

Journal NEWS

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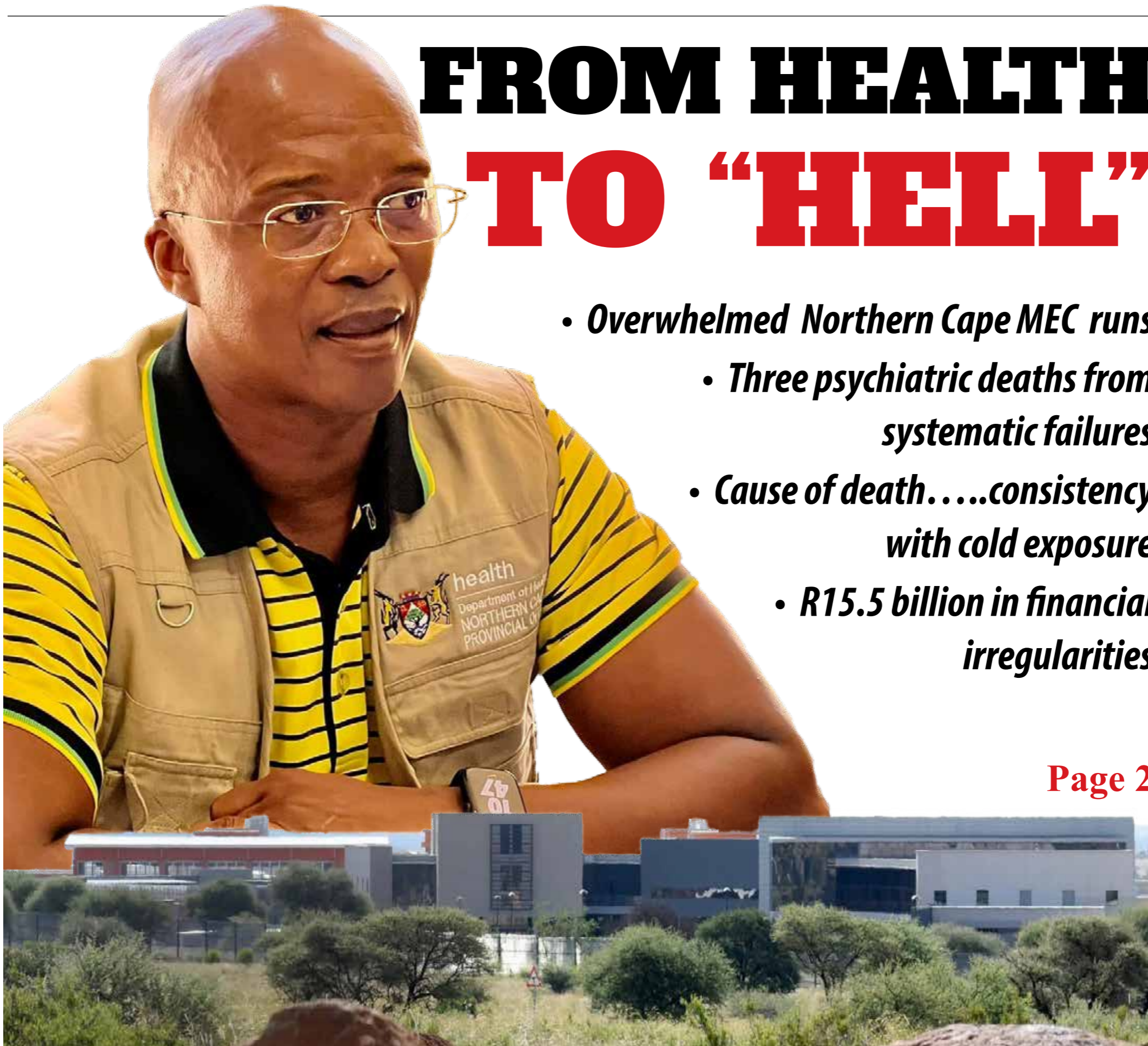
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Taung Mayor Axed Amid String of Vehicle Mishaps

ANC removes Taung Mayor Tumisang Gaoraelwe after repeated misuse of municipal vehicles



Former Mayor of Greater Taung Local Municipality firing Tumisang Gaoraelwe. Picture: Facebook
By: Refilwe Mochoari

The ANC in North West Province has finally acted on the allegations of reckless behaviour and the misuse of state vehicles, firing Tumisang Gaoraelwe as mayor of Greater Taung Local Municipality.

The party during an interview with Journal News said that an official statement regarding a new Mayor of GTLM will be released after a municipal council meeting which scheduled for the upcoming week.

The ANC Secretary General Fikile Mbalula's on Tuesday during a media briefing, confirmed that Gaoraelwe has been fired from his position as mayor.

Gaoraelwe's removal comes after mounting pressure due to several incidents involving the misuse of municipal vehicles. His dismissal is reportedly linked to his involvement in multiple car accidents, which damaged and written off three municipal vehicles, amounting to over R1.3 million in losses.

Calls for Gaoraelwe's removal intensified weeks ago after he was involved in yet another accident with a municipal vehicle, making it his third incident with a municipality vehicle. The first accident allegedly occurred in 2022 when he crashed the municipality's BMW X3, valued at R700,000, on the N12 road between Schweizer Reneke and Wolmaranstad.

In his defence, Gaoraelwe stated that the accidents were unintentional and should not be grounds for his removal. ANC spokesperson in the province Tumelo Maruping emphasised that Gaoraelwe's removal is part of the party's strategy to assess and improve local governance.

He says this is part of the ANC's efforts to enhance local governance.

Although he has been removed as mayor, Gaoraelwe will remain an ordinary ward councillor.

"Gaoraelwe has not been fired. He is still an ordinary councillor of the municipality.

"We will soon announce who the new mayor will be. The council is currently coordinating a meeting to elect a new mayor, and we should be able to make an announcement next week," said Maruping.

Mbalula also took action in Free State municipalities, dismissing seven mayors in an effort to enhance service delivery and ensure accountability within the municipalities. (See page 3)



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Power of Life

Nothern Cape mine gets new shovels

In mid-October, heavy equipment manufacturer Komatsu South Africa delivered and commissioned a PC5500-11 hydraulic face shovel for iron-ore and manganese miner Assmang's Khumani iron-ore mine, in Kathu, in the Northern Cape.

Manufactured in Germany over nine months, the 550 t PC5500-11 journeyed by ocean and road to Khumani mine, followed by 35 days of on-site assembly.

The project involved six specialist partners and over 5 000 personnel-hours, completed without a single safety or environmental incident – a testament to Komatsu's zero-harm commitment, reports Komatsu South Africa.

At the handover ceremony, Komatsu mining operations GM Hermann Hollhumer emphasised the broader impact of the equipment delivery, saying the project supported local employment during assembly, engaging technicians, welders and logistics providers from the surrounding area.

"Safe, cost-effective mining strengthens South Africa's global competitiveness and benefits every stakeholder in the value chain," he added.

Komatsu worked closely with Assmang and a network of South African partners to ensure seamless delivery, commissioning and smooth integration into Khumani's fleet.

"World-class engineering built in Germany, assembled by South Africans and now ready to perform in one of Africa's most productive iron-ore mines," said Komatsu senior mining sales representative Tertius Vermeulen of the PC5500-11.

This collaboration continues to drive safe, efficient, and sustainable mining practices in South Africa, reports Komatsu South Africa.

Engineered for performance and sustainability, the PC5500-11 is optimised for South African conditions, offering proven compatibility with 220 t to 290 t haul trucks, boasting cycle times of about 35 seconds, achieving up to 10% higher productivity than its predecessor and using a Tier 2 configuration for local fuel quality regulatory frameworks and high-altitude conditions.

The shovel also offers smart hydraulics and variable cooling systems for improved efficiency, as well as smarter maintenance and operator comfort.

In line with Komatsu's circular economy strategy, all major components of the shovel are rebuildable or re-manufacturable, thereby enabling the extension of its service life and reducing the use of virgin raw materials.

In addition, the ground engaging tools installed on the PC5500-11 are made using 100% renewable energy, whereby at all stages of the process, from manufacture to operation, Komatsu aims to reduce carbon footprint. - **Cramer Media**

Crisis plagues the NC "HELL" Department

By: Refilwe Mochoari

The abrupt resignation of Maruping Lekwene as the Northern Cape's Health MEC and a Member of Legislature has sent shockwaves through the province, leaving many wondering what the future holds for a department that has long been haunted by crisis after crisis.

Lekwene's departure last week Wednesday, 5 November 2025, comes amid calls for the health department to be placed under administration following a recent damning Health Ombudsman's report that revealed systemic failures at the Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe Hospital (RMSH) as well as the Kimberly Mental Health Hospital (KMHH), which are linked to the death of three psychiatric patients.

Additionally, an Auditor-General report has exposed R15.5 billion in financial irregularities.

Critics have since raised concerns about the stability of the province's healthcare system, questioning Lekwene's resignation and whether the department was on the brink of collapse.

Lekwene has been the MEC for Health since June 2020 and was re-elected after last year's general elections. His tenure has been marred by controversy, with the department being without a permanent departmental head for over three years now.

The current Head of Department (HOD), Mxolisi Mlatha, is reportedly appointed on a month-to-month contract basis and is the sixth acting HOD under Lekwene's administration.

According to the Ombudsman report - which followed investigations that were jointly conducted with the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) in the Northern Cape - a complaint was lodged by Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi against the province's mental health hospital on 10 October 2024.

The complaint was based on information Motsoaledi received alleging that two patients had died at the mental health hospital, while two others were admitted at the RMSH in a critical condition. The respective incidents reportedly occurred in July and August 2024.

It was established that patients were admitted



Former MEC for Health Maruping Lekwene. Picture: Facebook

to RMSH, after facing complications at the mental health hospital.

Cyprian Mohato died of pneumonia on 16 July 2024 at RMSH in the surgical recovery unit, while Tshepo Mdimbaza died on 3 August 2024 in Ward M5 at the mental hospital after apparently freezing to death with a postmortem report confirming the cause of death as "consistency with cold exposure".

Petrus de Bruin and John Louw, on the other hand, were in a critical condition when admitted.

De Bruin was later discharged, and Louw remains bedridden and is fully dependent on nursing staff following a brain surgery.

The report states that at the time of the incidents,

the mental health hospital was experiencing challenges with electricity supply due to vandalism of its electricity power substation, it is said that the delay in restoring electricity supply was due to a dysfunctional supply chain management in the provincial office.

Meanwhile, the Auditor-General's latest report also highlighted, among others, irregular expenditure amounting to R15.5 billion on incomplete infrastructure projects.

Opposition parties and labour unions have reacted to the crisis, with the Democratic Alliance's leader in the province, Harold McGluwa declaring Lekwene's move as a clear indication that there is a lack of leadership and accountability in the department.

"Although we do welcome his resignation, it is con-

cerning that he decided to resign during this critical time.

"This is a clear indication that the department is in a crisis," added McGluwa.

He continued: "The Department of Health is led by incompetent leaders, and his resignation is shocking and evident.

"We have been asking Premier Zamani Saul to appoint an HOD, but he is delaying. Now he appointed the MEC of Agriculture to act as Health MEC, which is the worst thing that can be done. Now we (also) have an acting HOD and an acting MEC.

According to McGluwa, no action has been taken ever since the Health Ombudsman issued the report.

"When the health ombudsman issued the report in July, we called for the department to be placed under administration and there is still no action, instead Lekwene resigned.

"As the DA in the province we are calling on the Minister Aaron Motsoaledi to place the department under administration because this is a serious crisis," McGluwa added.

The Public Servants Association (PSA) also welcomed Lekwene's resignation but dismissed this move as just a temporary solution. The union stressed in a media statement that Lekwene's resignation should not serve as a shield from accountability.

"This is a step towards accountability, but it cannot mark the end of the process.

"Allegations of corruption and poor governance must be thoroughly investigated and those responsible must face disciplinary and criminal action.

"The PSA calls on the Premier to initiate a full forensic investigation into allegations of irregular expenditure and mismanagement in the department, suspend implicated officials pending the outcome of investigations," the PSA said.

Lekwene has now been deployed as Head of Elections for the ANC in the province.

He currently serves as the ANC Northern Cape deputy secretary, while concurrently being the South African Communist Party chairperson in the province.

Journal News could not get comment from Premier Zamani Saul at the time of print.

North West Innovation Helps Farmers Save Water, Boost Yields

The Smart Drip Irrigation System offers a sustainable solution to long-standing challenges in small-scale farming

By: Matshidiso Selebeleng

While South Africa continues to battle water scarcity — a growing threat to the agricultural sector — an innovative irrigation solution from the Mafikeng Digital Innovation Hub could be the breakthrough farmers have been waiting for.

The Smart Drip Irrigation System is an automated watering solution that uses soil moisture sensors to monitor water levels in real time. It automatically regulates water flow through an electric valve and pressure pump, ensuring crops receive the right amount of water at the right time.

By promoting water conservation, improving productivity, and reducing environmental impact, the system supports both economic and environmental sustainability.

According to Thato Ndaba from the Mafikeng Digital Innovation Hub, the technology was developed in response to the growing challenge of water scar-



Mafikeng Digital Innovation Hub invents an irrigation system. Picture: International Food Policy Research Institute

city and inefficient irrigation practices faced by many small-scale farmers in the North West province.

"This solution helps small-scale farmers save water, reduce labour costs, and increase crop yields by preventing over- or under-watering," said Ndaba. "It also promotes sustainable farming practices by using technology to optimise irrigation efficiency, which is especially valuable in regions like the North West

where water scarcity is a major challenge."

Many small-scale farmers still rely on manual or traditional watering methods, which often lead to water wastage, uneven crop growth, and high labour costs. The Smart Drip Irrigation System aims to address these issues by delivering only the amount of water crops need, significantly reducing overall water consumption.

Designed as a long-term, low-power solution, the system can also be adapted to run on solar energy, making it suitable for rural areas with limited access to electricity.

Its affordability, easy maintenance, and scalability mean that farmers can adopt and expand the system without facing high ongoing costs.

Ndaba added that there are strong plans to expand the project beyond the North West province.

"After successfully testing and implementing the system locally, our next goal is to reach more small-scale farmers across South Africa — especially in provinces such as the Free State, Northern Cape, and Limpopo, where water scarcity and inefficient irrigation remain serious challenges," he said.

The innovation has already attracted positive feedback from farmers and sparked discussions about how technology can help solve everyday challenges in agriculture.

"The response shows a real need for affordable, technology-driven irrigation systems that make farming easier and more sustainable," Ndaba concluded.

The Hub says it specifically focused on small-scale farmers because they form the backbone of local food production yet face the greatest barriers to accessing modern farming technologies.

Traditional irrigation methods remain time-consuming, wasteful, and costly — challenges the Smart Drip Irrigation System seeks to overcome.

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Mangaung Finally Launches Ombud ...to Tackle Maladministration

Advocate Shale Naidoo appointed to lead efforts to restore accountability and improve public trust



Advocate Shale Naidoo and her team appointed as the City's independent watchdog (Ombudsman). Picture: Thabo Ketele

By: Matshidiso Sebeleng

If you have gone to hell and back – as many residents claim – trying to resolve service delivery complaints, the newly established Mangaung Metro Municipality's Office of the Ombudsman may be your final stop for justice.

The Office, serving as the City's independent watchdog, was officially launched on Thursday after years of delay. According to the municipality, the office will handle billing disputes, investigate cases of maladministration, human rights violations, and service delivery failures – all in a bid to restore accountability and public trust within the City.

Advocate Shale Naidoo, who brings over 20 years of experience in law, governance, and public administration, has been appointed to lead the office. Together with her team, Naidoo will act as a neutral facilitator to

address residents' grievances with impartiality and fairness.

The establishment of the office follows a 2018 council resolution that was only implemented recently. The Ombudsman's office will investigate complaints, make findings, and recommend corrective actions to address administrative injustices and systemic challenges within the city's operations.

Naidoo assured residents that her office will operate independently and uphold constitutional values.

"Section 2 of the Constitution provides that the Constitution is the highest law in the country, and all conduct inconsistent with it must be declared invalid. The Constitution and the rule of law are extremely important," Naidoo said.

"I pride myself on doing the right thing. Our independence ensures that complainants can rest assured we will act without fear or favor, always in the best interests of

the citizens we serve," she added.

Naidoo emphasized that her team will work to ensure that municipal bylaws are effectively implemented for the benefit of the community.

City Speaker Lawrence Mathae said the office will play a crucial role in safeguarding residents' rights and promoting ethical governance.

"It is a powerful tool at your disposal to ensure that your voice is heard and that you receive the efficient, transparent service you are entitled to," Mathae said. "To our municipal officials, the Ombudsman is here to help uphold the highest standards of public service. Co-operation with this office is not optional – it's a duty."

City Manager Sello More added that the initiative aims to ensure residents' concerns are addressed directly within Mangaung, rather than being escalated to external bodies such as the Legislature, the Human Rights Commission, or the Public Protector.

Mbalula Enforces Party Line, Removes Defiant Free State Mayors



African National Congress Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula confirms the axing of seven mayors. Picture: ANC Facebook

By: JN Reporter

After months of friction between the ANC's provincial leadership (PEC) and its local government representatives, African National Congress (ANC) Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula has finally stamped the ruling party's authority against defiant mayors it sought to recall from office.

Following a National Working Committee (NWC) meeting this week, Mbalula confirmed the dismissal of seven mayors from the Mafube, Moqhaka, Letsemeng, Nketoana, Nala, and Masilonyana local municipalities, as well as the Lejweleputswa District Municipality, bringing an end to a prolonged internal dispute.

This follows Mbalula's earlier decision in September to temporarily halt the Free State provincial leadership's plan to recall the mayors, speakers, and chief whips over allegations of poor performance and failure to deliver essential services.

"The NWC endorsed the reconfiguration of the municipalities in the Free State province as part of implementing the local government action plan. In the Free State province, we have intervened in the municipalities to align with the ANC's commitment to strengthen local government, improve service delivery, and ensure accountability to the municipalities," said Mbalula.

Briefing the media on the outcomes of the meeting, Mbalula said the party remains focused on promoting ethical leadership, building capacity, and restoring stability in local government.

"In the coming weeks, we will see changes in some of the municipalities I have mentioned in the Free State and start the process of appointing replacements. We will reconfigure the troika in certain municipalities," said Mbalula.

In August, provincial secretary Polediso Motsoeneng announced during a post-PEC media briefing that seven municipal troikas in the Free State would be reshuffled due to persistent audit disclaimers, weak leadership, and corruption allegations that have crippled service delivery.

This decision followed an oversight visit by Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), which uncovered widespread dysfunction across municipalities – including billions in missing funds, sewage spills, illegal tenders, and severe staff shortages.

Parliamentary committee chairperson Dr Zweli Mkhize described the state of Free State municipalities as "disastrous," a sentiment echoed in the Auditor-General's latest report, which highlighted rampant irregular expenditure, lack of accountability, and numerous audit disclaimers across the province.

Thuntsa Lerole Sparks Economic Boost in JB Marks



Beyond the blueprint: Thuntsa Lerole brings economic opportunities to the JB Marks Local Municipality in NW. Picture: Facebook

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

With service delivery frustrations rising across the North West, the Thuntsa Lerole Programme has hit the ground in JB Marks – delivering a fresh wave of economic opportunities for township entrepreneurs.

MEC for the Department of Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT), MEC Bitsa Lenkopane, on Friday last week, rolled out a transformative initiative in Potchefstroom. She was supported by North West Premier Mr Lazarus Mokgosi and the Mem-

ber of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Local Economic Development, Ms Malverine Davis, during a sod-turning ceremony.

Aimed at addressing critical service delivery backlogs, the programme integrates various government departments and stakeholders to deliver essential services directly to communities.

It has already been implemented across several local municipalities in the North West Province.

One of the flagship interventions—the Dunlop Wheel and Alignment Project—marks a significant milestone in stimulating township economic activity and job creation.

A newly opened site will serve as a market trading hub for small business owners, encouraging entrepreneurship and supporting sustainable livelihoods.

DEDECT says its broader mission is to promote inclusive economic growth across the province.

"The Thuntsa Lerole Programme demonstrates government's commitment to improving the lives of our people through tangible, on-the-ground initiatives. By supporting small businesses and empowering communities, we are building a sustainable and self-reliant provincial economy," said Premier Mokgosi.

The Department has also partnered with financial institutions, including ABSA, to strengthen enterprise development.

Through its Integrated Economic Development Services (IEDS) Unit, 58 informal traders have been trained in business and financial management.

In a drive to combat unemployment and poverty through entrepreneurship, all programme graduates will receive start-up resources and ongoing support to help them establish and grow sustainable businesses. "Our goal is to ensure that every initiative we launch translates into real impact – empowering




families, stimulating local economies and restoring dignity through meaningful work," said MEC Lenkopane.


The MEC further highlighted plans to strengthen environmental services, noting that out-of-school youth environmental clubs will run clean-up campaigns and establish recycling cooperatives to improve their livelihoods.

These initiatives form part of DEDECT's 'Matlakala Ke Zaka' campaign, which promotes environmental sustainability and economic opportunities for women recyclers and green entrepreneurs.

The Department says its efforts remain rooted in accelerating service delivery, empowering communities and driving inclusive economic development across the North West Province.



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ERRATUM



POST REF. 1 DIRECTORATE: OFFICE OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

This serves to place an erratum in respect of the advert published on the 2nd of November 2025 and the 12th of November 2025 in Careers 24, Bloem Express and Volksblad with the closing date of 17 November 2025.

Please be advised that the correct remuneration package for the above mentioned position is as follows:

Minimum – R 1 778 992, Mid-point – R2 155 505, Maximum – R 2 532 720

All other conditions and the closing date for the advert remain the same. Candidates who have already applied need not to re-apply. All telephonic enquiries should be directed to the Executive Manager: Human Resources, Me. Mpho Molemela at 051 412 2644. Apology for any inconvenience which might have been caused.

Anthrax and Lumpy Skin Disease Threaten Northern Cape Livestock



Livestock farmers, game farmers and land users in the Northern Cape face anthrax outbreak. Picture: Supplied

By: Matshidiso Selebeng

Livestock and game farmers in the Northern Cape are on high alert following outbreaks of Anthrax and Lumpy Skin Disease — deadly and highly contagious diseases that threaten animal health, livelihoods, and the province's agricultural productivity. Farmers are being urged to vaccinate, monitor their herds, and report any suspicious deaths immediately.

Livestock farmers, game farmers, and landowners in the Northern Cape have been urged to remain vigilant following outbreaks of Anthrax and Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), the Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform has advised.

Anthrax is a highly fatal bacterial disease caused by *Bacillus anthracis*, a gram-positive rod-shaped bacterium. The infection spreads when animals die from the disease, with flies and vultures carrying spores to nearby grazing areas and water sources. Healthy animals become infected when they ingest contaminated grass

or water. Even bones from previously infected carcasses can restart the infection cycle.

Lumpy Skin Disease, on the other hand, is a viral disease related to sheeppox. While less fatal than anthrax, it is transmitted by biting insects, including flies, mosquitoes, ticks, and midges.

"Game herbivores are usually the first to be infected with anthrax. They show symptoms such as high fever, weakness, and difficulty breathing, often followed by sudden death," explained Dr Leon Kruger, Lecturer in the Department of Animal Sciences at the University of the Free State.

"Lumpy Skin Disease presents differently: the animal develops a fever, followed by swelling and painful lesions on the legs and brisket, causing reluctance to move."

Dr Kruger added that in cases of anthrax, blood may exude from all body orifices. Farmers are legally required to report such mortalities under Act 35 of 1984.

"Contact your nearest state veterinarian, animal health technician, or private veterinarian immediately.

Keep dogs and birds away from the carcass until veterinary services arrive. Disposal typically involves burial at least 1.8 meters deep and covering the site with lime," he said. For LSD, vaccination is the only effective control measure. Farmers are encouraged to vaccinate their cattle annually before the high-risk season, as disease vectors become active following the first rains. However, free-roaming game cannot be vaccinated.

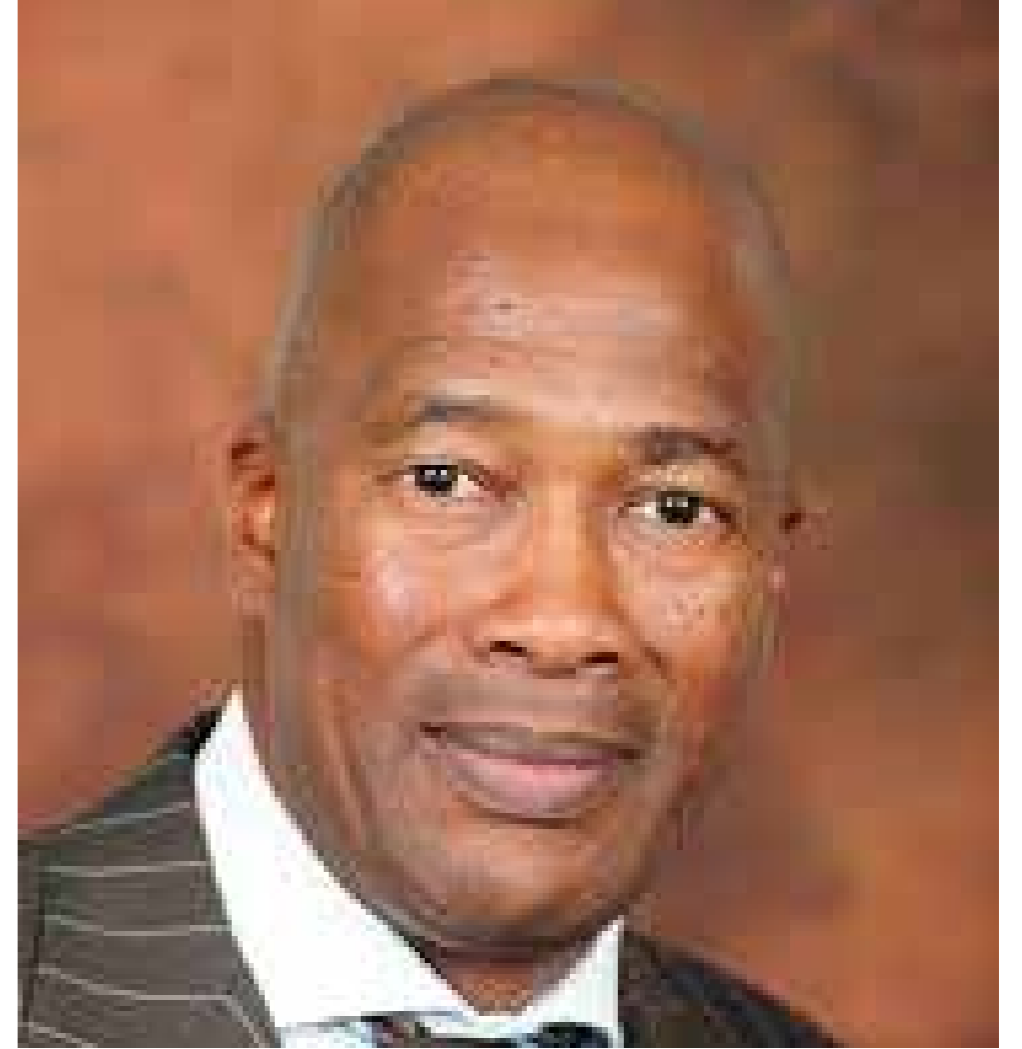
These outbreaks come just months after a Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak, which also carries legal regulations that are often unenforced.

Dr Kruger warned that such diseases can have serious impacts on agricultural production:

"Mortality and debilitating diseases affect productivity and incur secondary costs. These diseases do not discriminate — even valuable animals can be infected."

Farmers are urged to remain alert, vaccinate where possible, and comply with reporting protocols to help control the spread and protect both livestock and livelihoods.

Northern Cape Government Strengthens fight against GBV



Director-General Justice Bekebeke. Picture: Supplied

By: Abigail Visagie

In observance of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence (GBV), the Northern Cape Provincial Government has launched the initiative "Thursdays in Black." Running from 25 November to 10 December 2025, the campaign carries the theme: "Accelerating Actions to End Gender-Based Violence and Femicide while Ensuring No One Is Left Behind."

Director-General Justice Bekebeke explained that the initiative aims to renew the province's commitment to equality, dignity, and justice. "This period is an important opportunity to reflect on the impact of GBV and to reaffirm our responsibility as agents of change in our workplaces and communities," he said.

Going black on Thursdays is both a symbolic

gesture and an act of solidarity, Bekebeke noted, commemorating victims and survivors while raising visibility of the issue.

"Gender-based violence remains a serious challenge in the Northern Cape, affecting individuals, families, and communities," he added. "As a government, we recognise that combating GBV requires collective effort, compassion, and action from every public servant. Through this campaign, we aim to strengthen awareness, drive behavioural change, and build a safer, more caring province for all."

All departments are encouraged to wear black and incorporate GBV awareness messages into their programmes. Beyond this campaign, these efforts promote a culture of respect, accountability, and zero tolerance for gender-based violence year-round.

Meyiwa murder trial: Nhlahlezi Zungu claims cops told him what to say



Accused in the Senzo Meyiwa murder case. Picture: TimesLive

The defence in the murder trial of the late Bafana Bafana goalkeeper Senzo Meyiwa on Wednesday presented a new witness, Absalom Nhlahlezi Zungu, the father of police constable Sizwe Zungu, at the Pretoria High Court.

Zungu told the court that police took him to a house that was not a police station, where he was instructed to make a statement.

He said the officers told him what to say, and even gave him the names of the accused men before court.

Asked about other suspects

According to Zungu, police asked if he knew the individuals and if he knew Meyiwa's killers.

"They mentioned Muzi and Ntanzi and asked if I knew them," he said while testifying.

He told the court that he knew accused Muzi Sibiya, as his neighbour, and Bongani Ntanzi, as he is his cousin's son.

"The others I don't know."

He said this as he was led by defence advocate Charles Mnsi, who represents two of the accused.

"There wasn't much that I was going to say to them because I saw the way they treated me. But they never assaulted me," he added.

Zungu said he said what he was told to say while Brigadier Bongani Gininda was the one writing it down.

He testified that police later asked him to sign the statement, but he refused.

Wouldn't sign prepared statement

"I wouldn't have signed anything because it cannot be that a statement is going to be taken and it's taken in the bushes and not at the police station," he said.

"After that, they took me home."

When asked whether his son was part of the group that drove him back home, Zungu said he was there.

He also told the court that he never met with his son again after that day.

Before meeting up with the police, Zungu said his son had previously come to his home in Ermelo. He said his son arrived at night and, out of respect, did not drink alcohol in his presence. He went out and came back later.

When he returned, Constable Zungu asked his father to testify for them and to change his surname to Khumalo.

"He said I was going to do this for him and for Gininda. We had an argument because I had warned him about this Gininda, and he left," he said.

Connection to killers

When asked by Advocate Mnsi if it surprised him that his son had approached him to assist in finding the killers of Senzo Meyiwa, Zungu said he was shocked.

"I was surprised. And I even asked him why he would come to Ermelo instead of investigating where he was killed. I asked if he was killed in Ermelo," he told the court.

He further testified that before that visit, Constable Zungu had told him that they were about to arrest Meyiwa's killers, and that he was now attending meetings in Pretoria.

"I warned him about working with Gininda. I said if he knew the suspects, he must go to the police station, not Gininda," said Zungu.

Advocate Mnsi told the court that there had been information suggesting that Constable Zungu obtained his knowledge about the murder of Meyiwa from his father.

However Zungu denied this.

"He didn't get it from me. He's the one who would come with things, and I don't go around with them. He's the one who told me that he knows the people that killed Meyiwa. And he's my child, I know him. I saw him on a number of things, because he was looking at getting promotions," he said. *SundayWorld*

DA Criticises Collapse of Public-Private Partnerships in Mafube Municipality



DA councillor in the Mafube Local Municipality Suzette Steyn. Picture: Supplied

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in the Mafube Local Municipality have reportedly collapsed due to mismanagement and financial neglect, leaving thousands of residents frustrated by poor service delivery and delayed salary payments.

PPPs are collaborative agreements between government entities and private sector companies designed to enhance service delivery and infrastructure through shared investment and risk.

In Mafube, however, service delivery has sharply declined — water supply is inconsistent, road and infrastructure repairs have stalled, sewage maintenance has ceased, and governance issues persist.

Despite these challenges, the municipality continues to hold community engagements that many residents describe as ineffective.

"The municipality continues to host mayoral imbzos and Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) events rather than addressing urgent community needs," said DA councillor Suzette Steyn.

Residents in Villiers and Ntswanasatsi have reported going without water for up to three days, prompting two private companies to step in and assist. In Frankfort, recurring sewage leaks remain unresolved due to unpaid municipal workers.

Steyn said the DA supports private-sector collaboration for sustainable service delivery but accused municipal management of blocking such efforts.

"Rural Free State, a service provider, even offered one year of free support — auditing water meters, training staff, and improving the billing system. Yet, management under former administrator Adv. Mothusi Lepheana and acting municipal manager Selapane rejected the proposal, opting instead to hire multiple consultants at extra cost," she said.

The DA has blamed the municipality's lack of accountability, transparency, and sound financial management for its continued collapse.

"We reiterate our mission to fix dysfunctional municipalities, end corruption, and ensure affordable, reliable services for all residents," Steyn concluded.

Sol Plaatjie Workers Secured Permanent Jobs Following Protests



Municipal workers protest for permanent jobs. Picture: DFA

By: Matshidiso Selebeleng

The South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU) has secured a major victory for 497 casual workers at Sol Plaatjie Municipality, who will now be absorbed into permanent positions.

The breakthrough came on Wednesday following a special session of the Local Labour Forum, attended by SAMWU provincial and regional leadership, IMATU, Council and Management representatives, and Sol Plaatjie Executive Mayor Barbara Barlett. The first batch of 125 workers is expected to be absorbed on 1 December 2025.

The agreement follows days of tense protests, during

which workers marched from Kimberley City Hall to the municipal offices, leaving piles of rubbish in the streets to highlight their frustration. A municipal strike planned for 12 November was halted after the deal was reached.

"Our battle was fought on the principle of dignity," said SAMWU. "Municipal workers demanded justice for the non-implementation of a May 2025 Local Labour Forum resolution, which promised the absorption of 497 long-serving contract workers."

SAMWU condemned the police response to Monday's peaceful demonstration, which involved stun grenades, rubber bullets, and the arrest of one member. "Only through the swift intervention of our legal team was our comrade released on warning," the union added.

The agreement ensures the phased permanent absorption of all 497 employees and establishes regular, constructive engagements between management and organised labour, paving the way for labour stability and respectful relations.

SAMWU and IMATU have called for accountability from the South African Police Service for what they described as unwarranted brutality, emphasizing that the union will monitor the implementation of the agreement closely.

"This outcome is a testament to the courage and solidarity of Sol Plaatjie's municipal workers," said SAMWU. "We will not rest until every contract worker receives the justice they are owed."

Minor Cousins Brutally Murdered in Family Feud



Rethabile and her mother, Bendiwe Leeuw. Picture: Baagedi Sethora

By: Abigail Visagie

Cousins Katleho Joy Leeuw (3) and Onkarabets Leeuw (5) were brutally murdered days apart from each other, believed to be the victims of a horrible crime fuelled by deep-rooted rage, jealousy, and a gambling dispute.

Journal News spoke exclusively to Onkarabets' mother, Rethabile Leeuw, who believes the murders were an act of vengeance. This after she recounted a chilling visit from her cousin, Vuyiswa Leeuw, Katleho's mother, on the day Onkarabets went missing.

"Katleho's mother, Vuyiswa Leeuw, arrived at my home the day my son went missing.

She seemed quite cheerful and friendly for someone who had recently buried a child and mentioned in a happy tone that I can't have two children, and she only has," said a deeply torn Rethabile.

"This sent chills down my spine as my partner was arrested in connection with the murder of her child," she added.

Rethabile, who spoke with sorrow, mentioned that she fears for her life and the life of her remaining child.

She also revealed that she was also a victim of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), as her partner - the 29-year-old male suspect - had repeatedly physically abused her and her two children.

"I am quite relieved that my partner has been arrested as he used to viciously beat me and the children up; he showed no mercy to either of us," Rethabile stated.

Rethabile explained that her partner and his cousin, Vuyiswa, frequently engaged in gambling competitions. On the day Katleho was murdered, she won - which seldomly happens. Allegedly, the suspect could not handle Vuyiswa's victory and decided to commit a sinister act.

An anonymous neighbour alleged that the suspect, Vuyiswa, and Rethabile Leeuw are all related. The neighbour claims that Rethabile's firstborn child was a silent victim of sexual assault at the hands of her partner and further alleged that Vuyiswa killed Rethabile's five-year-old son, Onkarabets, and had cut him up to feed him to the pigs.

"Vuyiswa and one of her accomplices, a family member of mine, knew exactly where Onkarabets' body was and directed the police right to it, and Vuyiswa's blanket was found covering Onkarabets' lifeless body," the neighbour added.

Lieutenant-General Thabo Covane from the Free State South African Police Services (SAPS) has confirmed the arrest of Vuyiswa. She is expected to appear in the Bloemfontein Magistrate's Court soon after a case of kidnapping and murder was opened.

During her visit to the bereaved family on Thursday, MEC for Agriculture, Elzabe Rockman, offered words of comfort to the grieving mother, urging her to keep her remaining child safe and away from the streets.

Rockman emphasised that justice will prevail, and further extended support by providing the family with a food hamper and volunteering to assist with the burial arrangements for their late son, Onkarabets.

Ekurhuleni metro police officers involved in various crimes, commission told



The Madlanga Commission will resume Today 14 November. Picture: Supplied

A group of officers within the Ekurhuleni metro police is accused of operating as a rogue unit. They have been accused of extortion, kidnapping, theft and hijacking.

On Monday, 10 November, retired Ekurhuleni Metro Police Department (EMPD) deputy chief Revo Spies told the Madlanga Commission that a group of officers within the EMPD's specialised services unit allegedly ran a criminal racket, hijacking trucks and disappearing with their freight.

This formed part of Spies's broader testimony, in which he described how the officers "operated like rogues".

"They would hear a rumour and go out making arrests in places like Hammanskraal, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Free State. According to them, it was a success because there were arrests, but they acted completely outside their mandate. They conducted criminal investigations, which are solely the responsibility of the SAPS. They had no authority to investigate cases, yet they did it."

Spies revealed that a civilian, the owner of a security firm who has not been charged in connection with the alleged rogue EMPD activities, was a constant

presence in the alleged criminal activities. He did not name the person.

Spies dropped another bombshell, alleging that the current acting EMPD boss, Brigadier Julius Mkhwanazi, was an accessory to a murder, accused of cleaning up a crime scene. This is the same brigadier who, according to evidence before the commission, entered into an unlawful agreement with alleged organised crime leader Vusumuzi "Cat" Matlala's security company.

The Madlanga Commission is hearing evidence into alleged criminality, political interference and corruption within law enforcement, after explosive claims by KwaZulu-Natal police commissioner Lieutenant General Nhlhla Mkhwanazi, who claimed that top officials had conspired to obstruct investigations into criminal syndicates.

Crime scene clean-up alleged

According to Spies, information about the murder scene was shared during an engagement with the police watchdog, the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (Ipid), in March 2023. At the time, Spies discussed the dockets involving EMPD members under investigation by Ipid.

However, to his surprise, Ipid later informed him that they were probing the same cases and requested that EMPD hand over the dockets to them - a request to which the EMPD ultimately complied.

This murder happened on 15 April 2022 in the Brakpan area. The body was found in a dam, and according to Spies, Ipid's probe has been linked to the "rogue" EMPD officers.

It is alleged that the victim was tortured on the scene, with a rubber tyre tube pulled over his face to suffocate the person.

The commission heard that one of the EMPD members who turned State witness claimed the victim offered to pay the officers R500,000 for his release. Despite this, the person was shot and killed, and Brigadier Mkhwanazi was allegedly called to the scene.

"Arriving at the scene, the brigadier allegedly proceeded to direct them to clean the scene. The body was placed on the back of this civilian bakkie and dumped somewhere," Spies told the commission.

According to Spies, none of the officers has been charged and the matter is still under investigation.

Officers accused of theft
Spies referred to several cases being probed by Ipid

in connection with the EMPD's alleged rogue operators, including the alleged theft of a truck in Putfontein, Benoni, in 2024.

Officers allegedly arrived at the scene around 11pm and contacted their supervisor, who arranged for the driver to come only the next morning. The truck and its owner were kept overnight - an act Spies described as resembling kidnapping. When the driver arrived the next morning, the officers drove the truck off the property, claiming it was unlicensed and would be impounded. However, instead of heading to the impoundment lot, they took the N12 highway.

The truck owner followed them using a dashcam, but lost sight of the vehicle when the officers switched on their lights and sirens. The following morning, at around 4am, the truck's horse was found at the Boksburg SAPS pound, registered as a recovered stolen vehicle by the same officers. The truck's contents were missing.

The owner discovered the truck was undriveable because the gearbox controller had been removed. The case remains unresolved, with certain EMPD members implicated, but no arrests have been made.

Another case in the Hillbrow-Kensington area in

2024, known as the Precious Stones case, allegedly involved the same group of EMPD officers. A lawyer representing the victim notified the city of an intended lawsuit over the theft of precious stones worth R45-million.

The owner, who had lawful export approval, claimed the officers arrived in uniform, signed in at a nearby police station, and used an SAPS evidence disposal form to seize the stones under false pretences. When the owner reported the matter to SAPS, they had no record of the operation.

CCTV footage later confirmed the involvement of EMPD officers. The stones were never recovered, no arrests were made, and the officers were not disciplined.

The commission was advised that, to gain a clearer perspective on all the cases against the alleged rogue unit, it should begin its inquiry with Ipid.

Shocking evidence was also heard about how an informant, Jaco Hanekom, was killed after he exposed an unlawful EMPD operation in 2022 in Meyerton, where the rogue group is alleged to be involved in stealing copper. Hanekom, before his death, provided video footage of the theft. DM

Kovsie Student Shines at National Agri Writing Contest

UFS postgraduate recognized for groundbreaking article on precision agriculture and sustainable farming



By: Abigail Visagie

The University of the Free State has struck gold once again — proving, as many proudly say, that only a Kovsie knows the feeling. For Mpumelelo Ntozakhe, that feeling comes with overwhelming pride and joy.

Ntozakhe, a student in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (NAS), has been named the 2025 Young Agri Writers General Award winner for his article titled "Precision Agriculture: Revolutionising Farming with Technology."

He is currently completing his Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Agriculture at UFS while serving as a Kovsie X Programmes Coordinator and Executive Producer.

According to UFS spokesperson Teboho Mositi, Ntozakhe's award-winning article highlights how technological innovation is reshaping modern farming and strengthening sustainable agricultural production.

Ntozakhe explains that precision agriculture brings together advanced tools such as drones, GPS, sensors and data analytics to improve efficiency and sustainability on farms.

"Drones capture aerial images that help identify issues such as pests, nutrient shortages and irrigation needs, allowing for targeted responses. GPS-guided machinery ensures accurate planting, fertiliser application and water use, reducing waste and enhancing productivity," he said.

He adds that real-time data from sensors helps farmers make informed decisions about soil conditions and crop health.

Beyond the technological benefits, Ntozakhe underscores the environmental gains of precision agriculture — from conserving resources and reducing chemical use to supporting climate-resilient farming systems.

The economic advantages are equally compelling. "Higher yields, reduced input costs and improved resource management all contribute to greater profitability for farmers. This strengthens the long-term sustainability of farming operations and supports food security for a growing global population," he said.

Ntozakhe says his motivation for entering the competition stems from a deep passion for sustainable development and a desire to extend his learning beyond the classroom. He hopes to show how agricultural knowledge can spark meaningful change within communities.

"Winning has been an immensely rewarding experience. I feel humbled, inspired and motivated to continue contributing positively to the agricultural sector and to my peers," he said.

Dr Qinisani Qwabe — former lecturer, supervisor and mentor to Ntozakhe — expressed pride in his former student's accomplishment.

"I am proud of one of my former students as he is the winner of the 2025 General Award in the category 'Precision Agriculture: Revolutionising Farming with Technology.' Working with this young man was always a delight," said Qwabe.

Drawing on Xhosa wisdom, he added the idiom "Ntinga Ntaka Ndini" — keep soaring — urging Ntozakhe to continue striving for excellence.

"You have made us proud. As the saying goes, only a Kovsie knows the feeling," Qwabe concluded.

Top South African wine estate offers water tasting at R295 per person



The Fine Water Company is running the world's first Fine Water Tasting Room at The Library at Lanzerac, charging R295 per person for a fine water tasting session.

The Fine Water Company was founded in 2021 by Nico Pieterse, an experienced entrepreneur and Water Sommelier from Franschhoek.

Pieterse is one of only a few certified water sommeliers around the world, and one of only two in South Africa.

The Fine Water Company started out in Franschhoek and ran a tasting room at Chef's Warehouse at Maison. In November 2024, the Fine Water Tasting Room announced that it had found a new home at the Lanzerac Hotel in Stellenbosch.

More recently, it thanked Dr Michael Mascha for being part of the unveiling of the world's first Fine Water Tasting Room at The Library at Lanzerac.

Lanzerac's history dates back to 1692, and the

wine estate is synonymous with old-world charm and rich Cape heritage.

It belonged to former Steinhoff CEO Markus Jooste until recently, when the South African Reserve Bank attached it.

The Fine Water Company is now offering 45-minute water tasting sessions at R295 per person at The Library at Lanzerac.

"Similar to wine tastings, guests sip, evaluate, and compare the qualities of different waters," the company explained.

The Fine Water Company added that it is guided by expert insights into the water's origins and compositions.

Participants sample a variety of waters, including mineral-rich spring water, soft glacial water, purified and distilled water, and urban tap water, for comparison. There is also water from rare and exotic sources, such as the Alps, Iceland, or volcanic springs, avail-

able to taste. The Fine Water Company described a water tasting session as a unique and enlightening sensory experience.

"Participants explore the diverse flavours, textures, and aromas of water sourced from around the world," it said.

"Guided by a water sommelier or expert, it's an opportunity to discover the hidden complexity of water, much like a wine or coffee tasting."

During a water tasting, participants sample waters from pristine natural springs, exotic watersheds, and even urban tap water.

"This allows them to experience firsthand how factors such as mineral content, source, and filtration methods shape the water's characteristics," it said.

Attendees are encouraged to observe, describe, and evaluate the appearance, aroma, taste, and mouthfeel of the different waters.

For this experience, participants sip small amounts

and allow the water to linger on the tongue to experience its full profile.

They cleanse the palate between the different water samples with neutral water or mild snacks.

"The sommelier explains the differences between waters, their unique mineral compositions, and their impact on health and hydration," it said.

It explained that it allows people to discover hidden flavours. "Each water reflects its geological journey, revealing distinct tastes and textures," it said.

"Water tastings are more than an event. They're an invitation to rethink water's role in our lives," The Fine Water Company said.

"By celebrating its complexity, these experiences elevate water from an everyday necessity to a luxurious, sensory delight."

"Whether you're a connoisseur, a health enthusiast, or simply curious, a water tasting offers a fresh perspective on this life-giving resource."

Health Minister rolls out 6-month HIV treatment programme



By: Abigail Visagie

The Free State has officially launched the national Six-Month Multi-Month Dispensing (6MMD) HIV treatment programme at the MUCPP Clinic in Bloemfontein — a milestone Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi says marks a major step forward in South Africa's fight against HIV/AIDS.

Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae joined the minister at the launch, which fulfils a commitment made to the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC). TAC had submitted a memorandum late last year calling for HIV medicine collection intervals to be extended from three months to six. Motsoaledi said the new rollout shows that "the promise was kept".

The introduction of 6MMD is the result of collaboration between the Department of Health, civil society and international partners, including the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Motsoaledi emphasised that while treatment cannot prevent HIV infection, it significantly improves the quality of life for people living with HIV — and that the extended dispensing period is a reward for those who consistently manage their health responsibly. The initiative builds on

the 'End TB and Close the Gap' campaign, which sought to trace more than 1.1 million people who had tested positive for HIV but were not yet receiving treatment.

Reaffirming government's commitment to ending HIV/AIDS by 2030, Motsoaledi noted the state's R46.8-billion investment aimed at curbing new infections and eradicating the disease.

"Not everyone will qualify for the six-month dispensing programme; only those who have demonstrated responsibility in managing their health will be allowed in," he added.

Motsoaledi also announced that the Lenacapavir HIV prevention injection is expected to launch around March or April 2026. Administered twice a year, it will offer long-term protection for HIV-negative individuals, with the first rollout prioritising young women aged 16–24 and pregnant women. Premier Letsoha-Mathae reiterated the province's support for national HIV prevention efforts, urging recipients to use the treatment correctly. "The six-month treatment is not for you to share with others; it is made to minimise your clinic visits. Tshwanetse le e thlokomele," she said.

The event was also attended by the Free State MEC for Health, Monyatso Mahlatsi, and Acting Director-General Dr Molefynana Phera.

MPs accuse Cedrick Nkabinde of misleading the Committee



Cedric Nkabinde, the chief of staff of suspended Police Minister Senzo Mchunu, appeared before the Parliament ad hoc committee probing police corruption on 13 November 2025. Picture: EWN

The parliamentary ad hoc committee investigating police corruption has postponed its hearing with Cedric Nkabinde due to inaccuracies in his sworn statement.

Now MPs want Minister Senzo Mchunu's chief of staff to go back and fix the discrepancies in his submission around the dates and meetings with implicated individuals like Brown Mogotsi.

Nkabinde was set to appear for the whole day to give his testimony, but proceedings were postponed just before the lunch break.

Cedric Nkabinde's evidence had focused on his relationships with Nhlanelhla Mkhwanazi and how he got to know corruption-accused businessman Brown Mogotsi.

He told the committee about when he first made contact with Mogotsi, leading up to the directive to disband the political killings task team last December. Nkabinde also got his dates wrong on when Minister

Mchunu was in Lusikisiki following the killing of 18 people last year, saying it was in September instead of October.

Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) leader Julius Malema accused him of misrepresenting facts.

"You must say you completely want to apologise to a particular extent, even ask that you withdraw this affidavit and go and do a proper affidavit where you remember dates."

ActionSA MP Dereleen James: "You've given us a sworn statement and you now come and say you have thumbsucked dates."

But Nkabinde told MPs that his devices were seized over a month ago during a raid at his house and he had no way of verifying certain dates.

After a short adjournment, chairperson Soviet Lekganyane ceded to calls for the meeting to be deferred to allow Nkabinde time to correct his statement.

EWN

South Africa reaffirms commitment to equitable water and sanitation access



The Ministry of Water and Sanitation has reaffirmed its commitment to accelerating equitable and sustainable access to water and sanitation services across South Africa.

The commitment was made at the Association of Water and Sanitation Institutions of South Africa (AWSISA) Africa and Global South Water and Sanitation Dialogue, which is currently underway at Emperors Palace, in Johannesburg.

The dialogue was formally declared opened by Deputy President Paul Mashatile, supported by the Minister of Water and Sanitation, Penny Majodina, through a virtual address on Monday, 10 November 2025.

In his address, the Deputy President highlighted the urgency of advancing water security and dignified sanitation across all communities, while strengthening partnerships across Africa and the Global South.

More than 1,500 delegates are in attendance, including government leaders, water utility executives, researchers, civil society organisations, youth innovators, and private sector partners.

The Ministry recognises that Africa's water and sanitation challenges are shared, transboundary and deeply interconnected. This is why South Africa continues to work closely with African governments, regional bodies

and strategic global partners to advance the Africa Water Vision 2063, which seeks a prosperous and water-secure continent where water is equitably and sustainably managed.

Held under the theme: "Towards Sustainable Water and Sanitation Security in Africa", the dialogue reflects and acknowledges the shared exposure to climate shocks, rapid urbanisation and the systemic pressures facing public infrastructure and institutions.

The dialogue goes beyond knowledge exchange but also creates a strategic platform, where policy harmonisation is pursued, technological solutions are tested for local relevance and cross-border partnerships are strengthened.

It also aims to accelerate infrastructure delivery, align regulatory reforms and unlock blended investment models capable of sustaining long-term development.

In her address, Water and Sanitation Minister Penny Majodina reiterated and emphasised the Ministry's commitment to enhancing the delivery of water and sanitation services across the country, especially in disadvantaged and underserved communities.

"Our commitment is deeply rooted in restoring dignity to our communities.

We are intensifying our work in the most disadvan-

tagged and underserved areas. Every household, every school and every clinic deserves safe and dependable water.

This is not just an aspiration; but a right we are actively realising through investment, partnership and accountable delivery," Majodina said.

AWSISA was officially established in August this year through a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Department of Water and Sanitation. This milestone marked a shared effort to strengthen collaboration across the sector and expand access to clean water and dignified sanitation for communities in South Africa and across the continent.

The agreement cemented a unified commitment to unlock investment, drive innovation, and accelerate service delivery.

It also provides a framework for aligning sector strategies and plans, promoting joint engagement on policy and regulatory reform, advancing research, data-sharing, and sector-wide capacity building, amongst others.

South Africa remains steadfast in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 6 on Clean Water and Sanitation and in supporting Africa's collective progress toward a just, inclusive, and water-secure future. — *SAnews.gov.za*

FS municipality challenged over unlawful 15 year fixed-term contracts



The troubled Dhlalabeng Local Municipality in Bethlehem, Free State must permanently hire a group of employees, who it appointed for between eight and 15 years on fixed-term contracts and in the process bungling labour laws.

Mangwajane Mofokeng, Mamahlape Galawe, Tshepiso Ramosena, Thabo Motloung and Helena Wille were either appointed as part of the municipality's graduate development programme or their contracts were not specific to a position for which they were appointed.

Wille was hired in a temporary administrative position while the others were part of graduate and learner development programmes.

The Labour Court in Braamfontein, Johannesburg heard that the group's contracts were expressly fixed-term and were lawfully concluded under the Labour Relations Act (LRA) subject to compliance with the section prohibiting abuse of successive fixed-term contracts.

The workers, who were represented by the Independent Municipal and Allied Trade Union (Imatu), com-

plained that their contracts were continuously extended or renewed by abusing fixed-term contracts.

"This is not a situation where the applicant (Dhlalabeng) appointed them permanently without justification, but rather where the applicant persistently renewed and abused fixed-term arrangements for its own operational reasons," the workers stated.

The workers initially took the matter to the SA Local Government Bargaining Council (SALGBC), which ruled in their favour. The Dhlalabeng Local Municipality challenged the ruling at the Labour Court in Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

"The court recognises that the applicant has engaged in a prolonged pattern of employing respondents on successive fixed-term contracts spanning eight to 15 years. This pattern is troubling and likely in breach of section 198B (of the Labour Relations Act [LRA]).

The applicant's (the municipality's) failure to seek a review of the arbitration award within the prescribed timeframe means the award is now final and binding,"

Labour Court acting Judge Coen de Kock explained last month.

According to acting Judge De Kock, the municipality was obliged to comply with the SALGBC award by ensuring that the necessary approval or that endorsement is obtained from the council as well as the staff establishment being updated to make provision for the permanent posts of the five employees.

The Labour Court dismissed the municipality's challenge of the SALGBC's ruling on the grounds that it was not brought within a reasonable time and that the interests of justice do not favour it being heard.

Acting Judge De Kock also ordered that the municipality must comply with the arbitration award within 30 days from October 29, 2025.

The workers' representative, Imatu, said it will continue to challenge procedural irregularities and the misuse of fixed-term contracts wherever they occur.

Attempts to contact the municipality were unsuccessful.

Government on path to increase infrastructure development



With the recognition that higher and more efficient infrastructure investment is essential to unlock faster and more inclusive growth, government is partnering with the private sector to strengthen infrastructure delivery and improve the quality of spending.

"We are leveraging public resources to mobilise private finance and expertise at scale to strengthen service delivery, improve spending effectiveness and drive higher economic growth," Minister of Finance Enoch Godongwana said on Wednesday.

Presenting the Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) at a sitting of the National Assembly at the Good Hope Chamber in Parliament, the Minister said capital payments are the fastest growing expenditure item at 7.5% over the medium-term.

In line with the vision contributing towards economic growth and advancing the pillar of growth-enhancing infrastructure, government is shifting the composition of spending from consumption to investment.

The amendments to Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) took effect on 1 June 2025, and these unlock the potential across spheres of government and streamline approvals for smaller projects.

"Three weeks ago, new guidelines on unsolicited bids and fiscal commitments and contingent liabilities were issued and these took effect immediately.

"The unsolicited bid guideline provides a clear structured pathway for the private sector to submit project ideas to government.

"It also provides a framework for reporting and managing of fiscal commitments and contingent liabilities arising from PPP projects," the Minister said.

Municipal PPP regulations will be amended by 2026.

Leveraging lessons from the Renewable Energy Independent Power Producers (IPPs) project, to streamline planning and procurement, the Department of Transport's private-sector participation unit is reviving the passenger transport and logistics sector.

"Following strong interest from the freight logistics requests for information, the unit will issue the first rail corridor request for proposal by December 2025, with others following in early 2026.

"The unit has also issued requests for information for investment opportunities in modernising and growing the passenger rail system.

"The Water Partnerships Office is making progress in preparing non-revenue water and reuse projects across municipalities. These will create a robust pipeline for the private sector to co-invest in," the Minister said.

Government has reconfigured the Budget Facility for Infrastructure (BFI) to run four bid windows annually instead of just one.

Since the reconfiguration, the BFI has received 28 submissions. Nine projects were accepted for

detailed analysis.

"Funding to the tune of R4.1 billion is also allocated for disaster relief to fix schools, pipelines, clinics and substations damaged between last year and this year by flooding in KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, and the Eastern Cape.

"To raise the funding for these BFI projects, a new infrastructure bond will be launched soon to raise a minimum of R15 billion.

"The bond forms part of our efforts to introduce dedicated financing instruments that can mobilise cheaper financing to support our infrastructure agenda," the Minister said.

Government will also contribute to R2 billion to capitalise the Credit Guarantee Vehicle.

"Initially, the vehicle will support electricity transmission expansion, directly contributing to our efforts at energy security while also driving decarbonisation.

"This heralds a new era in PPPs, where private investment in high-voltage transmission lines is enabled. This is real progress in our move away from merely fixing the power utility to securing power to the grid from a range of sources.

"This is real progress in our move away from merely fixing the power utility to securing power to the grid from a range of sources," he said.

The Minister said it was a key and innovative part of infrastructure reforms developed with international partners to de-risk private investment without state guarantees.

"We are also committed to simplifying the institutional arrangements across the infrastructure ecosystem. The new Infrastructure Finance and Implementation Support Agency will be operational by March 2026," he said.

The agency will provide project preparation support to supply the BFI pipeline.

"It will centralise infrastructure finance functions to systematically crowd-in private capital and promote the use of alternative delivery mechanisms.

"Madam Speaker, municipalities are at the forefront of providing essential services. However, many are fraught with capacity constraints that hinder their ability to turn allocated budgets into reliable services.

"It is for these reasons that several reforms have been introduced to urgently remedy this untenable situation," the Minister said.

Government is piloting a utility reform programme to stabilise and professionalise water and electricity businesses in a few municipalities in Mpumalanga.

"We will use accredited indirect delivery partners such as the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA) to provide the infrastructure while building municipal capability to do this on their own.

"Honourable members, this is how we will ensure that our goal of public sector investment in infrastructure exceeds the R1 trillion mark over the next three years," the Minister said. — *SAnews.gov.za*

Bloemfontein Children's Choir prepares for Belgian tour

The Bloemfontein Children's Choir (BCC) will host its 2025 Gala Concerts on 3 and 4 December at the Odeon, University of the Free State, marking 38 years of choral excellence. The concerts will feature the choir's "Sounds of Africa" programme, presented ahead of its much-anticipated Belgian Christmas Tour later in December.

Audiences can look forward to a vibrant and uplifting showcase, including timeless classics such as *Adiemus* by Karl Jenkins, *Heal the World* by Michael Jackson, *Ode to Joy* by Beethoven, and *Hallelujah* from Handel's *Messiah*.

The Gala Concerts serve as a prelude to the choir's 17th visit to Belgium, where the BCC will perform 16 concerts across the country. Highlights of the tour include a historic first performance at the European Parliament, as well as

appearances in renowned venues in Bruges, Leuven, and St. Truiden, among others.

Under the inspired direction of Werner Standen, the choir has continued to flourish, earning two gold medals and the Junior Choir Division title at the Cape Town Eisteddfod (2023), performing at the National Mzansi Conductors Convention, and enchanting audiences during its 2022 European Tour, which featured a standout performance at Disneyland Paris.

As the BCC celebrates nearly four decades of musical excellence, the "Sounds of Africa" Gala Concerts promise an evening of joy, unity, and cultural pride, showcasing the extraordinary talent and spirit of young voices. Tickets are available via Webtickets.

*This article was first published by Bloemfontein Courant

DA Students' Organisation addresses ongoing crisis of gender-based violence and femicide across South Africa's campuses



The Democratic Alliance Students' Organisation (DASO) expresses great concern at recent cases of the appointment of individuals with pending sexual assault allegations to leadership roles within Student Representative Councils, including at WITS, UCT, and NMU.

This undermines both the integrity of student governance and the safety of survivors, sending a chilling message that accountability is being ignored.

DASO urges the Minister of Police and Justice to take bold and decisive steps to reform our criminal justice system, and as we watch the collapse of national policing in real time at the Madlanga Commission and Ad Hoc Committee, DASO demands that policing is devolved to competent provincial and municipal levels in order to address the inefficiencies and failures of the national SAPS in combating crime. Our students need law enforcement institutions and justice institutions that truly serve as spaces of safety and dignity for all, and which intervene when the crime of GBV is reported – not sometimes, but EVERY time.

South Africa needs faster prosecution of GBVF cases and providing stronger support systems for survivors, so that justice is delivered, not delayed and never denied.

In a collective show of solidarity and remembrance, DASO expresses our support for the growing movement across the country, recognizing and highlighting the scourge of gender-based violence across South Africa.

DASO urges all students and South Africans to take a visible stand against GBVF. We call on students to wear black and purple as colours of solidarity – to honour survivors, to mourn the lives lost to this injustice, and to reaffirm our collective, unyielding demand for justice. *By Andrea Martinez - DASO federal chairperson*

Opinion

Dr. Bhekiswa Mthembu
corporate strategist, author, and social entrepreneur committed to driving socio-economic change



The Oceans Economy – SA's Next Industrial Frontier



In a country where the oceans generate R130 billion annually but rural poverty persists at 70%, the question is not whether the blue economy has potential—it's whether that potential will reach the people who need it most. For the GNU, the 2026 elections will be a referendum on delivery, not policy.

Few South Africans outside coastal regions stop to consider the oceans economy as a serious lever of economic change. It's often treated as niche—something for ports, logistics companies, or tourism brochures. But that perception is not only limiting; it is dangerous. The blue economy encompasses industries such as maritime transport, aquaculture, offshore renewable energy, marine tourism, and coastal manufacturing. Together, these contribute over R130 billion annually to South Africa's GDP and hold the potential to create up to one million new jobs by 2033.

Despite this, access to opportunity within the oceans economy remains deeply unequal. In the Eastern Cape—a province defined by both coastal access and rural marginalisation—the divide is stark. Less than 20% of maritime contracts go to Black-owned SMMEs, women hold only 22% of senior roles in the sector, and just 15% of aquaculture ventures are Black-owned. Fewer than 5% of rural youth access maritime training through SAMSA. This isn't about capacity—it's about access. And until we design pathways that connect the oceans economy to the rural majority, we will continue to entrench coastal privilege over national equity.

Amathole District Municipality offers a caution-

ary case. Despite being adjacent to national logistics infrastructure like Ngqura Port and the Coega SEZ, Amathole remains under financial intervention with a R2.5 billion water infrastructure deficit. Its proximity to economic opportunity has not translated into participation. This is not a failure of geography. It is a failure of design.

The implications go beyond the Eastern Cape. The concentration of blue economy benefits in select urban nodes mirrors South Africa's broader economic spatial inequality. The country has historically pursued industrialisation strategies that favour metropolitan centres, leaving rural and peri-urban areas undercapitalised and underconnected. But if the blue economy is to be the next industrial frontier, it must start where the need is greatest—and that is in districts like Amathole, OR Tambo, and Alfred Nzo.

To realise the equity potential of the oceans economy, three strategic shifts are needed. First, institutions must embed accountability for transformation outcomes—not just budget spend. This includes public dashboards tracking black supplier contracts, and performance agreements that tie government investment to measurable equity goals. These tools can ensure that state investment doesn't merely circulate within established networks but acts as a conduit for economic participation.

Second, we must rewire the talent pipeline. Rural districts need to be at the centre of maritime training and entrepreneurship programmes—not an afterthought. Skills development must be integrated with placement pipelines and incubator

infrastructure that connects training to contracts. Institutions such as the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA), Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs), and local municipalities must collaborate on rural-first strategies that make maritime careers visible, viable, and valuable to young people far from the coastline.

Finally, market access must become a right, not a favour. Ports and coastal value chains should be governed by procurement quotas that open the door to Black, women-led and youth-run enterprises—particularly from underrepresented inland and rural regions. Without deliberate procurement reform, the blue economy will reproduce the same exclusionary patterns that plague other high-growth sectors.

This is not theory. The foundations already exist. Operation Phakisa has mobilised over R170 billion in investment. Coega alone sustains 10,000 direct jobs. The offshore wind potential along the Eastern Cape coast is enough to power the province twice over. Seaweed farming, an emerging sector, could generate R5 billion in revenue annually. The issue isn't opportunity—it's ownership.

And ownership starts with alignment. Between national policy and local capability. Between coastal infrastructure and rural economies. Between what the state builds and what the people can access.

The GNU's promise of inclusive growth must take root here. For this to happen, political will must be matched with institutional courage.

If the blue economy is approached with the same centralised, compliance-heavy mindset that has hamstrung other transformation efforts, it will fall short. Instead, we need a decentralised model that gives district municipalities a role in designing and driving blue economy interventions. This could include municipal blue economy funds—seeded through conditional debt relief—that support local entrepreneurs and cooperatives to enter the maritime value chain.

We cannot build a truly inclusive economy if rural governance is bypassed. As we head into the 2026 local elections, the blue economy cannot be left to port authorities and planning documents.

It must be reclaimed as a national priority with rural delivery at its core. This is not about expanding a niche—it's about unlocking a frontier.

When a young woman in Butterworth supplies sustainable packaging to Ngqura, when a graduate in Alice is trained to install offshore wind farms, when a small-scale aquaculture business in Mthatha exports seaweed to Asia—we are not just transforming GDP figures. We are transforming the social contract.

The tide is rising. The question is not whether South Africa will ride it. The question is: who will own the ships?

Global Citizen is Coming to South Africa Again



Refilwe Mochoari
Editor-in-Chief

As we count down to the world's largest presidential gathering which is taking place from 18 to 23 November, I cannot help but feel a sense of excitement and anticipation.

Hi everyone, my name is Refilwe Mochoari, and I'm thrilled to share with you that I have received an invitation from the Global Citizen movement to attend their Global Citizen Now event, happening on the eve of the G20 leadership summit in Johannesburg.

For those who may not be familiar, Global Citizen is a movement and platform that empowers individuals to take action on pressing global issues, with a focus on eliminating extreme poverty.

According to the movement extreme poverty can be eradicated, and all people can mobilise the necessary resources to make it happen.

It's a lofty goal, but I firmly believe that together, we can make a difference.

Being part of the Global Citizen movement means recognising the systemic inequalities that perpetuate poverty, racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression.

It means understanding that our individual voices may be small, but collectively, we are a powerful force for change.

As the movement's mantra goes, "When we use our voices together, we are powerful, and we can ensure lasting change in the mission to defeat poverty."

The Global Citizen Now event marks a significant milestone, as it is the first time this flagship gathering is taking place on African soil.

This event is part of the year-long Scaling Up Renewables in Africa (SURA) campaign, aimed at accelerating investment in renewable energy and driving bold action ahead of the G20 leaders' summit.

The lineup of speakers is impressive, featuring President Cyril Ramaphosa, Zambian President Hakande Hichilema, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen, musician Yvonne Chakachaka, Pearl Thusi, Sim Ngezi, and the event will be hosted by the talented Nomzamo Mbatha.

I cannot wait to see the conversations that will unfold during the summit.

But what does such an event mean for an ordinary person like you and me?

It's simple, it is a call to action.

But it is also an opportunity for us to come together, raise our voices, and demand change.

We have the power to shape the future, to hold our leaders accountable, and to ensure that everyone has access to basic human rights like clean water, sanitation, and energy.

I believe that the preparations for the Global Citizen Now event are at an advanced stage and this is certainly a movement that I am comfortable aligning myself with because of my personal values.

So I urge you to join me in this movement.

Let us learn, let us grow, and let us take action.

Let us show the world that we care, and that we will no longer stand idly by while millions suffer in poverty.

Together, we can make a difference. Together, we can create a poverty-free future.

We have only nine days left before the event, and I cannot wait to see what the future holds.

Fun Facts about the importance of the Global Citizen Movement:

Being a Global Citizen means believing that extreme poverty can be eliminated.

Believing that resources to end it can be mobilised if enough people take action.

It means learning about the systemic inequalities that fuel poverty.

It means realising that when we use our voices together, we are powerful.

You can ensure lasting change in the mission to defeat poverty and defend the planet.

Global Citizens recognise the power of advocacy.

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

The Necessity Of Disruption

Change is a normal condition of life, not an abnormal occurrence.

Why is it so hard for people to change, even those of us who are dedicated to leading and bringing about change in others?

Good leaders may feel successful when they do all the I's and cross all the T's, but great leaders understand that their lives and their leadership are inherently disruptive.

They are thinking new thoughts, introducing new ideas, charting new paths, creating new products and services, finding new ways to connect with people, and, in all of this, creating a lot of tension before they resolve any of it.

MBA professor and corporate culture expert John Mattone observes, "The comfort zone—yes, it feels good, but in reality is the most painful existence and is not going to get you anywhere. The best CEOs are constantly disruptive."

We don't create disruption as a means of throwing people off balance so we can control them. That's pathology, not leadership.

Instead, we understand that a certain level of disturbance is inevitable as we move our organizations forward. King Solomon may not have been a farmer or a rancher, but he understood how to use analogies from the countryside.

He wrote, "Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean, but abundant crops come by the strength

of the ox" (Proverbs 14:4 ESV).

If we want everything in our organizations to be neat and clean, we'll miss out on the opportunity to use the creativity and strength of our brightest people—people whose contributions often create messes!

We have the responsibility to create a certain level of disruption by intentionally enlisting the best ideas and trying new directions.

Otherwise, we will suffer disruption forced upon us by circumstances that seem beyond our control. Either we will lead boldly in the midst of disruption or it will crush us—it's our choice.

I hope I'm disrupting your thinking. I want to push you to think about embracing the seasons of ambiguity and even welcoming them instead of believing there's something tragically wrong when you don't have all the answers.

I want to make you feel uncomfortable...and like it! In fact, if you don't feel resistant to this concept,

"Where there are no oxen, the manger is clean, but abundant crops come by the strength of the ox"



Pastor Motsamai Kareli
Empowerment Ministries International

I haven't pushed hard enough.

I want you to think of me as a dentist and you're in the chair. The closer I get to you and the exposed nerve with the drill in my hand, the more you squirm.

If you get up and leave, you'll still have that cavity and it will cause more harm. But if you overcome your resistance, stay in the chair, and give yourself to the process, we can address the problem so you can move on with your life.

Another analogy makes the same point: a fighter pilot knows he's in the right spot when he's getting anti-aircraft fire. If you're not catching flack for your disruptive ideas, you're not over your target yet. Keep flying.

Let me press a little more: Newton's third law says that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. If your goal is to eliminate all disruption, you won't move at all.

If you move, if you rock the boat and make waves, you'll get an equal and opposite reaction, at least from some people.

Sometimes the resistance is your own sense that

good leadership should create a smooth pond; this idea of disruptive leadership seems foreign, strange, and wrong.

But often, the resistance comes from those who expect you to always give them smooth waters. Your job is to help them embrace disruption and ambiguity so real progress can happen.

Counselors, coaches, and great business leaders understand that resistance is unavoidable if organizations are going to move forward. It's not a flaw and it's not a sin.

We don't make progress personally without creating tension between what has been and what can be.

The people in our organizations won't move ahead until they learn to interpret their sense of uneasiness as an opportunity to be more creative and effective than ever. Our job is to reframe their resistance for them.

I'm not saying that every time others resist our ideas that we're right and they're slow and dense. They may have very good reasons to resist our ideas!

Resistance forces us to think more deeply, communicate more clearly, determine if the path we're on can be improved, and then help people see the benefits of a season of chaos.

We will continue on the next article on why change is so hard.

Business

Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	16.97	0.67%	▲
Rand/Pound	22.33	0.50%	▲
Rand/Euro	19.71	0.47%	▲
Platinum	1 622.10	0.33%	▲
Brent Crude	62.89	0.35%	▲
Gold	4 234.03	0.95%	▲
Etherium	3501.09	2.35%	▲
Bitcoin	102895	1.01%	▲

Early Rains Worry Bloem Maize Farmer



Farmers continue to face tough weather conditions and hope for better summer rainfall. Picture: Food For Mzansi.

By: JN Reporter

A Bloemfontein maize farmer has voiced concern over recent early rains, warning that they may signal a potential mid-summer drought later in the season.

Farmer Laurens Schlebusch said the early rainfall is not ideal for planting maize, as the optimal planting period in the region typically begins around 16 December. "Unfortunately, this is not the best time to plant maize," said Schlebusch.

"Old farmers always said mid-December is the right time. If we plant now, we might face a mid-summer drought in February — that's our biggest concern at this stage. It looks like La Niña will flatten out in January."

Despite the risk, Schlebusch expressed some relief that the rains have benefited grazing lands, helping farmers plant feed for their livestock.

He noted that the province, particularly its eastern parts, had already received heavy rainfall in recent weeks.

However, the South African Weather Service (SAWS) has recently issued a seasonal forecast indicating that the upcoming summer season is likely to bring above-normal rainfall across much of the country.

While this presents opportunities for improved water availability, experts warn that it also increases the risk of flooding, waterlogging, and crop stress in some regions.

Wetter-than-normal conditions are expected to develop toward mid-summer, especially across the eastern interior, including parts of North West, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, and the Eastern Cape.

"The forthcoming summer season will likely be wet-

ter than normal, with the probability of above-normal rainfall increasing towards mid-summer," the SAWS said.

According to the Climate Prediction Centre (CPC/NCEP/NWS), La Niña conditions are currently present and expected to continue through December 2025 to February 2026, with a 55% chance of transitioning to El Niño-Southern Oscillation (Enso)-neutral between January and March 2026.

SAWS noted that for South Africa, this generally translates into "favourable rainfall conditions for the summer rainfall areas in the north-eastern parts of the country, although it may also increase the likelihood of flooding during summer."

At the recent Atlas AgriSA Congress, Dr Christien Engelbrecht, meteorologist at the SAWS, shared a broader outlook on Southern Africa's changing climate.

"It's likely to become generally dry and at the same time this region is certain to become drastically warm, especially if the future, or under the assumption of course, that we keep on emitting greenhouse gases at the current rates of emissions, so under so-called low mitigation futures," she said.

She warned that a generally drier future and a much hotter future for Southern Africa is really bad news because it is a water-stressed region, and when a water-stressed region becomes much warmer and likely drier, the options for climate change adaptation are really limited.

Engelbrecht highlighted that while many regions face increasing drought and heat stress, the eastern escarpment, including the Drakensberg and KwaZulu-Natal, presents a more complex outlook.

About half of climate models project a wetter future, and the other half a drier one, but nearly all agree that

extreme rainfall events will become more frequent. These intense events are expected to bring heavy downpours and flooding similar to the April 2022 and June 2025 Mthatha floods.

"So indeed, over eastern South Africa, we need to prepare increasingly for flood risk. We are speaking of really intense rainfall events caused by cut-off lows, a certain type of weather system that many of our farmers will know much about because it's so important in terms of bringing rainfall to the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, sometimes over the interior. But that type of weather system is becoming more dangerous," Engelbrecht said.

Engelbrecht explained that as the Indian Ocean warms, evaporation into the atmosphere increases, making weather systems more powerful and capable of bringing heavier rainfall.

"In central Southern Africa and the western parts, it's certainly about more long-lasting, more intense droughts and much more intense heatwaves than we are used to. We can already expect unprecedented heatwaves occurring in the next 10 years compared to the last 10 years," she said.

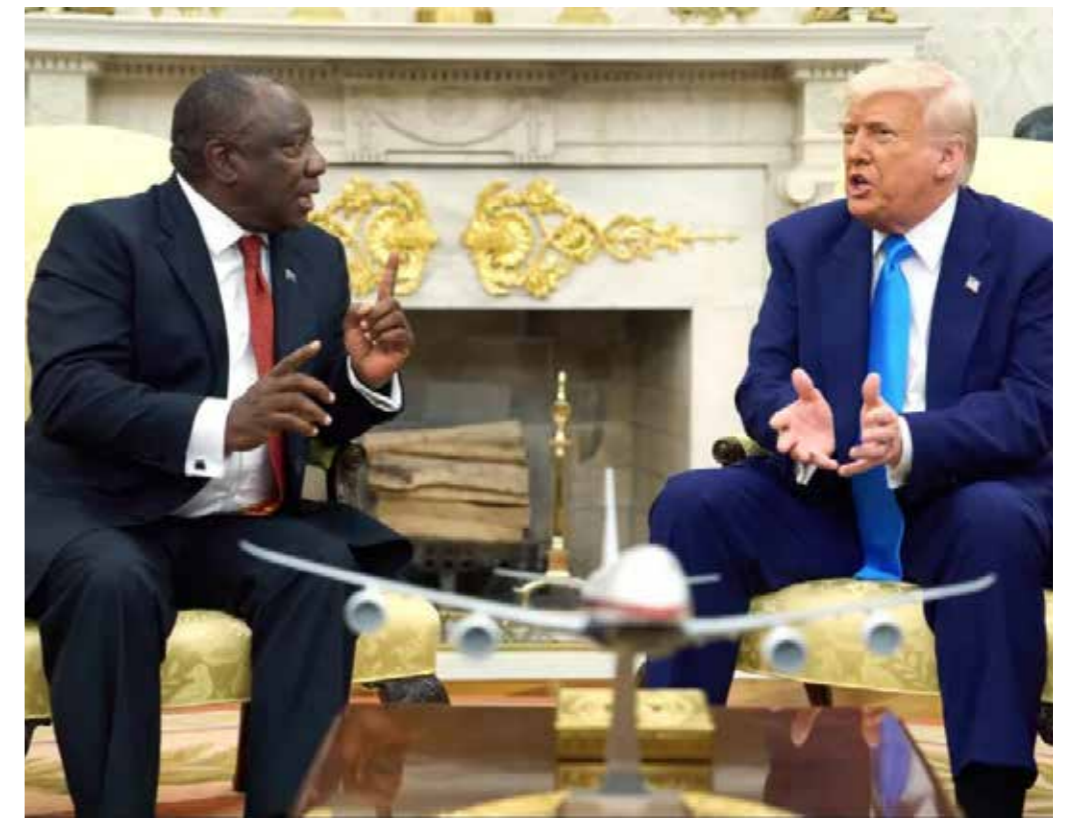
Soil scientist Peter Mudau advised farmers to pay close attention to their soil types and drainage capacity during this high rainfall period.

"La Niña season is those times of growing crops in above-normal rainfall. Farmers need to be aware of the type of soils they have and how to manage the planting schedules.

"It would be advisable for farmers to monitor soil water content in their fields to introduce strategies that will mitigate excess water in their fields and further assist with improving crop performance," he said.

Additional reporting by SABC and Food for Mzansi.

'It's their loss': Ramaphosa Hits Back at Trump's G20 Boycott



US President Donald Trump, right, meets South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in the Oval Office of the White House on May 21, 2025, in Washington, DC. Picture: RSA Presidency

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa says "boycott politics doesn't work" as he hit back at US President Donald Trump's decision to skip the G20 leaders' summit in Johannesburg later this month.

Trump has said that no US official would attend the gathering over widely discredited claims that white people are being persecuted in South Africa.

Speaking outside parliament, Ramaphosa said the US's "absence is their loss" and that the boycott would not prevent the meeting from going ahead, according to the AFP news agency.

He added that the US was "giving up the very important role that they should be playing as the biggest economy in the world".

The G20 summit is taking place between 22-23 November but in a post on social media, Trump said it was a "total disgrace" that South Africa was hosting it.

He had earlier said South Africa should not be in the G20 at all, and that he would send Vice-President JD Vance, instead of attending himself.

Then over the weekend, he doubled down on his claims that "Afrikaners [people who are descended from Dutch settlers, and also French and German immigrants] are being killed and slaughtered, and their land and farms are being illegally confiscated".

"No US government official will attend as long as these human rights abuses continue," he added.

Trump has previously said that while he is trying to restrict the number of refugees the US accepts, Afrikaners would be welcome.

Ramaphosa said "boycotting never achieves anything of great impact, because decisions will be taken that will move the various issues ahead", AFP reports.

South Africa is the current chair of the G20 grouping of the world's largest economies.

The forthcoming summit will mark the first time it takes place on African soil.

Every year, a different member state holds the G20 presidency and sets the agenda for the leaders' summit, where they discuss the major economic issues of the day - with the US due to take over from South Africa.

Trump is not the only leader set to skip the G20. Hi close ally, Argentinian President Javier Milei, has also indicated he will not attend but will instead send his Foreign Minister Pablo Quirno, AFP reports. South Africa's government has said that claims of a white genocide are "widely discredited and unsupported by reliable evidence".

It also says that no white farmers have seen their land confiscated without compensation. **BBC**

New study reveals deepening food security crisis in SA



A community member grabs a piece of fruit at the food market. Picture: SABC.

A new study commissioned by Food Forward SA and the University of Cape Town has revealed that the crisis of food insecurity in South Africa is deepening.

High food prices have affected approximately 16 million people, especially female and youth-headed households.

The study has identified the Eastern Cape as the epicentre. FoodForward SA managing director Andy du Plessis says there's an urgent need for collective interventions,

"It's a piece of research that took 18 months to complete and what we were able to do was we did just over 750 in-person interviews with people who receive food services from our beneficiary organization network across the country.

What we wanted to do was get deeper insights into household food insecurity. We found that people's buying patterns have changed. They buy cheaper food and they are eating smaller meals so that the food can stretch. The severity of food insecurity has deepened and worsened." **SABCNews**

Godongwana announces debt stabilisation, 3% inflation target

Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana delivered the Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) in Parliament on Wednesday 12 November, confirming that government debt will stabilise at 77.9% of GDP in 2025-'26.

These details were crucial in laying out the plans for the Medium-Term Budget for 2025 — South Africa's first such milestone since the 2008 financial crisis.

Godongwana said the fiscal turnaround follows stronger tax collection, improved efficiency worth R6,7 billion, and better-than-expected economic growth.

"This is the first time since 2008 that public debt will not grow as a percentage of GDP," said Godongwana. "We have achieved this without resorting to harsh austerity."

Monetary policy overhaul

The Finance Minister announced a major policy shift, setting a new 3% inflation target with a 1% tolerance band, replacing the previous 3 to 6% range. This policy aligns with the strategic plans laid out in the Medium-Term Budget 2025.

"South Africa will move towards international best practice," he explained. The new target will be implemented gradually over two years in partnership with the South African Reserve Bank.

The tighter band aims to strengthen price stability and help consumers and businesses plan long-term investments with greater confidence.

Infrastructure-led growth strategy

Godongwana outlined a R1 trillion infrastructure investment programme over three years. Capital expenditure will grow by 7,5% annually, making it the fastest-growing budget item. This is a significant part of the Medium-Term Budget.

"We are leveraging public resources to attract private finance and expertise to drive growth," he said.

A new R15 billion infrastructure bond will support projects in energy, logistics and water, key sectors that underpin economic recovery.

Economic growth and structural reforms

Real GDP growth is projected at 1,2% for 2025, up from 0,5% in 2024, with an average 1,8% between 2026 and 2028.

Godongwana said government continues to tackle energy and logistics bottlenecks. About 2 220 MW of renewable energy projects are underway, and private participation in ports and freight rail could unlock R200 billion in new investment.

A national water resource infrastructure agency will begin operations by April 2026, following amendments to the Water Services Act — reforms all part of the broader Medium-Term Budget 2025 strategy.

Fiscal efficiency and savings

National Treasury plans to save R6,7 billion by scrapping underperforming programmes and introducing an early-retirement scheme worth R3,5 billion in an-

nual savings.

Authorities will also intensify enforcement against illicit trade, which has cost about R40 billion in excise revenue since 2020. These measures are aligned with the goals set out for Medium-Term Budget 2025.

Budget balance and allocations

The overall deficit will narrow from 4,5% of GDP in 2025-'26 to 2,7% by 2028-'29. Debt-service costs will grow more slowly at 3,8% annually, compared with earlier projections of 7,7%.

New allocations include:

- R2 billion to rebuild Parliament;
- R1 billion for the 2026 municipal elections; and
- R4.1 billion for disaster relief in flood-affected provinces.

Political and market response

Godongwana said the statement "sends a clear message, South Africa is choosing growth, stability, and reform."

The announcement follows the country's exit from the FATF grey list and comes ahead of its African G20 presidency, reflecting stronger international confidence in the plans laid out by the Medium-Term Budget 2025.

The MTBPS will now undergo parliamentary review and public consultation before the February 2026 national budget. **novanews**

GET TO KNOW YOUR DJ

Grand Multipurpose Beats with Steve Musiq



By: Lerato Mutlanyane

If your weekend does not start with a bass drop, you have not met Steve Musiq.

Presenting the architect of vibes, he does not just play music, he creates acoustic sanctuaries where rhythm is the only language.

Kutloano 'Steve Musiq' Kompfi is a DJ and music producer on a mission to move crowds.

Originating from Reddersburg and influenced by a musical family, he began his journey at just 15 and has never looked back.

His versatile three-step transitions and deep house sets are masterclasses in tension and release, seamlessly weaving melodies and vibes together.

To refine his skills, Kompfi enrolled in an Audio Engineering program, which subsequently led to his song "Give Me Love" featuring Chikondi.

He also launched an EP titled "Music In Me," which gained significant traction on streaming platforms.

Like any music journey, Kompfi faced hurdles, but he persevered against the odds.

In an interview with Journal News, he says he takes on every challenge that comes his way.

"The challenges I faced taught me how to navigate the industry. Not getting booked, networking, and having the funds to attend gigs, especially since I did not live in Bloemfontein, were major obstacles, but with my family's support, I pulled through," he said.

For more of 'Steve Musiq', catch him live at Dreamers in Reddersburg.

Bloem Designer Otsile Toli: Weaving a Legacy

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

In the heart of Bloemfontein, a quiet studio buzzes with creativity as Otsile Toli builds her fashion empire.

As the Chief Executive Officer of Pieces by Otsile Toli, this talented designer is making waves with her bespoke collections, which range from wedding gowns to elegant ball gowns.

Founded in 2019 after her graduation from the Central University of Technology, Pieces by Otsile Toli has already established a strong reputation in the fashion industry.

Toli's passion for creating high-quality, timeless pieces is evident in her work, and she is dedicated to making women feel confident and comfortable.

Despite facing various challenges, Toli remains steadfast in her love for fashion.

"We have gone through numerous name changes, but this one resonated with me.

"The meaning of 'pieces' in this context signifies assembling parts to create something from nothing," she said.

She says her vision is to launch a men's collection that stands out in the industry.

With her commitment to showcasing local talent and her dedication to her craft, she is poised to put Bloemfontein on the fashion map.

Her efforts have gained recognition on some big stage opportunities to showcase her designs at prestigious events like South African Fashion Week.



Dr. Rolene Strauss Turns Nostalgia into a Fashion Revolution

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

Dr. Rolene Strauss, founder of RS Sunglasses, didn't need Paris or Milan to spark her next big collection — she found inspiration in the hallways of her own past.

The University of the Free State (UFS) alumna, medical doctor, and former Miss South Africa/Miss World 2014 stumbled upon a game-changing idea when her husband, Daniel Strauss, attended a UFS corporate event in Cape Town. There, he received a gift crafted from indigenous seshweshwe fabric produced at the UFS Parady's Experimental Farm — and the concept of "soul in style" fell right into her lap.

Strauss's discovery led to a collaboration that blends style, empowerment, and community impact. She seized the opportunity to create jobs for local women, celebrating their artistry through a line of seshweshwe-embroidered pouches designed to house her signature eyewear.

"It was a beautiful, serendipitous moment," Strauss says. "Some stories come full circle. I've always dreamed of giving back. This pouch carries more than sunglasses — it carries hope."

With support from the Department of Sustainable Food Systems and Development, five local women — Elizabeth Mswana, Sarah Lenong, Sophia Mekhoe, Nthabiseng Ndabeni, and Elizabeth Tema — were trained and recognized for their exceptional craftsmanship.

"This partnership blends craft, tradition, and modern luxury," says Doretha Jacobs from the Department. "It shows that giving back can create ripples of opportunity."

RS Sunglasses' seshweshwe pouches are more than just accessories; they are a testament to the power of looking back to move forward, reminding us that the seeds of future success often lie in the soil of our past.

The RS Sunglasses Seshweshwe Pouches are now available online.

Young literary star Omogolo Phakadi shines bright

In a special gesture to recognise and celebrate exceptional literary talent, oom Jackie Gouws from the Rustenburg Herald and Mafikeng Mail recently honoured Omogolo Phakadi for her outstanding achievement in the Spelling Bee competition, where she took third place.

As part of the newspaper's commitment to fostering a culture of reading and writing, Omogolo was presented with a special gift in recognition of her impressive linguistic skills and dedication to literary excellence. This gesture not only acknowledges Omogolo's achievement but also encourages young learners to continue striving for excellence in the world of words.

When receiving her gift Omogolo Phakadi said, "I feel so happy with the gift I have received. I feel so confident and I have to believe in myself in everything I do. I'm going to do so much more in future competitions. Thank you to oom Jackie Gouws and Mafikeng Mail for giving me this wonderful gift. I was really not expecting it. Thank you!"

When speaking to Omogolo's teacher about the journey, Refilwe Lehohla said she taught Omogolo from Grade 5 and took note of her ability to grasp English words and saw her potential as a member



for the Spelling Bee Club.

"I had recently started alongside Ms Paballo Makhoane, a coach who took on the challenge of helping prepare the students for the various spelling bee competitions. I encouraged her to join, and she did. We prepared our learners at the very start of the year for the competitions to ensure sufficient practice and to build confidence for the task ahead.

"This meant that after-school practices as well as

weekend practices were on, the parents obliged and we got to work. For us to have reached the national level in this competition was most desired and this was our first time our school achieving such a milestone. Special thanks to God for this privilege to teach, to my principal for the good support, to the families who gave encouragement and believed in their children's potential," said teacher Lehohla.

*This article was first published by Mahikeng Mail

Angel Voices Choir Klerksdorp to Shine at Lighthouse Performance



Music has always been more than melody; it's emotion, community, and courage rolled into one. The Angel Voices Choir Klerksdorp embodies that truth perfectly. Every rehearsal and performance is a celebration of what can be achieved when people are given space to shine, no matter their circumstances. Under the care and guidance of their mentors at the Triest Centre Klerksdorp, each choir member has found confidence, pride, and belonging through song.

Earlier this year, their commitment paid off when they impressed adjudicators at the Rina de Bruyn Eisteddfod on 3 September 2025. Their performance earned them a Gold A+, a top-tier recognition that filled both the choir and their supporters with immense pride. "It was such a beautiful moment," said one caregiver, reflecting on the day. "To see their faces light up with accomplishment — that's what makes all the practice worthwhile."

Speaking to Rina Oldewage, one of the Lighthouse event organisers, she expressed heartfelt excitement for hosting them again. "This initiative is very close to my heart," she said. "The Angel Voices Choir has inspired many of us — their spirit reminds us what community truly means. I can't wait for Klerksdorp to experience that magic once more."

Seats for the event are limited, and Rina encourages residents to contact the organisers at 068 388 2077 to book early.

More Than Just a Performance

This year's Lighthouse event Klerksdorp aims to be a celebration of inclusion and creativity. To complement the evening, Side Eye Photography — a local business known for its expressive visual storytelling — will bring along their 360-degree video booth, giving guests the chance to capture their own memorable moments in a fun and interactive way.

Visitors can expect an atmosphere of pure joy, where music mingles with laughter, applause, and community spirit. Children are welcome, and families are encouraged to attend together. The choir performance Klerksdorp will highlight how art and compassion can create a sense of belonging that stretches beyond the stage.

Beyond their musical efforts, the Triest Centre Klerksdorp continues to make remarkable strides in building inclusive spaces for its members throughout the year. The organisation focuses on personal development, vocational skills, and community participation — always guided by the belief that every person has something valuable to contribute.

Following the November concert, the centre will host its beloved Christmas Market on 28 and 29 November 2025, featuring handmade crafts, gifts, and festive decorations created by members and local artisans. Visitors will find everything from woodwork to woven items — each piece representing not only creativity but also empowerment. Supporting the market means supporting the people who put their hearts into each creation.

Celebrating Inclusion Through Music

Events like this choir performance Klerksdorp serve as powerful reminders of what true community looks like. They bring together people from all walks of life to celebrate the beauty of human expression. The Angel Voices Choir Klerksdorp doesn't just perform; they connect. Their voices carry stories of perseverance, hope, and joy — stories that touch everyone in the room.

Local supporters often describe the choir's performances as "goosebump moments." It's not just about the technical side of singing, but the authenticity of emotion that radiates from every member. Their songs, often chosen for their uplifting lyrics and spiritual undertones, remind audiences of the importance of compassion and togetherness.

As one volunteer at the Triest Centre shared, "Every rehearsal is filled with laughter. Even when things go wrong, there's such positivity in the air. They teach us more about happiness than we could ever teach them."

Where Every Voice Matters

The Angel Voices Choir Klerksdorp stands as a symbol of what can be achieved when communities value inclusion over exclusion. By attending their upcoming Lighthouse event Klerksdorp, residents are not just watching a performance — they're participating in a celebration of humanity.

Whether you come for the music, the festive atmosphere, or to support a loved one, this event is about more than entertainment. It's about empathy, encouragement, and the shared joy of connection.

*This article was first published by North West Insider

GIG Guide

Friday 14 November 2025

Locan Flava
Sechaba Lounge
Bloemfontein

Saturday 15 November 2025

Vaal Takeover
IZA
Bloemfontein

Saturday 15 November 2025

Bloem Feast music & food
Rambler's Club
Bloemfontein

Saturday 15 November 2025

Chilled Saturday
K-LA-K Lifestyle
Bloemfontein

ChuffPlek.
Lounge

PRESENTS

TOAST BOTTLES

28 SATURDAY FEB 2026

GENERAL TICKET R250 | VIP R3000

VENUE
ARTHUR PITSO STADIUM
MANYATSENG, LADYBRAND - FREE STATE

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT COMPUTICKET



Sport



Boks Wary of 'Improved' Italy

Rassie's Erasmus' charges exude humility despite boasting a 94% winning record against Gli Azzuri

By: Mpho Sekharume



While looking to extend their good vein of good form, the Springboks remain aware of the threat posed by the Italians this weekend. Picture: Supplied

History will count for nothing as World Champions Springboks take on a spirited Italy in a clash that carries both the weight of caution for the visitor and the potential of causing an upset by the hosts.

The contest seems heavily skewed towards the world champions on paper, with the South Africans boasting an imposing and long-standing 94% win record against the Italians in their past encounters.

Yet, in the complex world of Test rugby, past glories offer no guarantees, and the current form of both nations dictates that the Springboks must approach this fixture with utter seriousness and focus.

Springboks coach, Rassie Erasmus, is wary of the challenge presented by their hosts. He acknowledged that Italy is riding a wave of immense confidence following their stunning 26-19 victory over Australia just last week.

"Their victory against Australia will also boost their confidence immensely, so we have a lot of respect for them, and we'll have to give everything to get the result we want on the weekend.

"They've made huge strides in the last few years, and last week's result shows what they are capable of when they are at their best, so we are not taking them lightly," Erasmus said.

The Boks themselves are in a commanding vein of form, having recently delivered a spectacular victory over France in Paris, a result achieved through a display of unyielding character and tactical precision that confirmed their status as one of the world's most resilient teams.

Furthermore, the two teams met earlier this year in the July Test series in South Africa, where the Springboks secured back-to-back wins, an initial hard-fought 42-24 victory followed by a dominant 45-0 shutout.

While those scorelines seem comfortable, Erasmus's focus remains firmly on the potential for an upset, especially given the history.

"They have also beaten us in Italy before, they are a passionate and well-coached team, and they'll have an ardent crowd behind them in Torino, so we know what we are in for," said the Boks mentor.

Erasmus' caution is well-founded as Italy is one of the very few nations to have actually defeated the Springboks on home soil before.

For the Springboks, however, the core motivation remains the relentless pursuit of excellence - playing with the collective purpose that has defined their recent success.

This meeting in Turin is more than just another fixture, but a vital check of the Springboks' ongoing commitment to their process, and a measure of how far Italy has truly progressed.

The Springboks know exactly what they are in for and only a unified 80-minute performance will be enough to secure the win and protect their almost-flawless record against a dangerous, rapidly improving Italian side.

Thidiela Questions Khoza's Dual Role

Black Leopards founder queries why Khoza serves as both club owner and league chairman



Black Leopards chairman, David Thidiela. Picture: Laduma

By: Mpho Sekharume

David Thidiela, owner of Black Leopards FC, has delivered a fiery indictment of the Premier Soccer League (PSL) leadership by taking aim at its top executives.

As reported by Soccer Laduma, Thidiela's critique targets not only the long-standing tenure of PSL Chairman Dr. Irvin Khoza, but also the lengthy and arguably irregular stay of Golden Arrows chairperson Mato Madlala in the acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) position.

Thidiela's grievance rests upon a fundamental questioning of the global governance norms of football, suggesting the structure currently operational in South Africa's top flight is an anomaly that compromises fairness and objectivity at its core.

He openly questioned the current dual role held by Khoza, who remains the chairman of the league while simultaneously sitting at the helm of one of its most successful and prominent member clubs, Orlando Pirates.

According to Thidiela, this arrangement represents an untenable conflict of interest that fundamentally warps the league's administration.

"You'll never see this anywhere in the world. Is there any organisation in the world where someone who is the owner of a team is running the league? So why here?"

"Now do you want to tell me you can't answer me when I ask where you have ever seen a team owner running the league's affairs? That's what I'm asking," he queried.

The implicit accusation is that the dual mandate inevitably creates bias in decision-making, which, whether true or perceived, corrodes trust among the league's stakeholders. His frustration clearly extends to the lack of external scrutiny, as he laments how such a situation has been permitted to persist, seemingly without challenge.

Thidiela's blatant criticism also extends to the position occupied by Madlala. He views his decade-long stint as the acting CEO of the league, while simultaneously serving as the chairperson of Golden Arrows FC, as another glaring example of awry governance.

This blistering critique culminated in accusations that extend beyond the PSL's offices and into the media fray - further suggesting there is a collective reluctance to address the league's administrative shortcomings.

"Tomorrow, the media will say this, and that day you will say that, and there is no objectivity. You are all captured, and you allow these things to happen," declared the Leopard's owner.

This is more than a complaint; it is a call for radical intervention and a demand for a return to global best practices where the interests of the administrator are completely divorced from the interests of the competitor.

Thidiela's comments may have sparked a debate that will call for scrutiny into the league's affairs. He has called on Sports Minister Gayton McKenzie to intervene.

"I have written a letter to him because I believe he is the right person to talk to. These things have been happening for a long time, and I have been against these things," Thidiela told Soccer Laduma.

Springboks record against Italy

Matches Played	Wins	Losses	Points for	Points Against	Tries Scored	Tries Conceded	Highest Score
18	17	1	851	219	113	19	101-0

Heidedal Chess Foundation, hopeful to compete in national championships

By: Abigail Visagie

The Heidedal Chess Foundation (HCF) will be heading soon towards the National Chess tournament set to take place in Port Elizabeth next month, and needs your support.

Established in 2017 as a non-profit organisation, HCF was initially formed to empower and develop the youth within Heidedal and surrounding areas through a tactful and friendly game of Chess.

Founder and head coach, Vaughan Peters, mentioned that he has seen the changes within the schools that he has trained.

"Most of our team members are from Primary, therefore heading towards the national tournament would not only be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, but also a privilege and inspiration for the children that are yet to participate in a tournament such as the Mangaung Qualifying Tournament and eventually the national chess tournament.

"HCF has assisted so many underprivileged children in reaching their full capacity as well as helping them stay focused, disciplined, and inspired to reach their full potential.

"We are proud to announce that seven of our young players have qualified to represent the Free



State at the upcoming Mzansi Inter-Provincial Youth Chess Championship, taking place in Gqeberha from 14-17 December 2025," said the ecstatic coach. He further highlighted the fact that since some

of the team players come from an underprivileged background, such opportunities do not only represent a sporting achievement but also a symbol of hope.

Peters has confirmed that seven hopeful players will be heading towards the Mzansi Inter-Provincial Youth Chess Championship:

Ranerio du Toit (8), Altavio Jacobus (12), Jonalidro du Toit (12), Jermaine Redguard (15), Ashlynnne Colbert (15), Keagen Molatloe (16) and Vanadium Mitchell (19). Peters further added that the Free State Sports Confederation will be sponsoring their accommodation and that they only request assistance with their transportation, amounting to the value of R1000.

"The transport cost is R1 000 per child, and your support will help ensure that these deserving young players can travel safely to represent our province and community with pride.

"Any contribution - whether financial or in-kind (such as fuel sponsorship or vehicle hire) - will be deeply appreciated and acknowledged by our foundation," said Peters.

The Banking Details: Account Name: Heidedal Chess Foundation Bank: FNB Account Number: 62811911793