

Journal NEWS

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Siwelele Denies Sundowns Top Spot

Page 12



Festive Season Road Safety Launched

Page 3



Get Lost in the Groove with Glen Kosha

Page 10



SEWAGE NIGHTMARE GRIPS HEIDEDAL ...as Homes Battle Overflowing Drains

Two neighbouring households say they've lived with sewage flooding, unbearable stench, and health dangers for months—revealing deeper infrastructure failures the city claims it never knew about



Page 3

Childheaded home lives with sewage flooding and health danger in Heidedal. Picture: Thabo Ketele



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Power of Life

Manhunt Launched After 43 Firearms Stolen in Daring Kroonstad Burglary



By: Matshidiso Sebeleng

Police in Kroonstad have launched an intensive manhunt after a major burglary at the Mqhaka Parks Municipality building in the early hours of Monday, in which more than 40 firearms and over a thousand rounds of ammunition were stolen.

According to the South African Police Service (SAPS), the break-in is believed to have occurred at around 00:55.

The burglary was only discovered later that morning when a municipal employee arrived for work and found the alarm control box destroyed.

Further inspection revealed that the door to the building's armoury room had been forced open, allegedly using a grinding tool.

Inside, two steel safes had also been cut open and a substantial cache of weapons and protective gear was missing.

Police confirmed that approximately 43 firearms – including 9mm pistols, revolvers and pump-action guns – were stolen, along with 1 105 rounds of ammunition and six bulletproof vests.

Preliminary investigations suggest that the perpetrators gained entry by breaking through a wall next to a bathroom area.

The crime scene was attended by multiple SAPS units, including forensic specialists, as detectives began piecing together how the burglars managed to execute the operation without raising immediate alarm.

By Tuesday evening, no arrests have been made, with police warning that the stolen weapons posed a significant public safety risk.

A case of business burglary has been opened, and SAPS says an intensive investigation is under way.

Police are urging anyone with information that could assist in arresting the suspects or recovering the stolen firearms to contact Detective Colonel Ben Bolsiek at 082 466 8530, the Crime Stop line at 08600 10111, or submit an anonymous tip-off via the MySAPS app.

North West to Kick-Start Summer Initiation Season



Initiation season kicks off in North West. Picture: Supplied

By: Matshidiso Sebeleng

As South Africa enters its final initiation season of the year, teachers, parents and communities are preparing for the month-long rite of passage that ushers young boys into manhood and young girls into womanhood.

In the North West, authorities say they have strengthened systems to ensure a safer and more compliant season, following challenges experienced during the winter initiation period.

According to Thebeetsile Keameditse, spokesperson for the North West Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, the Provincial Initiation Coordinating Committee (PICC) has tightened screening processes and ensured that all practitioners involved in this season are properly certified.

"All applications for initiation schools and practitioners – including principals, traditional surgeons, caregivers and traditional health practitioners – were verified in line with the Customary Initiation Act No. 2 of 2021. PICC also ran extensive capacity-building workshops from August to September 2025 across all districts," said Keameditse.

These workshops focused on compliance, safety standards, age restrictions, consent procedures and proper registration requirements. Traditional Councils also screened practitioners at community level before applications reached the PICC.

To strengthen health and safety measures, the Department of Health trained traditional surgeons on 14 November 2025 in preparation for the summer season.

"Taken together, these steps give confidence to the PICC that the 446 approved initiation schools meet the criteria set out in the CIA and are adequately prepared

for a safe and compliant season," Keameditse added. He said monitoring teams from the PICC, Traditional Councils and local initiation committees will conduct frequent site visits throughout the period.

One of the biggest challenges for the department remains the emergence of illegal initiation schools, many of which operate under unsafe conditions. These contributed to the six deaths recorded in the province during the winter season.

"The PICC approaches customary initiation with profound respect for its sacredness. Our responsibility is to ensure that every initiate emerges healthy, protected and respected," he said. "We believe this can be achieved through partnership, education and enforcement."

To address illegal schools, the PICC and law-enforcement agencies have run awareness campaigns, school outreach programmes and media messaging to encourage parents to choose legally registered schools and to understand the importance of consent and medical screening.

"Culture thrives when it is protected, not when it is exploited," Keameditse said, expressing hope for a safe and incident-free season.

"The PICC's goal is clear: no family should lose a child in the name of culture. By strengthening preparedness, health measures and enforcement, the province is better positioned to prevent tragedies and ensure a dignified, safe initiation season."

Keameditse emphasised that anyone wishing to host an initiation school must register at least three months before the season begins. Applications must be submitted to the PICC, and written approval is required from the relevant Traditional Council or, if conducted on private land, from the landowner or occupier.



Executive Mayor of the City of Matlosana Local Municipality, Fikile Mahlophe announced a R4.5 billion rand solar storage project. Picture: Supplied

R4.5 Billion solar project expected in Matlosana

The Executive Mayor of the City of Matlosana Local Municipality, Fikile Mahlophe announced a R4.5 billion rand solar storage project for the city.

The project will be developed by energy companies, Scatec Solar Project, Mullilo Battery Energy Storage Project, OPEG Solar Project, Naos PV Project (SOLA Group).

Mahlophe says the project is expected to create over 2000 jobs, business opportunities and energy security.

He says projects are expected to create employment opportunities for residents as well as business opportunities for small businesses.

He says it will also be an opportunity for development and training of young people and to increase municipal revenue which will create improved investor confidence.

While addressing members of the media, Mahlophe said,

"Today, we officially announce strategic partnerships between the City of Matlosana and four major renewable energy developers who will be investing in large-scale solar and energy storage projects across our municipality.

"This announcement is not only about infrastructure, it is about energy security, economic growth, job creation, and restoring confidence in Matlosana as an investment destination," said Mahlophe.

"Together, these investments represent one of the most significant renewable energy portfolios ever secured in the North West Province."

The African National Congress (ANC)-led municipality has been embroiled in ongoing corruption and fraud scandals, including serious allegations against top municipal officials.

While the residents are getting used to wide-

spread service delivery challenges such as water loss and sewer overflows, poor road infrastructure, inconsistent refuse removal and frequent street light outages, the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks) and the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) have launched investigations into the municipality's finances, leading to arrests and court appearances.

The municipality is expected to uphold transparency in managing all projects to ensure accountability and build public trust.

Mahlophe named a steering committee to ensure that opportunities reach communities fairly, that projects are monitored effectively, and that commitments made by developers are honoured.

"To ensure transparency and proper coordination, the municipality is establishing a Project Stakeholder Steering Committee.

"This structure will include representation from the office of the executive mayor, municipal manager, LED Directorate, Town Planning and related units, the Local Business Forum, ward councillors, community representatives and the developers themselves," Mahlophe said.

Despite, numerous allegations of fraud and corruption faced by the municipality, Mahlophe said Matlosana is open for business.

"We are strengthening systems, improving turnaround times, and ensuring that investors find a municipality that is ready, responsive, and committed to partnership. These solar projects send a strong message that Matlosana is becoming a regional hub for clean energy investment."

"We remain committed to building a city that works—one that creates jobs, attracts investment, and provides a better quality of life for all our residents, he said.

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Recognising Passion at the North West Media Awards

Honouring the storytellers shaping democracy and celebrating media excellence across the North West

By: Abigail Visagie

It's that time of year again when excellence in media is celebrated in the North West Province.

The North West Media Awards (NWMA) are back, this year bigger and better, promising a renewed commitment to acknowledging excellence, independence, integrity, and innovation in the media landscape.

Established in 2011, this annual event celebrates the pivotal role that media practitioners play in strengthening democracy, highlighting stories from a democratic and diverse South Africa, while also giving a voice to the voiceless.



NWMA Board of Director including Founder on the middle Mr Ananias Ndlovu. Picture: Supplied

Spokesperson for NWMA Berlina Lekgethwane says the awards honour outstanding individuals, media houses, and organisations excelling in journalism,

photography, communication, and other media-related sectors.

She says the NWMA serves as a reminder of the

dedication, compassion, and resilience required in the fast-paced world of media.

"Some winners are chosen through public voting, while others are determined based on judges' criteria and scores.

"This year, the NWMA has partnered with North West University to feature two media icons, each with over three decades of experience.

"The winners will receive awards along with special recognition from the legendary Dr Ezekiel Matjila, a prominent broadcaster best known for his role as a setswana news anchor and a former radio personality for Motswedding FM.

Joining Matjila is another broadcaster Snyman Rankane, from Motswedding FM, known for his shows "Gaabo Motho" and "Lerethabetse."

The 2025 NWMA event will also feature hosts Hector Motivator, a well-known author and motivational speaker, Lee Jay, a photography journalist, and Khumo Monde, who will serve as a red carpet presenter dressed by Rustenburg Fashion Week.

"Although the NWMA is recognised as a non-governmental organisation, it has received R50 000 from North West University and significant support from Premier North West Lazarus Mokgosi through radio advertisements and promotional efforts, said Lekgethwane.

The 16 categories for the NWMA amongst others include, Journalist of the Year, Photographer of the Year, Newspaper of the Year, Newsletter of the Year, Radio Current Affairs Programme of the Year and many others.



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Sewage Nightmare Grips Heidedal

... as Homes Battle Overflowing Drains

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

Months of overflowing sewage, foul odours, and rising health risks have turned daily life into a nightmare for families in Heidedal's Ashburry division in Bloemfontein—exposing what residents say is a deepening infrastructure crisis the municipality claims it never knew about.

Across two houses - 35A and 35B – homeowners told Journal News that they have reported the same ongoing nightmare to the Mangaung Metro Municipality over the past six months with no luck. What at first appears to be isolated household disasters is revealing a troubling pattern that points to a much larger infrastructure failure.

For 71-year-old pensioner Sina Brown, the ordeal began with a gurgling sound in her bathroom sink, bathtub, and toilet. Soon after, a faint but unmistakable sewage odour began creeping out of the backyard drains, accompanied by a musty pool of wastewater that now makes the yard unusable. Because the houses in the area occupy much of the yard space and appear to share sections of plumbing, her neighbours' flushes cause sewage to rise through her own toilet, bathtub, and sink.

Brown fears that if the problem continues, her family will soon face serious health risks.

"The issue was reported to the municipality once, but no one has assisted. The plumbing workmanship of both houses is very poor, and that's what's causing all these leaks. At this point, I may have to use my own money to fix this because the municipality isn't helping and the other household can't afford repairs," she said.

"I am really tired. We cannot live in such dire conditions and just wait for a miracle."

What Brown is experiencing is not an isolated incident—it suggests a wider pattern of neglect extending beyond a single property line.

Just a street away, the Meyer family at 35A Abduraman Lane faces a similar daily crisis. Sewage frequently blocks their backdoor, leaking down to the street and creating a pool of mud, faeces, and soggy paper. The household of ten—four young adults and six children—says they have repeatedly reported the issue, including problems with the house's pipe connections.

"This problem has been here for over six months, even longer. The municipality officials came to inspect, but they never came back," said 20-year-old Nesta Meyer.



House 35A in Heidedal's Ashburry division. Picture: Thabo Ketele

"We've even adapted to living like this."

The health risks associated with sewage exposure are severe: waterborne diseases such as Hepatitis A and E. coli infections, exposure to hazardous pathogens—including bacteria, viruses, and parasites—and environmental contamination.

As part of its service delivery mandate, the municipality is responsible for effective sewage treatment, public health education, and routine water quality monitoring.

When contacted for comment, the Mangaung Metro Municipality said they had no prior record of these complaints.

"This is the first time we hear about this issue, especially in that area. We have conducted multiple sewage works around there, so this comes as a surprise—but we will attend to the matter as in yesterday," said Communication Liaison Officer for Sanitation, Gcinumuzi Radebe.

"Many times, people report issues to councillors, and these queries never reach our office. We will check our records and send a team to resolve the situation as soon as possible."

The story of Perishlaan Avenue is still unfolding. It is a story about infrastructure taken for granted—and the community resilience that emerges when it fails. By speaking up, residents hope not only to fix the pipes but to reclaim the health and dignity of their neighbourhood.



Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae and MEC for Health Monyatsa Mahlatsi. Picture: Supplied

Mathae Meets Rape Victim's Families

By: Matshidiso Selebeleng

As the country observes the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children, there are still people who suffer at the hands of their protectors, even on the days that they are supposed to look out for them.

Recently, a video of a distraught mother who was calling for help from the public after her child was allegedly raped by her husband surfaced on social media.

In the video, the mother explains that the family of her husband was now fighting her for opening a case against their brother, which prompted her to go on social media and ask for help, as she felt like the family might overpower her, as they have the financial means.

She also complained about harassment from the suspect's brother, who is a well-known figure in the community.

This led to the victim's brother posting on social media accusing the victim's mother of spreading lies to seek public sympathy, so that she can fight to get his family's assets.

According to reports, the incident allegedly took place at the family's home in Welkom on 16 November 2025, just a few days before the national shutdown against GBV and Femicide, and President Cyril Ramaphosa declared it a national disaster.

To show support for the mother and the victim, the Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae, together with the Executive Mayor of Matjhabeng Local Municipality, Thanduxolo Khalipha, visited their home over the weekend.

Letsoha-Mathae said the case was a reminder of the dangers faced by both women and children in the country and that more collaborative efforts were needed to put an end to Gender Based Violence and Femicide.

"I had an opportunity to talk to the mother, and she is obviously upset, as any mother would be, about what allegedly happened to her daughter. She also mentioned that she has not been getting the necessary support from the police, and we are going to talk to the police management to determine what happened," said Letsoha-Mathae.

Adding that, "Ours is to support the affected parties and allow the legal process to unfold."

Letsoha-Mathae committed that the Department of Social Development will provide for social psycho support to the family.

The suspect and the victim's stepfather have been apprehended and charged.

A FESTIVE-SEASON ROAD-SAFETY MESSAGE FROM MEC JABU MBALULA

As the holiday season draws near, many of us will be taking to the roads, whether it's a quick trip to a neighbour's house or a longer journey to visit family and friends across the country and beyond. The Free State's roads are the lifeblood that links six neighbouring provinces and our friend Lesotho, and we must all do our bit to keep them safe.

PLEASE REMEMBER :

- ❖ **Fatigue kills:** rest every 2 hours or 200 kilometres to rejuvenate.
- ❖ **Plan your trip:** give yourself plenty of time and check for any roadworks or adverse weather.
- ❖ **Never drink and drive:** arrange a designated driver, use public transport or call a reputable taxi.
- ❖ **Buckle up:** a seat-belt is your best defence, no matter how short the journey.
- ❖ **Observe speed limits:** they're there to protect you and everyone else on the road.
- ❖ **Stay alert:** keep your eyes on the road, avoid distractions and watch out for pedestrians and cyclists.
- ❖ **Make sure your vehicle is road-worthy:** check your tyres, brakes and lights before you set off.

Our traffic officers will be out in force, conducting stop-and-check points and enforcing the law, but we need your help. A little extra care can prevent a tragedy.

May your celebrations be merry, your gatherings warm, and your journeys safe. No one should have to lose a loved one on a road that should carry us together to joy. Let's keep the Free State's arteries flowing with life, not loss.

Wishing you a wonderful festive season filled with love, laughter and safe travels.

STAY SAFE

MEC Jabu Mbalula
MEC for Community Safety, Roads and Transport, Free State Province



Festive Season Road Safety Campaign Launched

The festive season, a time of joyous celebrations and family reunions is upon us, and many holidaymakers will be traversing the length and breadth of the country to various destinations. Many will be travelling back home to see their loved ones after a long absence. Nonetheless, this period is synonymous with high traffic volumes and the highest recorded road accidents and fatalities. In short, this time presents a serious threat of loss of life on South African roads.

To corroborate this information, on Sunday, 30 November 2025, Minister of Transport Barbara Creecy confirmed that this time of the year indeed accounts for the highest rate of road fatalities on our roads. However, Minister Creecy also expressed her encouragement, noting the sharpest recorded decrease in road crashes and fatalities in over three years. "We have reduced the road death toll by 700 in the previous year, and we aim to halve road fatalities by 2030. We are committed to saving lives and ensuring adherence to road safety rules. In the coming weeks, traffic will increase sharply. However, we have a comprehensive national plan, which includes over five hundred (500) traffic operations to be carried out nationwide."


The Free State is a central province that links five (5) of the nine provinces of the country. Its importance, particularly during this time of the year, cannot be understated.

Speaking at the launch of the festive season road safety campaign on the N1 in Kroonstad, Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae strongly cautioned road users to be disciplined, cautious, and considerate of one another. She warned that the Free State will not be a safe passage for illegal immigrants and other criminal elements.



"What I can say without any fear of contradiction, ladies and gentlemen, is that we are prepared and ready to ensure that road users reach their respective destinations safely. This government will not sit idly by while lunatics turn our roads into crime scenes.

"We will show no mercy to reckless drivers, and neither will we allow unroadworthy vehicles on our roads. We will not allow responsible and obedient road users to be at the mercy of erratic drivers." - FSPG



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PUBLIC NOTICE CALLING FOR INSPECTION OF THE 11TH SUPPLEMENTARY VALUATION ROLL AND LODGING OF OBJECTIONS FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2025 – 30 JUNE 2026

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 49 (1)(a)(i) of the Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act No 6 of 2004), hereinafter referred to as the "Act", that the supplementary valuation roll for the financial years **1 July 2025 until 30 June 2026** is open for inspection at the following pay points: Zastron municipal offices at Hoofd Street, Rouxville municipal offices at Church Street and Smithfield municipal offices at c/o President Hoffman & Voortrekker Streets from 17 November 2025 to 31 December 2025. In addition the supplementary valuation roll is available at website www.mohokare.gov.za

An invitation is hereby made in terms of section 49(l)(a)(ii) read together with section 78(2) of the Act that any owner of property or other person who so desires should lodge an objection with the municipal manager in respect of any matter reflected in, or omitted from, the supplementary valuation roll within the above-mentioned period.

Attention is specifically drawn to the fact that in terms of section 50(2) of the Act an objection must be in relation to a specific individual property and not against the supplementary valuation roll as such. The form for the lodging of an objection is obtainable at the following addresses: Zastron municipal offices at Hoofd Street, Rouxville municipal offices at Church Street and Smithfield municipal offices at c/o President Hoffman & Voortrekker Streets or website www.mohokare.gov.za

The completed forms must be returned to the following at address: Mohokare Municipal offices – Hoofd Street, Zastron.

For enquiries please telephone 051 673 9600 or email rannetlad27@gmail.com adrifenwick@gmail.com

Mr M. Mohale
Acting Municipal Manager

Signature _____
Date _____

HIV Funding Crisis - 3.3 million New HIV Infections Expected in 5 years

By: Refilwe Mochosi

As the world commemorated World Aids Day on Monday (1 December) under the theme "Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS Response" a United Nations (UNAIDS) report, reveals a concerning forecast of 3.3 million new HIV infections expected between 2025 and 2030 as a result of the abrupt international funding cuts that were implemented.

In January 2025, the largest donor to the HIV response since the beginning which accounted for 75% of international funding for HIV temporarily halted all HIV-related funding and the global response immediately entered crisis mode.

The UNAIDS report which was issued last week details the consequences of the 2025 funding crisis which has thrown the AIDS response into turmoil with disruptions to HIV prevention and community-led services especially for the most vulnerable communities.

According to the report, at the time, clinics were forced to shut their doors, essential frontline health workers were furloughed and community programmes reaching the most vulnerable people had to stop immediately.

The impact of the funding disruption has been severe for ordinary South Africans who are living with HIV in South Africa. Malebo Moagi (37)* a sex worker from Johannesburg is a mother of three children.

She says she lost access to antiretroviral therapy for four months.

"The only thing I could think of was my children, and that I am going to die", she said.

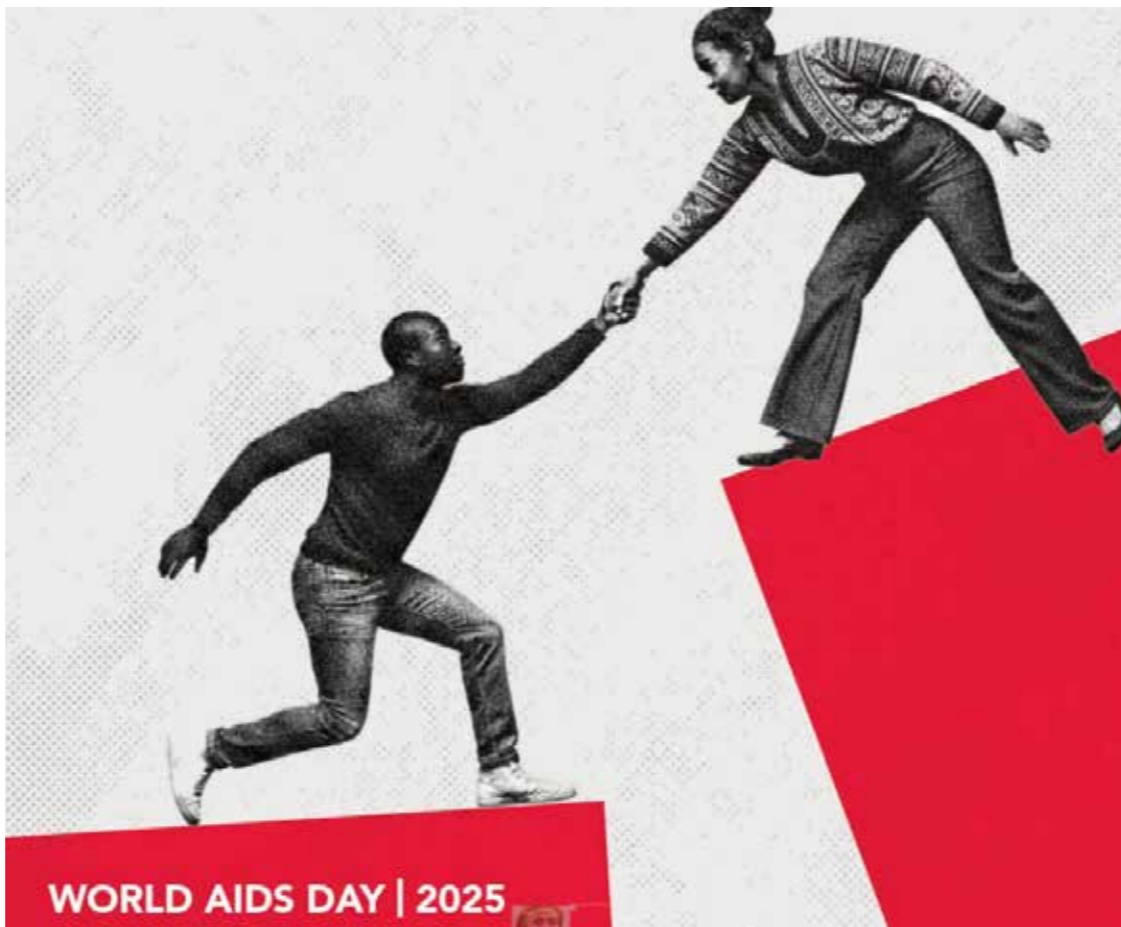
Thatohatsi Kgampene (40) says she was working for an HIV non-governmental organisation, and lost her employment due to the crisis.

"This has affected my livelihood. I have been employed by the organisation for more than five years and now this is the end. I am hopeful that our organisation will receive funding elsewhere and that they will call us so that we can go back to work, he said.

The report highlights a significant drop in, the number of people using PrEP which has fallen by 64% in Burundi, 38% in Uganda, and 21% in Viet Nam.

Over 60% of all women-led HIV organisations have lost funding and have been forced to suspend work, leaving communities without access to vital services.

According to Executive Director for UNAIDS Winnie Byanyima, the global response suffered its most significant setback in a decade, and she says the crisis has affected the progress made in HIV prevention.



She says the consequences include a failure to reach the 2030 global HIV target of the next global AIDS strategy and can result in an additional 3.3million new HIV infections between 2025 and 2030.

The Global health strategy is the product of extensive consultation with people living with, at risk of, and affected by HIV and with partners at multiple levels of society such as community workers, local organisations.

It considers the impact of a rapidly changing global health and development ecosystem worsening inequalities and human rights violations, persistent stigma and discrimination, economic volatility, and geopolitical uncertainty.

Byanyima says the funding crisis has unfolded against a deteriorating global human rights environment with particularly severe consequences for marginalised populations.

She says despite the challenges, several countries which amongst others include South Africa, Nigeria,

Uganda, and Tanzania have taken swift action in a bid to close funding gaps.

"As a result, the countries are showing resilience when it comes to HIV treatment delivery.

"Some have reported relatively steady numbers or even an increase in new initiation on antiretroviral therapy as a result of swift action to maintain services, and these countries have committed to increasing domestic investments in HIV services, she said.

She added that UNAIDS is currently working with 30 countries to accelerate national sustainability plans.

Amongst other innovative and resilient offerings during this difficult time, new HIV preventative technologies were launched such as the twice-a-year injection for HIV prevention which has the potential to prevent thousands of new infections.

The Free State's official commemoration for World Aids day took place Wednesday at the Ipeleng Secondary School in Petrusburg.

FS Battles to Keep HIV Patients in Care



MEC for Health Monyatso Mahlatsi, Premier Maqueen Letsoha-Mathae and Civil Society Chairperson Simphiwe Mokoena. PHOTO: Supplied

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

The Xhariep District in the Free State province is currently having difficulties retaining HIV-positive patients on treatment. This information was shared by Xhariep District Director Dr Ntshieleng Caka during the World AIDS Day celebrations held at Lepetla Secondary School in Petrusburg, under the theme "Renewed Efforts and Sustainable Commitments to End HIV."

Caka said that, although the Xhariep has made improvements towards achieving the 95-95-95 target which means that 95% of people living with HIV know their status, 95% have access to antiretroviral therapy, and 95% of those on treatment achieved viral suppression.

She said the district's current rates are 94-86-94 which indicates that only 86% of HIV-positive individuals in the province are retained on treatment.

Despite this, Xhariep ranks second in the country for its performance against the 95-95-95 targets. To address the retention issue, the Department of Health has launched the "Close the Gap" campaign, aimed at identifying 1.1 million people who are HIV-positive but not receiving treatment. This figure has been broken down by province, district, and even facility, with everyone working diligently to close their respective portions of the gap.

According to the Human Sciences Research Council, the Free State had the highest HIV rate in the country at 15.6% in 2022, an increase from 17% in 2017, which translates to approximately 450,000 people living with HIV in the province.

Professor Khangelana Zuma, the principal investigator of the study, highlighted that HIV prev-

alence in the province was consistently higher among females compared to males across all age categories above 15 years. He expressed concern over the stable prevalence of 3.9% among children aged 0 to 14 years, as well as an increase in rates among youth aged 15 to 20 in 2022 compared to 2017. Notably, prevalence more than doubled among those aged 15 to 19 during this period.

In an interview with Journal News, Civil Society Chairperson Simphiwe Mokoena emphasized that the day was an opportunity to remember the achievements made in the HIV response and to encourage those affected by the virus. "Many have lost their lives due to AIDS and tuberculosis, and the government has provided antiretrovirals for free to save countless lives. However, unfunded programs aimed at ending HIV need urgent attention," Mokoena said.

He noted that civil society's interventions, including social mobilization and community outreach, have significantly contributed to behavioral change, especially in combating stigma against those who test positive. "Despite this progress, stigma and discrimination persist within communities, particularly among those unaware of their status," Mokoena added.

He highlighted that the stigma surrounding HIV hampers community health, as men often hesitate to access health services and get tested. Unemployment and food insecurity are also significant challenges that further complicate the response to HIV.

"Therefore, I call upon the government to invest more domestic resources into HIV programs and to create employment opportunities without prioritizing specific age groups," Mokoena added.

Thabo Nchu's Gadget Guru



Modirimang fixing a phone at a client's house. Picture: Supplied

By: Tshepiso Mokhema

Thabo Nchu-born entrepreneur and accounting graduate Modirimang Maselo (35) has always had a passion for technology, despite studying a different field in tertiary education. His interest in fixing gadgets began when he learned the skill from a friend, which sparked a deep appreciation for technology.

Maselo offers a variety of electronic device repairs, which amongst others include laptops, tablets, micro-waves, stoves, and cellphones.

In 2023, after losing his job and facing an extended period of unemployment, Maselo discovered a training program supported by several stakeholders, including the Department of Small Business, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), and the Department of Communications and Technology.

"I saw a Facebook advertisement from NYDA inviting applications for a cellphone repair technician training program. I applied and, after a rigorous selection process involving interviews, tests, and intensive training, I was chosen as one of the successful candidates," Maselo explained.

He says he launched Rea-A-Atlegang Business Solutions (Pty) Ltd immediately after completing the training. "My main aim is to establish a well-equipped workshop and develop a partnership with Motheo TVET Col-

lege, which is located very close to my business.

"This collaboration will allow students, especially those studying cellphone repair and related courses, to gain practical experience at my workshop.

"I also plan to employ youth from the local community, providing them with valuable work experience and opportunities for skills development," he said.

Maselo says his future plans include the offering of mobile repair services to meet the needs of residents in surrounding areas who are unable to reach his workshop.

"The surrounding areas are the Thaba Nchu Trust villages, and many of the people that side are not able to reach our workshop, he said.

He says the mobile service will assist him to expand his customer base and provide convenient services for those unable to visit his workshop directly.

Since starting his business as a cellphone repair technician, Maselo's life has transformed significantly.

He says he appreciates the ease and convenience that entrepreneurship has brought to his life, something which he has never experienced before.

He says his business has not only improved his circumstances, but it has also positively impacted his community.

"My skills and expertise have grown immensely since I became a technician. I can now repair a wide range

of electronic devices, including laptops, tablets, micro-waves, and stoves, in addition to cellphones. "This diversification not only broadens my service offerings but also allows me to tackle more complex repairs, enhancing my confidence and capabilities.

"I am grateful for the training and experience I have received; it has empowered me to take on tasks I wouldn't have attempted before. This growth has been incredibly fulfilling, and I am excited to further develop my skills and expand my services to meet the needs of my community," he said.

Since launching his business, Maselo has repaired hundreds of gadgets and has received great support from his community.

He says the success of his business has enabled him to provide for himself and his family, describing it as a wonderful experience.

While he acknowledges that running a business comes with challenges especially in today's competitive landscape he believes the rewards far outweigh the difficulties.

"I believe that cellphone repair is a vital service, particularly in today's fast-paced technological environment, and I am excited to contribute to my community through my business. I am currently seeking funding or support to help grow my business and make a positive impact on the local economy," Maselo said.

Sexual Offences Court Launched in Botshabelo

A Safe Space for Victims and a Step Toward Successful Prosecution



The official opening of the Botshabelo Sexual Offences Court. Picture: OTP

In South Africa, more than 100,000 cases involving child victims have been reported over the past six financial years. Of these, over 22,000 were sexual offences.

Recently, a 32 year-old man from Botshabelo in Mangaung was successfully prosecuted and convicted for the sexual assault of a 12 year-old girl. In another case, a man from Umtata in the Eastern Cape was convicted of raping his daughters.

It is against this troubling backdrop that Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae joined Minister of Justice Mamoloko Kubayi on Thursday, 04 December 2025, for the official opening of the Botshabelo Sexual Offences Court.

"Sexual violence constitutes one of the most devastating offences in our society. It impacts not just the individual survivor but also families, communities, and the nation at large. Survivors frequently encounter prolonged delays, secondary

trauma, stigma, and barriers that impede their access to justice. This court has been established as a direct reaction to those challenges. It signifies a commitment: that survivors will be acknowledged, safeguarded, and treated with empathy and expertise" Premier Letsoha-Mathae said. "NGOs need to play their role. We have funded NGOs that are not doing what they are meant

to do. We must monitor their impact in helping communities, particularly women and children, who are the most vulnerable and victims of abuse, sexual violence, and Gender-Based Violence and Femicide," she concluded.

The newly launched Sexual Offences Court offers specialised services that conventional courts cannot provide to victims of sexual violence. Equipped with modern technology and staffed by trained professionals including prosecutors, social workers, psychologists, and other intermediaries, the court ensures a safe, supportive environment where victims can testify without fear or the pressure of facing perpetrators directly. This approach increases the likelihood of successful prosecution and strengthens community confidence in the justice system.

Beaming with pride and hope, Minister Kubayi cut the red ribbon to officially open the court.

"The court provides a child friendly environment and ensures that victims do not have to testify in the same room as perpetrators. Specialist professionals are available to support victims in giving their testimonies in an enabling environment. This provides them with speedy access to help," Minister Mamoloko Kubayi said.

She added that 16 new Sexual Offences Courts have already been rolled out, and over 40 existing courts have been upgraded across the country.

R57.2b Budget Shake-Up: Mosenogi Prioritises Services That Matter



MEC for Finance, Kenetswe Mosenogi and the Speaker of the Legislature, Dr. Desbo Mohono. Picture: NWPT Facebook

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

The North West Provincial Treasury has shifted its financial priorities with the tabling of a R57.2 billion adjustment budget, signalling a renewed focus on stabilising health and education services amid mounting fiscal pressures.

Tabling the adjustment budget on Friday, MEC for Finance Kenetswe Mosenogi said the revised allocation reflects an increase of R1.41 billion, from R55.8 billion to R57.2 billion, forming part of the province's response to ongoing fiscal pressures, reliance on the National Treasury, and the urgent need to diversify revenue sources.

She said "This critical mid-year review acts as a barometer for the province's financial health, allowing government to realign priorities and resources in response to shifting economic conditions and service delivery demands. The adjustment budget—mandated under the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA)—is more than a technical process; it reflects government's ability to reconcile initial fiscal plans with the realities on the ground".

Health Gets R503 Million Boost

The Department of Health receives one of the largest upward adjustments—an increase of R503.467 million, raising its budget from R17.040 million to R17.544 million. The additional funding includes:

- R40.414 million rollover from the National Ter-

tiary Services Grant to settle outstanding invoices from the previous financial year.

- R466.467 million from National Treasury to ease pressures on Compensation of Employees, Goods and Services, and outstanding accruals and payables.
- R60 million allocated to augment national funding for accruals.

- R7.703 million to cushion the impact of funding withdrawn from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Education Sees R463 Million Increase

The Department of Education's budget increases by R463.215 million, made up of:

- R104.010 million in conditional grants,
- R276.766 million in equitable share funding, and
- R82.439 million in rollovers.

Key rollovers include:

- R4.001 million for the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Grant,
- R71.322 million for the Education Infrastructure Grant,
- R5.590 million for the Maths, Science and Technology Grant, and
- R1.526 million for Learner Teacher Support Material.

This raises the department's overall budget from

R22.895 million to R23.358 million.

"The Early Childhood Development (ECD) subsidy has been increased from R17 to R24 for centre-based programmes, and from R6 to R9 for non-centre-based programmes," MEC Mosenogi announced.

Scrutiny Begins as Opposition Parties Push Back

With the tabling of the adjustment budget, legislative scrutiny is now underway. Opposition parties are expected to challenge the prioritisation choices, arguing over whether the reallocation sufficiently addresses the province's core challenges. Civil society and labour will also analyse the impact on social services and public sector employment.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) raised concerns about persistent municipal governance failures, noting that of the seven municipalities under financial recovery, only two show meaningful progress—prolonging service delivery breakdowns. The party further pointed to rising gender-based violence, collapsing infrastructure, and other systemic issues.

"Worryingly, the budget lacks clear delivery timelines, measurable targets, and accountability measures to curb wasteful expenditure and corruption," said DA Finance Spokesperson in North West, Hendriette van Huyssteen. She added that the DA demands transparency on funded projects, the publication of maintenance reports, firm deadlines for infrastructure repairs, and accountability for underperformance. "Increasing expenses without fixing fundamental provincial issues betrays ordinary families," she said.

The Freedom Front Plus (FF Plus) echoed similar concerns, noting a drop in expenditure in key infrastructure departments from 31.22% to 23.57% in the first quarter compared to last year.

"This underspending is deeply concerning as the North West already faces a massive backlog in maintaining critical infrastructure," said FF Plus provincial leader Michal Groenewald. "The province must invest its available funds responsibly and free from corruption to support service delivery and economic growth."

A Budget Measured by Delivery, Not Announcements

In conclusion, the 2025/26 Adjustment Budget reflects a provincial administration grappling with hard fiscal choices while seeking to protect vulnerable communities and stimulate economic activity through targeted spending.

Its success, however, will not be determined in the Legislature, but in the coming months—through improved service delivery, quicker project completion, and tangible improvements in residents' lives.

The Provincial Treasury has charted a revised course; the true test now lies in effective implementation.

Signs of a Looming Jagersfontein Mine Disaster were Visible but Ignored



Hundreds left destitute following Jagersfontein disaster. PHOTO: Baagedi Sethora

By: Matshidiso Sebeleng

About ten people are facing charges of murder, malicious property damage, and contravention of the Health and Safety Act in relation to the September 22 Jagersfontein disaster that tragically killed three people and left hundreds destitute.

The Department of Water and Sanitation and Kopanong Local Municipality have opened a case with the South African Police Services against Jagersfontein Development (Pty) LTD

This follows an explosive report investigated by the Universities of Pretoria and Witwatersrand which reveals that the diamond mine collapse could have been prevented.

Issued to the small Free State mining town community by the Deputy Ministers of Water and Sanitation, David Mahlobo and Sello Seitlholo on Friday, the findings of the report reveal that long-term engineering failures were ignored and that signs of a looming mine collapse were visible.

The report also states that the mine's owner may have been aware of the impending disaster.

According to the report, the visible signs include, the instability of the southern wall of the dam, construction of the tailings was based on a conceptual design, and no detailed designs were done.

It also states that there was no construction supervision by a registered engineering professional and the Southern wall was constructed on a weak foundation which drastically contributed to the collapse.

"The technical investigation by the two universities found that among others, the owner of the tailings dam, Jagersfontein Development (Pty) Ltd, may have been aware of the instability of the storage facility along the southern wall of the dam tailings from as far back as 2019, and at the

time added large volumes of material to stabilise the slope, which was not effective, but continued to raise the dam wall and deposit more tailings into the dam.

"The construction and raising of the tailings storage facility was based on conceptual designs and no detailed designs were done to enable the safe construction of the facility, there was no construction supervision by a registered engineering professional, and that part of the southern wall of the compartment was constructed over a pre-existing tailings dump of low strength. Which is what largely resulted in the failure of the TSF where the breach occurred," the report states.

In addition, the report finding shows that in March 2022, a small crest failure was observed and reported as an early sign of the collapse which happened six months later.

While addressing the community, Mahlobo said he was confident that the court judgment would be in favor of the residents and against the mine company.

"We obviously cannot get into the merits of the case because it is in court, safe to say that we have strong evidence and it is a winnable case," he said.

The delegation also included Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae and the Mayor of Kopanong Local Municipality Xolani Tseletsele. Letsoha-Mathae expressed her satisfaction with the report

"We promised the people of Jagersfontein that we would pursue this matter and we are.

"This government, has witnessed the devastation of the disaster caused by the collapse of the mine dam, we laid a case with the police, and we are happy that the matter is currently in court.

"The investigation that led to the report was not done by the government, but by institutions of higher learning, and it was a transparent investigation," she said.

Crackdown on GBV: Botshabelo Gets Specialised Court



Crackdown on GBV: Botshabelo Gets Specialised Court. Picture: OTP

By: Abigail Visagie

Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae, together with Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development Mameloko Kubayi, officially opened the Botshabelo Sexual Offences Court yesterday.

The launch follows the release of South Africa's second-quarter crime statistics by Police Minister Firoz Cachalia, which show a sharp rise in sexual offences in the Free State. Cases increased from 737 in the first quarter to 890 in the second quarter — an alarming spike of 153 new victims.

"Sexual violence constitutes one of the most devastating offences in our society. It impacts not just the individual survivor but also families, communities, and the nation at large," said Letsoha-Mathae, noting that many survivors face long delays, secondary trauma and stigma when seeking justice.

She added that the new court marks a "pivotal milestone" for the province. "This court has been established as a direct reaction to those challenges; it signifies a commitment that survivors will be acknowledged, safeguarded and treated with empathy and expertise."

The specialised court is equipped with modern technology and staffed by trained social workers, prosecutors, psychologists and other professionals. Its design aims to provide a safe, child-friendly space for victims to testify without having to face their alleged perpetrators, a model authorities believe will improve conviction rates and restore confidence in the justice system.

Minister Kubayi, celebrating the opening, emphasised that the facility creates an environment that helps reduce fear and trauma for victims, especially children. "Specialist professionals are available to support victims in giving their testimonies

in an enabling environment.

This provides them with speedy access to help," she said.

Kubayi added that the department had also donated toys and books through its One Toy, One Book, One Future charity initiative, which supports child survivors. She stressed the long-term emotional burden minors often carry after sexual violence. "When a child is raped, the pain is seen when they appear in court, and they have to point at the person — someone they know most of the time," she said.

Meanwhile, Premier Letsoha-Mathae urged NGOs to fulfil their mandates. "We have funded NGOs that are not doing what they are meant to do. We must monitor their impact in helping communities, particularly women and children, who are the most vulnerable and victims of abuse, sexual violence, and Gender-Based Violence and Femicide," she concluded

Magage Announces Major Provincial Spending Plan

NC government aims to ease service delivery pressures with strategic funding

By: Matshidiso Sebeleng

The Northern Cape MEC for Finance, Economic Development, and Tourism, Venus Blennies-Magage, tabled the 2025 Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement and Adjustments Budget on Wednesday, presenting a budget exceeding R1 billion—just weeks after South Africa hosted its first G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg.

The Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture received an additional R15 million, including R3.2 million for the national school sport championships co-hosted with the Department of Basic Education. The Department of Roads and Public Works was allocated R157.7 million, with R10 million set aside for personnel-related pressures in technical and finance roles, and R95.6 million earmarked for rates and taxes settlement for the Sol Plaatje Municipality.

Economic Development received R15 million, including R3.6 million to support Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises. The province's new Diamonds & Dorings Kimberley Bighole Marathon received R3.3 million, with an additional R1.7 million allocated to the Diamonds & Dorings Kimberley Diamond Cup. A total of R242.8 million was earmarked for the provincial housing project as part of the first tranche of the R300 million allocation.

Highlighting the importance of education, Blennies-Magage announced an additional R92 million for the Department of Education, including R80 million to address compensation-of-employees pressures. Early Childhood Development (ECD) will receive R39.8 million through a dedicated grant, increasing subsidies from R17 to R24 per child for centre-based programmes, and from R6 to R9 per child for non-centre-based programmes, while expanding the number of subsidised children.

Blennies-Magage emphasized that universal health coverage remains a priority, with the Department of Health receiving R267.5 million, including R160 million in national funding to retain health professionals, appoint doctors, and address goods-and-services pressures. "Addressing imminent risks in the Departments of Health and Education, and implementing decisive measures under the Targeted and Responsible Savings (TARS) methodology, are key priorities. Additional funding alone will not resolve these challenges," she said.

In response, the Democratic Alliance (DA) in the province expressed cautious optimism. The party welcomed the additional R20 million for Emthanjeni's bulk infrastructure, aimed at improving water and wastewater services in De Aar, Britstown, and Hanover. They stressed that residents must benefit from the Northern Cape Provincial Treasury's decisions, while continuing to scrutinize discretionary fund allocations of R31.5 million to executive members.



Northern Cape MEC for Finance Venus Blennies-Magage. Picture: Supplied

MANGAUNG
AT THE HEART OF IT ALL

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON THE REVIEW OF THE INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP) 2026/2027, SECTORAL PLANS, SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK, THE MTREF BUDGET 2026/2027 – 2028/29 AND BUDGET RELATED POLICIES

Subsequent to the adoption of the IDP and Budget Process Plan by the Mangaung council, the city has begun the process of its 4th and final review on the five-year IDP for 2022/2027 and MTREF Budget. During this process, the Municipality must consult its stakeholders for the review of IDP 2026/2027 and the MTREF budget allocations for 2026/2027 – 2028/2029 period. The outcome of the consultative and interactive processes in all 51 wards of municipality with communities, public representatives and various stakeholders is valuable and will contribute towards the achievement of the overall municipality's objectives.

The review of the 2026/2027 IDP and Budget will be structured as follows:

CORE COMPONENTS	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBILITY
Assessment of the existing level of development (Feedback report Section 72 report and submission of community aspirations)	• First Round – 16 February 2026 • Second Round – 30 April 2026 (Comments on the Draft IDP)	• Submissions by Ward Councilors with assistance from Ward Committees. • Stakeholders submissions • IDP and OPM office publishing the feedback report
Demographic Analysis	27 February 2026	• IDP and OPM office • Stats SA (Available data i.e. General Household Survey)
Review of Mangaung Sector Plans	27 February 2026	Mangaung Departments
National and Provincial governments proposed Projects	30 January 2026	• Provincial COGTA • National Treasury

Following the above, specifically on the first component, stakeholders are hereby requested to submit their inputs/comments in writing to IDPComments@mangaung.co.za on or before **16 February 2026**. Additionally, all other hand written inputs/comments can be hand delivered at any Municipal Regional Offices to the attention of Regional General Managers (RGMs) on behalf of the IDP office.

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President Ramaphosa Condemns GBVF



Minister Mameloko Kubayi, President Cyril Ramaphosa and FS Premier, Maqueen Letsoha-Mathae. Picture: Thabo Ketele

By: Abigail Visagie

The President of the Republic of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, graced the Free State with his presence at the Free State Provincial Men's Indaba in honour of 16 Days of Activism against Women and Child Abuse, held at Lemo Green Park, Bloemfontein.

As keynote speaker, the President condemned all forms of abuse against women, children, and the vulnerable by men. Following his declaration of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) as a national disaster, Ramaphosa spoke sternly against men exploiting young women for jobs.

He also criticised the misuse of "traditional values," noting that some men, as an expression of toxic masculinity, hide behind cultural narratives to justify abuse.

"We can talk the whole day, but the truth is that men do not respect women and view them as objects. Women

are the most valuable assets of our country and must be treated with dignity," Ramaphosa said.

He further stressed that this concern requires the attention of all citizens, so women no longer fear speaking out against GBVF.

He also highlighted that broken homes, where father figures are absent, can negatively impact boys.

"South Africa has a crisis of broken families where the vast majority of children do not live with their biological fathers. Boys lack father figures. Premier Letsoha-Mathae, you have initiated something really good, and hopefully it will spread across the country," he concluded.

Free State Premier Maqueen Letsoha-Mathae shared the same sentiment and expressed pride that the province led the eight provinces by hosting the Men's Indaba. She said that with the adjusted 2025/26 provincial budget, their focus will be on GBVF.

"We will roll out dialogue sessions across districts, and participants will be men because, as women, we have

played our role. It is time that men take the baton and start being the change," Mathae said.

The Premier added that the next step will start in schools, with the MEC for Education, Dr MJ Maboya, and the executive council engaging boys, girls, traditional leaders, and traditional healers.

"We will even visit taverns and speak at soccer matches and tournaments," Mathae concluded.

Meanwhile, MEC for Finance, Economic Development, and Tourism, Ketso Makume, confirmed that part of the R6 million allocated to the Premier's office will provide practical support to GBVF survivors.

Makume, appointed to champion these dialogues across districts, plans to engage businesses and other departments to address issues such as men fearing women in leadership roles.

"Health issues will also be discussed so outcomes address GBVF-related concerns. Where we are gathered as men, the message should be clear: Not in my name," said Makume.

Skills Boost for NC Youth as DRPW Unveils 12-Month Learnership



Northern Cape fights youth unemployment. Picture supplied by the Department of Roads and Public Works. PHOTO: Supplied

By: Matshidiso Sebeleng

The Department of Roads and Public Works (DRPW), in partnership with the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA), has launched a 12-month Tyre and Suspension Learnership Programme at the Teachers Training Centre in Kimberley.

The initiative aims to curb youth unemployment by offering opportunities to 100 young people across the Northern Cape, with 20 participants selected from each district.

Presenting the midterm budget speech on Wednesday, Northern Cape MEC for Finance, Economic Development, and Tourism, Venus Blennies-Magage, noted that unemployment remains a major challenge in the province despite recent improvements.

"National unemployment has decreased from 33.2 percent in the second quarter to 31.9 percent in the third quarter of 2025. The provincial unemployment rate dropped from 32.7 percent to 31.2 percent over the same period. While this slight improvement is encouraging, the rate is still a serious concern and requires urgent, collective action.

Departments need to develop programmes that create sustainable jobs and support the success of the provincial Jobs Plan," she said.

She added that the province must decisively address unemployment, empower the youth, and reduce poverty-related social issues, as communities expect meaningful solutions.

The learnership is designed to build technical skills through the Tyre Repair and Maintenance

Level 2 and Suspension Sub-Assembler NQF Level 3 qualifications.

"This is a golden opportunity. Make the most of it. The future is in your hands. As government, we are committed to transforming the lives of unemployed youth," said Dr Steven Jonkers, Head of Department in the Frances Baard District.

According to the department's statement, participants will receive a monthly stipend for the duration of the programme. Training will consist of 30% classroom instruction and 70% practical work, with hands-on components conducted at departmental workshops and selected private tyre-repair companies.

MEC Fufe Makatong highlighted the programme's role in promoting job creation and entrepreneurship.

"This initiative will help participants become entrepreneurs and start their own businesses after completing the programme," she said.

The department added that learners will acquire skills in tyre inspection, servicing, wheel balancing, puncture repairs, tyre mounting, and more.

The Tyre and Suspension Learnership Programme offers industry-aligned skills relevant to vehicle maintenance, fleet services, logistics, and transport sectors.

By combining theory and practical experience, the programme aims to equip participants with the competencies needed to transition smoothly into the workforce. This province-wide initiative also supports inclusive economic growth by providing equal opportunities across districts, ensuring that youth from rural and township communities are not left behind.

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Nkabinde rejects claim of protecting Batohi from cross examination



National Prosecuting Authority's boss, Advocate Shamila Batohi Picture: GCIS

Chairperson of the Nkabinde Enquiry, retired Justice Bess Nkabinde, has criticised National Director of Public Prosecutions, Advocate Shamila Batohi, for insinuating that the retired justice would protect her from being cross examined at the enquiry.

This after Advocate Batohi referred to an alleged telephone conversation she had with Justice Nkabinde prior to the start of the enquiry, where the retired Justice allegedly told Batohi she wouldn't be cross examined.

Justice Nkabinde has vehemently denied this assertion cautioning Batohi from impugning her conduct or that of her co-chairs at the enquiry.

The Nkabinde enquiry is probing suspended South Gauteng Director of Public Prosecutions Advocate Andrew Chauke's fitness to hold office, following prosecutorial decisions he took during the racketeering case of the Cato Manor Police Unit dubbed the Death Squad, and the murder, kidnapping and assault charges against former Crime Intelligence Boss General Richard Mdululi.

Judge Nkabinde states her position.

Judge: May I take this opportunity to clarify your statement that I made it clear in Chambers that you will not be cross examined. Did I understand to say that?

Batohi: That is correct chairperson.

Judge: It is important to put context to that question. To that answer rather and place it correctly on record. That it is not correct that I said that you will not be cross examined. **SABCNews**

DG Mweli Visits North West Grade 12 Marking Centres



Ensuring Excellence: DBE Director General Oversees Rigorous Marking Process at marking Centers. Picture: Facebook

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

Director-General of the Department of Basic Education, Mr Mathanzima Mweli, visited North West marking centres on Sunday, 30 November 2025, to oversee and motivate Grade 12 markers.

With over 182 marking centres nationwide, the NSC marking process demands strict confidentiality and accuracy. In the North West alone, more than 20 venues with hostel facilities host 4,017 personnel.

"You left the comfort of your homes to perform a national duty. You are our National Priceless Precious Assets," Mweli said, urging markers to take care of their health during the process.

MEC for Education Viola Motsumi welcomed the visit, noting 24-hour security measures and training for all markers. The official marking process began on Monday, 01 December 2025, and is set to conclude on 12 December 2025.

Opinion

Dr Nitha Ramnath

Deputy Director, Corporate Relations, Communication and Marketing · University of the Free State



Building the future:

UFS advances a new vision for township rental markets

The University of the Free State (UFS), in partnership with the Development Action Group (DAG) and Planact, has taken a leading role in shaping South Africa's urban future by convening partners, practitioners, and policymakers to unlock the potential of township rental markets as engines of inclusive growth.

With support from the South African National Research Foundation (NRF) Research Chair in City-Region Economies in the UFS Department of Economics and Finance and the Centre for Development Support (CDS), Professors Andreas Scheba and Ivan Turok partnered with DAG and Planact to bring evidence-based insight and strategic direction to the inaugural Township Rental Dialogue held in Johannesburg on 25 November, followed by a Small-Scale Rental Housing Construction Expo the next day.

This one-day public dialogue and learning exchange brought together key actors from government, the private sector, academia, financial institutions, civil society, and property developers to explore how township rental markets can contribute to building more inclusive and vibrant cities.

Township rental markets are expanding rapidly as homeowners and micro-developers respond to rising urban housing demand.

This growth holds significant promise for improving livelihoods, stimulating local economies, and strengthening neighbourhoods – but it also presents challenges around regulation, infrastructure, safety, and tenant protection.

Recognising these complexities, the UFS has helped organise and convene the dialogue around how collaborative solutions can build more equita-



ble, sustainable communities.

In his keynote address, Prof Turok – NRF Chair in City-Region Economies at the UFS – set the strategic tone for the event.

He highlighted the scale and significance of township rental activity and emphasised the need for partnerships that combine research, policy reform, and community-driven innovation.

Drawing on recent insights from UFS-led research and reforms underway in Cape Town, Turok underscored that “a stronger, more compelling vision for the sector is essential to mobilise political will and unlock investment”.

Three panel discussions expanded on this call to action, bringing together practitioners from government, civil society, financial institutions, and academia.

Scheba facilitated the session on strengthening support systems for micro-developers and homeowners, an area where evidence, trust-building, and

community-level engagement are crucial.

Participants highlighted promising reforms at national and local government levels and stressed the importance of civil society organisations in bridging gaps between communities and institutions.

According to Scheba, “policy reforms across different spheres of government are encouraging, but more meaningful spaces for citizens to engage if we are to truly co-create solutions are needed.

Financial inclusion emerged as another priority.

Representatives from commercial banks and housing micro-finance institutions shared new approaches to expanding access to affordable finance, emphasising the need for better data, reduced lending risk, and intermediaries that can connect township developers to formal financial ecosystems.

Zama Mgwatywu from DAG emphasised the urgent need for action to support the growth and gradual formalisation of the sector.

He stressed that government can no longer post-

pone critical actions, because people are building regardless.

“Government must acknowledge, engage, collaborate, and lead in shaping rental markets to maximise the contribution to township economic and social development,” he said.

He challenged participants to not just articulate the challenges but “to get their hands dirty and co-create solutions, as everyone has a role to play in strengthening the sector”.

In his closing remarks, Turok identified three urgent actions that can accelerate progress, including creating a more enabling regulatory environment through clearer building standards, streamlined planning procedures, and tenure reforms that support compliance and safety.

“Another urgent action is innovation in infrastructure financing to ensure that rapidly densifying neighbourhoods gain access to reliable services, amenities, and public space upgrades.

We also need to invest in capacity-building for township developers, drawing on new technologies, peer networks, and civil society partnerships to strengthen local skills and knowledge,” he concluded.

Participants welcomed the dialogue as an important platform for breaking silos, aligning priorities, and building a shared roadmap for township rental reform.

The event demonstrated the role that the UFS plays, not only as a research institution, but also as a convener that brings diverse voices together to co-create practical, inclusive solutions for South Africa's cities.

Why Competition Matters? A Review of South Africa's Anti-Competitive Policies and Their Importance for Social Transformation



What is competition and why does it matter? Economic competition creates an even playing field; it allows all economic entities – big and small – to enter the market, grow, innovate, and contribute to the economic growth and development of the country as a whole.

Economic competition provides the basis for social inclusion, it allows everyone to access the economic opportunities that they need to reach their full potential. Inclusion increases social cohesion and resilience. When markets are inclusive and fair, businesses and individuals develop the capacity to support themselves and their society in good times and bad. Anti-competitive business practices negate market competition and hinder businesses from competing fairly.

This negatively impacts society's capacity to be inclusive, cohesive, and resilient and leads to high levels of inequality, poverty, and unemployment.

Anti-competitive practices include; collusion, price fixing, monopolistic practices, and abusing market dominance to shoulder out others (opportunity hoarding). Healthy competition is especially important in the South African context because of the country's history of segregation.

For hundreds of years prior to South Africa's democratic dispensation, black South Africans were denied the opportunity to participate in the economy.

Their economic options were limited to low-skilled labour and they were restricted from accessing mainstream urban markets through segregationist policies such as the Natives Land Act which saw thousands of black families forcibly moved to homelands and townships.

A number of policies such as the Employment Equity Act (EEA), the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (PEPUDA), and the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (B-BBEE) were implemented following South Africa's democratic transition and structures set up such as the Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) Commission and Competition Commission, amongst others, to oversee equal access to opportunities.

Great strides have been made by both of these entities to bring about economic inclusion and eradicate discriminatory economic practices.

The Competition Commission has had its work cut out for it and in the last decade alone investigated a number of anti-competitive cases and imposed around R4 billion in penalties to entities engaging in anti-competitive mergers and prohibited business practices.

The B-BEE Commission has been, equally, inundated with cases of discrimination in the workplace and this year announced that it would appoint 20 000 more inspectors to monitor and evaluate compliance with EEA.

Sadly, as the structures implement measures to eradicate anti-competitive practices and increase market transparency, the means employed to evade such transparency grow ever more sophisticated – fronting being just one example.

As a result, the economy remains inaccessible to those who lack the power, resources, or networks to break in.

30 Years after democracy, South Africa remains a deeply unequal society where only a small segment of the population is economically emancipated, the remainder continue to live on the margins of society employed in low-skilled positions, subsisting in the informal sector, and dependant on social welfare.

Segregationist and anti-competitive business practices impact employment it also makes goods and services unaffordable to the people who need them most as the Competition Commission's investigations into basic food stuff and HIV/Aids drugs evidence.

We see the impact of deepening market concentration and exclusion on the streets every day and we are reminded that the road to economic inclusion is an uphill one but one that absolutely cannot be abandoned because of the profound impact it has on the citizenry and on the future development of the country.

As the Government of National Unity (GNU) organizes its National Dialogue, economic inclusion through fair competition must be feature on the agenda.

The economy is in turmoil and the citizenry disillusioned with the slow pace of social transformation. The economy can no longer be held to ransom by multi-nationals and to the forces of globalization.

In order for the South African economy to grow, the country's leadership needs to have a clear road map for how it intends to bring about the developmental state it has long promised its people. **By Dr. Shevonne Henry**

Letter to the Editor

The editor reserves the right to edit and reject letters and all correspondence must include your full names, address and phone numbers. Write to: editor@journalnews.co.za



Pastor Motsamai Kareli
Empowerment Ministries International

Cultivating Innovation on Your Team

Give Away Power to Engage New Growth Strategies

The best leaders don't delight at being the center of attention or consider themselves to be the only ones with good ideas. Instead, their delight is in seeing their team succeed. Leaders empower people on their teams by injecting meaning into everything they do. God Himself has appointed and empowered us as leaders. Empowerment is much more than delegation of responsibility. It is that, of course, but we rev people's engines when they're convinced that what they do each day has an impact on the lives of others. They're not just making widgets; they're making widgets to improve the quality of life for the people who use them. We motivate those on our teams when we ask them to speak into an important decision and we listen to their input. When they believe they have a voice, they're more engaged, more committed and more energized, even when the decision wasn't what they suggested.

In some organizations, people are always looking over their shoulders to see if they're going to be slapped down for doing something wrong or having a novel idea. But in a healthy culture, they have a zone of safety, and they feel secure. This security doesn't foster lethargy; it's the fertile soil of creativity and innovation. (If someone takes advantage of this positive environment by slacking off, you'll know that person either needs to connect tasks with purpose more fully, or he needs to go.)

When leaders empower others, they are giving power away. The people on the team have the opportunity — in fact, the authority — to take more initiative to come up with better ideas and methods, which almost inevitably leads to greater motivation to achieve higher results. The very best leaders don't insist on being the center of attention and having all the right ideas. They push authority and responsibility to lower levels in the organization, bringing out the best in their people and celebrating like crazy when each one succeeds. After a successful event, the leader may tell the team, “That was amazing! We can tweak a few things, but let's talk about all the things that went really well so we can leverage those even more next time.”

When things don't work out like they hoped, gifted leaders don't berate the people whose project came up short. These leaders dissect what went right even more than what went wrong. And they express confidence that the person leading that effort will have a better outcome next time.

In this environment and in these conversations, people on the team feel respected, honored, valued, admired and confident in the leader. They are

highly motivated to dive into the next project and give it their very best. They develop a wonderful blend of pride in their accomplishments and humility that it took the whole team pulling together to pull it off.

People live for affirmation, and they shrivel and wilt without it. Give it, but give it authentically. Don't just say the same bland niceties again and again. Become skilled at being specific in your encouragement. Notice particular qualities. Specific, thoughtful affirmations are much more powerful than “You're the best!” or “Great job!”

The best leaders are masters at catching people doing something innovative and affirming them for it, and these leaders are skilled at using mistakes and failures as stepping stones of growth. They actually encourage people to keep trying and stretching because the only people who don't make mistakes are either dead or cowards. Most people are ashamed when they make mistakes, but in a healthy culture, people are free to admit their errors. If it was a good attempt but failed, the leader can help them learn and move on. If the failure was the result of a dumb decision, the leader can patiently help the person think through the process so it doesn't happen again. And if it was a great idea but the wrong time, the leader will encourage the person to keep pushing and innovating.

The People Around You

If we look carefully, we'll notice four types of people in our organizations. When we identify them, we can tailor our communication—and our expectations—to fit each person. These include:

Wanderers

These are people who can hear our vision again and again, but it doesn't sink in. We can take them to conferences, give them books, send links to podcasts and share our hearts with them, but they just don't get the picture. They're not evil or immoral, but for some reason, they can't see beyond their own needs and desires. They sit in a cubicle and perform their assigned tasks, but they can't connect what they do to a higher purpose. If they serve as volunteers, they don't go beyond the minimum expectations. They wander in and out of our doors without connecting with the heart of our mission. They're undoubtedly the wrong people to ask to lead in your company or organization, but they aren't bad people.

Followers

Many people get excited about the vision, but they don't take initiative to fulfill it. They see a need, but they assume someone else will take care of it. However, when a leader asks them to participate to meet the need, they're glad to help. Most people in

Inclusion Debate: Bridging the Equity Divide in the Workplace

The importance of achieving equitable representation in a workplace/work force is crucial not only to enhance creativity, innovation and productivity but also is vital for economic growth, social justice and societal transformation. Diversity and inclusion are crucial components of modern organisation as they speak a management of a range of diverse human differences viz: race, gender, physical abilities, ethnicity, sexual orientation etc. Through diversity talent can be attracted and retained by having individuals with unique perspectives, varied backgrounds and experiences. Through inclusion an environment is created for all these individuals to feel welcomed, supported and valued. Diversity and inclusion go a long way in ensuring social equity and social justice. Employment Equity seeks to address systemic inequalities that have marginalised certain groups based on race, gender disability or other characteristics. Albeit its varied historical context, South Africa like other Countries globally, finds itself in the global space of grappling with the challenges brought about by the rise of Diversity and Inclusion as core Values in Corporate Governance. The efforts of South Africa to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion finds expression in most of its employment Legislative Framework Work in particular the Employment Equity Act of 1998 as it aims promote fair treatment and equal opportunities in the workplace in order to ensure social cohesion, inclusion and economic growth. Since the enactment of the aforementioned piece of Legislation commendable progress have been registered in bridging equity as outlined in the RSA Constitution. In its recent report, the Commission for Employment Equity (2023/2024 Annual Report) indicates a consistent progress and increase in representation of the designated groups and occupational levels. Despite this commendable progress much still need to be done as most of the designated groups still fall below their EAP.

According to the report, Females represents 25% as opposed to 74% of males in Senior Management in Private Sector while Government registered 64% males and 35% females. We see Private Sector having a representation of 64% whites and 14% Blacks, Indian at 12%, and Coloureds at 5,9%. Representation in the disability group is at a concerning 1.8 % in Private Sector and a low 1,5% in Government. The skills levels are equally reported to be at concerning levels. There is however a ray of hope for improvement in the advent of the recent amendments to the Employment Equity Act as the companies are now obliged to conduct a thorough analysis of workforce demographics and to identify company shortfalls on equity through refocused strategic plans that addresses and monitor issues of equity, diversity and inclusion. The amendments emphasises compliance and accountability through the penalties imposed on Equity Compliance Certificates and the removal of the size of the company as a barometer.

These together with the implementation and the audits of fair recruitment processes and implementation of inclusive re-skilling and upskilling practices based on diversity and inclusion strategies and policies will go a long way in ensuring a desired goal of driving transformation through equity, diversity and inclusion. The benefits of equity, diversity and inclusion on social cohesion and economic growth cannot be over emphasised. Government must be more intentional about putting in place mediated measures to foster equity, diversity and inclusion and to eradicate systemic biases and resistance to change within organisational cultures. Corporate Governance Culture and footprint that goes beyond quota transformation to a culture that natures values and sustained Inclusion is imperative. **Tumi Moshote, a High Court advocate, holds an LL.M in Corporate Law and a Master's in Political Transformation and Governance.**

our churches and many in our companies fall into this category.

Leaders

A few people in our organizations are captured by the vision, devote everything in them to achieve it and enlist others to join them in the work. They know, they grow and they show. If we expect everyone on our teams to be this kind of person, we may be deeply disappointed.

At higher levels of an organization, though, such as the executive team, every person should be an exceptional leader. As the organization grows, we need to be more selective about the people we select, train and develop. We look for more leaders to join us.

When I speak on this topic, I tell the audience,

“Within a day or two after this event, you'll know which category you fit into. Some of you will leave here and call a friend to share what you've learned because this information may help him or her. You may be a leader.

Some of you will go home and review your notes so you can internalize the concepts so you can grow. You're probably an achiever. If you don't bother to look at your notes, you may be a follower. And if you've missed the talks because you were walking around outside, you're a wanderer.”

The best leaders don't delight in being the center of attention and being the only one with good ideas. Quite the opposite. They delight in seeing others succeed, and their delight is obvious to everyone.

Business

Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	16.99	0.22%	↕
Rand/Pound	22.69	0.05%	↕
Rand/Euro	19.82	0.26%	↕
Platinum	1 646.90	-1.53%	↕
Brent Crude	62.83	0.17%	↕
Gold	4 198.92	-0.10%	↕
Etherium	3 183.9	0.63%	↕
Bitcoin	92 870.7	-0.88%	↕

SA's G20 role dims as Poland steps in

US excludes SA from 2026 G20 and invites Poland instead



SA's participation in the 2026 Group of 20 (G20) appears set to be more subdued Picture: BD

Retoria's participation in the 2026 Group of 20 (G20) appears set to be more subdued after the US department of state confirmed it will exclude South Africa from the G20 2026 summit and invite Poland instead.

"About this time next year, the UK will be taking over the G20 presidency. We will be able to engage meaningfully and substantively over what really matters to the rest of the world. For now, we will take a commercial break until we resume normal programming," President Cyril Ramaphosa's spokesperson, Vincent Magwenya, wrote on social media on Wednesday.

For 2026, South Africa is part of the G20 troika along with the US and the UK, which will hold the presidency in 2027.

The US has repeated the discredited notion of a "white genocide" in South Africa as a reason behind its unilateral decision to exclude the country from the G20. It follows the conclusion of the G20 Leaders' Sum-

mit in Johannesburg last month, when leaders of the world's largest economies affirmed multilateralism and vowed to support the US for 2026.

The decision, made public by US secretary of state Marco Rubio, follows a boycott by Washington of the recent summit and a diplomatic row over the ceremonial hand-off of the G20 presidency. South Africa handed over the presidency of the G20 at the end of November in a low-key ceremony at the head offices of the department of international relations and co-operation.

South Africa is a founding member of the G20 and the move by the US is the first for the bloc, which accounts for the world's largest economies. The G20 under the US presidency is set to deviate from SA, with Washington reducing the number of working groups.

"Under [US] President [Donald] Trump's leadership, the G20 will use four working groups to achieve progress on three key themes: removing regulatory bur-

dens, unlocking affordable and secure energy supply chains, and pioneering new technologies and innovation," Rubio wrote in a statement.

The decision by the US about South Africa follows months of limited US participation in the G20 process during SA's presidency. Washington skipped many working-group meetings and withdrew from chairing the sustainable-finance workstream, prompting Italy to take over, Business Day understands.

The first G20 sherpas meeting for the US' 2026 presidency is scheduled for December 15, to which South Africa has not been invited.

International relations director-general Zane Dangor told MPs in parliament on Wednesday that the non-invitation of SA was a breach of protocol.

"Guest countries get invited. South Africa is a member of the G20 and our participation shouldn't be dependent on whether the presidency seeks to invite a member or not," Dangor said. **BusinessDay**

Here is the Official Petrol Price for December



The Department of Petroleum and Mineral Resources has published the official fuel price adjustments that will take effect on Wednesday, 3 December 2025.

November saw oil prices trade in a narrower range, fluctuating around \$63 a barrel as the United States pressured Russia to end its war in Ukraine.

The potential for further sanctions on Russia, or easing of sanctions if it agreed to negotiate peace, kept the market on its toes, even as forecasters underlined an oversupply in the coming years.

The rand, meanwhile, continued to show resilience, sticking to around R17.30/\$ for most of the month.

A succession of good news, including a credible budget, credit rating upgrade, and a general shift in sentiment balanced out a stronger dollar, resulting in a stable picture for the exchange rate.

Due to the higher-on-average oil price and not much movement in the rand, the balance of recoveries for fuel fell into the negative for December, resulting in a price hike at the pumps.

From Wednesday, petrol users will see prices increase by 29 cents per litre, while diesel drivers will see a much larger hike between 65 and 82 cents per litre.

The table below outlines the changes:

Fuel	Change
Petrol 93	increase of 29 cents per litre
Petrol 95	increase of 29 cents per litre
Diesel 0.05% (wholesale)	increase of 65 cents per litre
Diesel 0.005% (wholesale)	increase of 82 cents per litre
Illuminating Paraffin (Wholesale)	increase of 74 cents per litre
LPGAS (Gauteng)	increase of 24 cents per kg

The average international product prices for Petrol, Diesel and Illuminating Paraffin increased during the period under review.

The Rand appreciated against the US Dollar during the period under review, on average, when compared to the previous period.

The average Rand/US Dollar exchange rate for the period 31 October 2025 to 03 December 2025 was 17.2343 compared to 17.2930 during the previous period.

This led to a lower contribution to the Basic Fuel Prices on petrol, diesel and illuminating paraffin by 3.355 c/l, 3.791 c/l, 3.755 c/l respectively

In line with the application of the Regulatory Accounts System the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy has approved a net increase of 3.6 c/l in the annual margin adjustments on petrol.

The minister also approved and a net increase of 5.48 c/l on diesel and illuminating paraffin wholesale prices, with effect from 03 December 2025.

The Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy has also approved the adjustments to some of the pricing elements of the maximum retail price structure of liquefied petroleum gas (LP Gas) with an adjustment of 70.0 c/kg with effect from 03 December 2025.

LP Gas prices will differ in each of the Magisterial District Zones.

This is how the price changes will reflect at the pumps (Diesel prices reflect wholesale, pump prices will differ):

Inland	November	December
93 Petrol	R20.97	R21.26
95 Petrol	R21.12	R21.41
Diesel 0.05% (wholesale)	R19.13	R19.78
Diesel 0.005% (wholesale)	R19.20	R20.02
Illuminating Paraffin	R12.98	R13.73
LPGAS (per kg)	R33.98	R34.22
Coastal	November	December
93 Petrol	R20.18	R20.47
95 Petrol	R20.29	R20.58
Diesel 0.05% (wholesale)	R18.30	R18.95
Diesel 0.005% (wholesale)	R18.44	R19.26
Illuminating Paraffin	R11.97	R12.72

*increase of 15c/kg | ** increase of 9c/kg
Source: **Business Tech**

Good news for the top 1% in South Africa



Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana Picture: Supplied

Finance Minister Enoch Godongwana has doubled down on this stance that introducing a wealth tax is not viable in South Africa.

This follows his previous comments at the beginning of the year, in which he stated that South Africa already taxes the rich heavily.

In a parliamentary Q&A, Godongwana said that, despite calls for new taxes targeting the ultra-wealthy, the country already collects substantial revenue from high-income earners through an established and progressive tax system.

The minister was pressed on why he continues to reject the idea of a wealth tax, given that the country's existing instruments—donations tax, securities transfer tax, transfer duty, and capital gains tax—collectively account for less than 6% of total revenue.

This is despite the fact that around 55% of South

Africa's wealth is concentrated among about 1% of the population.

In response, Godongwana said the framing is misleading, insisting that South Africa already taxes the wealthy at levels comparable to or higher than many rich countries. He pointed out that the suite of taxes aimed at wealth currently brings in revenue equivalent to 1.15% of GDP, which is more than double the OECD average of 0.5% for similar taxes.

These include donations tax, transfer duty, estate duty and securities transfer tax. Earlier this year, he noted that municipal property rates and capital gains tax further add to the total.

"South Africa's taxes targeting wealth collect revenue equivalent to approximately 1.15% of GDP, which is comparable to the OECD average," he said.

"Only four countries—Norway, Spain, Switzerland and Colombia—levy annual wealth taxes. International experience shows that annual wealth taxes generate limited revenue and are costly and complex to administer," he added.

To illustrate this, Godongwana pointed to Spain, where the country's wealth tax generated just €619 million in 2023—approximately 0.04% of GDP—while income tax brought in €130 billion.

According to Godongwana, this is proof that trying to tax net wealth directly is far less effective than relying on a well-designed income tax system. **BusinessTech**

New Syndicates Plunging SA into Darkness

Copper cable theft syndicates are wreaking havoc in South Africa, with the situation exacerbated by the availability of cheap replacements. Copper thieves plunge households, businesses and factories into darkness amid widespread cable theft and power outages.

Eskom reported 771 transformer failures linked to vandalism and illegal connections in the first nine months of 2025, representing a 20% increase over the same period in the prior year.

National Treasury estimates that copper theft costs South Africa around R7 billion per year.

Copper theft is now seen as undermining the nation's energy security and economic recovery.

JSE-listed South Ocean Electric Wire Company (SOEW) is calling for an immediate government crackdown on organised crime and lax import controls.

SOEW warned that rushed replacements with cheap, non-compliant cables from China are also exacerbating the problem.

This increases the risk of further blackouts for households, businesses and industries.

When emergency fixes are desperately needed, whatever replacements are at hand are used; these are often cheap imports that fail local SANS standards, adding the risk of ongoing outages," said SOEW CEO



Andre Smith.

"The scale of cable theft is staggering. It is believed that syndicates, sophisticated networks often involving insiders, scrap dealers and international buyers, target copper and aluminium lines across Eskom's grid, municipalities and private networks."

Smith said that these groups coordinate via encrypted apps, bribe officials and use stolen vehicles for quick hits. There is also an increasing trend of armed robberies directly targeting copper manufacturers or resellers, putting lives at risk. The theft hits sectors like automotive and food processing the worst, but renewables are also affected, with solar farm cabling targeted. Smith said that theft becomes a vicious cycle, with thefts prompting hasty replacements. However, cable dumping then floods the markets.

70% of PV and power imports often skip certifications, lacking compliance requirements such as UV resistance and cross-linked Low Smoke and Zero Halo-

gen insulation, which increases the risk of fire.

"Syndicates steal, grey imports are used as replacements, and the grid suffers; it's a vicious cycle we must break," said Smith. He added that several industries, including mining, construction, solar, and manufacturing, are facing an escalating threat from the influx of substandard imported power cables.

He noted that this places the safety, employment and economic viability of the local cable manufacturing industry at risk.

Job losses are also on the cards, as the market is flooded with cheap, non-regulated imports.

He added that calls are growing for decisive action from authorities to protect the industry, with SARS, the Department of Trade and trade unions urged to intervene. Smith said that these organisations should look for potential dumping by drawing parallels with the anti-dumping duties on tyres from Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia.

"Without intervention, the reliance on untested imports could deepen, threatening the resilience of South Africa's industrial base and local power cable manufacturing."

He added that jobs, such as those in PVC production, wooden drum manufacturing, and steel wire supply, are facing unemployment. **-Business Tech**

GET TO KNOW YOUR DJ

Get lost in the groove with Glen Kosha



Gomolemo Moahlodi aka 'Geemo'. Picture: Supplied

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

If your weekend needs a soundtrack of pulsing house rhythms and seamless nostalgic mixes, look no further than the flaming decks that the Elite DJ will be morphing.

An instant pause as we get to know Ronaldo Ramongae from Jacobsdal in the Northern Cape, a local favorite known for his great, versatile house sets and mixes, which include Amapiano, Deep House, and Afro House.

For five years, Ramongae has been rising through the ranks with his ethereal, melodic house sounds. His astounding stage history is massive, and he has shared stages with top DJs in the game, playing at big festivals like Summer Splash, Vander Kloof Dam, Letsemeng Soccer Jersey, and the Annual Coat Fiesta.

Making a name for himself, he always had his hands on the prize.

"I am self-taught and driven by my own passion for the industry. I have learned from various sources and experiences, including my Jacobsdal brothers in the Stalle entertainment," he shared.

With aspirations of headlining big festivals in the future and collaborating with prominent names in the music scene, he says he will stop at nothing to make his dreams a reality.

He keeps invading spaces and giving the crowds fire-captivating house sets.

He will be playing at Kimberly Zeus today December.

Kelvin Momo Dominates Spotify and Apple Music in 2025

In a year defined by South Africa's continued global influence on Amapiano, one name echoed more consistently than any other: Kelvin Momo. As Spotify Wrapped and Apple Music Replay 2025 arrive, the numbers reveal a remarkable story of deep-listening, loyal fans, and a producer whose sound has matured into a national cultural staple.

Spotify's 2025 data places Kelvin Momo firmly among the top three most-streamed artists in South Africa, a testament to the enduring appeal of his Private School Amapiano style. Across the year, Kelvin Momo amassed over 71 million Spotify streams.

Two of his albums, "Ntsako" and "Thato Ya Modimo," anchored his dominance. Both projects secured spots within Spotify's Top 10 Most-Streamed Albums of 2025, reinforcing his status not just as a hitmaker but as a creator of full-length bodies of work that resonate far beyond their release cycles.

Listening habits further highlight his connection with audiences. More than 153 million streams came from mobile devices, showing how integral his music is to everyday South African life. Combined desktop and TV streams contributed an additional 15 million, reflecting his growing presence in home entertainment spaces.

When isolated, his two major projects paint an even clearer picture. Together, "Ntsako" and "Thato Ya Modimo" surpassed 76 million streams in 2025 alone, landing in the number two and five positions, respectively.



Kelvin Momo. Picture: Supplied

On the artist leaderboard, Kelvin Momo finishes the year as South Africa's number two most-streamed artist on Apple Music, positioned alongside global titans such as Drake and local powerhouses like Kabza De Small and DJ Maphorisa.

Kelvin Momo's 2025 story is not one of sudden virality; it's one of sustained excellence. From missed performance, album releases, and his sold-out Red Bull Symphonic, he has continued to cement his position.

As the year closes, both Spotify and Apple Music confirm what South Africans have felt throughout 2025: Kelvin Momo is not just a contributor to Amapiano; he is one of its most trusted narrators, shaping the soundscape of a genre.

Apple Music Replay 2025: Kelvin Momo's Influence Across Platforms

Kelvin Momo's impact wasn't confined to a single streaming service. Apple Music's year-end roundup, which accounts for streams, Shazam activity, radio play, and lyric interactions, underscores his broad and sustained reach.

His collaboration with Da Muziqal Chef, Tracy, and Thatohtsi, "Bo Gogo," appears prominently in Apple Music South Africa's Top Songs of 2025, marking one of the year's most replayed and searched-for tracks.

Apple's album rankings further solidify his commanding presence. In the Top Albums of 2025 (South Africa):

- 1 - "Ntsako"
- 3 - "Thato Ya Modimo"

Securing two of the top three positions in a competitive market dominated by both local and international heavyweights is a rare achievement, one that speaks to both cultural relevance and artistic consistency. *iol*

'Archie became a very inspirational character in people's lives' – Maake-KaNcube

Maake-KaNcube will briefly take up the Archie Moroka role at the upcoming iPendoring Awards.

There are a few fictional characters whose names are instantly recognised. Archie Moroka is among those few.

The actor who played the role, Sello Maake-KaNcube, has long accepted that the role has a life of its own.

"You know, I never thought of it, I never thought it would have such an impact," Maake-KaNcube shares.

The seasoned actor will briefly take up the role at the upcoming iPendoring Awards, which mark three decades of championing South Africa's indigenous languages.

His participation in the awards ceremony, to be hosted at the UJ Arts Centre in Johannesburg, will see Maake-KaNcube reprise the role he first took up about 30 years ago on Generations.

"It didn't need much preparation because I know and remember, even scantily though, because this was 30 years ago," says Maake-KaNcube about his preparation for the awards.

Archie Moroka – a South African favourite After leaving Generations, Maake-KaNcube moved to the UK, where he spent about five years working on other projects.

"I was actually shocked when I returned to find out that people still said 'Archie, Archie...' and that has carried on, it never ceased."

Maake-KaNcube is reprising the role, particularly the aspect of Moroka being an advertising mogul, which he played on Generations.

The show's creator, Mfundu Vundla, based Moroka's character on his brother, Peter Vundla, who co-founded South Africa's first black-owned ad agency, Herdbuoys, in 1991.

"I think [on Generations] is where people saw black people in the corporate space for the first time, so it was ground-breaking."

Such was the paradigm shift brought by the show and its characters that South African businessman and former CEO of General Electric for Southern Africa, Nyimpini Mabunda, once attributed his business success to the fictional character.

"So Archie became a very inspirational character in people's lives," says Maake-KaNcube.

"I remember Thuli Madonsela, who said her father was a great fan. 'I just loved the way that boy speaks English,'" says Maake-KaNcube, quoting the former public protector's father.

A few years ago, an insurance company ran an ad poking fun at the fact that people still see Maake-KaNcube as Archie Moroka.

"I think that ad, introduced me to the younger generation that never saw me when I was being 'Archie.'"

Rich South African lingo

From Tuesday until 4 December 2025, iPendoring will host the indigenous Language Imbizo and celebrate 30 years of creative excellence at the awards ceremony.

These events spotlight how indigenous languages are thriving in the digital age, inspiring the next generation and remaining central to South Africa's cultural and commercial landscape.

Hosted at the Keorapetse William Kgosisile Theatre at the University of Johannesburg's Arts Centre, the Imbizo features three panel discussions exploring mother tongue literacy innovation, the implications of the Competition Commission's media report for indigenous language publishing, and the role of language as cultural resistance and

'Decrease prices': Viewers React as DStv Confirms Cancellation of 4 Channels and Possible Loss of more



DStv subscribers have reacted to the company's announcement that four channels will be discontinued, with a further twelve potentially being lost.

BET Africa, MTV Base, CBS Justice, and CBS Reality, operated under Paramount Africa, will be removed from the DStv lineup.

The channels will go off-air on 1 January 2026, as Paramount Global closes its Paramount Africa operations, which were managed from Johannesburg and Nigeria.

Possible loss of 12 Warner Bros. Discovery channels

DStv also informed customers that its distribution agreement with Warner Bros. Discovery will end on 31 December 2025.

"While discussions between the parties continue, no agreement has been reached at this stage," the company said.

Subscriber concerns over fees

The announcement prompted questions about how the changes will affect subscription prices.

"They must then reduce the subscription fee," one user, Thuthukile, wrote on X.

Another user, Kelebogile, said: "As much as they are closing channels, I honestly hope that they also decrease their prices."

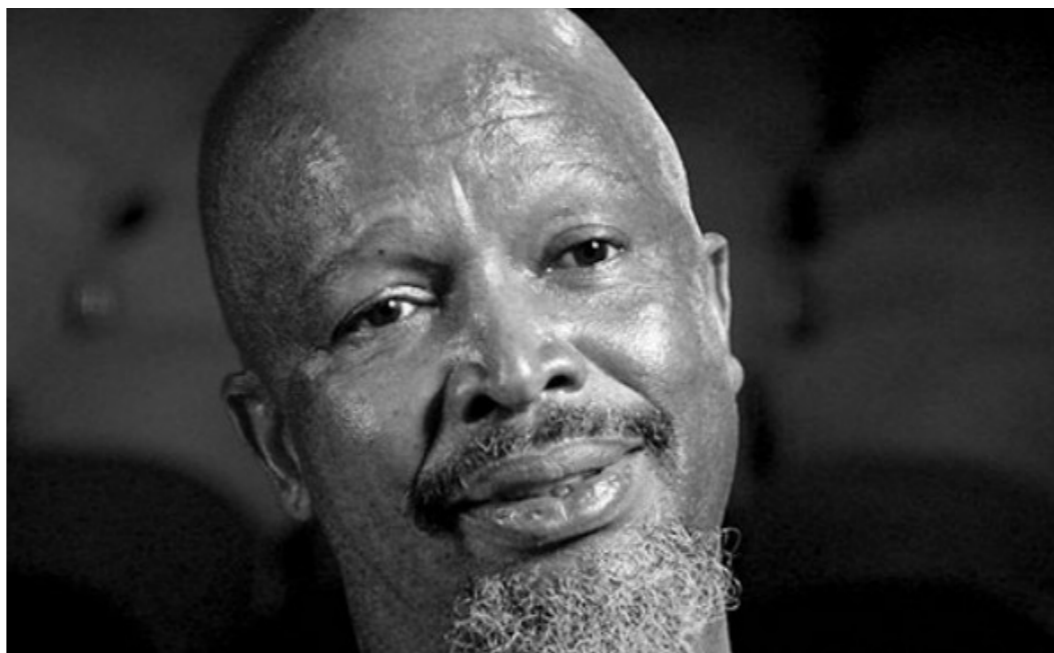
Price adjustments for 2025

Subscribers' concerns come after recent price increases. In March this year, DStv announced price adjustments for 2025. The changes took effect on 1 April.

Premium increased from R929 to R979. Compact Plus rose from R619 to R659. Compact increased from R469 to R479. Family moved from R329 to R339. Access went from R139 to R150. EasyView increased from R29 to R30 and Access fees rose from R120 to R125.

There were also changes to add-on services. Add Movies decreased from R79 to R49. Showmax remained R99. DStv Stream saw no price change. Showmax PL increased from R69 to R99, and Showmax Entertainment Mobile rose from R45 to R50.

The Citizen



identity.

"I don't think we have captured the brilliance and the beauty that South Africa has," says Maake-KaNcube.

"Even now, the way we use African languages, we're using them as a synonym. It's unlike when we used to see in productions like Bophelo Ke Sempheko where I played Dr Mashobadieta... in those times language was used in its purest form."

Maake-KaNcube adds that today's actors are being trained in other languages so that they don't perform in their mother tongue.

"Can you imagine training an Afrikaans actor without Afrikaans... that will never happen."

Maake-KaNcube laid the blame on the government's inability to sufficiently instill the country's official languages.

"Our government, they purported to say we have 11 official languages, which in itself is a fallacy because it's not living up to that policy, it [government] doesn't even have the plans about that policy, how to implement that policy"

"They are robbing us of the richness in our culture." *The Citizen*

One Night only with Mariah the Scientist



By: Refilwe Mochoari

American platinum-selling music sensation singer and songwriter, Mariah Amai Buckles professionally known as Mariah the Scientist will in the New Year grace the SunBet Arena stage in Pretoria on Saturday, 3 January.

The 'Burning Blue', 'Is It a Crime', 'Spread Thin', 'Reminders', and '2 You' hit makers promise to give her fans a music event to remember.

A fire line-up of supporting acts not to be missed will see Hip-Hop royalty A-Reece, 'Aweh' hit maker Lordkez, and much-loved R&B and Soul advocate Manana bring memorable entertainment to the show for all the day ones and new fans.

Vertex Events Executive Director, Thato Segaele in a media statement said, "Johannesburg and Pretoria people, you asked for her, we heard you, and Mariah the Scientist has agreed.

"We are excited to yet again bring an impactful international act yet again. "Continuous talks for Mariah the Scientist to perform in South Africa were already in the works with her team since earlier in the year, and we as the entire Vertex Events team are happy to finally see it come into fruition. We are preparing a special event to start the New Year."

Mariah the Scientist is a Billboard number-one hit maker with over three million followers on Instagram.

She is expected to perform her much-loved album 'Hearts sold separately' to give her fans a specially curated show.

Tickets will be available for purchase on Webtickets - www.webtickets.co.za and at Pick'n Pay stores nationwide, priced from R690. Gates will open at 4PM on show day.

GIGGuide

Friday 05 December 2025

Pretty Girls Dig Hip-Hop

Afro Braai

Bloemfontein

Friday 05 December 2025

Chill Out Weekend

The Far Out Lounge

Bloemfontein

Saturday 06 December 2025

Fill Up

Toyota stadium

Bloemfontein

Sunday 07 December 2025

Fill Up Wrap up Party

IZA

Bloemfontein



JJJ NOTICE OF LOST OR DESTROYED TITLE DEED

Notice is hereby given in terms of Regulation 68 of the Deeds Registries Act 1937, of the intention to apply for the issue of a certified copy of Deed of Grant No. TG384/1994QQ passed by ESTATE LATE LINDIWE JOYCE RADEBE in favour of BALENI STEPHEN TOKWE and BONGANI REARABETSWI RADEBE in respect of certain ERF 269 PHUTHADITJHABA-N, DISTRICT HARRISMITH, PROVINCE FREE STATE, which has been lost or destroyed.

All interested parties having objection to the issue of such copy are hereby required to lodge same in writing with the Registrar of Deeds at BLOEMFONTEIN within two weeks from the date of publication of this notice. SIGNED at BLOEMFONTEIN on this 28th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2025. BEREKA MOSADI CONSULTANTS (PTY) LTD 874 PANYANE STREET BATHO LOCATION, MANGAUNG 9323 E-MAIL: matshedisoramola@gmail.com CONTACT: (+27) 65 862 3469

ChuffPlek.
Lounge

PRESENTS

TOAST BOTTLES

28 SATURDAY
FEB 2026

ARTISTS LINEUP WILL BE ANNOUNCED FROM 10 JANUARY 2025

GENERAL TICKET **R250** | VIP **R3000**

VENUE
ARTHUR PITSO STADIUM

MANYATSENG, LADYBRAND - FREE STATE

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT COMPUTICKET



Sport



Siwelele Denies Sundowns Top Spot

Reigning Betway Premiership champions Mamelodi Sundowns will not lead the standings heading into the mid-season break after they were held to a 1-1 draw by Siwelele FC at the Dr Molemela Stadium on Wednesday evening.

The Brazilians needed a win to reclaim top spot from Orlando Pirates (who are inactive in the league this week ahead of the Carling Knockout final on Saturday), but could only draw in Bloemfontein – leaving them in second spot, two points adrift of the Buccaneers.

Siwelele, who claimed the lead via Vincent Pule but were pegged back by Lebo Mothiba, are up to 11th place – four points off the top eight.

Sundowns bossed possession through the first

quarter of the match, but created no clear chances against a well-organised Siwelele defence.

And the hosts then claimed the lead against the run of play in the 27th minute, with Tebogo Pot-sane stealing possession off goalkeeper Ronwen Williams (who had been done no favours by a poor back-pass from Keanu Cupido) inside the 'Downs penalty area before feeding Vincent Pule, who had an easy task to stroke a shot into the unguarded net for 1-0.

The Brazilians responded with several sustained spells of attacking pressure, forcing the team in green and white to defend deep, but goalkeeper Ricardo Goss was not called upon to make any notable interventions, as the half closed with Siwelele

one goal to the good.

Sundowns sent on the likes of Arthur Sales and Themba Zwane in the second half to try and turn the game around, with the latter having a good chance to level the game in the 68th minute, only to fail to hit the target with a left-footed shot.

Yet it was another substitute, Lebo Mothiba, who levelled the game in the 74th minute with one of his first touches, turning home a close range shot after a sweeping passing move had unpicked the Siwelele defence.

Three minutes later 'Downs should have claimed the lead, with Iqraam Rayners shooting over from close range after fine set-up play from Tashreeq Matthews down the right flank.

The Brazilians' hopes of winning the game were dealt a major blow with 10 minutes of regulation time remaining as they were reduced to 10 men, with Teboho Mokoena sent off for a second yellow card. Regardless of their numerical disadvantage, Sundowns still threw numbers forward in search of a winner and were lucky not to be hit on the counter by Siwelele, who had a couple of great attacking opportunities in the dying minutes which would have produced a decisive goal had they been more clinical and composed.

The teams will only return to Betway Premiership action in the latter half of January 2026, with Sundowns hosting Orbit College, and Siwelele visiting Richards Bay. *PSL*

Confident Proteas aim to seal thrilling ODI series against India in Vizag decider



Pictures: @LawrenceBailey0

Over the past decade, when India hosts South Africa for an ODI series, it is almost guaranteed to go right down to the wire.

Who can ever forget the five-match series in 2015, where the AB de Villiers-captained South Africa beat the MS Dhoni-led India 3-2, winning the fifth and final match to seal what was a highly entertaining series?

In engagements with the media, Proteas fast bowler Kagiso Rabada still refers to that series as the best he has been involved in his career.

These past five days, the two teams, under different leaders in South Africa's Temba Bavuma and India's KL Rahul, have produced fireworks of the same calibre in Ranchi and Raipur. The ongoing three-match series is currently deadlocked, with each side having one win. The series decider is set for Visakhapatnam this coming Saturday.

Both ODIs have seen each team cross the 300-run mark, with three players — Virat Kohli, Ruturaj Gaikwad and Aiden Markram — having smashed at least one century so far.

The two games have both gone into their final overs, with India winning the first match in Ranchi by 17 runs, and South Africa taking the second in Raipur by four wickets (both with four balls to spare). With the stakes high for the series decider, Markram believes the Proteas are currently high in confidence. *IOL*

Career rise for Chiefs captain as he elbows Bafana snub

Brandon Petersen's purple patch season has moved on to another addition through his spell as first-choice goalkeeper and captain at Kaizer Chiefs.

Though this week started with the obvious disappointment of failing to squeeze his way into the final AFCON squad, Petersen is walking with his chest out for what he has done at Chiefs this season.

Wednesday's goalless draw with Chippa United might not have been the desired result for the club, but the Amakhosi skipper had a clean sheet addition to his collection.

That was number 10 for the season in all competitions in 17 appearances.

This means the 31-year-old will go to Christmas with a double-figure count of clean sheets for the first time in his career, which has stretched a dozen years. In reaching 10 clean sheets already, it means he has also matched his season-best tally achieved in the 2022/23 campaign.

He has now played 11 league games in a row for the first time while reporting for duty in Naturena.

The Soweto giants still have at least another 23 games to play across all competitions this season.

Petersen was unable to displace Ricardo Goss from the third-choice position in the Bafana squad behind Ronwen Williams and Siphon Chaine.



Williams is the first choice and is already on double figures (11) with his clean sheets count at Mamelodi Sundowns, just like Chaine (14 clean sheets) at Or-

lando Pirates. Goss is on six clean sheets at Siwelele, where the weight of his workload is heavier, playing for a bottom club in the Betway Premiership.

Kimberley Skateboarding Championships

By: Refilwe Mochoiari

All roads lead to Kimberley in the Northern Cape for the biggest skateboarding championships in the world, showcasing some of the best talent in one place.

Skateboarders from around the globe are gathering in the diamond town for the Kimberley Diamond Cup, which is currently taking place at the Kimberley Skate Plaza. The two-day event kicked off today (December 5) and will crown the winners tomorrow (December 6), with a prize pool of R200,000 up for grabs.

According to the Northern Cape Provincial Government, through the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDaT), athletes who qualified through the KDC Grand Slams earlier this year will converge in Kimberley for two days of intense, high-stakes action. MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Venus Blennies-Magage, stated that hosting the finale in Kimberley highlights the province's growing presence in the global extreme sports arena. She noted that skateboarders from America, Australia, England, Lesotho, Mozambique, and other countries are currently in Kimberley showcasing their skills.

"The high-flying stunt displays will feature throughout the program, enhancing the festival atmosphere and cementing the event as one of the most dynamic extreme sports gatherings in Africa," she said.

As one of the continent's premier skateboarding



showcases, the KDC continues to position the Northern Cape as a hub for extreme sports, youth development, and sports tourism. Beyond the action on the ramps, the event is set to provide an economic boost for Kimberley's hospitality, retail, and transport sectors, as visitors, families, and professional teams flock to the city.

"The KDC Championship remains a catalyst for youth empowerment, skills development, and economic activity. Bringing all Grand Slam qualifiers to Kimberley underscores our commitment to positioning the Northern Cape as an active player in the global extreme sports arena.

"We are excited to welcome athletes and visitors as we proudly close this year's series," she added.

Spectators can look forward to two full days of skateboarding battles, entertainment, exhibitions, and community activations. The organizers have assured attendees of a safe, family-friendly environment throughout the weekend.