

# Journal NEWS

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## Mofutsanyana Regional Conference Hangs in the Balance



Regional convenor, Thabo Mokoena. Picture: Facebook  
By JN Report

The much-anticipated Thabo Mofutsanyana regional conference hangs in the balance as disputes cast uncertainty over the already scheduled gathering.

The conference, expected to get underway today amid heightened political tension, faces the risk of delays or possible postponement as internal challenges from several branches remain unresolved.

These disputes have raised concerns about compliance with party guidelines and the legitimacy of the conference, with insiders warning that failure to address them could open the door to further divisions and potential legal challenges.

The conference follows ANC Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula granting a waiver to the Thabo Mofutsanyana, Fezile Dabi, Lejweleputswa and Mangaung regions to proceed with their regional conferences.

In a letter dated 30 March 2026, Mbalula said the decision for Free State regions to proceed had been taken by the National Working Committee (NWC), “subject to strict compliance” with ANC guidelines and rules.

However, with members preparing to elect their leaders — and former Regional Chairperson and current convenor Thabo Mokoena tipped to secure a second term unopposed — Provincial party spokesperson Thabo Meeko told Journal News the meeting will only be confirmed on Saturday. **Continues on Page 2**

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## Mofutsanyana Regional Conference Hangs in the Balance

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following a Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) sitting.

"I can only tell you that the PEC is sitting on Saturday, and whether or not the Thabo Mofutsanyana regional conference is sitting, I cannot respond to rumours. That will be confirmed on Saturday," said Meeko, casting doubt on the gathering proceeding today without PEC approval.

Journal News has reliably learnt that 13 branches have lodged disputes ahead of the conference, raising the risk of delays to the start of proceedings.

It is alleged that the region only qualified to convene at the last minute, having initially failed to meet the required 70% threshold by the end of last month.

"I can tell you that 13 disputes have been lodged and are expected to be dealt with before the conference starts. That puts everything — the whole conference — at risk. It lays a foundation for litigation and raises questions about the authenticity of the conference itself," said another insider.

Attempts to obtain comment from ANC regional spokesperson Vusi Khumalo were unsuccessful, as he had not responded to questions sent via WhatsApp at the time of publication.

With no challengers emerging, Mokoena's re-election appears all but certain, reinforcing his grip on the region's leadership at a critical time for the party.

The uncontested race suggests growing confidence in Mokoena's leadership, with branches rallying behind him despite ongoing organisational challenges. His anticipated return to office in the Free State's largest region by membership is expected to provide continuity as the ANC navigates renewal efforts, service delivery pressures, and preparations for future electoral contests.

According to insiders within the regional leadership, this outcome is likely despite the disputes lodged by some branches.

"I can confirm that both Comrade Chair Mokoena and his former secretary and current coordinator, Mojalefa Mohapi, will be re-elected unopposed. No challenger has thrown their name in the hat or been nominated to contest their positions," said one insider.

The outcome of the conference will not only cement Mokoena's leadership but also test the ANC's ability to manage internal disputes while maintaining organisational stability. How the party resolves the outstanding branch challenges is likely to shape perceptions of the conference's legitimacy and could have lasting implications for unity in the region.

# Malema alleges political bias in five-year prison sentence

EFF leader Julius Malema has claimed that his prosecution is politically motivated, alleging that a "hidden hand" was influencing the judicial process against him.

He said this was part of a broader and orchestrated campaign to disrupt his political career and stifle the EFF's influence ahead of the 2026 local government elections.

Malema was addressing his supporters outside the East London Magistrate's Court following his sentencing for the unlawful discharge of a firearm during a 2018 rally.

Malema was sentenced to five years of direct imprisonment on Thursday. However, he was released on warning following his immediate appeal against the sentence.

This was after he was found guilty in September last year on five charges under the Firearms Control Act, including discharging a firearm in a built-up or public area without sufficient reason, unlawful possession of a firearm and unlawful possession of ammunition.

Addressing the crowds, Malema claimed that a "hidden hand" of imperialism and capital is behind legal attempts to silence him.

He accused Magistrate Twanet Olivier of being a "racist of note," adding that she was acting under external influence.

"Magistrate Olivier is a racist of note, and she must know that in her sleep," he said.

"She did not read the heads of argument. She entered the court without knowing what was contained in the arguments that the lawyers were putting before the court," Malema said, adding that Olivier speaks politics instead of reading.

"We are dealing with someone who doesn't apply the law. The law, whether you hate someone or not, you have to answer the question: What does the law say on the matter?"



A defiant Julius Malema addressed a huge crowd of EFF supporters outside court after his sentencing yesterday. Picture: IoL

He added that no reasonable judge would agree that a person who shoots one bullet should be sentenced to five years, adding that the sentence was politically motivated and disproportionate.

He said the case was an attempt by his opponents

to defeat him and the EFF through the legal system rather than at the ballot box.

Malema added that the party will petition the high court to appeal the guilty verdict and the sentencing itself. During the EFF's fifth-anniversary celebrations

at Sisa Dukashe Stadium in Mdantsane, Eastern Cape, a video emerged of Malema firing what appeared to be an assault rifle into the air in front of approximately 20,000 supporters.

The rifle used belonged to a security company linked to his former bodyguard, Adriaan Snyman.

The incident went viral, prompting the Afrikaner lobby group AfriForum to open a criminal case against Malema.

He consistently argued that the weapon was a toy or prop, not a real firearm capable of firing live ammunition.

Snyman, accused of providing the weapon, was acquitted due to a lack of evidence.

The MK Party also supported Malema's remarks, saying the courts are being used as weapons to serve political agendas against those fighting the system, adding that the law is not applied equally in this country.

"We have an even worse situation, where a President is found with monies that he never disclosed in a couch, but he is still walking," said spokesperson Nhlamulo Ndhlela.

He said the current system has been politicised and weaponised against the defiance of the system.

He said this also happened when former President Jacob Zuma was arrested in 2021.

This was after he was found guilty of defying a Constitutional Court order compelling him to appear before the commission chaired by Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo.

"It's unfortunate and rather not surprising that they will come to the conclusion of this outcome and sentence him (Malema), and we know it is politicised," Ndhlela said, questioning why the owner of the firearm is not convicted.

Meanwhile, AfriForum and the DA said the sentence also sends a clear message that in South Africa nobody is above the law. -IoL

## Flu Fight Intensifies Ahead of Winter Surge



By Bernell Simons

As the 2026 winter season approaches, health authorities are ramping up efforts to curb the spread of influenza through early vaccination, strengthened surveillance, and community-driven awareness campaigns.

At the centre of this year's provincial response is Acting Provincial CDC Assistant Director Christo Bornman, who says the focus is firmly on preparedness and prevention ahead of the anticipated flu surge.

"My role is preparedness, ensuring that we are ready for the winter season and the flu season," Bornman explained during an interview outlining the province's vaccination and response strategy.

His portfolio includes coordinating planning, strengthening outbreak readiness systems, and ensuring that health facilities are equipped to respond effectively once flu cases begin to rise.

According to Bornman, flu vaccines have already been distributed across all districts, with clinics actively rolling out immunisation programmes ahead of peak transmission periods.

He said the vaccine being administered this season is designed to protect against the most common circulating strains of influenza A and influenza B — a targeted formulation that remains a key defence in reducing severe illness, hospitalisation, and pressure on healthcare facilities.

Bornman emphasised that early vaccination is a critical intervention, particularly as colder months typically bring a rise in respiratory infections.

Prioritising those most at risk "The vaccination programme is structured to prioritise high-risk groups, including healthcare workers, elderly persons, pregnant women, young children, and individuals living with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems.

"Special attention is also being given to care facilities such as old age homes, where coordinated planning ensures that both residents and staff are covered before peak flu transmission begins.

"We work closely with institutions like old age homes to ensure we allocate vaccines according to need and protect those most vulnerable," Bornman said.

He added that awareness plays a decisive role in vaccine uptake. As a result, the province has expanded communication strategies through radio broadcasts, community outreach, clinic-based education, and social media platforms.

Health workers are also encouraged to promote vaccination during daily patient interactions, ensuring the message reaches individuals at the point

of care.

Mobile clinics continue to play a vital role in reaching rural and underserved communities, bringing vaccines directly to areas where access to healthcare services may be limited.

Bornman also highlighted the importance of public awareness around flu symptoms and warning signs.

While influenza often presents with fever, headaches, body aches, and fatigue, he cautioned that severe symptoms such as chest pain, persistent vomiting, dizziness, and extreme weakness should never be ignored.

"In those cases, people should immediately seek medical attention at their nearest clinic or healthcare facility," he said, adding that most mild cases can be treated effectively at outpatient level.

The safety of the influenza vaccine remains under continuous monitoring through dedicated adverse event surveillance systems.

Any reported reactions following immunisation are investigated to ensure ongoing public safety and confidence.

Bornman noted that most side effects are mild and short-lived, typically including slight pain at the injection site or brief flu-like symptoms.

He encouraged individuals to disclose any previous adverse reactions before receiving the vaccine to guide appropriate clinical decisions.

Schools and workplaces have also been identified as key environments for boosting vaccination coverage due to their ability to reach large groups efficiently.

"In schools, integrated health teams conduct awareness campaigns and vaccination drives where parental consent has been obtained. This ensures both safety and community participation in the process.

"Workplaces similarly serve as critical access points for health education and immunisation efforts, helping to expand coverage across working-age populations," he said.

While vaccination remains the cornerstone of influenza prevention, Bornman stressed that everyday hygiene practices are equally important in limiting transmission.

These include frequent handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes with the elbow, proper disposal of tissues, and staying home when experiencing flu-like symptoms.

"Simple hygiene practices significantly reduce the spread of the virus in communities," he said.

Bornman concluded that the province's preparedness strategy is built on early action, coordinated planning, and community participation.

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# Saki Mokoena Talking the Talk

## Human Settlements Takes Tough Stance on Shoddy Builds

Mogomotsi Selebi

**M**EC for Human Settlements Saki Mokoena has announced that the department will not pay a contractor for what has been deemed substandard work.

The announcement was made on Friday, 10 April 2026. MEC Saki Mokoena announced that he had flatly rejected the work of a contractor who had been contracted to build Breaking New Ground houses in Bothaville, Nala local municipality.

"I just rejected this shoddy work now in Bothaville and directed the contractor to correct before any handover to our people. We are restoring dignity of our people... correct or we terminate." MEC wrote on his social media page.

A picture accompanying the post showed poor plastering inside the house, which left MEC Mokoena enraged. The department also wrote a letter to contractors, warning that substandard work will not be tolerated.

The letter read in part: "The Department has observed serious and recurring non-compliance with contractual obligations, statutory requirements, and prescribed building standards...The Department has identified, inter alia:

- a) Structural failures and incomplete works
- b) Use of inferior and non-compliant materials
- c) Failure to adhere to approved plans and quality standards."

The department has thus taken a tough stance of withholding payment for work deemed to be of low quality. "All payments on affected projects are immediately with-



Free State Human Settlements MEC, Saki Mokoena. Picture: FSHS

held. Payments will only be processed upon:

- a) Full rectification of all defects
- b) Independent verification and certification of compliance."

In a move that will undoubtedly cause concern for contractors whose work is of poor standard, the department announced that payments will be withheld. "No public funds will be disbursed for work that does not meet contractual and statutory stand-

ards." The stance by the department is consistent with Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae's promise that public funds will not be spent on poor workmanship and that such contractors will be blacklisted, not only in the Free State province, but in other provinces as well.

"I am happy with the decision taken by MEC Mokoena. For a long time, money has been paid to people, yet the quality of their work left a lot to be desired. That will not be allowed in the 7th administration," Premier Letsoha-Mathae said.

# How Football Academies Are Rewriting Young Lives



By Bernell Simons

**O**n any given afternoon in Bloemfontein, the sound of footballs being struck echoes across dusty fields, school grounds, and community parks. But beneath the rhythm of passing drills and shouted instructions lies something deeper than the game itself.

In communities where young people face unemployment, substance abuse, and limited opportunities, local academies are offering something rare — structure, purpose, and a sense of belonging. For many children, stepping onto the pitch is not just about playing; it is about escape, rebuilding, and reimagining their future.

At Noble Hearts Football Academy in East End, this philosophy extends far beyond the field. Coach Lebohlang Pittele describes the academy as a space where sport and education go hand in hand.

"We created Noble Hearts to give young people structure," he says. "Yes, we teach football, but more importantly, we are teaching discipline, responsibility, and self-belief."

What sets the academy apart is its strong academic support programme. In addition to training sessions, players receive extra lessons in English and mathematics, along with homework assistance — ensuring their development stretches beyond the pitch.

"We don't separate football from education. We help with homework, we support them in subjects like maths and English, because we understand that not all of them will become professional footballers. Education is just as important," Pittele explains.

The results are already visible.

"We've seen a real shift. Players are more focused, more disciplined. Some who struggled with school attendance are now consistent in both the classroom and training. That sense of belonging makes a big difference," he adds.

Across town in Heidedal, a similar impact is unfolding at Ocean XI, a community-rooted club that has been shaping young lives since 2006. Led by Coach Leonardo Peters, the academy has become a second home for many boys in the area.

"We saw the need for a safe space," Peters says. "Too many young boys were exposed to negative influences. We wanted to create something positive — somewhere they could feel they belong."

On the field, the focus is as much on character as it is on skill.

"We teach discipline, respect, and consistency," Peters explains. "Talent alone is not enough. The boys must learn accountability and how to carry themselves beyond the field."

Over the years, that approach has paid off. Boys who once lacked direction have grown into confident young men — some improving academically, others stepping into leadership roles within their communities.

"We've seen real change. That's what keeps us going," he says. Stories like that of Tyrone Mondl continue to inspire the next generation. "We remind them that where you come from does not define where you can go. What matters is your commitment and belief."

Yet, behind the progress lies a shared challenge.

Like many grassroots initiatives, both academies operate with limited resources. "Funding, equipment, transport — it's always a struggle. But the passion is there," Pittele says.

# NW Treasury warns of false tender award messages

**T**he North West Provincial Treasury has issued a warning about fraudulent communications currently circulating that falsely claim a tender has been awarded by the department.

According to the department, individuals and businesses are being contacted regarding the alleged awarding of a tender identified as "BID NWP002/25 for the supply and delivery of cleaning chemicals to the North West Provincial Government for a period of three years".

These messages reportedly originate from the Head of Department.

However, the Provincial Treasury has categorically dismissed the communications as fraudulent and misleading.

"The Head of Department is not involved in any procurement or bidding processes, including the awarding of tenders.

All official procurement processes are conducted in accordance with established Supply Chain Management policies, and any communication relating to bids or awards is issued through formal and verifiable departmental channels only," the department said in a statement.

The department has urged members of the public, service providers, and stakeholders to ignore such messages and refrain from sharing personal or financial information. It further encouraged anyone who receives suspicious communications to report them to law enforcement authorities.

The department said the tender pertaining to the supply and delivery of cleaning material was indeed advertised and has been closed. The tender adjudication processes will follow the legislated processes, which are still to follow in accordance with legislated procedures.

For verification of any tender-related information, stakeholders are encouraged to contact the department through its official communication platforms. — [SAnews.gov.za](http://SAnews.gov.za)



## FREE STATE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### CALL / REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR FUNDING OF NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS (NPOs) AND COOPERATIVES TO PARTNER IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUTH AND WOMEN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS FOR THE 2026/2027 FINANCIAL YEAR

The Department of Social Development hereby invites proposals from interested and qualifying registered Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) and Cooperatives to partner with the Department in the implementation of Community Development Projects within the four (4) Districts and the Metro of the Free State Province. The funding period shall not exceed twelve (12) months. Successful organisations will enter into a contract with the Department commencing on date of the signing of the contract and ending on 31 March 2027 (2026/27 financial year). Funding will be provided to strengthen service delivery in line with the Department's mandate and relevant Department of Social Development (DSD) policies, guidelines and legislative frameworks.

#### Funding is conditional upon:

- Compliance with all Request for Proposal requirements
- Alignment with departmental objectives
- Availability of funds
- Organisational compliance
- Demonstrated project impact and implementation capacity.

The Department reserves the right to consider applications received but does not create any expectation to appoint a particular NPO or Cooperative. All proposals for funding must fall within the Social Development mandate and must be submitted using the Department's prescribed application form, available on the Departmental website and at Local District Offices.

- Must have a bank account in the name of the organisation.
- Registration on the Central Supplier Database (CSD) must be active and up to date at the time of application. Proof of registration must be attached.
- Must present no history of financial mismanagement or contract violations, unless formally cleared by relevant authorities.
- Must not be under investigation by any state authority for any offence.

#### FUNDING FOCUS AREAS FOR 2026/27

The qualifying NPOs and Cooperatives will be considered for funding under the following projects:

Type of Service	Targeted Towns	Preference
Youth Development Projects	All Towns	Projects aimed at creating enabling environments for young people to develop constructive and sustainable relationships, while providing opportunities to build competencies, skills and socio-economic resilience.
Women Development Projects	All Towns	Projects focusing on skills development, manufacturing, production with high growth potential, job creation, project viability, transition to large-scale industrialisation and sustainability.

Preference will be given to registered Cooperatives that meet all eligibility and compliance requirements.

#### COMPULSORY ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Proposals must include the following:

1. **Governance:** Disclosure of the organization's profile (Board, Executive, Committee, staff, and capacity-building plans).
2. **Confirmed Needs:** Disclosure of the area of operation and identified needs.
3. **Financial Status:** Disclosure of financial status, including assets.
4. **Corporate Image:** A detailed budget breakdown and costed implementation plan, submitted on the organization's letterhead, signed by the Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer.
5. **Legislative Compliance:** Applications must comply with the Non-Profit Organization Act (NPO Act), the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), and the Financial Intelligence Centre Act (FICA).

Non-compliance will result in disqualification.

#### Supporting Documents:

- Latest audited financial statements or financial statements.
- Certified copy of the NPO registration certificate and proof of registration status (printout).
- Copy of the NPO constitution (Stamped and signed).
- Proof of registration for Cooperatives (received from CIPC)
- Certified ID copies of the office bearers/ management committee/ board members
- Proof of physical address (Provide proof from municipality).

#### Statutory Compliance:

- Signed copy of Section 38(1)(j)(a) or (b) extract.
- Tax Certificate/Tax Exemption Certificate/proof of registration with SARS.
- Proof of banking details (In organisations name).
- Proof of registration on the Central Supplier Database (CSD), with active status.
- Affidavit disclosing funding received from other donors for 2025/2026.

- Have no history of financial mismanagement or contract violations, unless formally cleared by relevant authorities.
- Not be under investigation by any state authority for any offence.

NPOs and Cooperatives that do not meet the above requirements will not be considered.

#### CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS

Friday, 08 May 2026 (Close of Business)

Late applications will not be considered. Applications must be hand-delivered to the relevant District Offices. Information regarding application procedures, service specifications and application forms is available at the Local District Offices of the Department of Social Development, as listed below:

#### CONTACT NUMBERS FOR DISTRICT OFFICES:

DISTRICT	ADDRESS	CONTACT NR	CONTACT PERSON
XHARIEP	Second Avenue, Charles Ville, Jagersfontein	071 864 6076	Ms R. Mokenela (Refloe.Mokenela@fsocdev.gov.za)
MANGAUNG METRO	30497 Tsoai Street, Tshireletsong Building, Batho Location, Bloemfontein	071 864 5734	Ms M. Phori (Mantle.Phori@fsocdev.gov.za)
LEJWELEPUTSWA	Macholo Building, 10 Elizabeth Street, CBD, Welkom	083 443 8215	083 443 8215 Ms N. Botham (Nadine.Botham@fsocdev.gov.za)
THABO MOFUTSANYANA	FDC Building, Setsing Shopping Complex, Phuthaditjhaba	061 799 1488	Mr J. Skosana (Jerry.Skosana@fsocdev.gov.za)
	Sederhof Building, 30 Johan Blignaut Drive, Bethlehem	060 405 7009	Mr N. Kharafu (Doctor.Kharafu@fsocdev.gov.za)
FEZILE DABI	51/53 Kort Street, Parys	084 088 0321	Mr E. Lephotu (Ephraim.Lephotu@fsocdev.gov.za)
	20 Cross Street, Kromstad	066 487 6173	Ms N. Sethabela (Ntsoki.Sethabela@fsocdev.gov.za)

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE

The Department of Social Development reserves the right not to fund any or all applications received. All decisions of the Department shall be final.

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

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

Municipal Systems Act, Section 34 requires that: A municipal council –

- (a) must review its integrated development plan –
  - (i) annually in accordance with an assessment of its performance measurements in terms of section 4 k; and
  - (ii) to the extent that changing circumstances so demand; and
- (b) may amend its integrated development plan in accordance with a prescribed process.

Notice is hereby given to Communities, Stakeholders and interested parties that the Draft Integrated Development Plan 2026/2027, Sectoral Plans, Draft MTREF Budget 2026/2027 – 2028/29 and Draft Budget Related Policies for the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality were noted by the Council on Monday, March 30, 2026 and documents are available at [www.mangaung.co.za](http://www.mangaung.co.za) for comments or inputs to influence the above mentioned draft documents and the draft documents will be available from Thursday, 09 April 2026 at the places below:

- **Bloemfontein:** Bainsvlei Library (Langenhovenpark), Fichardt Park Library, BP Leinaeng Library (Phahameng) Mangaung Library (Rocklands), Trevor Barlow Library (Heidedal) and Lourierpark Library
- **Botshabelo:** Botshabelo Library
- **Botshabelo:** Sechaba Mahobe Library
- **Thaba Nchu:** Sotosha Library
- **Soutpan:** Municipal offices
- **Dewetsdorp:** Municipal offices/Library
- **Wepener:** Municipal offices/Library
- **Van Standenrus:** Municipal offices/Library

Community and all stakeholders are encouraged to submit written comments and inputs regarding the draft documents via email to the following persons:

- **IDP and Sectoral Plans enquiries:** [IDPcomments@mangaung.co.za](mailto:IDPcomments@mangaung.co.za)
- **MTREF Budget and Budget Related Policies enquiries:** [Hansie.VanZyl@mangaung.co.za](mailto:Hansie.VanZyl@mangaung.co.za), [Arrie.Bartnis@mangaung.co.za](mailto:Arrie.Bartnis@mangaung.co.za) and [lehula.reid@mangaung.co.za](mailto:lehula.reid@mangaung.co.za)

Alternatively, submissions may still be hand delivered at the nearest municipal offices for the attention of IDP office, Bram Fischer Building, Second Floor, Room 212b and 213b. The closing date for the above is Monday, 04 May 2026.

Below is the schedule for IDP sessions:

Dates	Days	Region	Venue	Time
15 – 17 April 2026	Wednesday – Friday	All Wards	Radio Interviews	To be confirmed on social MMM media platforms
21 April 2026	Tuesday	Thaba-Nchu	Maria Moroka (Wards for Trust Areas only)	11:00 – 14:00
			Barolong Hall	15:30 – 18:00
22 April 2026	Wednesday	Botshabelo	Simson Sefuthi Hall	15:00 – 17:00
			H Hall	17:30 – 19:30
23 April 2026	Thursday	Bloemfontein	Kopanong Hall	15:00 – 17:00
			Kagisanong Hall	17:30 – 19:30
28 April 2026	Tuesday	Bloemfontein	Clive Solomon	15:00 – 17:00
			Paradise Hall	17:30 – 19:30
29 April 2026	Wednesday	Dewetsdorp, Wepener and Van standenrus	Wepener Qibing Hall	15:00 – 17:00
30 April 2026	Thursday	Soutpan/Ikgomotseng	Soutpan/Ikgomotseng Community Hall	16:00 – 18:00
04 May 2026	Monday	Bloemfontein	Bram Fischer Building Indaba Auditorium	16:00 – 18:00

**CLLR. LAWRENCE MATHAE, COUNCIL SPEAKER**

Issued By MMM Communications      [www.mangaung.co.za](http://www.mangaung.co.za)      Mangaung Metro Municipality      Call Centre: 0800 111 300

## Heidedal Family Battles Hunger, Cold and Collapse



By Matshidiso Selebeleng

As heavy rains batter the country and the cold winter approaches, the Tromp family in Heidedaal's Gatvol is pleading for urgent assistance, warning that their home is on the verge of collapse while their daily struggle for survival worsens.

Julia Tromp and her family have lived in Gatvol for nearly a decade, but life has become increasingly unbearable. She says the situation at home has deteriorated further as her two older children battle drug addiction, while her youngest is still in Grade 11.

The 52-year-old recalls how their hardship deepened after they were evicted from their rented home in Dr Block in the middle of the night.

"We were only R100 short on rent, but the landlord refused to listen. We were forced out, and my husband had to find us a place to stay that very same night," she said.

Now unemployed, Tromp relies on her disability grant and her husband's weekly income of R1 800, which she says is not enough to sustain the family.

Their current shelter, a small shack given to them by a Good Samaritan, was later extended to accommodate the family. However, years of wear and exposure to harsh weather have left the structure dangerously unstable. With a six-month-old baby in the household, the conditions have become dire.

"My family and I desperately need help. This house could collapse at any time, and we simply cannot afford to fix it," she said.

"It's painful to be ridiculed in the community because of our situation. We just want to live like other people."

Tromp says the family often goes days without food. Recently, they survived three days without eating, despite her needing to take chronic medication.

"I once took my medication on an empty stomach because we had no food. I was too ashamed to ask neighbours again after they had helped the day before. I ended up having seizures," she said.

She adds that most of their limited resources go toward ensuring the baby has formula. "We make sure the baby eats, and the rest of us just go to bed hungry."

The family's challenges are compounded by her two older children, aged 28 and 25, whose drug addiction has worsened their already fragile situation. Tromp says they often take household items and sell them to fund their addiction.

Even donated items have not been spared.

"I sometimes go to church for prayers and come back with clothes, but after a few days they are gone. What hurts the most is that people buy these things from my sons, knowing our situation," she said.

The emotional toll has been severe. Tromp admits that the overwhelming circumstances have, at times, driven her to dark thoughts.

"Sometimes I ask God why I was brought into this world to suffer like this. There are moments when I feel like maybe I would be better off dead," she said, breaking down in tears.

With winter setting in, Tromp fears the worst. The shack is riddled with holes, offering little protection from the elements.

"We don't know how we are going to survive the cold, especially with a baby. Living here is like living outside," she said.

# Veterans Finally Receive Long-Awaited Houses in Jouberton



MEC for Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs, Gaoage Oageng Molapisi. Picture: NWHS

By Bernell Simons

In a move expected to bring both relief and renewed hope, North West MEC for Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs, Gaoage Oageng Molapisi, will today hand over seven newly built houses to military veterans in Jouberton, under

the City of Matlosana Local Municipality.

The handover is more than a ceremonial gesture—it is being viewed as a significant intervention in a municipality where housing backlogs and service delivery challenges continue to affect many residents.

For the beneficiaries, many of whom have waited years for adequate housing, the moment represents

dignity restored and long-overdue recognition of their service to the country.

The project falls under the Military Veterans Act, 2011, which obligates government to provide support to military veterans, including access to housing.

But beyond policy, Friday's handover is expected to highlight the tangible impact of that commitment on the ground.

In communities like Jouberton, where socio-economic pressures remain high, such developments are often seen as rare but meaningful progress.

Local leaders say the delivery of houses to military veterans sends a broader message about prioritising vulnerable groups and acknowledging those who contributed to the country's history.

The day's programme will extend beyond the handover, with Molapisi set to engage directly with military veterans during a district imbizo at the Klerksdorp Recreation Centre.

The imbizo, bringing together veterans from across the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality, is expected to provide a critical platform for open dialogue between government and veterans—many of whom continue to raise concerns around housing, access to services, and broader socio-economic support.

The engagement comes at a time when calls for improved delivery and accountability are growing louder across municipalities, placing added significance on direct interaction between government leaders and communities.

Molapisi will be joined by Executive Mayor of the municipality, Councillor Fikile Mahlophe, with both leaders expected to outline ongoing efforts and future plans aimed at improving the living conditions of military veterans. For residents and stakeholders, Friday's event will be closely watched—not only as a moment of delivery, but as a test of government's ability to translate commitments into meaningful change.

Proceedings will begin with the housing handover in Jouberton at 10:00, followed by the imbizo at 12:00.

For the veterans set to receive homes, however, the significance goes far beyond the schedule. It is, quite simply, a new beginning.

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# Journal NEWS

Journal News

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## New eviction bill aims to protect small landlords, empower municipalities



to other entities.

She said the proposed amendments will allow municipalities to be formally joined in eviction proceedings, even where they are not the landowners.

"For example, where land owned by entities such as Transnet is unlawfully occupied, municipalities will be able to participate in court processes to outline their service delivery plans and constraints. This is a critical shift from the current legal framework, which often limits municipal action when land is not municipally owned.

"This is the first time municipalities will have automatic joinder in such matters. Previously, they were often unable to act, even though they carried the responsibility for providing services," she told SAnews.

The amendments are also expected to strengthen enforcement of municipal by-laws, particularly in cases where land zoned for agricultural use is unlawfully converted into residential settlements without approval.

She said illegal occupations disrupt planned service delivery and unfairly disadvantage residents who are waiting for housing and basic services through formal processes.

Protecting vulnerable communities

While the bill takes a firmer stance on unlawful occupation, the Minister emphasised that it also seeks to protect vulnerable individuals who may unknowingly purchase or occupy illegally sold land.

"Some community members fall victim to illegal land sales and only discover the illegality when facing eviction or demolition of their homes.

"The legislation aims to strike a balance between enforcement and fairness, ensuring that evictions are handled within a clear legal framework that considers the rights and circumstances of affected individuals," she explained.

Public participation underway

The Department of Human Settlements is rolling out public consultations across all provinces, including targeted engagements with property associations, civil society organisations and community groups.

Simelane said the outreach aims to ensure that ordinary citizens, particularly those unfamiliar with legal processes, understand the proposed changes and are able to provide input.

"This bill is about protecting ordinary community members. We want people to understand it, engage with it, and make their voices heard."

The amendment process forms part of broader efforts to strengthen the legal framework governing evictions and land occupation, while promoting fairness, improving service delivery, and supporting sustainable human settlements. – SAnews.gov.za

The proposed amendments to South Africa's eviction laws are set to offer stronger protection for ordinary landlords renting out backyard rooms and small properties, while giving municipalities greater authority to respond to unlawful land occupations.

Human Settlements Minister Thembi Simelane said the Prevention of Illegal Eviction (PIE) from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Amendment Bill is designed to support everyday South Africans who rely on rental income, particularly in township and informal settings.

Speaking to SAnews following the announcement of the release of the bill for public comment on Thursday in Pretoria, Simelane explained that the bill recognises the realities of small-scale landlords who lease out backyard rooms or informal dwellings as a primary source of income.

"It does not matter the scope or size of what you are leasing. Many people survive by renting out rooms. This bill ensures they are protected and have accessible legal recourse," the Minister said.

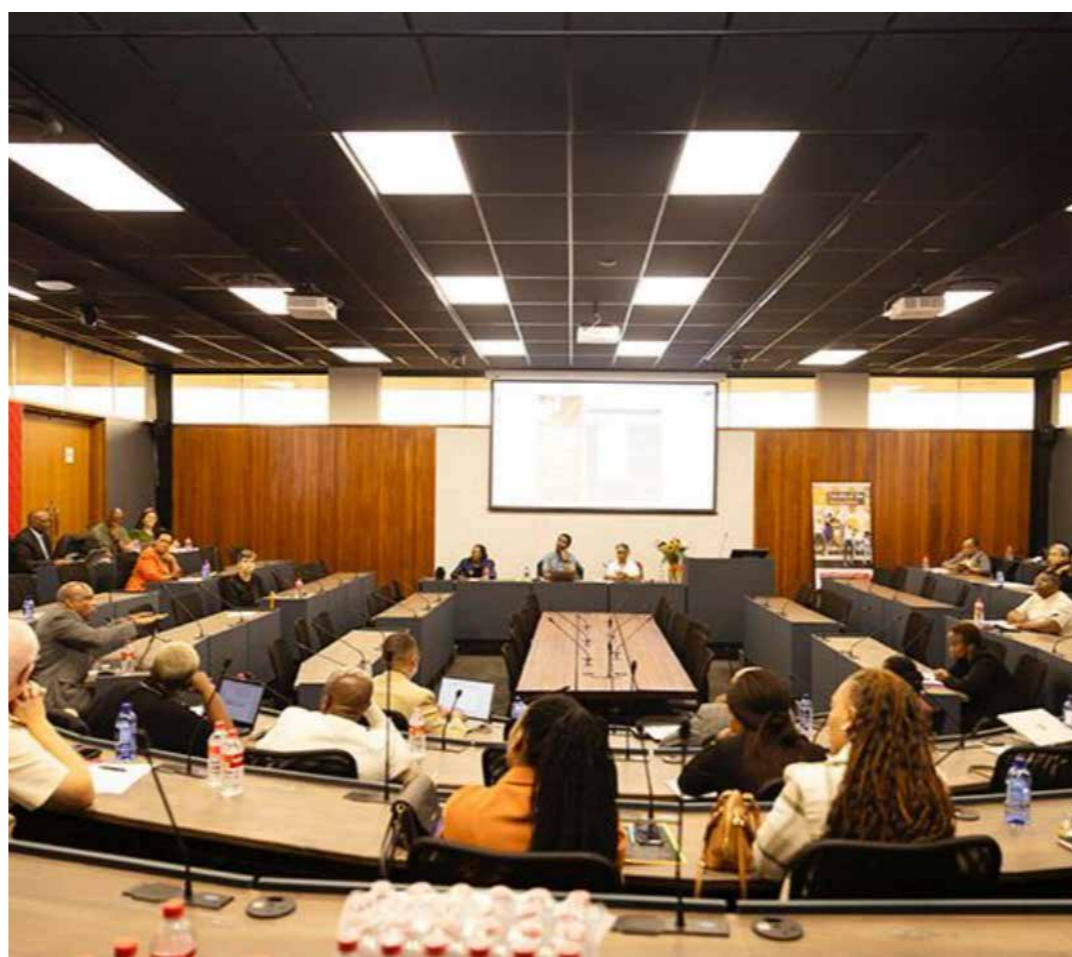
Under the proposed changes, she said disputes between landlords and tenants can be referred to the Housing Tribunal, offering a low-cost alternative to courts. The tribunal will have the authority to mediate, issue legally recognised certificates and sanctions, and make rulings that can be enforced through the courts.

This means landlords could obtain legally binding orders requiring tenants to vacate a property within a specified timeframe, with eviction possible if the order is not complied with.

Stronger role for municipalities  
The bill also introduces significant changes aimed at empowering municipalities, particularly in cases where land invasions place pressure on service delivery.

The Minister noted that municipalities often face the burden of providing water, electricity and sanitation to informal settlements that emerge through unlawful occupation, even when the land belongs

## Employability challenges for social work graduates spark urgent dialogue



The Department of Social Work at the University of the Free State recently hosted a colloquium bringing together academic and public-sector voices to engage on social-work-graduate employability. Picture: Liza Crawley

By Tshepo Tsoetsi

Experts gathered at the University of the Free State (UFS) recently tackled a difficult question about the future of the social work profession: what happens when the system continues to produce graduates without the capacity to absorb them, and what alternatives exist.

Work absorb them into meaningful employment?  
This question formed the centre of a recent colloquium hosted by the Department of Social Work in the UFS Faculty of Humanities, bringing together voices from academia, the public sector, NGO sector, the regulatory body, and academic associations to examine the growing gap between training and opportunity.

The conversation focused on the conditions shaping graduate employability for social workers, with particular attention given to the pressures within the

public sector, the realities of the non-profit space, and the limited pathways available to graduates entering the field. Rather than offering simple solutions, the discussions engaged the structural constraints that continue to define the profession.

Rethinking employability in a constrained system  
Speaking on the significance of the engagement, Prof Mpumelelo Ncube, Head of the Department of Social Work, emphasised the urgency of confronting these challenges at a systemic level. He reflected on the implications of training graduates into a labour market that cannot fully accommodate them.

"There is nothing as painful as training a social worker and knowing that at the end of the day they may remain unemployed. We must confront whether the system itself has the capacity to absorb them, and what alternatives exist."

Prof Ncube further located the issue within broader structural conditions affecting the profession.

"These challenges are not merely administrative or economic; they are structural – rooted in how the system itself is organised and sustained."

The colloquium created space for these concerns to be interrogated beyond institutional boundaries, recognising that employability is shaped by multiple, interconnected systems.

Prof Marlice Rabe, Vice-Dean for Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of the Humanities, situated the discussion within the broader responsibilities the higher education sector holds towards its society. She pointed to the gap between policy intent and lived reality, particularly in relation to social development frameworks.

"We have progressive policies and frameworks that speak to strengthening families and communities. The difficulty lies in implementation, and social workers are central to making that possible."

She also raised concerns about the vulnerability of graduates within the humanities more broadly, noting the need to reconsider how institutions prepare students for uncertain labour markets.

From a government perspective, Freddy Finger, Chief Director for Corporate Services in the Free State Department of Social Development, outlined the policy environment and constraints shaping employment outcomes. While national frameworks such as the National Development Plan set clear targets, Finger indicated that practical limitations continue to affect the department's ability to expand employment.

"Budget constraints and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have limited our capacity to absorb more graduates. At the same time, the demand for social workers remains significant."

He pointed to interventions such as internship programmes as part of ongoing efforts to create entry points into the sector, while acknowledging that these measures do not fully address the scale of the challenge.

Across the discussions, a central tension emerged between the recognised need for social workers and the limited capacity of existing systems to employ them. The colloquium highlighted the importance of coordinated responses that extend beyond a single institution or sector, with shared responsibility across government, universities, and the broader social services landscape.

By bringing these perspectives into the conversation, the Department of Social Work has opened space for continued engagement on how the profession can respond to both immediate pressures and longer-term structural realities.

## MATJHABENG MUNICIPALITY

ADVERTISEMENT: INVITATION TO SERVE ON THE  
AUDIT COMMITTEE

Matjhabeng Local Municipality hereby invites applications from suitably qualified, experienced, and independent individuals to serve as members of its Audit Committee, established in terms of Section 166 of the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA).

**Purpose of the Audit Committee**  
The Audit Committee is an independent advisory body that provides oversight on financial reporting, internal controls, risk management, performance management, and governance processes within the municipality.

**Term of Office and Remuneration**

- Appointments will be for a period of **three (3) years**
- Members will be remunerated in accordance with **National Treasury Regulations (20.2.2)** and applicable guidelines

**Minimum Requirements / Applicants must:**

- Possess relevant qualifications in **Accounting, Auditing, Risk Management, Finance, Law, IT** or related fields
- Have **extensive experience** in governance, financial management, or audit committees
- Demonstrate the ability to **analyse and interpret financial statements**
- Be **independent**, with no conflicts of interest
- Have a sound understanding of **local government legislation**, including the MFMA

**Competencies and Skills / The ideal candidates should demonstrate:**

- Strong **leadership and ethical standards**
- In-depth understanding of **governance and oversight structures**
- Knowledge of **municipal operations and regulatory frameworks**
- Expertise in one or more of the following areas:
  - o Financial Accounting and Auditing
  - o Risk Management
  - o Performance Management
  - o Information Technology Governance
  - o Human Resource Management and Labour Relations
  - o Corporate Governance
  - o Project Management
  - o Municipal Legislation

**Key Responsibilities / Successful candidates will:**

- Serve as an **independent advisory committee** to the Municipal Manager, Council, and political office bearers
- Review and provide guidance on:
  - o Financial reporting and compliance
  - o Internal audit processes
  - o Risk management frameworks
  - o Performance management systems
- Report to Council on a **quarterly basis**
- Perform duties in accordance with **Section 166 of the MFMA**

**Application Process / Applications must include:**

- A **comprehensive Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
- **Originally certified copies** of qualifications and identity document
- Clearly marked: **"AUDIT COMMITTEE APPLICATION"**

**Applications should be submitted to:**  
The Municipal Manager  
Matjhabeng Local Municipality  
PO Box 708  
Welkom  
9460

**Or hand delivered to:**  
Corner Ryk and Stateway  
Welkom

**Closing Date**  
**22 May 2026**

Enquiries can be directed to: 057 492 0600

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## MATJHABENG MUNICIPALITY

ADVERTISEMENT: INDEPENDENT CHAIRPERSON — FINANCIAL  
MISCONDUCT DISCIPLINARY BOARD

Matjhabeng Local Municipality hereby invites suitably qualified and experienced individuals to serve as the Independent Chairperson of the Financial Misconduct Disciplinary Board, established in terms of:

- the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA),
- the Municipal Regulations on Financial Misconduct Procedures and Criminal Proceedings (2014),
- Section 171 of the MFMA (financial misconduct),
- Section 139 of the Constitution (mandatory financial recovery intervention), and
- the Municipality's adopted Financial Recovery Plan.

The Financial Misconduct Disciplinary Board is responsible for considering and adjudicating cases of alleged financial misconduct by senior managers and officials, ensuring accountability, consequence management, and compliance with legislative provisions applicable to municipalities, including municipalities classified as distressed and under a mandatory Financial Recovery Plan.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**  
The Independent Chairperson will be expected to:

- Lead and preside over disciplinary hearings relating to alleged financial misconduct in accordance with the MFMA and associated regulations.
- Ensure that proceedings are fair, impartial, procedurally compliant, and aligned to natural justice principles.
- Provide written findings, recommendations, and sanctions on cases brought before the Disciplinary Board.
- Guide the Municipality on the application of the Financial Misconduct Regulations, including referrals for criminal proceedings where required.
- Ensure compliance with Section 171 of the MFMA and the 2014 Financial Misconduct Regulations.
- Support strengthened governance, ethical conduct, and consequence management as required under the Municipality's mandatory Financial Recovery Plan (Section 139(5)(a) & (c)).
- Uphold the independence and integrity of the Disciplinary Board at all times.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**  
Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- A relevant legal, financial, auditing, or governance qualification (NQF Level 7 or higher).
- At least 8 years' experience in chairing disciplinary hearings, arbitration, legal proceedings, or financial misconduct cases—preferably within the public sector.
- Strong knowledge of the MFMA, Municipal Systems Act, Municipal Structures Act, Public Sector Risk Management Framework, Public Service Regulations, and relevant municipal compliance frameworks.
- Demonstrated understanding of municipal governance, financial management, and disciplinary procedures.
- Proven ability to interpret legislation and apply it to complex misconduct cases.
- Independence from the Municipality (no current or past employment or contracts with Matjhabeng in the last 3 years).
- No history of criminal convictions, pending disciplinary matters, or listing on any register of misconduct.

**ADDED ADVANTAGES**

- Experience with municipalities under Section 139 interventions or Financial Recovery Plans.
- Legal or audit professional registration (e.g., admitted attorney/advocate, SAICA, IRMSA, IIA).
- Experience in municipal consequence management, Section 32 investigations, or forensic auditing.

**TERM OF APPOINTMENT**

- The Independent Chairperson will be appointed for a renewable term of three (3) years, subject to performance, continued independence, and compliance with legislation.
- Remuneration will be on a sessional basis, aligned to National Treasury guidelines for non-executive committee members.

**HOW TO APPLY**  
Interested candidates must submit:

- A detailed CV,
- Certified copies of qualifications and identity document,
- Proof of professional registration (where applicable),
- A declaration of independence and no conflict of interest, and
- Three contactable referees.

**Applications should be submitted to:**  
The Municipal Manager  
Matjhabeng Local Municipality  
PO Box 708  
Welkom  
9460

**Or hand delivered to:**  
Corner Ryk and Stateway  
Welkom

**Closing Date**  
**22 May 2026**

Enquiries can be directed to: 057 492 0600

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# NORTHERN CAPE INVESTMENT AND JOBS CONFERENCE

13 – 15 APRIL  
MITTAA SEPEREPERE CONVENTION CENTRE - KIMBERLEY



## Namakwa SEZ Set to Transform Northern Cape into Industrial Powerhouse



By Refilwe Mochoari

The Namakwa Special Economic Zone (SEZ) took centre stage at the inaugural Northern Cape Jobs and Investment Summit, where investment commitments exceeding R105 billion were announced.

Held from 12 to 15 April at the Mittah Seperepere International Convention Centre in Kimberley, the summit highlighted the SEZ as a cornerstone of the province's economic ambitions.

With R21 billion already invested in Phase 1 and a further R6.7 billion earmarked for Phase 2—set to launch in June—the Namakwa SEZ is steadily advancing toward full operation.

Momentum for the project was further cemented during a signing ceremony held on the sidelines of the Africa Mining Indaba earlier this year in Cape Town. The event was attended by Northern Cape Premier Zamani Saul, Industrial Zones Programme Executive Director Lionel October, and VZI Deputy CEO Vijay Kumar.

The SEZ is expected to unlock opportunities across key sectors, including mining, green hydrogen, beneficiation and infrastructure development. It will also drive the growth of local enterprises in Pofadder, Aggeneys and Port Nolloth, positioning the region as a future industrial hub.

This development aligns with Premier Saul's broader vision of creating 60,000 sustainable jobs—particularly for young people—while advancing inclusive economic growth across the province.

To reinforce this vision, Saul and his Executive Committee have integrated the Namakwa SEZ into the Northern Cape Industrial Corridor, a key driver of the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP). According to the Northern Cape Economic Development Agency, the SEZ will serve as a catalyst for both regional and national development, with benefits expected to extend across the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

"The central thesis is that the SEZ will address the past injustices faced by mining towns by transforming Aggeneys from a purely mining town into an industrial city that can thrive beyond the life of the mine. It will also help reduce the cost of doing business in rural areas," the agency notes.

Once fully developed, the Namakwa SEZ is expected to host a diverse mix of investments and enterprises—shifting the region from a resource extraction zone into a driver of long-term, sustainable economic growth.



NC MEC for Finance, Economic Development and Tourism Lorato Blennies-Magage.



From Left is Premier Zamani Saul, accompanied by Minister of Electricity Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, Minister of DTI Parks Tau and MEC For Finance Lorato Blennies-Magage.



Targeting Investment Opportunities ... Asian delegates engaging at the Northern Cape Investment and Jobs Conference in Kimberley.



DTI Minister Parks Tau, shaking hands with a delegate....



From Left is Minister of Small Business Stella Ndabeni, Minister of DTI Parks Tau, MEC for Finance Lorato Blennies-Magage and Premier Zamani Saul.

## R105 Billion Investment to Drive 60,000 Jobs



Signed and Sealed... Multiple major companies have committed to investing billions of Rands in the Northern Cape to create jobs and growth.

By Refilwe Mochoari

Northern Cape Premier Zamani Saul this week marked a major milestone in his drive to create 60,000 sustainable jobs, as more than R105 billion in investment commitments were secured during the inaugural Northern Cape Jobs and Investment Conference.

Held over three days at the Mittah Seperepere Convention Centre, the event drew over 900 delegates from across South Africa, all focused on strengthening the province's economic prospects.

The conference showcased investment pledges across key sectors, including mining, agriculture, energy and tourism.

These commitments are expected to boost the province's GDP from R164 billion to R200 billion by 2030.

The pledges were formally announced and signed by various companies during the conference, held in Kimberley from April 12 to 15.

Among those in attendance were Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition Parks Tau, Minister of Electricity Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, alongside private sector investors, government officials and business leaders.

In his closing remarks, Saul thanked investors for their commitments, noting that the pledges represent a significant step toward achieving the province's economic growth and job creation targets by 2030.

Key investments include investment from Vedanta Zinc from its Gamsberg mine, a zinc operation in the province pledged R11.2 billion to Iron Ore operations in the province.

Additional commitments from Northern Cape Premier Saul for mining, beneficiation and infrastructure amounting to R16.8 billion from Anglo American production; and R12 billion to serve for a catalytic green hydrogen project.

Meanwhile, South Africa committed R1.5 billion to a culture Park, including

## Northern Cape - South Africa's Leading Hub for Sustainable Job Creation



Trade, Industry and Competition Minister, Parks Tau, says the Northern Cape is strategically positioned as South Africa's leading hub for sustainable job creation. Picture: OTP/Facebook

## Unlocking renewable energy potential to drive industrial and sustainable job creation across the province

By Mpho Sekharume

The Northern Cape has been officially identified as South Africa's next primary growth engine, positioned strategically to lead the nation's transition toward a sustainable industrial future.

Speaking at the second day of the Northern Cape Investment and Jobs Conference at the Mittah Seperepere International Convention Centre (MSICC) in Kimberley, the Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC), Parks Tau, described the prov-

ince as a region of unparalleled potential.

This landmark conference has emerged as a significant milestone, successfully aligning government, business, and development partners to unlock large-scale investment and accelerate the province's trajectory toward a prosperous economic horizon.

Minister Tau's address was a resounding endorsement of the region's natural and strategic assets, asserting that the province is no longer on the periphery of industrial discourse.

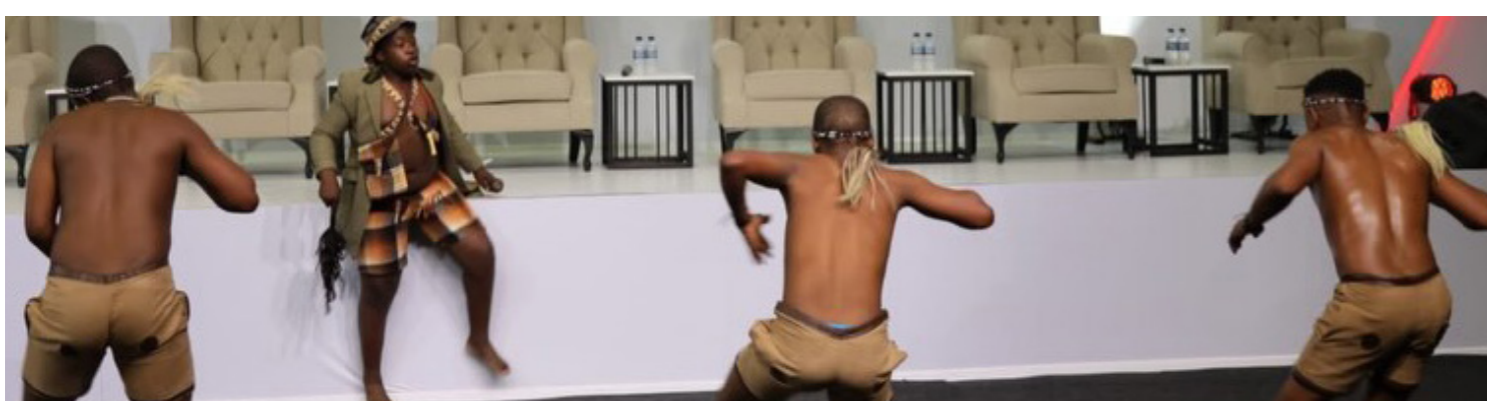
He noted that as global powers commit billions

to secure supply chains and environmental advantages.

"The Northern Cape has three: namely clean energy, green hydrogen," Tau said.

He further emphasised the province's potential to dominate the renewable energy sector. "Certainly, this province and the wind to become a central renewable energy hub."

Central to this vision





UNLOCKING INVESTMENT FOR JOBS THROUGH INDUSTRIALISATION

# Government Pledge Jobs in NC



grow the economy of the province.

include a R17 billion commitment. International to expand positioning it as the largest province. Anglo American has toward expanding its Kumba Kathu.

ments include R2.8 billion protech and Agri Revolution on and agriculture projects; do Energy for green energy billion from Prieska Power Re-reen hydrogen and ammonia

African Atlantic Salmon has to develop the Nama Aqua-a salmon processing facility.

"After all the deliberations over the past three days, significant commitments have been made. We assure all the corporate entities that have made these pledges that we do not take your commitments for granted," said Saul.

Northern Cape MEC for Economic Development and Finance, Lorato Blennies-Magage, underscored the importance of the conference, saying it had set a clear path to unlock large-scale investment, promote economic inclusion and create sustainable jobs across the province.

"We conclude with a clear pathway to unlock large-scale investment, foster economic inclusion, and create sustainable jobs for the people of the Northern Cape, she said.

# Economic Frontier

Commercialisation Strategy and the Boegoebaai project, which serve as the essential infrastructure anchors for a new era of trade.

Tau made it clear that these initiatives are not merely theoretical but are backed by solid policy and global appetite.

"Through Boegoebaai and the Green Hydrogen Commercialisation Strategy, it has the infrastructure anchor to build a hydrogen economy of genuine scale.

These are live policies and programmes with government commitment and investor interest behind them," he affirmed.

This commitment ensures that the Northern Cape is uniquely equipped to meet the demands of an international market increasingly focused on decarbonisation.

The Minister further explained that the DTIC has structured its industrialisation approach around three themes, namely: Decarbonisation, Diversification, and Digitalisation - referred to as the 3D's.

He noted that these 3Ds align almost precisely with the competitive advantages inherent to the province. By integrating these themes, the government intends to transform the Northern Cape into a sophisticated hub of modern industry, ensuring that economic growth is both sustainable and technologically advanced.

This alignment is expected to serve as a catalyst for significant job creation and the long-term industrial development of the region.

Concluding his address with a forward-looking perspective, Tau linked the province's growth to South Africa's broader international role following its G20/B20 Presidency. He positioned the collaboration between the state and the private sector as the key to unlocking the region's true power.

"As an outcome of our G20/B20 Presidency which was premised on the pillars of solidarity, equality and sustainable development, government and the private sector will be coming together to realise the Northern Cape's potential and position it as South Africa's next economic frontier," Tau concluded.

The conference served as a definitive launchpad for the Northern Cape's ascent as a leader in the global green energy transition.



## Powering Progress Through Science

By Mpho Sekharume

The Minister of Electricity, Dr. Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, unveiled a roadmap that positions the Northern Cape as a major participant and primary architect in South Africa's energy transition.

In his address at the Northern Cape Investment and Jobs Conference on Tuesday, Ramokgopa framed the province's future as a mathematical certainty driven by engineering precision.

The Minister's confidence is rooted in a verifiable relationship between energy infrastructure and the Human Development Index (HDI). This scientific approach ensures that the state's targets are tangible goals rather than arbitrary political figures.

"There is such a relationship that can be put in a mathematical computation that shows that if there's new generation capacity per megawatt that can translate into this number of jobs and it helps us to answer the question of the MEC of the quality jobs.

"The higher the residential electricity consumption per capita, the higher the human development index. So for us to improve the quality of lives of the people of the northern cape, we must increase capacity consumption of electricity," said Ramokgopa.

He emphasised that these outcomes must be measurable and evidence-based to move from abstract theory to local practice. This ensures that every megawatt added to the grid has a calculated impact on the dignity of the residents.

"You must be able to touch this number. It must be - it must not be something very arbitrary. So you must use evidence and science to answer the question."

Ramokgopa also redefined the energy 'quadrilemma' - a modification of the Trilemma global concept - by adding transformation as a non-negotiable fourth pillar for the Global South.

He spoke passionately about the need for beneficiation at source to ensure solar investments

result in long-term local career growth.

"You see all these investments, these solar parks, but the jobs are not here. The jobs are somewhere else. I'm talking about the quality jobs. You only realise them when you do construction, but for the rest of the life of the plant, these jobs are not here," he added.

Ramokgopa committed the state to acting as a proactive partner by drastically reducing the red tape that often slows down major infrastructure projects. He suggested that the state should do the heavy lifting regarding site permissions to de-risk the environment for private capital.

"The government must ensure that you reduce red tape and by really red tape let me bring it closer to home to ensure that the sites are permitted, the issues of servitude, right of way, water use license... you can further decrease these programs by ensuring that the state does the groundwork ahead of players coming into the space."

By aligning transmission infrastructure with generation capacity, he believes the province will successfully reach its R200-billion investment target.

Ramokgopa concluded by inviting the intellectual and business community to engage with this data-driven strategy.

He insisted that the province's path forward is built on a foundation of rigorous analysis rather than guesswork.

"I'm giving you an opportunity to repudiate what I'm saying but we've got an intellectual duty to show me what figures are you relying on and quote who is the source... because government must not be undermined to be thinking that this church just sit in a smoke field and then they thumb-suck - there's a science that underpins this," he stated.

Dr. Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, outlined a data-driven vision of a looming Northern Cape Industrial Renaissance.

### Dr. Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, outlined a data-driven vision of a looming Northern Cape Industrial Renaissance

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"You see all these investments, these solar parks, but the jobs are not here. The jobs are somewhere else. I'm talking about the quality jobs. You only realise them when you do construction, but for the rest of the life of the plant, these jobs are not here," he added.

Ramokgopa committed the state to acting as a proactive partner by drastically reducing the red tape that often slows down major infrastructure projects. He suggested that the state should do the heavy lifting regarding site permissions to de-risk the environment for private capital.

"The government must ensure that you reduce red tape and by really red tape let me bring it closer to home to ensure that the sites are permitted, the issues of servitude, right of way, water use license... you can further decrease these programs by ensuring that the state does the groundwork ahead of players coming into the space."

By aligning transmission infrastructure with generation capacity, he believes the province will successfully reach its R200-billion investment target.

Ramokgopa concluded by inviting the intellectual and business community to engage with this data-driven strategy. He insisted that the province's path forward is built on a foundation of rigorous analysis rather than guesswork.

"I'm giving you an opportunity to repudiate what I'm saying but we've got an intellectual duty to show me what figures are you relying on and quote who is the source... because government must not be undermined to be thinking that this church just sit in a smoke field and then they thumb-suck - there's a science that underpins this," he stated.





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## Opinion

## Nerima Wako-Ojiwa

is a Kenyan political analyst who serves as the executive director of Siasa Place.

Devon Knudsen is a Senior Fellow with the Alliance for Peacebuilding



## Kenya's 2027 Elections: Confronting Violence Against Women in Politics

Kenyan women are at the forefront of defending their democracy. Their recent leadership reflects a long history of pivotal contributions, both to women's rights and the rights of all Kenyans.

In a context of democratic backsliding, rising levels of gender-based violence (GBV), and accelerating human rights abuses in the lead-up to elections in 2027, women's leadership is needed more than ever.

However, research shows that women's leadership, especially in conflict or crisis, is often met with violent pushback. In Kenya and worldwide, violence targeting women in politics is deterring some women from seeking public office and punishing those who do run.

This problem is not new to Kenya, but the dichotomy between the achievements of Kenyan women leaders and the lack of accountability for their attackers, online and offline, is starker than ever.

The United Nations, the African Union, and the government of Kenya are taking steps to analyse the problem and offer recommendations, but tangible implementation lags. Meanwhile, bilateral partners that used to support women's participation in politics and fund efforts to prevent election-related GBV have pulled back.

Despite the risks and limited tangible support, Kenyan women are pressing forward, but many fear the costs they are asked to bear are unsustainable, not to mention unconscionable.

Women as Defenders of Kenyan Democracy  
Women are leading the fight against democratic backsliding in Kenya. During nationwide youth-led protests in 2024 and 2025, which initially arose as a pushback against new taxes and evolved into demands for greater government accountability and reform, women played pivotal roles in voicing citizens' demands and pressuring the executive branch to respect the rights of protesters.

Hanifa Adan distinguished herself for her broad-based fundraising for the medical costs of injured



protesters. Rose Njeri created an online tool making it easier for Kenyans to email officials, and Sumeiya Omar voiced students' concerns to media outlets. All three of these leaders were detained for their work.

Women were also instrumental in other ways: Zaha Indimuli, a volunteer medic who, in early 2024, helped lead the largest protests against GBV in Kenya's history, returned to the frontlines of the Gen Z protests and confronted police who were blocking ambulance access to injured demonstrators. Journalist Catherine Wanjeri wa Kariuki continued reporting on police attacks against protesters until she was shot three times.

Within the justice sector, High Court Advocate and Kirinyaga County women's representative Njeri Maina, along with other women, led a fundraising campaign to pay bail for detained protesters. Flor-

ence Muturi, the CEO of the Law Society of Kenya (LSK), and Faith Odhiambo, the 51st LSK president who just concluded her two-year term, provided pro bono legal representation for detainees and victims of police violence.

Odhiambo reminded Kenyan police, politicians, and judges that the constitution not only protects freedom of assembly but also requires that youth be included in socioeconomic and political discussions, and therefore are free to voice criticism in protests, online, or otherwise.

On one occasion, LSK lawyers stayed at the Milimani law courts past midnight to block an attempt to hold 185 detainees, including children, for several weeks while the police looked for evidence against them. Odhiambo also led the prosecution of the acting inspector general of police for contempt of court for ignoring orders for the release of detained

protesters. The public dubbed her "The People's Chief Justice."

The actual chief justice, Martha Koome, has also frequently stood up to the executive branch's skirting of constitutional protections. Koome is the first woman chief justice and was one of the lawyers pushing for the repeal of section 2A of the former constitution, restoring multiparty politics in 1992.

During the Gen Z protests, she spoke out against the abduction of protesters by state security forces. In 2025, she led the Supreme Court in upholding lower courts' decisions against the Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill, which threatened to undermine the separation of powers and rule of law.

These achievements build on a long history of women safeguarding Kenyan democracy. Whereas Koome has been instrumental in defending the constitution, Atsango Chesoni and Njoki Ndungu were instrumental in its drafting and passage back in 2010. Going back further in history to 1974, at age 25, Philomena Chelagat Mutai became the youngest person elected to Kenya's parliament, beating 11 male candidates.

When she received a full scholarship to attend Harvard, then-President Daniel Arap Moi personally intervened to prevent her from getting a passport. She was arrested but reelected shortly after her release. Even before Kenya's independence, women played important roles in the struggle against colonial rule, including as leaders within the Mau Mau resistance.

The Backlash against Women's Leadership

In a survey of 29 Kenyan women running for election in 2022, only two said they did not experience online violence. The survey also found that online violence and harassment were regularly accompanied by the same behaviours over the phone or in person, as seen in the campaign of Mary Mugure, who received threatening calls and messages before being attacked by men on a motorcycle.

## Point: Rethinking Jobs, Growth and Economic Capability



Another year begins with South Africans watching President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa deliver the State of the Nation Address, followed closely by the National Budget. Yet this moment carries unusual weight. South Africa enters the second year of the Government of National Unity amid fragile growth, rising political contestation, and deep uncertainty about the country's economic direction. With local government elections approaching, political messaging will intensify, but the real test lies beyond rhetoric. The question is not whether transformation remains important. It is whether South Africa is prepared to confront the structural constraints that continue to limit it.

Transformation discourse frequently assumes that economic growth will naturally translate into employment. This formulation is repeated so often that it has become shorthand for progress. Yet it sidesteps a critical reality: nearly half of South Africans actively seeking work do not have a matric qualification. Growth, in its current form, has not been structured to absorb this labour profile at scale. Instead of repeating that "economic growth creates jobs," a more rigorous question must be asked: given the skills base we currently have, what forms of economic activity are realistically expandable, and how do we build them deliberately?

Unemployment in South Africa is not only a volume problem. It is a structural and systemic mismatch between labour supply and economic configuration. When policy assumes capabilities that are not widely present, opportunity becomes aspirational rather than attainable. At the same time, another contradiction is emerging. South Africa is not only failing those without formal qualifications; it is increasingly failing its professionals. Engineers, teachers, doctors, graduates and entrepreneurs remain underutilised, moving between short-term contracts, stalled tenders and prolonged uncertainty. An economy that cannot deploy its skilled base is not merely inefficient, it is stagnating. Skills that are not applied do not compound. Infrastructure is delayed. Innovation slows. Institutional capacity weakens. Public confidence erodes.

The challenge, therefore, is not simply job creation. It is meaningful work creation, economic activity that strengthens productive capacity, delivers infrastructure, improves competitiveness and builds long-term resilience. This is where the State of the Nation Address and the Budget must be assessed with clarity. The central issue is not expenditure alone, but whether economic capability is being strengthened in measurable ways.

Three tests should guide this assessment.  
Alignment: Are education, skills development and industrial strategy deliberately integrated, or do they remain policy silos that undermine one another? Without coherence between what is taught, what is trained and what is produced, skills pipelines remain disconnected from opportunity.

Capital Allocation: Is public and private capital being directed toward sectors capable of absorbing both low-skilled labour and underutilised professionals, such as infrastructure delivery, energy expansion, housing development, logistics and local manufacturing? These sectors do not merely generate employment; they build assets that enable sustained growth.

Municipal Capability: Are municipalities being strengthened as engines of economic participation, or do administrative bottlenecks continue to delay projects, deter investment and suppress enterprise? Local government is where economic intent either materialises or collapses.

South Africa's transformation debate is approaching a threshold. Redistribution without expanding production has reached its limits. Funding mechanisms without sectoral clarity risk recycling dependency rather than building capacity. Political messaging that avoids structural trade-offs deepens frustration rather than restoring trust.

What is required now is disciplined economic leadership, leadership willing to confront constraints honestly, prioritise capability over symbolism, and sequence reform with precision. This requires choices: about where to concentrate investment, which sectors to scale, how to rebuild institutional competence, and how to align skills development with productive demand.

Transformation is no longer a moral debate. It is a capability challenge. And capability requires design, deliberate, sequenced, and accountable.

*Ntsaphokazi Madyibi - works at the intersection of governance reform, civic innovation and community-led problem-solving.*

## 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](mailto:editor@journalnews.co.za)



**Pastor Motsamai Kareli**  
Empowerment Ministries International

## One Thing That Makes or Breaks a Leader

In his book John C Maxwell, *Everyone Communicates, Few Connect: What the Most Effective People Do Differently*, he shares one of the most overlooked aspects of leadership. If you've read the book, you know where he is going, but if you haven't read the book, let me tell you—you don't want to miss this thought.

In fact, it's the one thing that makes or breaks a leader, and it's worth sharing again, so here we go:

## Connection.

Leaders cannot succeed in life without communicating effectively. It's not enough for them to just work hard; it's not enough to do a great job. To be successful, you must learn how to really communicate with others, and that means learning how to connect with them.

## Ask yourself the following:

Have you ever gotten frustrated during a presentation because people just weren't "getting it"?  
Have you ever wanted a raise, and needed your boss to understand just how much value you bring to the company?

Have you ever wanted your kids to really listen so you could help them make wise choices?

Have you ever wanted to improve your relationship with a friend, a peer, or someone within your community?  
Those are all communication challenges, and the key to communication is connection. If you can't find a way to communicate effectively, you will have untapped potential everywhere you go.

After 2 decades of marriage, public speaking, leading organizations, and developing and mentoring other leaders, I can say this confidently:

If you want to succeed, you must learn how to connect with others. If you can connect with others at every level—one-on-one, in groups, with an audience—you have the capacity for strengthening your relationships, increasing your sense of community, generating teamwork, and multiplying your productivity.

John defined connection as the ability to identify with people and relate to them in a way that increases your influence with them. He talks often

about connection beginning with finding common ground with others, but it's also about finding common ideas and common language that helps secure and extend the connection beyond the moment.

## I would say that connection needs:

A values match—you need to find a common set of beliefs on what is wise or good.

A vision match—you need to find a common future or desire that you want to work toward.

A venture match—you need to find a common desire to do actual work that builds on the values and achieves the vision.

How much healthier would your relationships be if you excelled at connecting?

Would your relationship with your significant other improve? Would your relationships with your kids?

## What about your co-workers or neighbors?

I could go on and on about this idea—which is why I recommend John's book on the subject! Helping leaders learn the vital importance of connecting with people is one of my passions.

Communication is my gifting, but connection is a skill that I have honed over time in order to make the most of my gift. Anyone can learn to connect if they'll be intentional about it; and anyone who wants to live an intentional life understands the benefit that connecting with others brings.

I don't do this in all of my social media platforms, but this feels like a good spot for a call to action. Take a few minutes today and do the following:

Evaluate your connection skills. Where do they need improving? Where are they strongest?

Spend some time reflecting about some of your most recent conversations; did you search for common values, or vision, or a venture? What did you do to make the other people feel connected with you?

The one thing that makes or breaks a leader is the ability to connect with others. The further along in leadership and life we go, the more effective we must become at connecting with people. Our success depends on it.

## REMEMBER CHRIS HANI



The tragic events of 10 April 1993 are a sad reminder of the price we paid for the freedom that we enjoy today.

In a month where we celebrate Freedom Day, which was attained on the 27th of April 1994 with the first ever democratic elections in our country, it is also equally important to take stock of the sacrifices made to arrive where we are. April is the month that our martyrs, Solomon Mahlangu and Chris Hani were murdered.

Hani's murder in particular stung the worst. The quiet and serene Dawn Park, Boksburg neighborhood where he resided with his family turned chaotic after an assassin's bullet ripped through his skull, permanently silencing him. It hurt. It was incensing. It was unfair. Chris Hani had spent the better part of his life in service of the people of this country. How dare his killers kill him on the calendar's holiest period and exactly a year before the historic '94 elections?

That was provocation of the worst order. Chris Hani lied motionless on his driveway, gallons of blood oozing from his head. In the commotion, Tokyo Sexwale wailed like a child. "They have killed Chris Hani!" he sobbed. We all sobbed. South Africa had been robbed of the apartheid's fiercest critic. At his funeral service a week later, Mbhazima Shilowa bellowed out a haunting freedom song as an ode to Chris Hani. 'Hamba Kahle' he sang,

as the wooden coffin carrying Chris Hani's mortal remains was lowered into the grave. He was gone and never to be seen and heard from again.

There were fears of a devastating civil war along racial lines. Fortunately, we had solid and sober leadership who managed to calm simmering tensions and avoided what could have been a self-destructive war. Thirty three years to that tragic day, we must take a good, long look in the mirror and ask ourselves if we have done enough to bring changes to the lives of the people the way Chris Hani would have wanted.

We must also remind ourselves that heroes such as Hani and Oliver Tambo, who sadly passed away two weeks after Hani, spent their lives far away from their loved ones, fighting for freedom that they never saw. It is in their memories that we must all work hard to ensure that a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic society is born.

In the memory of Chris Hani, we must work to bring together all the people of our country, despite efforts by some to drive a wedge amongst South Africans. When Chris Hani took his last breath on 10 April 1994, he blew it into the lungs of all South Africans to continue with the struggle. May his soul continue to rest in peace.

*MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae is the Treasurer-General of the ANC Women's League and also the Premier of the Free State province.*

# Business

## Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	16.43	-0.39%	▣
Rand/Pound	22.22	-0.15%	▣▣
Rand/Euro	19.34	-0.25%	▣▣▣
Platinum	2 108.90	-0.27%	▣▣▣▣
Brent Crude	99.50	5.01%	▣▣▣▣▣
Gold	4 788.67	-0.03%	▣▣▣▣▣
Ethereum	2 319.24	-1.75%	▣▣▣▣
Bitcoin	7 4185.93	-0.78%	▣▣▣▣

## Petrol price relief for May still on the cards in SA

The government is discussing ways to provide relief to South Africans as the country is grappling with one of its most severe fuel price shocks in history.

Deputy Director General Tseliso Maqubela from the Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources said that there is still a chance that an announcement on further relief measures is still on the table.

Mid-month projections from the Central Energy Fund (CEF) show that motorists and other fuel users are in for more pain in May.

The latest data shows that petrol prices are building an under-recovery of between R2.62 and R2.99 per litre, while diesel is showing an under-recovery of between R9.05 and R9.07 per litre.

While these under-recoveries are much lower than where they started at the beginning of the month (R8 and R17 per litre for petrol and diesel, respectively), they remain significant.

Specifically, a R9-per-litre hike in diesel prices would push the wholesale price above R35 per litre in May, shattering the record set in April 2026.

Wholesale diesel prices climbed to R26.11 (0.005%, inland) in April, beating the previous record of R25.53 in July 2022.

While petrol avoided hitting its highest-ever point—reaching R23.36, versus R26.74 per litre in July 2022 (petrol 95)—the current projection is for it to land close to that point.

In an interview with Kaya Biz, Maqubela said that understanding how petrol prices are calculated is key to



unpacking the crisis.

He explained that South Africa has import parity pricing, meaning South Africa effectively mirrors global fuel prices.

“We look at major refining centres globally and then look at what they are selling refined products for, and those then filter into our price build-up,” he said.

These international product prices are then influenced by the rand-dollar exchange rate, before additional costs are layered on.

Petrol price relief discussions are still ongoing

Deputy Director General Tseliso Maqubela

On top of that, the retailers have got to have a margin, the wholesalers have got to have a margin, and that finds its way into the price build-up.

Freight costs for importing fuel into the country are also included, along with government levies such as the general fuel levy and the Road Accident Fund levy.

Despite criticism, Maqubela said this system “has served us well” over nearly two decades, ensuring both

security of supply and competitive pricing.

A major factor shaping the current fuel landscape is South Africa’s reliance on imports. Maqubela noted that the country has been importing between 60% and 70% of its finished products.

This mainly comes from Gulf countries such as Oman, Kuwait, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, as well as India. In total, South Africa consumes between 65 and 67 million litres every single day.

While concerns have been raised about supply disruptions, Maqubela stressed that availability is not the primary issue.

“We are not concerned about the availability of supply. Our concern remains the price,” he said, pointing to rising global oil prices and a weaker rand as key drivers of higher costs.

On the possibility of further relief, Maqubela praised the National Treasury’s recent intervention to partially suspend the fuel levy, calling the move “quite commendable” given the fiscal sacrifice involved.

However, he warned that discussions about additional relief are still ongoing. “There is work that is being done, and at the right time, there will be announcements made,” he said.

“This announcement could come around the third week of April or so. However, I wouldn’t want to preempt the outcome of those discussions,” Maqubela said.

For now, he stressed that it is too early to predict May’s fuel prices, as daily under-recoveries fluctuate sharply based on global events. **BusinessTech**

## Major food product recall by Shoprite Checkers lands supplier in hot water



A supplier of hummus to Shoprite Checkers faces fines exceeding R1 million following a major recall of its products in 2024, found to contain Listeria.

The National Consumer Commission (NCC) has referred the supplier, BM Foods, to the National Consumer Tribunal for adjudication following an investigation.

The manufacturer was investigated following a major recall of the hummus products in September 2024.

At the time, Shoprite Checkers initiated the recall after laboratory testing confirmed the presence of the harmful microorganism *Listeria monocytogenes*.

This microorganism poses serious health risks, particularly to pregnant women, the elderly, and individuals with weakened or compromised immune systems.

The NCC said its investigation was prompted by information suggesting the supplier might have contravened the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act (CPA).

Its own laboratory results confirmed the presence of the harmful microorganism *Listeria monocytogenes*.

“The presence of the microorganism indicated that BM Foods produced and distributed hummus that was unsafe for consumption, thus contravening [various regulations],” the NCC said.

This includes specific regulations requiring the person in charge to ensure routine assessments are conducted to comply with hygiene requirements.

- The recall impacted several products:
- Traditional Hummus (125g and 300g);
  - Reduced Fat Hummus (125g);
  - Zataar Hummus (125g and 300g);
  - Red Pepper Hummus (125g and 300g);

and

- Caramelised Onion Hummus (125g).

The NCC’s Acting Commissioner, Hardin Ratshisu, said that suppliers of foodstuffs have an obligation under the CPA and applicable regulations to supply goods that are safe and do not pose a risk to consumers.

“It is therefore important that where there are findings of the violation of the CPA, implicated suppliers are held accountable before the tribunal,” he said.

The NCC has referred this matter to the Tribunal and has pleaded for the imposition of a fine of R1 million or 10% of BM Foods’ annual turnover, whichever is higher.

South Africa has experienced 18 recalls so far this year, with four in April 2026 alone.

The latest recall issued by the NCC is a product safety recall directed at health facilities and medical practitioners for various delivery systems.

This followed a recall notice for wireless power banks, certain Jaguar Land Rover Defender and I-PACE vehicles, as well as for certain Ford Ranger XLT, Wildtrak, Ford Puma, and Hino 700 vehicles.

The bulk of recalls happened in March, when eight recall notices were issued for various vehicles and food products, including Made for Tots Corn Puffs Chicken and various brands of dry dog and cat food.

The busy March period followed a more muted January and February, where a combined six recalls were issued, the most notable of which was Buitendijk peanut butter being pulled from shelves.

The peanut butter was pulled after tests revealed higher-than-legally-permitted levels of aflatoxin in some of the branded products.

Aflatoxin is a toxin produced by certain fungi that can contaminate agricultural crops, including peanuts, and is regulated in South Africa due to the health risks it poses. **BusinessTech**

## Steenhuisen announces early success in FMD vaccination campaign



Minister of Agriculture John Steenhuisen has announced encouraging early results in South Africa’s fight against Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), with the national vaccination campaign showing clear signs of success.

The Minister says more than 2 million animals have been vaccinated between February and 26 March 2026, with no new infections recorded in already vaccinated herds.

Although cases have been reported in all nine prov-

inces, the Department says that the recent increase reflects improved detection rather than a worsening outbreak.

“The recent increase in reported numbers is due to improved government capacity. We have strengthened surveillance and implemented a centralised reporting system, allowing for earlier detection and faster data capture.

Furthermore, heightened awareness has helped identify “sub-clinical” cases – where animals carry the

virus without showing obvious symptoms – which previously might have gone unnoticed,” Steenhuisen explains.

Vaccine supply

The Department says it has secured over 4 million vaccine doses, with additional shipments expected before the end of April.

The rollout is being carried out using a risk-based approach, with high-density livestock areas and key sectors such as dairy farming being prioritised. **SABCNews**



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GET TO KNOW YOUR DJ

**Bloem DJ D'Lo Hersh Lives a Double Life of Purpose**



By Lerato Mutlanyane

In Bloemfontein, where stories of hustle and heart often intertwine, Hershelle Baatjies (30)—better known as D'Lo Hersh—is proof that passion doesn't have to follow just one path.

By day, he works behind the sterile doors of Mediclinic's theatre unit as a dispenser, operating in a high-pressure medical environment focused on delicate heart and lung procedures. In the thoracic theatre, every second counts and precision is everything—a world far removed from flashing lights and pounding basslines, yet one that demands the same discipline that defines his life as a DJ.

"I'm a healthcare worker," he says simply—but the weight of that role runs deep.

Working in a space where lives hang in the balance has shaped his outlook in unexpected ways. It has instilled responsibility, composure and consistency—qualities that carry seamlessly into his second life behind the decks.

Because when the scrubs come off, D'Lo Hersh steps into a completely different rhythm.

From private gigs to weddings and intimate events, he transforms spaces through sound—reading crowds, setting moods and turning moments into lasting memories. His ability to move between these two demanding worlds speaks to a deeper drive rooted in both service and self-expression.

It's not just about music. And it's not just about medicine.

It's about balance.

In an industry where stability is often elusive, Baatjies has built his career from the ground up—funding his own journey, pushing through rejection and leaning on the unwavering support of his Heidedal community. That same determination fuels him in hospital corridors, where the stakes are far higher than any stage.

The challenges are real. Long hours, the emotional toll of healthcare work and late nights of DJing often blur the lines of personal life. It's a demanding existence that calls for sacrifice—and resilience.

But for him, both worlds serve a purpose. In theatre, he plays a role in saving lives. Behind the decks, he helps celebrate them.

And that is what makes his story resonate—the rare ability to exist in two extremes, yet remain grounded in both. Whether assisting in a life-saving procedure or soundtracking a wedding dance-floor, the mission remains the same: to make an impact.

Looking ahead, D'Lo Hersh has his sights set on growth—expanding his reach as a DJ, hosting events, particularly those that give back through charity, and taking his sound beyond Bloemfontein's borders.

But no matter how far the music carries him, his roots remain firmly planted in his community and his calling.

Because for Hershelle Baatjies, success isn't about choosing one identity over another—it's about mastering both. A healer in the operating room. A storyteller through sound. And in both roles, a man driven by purpose.

**BAL Beyond the Courts: A Celebration of Culture and Lifestyle**

By Refilwe Mochoari

While the main action unfolded on the court, the sidelines of the Kalahari Conference proved that the Basketball Africa League (BAL) Season Six was more than just a sporting event—it stood out as one of Africa's premier lifestyle and cultural gatherings.

This year's league tipped off on 27 March and ran until 6 April at the SunBet Arena in Times Square, Pretoria, under the theme "Rise With The Game."

The BAL is a top-tier professional basketball league featuring 12 club teams from across the continent, managed by the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) in partnership with NBA Africa.

The Kalahari Conference featured teams such as the Johannesburg Giants (South Africa), Dar City (Tanzania), Nairobi City Thunder (Kenya), Al Ahly (Egypt), and Rwanda's APR BBC (formerly known as the RSSB Tigers). The courtside atmosphere was filled with glitz and glamour, making it an unmissable spectacle.

Icons from the African television industry graced the event, including award-winning actress Nomzamo Mbatha, alongside Pearl Thusi, Natasha Thahane, Hope Mbhele, and

Kim Jayde, all turning heads with their style.

Radio personalities Robert Marawa, Tbo Touch, and Thando Thabethe were also in attendance, joined by Kaizer Chiefs executive Jessica Motung and media personalities Tino Chinyani and Simphiwe Ngema.

Simphiwe Ngema.

Beyond the games, the league delivered a continuous stream of high-energy entertainment, showcasing some of South Africa's hottest musical talent across amapiano and hip-hop.

Standout performances came from artists including Nasty C, Young Stunna, Scott Maphuma, Ciza, Toss, and Kamo Mphela. International act Small Gold also took to the stage, joined by Uncle Vinny, Uncle Cool, and Harmonize, transforming the arena into a vibrant celebration of music and culture.

A Historic East African Presence

According to Mathodi Mathabatha from APO Group, history was made as Tanzania's first-ever participating team, Dar City, led by captain and former NBA player Hasheem Thabeet, took to the court.

She noted that support from Dar es Salaam was amplified by a high-profile delegation, including Club President Mussa Mzani, Bongo Flava star Harmonize, and businessman Sal-lam SK.

"Their presence brought an unmistakable East African energy to the SunBet Arena, reinforcing the BAL's role as a unifying force for Africa's creative and sporting industries," Mathabatha said.



**Reality Star's Bold New Show Promises Glam, Grit and Truth**

By Lerato Mutlanyane

Two years after her debut on The Real Housewives of Durban, Londie London is ready to tell her side of the story—this time on her own terms. Armed with chaos, glamour and a sense of redemption, the 34-year-old star is stepping into a new chapter where she's firmly in control.

Best known for her headline-making moments on the hit reality series, Londie—real name Londiwe Zulu—now takes centre stage in her own show, Life with Londie London. The series offers an intimate look at her journey as she rebuilds both her personal and professional life, all in signature Londie style.

Set to premiere on 7 May 2026, the show dives into motherhood, business and everything in between. Unlike her time in an ensemble cast, this project places her squarely in the spotlight.

"This show is different because it follows me. I'm at the centre of it, and viewers will get to see more of me and all my different sides. It's very personal, and I can't hide behind anyone. I'm front and centre, baring it all—the good, the bad and the ugly," she said.

The series promises to peel back the layers of her life, revealing the realities behind the public persona. "People will see me as a mother, daughter, businesswoman and girlfriend. You've seen some of that before, but now you'll get a deeper understanding of how I juggle it all."

As a mother of two, Londie says the timing of the

show reflects her personal growth and clarity.

"I think I got to a point where I was ready. A lot has happened in my life, and for a long time, people only saw bits and pieces. Now I feel more sure of who I am, so it made sense to tell my story in my own voice," she explained.

"Viewers will see the real me—not just the glam or what people think they know, but the everyday reality. The good moments, the tough ones and everything in between."

Opening her life to the cameras came with challenges, especially when it came to vulnerability and protecting her children.

"The hardest part was letting people see me when I'm not okay. It's easy to show the strong side, but this show needed honesty, and that can be uncomfortable. I was also a bit nervous about showing my children—the world can be unkind and protecting them is my biggest priority," she said.

Motherhood, she added, has reshaped her outlook, influencing every decision she makes as she works to build a better future for her children.

When it comes to public scrutiny, Londie admits she has had to toughen up.

"I've grown a thick skin. Before, things used to affect me more. Now I understand that people will always have opinions."

Life with Londie London will air weekly every Thursday on Mzansi Magic (DStv channel 161) at 8pm, offering viewers an unfiltered look at her

journey as she reclaims her narrative and builds a more intentional life.



**Kolisi Foundation Marks Six Years of Impact**

By Lerato Mutlanyane

The Kolisi Foundation is celebrating six years of impactful community work, marking a milestone in its mission to uplift vulnerable communities across South Africa.

Springbok captain and co-founder Siya Kolisi took to Instagram to reflect on the journey, reaffirming the organisation's commitment to driving meaningful change. "Today marks the sixth birthday of the Kolisi Foundation. We are still here, we will not stop,

and there is a lot of work that still needs to be done. We will continue moving forward," he said.

Kolisi co-founded the foundation with his former wife, Rachel Kolisi. In his message, he emphasised resilience and gratitude, noting that quitting is not an option. "Thank you so much to all our founders, partners and on-the-ground implementing teams. Thank you to the board and the Kolisi Foundation staff for the incredible work that you do. We are deeply grateful for your contributions," he added.

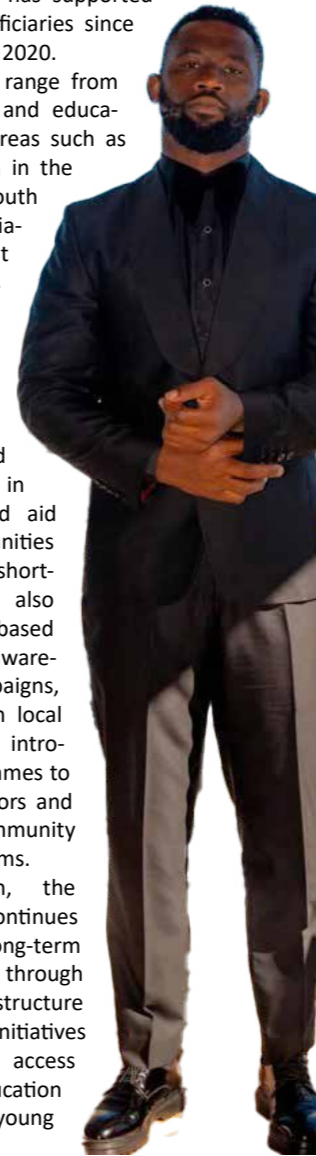
The foundation focuses on key pillars including

education and sport, food security, and combating gender-based violence. Through targeted programmes, it has supported thousands of beneficiaries since its establishment in 2020.

Its interventions range from food relief efforts and educational support in areas such as Zwide in Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape, to youth development initiatives aimed at breaking cycles of poverty.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the organisation played a critical role in delivering food aid to communities facing severe shortages. It has also led gender-based violence awareness campaigns, partnered with local shelters, and introduced programmes to support survivors and strengthen community response systems.

In addition, the foundation continues to invest in long-term development through school infrastructure projects and initiatives that expand access to quality education and sport for young people.



**Freshlyground Reignites the Beat with Explosive Comeback Album**



By Lerato Mutlanyane

The multi-award-winning Afro-fusion pop band Freshlyground—celebrated for their songwriting, electrifying performances, and musical versatility—has made a powerful return after seven years with their new album Take Me Home. The release marks a bold new chapter following a lengthy recording break.

The eight-track project reunites the group with Grammy-winning producer JB Arthur, who previously co-produced their albums Nomvula and MA-cheri. The album reflects both a return to their signature sound and an openness to creative evolution.

Before the group paused in late 2019, former lead vocalist Zolani Mahola embarked on a solo journey, leaving the band's future uncertain. Despite this, the members maintained their connection over the years.

"It soon became clear that we still loved playing together and we missed it," the band shared.

Fans never let go either.

"People kept asking when we would be back," they said. "That told us that the music still mattered." That overwhelming support played a key role in their decision to return.

Their comeback is driven by a renewed sense of purpose—stronger, more intentional, and ready to take on the global stage.

"We are not trying to recreate the past," they explained. "We are building from it."

This philosophy defines Take Me Home, blending nostalgia with growth. The band emphasised a more open and collaborative creative process, where each member contributes freely to the final sound.

"Our respect for each other shows in the music," they said. "It gives us the freedom to explore without losing who we are."

A defining shift in this new era is the introduction of Mbali Makhoba as lead vocalist. Her voice and influence have helped shape the band's refreshed direction and sonic identity.

The album's songs reflect both the group's roots and their evolution, carrying forward their legacy while embracing change.

Beyond the music, Freshlyground remains grounded in purpose.

"For us, music is not just entertainment," they said. "It is medicine. It is healing. It brings people together."

Their storytelling continues to centre themes of empowerment and identity, with a particular focus on women's voices within South African culture.

"We want to tell stories that have not always been heard," they said.

The band believes authenticity is key to their global resonance.

"When you stay true to where you come from, people everywhere can feel it," they explained. "That is how something local becomes something global."

Their live performances are already affirming this new phase—bridging past and present, and reconnecting audiences with the unmistakable Freshlyground sound.

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**GIGGuide**

**Saturday 18 April 2026**  
D'LO Birthday Celebration  
The Rooftop Garden Bar Lounge  
Bloemfontein

**Saturday 18 April 2026**  
Bloem Market  
Jutskei Parking Willows  
Bloemfontein

**Sunday 19 April 2026**  
Approach Sunday  
Sandy's Bar & Restaurant  
Bloemfontein

**Sunday 19 April 2026**  
Extended Soul Sunday  
Sechaba  
Bloemfontein



## MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS:

#### MEMBERSHIP OF THE MATJHABENG MUNICIPAL PLANNING TRIBUNAL

The Matjhabeng Local Municipality invites interested and suitably qualified individuals to submit nominations for consideration as members of the Matjhabeng Municipal Planning Tribunal (MPT). This call is issued in accordance with Section 35 of the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013 (Act No. 16 of 2013) and the Matjhabeng By-law on Municipal Land Use Planning, 2015.

#### Eligibility Criteria:

- **Attributes:** Applicants/Nominees must be persons with strong leadership qualities and must have in-depth knowledge and solid experience in/of spatial planning, land use management, land development and law related thereto.
- **Field/ Areas of Interest:** Town and Regional Planning, Land Surveying, Civil & Electrical Engineering, Environmental Management, Property Development and Management, Development Economics, Geotechnical, Legal, etc.

#### Terms of Office:

In terms of Section 37 of the Act, the term of office of members of the Municipal Planning Tribunal is five (5) years calculated from the date of appointment of such member by the Municipal Council.

In terms of Section 92 of the Matjhabeng By-law on Municipal Land Use Planning 2015, the term of office of members filling a vacancy (where a previous member resigned or was disqualified) will hold office for the unexpired portion of the period for which the member he/she replaces was appointed.

#### Nominations/Applications must be in writing or typed and accompanied by the following details:

- a) Personal details of the applicant or nominee (Full names, identity number as well as physical address),
- b) Particulars of the applicant's/ nominee's Curriculum Vitae with at least two contactable references, certified copies of qualifications, identity document/ passport, proof of address, valid registration certificate with relevant professional bodies and or voluntary associations as well as experience in matters listed Section 36(1)(b) of the Act,
- c) Motivational application letter by the nominator/nominee to the Matjhabeng Local Municipality (not more than one (1) page),
- d) A letter of acceptance of the nomination from the nominee as stated in Schedule 2 of the regulations in terms of the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 16 of 2013),
- e) A disclosure of the information contemplated in Section 38(3) and (4) of the Act,
- f) A sworn declaration by the applicant or nominee that he/she is not disqualified in terms of Section 38 of the Act.

#### Disqualification:

Interested persons are encouraged to read section 38 of the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013 (Act 16, of 2013), and failure to comply with the section and the above requirements may result in the disqualification of the nomination.

#### Remunerations:

The successful candidates (only non-government officials – all spheres of government) will be remunerated in accordance with Treasury Regulations that regulate the remuneration of commissions and committees of inquiry, and audit committees. These members will be reimbursed for expenses incurred for the attendance of the Municipal Planning Tribunal.

**Nominations must be addressed to: The Municipal Manager, Matjhabeng Local Municipality, P.O. Box 708, Welkom 9460. Nominations must be clearly marked: NOMINATIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL PLANNING TRIBUNAL and must be delivered in a sealed envelope at the Office of the Municipal Manager, Second Floor, Welkom Civic Centre. Closing date for submissions is 30 days from the date of publication of the advertisement.**

The Municipality will review all nominations to ensure compliance with the eligibility criteria and legal requirements.

**Enquiries can be directed to Mrs. Mmase Moletsane (E-mail: [townplanning@matjhabeng.co.za](mailto:townplanning@matjhabeng.co.za))**

**DR. VUYO ADONIS  
ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER**

# Sport

### FIFA WORLD CUP 2026™

GROUP STAGE

<b>A</b>	MEXICO SOUTH AFRICA KOREA REPUBLIC CANADA	<b>G</b>	BELGIUM EGYPT IRAN NEW ZEALAND
<b>B</b>	CANADA SOUTH AFRICA CANADA SWITZERLAND	<b>H</b>	SPAIN COSTA RICA SAUDI ARABIA URUGUAY
<b>C</b>	INDIA MEXICO HAITI SCOTLAND	<b>I</b>	FRANCE SINGAPORE IRAQ NORWAY
<b>D</b>	USA GERMANY AUSTRALIA YEMEN	<b>J</b>	ARGENTINA ALGERIA AUSTRALIA JORDAN
<b>E</b>	GERMANY GERMANY COTE D'IVOIRE ECUADOR	<b>K</b>	PORTUGAL QATAR MEXICO COLOMBIA
<b>F</b>	NETHERLANDS NETHERLANDS NETHERLANDS NETHERLANDS	<b>L</b>	IRELAND CHINA GUATEMALA PANAMA

## PSL Responds to Swallows-Gallants Status Saga



The Premier Soccer League (PSL) has distanced itself from the ongoing High Court dispute between Moroka Swallows and Marumo Gallants.

SABC Sport has seen communication from the League to the two parties making it clear it will not be drawn into what it views as a commercial disagreement between the two parties following their sale agreement.

As previously reported, former Swallows owner, David Mogashoa, is attempting to reclaim ownership of the top-flight status and is seeking a court order that would compel the League's Executive Committee to transfer the franchise back to him from Gallants.

The dispute stems from a deal concluded in May 2024, in which Gallants owner Abram Sello agreed to purchase Swallows' status for R40 million.

However, it later emerged that only part of the agreed fee was paid, triggering a breakdown in relations between the two parties.

Mogashoa claims Sello still owes him a balance of R20 million, while Sello disputes this, arguing the disagreement centres not on non-payment but on the structure and terms of the transaction.

The matter has since escalated into a legal battle, with both chairmen outlining their versions of events in affidavits being prepared for the courts.

Amid the dispute, the PSL's legal department has issued correspondence clarifying the league's position.

The document, seen by SABC Sport, states that the PSL will not intervene in the litigation and that any change in club ownership must comply with Article 13 of the NSL Handbook, irrespective of the court's ruling.

Article 13 requires member clubs to furnish monetary or other guarantees to the League before the start of each season as proof of financial compliance.

The League emphasises that its Executive Committee retains full authority to assess, approve or reject any application for a status transfer and that this process cannot be bypassed by a court order.

Even if Swallows are successful in court, the PSL insists a formal application must still be submitted and evaluated in line with Article 13 requirements.

The outcome of the case, the League noted, would be considered as one factor, but would not be binding on its decision-making process.

The PSL has also cautioned against any attempt to sidestep its regulations, requesting confirmation from Swallows' legal representatives that they are not seeking to bypass the prescribed process.

It warned that failure to do so could result in the league formally opposing the application and pursuing legal costs. - SABC



Ambition to Grow...FC Knights aims to grow into a regional football force that has a positive impact in the community. Picture: XXX

# Ambitious FC Knights Chases Growth

## Manyatseng's grassroots powerhouse combats social ills through tactical excellence

By Mpho Sekharume

FC Knights is a club defined by high-intensity football and a high-impact social mission.

Competing in the Local Football Association (LFA) league, the Ladybrand-based outfit has transitioned from a modest 2018 startup into a competitive force with a clear objective: securing a spot in the Regional League.

Founded by Mosa Madigketla, the club's technical foundation was built under grueling conditions. Despite the lack of resources, Madigketla has developed a squad capable of elite-level play.

"I started this team when I was 18, practicing with just one ball to develop some of the most talented players in Ladybrand.

"FC Knights was born from a vision and created to take as many kids off the street as possible," Madigketla recalls.

The club has become a strategic barrier against

wayward behavior in the Manyatseng community despite its novice status.

By providing a structured environment for Under-16 and Under-23 players, the club actively steers youth away from crime and substance abuse.

Madigketla notes that the discipline required on the pitch translates directly to stability in everyday life, with 98% of his players remaining clean and focused on their personal development.

On the field, the team employs a modern, aggressive tactical setup that belies their financial struggles.

"Our style is short, quick passing - a possession-based team controlling the tempo and the ball every game," explains Madigketla.

This technical approach was on full display during the 2025 Molllewa amateur teams tournament, where they surged through the competition, winning five of their six fixtures.

Their run only ended in the quarter-finals at the

hands of City Pillars - a bigger and better resourced outfit.

However, FC Knights' ambition to reach the next tier of provincial and hopefully South African football is frequently hampered by its lack of resources.

"We are a team that struggles to reach our peak as we cannot afford what can help or motivate us to get there.

"We have been having financial problems, but the team always seems to be blessed and survives another year somehow," Madigketla added.

Looking ahead, the club's roadmap is focused on professionalisation.

While the immediate goal is promotion, the long-term objective is to see Manyatseng talent breaking into the professional ranks.

"Our vision is to promote players to professional football, but we also instill discipline and teach them respect and the way to become great leaders one day," Madigketla concluded.

### PSL 2025/2026

CLUBS	P	W	PTS
1 Mamelodi Sundowns	23	17	56
2 Orlando Pirates	24	17	55
3 Kaizer Chiefs	23	13	45
4 AmaZulu FC	24	11	39
5 Sekhukhune United	24	10	38
6 Durban City	24	10	35
7 Polokwane City	23	8	33
8 Golden Arrows	24	9	31
9 Stellenbosch FC	23	7	28
10 Siwelele FC	23	6	27
11 Richards Bay	24	6	27
12 TS Galaxy	24	7	25
13 Chippa United	25	5	24
14 Marumo Gallants	24	4	19
15 Orbit College FC	24	5	19
16 Magesi FC	24	3	17

### Premier League 2025/2026

TEAMS	P	W	PTS
1 Arsenal	32	21	70
2 Man City	31	19	64
3 Man Utd	32	15	55
4 Aston Villa	32	16	55
5 Liverpool	32	15	52
6 Chelsea	32	13	48
7 Brentford	32	13	47
8 Everton	32	13	47
9 Brighton	32	12	46
10 Sunderland	32	12	46
11 Bournemouth	32	10	45
12 Fulham	32	13	44
13 C Palace	31	11	42
14 Newcastle	32	12	42
15 Leeds	32	8	36
16 Nottingham Forest F.C	32	8	33

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