time frame," Provincial Treasury MEC, Kenetswe Mosenogi, said.

Multidisciplinary teams of experts will support the representatives in driving institutional recovery and service delivery.

Municipal leadership teams must prioritise high-impact actions to accelerate progression from the current rescue phase.

Stronger coordination aims to eliminate persistent financial mismanagement and restore public trust in local governance. Both councils have pledged their full cooperation to ensure these urgent governance reforms succeed.

Manamela Prompts Probe into NC College

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

Northern Cape - Higher Education and Training Minister, Buti Manamela, has called for an urgent, evidence-based account of concerns at Northern Cape Urban TVET College, warning that forensic investigations must not be delayed where they are warranted.

Addressing Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Higher Education and Training during its consideration of the department's 2025/2026 Annual Report, Manamela said the college's situation required urgent attention, including consideration of whether a further independent investigation was necessary.

"I have also heard the concerns about Northern Cape Urban TVET College.

We need an urgent, evidence-based account of the work already undertaken and the further independent investigation required.

"Where forensic investigation is warranted, it must proceed without avoidable delay. Learners, records, and public resources must be protected while these matters are addressed," Manamela added.

The minister's comments formed part of a broader warning that recurring weaknesses across the post-school education and training sector could no longer be allowed to continue without consequences.

The department must move beyond simply acknowledging findings raised by the Auditor-General of South Africa and ensure that



agreed corrective measures are actually implemented.

"Corrective action must begin when weaknesses are identified, not when the next audit approaches. Where management has repeatedly been informed and agreed actions remain unimplemented, we must establish responsibility for that failure," Manamela continued.

Repeated findings, agreed corrective ac-

tions, and inadequate implementation have raised fundamental questions about accountability across the entire portfolio.

Accountability will extend directly to the department's leadership, boards, councils, administrators, and chief executives, as well as decisions taken by the ministry.

"Accountability cannot apply only to people below us," the minister said.

Manamela also singled out the Construc-

tion Education and Training Authority, stating that an institution under administration should demonstrate stronger governance rather than operate under a different standard of accountability.

He further confirmed he would require a clear account of the implementation of forensic recommendations at the authority, particularly regarding disciplinary processes, procurement, and possible conflicts of interest.

While acknowledging improvements in some areas of departmental performance reporting and modest improvements in TVET college audit outcomes, Manamela noted that these gains did not offset persistent control weaknesses elsewhere.

Previous concerns around vacancies, information systems, certification, performance evidence, and consequence management remain firmly on the department's oversight agenda.

Manamela and the Deputy Ministers will determine immediate corrective measures and longer-term reforms while overseeing their comprehensive implementation.

"For the public, the question is straightforward: what will change because these matters have been brought before Parliament?" he asked.

Students waiting for allowances, graduates waiting for certificates, and communities relying on functioning colleges need institutions that fulfill their responsibilities, rather than another explanation.

NGWATHE POWERS UP WITH SMART-METER PROJECT



New initiative targets reliable electricity supply, legal connections and local economic opportunities

Ngwathe Local Municipality is moving forward with the proposed Ngwathe Smart-Meter Project, an initiative aimed at modernising electricity metering, improving network management and addressing persistent challenges associated with unmetered and bridged electricity connections.

The proposed project is designed to support affected households in transitioning towards legal, properly metered electricity connections, while helping the Municipality strengthen the management and reliability of its electricity network.

At the heart of the initiative is meaningful public participation. The Municipal Manager, Dr Futhuli Patric Mothamaha, says residents should have access to accurate and official information about a project that directly affects electricity services in their communities.

"The initial rollout is proposed for Wards 1, 2, 9 and 14, where residents will be engaged through community meetings, door-to-door engagements and other approved municipal communication platforms," he said.

"These engagements will give residents an opportunity to understand the proposed smart-meter installation process, ask questions, raise concerns and receive information on the appropriate channels for assistance".

Importantly, the project is also expected to create local economic opportunities. Residents who meet the applicable recruitment and appointment requirements could participate in installation teams, with opportunities extending to field workers, administrative assistants and other support personnel.

Ngwathe-based SMMEs and local electricians are also expected to benefit from opportunities arising from the implementation of the project, strengthening local participation in the Municipality's infrastructure development programme.

Mothamaha is calling on residents to play an active role in the public participation process and to attend official community meetings when they are convened.

"Residents are further encouraged to rely on official municipal communication platforms and to verify information before accepting or circulating claims about the Smart-Meter Project" said Mothamaha.

Funded by National Treasury, the proposed Ngwathe Smart-Meter Project is intended to achieve more than improved electricity metering. It is also aimed at strengthening community involvement, supporting legal electricity supply and creating opportunities for local residents and businesses.

The Municipality believes that successful implementation will require cooperation between Ngwathe Local Municipality, communities, local businesses and other relevant stakeholders.

Through engagement, accurate information and local participation, the Smart-Meter Project seeks to lay the foundation for a more effectively managed electricity network and improved electricity services across Ngwathe.



Free State Learners Rise to National Water Challenge



By **Marcus Motshegwa**

Free State - The Free State Province has recorded commendable achievements at the 2026 Water and Sanitation Education Programme (WSEP) National Adjudication, held at Anew Hotel in Benoni, Johannesburg, from 27 September to 1 October 2026.

The Water and Sanitation Education Programme seeks to contribute towards narrowing the scarce-skills gap in science and engineering fields within the water sector, while promoting awareness among learners about water-use efficiency, responsible water resources management, environmental sustainability, and the proper care of sanitation facilities.

As part of the programme, high school learners participated in the Aqua Enduro and Public Speaking competitions, while primary school learners competed in the Baswa le

Meetse programme across the Poster, Music and Praise Poetry categories. Free State learners delivered impressive performances in the Public Speaking category, with several learners securing bursaries and laptops.

Oratile Mareka from Trio High School in the Fezile Dabi District was awarded a bursary and a laptop, while Lerato Tshabalala from Lindley High School in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District received a bursary.

Keitumetse Masisi from Kgorathuto Secondary School in the Mangaung Metro was also awarded a bursary and a laptop.

These achievements demonstrate the learners' growing understanding of water resources management, as well as their ability to apply teamwork, innovation and environmental sustainability principles to some of the challenges facing the water sector.

The province is equally proud of Lebohang Motsumi, a learner from Ratau Primary School in the Mangaung Metro, who

secured second position nationally in the Poster category.

The achievement earned an overall prize of R25 000, comprising R10 000 from the provincial competition and R15 000 from the national adjudication.

Learners from Ereskuld Primary School, also in the Mangaung Metro, secured third position nationally in the Music category, earning an overall prize of R20 000.

This comprised R10 000 from the provincial competition and a further R10 000 from the national adjudication.

The sponsorship of Team Free State by Alberto Road Marking and Civils is aimed at helping nurture the next generation of professionals who could play a significant role in the province's water and civil infrastructure development.

Company Director Mr Sinde Ndlapo said their vision is to see participating learners develop into future engineers, scientists and leaders in the water sector.

He expressed hope that the initiative would inspire learners to pursue careers in these fields and eventually contribute directly to the development of the province.

"We hope that one day they will work alongside us in building the province's water and civil infrastructure," Ndlapo said.

The Free State Province congratulates all participating learners, educators and schools for representing the province with distinction.

Their achievements demonstrate the important role that education and youth participation play in developing the next generation of water-sector professionals and environmentally responsible citizens.

The province remains committed to supporting initiatives that empower young people, promote responsible water use and sanitation practices, and encourage learners to pursue careers in the science, engineering and water sectors.

FuturePharma Facility Launched in Pretoria

The facility provides specialised infrastructure and expertise for pharmaceutical process development, scale-up and technology transfer



President Cyril Ramaphosa officially launched the advanced FuturePhARMA facility at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research campus today, marking a major milestone in South Africa's journey toward health sovereignty.

The new facility addresses the critical lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic by strengthening local scientific, technological, and manufacturing capabilities.

Operating as a shared resource, the facility bridges the vital gap between laboratory research and commercial manufacturing for emerging enterprises.

"The experience of the past taught us many lessons, chiefly that developing economy countries need to strengthen local scientific, technological and manufacturing capabilities if they are to safeguard the health of their people," Ramaphosa stated during the launch.

Individual researchers, universities, and emerging companies often find specialised pharmaceutical development platforms too costly to establish on their own.

By providing shared infrastructure and

expert resources, the institution accelerates technology transfer and streamlines regulatory pathways.

"The facility provides specialised infrastructure and expertise for pharmaceutical process development, scale-up and technology transfer," Ramaphosa noted.

Cross-sector partnerships spanning government departments, academic institutions, and industry stakeholders remain essential for driving industrial localisation and economic growth.

Regional partnerships across the African continent will further benefit as South Africa shares its robust research institutions and manufacturing capacity.

"South Africa stands ready to use its strong research institutions, universities, regulatory capabilities and pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity to contribute to regional value chains and partnerships across Africa," Ramaphosa affirmed.

Ultimately, the initiative aims to transform local knowledge into tangible products that create lasting social, industrial, and economic value nationwide. - *The Gauteng Times*

Initiation Schools Compliance Push in Mahikeng

Authorities intensify safety warnings and compliance measures across the North West ahead of the upcoming summer initiation season



By **Nonkululeko Ngubeni**

North West - Mahikeng has been identified as a hotspot for illegal initiation schools, with authorities warning about the kidnapping of children, fronting, and gangsterism ahead of the summer initiation season.

The warning was raised during an awareness campaign held in Mahikeng by the National Department of Traditional Affairs and the North West Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA).

The campaign brought together government departments, initiation practitioners, caregivers, parents, and prospective initiates to promote lawful initiation practices and prevent deaths, injuries, and other abuses.

The upcoming summer initiation season will start on 6 November 2026 for non-schooling initiates and 10 December 2026 for school-going initiates.

All pass-out activities are expected to be completed by 8 January 2027.

North West Provincial Initiation Coordinating Committee (PICC) Deputy Chairperson, Andries Stemmer, said the Customary Initiation Act of 2021 sets out mandatory processes that must be followed by initiation schools, including legal and health requirements.

"The law provides for standardised processes from the application for permits through the PICC until the last phase when initiates return from the schools. This is done to deal with illegal and unregistered schools, and other unlawful activities that are key contributors to deaths, injuries and negligence in many instances," Stemmer said.

Registration remains compulsory under Section 26(2) of the Act and must be completed at least three months before the start of the initiation season through the Provincial Initiation Coordinating Committee structures.

Concerns were also raised about the conduct of initiates after returning to their communities.

Speaking on behalf of the Mahikeng Initiation School Committee, Mamelani Tsha-

balala noted that the committee had identified cases of bullying involving learners who had not undergone initiation.

"We therefore make a call to parents to assist the Department of Education in instilling high-level discipline at home and to become involved in the affairs of their children. We cannot build a future generation of leaders on a baseline of lawlessness and violence," Tshabalala stated.

National House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders Secretary, Abram Sithole, called for stronger dialogue between generations to preserve indigenous knowledge while addressing social problems affecting communities.

He emphasised that issues including gender-based violence, femicide, and substance abuse should be openly discussed as part of ongoing efforts to address problematic behaviour.

The engagement ultimately called on communities and relevant stakeholders to play an active role in ensuring that customary initiation is conducted lawfully and safely.



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‘Men Must Stand Up’: Nthatsi Leads Mangaung’s Call To End GBV

Mayor urges communities to break the silence, expose perpetrators and take collective action against gender-based violence and femicide



Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality Executive Mayor Cllr Gregory Nthatsi has called on men and communities to break their silence and take collective responsibility in confronting gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF), warning that perpetrators are often people known, loved and trusted by their victims.

Delivering the keynote address at the historic Waaihoek Wesleyan Mission Church, Mayor Nthatsi said the gathering provided an important opportunity for the community to draw strength from one another and confront GBV as a societal crisis.

The Mayor’s call comes following President Cyril Ramaphosa’s declaration of gender-based violence and femicide as a national disaster, placing renewed focus on the urgent need for communities and institutions to work together to protect women and children.

“It is important that we come back to the Waaihoek Wesleyan Mission Church to gather strength. GBV is a societal problem and we need men to stand up and fight,” Mayor Nthatsi said.



He stressed that the fight against GBV cannot be left solely to government, law-enforcement agencies or civil society organisations. Communities, families and individuals all have a role to play in challenging abusive behaviour and ensuring perpetrators are held accountable.

“Perpetrators of GBV and femicide are people we know, people we love, and sometimes we hide them,” he said.

In a deeply personal reflection, Mayor Nthatsi shared his experience of growing up in a home where abuse was present. He said it was only later in life that he fully understood that his father had been abusing his mother.

The personal account underscored the hidden nature of domestic violence and the lasting impact abuse can have on families and communities.

The Mayor described GBV as an emotionally difficult and serious issue that must not be minimised or treated as an occasion for celebration.

“GBV is a sensitive topic; it is very heavy. Women are losing their lives at the hands of men they trusted to love and protect them. This is not a celebration,” he said.

He urged everyone attending to become active messengers against GBV and to challenge abusive behaviour whenever it occurs.

“I want all of us to be messengers and to call abusers out,” Mayor Nthatsi said.

His message was particularly directed at men, whom he urged to reject the culture of silence and actively challenge other men who perpetrate or enable violence.

The Mayor’s call reinforces Mangaung’s commitment to strengthening community-based action against GBV and creating spaces where victims can speak out, perpetrators can be challenged and communities can work collectively towards safer homes and neighbourhoods.

MANGAUNG TAKES SERVICE DELIVERY TO THE STREETS

Ward2Ward campaign brings roads, water, waste, electricity, law enforcement and environmental services directly to communities

From repairing potholes and fixing water leaks to cleaning neighbourhoods, restoring streetlights and cracking down on non-compliant businesses, Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality is taking service delivery directly to residents through its Ward2Ward programme. Led by Executive Mayor Cllr Gregory Nthatsi and members of the Mayoral Committee, the programme has been deployed across several wards, bringing municipal teams closer to communities and responding to urgent service-delivery priorities on the ground. The Ward2Ward campaign is built around a simple approach: identify community challenges, deploy the relevant municipal services and get the work done where residents live.

WARDS 4, 5 AND 6 GET TO WORK

In Wards 4, 5 and 6, the Municipality has intensified compliance inspections at tuck shops and other businesses operating across the communities.

Environmental Health Practitioners, supported by Law Enforcement officers, are conducting inspections to ensure businesses comply with applicable health, safety and regulatory requirements.

Expired goods are being confiscated, while action is being taken against businesses that fail to meet the required standards, including closure where necessary.

The inspections are aimed at protecting residents, promoting responsible business practices and ensuring that businesses operating in Mangaung comply with municipal regulations.

ROADS, WATER AND WASTE TOP WARDS 45 AND 46 AGENDA

On 30 September, Ward2Ward teams were deployed to Wards 45 and 46 under the leadership of Mayor Nthatsi and MMC for Planning and Human Settlements Cllr Ntombi Nhlapo.

Municipal teams responded to a range of community priorities, including pothole repairs, water and sewer leaks, blocked stormwater drains, illegal dumping, waste removal, grass cutting and street and high-mast lighting interventions by CENTLEC.

Law-enforcement operations formed part of the deployment, including a roadblock on Dewetsdorp Road, raids on illegal scrap yards in Phases 6 and 9, and compliance inspections at tuck shops.

RESTORING COMMUNITIES IN WARDS 7 AND 13

The campaign also reached Wards 7 and 13 around MUCPP Clinic and Nzame Combined School.

Led by MMC for Local Economic Development and Tourism Cllr Manthuse Letawana,

together with ward councillors and municipal teams, the deployment brought integrated services directly to residents.

CENTLEC teams worked on streetlights, while Environmental Health Practitioners conducted tuck-shop compliance inspections. Technical Services responded to burst pipelines and water seeping onto

streets, while Traffic officials conducted a roadblock on Dewetsdorp Road.

Community Services teams, working through PES and the War on Waste initiative under Dr Thabang Thinda, undertook grass cutting, cleaning,

litter collection and street maintenance.

The programme also focused on improving recreational spaces, including work aimed at refurbishing sports grounds to provide learners with safer spaces to play, develop skills and participate in community activities.

WARD 1, 2 AND 3 GET MUNICIPAL TEAMS ON THE GROUND

Ward2Ward teams have also been deployed to Wards 1, 2 and 3, where MMC Nhlapo, HOD Dr Thabang

Thinda, Ward 1 Councillor Samuel Sefaki, Ward 2 Councillor Tona Mokgothu and Ward 3 Councillor Tshepiso Machachamisa joined municipal teams in addressing local priorities.

Interventions included street cleaning, road maintenance, electrical meter-box replacements and compliance enforcement.

At Tambo Square in Ward 1, residents also received PTO certificates, while various service providers brought additional services closer to residents at Batho Community Hall.

WARD 19: FROM PLANS TO ACTION

On 21 September, the Ward2Ward campaign reached Ward 19 in Willows, where Mayor Nthatsi, Deputy Mayor Cllr Lulama Titi-Odili, Ward 19 Councillor Qondile Peter, ward structures and municipal teams joined forces to address community priorities.

The deployment brought together PES, Community Services, Waste Management, CENTLEC, Fire and Rescue, SAPS and the Traffic Department.

The Central University of Technology also joined the operation, with students painting sections of Small Street around Manheim Ladies Residence.

Teams undertook grass cutting, cleaning of open spaces, litter collection, stormwater inlet cleaning and the identification and addressing of water leaks.

Across these deployments, the Ward-2Ward programme is reinforcing Mangaung’s focus on visible, practical service delivery.

By bringing municipal departments and partners together in communities, the programme is creating a coordinated response to everyday challenges while strengthening engagement between residents and the Municipality.

The message from Mangaung is straightforward: service delivery must move beyond plans and into the streets—where residents can see the work, experience the improvements and hold government accountable for progress.

New Machinery To Rev Up Mangaung Road Repairs

Infrastructure boost strengthens road maintenance while War on Waste teams step up the city’s clean-up drive



Mangaung’s drive to restore roads and keep the city clean has received a major boost with the handover of new road infrastructure repair and maintenance equipment to the Metro.

Free State MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and Human Settlements Saki Mokoena officially handed over the equipment at the Bloemfontein Taxi Rank on 2 October 2026.

The handover was witnessed by Mangaung Executive Mayor Cllr Gregory Nthatsi, MMC for Technical Services Cllr Vusi Soqaka and MMC for Solid Waste Cllr Nthabiseng Jonas.

The new equipment will strengthen the Municipality’s capacity to respond to road maintenance needs, improve infrastructure and tackle deteriorating road conditions across communities.

The intervention comes as Mangaung intensifies its focus on visible service delivery and responds to residents’ concerns around road infrastructure.

Alongside the equipment handover, War on Waste teams were on the ground cleaning streets, collecting refuse and tackling waste in public spaces.

The combined approach is aimed at creating safer, cleaner and more functional communities by addressing both infrastructure maintenance and environmental cleanliness.

The handover marks another step in Mangaung’s ongoing efforts to improve service delivery, maintain its road network and create a cleaner urban environment.

EXECUTIVE MAYOR WARD2WARD SERVICE DELIVERY PROGRAMME IS COMING TO YOUR WARD EXECUTIVE MAYOR WARD2WARD



FREE STATE PROVINCE

EXCO MEETS

DARDEA TURNS SHEEP SHEARING
INTO RURAL OPPORTUNITY

strengthening small-stock production and opening pathways to
greater productivity



Small-stock farmers in Monotsha Village near QwaQwa are being equipped with practical skills to improve sheep production and wool quality as the Free State government takes agricultural support directly to rural communities.

The Free State Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environmental Affairs (DARDEA) conducted a hands-on sheep-shearing and wool-classification demonstration in Monotsha Village, Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipality, as part of the EXCO Meets the People programme.

The initiative forms part of government's ongoing efforts to strengthen small-stock farming, improve productivity and build more sustainable and resilient rural agricultural communities.

DARDEA Head of Department Tshepo Mabilo attended the session alongside District Director Mxolisi Tawana, with traditional leaders Morena Libenyana Mopeli and Mofumahadi Masetjhaba Mopeli also joining the engagement.

Farmers were taken through practical sheep-shearing procedures by Agricultural Advisor Lebohlang Mokoena, who demonstrated best practices designed to protect animal welfare while ensuring quality wool production.

Mokoena emphasised that preparation is critical to successful shearing.

He advised farmers to secure shearers well ahead of the shearing season and ensure that sheep are penned and properly sorted according to categories such as lambs, yearlings, rams and ewes, as well as breed and grade.

Farmers were also advised to fast sheep before

shearing, which helps create a cleaner shearing environment and reduces discomfort for the animals. Mokoena stressed that wet sheep should never be shorn and that shearing should take place on a clean, dry surface.

The practical demonstration gave farmers an opportunity to strengthen their knowledge while preserving agricultural practices and indigenous knowledge that have been passed down through generations.

The engagement also provided farmers with a direct platform to raise challenges affecting their production.

Among the key issues raised were the need for a dedicated shearing shed, a dipping tank, a borehole to supply the dipping facility and essential tools of trade. Responding to the concerns, HOD Mabilo reaffirmed DARDEA's commitment to supporting rural farmers and strengthening agricultural infrastructure.

He instructed the District Office to consolidate all issues raised by farmers and submit them to his office for further assessment.

Mabilo further committed to returning to the community to provide feedback on which matters have been resolved and which may require additional time and resources.

The Monotsha engagement demonstrates the value of taking agricultural support beyond government offices and directly to the farmers who form the backbone of rural economies.

Through practical training, farmer engagement and targeted support, DARDEA is working to strengthen small-stock production, improve livelihoods and build a more resilient agricultural sector in the Free State.



YOUTH TURN FARMING INTO A
JOB-CREATION ENGINE

MS Construction and Projects showcases how mixed farming, innovation and government
support are creating opportunities for hundreds of people in rural communities

More than 200 people gathered at MS Construction and Projects in Poeleng Village, QwaQwa, on Wednesday, 7 October 2026, offering Free State agricultural leaders a glimpse of how youth-led farming enterprises are turning rural land into productive businesses and employment opportunities.

The project was visited by the Head of the Free State Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environmental Affairs (DARDEA), Tshepo Mabilo, and Thabo Mofutsanyana District Director Mxolisi Tawana, accompanied by Morena Libenyana Mopeli and Mofumahali Masetjhaba Mopeli of Monotsha.

Morena Libenyana has further supported the initiative by allocating an additional 150 hectares of land to the project in Monotsha Village, strengthening its potential for expansion.

Led by young entrepreneurs Matsae Tsotetsi, the Chief Executive Officer, and Mologane Morwa Philimon, MS Construction and Projects has developed a diversified agricultural enterprise spanning mixed farming, vegetable production, poultry, herbal capsules, and fruit and vegetable juices.

The company is also AgriSETA-accredited, adding a skills-development component to its agricultural activities.

The scale of the project was evident during the visit, with more than 200 men and women, including young people, actively working at the Poeleng operation. In partnership with the African Conservation Trust, the initiative has contributed to the creation of more than 500 part-time fixed employment opportunities across QwaQwa.

The project also mentors and provides stipends to



28 non-profit organisations listed on the Social Development database, while supporting emerging small businesses.

Government support has played an important role in strengthening the project's infrastructure.

With assistance from DARDEA, the farmers have drilled three boreholes, fenced six hectares and constructed two security houses. Work is currently underway on an underground reservoir and additional poultry houses, further expanding the project's productive capacity.

The enterprise's growing footprint has also attracted recognition and incubation support.

MS Construction and Projects received an MEC Special Recognition Award at YAFF 2025 and secured third place in the Free State IWISA Community Champion competition.

The business is also being incubated through the Maluti TVET College Centre for Entrepreneurship and

the SAB Tholoana Foundation, providing the young entrepreneurs with opportunities to strengthen their business and entrepreneurial capabilities.

The visit by DARDEA leadership highlighted the potential of rural agriculture to become more than subsistence farming, with diversified enterprises creating jobs, developing skills, supporting local businesses and opening new markets.

For QwaQwa's rural economy, MS Construction and Projects represents an emerging model in which young entrepreneurs, productive land, agricultural innovation and government support come together to create sustainable economic opportunities.

As DARDEA continues its engagement with farming communities through initiatives such as EXCO Meets the People, projects like MS Construction and Projects demonstrate the possibilities that can emerge when rural farmers are supported with infrastructure, skills, land and access to development opportunities.

'DO NOT LOSE
PEOPLE
QwaQwa
Gover



President Ramaphosa
Launch Catalytic
R100-billion industrial boom
automotive, g



A R100-billion investment push aimed at transforming the Free State into a major industrial and manufacturing hub will be launched in Phuthaditjhaba on Friday, 9 October 2026, with

President Cyril Ramaphosa officiating the landmark ceremony.

The launch of the Free State Catalytic Investment and Industrialization Project at the Phuthaditjhaba Multipurpose Centre is expected to mark a significant step in the province's drive to attract large-scale investment, expand manufacturing capacity and



THE PEOPLE



DOSE HOPE': Premier Assures Qwa-Qwa Widows Government Is At Work

The message from Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae to hundreds of women gathered at the Bluegumbosch Multi-Purpose Centre was clear: do not lose hope, government is at work.

The Premier was addressing hundreds of women, many of them widows, during a dialogue convened by the Office of the Premier on Wednesday, 7 October 2026. The engagement focused on the challenges faced by households following the death of a breadwinner and, importantly, on practical government support available to women left to raise families and sustain households on their own.

Premier Letsoha-Mathae said the dialogue followed earlier engagements with men on gender-based violence, which highlighted the need to create a similar platform for women, particularly widows.

"Those conversations made it clear that we also had to sit withomme, especially widows," she said.

Government departments used the gathering to provide practical information on accessing support, including funding opportunities, establishing food gardens, registering on the Central Supplier Database and formalising customary marriages.

A key concern raised by the Premier was the plight of widows whose late husbands operated taxis.

She said some women are left without an income because they face difficulties when trying to transfer ownership of taxi businesses after the death of their husbands.

The Premier appealed to taxi operators to assist such women rather than prevent them from taking over businesses that supported their families.

"Help them so they can feed their families," she urged.

The Premier also outlined several interventions undertaken in the area during the week, including the deployment of 21 ambulances to the district, road works, engagements with traditional leaders, the handover of houses and title deeds, and a visit to Bolata Clinic.

She said government was exploring solar power for the clinic and considering extending its services to operate on a 24-hour basis.

"This will ensure that pregnant women are not sent further away and that the hospital queue is shortened," Premier Letsoha-Mathae said.

Economic revitalisation was also highlighted as an important part of government's response to challenges facing communities.

The Premier said efforts were being made to bring factories back into operation and expand industrialisation opportunities in the area.

She urged residents to remain patient while government addresses the challenges confronting communities.

"Do not lose hope. Government is at work. We cannot do everything at once," she said.

The engagement also included a warning to SASSA beneficiaries who repeatedly change their banking details in an attempt to stay ahead of creditors. The Premier cautioned that such practices can delay the processing of applications for other beneficiaries who urgently need social assistance to support their families.

The programme concluded with the distribution of blankets to elderly women, providing practical relief as temperatures in Thabo Mofutsanyana continue to drop.

For the women of Bluegumbosch, the dialogue provided more than an opportunity to raise concerns. It opened a direct channel to government departments, provided information on available opportunities and reinforced the message that support mechanisms are available to help households navigate difficult circumstances.

Amaphosa to Catalytic Project

Project set to transform Free State, unlocking green-energy and logistics opportunities and 6,500 permanent jobs

create sustainable employment opportunities.

The high-level ceremony will be hosted by Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae, Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipality and Chinese investors Joy Long-YJC, bringing together key stakeholders from across government, business and the investment community.

At the centre of the project is an ambitious industrial programme designed to mobilise investment across several strategic sectors, including automotive assembly, electric-mobility technologies, automotive components, energy systems, logistics, skills development and local supplier networks.

With an estimated investment value of approximately R100 billion, the project is positioned as a major catalyst for manufacturing-led economic growth in the province.

The development is expected to support industrialisation, green-economy development and the energy transition, while creating approximately 6,500 permanent jobs.

For Maluti-a-Phofung and the broader eastern Free State, the project also presents opportunities for local businesses and entrepreneurs to participate in emerging supply chains and benefit from increased economic activity.

The launch will bring together representatives from national, provincial and local government, investors, development-finance institutions, infrastructure providers, businesses and training institutions.

Delegations representing all 35 wards of Maluti-a-Phofung are also expected to attend, underlining the significance of the project for communities across the municipality.

The Free State Catalytic Investment and Industrialization Project comes at a time when the province is seeking to strengthen its industrial base, attract new investment and create pathways into the economy for young people and local businesses.

With automotive manufacturing, electric mobility, energy and logistics at its core, the initiative is expected to establish new opportunities for skills development, enterprise participation and employment.

The presence of the President, provincial leadership, municipal authorities and international investors is expected to place Maluti-a-Phofung firmly at the centre of the province's industrialisation ambitions.

For the Free State, Friday's launch is therefore more than a ceremonial event—it is a major investment milestone aimed at turning industrial potential into factories, supply chains, skills and jobs for communities.

QWAQWA GETS A MAJOR SERVICE DELIVERY BOOST

Ambulances, new homes, upgraded roads and improved care facilities delivered as Free State government takes services directly to communities



QwaQwa received a major service-delivery boost on Wednesday, 7 October 2026, as the Free State government brought ambulances, new homes, road upgrades and improved public facilities directly to communities through the EXCO Meets the People programme.

The day of action saw Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae and members of the Provincial Executive Council engaging communities and overseeing a range of interventions aimed at improving healthcare, housing, roads and the living conditions of vulnerable residents.

21 AMBULANCES TO STRENGTHEN HEALTHCARE



Premier Letsoha-Mathae and Free State MEC for Health Monyatso Mahlatsi handed over ambulances to Bolata Clinic in QwaQwa, forming part of a total of 21 ambulances allocated to healthcare facilities across the Thabo Mofutsanyana District.

Six of the ambulances have been allocated to facilities in QwaQwa.

The handover at Bolata Clinic, situated in the heart of QwaQwa, was met with excitement from healthcare workers and patients, who welcomed the additional emergency vehicles as a critical boost to local healthcare services.

Premier Letsoha-Mathae said the new ambulances would help residents reach healthcare facilities more quickly, potentially saving lives during medical emergencies.

"We have heard the concerns of residents of QwaQwa about the shortage of ambulances. I am extremely happy that the Department of Health has managed to assist and our people will now receive the services they so desperately deserve," she said.

The intervention is expected to strengthen emergency medical services and improve access to healthcare for communities across the district.

GOVERNMENT TAKES A STAND AGAINST GBV

During her programme in QwaQwa, Premier Letsoha-Mathae also used her engagement with traditional leadership to condemn the continued killing and abuse of women and children.

Speaking to Morena e Moholo Montoeli Mota, the Premier raised concerns about individuals who allegedly exploit culture and religion to abuse vulnerable members of society.

She called for greater scrutiny of individuals establishing churches and religious organisations in communities, particularly where vulnerable people may be exploited financially or subjected to abuse.

The Premier also reflected on the recent deaths of women in Gauteng, saying the incidents had reopened painful memories of previous cases of gender-based violence that shocked the country.

She referenced the deaths of Karabo Mokoena, Uyinene Mrwetyana, Tsegofatso Pule and Nosicelo Mtebeni, saying the latest killings underscored the urgency of confronting violence against women.

Her message was clear: communities, traditional leaders, religious organisations and government must work together to protect women and children and challenge practices that enable abuse.

THEKOLOHELONG CARE CENTRE GETS A CLEAN-UP



Government's service-delivery drive also reached Thekolohelong Care Centre, where the Free State Department of Public Works and Infrastructure carried out a comprehensive cleaning and maintenance campaign.

Led by MEC for Public Works and Infrastructure Dibolelo Mance and Head of Department Molato Tshabalala, the intervention forms part of the EXCO Meets the People programme.

Thekolohelong is a residential facility for older persons under the Department of Social Development. Recognising the need for elderly residents to live in a clean, safe and dignified environment, the department deployed Expanded Public Works Programme teams to conduct extensive cleaning across the facility.

The department's Maintenance Unit also deployed in-house artisans to undertake minor repairs and address immediate maintenance needs.

The intervention has left the centre cleaner, safer and more habitable for its elderly residents.

SEVEN FAMILIES RECEIVE NEW HOMES



For seven families in Bluegumbush, the day marked the beginning of a new chapter when MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and Human Settlements Saki Mokoena handed over newly completed Breaking New Ground (BNG) houses.

The seven homes were handed over to rightful beneficiaries following complaints lodged with the Public Protector.

The beneficiaries are linked to the Bluegum-Bosch 2000 TTC and Group Two Rectification 2013/15 (Phase 2) Project.

The completion and handover of the houses represent progress in addressing long-standing delays and resolving outstanding matters raised through the Public Protector process.

The new homes provide the families with safe, secure and dignified accommodation while demonstrating government's commitment to addressing service-delivery complaints.

The handover formed part of the EXCO Meets the People programme, which brings the Provincial Executive Council closer to communities to hear concerns directly and accelerate solutions.

ROADS OPENED TO IMPROVE QWAQWA CONNECTIVITY



Transport infrastructure also took centre stage, with MEC for Community Safety, Roads and Transport Jabu Mbalula officially opening the newly rehabilitated A225 Setsing-Namahadi Road.

The event was attended by Maluti-a-Phofung Executive Mayor Cllr Tumelo Thebe, representatives of SANTACO and SAPS, among other stakeholders.

The Setsing-Namahadi route is an important link for residents, learners and public transport operators, including taxis and Maluti Bus Services.

The rehabilitation is expected to improve road safety, reduce travel time and transport costs, and provide safer access to schools, clinics and economic opportunities. MEC Mbalula also officially opened two additional upgraded routes: A223 Elizabeth Ross Hospital to Bolata and A224 Thiboloha to Maluti Bus Depot.

Together, the three roads serve as critical lifelines for communities across QwaQwa.

The interventions form part of the Free State government's broader commitment to bringing services closer to communities, addressing long-standing infrastructure challenges and restoring dignity through practical service delivery.

For QwaQwa residents, the message from the provincial government was reinforced on the ground: government is not only listening to communities—it is taking action where people live, work and access essential services.

OPINIONS

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

EDITOR'S JOURNAL



Mpho Sekharume
Editor-in-Chief

Never Prepared,
But Always
Reactive
Government is forced
into a reactive posture as
court rulings and street
tensions collide

South Africa's lethargic immigration management systems have been shaken into motion in recent months by an unlikely collision of judicial directives and public anger. Government now finds itself scrambling to contain a mounting administrative and social crisis following a Constitutional Court judgment that dismantled procedural barriers at refugee reception offices.

Rather than proactively anticipating the fallout of legal challenges, the executive branch has waited for streets to boil over before offering token assurances. When the apex court ruled that administrative restrictions could not automatically deny individuals access to the asylum system, it laid bare a system already stretched to breaking point.

Inter-Ministerial Committee on Migration chairperson, Mmamoloko Kubayi, recently warned that false claimants would face the full might of the law, attempting to project a firm hand on a porous process.

Yet this belated administrative posturing rings hollow to communities bearing the brunt of unmanaged migration numbers while government machinery remains paralysed.

It required the sudden resurgence of high-profile anti-illegal immigration marches and public demonstrations outside reception facilities to finally drag executive leadership to the podium.

This reactive scramble exposes a deeper institutional indifference that characterises immigration policy until public unrest threatens political stability.

If civil society organisations had not challenged exclusionary State practices in court, and if angry citizens had not taken to the streets in protest, the administration would likely have remained entirely nonchalant.

The State's reactive five-point migration plan is frequently touted as a comprehensive framework, yet it is consistently only activated in moments of acute crisis.

Decades of bureaucratic inertia have left South Africa stumbling from 1 migration crisis to the next without a modern, predictive policy framework.

Consecutive administrations have consistently treated immigration as an administrative afterthought rather than a core strategic pillar of state security and economic planning.

Branding a five-point plan as a novel breakthrough after 32 years of democratic governance amounts to a belated confession of institutional neglect.

Blaming misinformation and social panic for escalating tensions allows leadership to deflect from its own failure to communicate transparently with an anxious public.

Government cannot govern by crisis management, lurching from one judicial reprimand to the next street demonstration without a coherent, proactive immigration blueprint. Restoring public order requires more than stern ministerial warnings and threats of Special Investigating Unit probes into historical asylum corruption.

It demands robust administrative capacity, transparent handling of court-mandated reforms, and continuous engagement with local communities long before tensions boil over into xenophobic rhetoric.

Until the state abandons its reactive posture and treats migration management as a permanent governance priority, South Africa will remain perpetually vulnerable to the next avoidable flashpoint.

Dr Jean-Paul Pophaim - Lecturer and Homelessness & Policy researcher, Department of Criminology, University of the Free State

Understanding homelessness - From visibility to the bigger picture

Homelessness is an enduring and multifaceted phenomenon that demands a multisectoral and transdisciplinary response that intentionally disrupts siloed functioning and prescriptive mandates. It is not a new phenomenon; it is one that has stood the test of time and taken various forms across societies and timelines. In South Africa, homelessness is one of the foremost manifestations of a failed democracy, one that deliberately excludes and denies people their constitutional rights.

Characterised by frequently overlooked gross human rights violations, homelessness – and, more importantly, people experiencing homelessness – has long been subjected to social and institutional neglect.

In the absence of a universal definition of homelessness, the question: “What is homelessness?”, remains as elusive as effective solutions to this complex issue. Homelessness transcends static definitions, as the experience is shrouded in heterogeneity, diverse pathways and non-linear life trajectories. The United Nations (UN) defines

homelessness as a manifestation of extreme poverty and a failure of multiple systems, characterised by a lack of stable, safe, permanent and appropriate housing. Yes, it is that, but so much more! Adequate conceptualisation requires a range of definitions that comprehensively outline the contexts in which homelessness exists, ensuring that it is not reduced to housing insecurity or personal mismanagement.

An attractive quality of the UN definition is its emphasis on the failure of multiple systems, highlighting several pathways into homelessness.

Making homelessness more visible requires awareness. Society must acknowledge its importance, understand the associated risks and impact it has on individuals and the broader community. Educated awareness encourages informed attitudes rather than socially constructed misconceptions. Once we reach this level of societal awareness, responsible action and positive change can hopefully follow.

From policy to partnership: What can we

build together?

In the absence of a national policy framework on homelessness, only one province, three cities and one municipality have attempted to develop and implement policies which are widely regarded as uncritical and largely ineffective. Subsequently, homelessness in South Africa continues to exist in what is best described as a policy vacuum.

Mangaung is, unfortunately, not one of the areas that have attempted to introduce such a policy. As a result, there is very little being done in response to homelessness from government, while organisations at grassroots typically have to pick up the slack with no designated plan of action – instead, a flurry of crisis management.

Following concerns raised by a stalwart in the Mangaung homelessness sector, Bishop De la Harpe le Roux from the Towers of Hope, the Directorate for Community Engagement (DCE) at the University of the Free State (UFS) has taken the lead in the establishment of a multi-stakeholder task team. This task team seeks to strengthen responses to

homelessness in the region – while embracing the values of the UFS in its views regarding its response to social problems, which is not simply a charitable “add on”, but part of the institution's core academic function and ethical obligation.

The DCE advances this commitment by playing a strategic advocacy and leadership role in mobilising academic, community and stakeholder partnerships to address community-based societal challenges through engaged scholarship, knowledge co-creation, capacity development and collaborative action aimed at achieving sustainable societal impact.

Since its inception, the task team has grown considerably, bringing together a formidable wealth of knowledge, experience, and specialised expertise with representatives from the DCE, Kidz Care Trust, Towers of Hope, Iphahamiseng Trust and Zawadi Shelter, alongside staff members from various faculties at the UFS, including the Humanities, Health Sciences, Education, Law and Theology.

From dialogue to action: A phased path toward meaningful, sustainable change!

Our mission and vision as a task team is quite simple: We plan to move beyond dialogue and leap into action.

The goal is to move from fragmented crisis responses towards a coordinated, inclusive and evidence-based response to homelessness in Mangaung. Accordingly, we plan to follow a phased and strategically thoughtful approach, ensuring that we generate contextually relevant data, establish functional intersectoral relationships and create sustainable service sector pathways to ensure that the policy (upon implementation) is met by a fully functional network at grassroots level.

The initial phases of the project include an estimation survey, engaging with local government departments, a region wide census, community awareness and advocacy events, participatory consultations with partners, communities and people experiencing homelessness, toward the drafting and eventual implementation of the proposed policy!

Turning South Africa's infrastructure crisis into a national classroom



The Tshwane water scandal and the tragic George building collapse are not merely failures of maintenance; they are glaring symptoms of a critical skills shortage. Yet, staring us in the face is a R1 trillion public infrastructure commitment over three years.

The national conversation can no longer afford to dwell solely on the diagnosis of our decay. The urgent question is execution: How does South Africa connect its latent civil engineering and built-environment talent to the infrastructure capacity required to turn more than R1 trillion of public investment into productive, sustainable economic growth?

The answer requires treating infrastructure projects as “economic classrooms”. A decade ago, the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBC) lit the spark by identifying a catastrophic shortage of up to 50 000 registered Building Inspectors.

In 2015, the NHBC and the SACPCMP began developing the professional registration architecture. The response was slow, recording zero Professional and Certified Building Inspectors from 2016 to 2022.

But by 2024, the figures rose to 39 professional and four certified building inspectors. That movement is the spark becoming visible. Today, that spark is being carried across the entire government ecosystem. The May 2024 George building collapse provided a powerful national reminder of the value of technical competence.

Human Settlements Minister Thembi Simelane translated the lessons into action: enhanced technical oversight, intensified inspections, an internal review of high-risk projects, and strengthened escalation protocols, enforcing strict regulatory compli-

ance.

Public Works Minister Dean Macpherson has taken the baton further, anchoring the SA Construction Action Plan in digital infrastructure tracking. His approach mandates integrated Asset Information Management, real-time project visibility, and professional registration for built-environment professionals.

By July 2026, the National Built Environment and Construction Safety Framework unified these efforts into a single national confidence agenda: inspection, professionalisation, and digital intelligence.

This regulatory tightening perfectly aligns with President Cyril Ramaphosa's 2026 “Skills Revolution”.

Through a dual-training model integrating education with practical workplace experience, and his R1 trillion infrastructure pledge, the government is explicitly linking infrastructure to jobs and productivity.

Minister Buti Manamela is operationalising this through an integrated pathway from education to employment, championing the “Access for Success” principle.

For a constrained PSET system, this expands access through multiple, professionally aligned pathways connecting universities, TVET Colleges, and workplace experience.

Here is the crux of the opportunity: a public building project must become a workplace learning environment. An infrastructure inspection must develop professional competence. The resulting technical information strengthens the asset record, improving maintenance planning, budgeting, and ultimately the productivity of infrastructure investment.

One investment yields two national as-

sets: upgraded infrastructure and a newly minted professional.

This is already happening. The 250-candidate KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) SIS programme is proving that multi-stakeholder architectures can connect latent youth talent to municipal needs. Supported by the University of Johannesburg and catalysed by Thamsanqa Career Pathways (TCP), which designs labour market demand-driven solutions connecting latent talent, public institutions, and young people into an integrated journey, KZN is a proving ground for a model capable of national scale.

The World Bank and African Development Bank are clear: Public investment efficiency depends on governance, institutional capacity, and digitalisation. We cannot crowd in private investment without a digitised system knowing exactly what our infrastructure requires.

We have the policy architecture. We have the R1 trillion investment platform. The emerging formula is clear: Shortage → Access → Learning → Workplace Experience → Professional Competence → Registration → Infrastructure Intelligence → Better Investment → Economic Growth.

It is time to stop mourning our rotten pipes and ignite a connected national capability ecosystem. From potential to professional success, and from infrastructure investment to economic stimulus—the transition is underway.

**Xolani Hadebe is the founder and conceptual architect of Thamsanqa Career Pathways (TCP), a technology-enabled socioeconomic platform and post-matric bridging programme in South Africa.*

***The views expressed here do not reflect those of the Journal News Network.*

Modernisation or Development: The choice of a regime

What if, for the first time, Africa came to an international meeting with a clear vision of its own destiny — and no longer with a simple list of demands?

On 14 October 2026, in Bangkok, African and Asian decision-makers will discuss economic transformation. Behind the agenda — growth, industrialisation, climate — lies a question too rarely asked aloud: What model does Africa really want to build, and who among us will be held accountable for it?

This is not theoretical. It is a choice of sovereignty.

For decades, Africa has chosen modernisation. It has imported models, systems, institutions designed elsewhere. The results are mixed; the underlying trends are troubling. In several countries, debt service absorbs up to 72% of public revenue. On average, African states devote 17% of their revenues to it — often more than to health or education.

These figures have external causes: costly capital, ratings, conditionalities, private creditors. But a high debt does not by itself say why the money was borrowed, what it was used for, or who decided. Part of the architecture is external. Part is internal: weak tax systems, captured contracts, budgets that protect the apparatus before the public. African leaders were not passengers. They signed. They allocated.

The distinction that matters is simple. A loan treated as capital finances an asset that reproduces itself — energy, port, training, industrial tooling — and comes with rules. A loan treated as income pays salaries, subsidies, networks. Nothing remains when the bill arrives.

Modernisation imports. Development invents. Modernisation copies. Development builds from within.

As long as the two are confused, dependence is reproduced in the name of progress.

Factories, budget arithmetic, ports, selection by competence are not a “Western culture.” They are techniques. They work when they impose feedback. They fail when a network captures them without ever paying the price. The sin is not having borrowed a tool. It is having left it to cousinage.

One example suffices. In several countries, infrastructure contracts have been signed without real competitive bidding, at above-market prices, with companies linked to circles of power. The loan was contracted. The asset never produced the expected revenue. The debt, however, remains. This is not a problem of model. It is a problem of regime.

It is precisely that regime that Ali Mazrui, nearly forty years ago, had already described in other terms. Africa, he wrote, is the product of a triple heritage: indigenous, Islamic, Western. The question is not to oppose them. It is to know whether Africa can synthesise them to invent its own path.

Too often, we have imported instead of composing. Adopted forms instead of building substance. Modernisation without roots produces fragile institutions and societies that do not recognise themselves in their own rules.

Resources exist. Ubuntu carries an idea

of power as responsibility and prosperity as common good. But these resources are not enough. Without meritocracy, the collective becomes a closed circle. Meritocracy — the effective possibility for competence to reach responsibility outside networks — is not the enemy of Ubuntu. It is its condition of credibility. This is the meaning of the Abdou Samb Foundation's commitment. Talent without opportunity remains a promise in suffering.

Asia is not proof that a different metaphysics is needed. China, Singapore, Malaysia, India did not reject calculation, competition, competence. They used tools — sometimes the same ones — with state discipline and a demand for results. What separates one trajectory from another is not the model displayed. It is the capacity to make money work, to punish failure, to not turn the loan into a lifestyle.

That is why African youth, as the seventh region of the African Union, is not an ornament. A seat without rules is a chair at the same table.

For it to be a lever, this region must have a right of initiative, real representation in decisions, its own budget, access rules based on merit, and public evaluation of its actions. To make youth a region is to decide whether this voice will extend a system of imported forms and protected networks — or whether it will force an architecture in which competence is rewarded, failure sanctioned, and rules apply even to those who wrote them.

Modernisation taught us to adopt forms. Development requires that we produce our own rules.

It is a choice of regime: responsibility or impunity. Tools in the service of a project, or tools captured by a network.

So, is it still possible to move toward rooted and sovereign development?

Yes. But this shift will not be decreed from above. It presupposes a generation capable of synthesising our heritages, refusing clientelism, and building institutions where failure has a price.

That generation is African youth. Not because it holds all the answers, but because it carries a demand for merit that current systems struggle to satisfy.

Not giving it a real place is not remaining neutral. It is excluding it once again — and letting the gap widen between ageing institutions and a society that has already shifted.

Making youth the seventh region is not a favour. It is a strategic choice.

Either this region becomes the lever of a real passage: inventing our rules and making them respected. Or it will be just one more institution in a system that prefers dependence to sovereignty, and impunity to responsibility.

The choice is ours. And the future will hold us accountable.

**Ambassador Abdou Samb is a Senegalese engineer, mathematician, European Commission expert on digital transformation and honorary Ambassador of the Pan African Parliament for diaspora affairs. He is also the President of A2S International and the Abdou Samb Foundation.*

***The views expressed here do not reflect those of the Journal News Network.*



Business

Markets and Indicators			
Rand/Dollar	16.52	0.41%	▲
Rand/Pound	21.87	0.51%	▲
Rand/Euro	18.54	0.54%	▲
Platinum	1,675.40	1.69%	▲
Brent Crude	102.90	0.75%	▲
Gold	4,178.46	1.08%	▲
Ethereum	2,492.92	0.67%	▲
Bitcoin	82,400	0.98%	▲

SA-Egypt Business Council Launched



Pretoria deepens trade ties with Cairo through a historic new bilateral council. South Africa has officially elevated its economic relations with Egypt by launching the Joint South Africa - Egypt Business Council during the Alamein Africa Business Forum which ran from 2 to 4 October 2026 in Alamein, Egypt.

Egypt stands as a strategic partner and South Africa's largest export market in North Africa, boasting a dynamic economy with a population exceeding one hundred million people.

Direct bilateral trade between the two

nations increased by 26% from R3.4-billion in 2024 to R4.3-billion in 2025, driven by expanding market access under the African Continental Free Trade Area.

"The outcome of this relationship results in deepening bilateral trade and investment by creating practical commercial partnerships between South African and Egyptian companies," trade officials noted.

Key initiatives of the newly established council include dedicated partnerships focused on mining, minerals, automotive manufacturing, and new-energy mobility systems.

Additional frameworks will support renewable energy platforms, agricultural corridors, engineering infrastructure, and an ambitious joint-venture investment fund targeting pan-African corporate growth.

The automotive sector emerged as a primary beneficiary, with discussions paving the way for integrated production corridors linking Cape Town directly to Cairo.

Ministers and industry leaders emphasised that leveraging regional value chains will significantly boost intra-African trade, industrialisation, and sustainable employment creation.

Hemp Industry Growth Accelerated

With the planting season already underway, manufacturers and industrial processors are actively committing to vital agreements and partnerships



By JNN Reporter

South Africa advances its competitive hemp and cannabis sector by convening the second Quarter Steering Committee to accelerate commercialisation and expand market participation.

Partners from government, labour, and the private sector gather to strengthen implementation of the Hemp and Cannabis Master Plan across the entire value chain.

Discussions focus heavily on achieving a robust 10% annual growth target by expanding local demand, domestic manufacturing, and lucrative export opportunities.

"From planting to processing, manufacturing and export, building a competitive, inclusive and sustainable South African hemp and cannabis industry," organisers noted.

The ongoing review of the master plan provides a critical opportunity to unlock the broader industrialisation potential of this emerging economic sector.

Participants explore diverse opportunities spanning traditional cultivation, industrial hemp applications, medicinal cannabis developments, cannabidiol wellness products, and innovative materials for the built environment.

With the planting season already underway, major manufacturers and industrial processors are actively committing to vital off-take agreements and collaborative market partnerships.

The strategic focus is shifting decisively from mere potential to actual production, operational markets, and sustainable inclusive growth across local communities.

These formal commitments help create reliable pathways for indigenous growers to participate meaningfully in both domestic and international commercial markets.

Strengthening regulatory frameworks and supply chain efficiencies remains a top priority for all stakeholders involved in the steering committee consultations today.

The collaborative approach ensures that economic benefits are shared equitably among emerging farmers, established enterprises, and local labor organisations across the nation.

Continued investment in specialised processing facilities and agricultural training will further solidify South Africa's competitive edge in the global cannabis and hemp marketplace.

NOTICE

NOTICE OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS: WATER USE LICENSE AND BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION FOR THE PROPOSED UPGRADE OF SPRINGFONTEIN PUMP STATION INCLUDING 1 KM SEWER PIPELINE IN KOPANONG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, FREE STATE

1. Notice is hereby given, in terms section 24(G) regulation (Government Regulation 696 of 2027) in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) as amended to the department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Free State for the commencement of activity listed under EIA Regulations of 2017 and NWA (Act No 36 of 1998) Section 21
2. The activity location is farm Springfontein 680 portion 0 in Springfontein, Free State.
3. The development triggers the following listed activities in terms of EIA regulations, 2017 as amended. GNR 327 Activity 19 and GNR 324 Activity 12:
4. The date of placement of this notice is 30 Sep 2026
5. Queries regarding this matter must be referred to: The Environmental Consultant, Retso Con (Pty) Ltd, Unit 5, Gold Reef Estate, Langenhoven Park, Bloemfontein, 9301 or Email: liketso@retsocon.com.
6. Parties wishing to formally register as an I&AP are requested to forward their comments (and contact details) to Retso Con (Pty) Ltd within 30 days of placement of this advertisement, which is on or before 30 Oct 2026

Smart Tourism Takes Root In Fezile Dabi

New digital visitor centre in Parys positions Fezile Dabi as a destination of choice while connecting tourists with local businesses and experiences

By JNN Reporter

Free State - The Free State is positioning itself as more than a province to travel through, with the launch of the Smart Visitor Information Centre (Smart VIC) in Parys signalling a new era of technology-driven tourism and stronger local economic opportunities.

Launched at the Parys Tourism Information Centre, the Smart VIC provides visitors with convenient, up-to-date information on attractions, accommodation, restaurants, events and activities across the destination.

The initiative brings tourism and technology together to make it easier for visitors to discover what the Free State—and particularly the Fezile Dabi District—has to offer.

According to the Fezile Dabi District Municipality Communication Unit, the Smart VIC is designed not only to assist tourists, but also to strengthen the local tourism economy by connecting visitors directly with tourism businesses and micro, small

and medium enterprises.

These include tour operators, tourist guides, artists, crafters and farmers, creating opportunities for local enterprises to benefit from increased visitor activity.

"For Fezile Dabi, the platform provides an opportunity to showcase the district's rich mix of natural landscapes, cultural experiences, heritage sites, agricultural attractions and recreational activities," said the municipality.

By improving the visibility of attractions and promoting lesser-known destinations, the Smart VIC has the potential to encourage visitors to stay longer and explore more of the region.

Longer stays can translate into increased tourism spending in local communities, supporting businesses, creating opportunities and strengthening the district's tourism value chain.

The technology can also generate valuable visitor insights that can assist authorities and tourism stakeholders with destination planning, product development and targeted marketing.

More than a digital information point, the Smart VIC represents a commitment to innovation, digital transformation and inclusive tourism development.

Its ultimate success will be measured by its ability to turn information into experiences, experiences into longer stays, and tourism activity into sustainable opportunities for local businesses and communities.



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More than a digital information point, the Smart VIC represents a commitment to innovation, digital transformation and inclusive tourism development.

Its ultimate success will be measured by its ability to turn information into experiences, experiences into longer stays, and tourism activity into sustainable opportunities for local businesses and communities.



BJJ NOTICE OF LOST OR DESTROYED TITLE DEED

Notice is hereby given in terms of Regulation 68 of the Deeds Registries Act 1937, of the intention to apply for the issue of a certified copy of Deed of Grant No. TG234/1990QQ passed by MALUTI-A-PHOFUNG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY in favour of NOMALUNGO TSHABALALA in respect of certain ERF 9015 PHUTHADITHABA-A, DISTRICT HARRISMITH, PROVINCE FREE STATE, which has been lost or destroyed.

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

SIGNED at BLOEMFONTEIN on this 05th DAY OF JUNE 2026.

BEREKA MOSADI CONSULTANTS (PTY) LTD
874 PANYANE STREET
BATHO LOCATION, MANGAUNG
9323
E-MAIL: matshedisoramolula@gmail.com
CONTACT: (+27) 65 862 3469

Our Ref: BMC043/2026/MGR



BJJ NOTICE OF LOST OR DESTROYED TITLE DEED

Notice is hereby given in terms of Regulation 68 of the Deeds Registries Act 1937, of the intention to apply for the issue of a certified copy of Deed of Grant No. G688/1985 passed by THE SOUTH AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT TRUST in favour of NGALO PETRUS MOLANGISO in respect of certain ERF 164 BOTSHABELO-C, DISTRICT THABAN'CHU, PROVINCE FREE STATE, which has been lost or destroyed.

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

SIGNED at BLOEMFONTEIN on this 24th DAY OF AUGUST 2026.

BEREKA MOSADI CONSULTANTS (PTY) LTD
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9323
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CONTACT: (+27) 65 862 3469

Our Ref: BMC066/2026/MGR



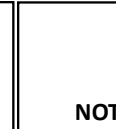
NOTICE IN TERMS OF REGULATION 68 OF THE DEEDS REGISTRIES ACT,1937 (ACT 47 OF 1937), IN RESPECT OF A LOST TITLE DEED

Notice is hereby given in terms of regulation 68 of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937, of the intention to apply for the issue of a certified copy of Certificate of Registered Title Number T8489/1974 in favor of MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, in respect of

ERF 3132 RIEBEECKSTAD (EXTENSION 1), DISTRICT WELKOM, PROVINCE FREE STATE
EXTENT: 833 (EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY THREE) square metres

All interested persons having an objection to the issue of such copy are hereby required to lodge the same in writing with the Registrar of the Deeds, Free State at Bloemfontein within two weeks from the date of the publication of this notice.

Dated at Bloemfontein on 07 October 2026
Electronically sent thus unsigned
RC ISHMAIL ATTORNEYS
051 4300187
convey@racilaw.com
UNIT 4 REID PLAZA
21 REID STREET
WESTDEN



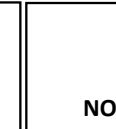
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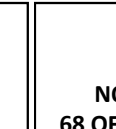
NOTICE IN TERMS OF REGULATION 68 OF THE DEEDS REGISTRIES ACT,1937 (ACT 47 OF 1937), IN RESPECT OF A LOST TITLE DEED

Notice is hereby given in terms of regulation 68 of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937, of the intention to apply for the issue of a certified copy of Deed of Transfer Number T2507/1980 in favor of MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, in respect of

ERF 3162 RIEBEECKSTAD (EXTENSION 1), DISTRICT WELKOM, PROVINCE FREE STATE
EXTENT: 833 (EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY THREE) square metres

All interested persons having an objection to the issue of such copy are hereby required to lodge the same in writing with the Registrar of the Deeds, Free State at Bloemfontein within two weeks from the date of the publication of this notice.

Dated at Bloemfontein on 07 October 2026
Electronically sent thus unsigned
RC ISHMAIL ATTORNEYS
051 4300187
convey@racilaw.com
UNIT 4 REID PLAZA
21 REID STREET
WESTDEN



NOTICE IN TERMS OF REGULATION 68 OF THE DEEDS REGISTRIES ACT,1937 (ACT 47 OF 1937), IN RESPECT OF A LOST TITLE DEED

Notice is hereby given in terms of regulation 68 of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937, of the intention to apply for the issue of a certified copy of Certificate of Registered Title Number T8490/1974 in favor of MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, in respect of

ERF 6140 RIEBEECKSTAD (EXTENSION 1), DISTRICT WELKOM, PROVINCE FREE STATE
EXTENT: 1401 (ONE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED AND ONE) square metres

All interested persons having an objection to the issue of such copy are hereby required to lodge the same in writing with the Registrar of the Deeds, Free State at Bloemfontein within two weeks from the date of the publication of this notice.

Dated at Bloemfontein on 07 October 2026
Electronically sent thus unsigned
RC ISHMAIL ATTORNEYS
051 4300187
convey@racilaw.com
UNIT 4 REID PLAZA
21 REID STREET
WESTDEN

Royal House and Tourism Ministry Back Thaba Nchu Festival



By Katlego Mashwabi

Free State - The intersection of heritage and sustainable economic growth took centre stage at the Barolong Boo Seleka Royal House in Morolong, Thaba Nchu, during the official media launch of the Black Mountain Expo and Festival. The main festival, scheduled from 30 October to 1 November 2026, is positioning itself as a major economic catalyst for the Free State by pivoting traditional tourism into a vehicle for local enterprise.

The high-profile launch drew key dignitaries, including National Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Makhotso Magdeline “Maggie” Sotyu, Mangaung Metropolitan Executive Mayor, Gregory Nthatsi, Her Majesty Kgosi Gaboilewe Moroka, and Tourism Transformation Council of South Africa Chairperson, Dr Eddy Khoza. Delivering the welcome address, Mayor Gregory Nthatsi emphasized that the event’s true value lies in its long-term economic footprint rather than temporary entertainment. He stated that the festival must drive a creative livelihood that actively provides pathways for local artists, emerging tour operators, and unemployed youth.

“This event should not be understood merely as a calendar event, but rather as an opportunity to ask important questions of how we convert rich culture and heritage assets into sustainable economic opportunities,” Nthatsi stated.

He noted that the ultimate success of the event is measured by what structural opportunities remain once the stage has been dismantled. To achieve this, the festival layout integrates key developmental components designed to bridge the gap between culture, education, and market access, including a sustainable SMME village, a tourist expo, a student career expo, and a student cooks competition.

In a major announcement for the regional economy, Deputy Minister Maggie Sotyu committed the Department of Tourism to actively driving the festival’s success alongside the organizers. To back this commitment, Sotyu unveiled a targeted Earn and Learn pilot programme for the Free State that will absorb 1,000 unemployed hospitality graduates. Under this initiative, the department will fund stipends for graduates placed within local hospitality establishments that lack hiring capacity, transitioning them into permanent jobs upon completion. Speaking for the organizers, Andronica Dinko highlighted the vision of providing an all-in-one camping experience inspired by the regional success of the Eswatini MTN Bushfire festival.

This grassroots approach earned high praise from Her Majesty Kgosi Gaboilewe Moroka, who was recently appointed to the National Board of MSMEs.

Kgosi Moroka praised the vision of the organizers, noting that the initiative is built from the soil and comes from the seed. Pledging her attendance for the opening on 30 October, she lauded the multi-stakeholder support as a textbook example of cooperative governance that seamlessly brings together the community, traditional leadership, and local, provincial, and national government.

“Collaboration is the new competition,” Her Majesty concluded. “It may take a bit longer with more hands, but it will also be sustainable.” Logistical networks are also expanding to support this economic influx, reinforced by a newly announced partnership with the South African National Taxi Council to provide streamlined transport links to the festival grounds.

CUFA Moves Global Stage to Old Greys

Festival goers gear up for an amplified ‘Indoor-Outdoor’ experience

By Katlego Mashwabi

Free State - Fresh off a spectacular takeover at the CUFA Fest Gospel Sunday, the buzz around town has reached a fever pitch. If you thought you knew what to expect from the festival’s flagship installation, think again.

In a brilliant move that elevates the entire affair, organisers have officially announced that the CUFA Fest Global Stage is packing up its traditional outdoor home at the Rose Garden and moving to the effortlessly chic Old Greys Convention Centre and Gardens.

According to Palesa Moseme, Creative Director of CUFA Fest, this isn’t just about finding more space for an eager, growing crowd - it’s a strategic, weather-proof pivot.

“We want to transition from a festival to an experience,” CUFA Fest Chairman Mr Ben Moseme shared during an exclusive interview with Journal News Network.

The relocation means a serious glow-up for the VIP crowd, affectionately dubbed the VICs (Very Important Cufafas). Organisers are set to elevate the VIC experience with a seamless, beautifully designed tent structure erected directly over a custom deck, giving the elite section a grand architectural feel.

What makes the Old Greys upgrade truly delicious is the meticulously curated indoor-outdoor flow. Forget rigid boundaries; the glass doors and white panels of the iconic Old Greys Dome will be completely thrown open.



This seamlessly merges the indoor luxury infrastructure with the lush, open green lawn, ensuring every corner feels connected.

Music lovers are also in for an absolute acoustic treat. The venue layout features a genius audio split: all live bands will perform inside the intimate Dome, while DJs anchor the outdoor green, flanked by two massive sound towers and towering high-end LED screens.

The physical layout has been completely reimagined with crowd movement and style in mind. The festival food court is stepping back and stretching out into an ambient L-shape, making room for a massive 5 by 3-metre screen and a wider variety of premium exhibitors.

To keep the energy seamless, the main bar is moving five metres forward into the inner circle, clearing a secure rear driveway so arriving celebrities can slide directly backstage without a hitch.

The crown jewel of the lawn experience will undoubtedly be the Martell Blue DJ Booth and Merchandise Store. Crowned by a massive overhead LED screen, the area will feature an elevated, clear DJ booth fitted with safety rails.

Dramatically lit by reflections from the dome deck and mirrored by a secondary clear centrepiece structure, it promises to be an absolute visual marvel.

True to its high-fashion roots, the event maintains its strict All-White dress code, accented by soft neutrals and pastels. However, the new venue introduces a refreshing Walk Light in White concept.

Thanks to a beautifully curated Cortijo garden setup complete with pristine umbrellas and festival lounge furniture scattered across the lawn, patrons can officially leave their camping chairs and umbrellas at home.

Regarding entry, the exclusive Golden Circle remains an intimate, indoor affair within the Dome, while the rest of the venue opens up into wide, accessible walkways.

Premium experiential lounges for Friends of Martell, Friends of Red Bull, and Friends of CUFA will span across both the upstairs deck and the downstairs lounge.

As Koketso Sejosengoe, Head of PR and Communications, perfectly puts it, this is a curated lifestyle experience taking the global stage to the next level.

The stunning afternoon affair boasts an unmatched powerhouse lineup featuring Zonke, Vusi Nova, Kelvin Momo, DJ Finzo, Oskido, Sannere, and Sjawa, who comes fresh off the runway at the SS27 Paris Fashion Week. Dress to impress and prepare for an unforgettable experience.

Kimberley to Host Landmark Heritage Concert Honouring Sol Plaatje and Kgosi Luka Jantjie

The Northern Cape will take centre stage in South Africa’s cultural calendar as Classics on Turf, in partnership with the Thabo Mbeki Foundation, presents a major heritage concert honouring two of the country’s most influential, yet often overlooked, figures: Kgosi Luka Jantjie and Sol Plaatje.

The Classics on Turf Heritage Concert will take place on Saturday, 24 October 2026, at the Mittah Seperpere Convention Centre in Kimberley. This event builds on the momentum of the recent Tiyo Soga tribute in Johannesburg and positions the Northern Cape not merely as a place on the map, but as a living archive of resistance, intellect and nation-building.

The keynote address will be delivered by Professor Yunus Ballim, inaugural Vice-Chancellor of Sol Plaatje University and Emeritus Professor at the University of the Witwatersrand.

Prof Ballim’s connection to both honourees runs deep, as it is not simply academic; it is also rooted in the restoration of dignity and memory.

As the university’s founding Vice-Chancellor, he championed the naming of its administrative building as Luka Jantjie House. In doing so, he formally honoured the resistance leader whose land was the first to be seized during the Kimberley diamond rush.

Prof Ballim’s own contributions are recognised through Yunus Ballim Square, which is located in the central courtyard of Luka Jantjie House.

“There’s much more to this than just a concert,” says Vincent Zwelibanzi Mntambo, Patron of Classics on Turf.

“We are convening a moment of cultural reawakening. The stories of Kgosi Luka Jantjie and Sol Plaatje are not dusty footnotes. They are the living DNA of our nation’s resilience and intellect,” he adds.

The evening’s artistic direction is led by Maestro Kutlwano Masote, who will conduct the Northern Cape Symphony Orchestra alongside collaborative artists,



including guest artist Vusi Mahlasela, the Northern Cape Youth Choir, the Sol Plaatje University Choir and other local cultural groups.

“Music is the most profound medium for memory,” says Masote. “It goes beyond the intellect and speaks directly to the soul of a people. Our approach is to weave the sounds of the Northern Cape soil with the grandeur of a classical orchestra from Kimberley itself, which is exciting. We blend heritage-infused arrangements, dramatic readings and the voices of our youth.”

The programme honours Jantjie as a symbol of resistance and sovereignty. He was the first independent African ruler to lose his land to colonial forces.

His boycott of rural trading stores in the early 1890s was perhaps one of the earliest examples of non-violent resistance in colonial South Africa. Plaatje is honoured as a giant of language, literature and early political organisation.

He was a founding member of the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), which later became the African National Congress (ANC). He translated Shakespeare into Setswana and authored Native Life in South Africa.

The event will feature the Northern Cape Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Kutlwano Masote, a keynote address by Prof Yunus Ballim, performances by youth orchestras, choirs and local cultural groups, and a dedicated youth access programme aimed at bringing 1 000 school learners and students to the concert. **Entertainment SA**



Masters of the Thread: Meet the Designers of FSFW 2026



By Katlego Mashwabi

Free State - From custom bridal elegance to avant-garde streetwear, this year’s Free State Fashion Week (FSFW) line-up celebrates the rich diversity, deep heritage, and sheer talent of our local design landscape.

Here are the visionary profiles of the designers who will be illuminating the runway this season:

Charissa Williams: The Golden Standard of Bridal Wear

Brand Focus: Custom and Ready-Made Bridal Gowns, High-End Formal Wear

Based In: Welkom, South Africa
Charissa Williams’ journey into the world of fashion began at the tender age of nine when she stitched her very first dress for a Barbie doll.

Today, with 20 years of professional fashion design experience, she stands as one of

the region’s premier bridal couturiers.

Charissa specialises in creating bespoke wedding gowns, high-end evening wear, and breath-taking matric farewell dresses tailored to each client’s unique vision. In a touching homage to her grandmother, Charissa’s signature touch often incorporates gold - her absolute favourite colour to weave into her creations.

Beyond her current focus on a stunning new collection of matric farewell gowns, Charissa is deeply committed to nurturing the next generation.

Her boutique regularly hosts industry internships, offering mentorship and hands-on fashion design experience to aspiring local creators.

Shirley Magqaza: The Full-Spectrum Style Alchemist

Brand: ShirQreates
Based In: Bloemfontein, South Africa

Shirley Magqaza is a true creative powerhouse. As a dedicated fashion designer, makeup artist, stylist, and professional hairdresser, Shirley possesses a rare, 360-degree approach to transforming abstract ideas into stunning runway realities.

For the past seven years, she has channelled this multidisciplinary expertise into her creative studio, ShirQreates.

Her brand is an authentic celebration of African craftsmanship, blending straight couture with comprehensive personal styling.

No stranger to the spotlight, Shirley’s seasonal collections have previously graced the prestigious runway at the Bloem Show.

Whether she is crafting an intricate garment or executing a flawless aesthetic transformation, Shirley’s work definition remains simple: she creates anything and everything with absolute passion.

Khathithi Jwara: The Streetwear Visionary

Brand: Thee Artificer

Experience: 2 Years

Khathithi Jwara may have been designing for just two years, but his profound design philosophy has already established him as a rising star in South African fashion.

As the visionary behind the brand Thee Artificer, Khathithi specialises in handcrafted denim streetwear.

His work is uniquely anchored in a design philosophy he calls African Kintsugi.

Inspired by the traditional Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with gold lacquer, Khathithi’s garments celebrate transformation. He masterfully turns mistakes, scars, and imperfections into beautiful, highly textured garments, often contrasting raw denim with his signature medium: white wool.

Mpho Staat: The Print Pioneer
Brand: GSTAAT

Experience: Designing since 2011

Mpho Staat, the seasoned founder of the acclaimed South African fashion label GSTAAT, has been a definitive voice in the local fashion industry since 2011.

Known for his bold and sophisticated sensibilities, Mpho openly admits he prefers working with intricate prints over solid blocks of colour.

However, at this year’s FSFW, Mpho is looking to challenge boundaries by seamlessly fusing his love for patterns with a singular colour palette: green.

Audiences can expect a brilliant, refreshing exploration of green infused directly into his signature textiles.

When he is not preparing for the runway, Mpho is dedicated to community empowerment, currently passing on his masterful technical skills to the next generation by conducting professional sewing lessons.

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SPORT



GIANTS COLLIDE!



The Buccaneers and Masandawana are gearing to set Moses Mabhida Stadium alight in the epic MTN8 final weekend thriller

By **Gomolemo Winkel**

When two elephants collide, only the grass suffers,' so goes an old adage that best describes the pending thriller that is the MTN8 final this Saturday, 10 October 2026, where the cup's defending champions cum reigning Betway Premiership champions, Orlando Pirates, will take on CAF Champions League and FIFA Africa-Asia-Pacific champions, Mamelodi Sundowns.

This colossal domestic fixture will also see Pirates coach, Abdeslam Ouaddou, and the Sundowns mentor, Miguel Cardoso, cross paths for the first time in an MTN8 final, setting the tone for a high-stakes duel for supremacy.

Ouaddou believes his team is motivated to retain the trophy against the two-time African champions.

"We are really excited to play this kind of game and to defend this title. We had, of

course, had around two weeks to prepare for this game," he said.

The Moroccan coach admitted that the final will be contested between two quality teams but stressed Pirates' ambition to deliver a strong performance on the big stage.

"We are playing a game with two champions, fantastic event for the country, for all the lovers of football. And of course, our aim is just to go in that game with a big ambition, willing to do well, to show the best face of Pirates. And of course, to give a very good image of football in South Africa," said Ouaddou.

With Thalente Mbatha, Mohau Nkota, Evidence Makgopa, and Andre De Jong returning from injury, while Sihle Nduli continues to recover in the Bucs casualty ward, Ouaddou remains positive ahead of the encounter.

"It is important for the two teams to give a very good image of football. But I am very excited. "I feel a very good energy from our players and the from technical staff," he

added. From a player's perspective, Pirates vice-captain, Tapelo Xoki, declared that the squad is eager to make more history for the club.

"Everyone is ready, trying to make sure that they are available for selection. Looking forward to write history again for the club. It's another chance for us to make history for ourselves and for the club. So we will do our best and make sure we make our supporters proud," said Xoki.

Meanwhile, the well-decorated Cardoso

- who will experience his first MTN8 final against the Buccaneers - also has a thorough understanding of the significance of this weekend's fixture.

"We had never played a final against Pirates ourselves as coaches. The club has played many. We understand very well, obviously, the importance of such a game, what is at stake, what exactly it means mostly in South Africa for the fans. So there is a strong attention on the game," he said.

The Chloorkop side will be missing a

few stalwarts in Teboho Mokoena, Bathusi Aubaas and Aubrey Modiba, who all returned from national team duty with injuries.

Cardoso noted that the club would not take avoidable risks with key players, keeping in mind Sundowns' demanding post-final match schedule.

"What is 100% sure is that we cannot risk anything on players considering that this match on the weekend is very important, but on Tuesday there is another one. Losing

one player for five matches in a club like ours is dramatic. So we will have to see if they are fully recovered," said the Portuguese mentor.

Despite injury concerns, Sundowns midfielder, Sphelele Mkhulise, is certain that the squad is fully prepared for the title decider.

"Everyone is ready. Everyone is motivated to play the final. And I am also ready to play. And we believe that we can do well and win the cup, and make our supporters happy," said Mkhulise.

NWU Bodybuilders Bound for Spain

North West University bodybuilders qualify to represent South Africa at the global championships

By **Gomolemo Winkel**

North West - Two North West University (NWU) bodybuilders are on the verge of creating a significant milestone for the institution's bodybuilding programme after qualifying to represent South Africa at the International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness World Men's and Women's Championships and World Congress in Santa Susanna, Spain, from 29 October to 2 November 2026.

The duo, Bokang Matsetela from the Mahikeng Campus and Letlhogonolo Baloyi from the Vanderbijlpark Campus, secured national team selection following stellar performances on the domestic stage.

Matsetela secured first position in the junior ladies' bikini category before claiming another victory in the senior ladies' bikini under-172 cm division.

"Winning first place in both categories was more than just a personal triumph. It was a validation of discipline, sacrifice, and the relentless pursuit of excellence," said Matsetela.

Looking ahead to the international showcase, Matsetela noted that her sights are

set firmly on peak performance.

"My expectation is to bring my absolute best package to the stage, aiming not only for placement, but for personal growth, international recognition, and the pride of representing my country and university," she said.

Coach Tshelo Jack Baloyi explained that the university programme aims to produce athletes capable of competing against international standards rather than merely dominating locally.

"Because now, if you check with bodybuilding, we do it 24 hours. We cannot say we are not in the gym or eat whatever we want. She has been on a strict diet since January this year, and that dedication is what convinced me as a coach," he said.

Meanwhile, Vaal Campus-based athlete Letlhogonolo Baloyi is eager to test his capabilities on the global stage.

"I am looking forward to testing myself against athletes from around the world and giving everything I have to represent my

country and university with pride," he said.

Baloyi's journey began at the Sports South Africa Bodybuilding Championships, where he claimed first place in the men's physique over 178 cm category before capturing the Overall Men's Physique Title.

"These results mean a great deal to me because they represent months of discipline, training, nutrition, and preparation," said Baloyi.

Coach Mabasa noted that Baloyi's training has focused heavily on refining essential competitive attributes.

"Our main focus areas have been conditioning, symmetry, and stage presentation. At the international level, the standard is extremely high, so we have worked on bringing him in leaner and harder while maintaining his muscle mass," said Mabasa.

Mabasa expressed confidence that the experience gained in Spain will leave a lasting legacy back home, helping to elevate training standards and inspire future generations of university athletes.

Ellis Rallies Support for Banyana in Bloem

Mangaung football fans encouraged to come support the national women's football team in the second leg of their clash with Madagascar

By **Gomolemo Winkel**

South Africa's women's football national team, Banyana Banyana head coach, Desirée Ellis, has encouraged Bloemfontein football supporters to show up as the team continues its journey towards the 2028 Olympic qualification.

With the first leg Olympics Qualifier duel against Madagascar today, 9 October 2026, being played behind closed doors at the Toyota Stadium in Bloemfontein, Ellis encouraged supporters in Free State capital to rally behind the team in the second leg of their encounter against on 13 October at the same venue. Due to their lack of state-of-the-art facilities and resources in their country, Madagascar are the official hosts in the first leg match, with South Africa hosting the second leg.

"Just a reminder to the fans out there, the 1st leg is closed. No fans are all out in the stadium.

So we just urge all the fans in Bloemfontein them to come out and really show what a home game is for us in the 2nd match," Ellis stated at a press conference at Dr Molemela Stadium.

The two-legged clashes form part of preparations for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic games.

The qualifier matches are structured as a six-team intercontinental mini tournament running from 24 November until 5 December 2026.

Ellis explained that the preparatory work serves a dual purpose beyond consecutive encounters with the island nation due to tight training schedules.

"So we are using it two-fold because we



have very little time to prepare, and we know that it is a very big tournament as well that we need to prepare for. So we are doing a two-fold. We are preparing for Madagascar, but also looking at how we can get the team to be a better version of themselves come November," she said.

Madagascar are ranked 191st, standing 134 places below Banyana Banyana, though coaching staff cautioned against complacency by emphasising a mindset focused on playing to win.

"The rankings do not mean anything. It's 11 vs 11, and if you do not take the game seriously, before you know it, you are chasing the game. So we will take the game really, really seriously.

"We have played them twice before in 2018 and 2019.

We know that we can beat them, but that means nothing. You still got to go on the field, and do the job," Ellis stated.

Blending younger talent with experienced campaigners, for Ellis, has further proved essential for maintaining squad depth and long-term competitiveness.

"We have always been a team that has brought in newer, younger players.

You know, a lot of them are a little bit more experienced now, with a lot more caps, and we will consistently do that because we want to make sure when more senior players eventually step out that there's someone to step in," she added.

Team captain, Refiloe Jane, stressed the importance of establishing a strong advantage during the opening fixture to reduce pressure ahead of the return leg.

"Well, it's gonna be important to make sure that in the first leg, you do so well, you get the important result, because you do not want to put yourself under pressure," said the skipper.

Securing qualification for the Olympics will additionally elevate player morale while fostering the broader growth of women's football across the country.

"Oh, well, it's important to qualify, you know, when you play in big tournaments, it opens more for the players, and for the development of women's football in our country," she concluded.

