



Friday 05 June 2026
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SETTING THE PACE: TAU'S 100-DAYS ACTION PLAN IN FULL SWING

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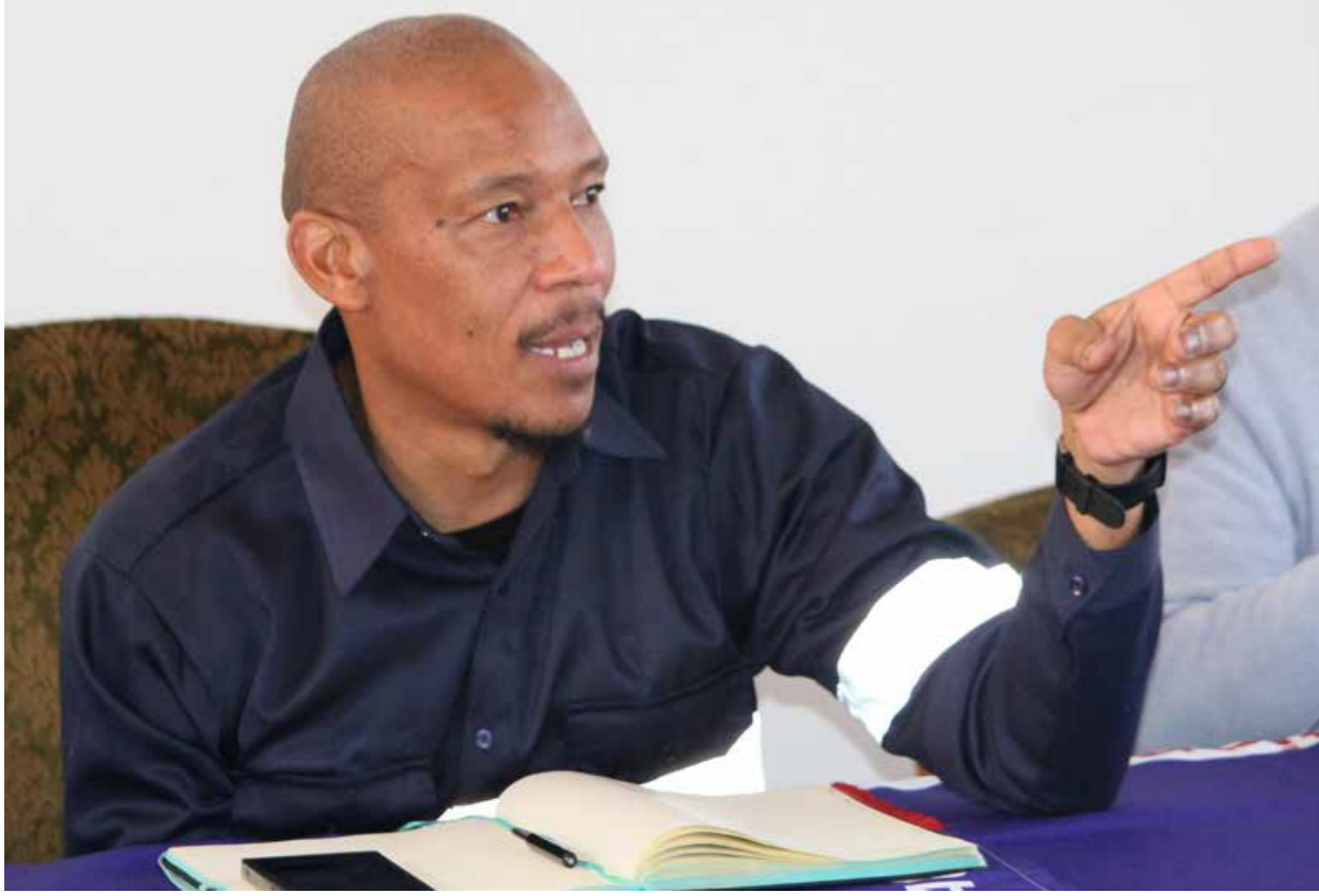
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MOQHAKA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY 100

By Matshidiso

100 Days of Action: Mayor Tau Prioritises Infrastructure and Community Needs



Moghaka Executive Mayor Cllr Ramasimong Tau has unveiled an ambitious 100-Day Mayoral Service Delivery Programme, anchored by a R1.6 billion municipal budget designed to tackle infrastructure challenges, strengthen service delivery and rebuild public confidence in local government.

A key milestone of the programme was the tabling of the municipality's 2026/27 financial year budget, which prioritises critical investments in water, sanitation and waste management services to improve the quality of life for residents across Moghaka.

The municipality has projected total operating revenue of R1.6 billion against total expenditure of R1.5 billion, with significant allocations directed towards addressing long-standing infrastructure constraints.

At the centre of the Mayor's service delivery agenda is a R244 million investment in the municipality's aging water network, which has been identified as the primary cause of recurring water interruptions affecting communities.

"The municipality continues to experience major

challenges with its water network, which in many instances leaves communities without water for extended periods. The network is still predominantly made up of asbestos pipelines, which are prone to frequent bursts, particularly during winter," Tau explained.

According to the Mayor, replacing and rehabilitating the aging infrastructure will help reduce water losses, improve reliability and ensure a more stable water supply for residents.

The maintenance and repair of the network are currently funded through the municipality's basic water charge tariff.

The budget also places a strong focus on sanitation services, with municipal leadership acknowledging the severe strain placed on the aging clay-pipe sewer network.

"The municipality continues to face serious challenges relating to its sanitation network. Many of the pipes have reached the end of their lifespan, resulting in frequent collapses and sewer blockages that are costly to repair and maintain," said Tau.

He noted that the current basic sanitation charge is no longer sufficient to fully cover the increasing

costs associated with maintaining and upgrading the deteriorating infrastructure, a challenge that has become increasingly evident over the past three years.

In addition to water and sanitation improvements, the municipality has allocated R54 million towards Solid Waste Management to ensure efficient refuse collection and cleaner communities.

Tau said municipal assessments have revealed that a significant contributor to waste management costs is the use of non-compliant refuse containers, which slow collection times and often result in overtime expenditure.

The Executive Mayor emphasised that the budget is firmly rooted in the municipality's constitutional mandate to provide quality services and respond directly to the needs of residents.

The 100-Day Mayoral Service Delivery Programme forms part of a broader strategy to accelerate visible service delivery interventions, strengthen accountability and ensure that municipal resources are directed towards projects that make a tangible difference in the daily lives of communities.

Working Together to Build a Stronger, More Resilient Moghaka

Moghaka Local Municipality has committed itself to a renewed era of service delivery, infrastructure renewal and economic growth, with Executive Mayor Cllr Ramasimong Tau outlining an ambitious vision to tackle the challenges facing communities while rebuilding public confidence in local government.

Acknowledging the realities of aging infrastructure, unemployment, water interruptions and service delivery pressures, Tau said the administration entered office with a clear understanding of both the challenges and the opportunities ahead. He stressed that the municipality's budget has been carefully crafted to directly address these issues and lay the foundation for sustainable development.

"The budget priorities of this administration will focus strongly on infrastructure refurbishment and upgrades. Greater investment will be directed towards the rehabilitation of roads, storm-water systems, water pipelines, sewer networks and electricity substations to improve reliability and reduce service interruptions," said Tau.

He added that maintaining existing infrastructure will receive equal attention to ensure that municipal services remain reliable, responsive and sustainable over the long term.

At the heart of the municipality's strategy is a commitment to economic development and job creation. Tau said the municipality aims to stimulate local economic activity by supporting township enterprises, attracting investment into industrial areas, strengthening partnerships with the private sector and ensuring that municipal procurement creates opportunities for local contractors, youth, women and small businesses.

"We ensure municipal tributes towards creating employment opportunities for our people," he said.

The Mayor also reaffirmed the administration's commitment to strengthening governance, accountability and financial discipline, describing these as essential building blocks for a stable and effective municipality.

Recognising the importance of public participation, Tau said the municipality will continue engaging ward committees, community stakeholders, traditional leaders and residents to ensure that development programmes are shaped by the needs and aspirations of the people they serve.

"Development can only succeed when government works together with the people," he said.

Beyond infrastructure and economic growth, the municipality has also committed to investing in social development programmes aimed at empowering young people, supporting sports, arts and culture, promoting gender equality, assisting vulnerable groups and combating substance abuse and crime.

Tau called on all sectors of society to put political differences aside and work together in the interest of community development.

"The task before us requires unity, discipline and commitment from councillors, officials, workers, businesses and residents alike," he said.

He emphasised that restoring public trust in local government will depend on visible improvements in service delivery and meaningful progress on issues that directly affect residents' daily lives.

"In 2026, governing means fixing the roads that children walk to school on. It means ensuring that when a mother turns on her tap, water comes out. It means that when a family pays their rates, they receive services in return. It means that every title deed we hand over is proof that government keeps its promises," Tau said.

Concluding his address, the Mayor said the municipality would not shy away from the challenges it faces but would confront them with determination, purpose and a commitment to delivering results.

"We know why we are here, and every day we will continue doing the work required to restore Moghaka to a path of growth, stability and service excellence."



Moghaka Executive Mayor Cllr Ramasimong Tau. Pictures: Baagedi Sethora

Moghaka Marks Historic Anniversaries



As South Africa enters June 2026, Moghaka Executive Mayor Cllr Ramasimong Tau has called on residents to reflect on a year marked by powerful historical anniversaries that continue to shape the nation's democratic journey and inspire the work of local government today.

Addressing Council, Mayor Tau highlighted the significance of the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Freedom Charter, a landmark document adopted on 26 June 1956 that laid the foundation for a democratic South Africa.

The Mayor reminded councillors that the historic

gathering at Kliptown in Soweto was no ordinary event. Thousands of South Africans from all walks of life came together to declare a bold vision for the future under the rallying call: "The People Shall Govern."

"They came from every corner of this country, including communities like ours here in Moghaka, and they dared to imagine a South Africa where all people would share in the wealth of the land, where all doors of learning and culture would be opened, and where there would be peace and friendship," said Tau.

He noted that the Freedom Charter was not crafted in the halls of power but emerged from the hopes, struggles and aspirations of ordinary people yearning for freedom and equality.

According to the Mayor, the Charter remains relevant today as municipalities work to deliver services, improve infrastructure and create opportunities for communities.

"As we deliberate over roads, budgets, title deeds and water infrastructure, we must remember that every decision we take is part of building the South Africa envisioned by the Freedom Charter," he said.

Mayor Tau also reflected on the historic 1956 Women's March, when more than 20,000 women from across the country marched to the Union Buildings carrying petitions with over 150,000 signatures in protest against apartheid pass laws.

Quoting the iconic slogan "Wathint' Abafazi, Wathint' Imbokodo", he paid tribute to the courage, resilience and determination of the women whose sacrifices paved the way for future generations. "Many of those women were mothers of the Free State. Their sacrifice, their courage and their dignity made possible every woman who serves in this Council today. We honour them not only through remembrance but through meaningful action," he said.

The Mayor further highlighted the significance of the 50th anniversary of the 1976 Soweto Uprising, when thousands of young people took a stand against an education system designed to limit their future.

"This year marks exactly 50 years since the youth of Soweto rose up against an education system designed to crush their minds and restrict their opportunities. They were young people who refused to accept injustice. Their courage shook the foundations of apartheid and ignited a movement that helped bring freedom to South Africa," Tau said.

He concluded by urging residents, particularly young people, to draw inspiration from these historic milestones and continue building a society rooted in equality, justice and opportunity for all.



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ILLEGAL ABORTION SURGE CONFRONTS STATE

Access to safer legal procedures fail to halt surge in illegal abortions and baby abandonment

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TOP OFFICIAL SACKED IN BURSARIES SCANDAL

By Bernell Simons

Eight Free State government employees face immediate retribution while a senior provincial official has been dismissed after a damning Special Investigating Unit probe exposed a multi-million-rand bursary fraud syndicate.

Free State Premier, MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae, confirmed the axing forms part of decisive internal sanctions taken after the investigation exposed severe oversight failures within the Office of the Premier.

The dismissed official and his colleagues systematically bypassed established procedures, ignored regulations, and approved funding for ineligible individuals.

They allegedly enabled widespread irregularities in a bursary programme intended to give disadvantaged young people an opportunity to further their studies.

"One senior official who unlawfully awarded bursaries to himself and members of his family has already been dismissed from public office," Letsoha-Mathae confirmed.

Beyond internal dismissals, the SIU has recommended disciplinary action against a total of 36 officials linked to the multi-million-rand scheme.

Evidence against seven individuals has already been referred to the National Prosecuting Authority for possible criminal prosecution on charges including fraud, theft, and money laundering.

The broader three-year probe examined allocations made between 2017 and 2023 during Sisi Ntombela's tenure as the Premier of the province. The investigations revealed how millions of rands were diverted through policy violations and abuse of public trust.

Among the discoveries facilitated by the officials was that the Office of the Premier paid R34 000 to the University of the Free State on behalf of a student who had already died.

The corrupt system also allowed seven foreign nationals to receive bursaries despite provincial policy strictly limiting the funding to South African citizens residing in the Free State.

Investigators found no evidence that the required approvals were obtained by the implicated staff to justify these severe policy deviations.

The compromised oversight further allowed failing students to extend three-year qualifications for up to seven years while continuing to draw government funds.

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ANC condemns Mathae's alleged "Patronage" Practices Page 5

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Top Official Sacked in Bursaries Scandal



Continues from Page 1

The province also contributed almost double the agreed amount towards an international study programme, driving irregular expenditure up by approximately R8.5 million.

Acting SIU Head Leonard Lekgetho stated that the actions of the employees represented a collapse of civic duty and ethical leadership.

"The SIU's investigation has exposed not just maladministration, but a moral failure, a collapse of civic duty and ethical leadership. Officials turned opportunity into exploitation and service into self-interest. They violated the trust of the people and the vision of our democracy," Lekgetho said.

The SIU is currently pushing to recover the lost funds, with R6.3 million already clawed back from various universities.

The decisive action against the eight employees has reignited intense public interest regarding accountability in government programmes intended to uplift vulnerable communities.

The ANC in the Free State has thrown its weight behind Letsosha-Mathae, calling for her to be given the space to implement the recommendations of the report.

Speaking at a party media briefing on Thursday, ANC deputy provincial secretary, Dibolelo Mance, advised that the provincial administration must be allowed to manage the bursary scandal.

"The SIU report was brought to us just like you have received as members of the media. We would really like to give the Office of the Premier space to deal with issues relating to the outcomes of the report.

"I am sure that the Premier in her own interviews has shown commitment that no stone will be left unturned and that is what we are expecting from all our employees of government," Mance said.

Illegal Abortion Surge Confronts State

Access to safer legal procedures fail to halt surge in illegal abortions and baby abandonment

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

In South Africa, approximately 500 000 abortions are performed each year, with over 50% of these being illegal, this according to research by the School of Public Health at the University of Witwatersrand.

Despite three decades of strong legal protections, illegal abortions disproportionately affect poor, rural, and immigrant women, as well as adolescent girls who face heightened stigma and confidentiality barriers.

The research indicates that facility-based stigma, resource constraints, insufficient provider training, and inconsistent application of conscientious objection provisions hinder equitable access to safe abortion services.

The Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1996 guarantees safe, legal abortions up to 12 weeks, and under specific conditions up to 20 weeks.

However, systemic barriers such as stigma, overcrowded clinics, lack of provider training, and poverty continue to push women into the hands of unregistered doctors and the dangerous use of pills sold through posters and social media.

Sister Maleboko Rantsho, owner of Karabo Clinic in Bloemfontein, a termination of pregnancy center that performs between 70 and 80 abortions per month, explains that the easy access to illegal facilities and abortion pills on social media is the root cause of the high number of illegal abortions.

Rantsho warns that these illegal pills can lead to fatal bleeding or permanent infertility.

"There are posters advertising these illegal abor-



tions that provide young women easy access to these services and fake doctors, resulting in an increase in recorded illegal abortions.

"These illegal doctors give girls pills obtained from unregistered pharmacies, which sometimes do not work. "They are highly dangerous, as women may bleed to death, she said.

Charmain Swart from the Pregnancy Crisis Centre in Bloemfontein says poverty and unemployment

contribute to young women resorting to illegal abortions or abandoning their infants.

"The fear of parents and guardians plays a role, as young women are afraid to talk to them about an unexpected pregnancy," she explains. "We need to educate parents to understand that an unexpected pregnancy is not the end of the world and that their children can still pursue their studies and have bright futures.

"Fear drives young women to take drastic measures, said Swart. To combat this issue, the House of Hope Community Life Development Centre in Welkom has initiated the Baby Safe program, where women can safely surrender unplanned babies.

The baby box is in a discreet passageway with high walls, ensuring the privacy of women depositing their babies.

Centre manager, Tseleng Molefe, explains that once a baby is placed safely in the baby safe, the box locks automatically, and an alarm alerts ER24 and the care workers.

"The baby will then be placed in an exclusion room for a health examination by medical personnel, she said. Molefe says, since its inception in 2021, the center has received up to ten babies through its door of hope. "Previously, we would open a case of abandonment with the police, but they often cited insufficient information.

"Now we refer the matter to the Department of Social Development for a case to be opened.

"The box is not used as frequently as before, but we still hear about children being abandoned.

"Even though we strive to create awareness during our outreach in Thabong, we are told that abandoned foetuses and newborn babies are frequently found at dumping sites, Molefe said.

Spokesperson for the Free State Department of Social Development, Thembele Ngabeni, stated that the department offers free support services for unplanned pregnancies.

"We provide free social workers who can offer psychosocial support to women.

"Communities can also play a role by being trained and screened as temporary safe care parents.

"They should be educated about reporting procedures and raised awareness of alternative care options for babies and children when parents are unable to care for them, Ngabeni said.

R98 Million Boost For Better Roads



Premier Zamani Saul launches fleet to win war on potholes. Pictures: Facebook

By Bernell Simons

Northern Cape Premier Zamani Saul, alongside MEC for Roads and Public Works Fufe Makatong launched the first phase of a R98 million Yellow Fleet that government hopes will transform road maintenance and infrastructure delivery across the province.

The launch, held in Kuruman alongside the rollout of the Operation Vala Zonke Pothole Repair Programme, marks one of the most significant investments in road maintenance equipment undertaken by the Northern Cape government in recent years.

Standing before a fleet of newly acquired graders, loaders, and road maintenance machinery, Saul described the initiative as a major step towards building a capable and developmental state that delivers tangible improvements to the lives of residents.

"This investment is not simply about purchasing machinery. It is about restoring dignity to communities, improving service delivery, and creating the conditions necessary for economic growth," Saul said.

"For many years, our people have had to endure damaged roads, delayed maintenance, and infrastructure backlogs.

"Today, we are sending a clear message that the government is responding with action. We are investing in solutions that will improve lives and sup-

port economic development, said Saul.

He said quality infrastructure was essential for attracting investment and creating jobs.

"When roads are maintained and infrastructure functions properly, businesses can operate efficiently, investors gain confidence, and communities gain access to opportunities. Infrastructure development remains one of the most powerful tools available to government to stimulate economic growth and improve living conditions."

He praised the Department of Roads and Public Works for driving the initiative and ensuring that the government builds internal capacity to maintain roads more effectively.

Northern Cape described the launch as a watershed moment for the department and the province.

Makatong said the Yellow Fleet gives the department the capacity to respond faster, work more efficiently, and address maintenance challenges proactively rather than reactively.

"Our responsibility is to ensure that residents experience real improvements on the roads they use every day. This investment places us in a much stronger position to deliver on that responsibility.

"We are building long-term capacity within government. These machines will assist us in repairing potholes, maintaining gravel roads, responding to flood damage, and preserving critical transport infrastructure throughout the province, said Makatong.

CRIME REPORTS



R7.5m illicit cigarettes recovered in Parys

A 35-year-old male suspect was arrested for possession of suspected illicit cigarettes valued at approximately R7.5 million on the N1, Vaal Plaza.

On Tuesday, 02 June 2026, at about 16:50, members of the Fezile Dabi District Highway Patrol were conducting a vehicle checkpoint on the N1, Vaal Plaza.

Police spokesperson, Sergeant Josephine Rani, said during the stop-and-search operation, officers identified a suspicious truck traveling towards Kroonstad.

"They pursued the vehicle and intercepted it at the Engen One Stop service station. Upon searching the truck, the police discovered a large quantity of suspected illicit cigarettes. The vehicle was escorted to Parys SAPS for further investigation," said Rani.

The search resulted in the confiscation of 430 boxes of suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated street value of R7.5 million. The Isuzu truck used to transport the goods was also seized.

The suspect is expected to appear before the Parys Magistrate's Court soon on charges of possession of suspected illicit cigarettes.

Alleged cheating boyfriend nabbed for girlfriend's murder

The Harrismith police have arrested a 48-year-old man from Intabazwe following the alleged murder of his girlfriend.

It is alleged that Lerato Mofokeng (43) on Sunday confronted her boyfriend after seeing him in the company of another woman in the area. During the confrontation, the suspect allegedly assaulted her by striking her several times on the head with empty beer bottles.

Police spokesperson, Warrant Officer Mmako Mo-

phiring, said the victim was rushed to a local hospital for medical treatment and transferred to a hospital in QwaQwa for further treatment on Monday.

"Unfortunately, she succumbed to her injuries on Tuesday. Police were subsequently summoned to the hospital. Following investigations, police traced and arrested the suspect, who has been charged with murder," confirmed Mophiring.

He is expected to appear before the Harrismith Magistrate's Court soon on a charge of murder.

Attorney Jailed 12 Years for R4.6 Million Trust Fund Theft

Northern Cape Hawks Provincial Head Major General Stephen Mabuella has welcomed the conviction and sentencing of a Kimberley attorney and conveyancer who misappropriated millions of rand from clients' trust accounts.

In a statement issued on 4 June 2026, authorities confirmed that 55-year-old Leanne Katherine Sulaphen Macleod was found guilty by the Kimberley Specialised Commercial Crimes Court on 14 counts of theft and 14 counts of money laundering.

The court heard that between 2021 and 2024, Macleod unlawfully misappropriated funds entrusted to her by clients for property transactions. As an admitted attorney and conveyancer, she was responsible for safeguarding money held in trust accounts for the buying and selling of properties.

Investigations revealed that she failed to execute certain client mandates or refund monies entrusted to her. Instead, she transferred funds from trust accounts into her personal bank account and used the money for her own benefit.

Her actions resulted in losses of approximately R4.6 million suffered by multiple clients.

Macleod was arrested by the Hawks' Serious Commercial Crime Investigation Team in November 2025 and was later released on R5 000 bail following her appearance in the Kimberley Magistrate's Court.

After several court appearances, the court sentenced her to 10 years' imprisonment on the theft charges, with four years suspended for five years on condition that she is not convicted of theft during the suspension period.

She was also sentenced to six years' imprisonment for money laundering.

The court ordered the sentences to run concurrently, resulting in an effective sentence of 12 years' direct imprisonment.

Mabuella commended both the investigators and prosecutors for securing the conviction, describing the outcome as a significant victory against commercial crime and a strong message that the abuse of trust accounts will not go unpunished.

Police Seize R134,000 Worth of Dagga and Mandrax

Two men, aged 37 and 39, have been arrested near Askham in the Northern Cape after police allegedly discovered dagga and mandrax tablets with an estimated street value of more than R134,000 in their possession.

Northern Cape police confirmed the arrests in a statement issued on 4 June 2026.

Members of Witdraai SAPS were conducting routine patrols along the R360 between Upington and Askham on the night of 3 June when they stopped a silver vehicle carrying the two suspects.

During a search of the vehicle, officers allegedly uncovered several bags of dagga valued at approxi-

mately R31,750, as well as hundreds of mandrax tablets estimated to be worth R102,500. The combined street value of the drugs is estimated at R134,250.

The suspects were arrested on charges of dealing in drugs, while the vehicle was seized for allegedly being used in the commission of the offence.

The pair are expected to appear in the Rietfontein Magistrate's Court soon.

ZF Mgcawu District Commissioner Monica Sebili commended the officers for their vigilance, saying law enforcement agencies will continue to intensify efforts to combat drug-related crime across the district.

Contact US

No 09 Henri Van Rooijen Street
New East End
Bloemfontein
9301

Tel:
051 430 0129

Email:
info@journalnews.co.za

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Postal Address:

No 09 Henri Van Rooijen Street
New East End
Bloemfontein
9301

Editor-in-Chief
Refilwe Mochoari
E-mail: editor@journalnews.co.za
Cell: 083 943 9879

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ANC condemns Mathae's alleged "Patronage" Practices



ANC Mangaung Regional Convenor and Speaker of Mangaung Metro, Lawrence Mathae (Left) and ANC Free State Deputy Secretary Dibolelo Mance (Right). Pictures: Facebook

By Nonkululeko Ngubeni

The ANC in the Free State has strongly condemned what it describes as alleged patronage practices linked to Mangaung Metro Speaker Lawrence Mathae, warning that the organisation will not tolerate the abuse of power to settle political scores or undermine party unity.

The comments follow allegations that Mathae dismissed five municipal employees for allegedly supporting his rival during the ANC's fiercely contested Mangaung regional conference, which was later nullified.

Speaking during a media briefing at the party's provincial offices yesterday, ANC Free State Deputy Secretary Dibolelo Mance said the organisation had taken note of the matter as it is seized with the regional leadership.

"The ANC has taken note of the matter. However, it is seized with the region at this time," Mance said.

He reiterated the party's opposition to patronage and factional retaliation, stressing that political preferences should never be used as a basis for employment decisions.

"The ANC has reiterated its position around this issue that patronage can never be the order of the day in the ANC. It does not mean that if somebody might not have supported you, or whatever the case might be, therefore they should be removed from office. It can never be allowed and can never be agreed to by the ANC. We do not subscribe to patronage," he said.

Journal News previously reported that the affected employees are Dineo Motlhabane, Tsietso Tekete, Mangi Shounyane, Tseliso Mokoai and ANC regional spokesper-

son Nqamile Nxangisa. They were allegedly dismissed with immediate effect after supporting Vusi Soqhaka during the regional conference, which was later abandoned and subsequently declared invalid.

The employees, who have yet to return to work, subsequently wrote to ANC Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula seeking urgent intervention.

In correspondence seen by Journal News, Mbalula instructed that the matter be treated with urgency and that a report be submitted to his office by 10 May.

The letter was also circulated to senior ANC leaders, including President Cyril Ramaphosa, Deputy President Paul Mashatile and ANC National Chairperson Gwede Mantashe, signalling the seriousness with which the party's national leadership is treating the allegations.



MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

ESTIMATES, RATES AND TARIFFS FOR 2026/2027

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 21 of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act of 2000 as amended, that Matjhabeng Local Municipality has framed its estimates of revenue and expenditure for the year ending 31 June 2027 as follows:

Assessment rates Tariffs:

Assessment Rates		
Description	2026/27	% Increase
RATES HOUSES (R 75 000 rebate)	0,0166	7%
VACANT STAND - RESIDENTIAL	0,0166	7%
RATES BUSINESS	0,0332	7%
VACANT STAND - BUSINESS	0,0332	7%
RATES INDUSTRIAL	0,0332	7%
RATES P S I		7%
PROPERTIES OWNED BY AN ORGAN OF STATE AND USED FOR PUBLIC SERVICES PURPOSES	0,0518	7%
PROPERTIES OWNED BY AN ORGAN OF STATE AND USED FOR PUBLIC SERVICES PURPOSES	0,0518	7%
SCHOOLS (INACTIVE)	0,0332	7%
RATES CHURCH (ZERO RATED)		7%
RATES MUNICIPAL (EXCEMPT)		7%
RATES AGRICULTURE (farms)	0,0042	7%
AGRICULTURAL / MINES	0,0667	7%
RATES SMALL HOLDINGS AGRI	0,0042	7%
RATES SMALL HOLDINGS BUSSINESS & COMMERCIAL	0,0332	7%
RATES SMALL HOLDINGS INDUSTRIAL	0,0332	7%
RATES SMALL HOLDINGS RESIDENTIAL	0,0166	7%
RATES FARM PROPERTIES BUSSINESS & COMMERCIAL	0,0332	7%
RATES FARM PROPERTIES INDUSTRIAL	0,0332	7%
RATES FARM PROPERTIES RESIDENTIAL	0,0166	7%
RATES EXEMPT		7%
PROPERTIES OWNED BY AN ORGAN OF STATE AND USED FOR PUBLIC SERVICES PURPOSES	0,0518	7%
PROPERTIES OWNED BY AN ORGAN OF STATE AND USED FOR PUBLIC SERVICES PURPOSES	0,0518	7%

Rates become due and payable in twelve monthly payments from 01 July 2026.

TARIFFS FOR SERVICES

It is further notified that tariffs for municipal services for the financial year (I e with effect from 1 July 2026) will be as follows:

- Refuse removal: 7 % increase on tariffs
- Sewerage : 7 % Increase on tariffs

Water:

Water				
Description	Step	Step value	2026/27	% Increase
Water house	Step 1	0 - 6 KL	27,1875	25%
	Step 2	7 - 50 KL	32,9125	25%
	Step 3	> 50 KL	43,6	25%
Water house Indigent	Step 1	0 - 6 KL		
	Step 2	7 - 50 KL	32,9125	25%
	Step 3	> 50 KL	43,6	25%
Water Business	Step 1	1 - 50 KL	32,9125	25%
	Step 2	> 50 KL	43,6	25%

Electricity

The average tariff increases of 11.3 % for the 2026/2027 period which conforms to NERSA's guideline.

Electricity tariffs subject to approval from NERSA

A schedule of actual tariffs for these services and other general services is available for inspection during office hours at all the finance offices of the Matjhabeng Municipality.

All money due to the council will be payable on the due date following the consumption and usage, failing which interest shall be levied at a rate of one percentage point higher than the rate by council to the bank in respect of an overdraft for the period during which such amount remains unpaid.

.....
Dr Vuyo Adonis
Acting Municipal Manager



MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

PUBLIC NOTICE ADOPTED FINAL ANNUAL BUDGET 2026/2027 FINANCIAL YEAR

Notice is hereby given in terms of Section 28(2) of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No.56 of 2003) and Section 23 of the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations respectively, that Adopted Final Annual Budget for 2026/2027 Financial Year was approved by Matjhabeng Local Municipality during the Council Meeting held on 28 May 2026.

The Adopted Final Annual Budget is available at Matjhabeng Local Municipality offices during office hours and is also available on the municipal website: www.matjhabeng.fs.gov.za

For more information please contact office of the Chief Financial Officer on 057 391 3715 during office hours.

VUYO ADONIS
ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER

Notice:

High Court Set to Deliver Judgment in Bodulo Mothong Housing Case Today



Stranded residents of informal settlement behind Lourierpark, in an informal settlement called Mountain View. Pictures: Supplied

By Gomolemo Winkel

Months of uncertainty surrounding the controversial Bodulo Mothong housing project could come to an end today when the Free State High Court delivers judgment in a closely watched legal battle that could determine the future of hundreds of vulnerable families awaiting relocation to safer living conditions.

The fate of Mangaung Metro Municipality's housing programme now rests in the hands of the court after arguments in a dispute between the municipality and the Democratic Alliance (DA) were heard on Thursday, 4 June 2026.

At the centre of the matter is land in Lourier Park earmarked for the relocation of residents currently living in informal settlements situated in hazardous areas across the metro.

After hearing submissions from both parties, the court reserved judgment and announced that its ruling will be handed down at 10:00 on Friday, 5 June.

Mangaung Metro MMC for Planning and Human

Settlements, Councillor Ntombi Nhlapho, said the municipality remains confident that the court's decision will support efforts to provide safer living conditions for vulnerable residents.

According to Nhlapho, the Bodulo Mothong programme was established to relocate families living in dangerous environments, including flood-prone areas, wetlands and beneath high-voltage electricity infrastructure.

"The primary objective of the programme is to save lives," she said, adding that many residents remain exposed to significant risks during severe weather conditions and that the municipality has a responsibility to provide land that is safe for human habitation.

The DA, however, has challenged the municipality's actions, arguing that the proper legal processes were not followed in the allocation of the Lourier Park land. Despite the legal dispute, several residents who support the relocation programme attended the court proceedings and voiced frustration over delays in securing permanent housing.

Thabang Moabi, a resident of an informal settlement in Naledi, said political disagreements should not stand in the way of people accessing safe housing. "We are hurt when political parties oppose the allocation of municipal land for housing. We just want a place where we can live safely," he said.

Another resident, Joseph Makae, described the difficult conditions faced daily by families living in informal settlements.

He said many residents live near quarries, dams and illegal dumping sites, while basic services such as electricity, sanitation and proper road infrastructure remain unavailable.

"There are dangers everywhere. Children can fall into the dams, the roads become inaccessible when it rains, and we have no toilets or electricity. We need to be moved to a better place," said Makae.

The court's ruling is expected to determine whether Mangaung Metro can proceed with the Lourier Park relocation project or whether additional legal processes will be required before the programme can move forward.

Land Return Sparks New Growth



President Cyril Ramaphosa joined Premier Lazarus Kgoso Mokgosi, Land Reform Minister Mzwanele Nkhomo and Human Settlements Minister Thembu Simelane to hand over close to 6,000 hectares of land to the NW communities. Pictures: Facebook

By Bernell Simons

More than a century after losing their land under discriminatory laws, thousands of Barolong families in North West have finally reclaimed what was taken from them. But this week's handover of nearly 6,000 hectares in Ratlou was about more than restoring historical justice — it was presented as a launchpad for economic growth, agricultural development and job creation in communities long excluded from meaningful participation in the economy.

At the Setlagole Sports Ground in Ratlou, President Cyril Ramaphosa joined North West Premier Lazarus Kgoso Mokgosi, Land Reform Minister Mzwanele Nkhomo and Human Settlements Minister Thembu Simelane to hand over close to 6,000 hectares of restored land to the Barolong Boo Phoi, Seitshero and Rapulana communities.

The restitution marks a significant milestone for communities still living with the legacy of the 1913 Natives Land Act, which dispossessed black South Africans of land ownership and entrenched generations of poverty, exclusion and migrant labour.

Addressing residents gathered for the ceremony, Ramaphosa described the occasion as both symbolic and practical.

"Today is a day of celebration. We are celebrating because the dignity of communities is restored. For many of you this day has been a long time coming," he said.

The president emphasised that the handover was not merely a political gesture but the fulfilment of a constitutional obligation.

"Our Constitution says that any person or community dispossessed of land after 19 June 1913 is entitled to restitution of that property or equitable redress. So, when I hand over these title deeds today, I am fulfilling a Constitutional responsibility."

Ramaphosa said the significance of restitution extended beyond legal ownership and documentation.

"It is about a family being able to say: this land is ours," he said, urging beneficiaries to protect the land and use it to create opportunities for future generations.

Premier Mokgosi said the true value of restitution would be measured by its impact on local livelihoods. He argued that restored land must become productive, commercially viable and capable of creating jobs in communities where economic opportunities

remain scarce.

Central to that vision is the upgraded Springbokpan Grain Storage Facility, which is nearing completion and is expected to strengthen agricultural value chains across the Ratlou and Ditsobotla municipal areas. The facility will provide grain storage, maize meal and oil milling capacity, warehousing for farming equipment and agricultural inputs, and improved market access for emerging farmers.

Nkhomo said government's focus is increasingly shifting beyond the transfer of land to ensuring beneficiaries receive the support needed to make restituted land economically sustainable. His department indicated that the North West handover forms part of a broader effort to evaluate land reform projects and strengthen support for communities already occupying restored land.

The presence of Simelane also highlighted government's wider land tenure reform programme. During the event, more than 300 title deeds were handed to households in Setlagole, converting occupational rights into full ownership. A further 20 farmers who had previously leased state-owned land received full title deeds, giving them greater security and confidence to invest in their operations.

Government said support linked to the restored land would include infrastructure grants, agricultural training, production assistance and targeted programmes aimed at expanding opportunities for women, young people and persons with disabilities in the agricultural sector.

The ceremony therefore represented far more than a symbolic return of land. For North West, it has become an early test of whether land reform can be translated into tangible economic outcomes through increased agricultural production, agro-processing opportunities and stronger local economies in some of the province's most rural districts.

For the Barolong communities, the return of their land closes a painful chapter of dispossession stretching back more than a century. Yet the real measure of success will not lie in the title deeds handed over on stage, but in what follows — whether the land can generate livelihoods, support local businesses and create lasting opportunities for future generations.

As Ramaphosa reminded beneficiaries, the restoration of land marks both an end and a beginning: the end of a long struggle for justice and recognition, and the beginning of a new responsibility to turn restored ground into shared prosperity.

Free State Health Targets Surgical Backlogs, Facility Upgrades and New Jobs

By Bernell Simons

The Free State Department of Health has unveiled an ambitious programme to reduce surgical backlogs, upgrade healthcare facilities, digitise patient records and create new employment opportunities as it seeks to rebuild confidence in the province's public healthcare system.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with Journal News Network, Free State Health MEC Monyatsa Viceroy Mahlatsi said the department is implementing a range of interventions aimed at improving service delivery, reducing waiting times and ensuring residents have access to quality healthcare closer to where they live.

Among the department's most urgent priorities is tackling a growing surgical backlog, particularly for orthopaedic procedures, where limited access to costly medical implants has slowed operations and left many patients waiting for treatment.

Mahlatsi said the department has strengthened efforts to recover funds from the Road Accident Fund for accident-related medical care, with the revenue earmarked to purchase additional implants and increase surgical capacity.

"We have established measures to improve revenue collection so that we can purchase more implants and accelerate surgeries," he said.

In a move expected to provide immediate relief, private hospitals across the province have agreed to assist the public health sector by performing approximately 10 percent of the surgical backlog at no cost to government.

According to Mahlatsi, the arrangement marks a significant partnership between the private and public healthcare sectors.

"This is the first time private hospitals in the Free State have committed to assisting public healthcare in this way without charging a cent," he said.

The department has also intensified efforts to address cataract surgery backlogs through targeted operation campaigns and surgical marathons that have already restored sight to hundreds of patients.

Mahlatsi described the impact of the programme as transformative, recalling recent interventions in Kroonstad where patients who had lived with impaired vision for years were able to see clearly again following surgery.

"Some patients told us they could not even see the food they were eating for the past four years. After surgery, they could see clearly again. Those are life-changing moments," he said.

Building on the programme's success, cataract surgery services will be expanded to Bongani Hospital, Mofumahadi Manapo Mopeli Hospital, National Hospital and Dhlhlabeng Hospital.

The province currently faces a cataract surgery



Free State Health MEC Monyatsa Viceroy Mahlatsi. Pictures: Thembisile Mlangeni

backlog of more than 8 000 patients. The department aims to reduce that figure by at least 1 000 during the current financial year, with support from private healthcare institutions and organisations such as the Al-Imdaad Foundation.

Infrastructure upgrades remain another major focus area for the department.

Years of inadequate maintenance have left several healthcare facilities in need of urgent repairs, affecting both working conditions for staff and the quality of care provided to patients.

Mahlatsi acknowledged that some facilities have been subjected to intervention by the Department of Employment and Labour due to concerns about workplace safety.

"The Department of Labour has a constitutional responsibility to ensure workers operate in a safe environment. Where facilities pose a danger, they are compelled to act," he said.

To address these challenges, the department has committed to refurbishing 44 healthcare facilities during the current financial year.

Planned projects include restoring theatre services at Mafube Hospital in Frankfurt, reopening theatre capacity in Virginia to ease pressure on Bongani Hospital, completing upgrades to the maternity unit at Pelonomi Hospital and finalising a number of long-delayed infrastructure projects across the province.

According to Mahlatsi, the upgrades will help reduce patient transfers between facilities, improve ambulance availability and expand access to healthcare services in local communities.

The department is also preparing to modernise its operations through the digitisation of patient records. The initiative will replace paper-based filing systems with electronic records linked to patient ap-

pointments, a move the department believes will improve efficiency, reduce waiting times and eliminate problems associated with misplaced files.

"Our clients will have appointments linked to digital records. This will improve efficiency and reduce delays significantly," Mahlatsi said.

Additional plans include expanding access to diagnostic services such as X-rays and sonar equipment at district hospitals and community health centres, reducing the need for patients to travel long distances for basic medical investigations.

The healthcare sector could also provide employment opportunities for residents as the department moves to strengthen its workforce.

Applications for nursing studies are currently open, while bursary allocations have been centralised to improve transparency and fairness in the selection process.

The department also plans to recruit non-clinical personnel, including cleaners, porters and administrative staff. In addition, 174 posts vacated through government's early retirement programme are expected to be filled.

"There will be quite a lot of job opportunities in the department going forward," Mahlatsi said.

Despite ongoing challenges facing public healthcare, Mahlatsi said there are signs of progress.

He noted that the department recorded approximately 6.3 million patient interactions during the previous financial year while receiving just over 1 000 complaints, the majority of which were resolved within 30 days.

Mahlatsi said the department remains committed to improving healthcare services and urged residents to continue making use of public health facilities as efforts to strengthen the system continue across the province.

Committee considers rules on President Ramaphosa's Section 89 probe



A meeting of Parliament's Sub Committee on the Review of Rules. Pictures: Parliament

Parliament will on Thursday consider the proposed rules that will guide its impeachment inquiry set up to determine whether President Cyril Ramaphosa faces impeachable offences related to US dollars stolen from his Phala Phala farm more than six years ago.

On Monday, Parliament elected Rise Mzansi's Makashule Gana as chairperson to lead the first Impeachment Committee to be established by the House.

While Parliament approved broad rules on the steps a Section 89 inquiry should follow back in 2018, it's still to be determined what the guidelines for how such a committee should function.

At a first meeting to review the house rules on impeachment two weeks ago, political parties were asked to submit proposals on how the Impeachment Committee should function.

The sub-committee will consider those proposals before making recommendations to the Rules Com-

mittee for onward consideration by the National Assembly.

These include whether the inquiry should have an evidence leader, how it will receive evidence and how witnesses will be treated.

It will also outline the President's rights to defend himself.

Setting up the committee and how it will work comes against the backdrop of President Ramaphosa challenging the parliamentary report that has given rise to the inquiry.

He has filed a case in the Western Cape High Court, set to be heard in early September, asserting that the report is fatally flawed.

But he has not interdicted Parliament from proceeding with setting up the inquiry.

Last month, the Constitutional Court ruled that Parliament must proceed with an inquiry after Parliament rejected the report's findings in 2022. *EWN*

Opinion

Nivashni Nair

Senior journalist, editor and media strategist



Has social media killed our sense of empathy?

An American woman recently posted a heart-breaking video announcing that her husband and her young son, aged six, had been killed in a car accident near Lombardy.

Among the thousands of messages expressing sympathy and support was a comment that stopped me in my tracks.

"I love your glasses. Can you tell me where you got them?"

At first, I assumed it was a joke. Surely nobody could be that oblivious. Yet the comment appeared genuine, written by someone who seemed more interested in a fashion accessory than in the unimaginable tragedy that had just been shared.

It would be easy to dismiss this as a single insensitive remark from a stranger on the internet. The problem is that it isn't an isolated incident. It is a symptom of a much larger issue. Social media has fundamentally changed how many people engage with one another, and not always for the better.

We now consume human experiences at the speed of a thumb swipe. In the space of a few seconds,



we can move from a video of a family mourning a loved one, to a cooking tutorial, to a political argument, to a celebrity gossip post, and then to an advertisement for shoes. Everything appears in the same feed, packaged in the same format and competing for the same fleeting attention.

The consequence is that some people no longer process what they are actually seeing. They respond to tragedy as though they are responding to a life-

style post. They comment before they think. They react without absorbing the context.

Empathy requires attention. It requires us to stop and recognise that there is a real person on the other side of the screen experiencing something real. Social media, by design, encourages the opposite. It rewards speed, engagement and instant reaction.

This is not about policing comments or demanding perfection. Most people genuinely care. Most

people would never intentionally cause further pain to someone who is grieving. But somewhere along the way, many of us have become so accustomed to viewing life through a screen that we have forgotten the basic social skill of reading the room.

Technology has connected us to more people than ever before, yet it has also created a strange emotional distance.

We witness births, deaths, illnesses, celebrations and disasters from the comfort of our couches, often forgetting that these are not stories. They are lives.

The woman who lost her husband and two sons did not need recommendations, opinions or questions about her eyewear. She needed compassion.

If social media has taught us anything, it is that being connected is not the same as being human. The challenge for all of us is to remember the difference.

****This article was first published in IOL.**

***** The views expressed here do not necessarily represent those of Journal News.**

Party Hopping: Greed, Power, or Just Plain Untrustworthy



Refilwe Mochoari
Editor-in-Chief

Liam Jacobs has returned to the Democratic Alliance (DA) less than a year after defecting to the Patriotic Alliance (PA). In South African politics, the grass is not always greener on the other side.

The grass is trampled by opportunists who jump from one party to another.

And now that the election date has been set for 2 November, we should brace ourselves for more of these political gymnastics.

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

Floor crossing has once again resurfaced. This is the season where the true character of politicians is tested.

When he moved to the PA, Liam Jacobs claimed he could no longer be part of the party saying that he had realized he was being used by the DA, and exclaimed that he had finally been "Home".

He said his main focus was to protect the public purse and to fearlessly hold those who are the custodians of the public purse accountable.

He said he wants to change the lives of ordinary South Africans through visible, tangible, and palpable service delivery.

He also said his main aim was to cement South Africa's place as one of the world's greatest nations.

Now earlier this week, Liam shocked everyone and admitted that he made a mistake by leaving the DA and accused the PA of selling its votes to the corrupt ANC.

The Liam case is just one of many especially during election season.

Let's look at Floyd Shivambu who has been with the Economic Freedom Fighters for eleven years after being expelled by the ANC in 2012.

He moved to Jacob Zuma's uMkhonto WeSizwe (MK Party) in August 2024, and accused the EFF of embracing corrupt governance.

Today Floyd is the leader and founder of the movement, Afrika Mayibuye which he launched in May 2025.

He says the party will seek to win an outright majority on November 2, the elections.

I mean we have also seen how the late Terror Lekota and Mbazima Shilowa founded the Congress of the People (COPE) because they felt that the ANC had betrayed its own principles.

As an ordinary citizen of the republic and someone who will be voting in the upcoming local government elections, when I see politicians abandon one ideology for another or chase whichever party that offers them the best chance at a seat, a salary or a slice of influence, it looks like not just opportunism, I see it as a complete indictment of loyalty.

Voters who they claim to represent are reduced to pawns in a game of self-preservation.

How are citizens supposed to believe in promises of politicians when those same politicians abandon their parties at the first smell of opportunity?

How can communities invest in leaders who treat loyalty as disposable?

How are the young people who believed so much in Liam, supposed to trust that he is a sober leader who is not an opportunist?

Politicians who party hop, wear betrayal like a badge of honor. I see them as untrustworthy and disloyal.

During the apartheid era, they were referred to as "Impimpi"

In modern-day language, they are called a "Snitch". An "Impimpi" was a spy.

It was an individual who sold out his or her community for personal gain.

If they found you, they burned you.

Today, the term might be less fashionable, but the behavior remains the same.

Party hopping or rather floor crossing is often dressed up as "strategic repositioning" or "aligning with values". But let's be honest, it is usually about greed, power, and survival.

Party hopping is a betrayal of people and until it is called what it really is, democracy will continue to be crippled by opportunists who value power over principle.

Letter to the Editor

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



Pastor Motsamai Kareli
Empowerment Ministries International

The Power of Authentic Leadership: Leading from the Inside Out



In an era defined by rapid technological shifts, remote workforces, and unprecedented global challenges, the traditional playbook of leadership is being rewritten. The days of the inflexible, stoic, "command-and-control" boss are fading. In their place, a more powerful and sustainable model has emerged: Authentic Leadership.

Authentic leadership isn't a management tactic or a corporate buzzword. It is a profound shift in how we guide others—anchored in self-awareness, transparency, and a genuine alignment between a leader's values and their actions.

What is Authentic Leadership?

At its core, authentic leadership is the practice of leading by staying true to who you are. It requires shedding the corporate armor and the pressure to present a flawless facade.

According to leadership experts, authentic leaders share four distinct pillars:

- Self-Awareness: They deeply understand their own strengths, weaknesses, values, and emotional triggers. They don't pretend to know everything.

- Relational Transparency: They practice open, honest communication. They share the "why" behind decisions and aren't afraid to say, "I don't know, but let's figure it out."

- Balanced Processing: Before making a major decision, they actively seek out opposing viewpoints. They don't just surround themselves with "yes-people."

- Internalized Moral Perspective: They possess a strong ethical compass. Their decisions are guided by core values, even when those decisions are unpopular or difficult.

Why Authenticity is a Business Superpower

Some fear that showing authenticity—especially vulnerability—signals weakness. In reality, the exact opposite is true.

Authenticity builds a cultural foundation that drives tangible business results.

1. It Builds High-Trust Cultures

Trust is the currency of leadership. When leaders hide behind a corporate persona, employees become skeptical and guarded. When a leader admits a mistake or shares a genuine moment of struggle, it signals psychological safety. Employees realize they don't have to be perfect either, which unlocks creativity and risk-taking.

2. It Drives Employee Engagement and Retention

People don't leave bad companies; they leave bad bosses. Employees today crave meaning and connection. An authentic leader inspires loyalty because team members feel seen, heard, and valued as human beings, not just cogs in a machine.

3. It Fosters Resilience in Times of Crisis

When a crisis hits, sugarcoating the truth destroys credibility. Authentic leaders face reality

head-on. By delivering tough news with empathy and honesty, they rally their teams. Employees are incredibly resilient when they feel they are being given the straight facts.

How to Cultivate Your Authentic Leadership Style

Becoming an authentic leader doesn't happen overnight. It is a continuous journey of personal and professional growth. Here is how you can start:

Step/Actionable Strategy/ Expected Outcome

1. Define Your Core

Actionable Strategy: Values Write down the 3 to 5 non-negotiable principles that guide your life.

Expected outcome: Consistency in your decision-making, even under pressure.

Step

2. Practice Vulnerability

Actionable strategy: Share a story of a past failure or ask your team for help on a challenging project.

Expected outcome: Humanizes you and builds immediate trust with your team.

Step

3. Seek Honest Feedback

Actionable Strategy: Implement 360-degree reviews or find a trusted mentor to call out your blind spots.

Expected outcome: Bridges the gap between how you see yourself and how others see you.

Step

4. Listen Actively

Actionable strategy: Put down your phone, close your laptop, and listen to your team to understand, not just to reply.

Expected outcome: Increases psychological safety and uncovers better ideas.

The Ultimate Paradox of Leadership

"Authenticity is the alignment of head, mouth, heart, and feet - thinking, saying, feeling, and doing the same thing consistently." — Lance Secretan

The ultimate paradox of leadership is that the more human you allow yourself to be, the more authority you actually gain.

You do not need to have all the answers to be a great leader. You simply need to be a real person who cares about the mission and the people tasked with achieving it. By embracing authentic leadership, you stop trying to be the best leader in the world and start being the best leader for your world.

The form/content dialectic in understanding the migration protest actions

In contemporary political discourse, a critical distinction must be made between "hearing" (passive auditory perception) and "listening" (active, intentional engagement). While South African political leaders hear the outcry regarding immigration, there is a systemic failure to listen to and understand the underlying grievances. This failure to listen is not merely a lapse in communication but an epistemological barrier in which leaders get obsessed with "forms" of protest actions than the "content".

In our SASCO political classes about 35 years ago, our political instructor, Comrade Nale Mashapa, used to place a strong emphasis on the dialectical relation between "form" and "content". He would usually refer to it as the 10/90 principle. This meant that, in analysing a phenomenon, less than 10% of our time and energy should be spent on understanding the "form" and most importantly 90% should be directed towards understanding and responding to the "content".

Engaging with social movements requires this sophisticated understanding of the relationship between form and content, which is a cornerstone of radical pedagogy within the Marxist tradition. Form is the external expression of a movement or protest action, often shaped by historical, cultural, or ethnic factors. In the current context, the form of the protest actions on migration has been loosely characterised as "Zulu nationalism", "Zulu rage" or "ethno-nationalism".

I must mention upfront that the use of derogatory songs during these protest actions directed at other ethnic or tribal groups, particularly the Tsonga people is abhorrent and must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. Equally, the deployment of violence and harassment of foreign nationals is grossly unfortunate and sickening. This goes against what we stand for as a country and is likely to make us the skunk of the continent.

The content of the protest actions is the material substance of the grievance, typically rooted in class-based economic insecurity. When the form, with all its regrettable ethnic undertones, is put aside, the content reveals several legitimate grievances on political, social and economic fronts. These grievances align with documented research on migration in South Africa in three areas.

The FIRST grievance, is the call to the government to enforce migration laws. My understanding of the grievance is not that the protestors do not want foreigners in South Africa. Rather, they have a problem with undocumented immigrants, whether from Asia, Africa, or Europe. Undocumented immigrants, means people who moved across the border without any legal authorisation. There is no country, I know of, in the world that does not have laws and enforcement mechanisms against an influx of undocumented immigrants.

In South Africa, we have a plethora of laws on migration, but our enforcement mechanisms are inadequate. The call for enforcement of laws has nothing to do with the historic mission to unite Africa and boost intra-continental trade. I heard the organisers of the protest actions call Africans from other countries "my sister" or "my brother", which means they do, in some way, carry the impulse for African unity, but not on the basis of lawlessness.

Their SECOND grievance, is that the flooding of the South African labour market by undocumented immigrants leads to labour market displacement and distortions. It is a fact that undocumented immigrants are deliberately used as a source of cheap and unprotected labour. Undocumented immigrants are in our households, restaurants, farms, small mining operations, security companies, and many other sectors. This creates

real-world tension regarding wage competition in informal and low-skilled sectors.

In February 2021 the President convened an Extended Cabinet Lekgotla to deal with post-Covid economic recovery to create 2 to 2.5 million jobs. The former Minister of Finance, Comrade Tito Mboweni was of the firm view that these 2 to 2.5 million jobs could be created within six months by just criminalising the employment of undocumented immigrants in low-skilled sectors, accompanied by a massive boost in the capacity of the Department of Labour to inspect and enforce compliance. This coming from a Minister of Finance should carry some cogency. In this regard, we must welcome the commitment by President Cyril Ramaphosa in his budget vote speech yesterday to respond to the issue of undocumented immigrants and appointment of labour inspectors.

The 2026 Helen Suzman Foundation Report (Migration I: Public opinion versus reality on immigration in South Africa) reflects that undocumented immigrants have "a higher rate of employment in the unprotected sector, more excessive hours and fewer benefits. This would suggest immigrants taking low standard jobs are pushing locals in the labour market upwards or outwards". It will be an over-exaggeration to entirely place the problem of high levels of unemployment in South Africa on the active presence of undocumented immigrants in the labour market. Equally, it would be the worst form of ignorance not to appreciate the fact that the increasing cheap and unprotected labour force of undocumented immigrants in South Africa distorts the labour market and leads to displacement of South Africans, particularly in the informal and low-skilled sectors. Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana, Egypt and many other African countries are responding to similar challenges.

The THIRD grievance, concerns the lack of government data on undocumented immigrants. It is important to note that this grievance is a well-documented crisis in post-apartheid South Africa. This complicates crime fighting and urban planning. It is a fact that some, not all, undocumented immigrants are part of drug cartels in the country. One of the protest action leaders claimed that "AKA and DJ Warras were killed by undocumented immigrants". These cases are difficult to investigate because there is no biometric data to help trace the killers. South Africa is confronted with a massive challenge of growing rural-urban migration, people are moving from rural provinces to metropolitan areas with the hope of better prospects of life. For the same reason, most undocumented immigrants move to metropolitan areas, but also to stay out of sight of law-enforcement agencies. This makes urban planning a real nightmare.

These issues constitute the organic content that drives the mobilisation. The fact that the mobilisation is ethnic does not invalidate the underlying grievances. It is a historic fact that when the state fails to provide economic security and safety, citizens often retreat into national belonging or ethnic identity as a tool for political pressure. Labelling these protest actions is a defective approach that ignores the organic crisis. As a country we must collectively assess the legitimacy of the grievances independently of their ethnic or cultural form.

To resolve the current impasse, as a country we must move beyond passive hearing and engage in active listening, focus should be on the content of the protest actions and enforcement of existing laws. Failure to do so will generate a crisis because we remain distracted by the appearances of the mobilisation, while the content of the crisis remains unaddressed. **By Dr Zamani Saul (Northern Cape ANC Provincial Chairperson)**



MATJHABENG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



MATJHABENG UNVEILS R4.9 BILLION BUDGET FOCUSED ON INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICE DELIVERY

From major infrastructure upgrades and water interventions to electricity reforms and community development projects, Matjhabeng Municipality has unveiled a R4.9 billion budget designed to improve service delivery, stimulate economic growth and build a more sustainable future for residents across the municipality

By Matshidiso Selebeleng Picture: Baagedi Sethora

After weeks of engaging communities through an extensive budget roadshow across all wards, Matjhabeng Local Municipality has tabled an ambitious R4.9 billion budget for the 2026/27 financial year, placing infrastructure investment, service delivery and financial sustainability at the centre of its development agenda.

Executive Mayor Thanduxolo Khalipha presented the budget on Thursday, describing it as a practical roadmap towards the municipality's vision of becoming "a benchmark developmental municipality in service delivery excellence."

The budget, which includes capital transfers and grants, is aligned with five strategic priorities: good governance, basic service delivery, inclusive economic development and job creation, institutional transformation, and financial sustainability.

Before tabling the budget, municipal leadership

embarked on a public participation roadshow to consult residents, businesses and stakeholders across Matjhabeng, ensuring that community voices helped shape the municipality's plans for the year ahead.

A major focus of the budget is infrastructure development, with R121.1 million allocated through the capital budget to fund critical projects across the municipality.

The funding will be sourced from grants including the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG), Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG) and the Integrated National Electrification Programme (INEP), among others.

"These funds will support critical infrastructure projects aimed at improving roads, stormwater systems, electrification, water infrastructure, sanitation services and community development," said Khalipha. The municipality has also prioritised

strengthening essential services, with projected revenues of R627.1 million from water services, R267.9 million from sanitation services and R173.7 million from refuse removal.

Recognising the ongoing challenges related to water losses and ageing infrastructure, the municipality has incorporated a significant national government intervention into its planning.

"We have included the intervention of national government through the Minister of Water and Sanitation. As you know, this programme started in 2023 and involves an investment of R4.4 billion over three years to address pump stations, sewer lines and sewer treatment plants," Khalipha said.

The intervention is expected to play a crucial role in reducing water losses, improving waste management

strengthening the municipality's overall water infrastructure network.

The budget also provides for the development of a long-term financial plan aimed at identifying future risks and opportunities while ensuring the municipality remains financially sustainable in the years ahead.

On the electricity front, bulk purchases from Eskom have been budgeted at R907.9 million.

Khalipha highlighted that Matjhabeng remains a beneficiary of the Eskom Debt Relief Programme approved by National Treasury in November 2023 and is currently pursuing additional support through the Smart Meter Grant programme.

"The municipality remains part of the Eskom Debt Relief Programme approved by National Treasury in November 2023.

"We continue to implement the required reforms

and financial controls to improve our compliance and financial sustainability," he said.

The mayor emphasised that data cleansing initiatives and the rollout of smart metering technology will play a vital role in strengthening revenue collection and improving financial management.

"Systems must be in place to ensure that the municipality receives revenue and allocates it correctly when payments are made. Where payments are not received on time, immediate action must be taken," he said.

With billions committed towards infrastructure, service delivery and financial reform, the 2026/27 budget signals Matjhabeng's determination to modernise its infrastructure, improve municipal performance and create an environment that supports growth, investment and a better quality of life for residents.

Billions in Investment Set to Transform Matjhabeng's Future

Matjhabeng Local Municipality is gaining momentum in its drive to unlock investment and accelerate development, with several major projects expected to reshape the local economy and create thousands of jobs.

According to Executive Mayor Thanduxolo Khalipha, development planning must always focus on the people who will ultimately benefit rather than the individuals leading the process.

"You must know when you plan development, development you don't plan around you because development is about the people involved. It's not about the term of office," said Khalipha.

Among the municipality's flagship projects is the long-awaited redevelopment of the Liberty Centre, which has stood abandoned and deteriorating for years.

Khalipha revealed that negotiations with a key investor have reached an advanced stage and that a formal agreement is expected to be concluded within the next month.

"In the next 30 days, we will be finalising our agreement with the investor that is going to invest in the Liberty Centre. You remember the last time I reported that this investor has been interacting with us. But now there is a commitment between ourselves and the investor," he said.

He added that the interested investor is not the only party looking to breathe new life into the once-thriving shopping complex. The mayor said the redevelopment will not only rejuvenate a prominent landmark but also help attract additional investment, create employment opportunities and strengthen the municipality's revenue base, enabling improved service delivery.

Another major development gaining traction is the proposed airport project, which Khalipha said is moving closer to implementation.

He announced that between 10 and 15 engineers from countries including Australia and Dubai have already arrived to begin planning work, with the project ex-

pected to unfold over the next six years.

"These engineers are dealing with the planning of the airport. You can even visit the airport yourself, and they are going to be here for the next six years. It's one of the important decisions that was taken by council, to have a short-term investment and a long-term investment," Khalipha explained.

The project is expected to have a significant impact on employment, with investments reportedly indicating that between 10,000 and 15,000 jobs could be created during the construction phase alone.

"On job opportunities, I was just told by the leadership of the airport that these investors said that once construction starts, between 10,000 and 15,000 people are going to be employed," he said. While progress continues, Khalipha acknowledged that some challenges remain, particularly around regulatory processes involving the Reserve Bank to facilitate the inflow of investment capital. However, he said efforts are underway to resolve these issues and fast-track economic development initiatives.

The municipality is also attracting renewed interest in renewable energy. Once regarded as a key energy hub, Matjhabeng has recently been approached by companies seeking to invest in solar energy projects.

Khalipha welcomed the interest, saying such investments would further diversify the local economy while creating additional opportunities for growth, employment and long-term sustainability.

3,000 Title Deeds, R66 Million Growth Plan: Matjhabeng Puts Residents First

"Better life for all" remains at the heart of Matjhabeng Local Municipality's development agenda as the municipality positions its 2026/27 budget to drive economic growth, improve infrastructure and place residents at the centre of service delivery.

Executive Mayor Thanduxolo Khalipha said the municipality has crafted a budget that prioritises the needs of communities and creates opportunities that will have a lasting impact on residents' lives.

A major highlight of the municipality's programme is the planned distribution of more than 3,000 title deeds, an initiative aimed at giving families legal ownership of their homes and strengthening household wealth.

Khalipha announced that the municipality will soon welcome the Deputy Minister of Human Settlements to lead the handover process.

"We will be welcoming the Deputy Minister of Human Settlements, who will be distributing title deeds in Matjhabeng, where we will be leading that programme and also distributing all the title deeds that are in our office," he said.

To ensure that the title deeds reach the rightful beneficiaries, verification processes are already underway.

"The team working under the leadership of the MMC for Human Settlements is already focusing on the verification programme.

They will be working together with ward committees and ward councillors to visit families and conduct verifications to ensure that by the time we hand over the title deed, it is indeed the rightful beneficiary receiving it,"

Khalipha explained.

He acknowledged the continued support of the Department of Human Settlements under the leadership of MEC Saki Mokoena, adding that many of the title deeds to be handed over are newly approved.

According to Khalipha, homeownership is more than just possessing a document—it is about empowering residents with a valuable asset that can help build financial security and unlock future opportunities.

The municipality is also advancing a funded development plan valued at R66 million as part of its strategy to improve living conditions and stimulate economic activity.

As part of the initiative, Matjhabeng will make selected municipal properties and parcels of land available for sale during the current financial year.

The municipality has invited investors, entrepreneurs and residents interested in acquiring land or property for business or private development purposes to participate.

"They can use it to develop their businesses or develop their properties. It is part of the budget that was approved by Matjhabeng," said Khalipha.

He emphasised that the municipality belongs to the people it serves and that all development initiatives are guided by the needs and aspirations of residents. "This municipality belongs to the people of Matjhabeng. Leaders come and go, but the people remain because they are the foundation of democracy. That is why we lead this municipality with humility and respect, because our people come first," he said. With thousands of title deeds set to be handed over and new investment opportunities on the horizon, Matjhabeng is positioning itself to deliver tangible benefits to residents while laying the foundation for sustainable growth and development.

Mmoho - Together - Sisonke - Tesame



HEALTH

Malaria's Toughest Enemy Isn't the Mosquito: Why Drugs, Tests and Vaccines Alone Haven't Defeated a 30-Million-Year-Old Killer

Malaria is caused by a very complex organism (parasite) which has been found in mosquitoes trapped in resin dating back 30 million years. The parasite that causes malaria has therefore been around for many years before our own species. Here, I will explore why the parasites that cause malaria are so difficult to beat.

The disease we know as malaria was once thought to be caused by breathing "bad air" (mal aria) that emanated from swamps. This was not "fake news" but rather a lack of understanding and evidence at the time. As you probably know, swamps and stagnant water are excellent breeding sites for mosquitoes that transmit the Plasmodium parasites that cause the disease.

To nourish her developing offspring, the female mosquito needs to feed on blood as an essential rich source of protein, and you and I are the local restaurant. Should she have Plasmodium parasites (sporozoites) in her salivary glands, these are injected into the person she is biting, together with her saliva and proteins that prevent blood clotting while she sucks up her meal.

The sporozoites she injects very rapidly (within 30 minutes to three hours) travel to, recognise and invade liver cells, where they are more difficult for the host's immune system to detect and fight. Of the five species of Plasmodium that cause malaria in humans, Plasmodium falciparum is the deadliest. P. falciparum is responsible for 95% of malaria deaths, most of which occur in Africa and among young children between five months and five years of age.

P. falciparum parasites take approximately five to seven days to divide and develop in the liver before emerging as thousands of merozoites that each recognise, attach to and enter red blood cells. Inside a red blood cell, the parasite is hidden from the immune system, then divides and develops to produce 16 to 48 schizonts every 48 hours.

As the schizonts burst from red blood cells and release their waste products, the body responds with a high temperature (fever). It is only during



the red blood cell stage of the parasite's life cycle that a person develops symptoms and feels ill from malaria. Some of the parasites within a red blood cell take a different developmental route, becoming male and female gametocytes. These can be taken up by a feeding mosquito, undergo fertilisation, survive digestive enzymes in the mosquito's stomach, pass through the stomach wall and invade various organs, including the salivary glands.

Being able to survive and multiply in all these different environments gives an idea of just how complex and adaptable this parasite is.

We can learn a lot by looking at some of the numbers involved. The World Health Organization's 2025 report suggests that 3.2 billion people are at risk of malaria. Approximately 95% of malaria cases occur in Africa, where about 1.58 billion people live. There were 292 million reported cases and 600,000 deaths, most of them among young children in Africa.

Here are some other numbers. South Africa's population is around 63 million people, while the world's population is approximately 8.3 billion. The average child with malaria has some 1,000,000,000,000 malaria parasites in their blood (and yes, that is around 120 times more than the world's population), and two days later there may be 40 times more parasites. The immune system or drugs must deal with

and eliminate every one of those parasites. I think you will agree that this is a formidable task. But amazingly, and fortunately, many patients do survive malaria.

Drugs have been a very effective way to prevent and treat the disease, but the parasite has repeatedly found ways to adapt and survive. It has developed resistance to every drug we have used, including chloroquine, sulphadoxine-pyrimethamine, mefloquine, piperazine, amodiaquine, primaquine, atovaquone, quinine, artemisinin and its derivatives. These drug-resistant parasites are found in different countries, and they do not need passports to move to new destinations, as mosquitoes, people and aircraft can transport them.

We need new drugs. The parasite requires copper, and my students are working on ways to prevent it from obtaining this essential element. There are several promising new drugs in various stages of development, although they are not yet available.

We also have a highly effective diagnostic test, which uses antibodies produced in South Africa by the National Bioproducts Institute in Durban. The test detects the parasite's Histidine-Rich Protein II (HRP II) in a patient's blood sample. Unfortunately, many parasites in different countries have evolved in such a way that they no longer produce this protein, meaning the test cannot detect them.

FASHION

Are We All Supposed to Wear Socks With Sandals Now?



their way back together. But while their mutual attraction makes practical sense — the combo prevents blisters and is simply more comfortable — it is also deeply reliant on social and cultural context, which changes over time. And, as you have discovered, from generation to generation.

The issue is not merely about a fashion combination. It is also about our fraught relationship with feet, which have always been a controversial body part. Sometimes regarded as obscene, sometimes offensive, often a symbol of class and social status, they are even occasionally the subject of legislation.

Once upon a time, back in the days of the Roman Empire, centurions wore socks, or at least the historical equivalent — "udones," as they were called — with their gladiator lace-ups as a way to protect their feet and keep them warm. In 15th-century Japan, it was common to wear split-toe tabi socks with traditional footwear.

By the end of the last century, however, wearing socks with sandals had become a national stereotype. Germans, at that time famously seen as

among the less fashionable people in Europe, were fond of wearing their Birkenstocks, which had not yet become so out there were actually in, with socks when they traveled — and they traveled a lot. Thus rendering the combination a "don't" for pretty much everyone else.

Though that cliché ultimately became a historical artifact, it gave way to another: the teen titan of tech in slides and crew socks. This became such a common sight in Silicon Valley that Kevin Systrom, the founder of Instagram, once told The Wall Street Journal that it was the clothing he would ban from his employees' wardrobes if he could.

At that point, socks and sandals were fully associated with nerd-dom, meaning that soon it was time for fashion, which loves an ironic twist, to embrace the twosome again. And so it did, with multiple brands, including Fendi, Miu Miu and Dior Men all showing sandals and socks on recent runways. (And because trends move so fast these days, others houses, like Celine and Chanel, are already moving in the bare toes direction.) BBC

FOOD Recipes

Pumpkin, spinach and lentil lasagne

Prepare 1h 05m
Cook 1h 15m
Serve 8



This tasty recipe for healthy vegetable lasagne has stunning layers of spinach, ricotta, lentils and pumpkin. It's the perfect dish for sharing with friends and family.

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 brown onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 900g Naranaka Gold Pumpkin or Butternut pumpkin, peeled, cut into 1.5cm cubes
- 2 x 400g cans Coles brown lentils, rinsed, drained
- 1/2 cup vegetable stock
- 690g bottle Coles Brand Italian Tomato Passata
- 500g ricotta
- Good pinch ground nutmeg
- 375g packet Coles fresh lasagne sheets
- 120g packet baby spinach, trimmed, finely shredded
- 1 1/2 cups grated Coles Brand Australian Tasty Cheddar Rocket leaves, to serve

Method

- Preheat oven to 190C (170C fan-forced). Grease a 26cm x 20cm x 6cm baking dish.
- Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Cook the onion for 5 mins or until soft and lightly golden. Add the garlic and cook for 1 min. Add pumpkin, lentils and stock. Reserve 1 cup of the passata and stir the remaining passata into the pumpkin mixture. Cover and bring to the boil. Reduce heat slightly and cook, covered, for 20 mins or until the pumpkin is tender and the mixture is thick. Transfer to a large bowl to cool slightly, then refrigerate until cold.
- Meanwhile, use a fork to mash the ricotta in a bowl. Stir in nutmeg. Season.
- Line the base of the prepared dish with a layer of lasagne sheets. Spread over half the pumpkin mixture, then top with another layer of lasagne sheets. Sprinkle with the ricotta mixture and use the back of a spoon to spread evenly. Top with spinach, then cover with another layer of lasagne sheets.
- Spread over the remaining pumpkin mixture, then top with remaining lasagne sheets. Spread over the reserved passata to cover completely. Sprinkle with cheddar. (To freeze, see Note).
- Bake for 45 mins or until golden and cooked through.

Meet UDOTI UDEMEDI, the Rising Voice Bringing Spirituality to Three Step



By JN Reporter

Emerging South African artist UDOTI UDEMEDI is not chasing overnight fame. He is building something deeper.

Born and raised in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, this rising versatile artist is quickly carving out his own lane by blending spirituality, storytelling, and authentic South African rhythm into music that speaks to resilience, faith, and purpose.

At a time where fast trends often dominate the music industry, UDOTI UDEMEDI whose real name is Supa Nkanyezi represents a different kind of artist.

Quiet, intentional, and deeply rooted in his upbringing, his music reflects the realities of struggle, ambition, and spiritual grounding.

"I grew up in a grounded environment close to family, church, and community.

"That environment taught me discipline, respect and to find value in small things, he said.

He says music was always present throughout his childhood.

Gospel echoed through church walls, maskandi played at home, while hip-hop and amapiano soundtracked moments shared with friends. Over time, music became more than entertainment. It became an expression.

"It felt like the language I understood best," he explains.

While many emerging artists enter the industry searching for attention, Nkanyezi's journey began with introspection and purpose. After writing and producing his own music, he realised his gift allowed him to communicate emotions and truths he struggled to express elsewhere.

"It wasn't about fame.

"It was about the fact that I could say things in a song that I couldn't say any other way, he said.

That purpose-driven mindset now sits at the center of his evolving sound within Three Step, one of South Africa's fastest-growing musical movements, and for him, the genre represents more than rhythm.

"Three Step is intentional, rhythmic, and can be even spiritual.

"It's rooted in South African sound but it moves with purpose. It's music you can feel in your chest and think about after, he said.

His breakout single, "Asambeni", introduced listeners to this unique blend of prayer, storytelling, and Zulu identity. Built around themes of seeking spiritual guidance and overcoming obstacles, the track has become a reflection of his own journey navigating the challenges of the music industry.

Like many independent artists, his path has not been easy.

"Access, consistency, and self-doubt were some of the biggest struggles," he says. "Funding studio time, getting into the right rooms, and believing

your sound matters when you're not seeing immediate results

"Prayer keeps me grounded, and the belief that if I don't quit, the work will open doors," he says.

A major turning point came during a creative camp hosted by Ziiki Media in Sandton, Johannesburg earlier this year. The camp brought together artists, producers, and collaborators including K-Zaka, Ice Cue, and Snaka, creating the foundation for what would become UDOTI UDEMEDI's forthcoming album.

"Being in that room with other artists and producers made me realise this is real.

"If I stay consistent, I can build something that lasts, says Nkanyezi

The experience also strengthened his relationship with Ziiki Media, the entertainment company currently providing him with label and development support across his growing career.

"What Ziiki Media taught me is structure, professionalism, and how to treat music like a business without losing the art," he explains.

Now preparing for the release of his forthcoming album later this year, UDOTI UDEMEDI hopes listeners connect not only with the sound, but with the honesty behind it.

"Every session, every song is built on prayer, sacrifice, and showing up when it's hard," he says. "Nothing was handed to me."

More than chart success, he says his long-term vision is to create music that leaves people feeling seen, inspired, and spiritually uplifted.

"Success for me is peace of mind, impact, and being able to open doors for others from PMB

"I want to make music that lasts longer than trends," he said.

As Three Step continues to evolve across South Africa, UDOTI UDEMEDI is emerging as one of the artists bringing substance, spirituality, and identity into the genre's next chapter.

And for young artists watching his journey from Pietermaritzburg and beyond, his message is simple: "Don't wait for someone to save you. Learn the craft, protect your peace, go to God for direction, and work like nobody's watching. Your location isn't a limitation. Your discipline is."

WEEKEND Gig Guide
ALL OVER BLOEMFONTEIN FROM
05 - 06 JUNE 2026

- GROOVY FRIDAYS (FRIDAY - 05 JUNE 2026)
- TONIQUILLE SATURDAYS (SATURDAY - 06 JUNE 2026)
- CENTRAL LIFESTYLE
- SATURDAY VIBES UNLEASHED (SATURDAY - 06 JUNE 2026)
- NEWS CAFE
- MONATE SATURDAYS (SATURDAY - 06 JUNE 2026)
- SECHABA LOUNGE
- IZA SATURDAY (SATURDAY - 06 JUNE 2026)
- IZA
- RIO FUSION SATURDAY (SATURDAY - 06 JUNE 2026)
- RIO COCKTAIL LOUNGE

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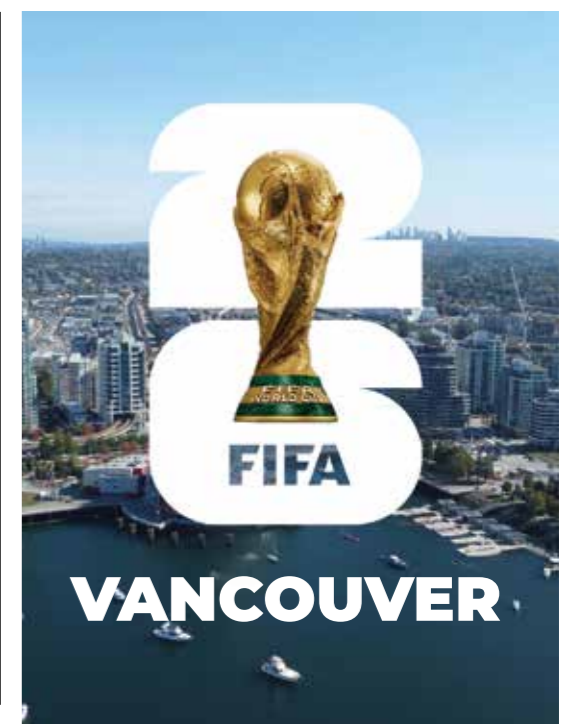
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SPORT



Runner Dedicates Comrades Debut to Brother

By Gomolemo Winkel

Free State athlete, Ndileka Tyu, will make her Comrades Marathon debut this Sunday to honour her late younger brother, Xhanti Camagu Matiso, whose untimely passing at age 28 inspired her to tackle the gruelling 89 km ultramarathon.

The Rouxville-born runner, affectionately known as 'Mama ka Nakys', joined the Teemaneng Running Club in Kimberley to formalise her training after years of recreational running, gym workouts, and cycling.

Tyu is among approximately 5 000 women set to participate in the historic 2026 race, which has attracted an estimated 22 000 runners from across the country and the world.

The debutant runner began her rigorous preparation in December 2025 through her club's festive endurance challenge to ensure peak physical conditioning for the demanding up-run.

"I had postponed running this marathon for some time, but losing our younger brother recently, Camagu Xhanti Matiso, at the age of 28 was a wake-up call. It reminded me that life is short and offers no guarantees," Tyu said.

To prepare for the structural demands of the course, Tyu relied on coaching clinics and the local North Ridge Social Runners group to provide a safe and consistent training environment.

The distance runner believes she is the first person from the small Free State town of Rouxville to compete in the prestigious event - adding provincial significance to her achievement.

Although Tyu represents a Northern Cape-affiliated club due to spending the past decade living in the neighbouring province, she remains deeply rooted in her Free State heritage.

Her primary objective for the event is to finish within the official cut-off time, securing a finisher's medal to present to her family in remembrance of her sibling.

"This race means a great deal to me because I am running in memory of my late brother and I hope to return with a medal to honour him. Giving up is not an option, no matter how difficult it gets I plan to push through," Tyu said.



Rouxville Runner Ready ... Ndileka Tyu is among approximately 5 000 women set to participate in the 2026 Comrades Marathon race this Sunday. Picture: Supplied

Mangaung Unite Miss Promotion Spot



Mangaung Unite's Rehlonolofaditswe Thulo after taking on two FC Ravens players during their 2026 ABC Motsepe National Playoffs encounter on Wednesday. Picture: Lonwabo Shots

By Gomolemo Winkel

Mangaung Unite narrowly missed out on promotion to the Motsepe Foundation Championship after a brave but challenging campaign at the 2026 ABC Motsepe League National Playoffs.

The Free State provincial champions finished at the bottom of their highly competitive three-team group following a tight opening defeat to FC Ravens and a hard-fought draw against Hope FC.

The Bloemfontein-based side showed immense promise on Wednesday by taking an early lead against Eastern Cape outfit, FC Ravens, before a late lapse in concentration allowed their opponents to snatch a narrow victory. "I think we were playing against a very desperate team. They played long balls. We had to deal with those long balls and set pieces. They have players who are more physical than us.

"But I am happy with how the boys handled them, especially in the first half where we played very well. In the second half, particularly in the first 20 minutes, we had to adjust and try to settle. It was not easy," Mangaung Unite coach, Morena Lothane, said.

The Free State outfit displayed great resilience in their final group match on Thursday afternoon, showing immense character to equalise after conceding an early goal against Western Cape side Hope FC.

The sides went into the halftime interval locked at 1-1, and despite creating several promising opportunities to secure a winner in the second half, the decisive breakthrough proved elusive.

The resulting stalemate ended the tournament run for both teams, allowing a disciplined FC Ravens side to secure the solitary ticket to progress from the group.

The club's media liaison officer was unavailable for comment at the time of publication.

Dewetsdorp Side Secures Regional Title

By Gomolemo Winkel

Morojaneng United have finally clinched the 2025/2026 Mangaung Regional League title after overcoming Classic XI with a hard-fought 2-1 victory in the regional playoffs at Kaizer Sebelo Stadium in Botshabelo.

The triumph marks a significant milestone for the Dewetsdorp-based outfit, moving the club one step closer to its ultimate ambition of competing in the provincial Free State ABC Motsepe League.

"Winning a league is rarely a pretty start to finish. It is three parts: survive the slow start, build rhythm mid-season, then handle pressure when everyone expects you to choke. The journey is the squad depth stepping up when starters were out," Morojaneng United assistant coach, James Mosebo said.

The technical team praised the squad for remaining deeply committed despite various challenges throughout the campaign, attributing the success to pure collective determination rather than individual brilliance.

"For the team, it is proof that the injuries and doubts were worth it. It shifts the mindset from underdogs to 'we belong at the top'. To supporters, it is validation. Every away trip, every chant when we were 1-0 down, this is their trophy too," Mosebo added.

Management highlighted the grit of the players who fought through difficult match conditions and injuries to maintain their championship momentum during the

gruelling regional campaign.

"Proudest is not the 4-0 wins. It is the 0-0 grind in the rain, the player playing 70 minutes with a knock, and those who accepted bench roles for the team. That is what separates champions from talent," Mosebo said.

While celebrations continue in the southeastern Free State town, United have already shifted their focus to the upcoming provincial promotional playoffs in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District.

The technical bench acknowledged that knockout football presents a completely different challenge and demands absolute clinical efficiency to avoid immediate elimination. "League form does not always translate into playoff success. Playoffs punish small mistakes. We need to be more clinical in front of goal, manage games better when leading and ensure we rotate the squad effectively to avoid injuries," Mosebo said.

The historic achievement has inspired communities across the former Naledi region, which has never previously hosted a football club competing at an ABC Motsepe League level. "We want to compete in the ABC Motsepe League. We do not have a team that has competed at that level in Naledi, so it would be a dream come true," Mosebo said. The club hopes to use this victory as a platform to inspire local youth, urging aspiring footballers to focus heavily on training and personal discipline. "To the kids, don't just copy our highlights. Copy our training. Talent opens the door, discipline keeps you in the room," Mosebo concluded.

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100-DAYS PROGRAMME ACTIVATION

Selebeleng



Moqhaka's 100-Day Plan Delivers Health Infrastructure Breakthrough



As part of the Moqhaka 100 Days Mayor-al Service Delivery Programme, Executive Mayor Jabu Tau has secured a significant breakthrough for healthcare services in Ram-mulotsi. Following the Mayor's intervention and request for urgent action, Free State Health MEC Viceroy Mahlatsi yesterday convened a stakehold-er engagement to address the unacceptable state of local health facilities and outline a clear plan for improvement.

During the meeting, MEC Mahlatsi committed to a phased upgrade of Pax Clinic over the next two financial years, beginning in the current financial year. He further announced that upgrades to Ram-mulotsi Clinic will commence soon, while select-ed healthcare services will be redirected from Ango Maseola Clinic to reduce overcrowding and improve patient access to quality care.

The meeting was attended by MMC for Community and Social Services, Cllr Pule Phamotse, and the Executive Mayor's Advisor, Mr Khotso Sesele, underscor-ing the municipality's commitment to accelerating service delivery and improving the quality of life for res-idents.

Moqhaka Charts a Service Delivery-Focused Future

Moqha-ka Local Municipality has official-ly adopted its 2026/27 Financial Year Budget, setting the stage for accel-erated service delivery and community development. Presenting the budget, Executive Mayor Jabu Tau emphasized that the municipality's spending plan is firmly rooted in its constitutional mandate and designed to respond directly to the needs and priorities of res-idents.

"This budget is service delivery-driv-en, based on the constitutional mandate of the institution, and is aimed at addressing the com-munity's needs," said the Mayor, underscoring the municipali-ty's commitment to improving the quality of life for all communities across Moqhaka.

Acting Municipal Manager Lizzy Ntsepe. Pictures: Supplied

Clr.N.P.Mage

2026/27 BUDGET OVERVIEW

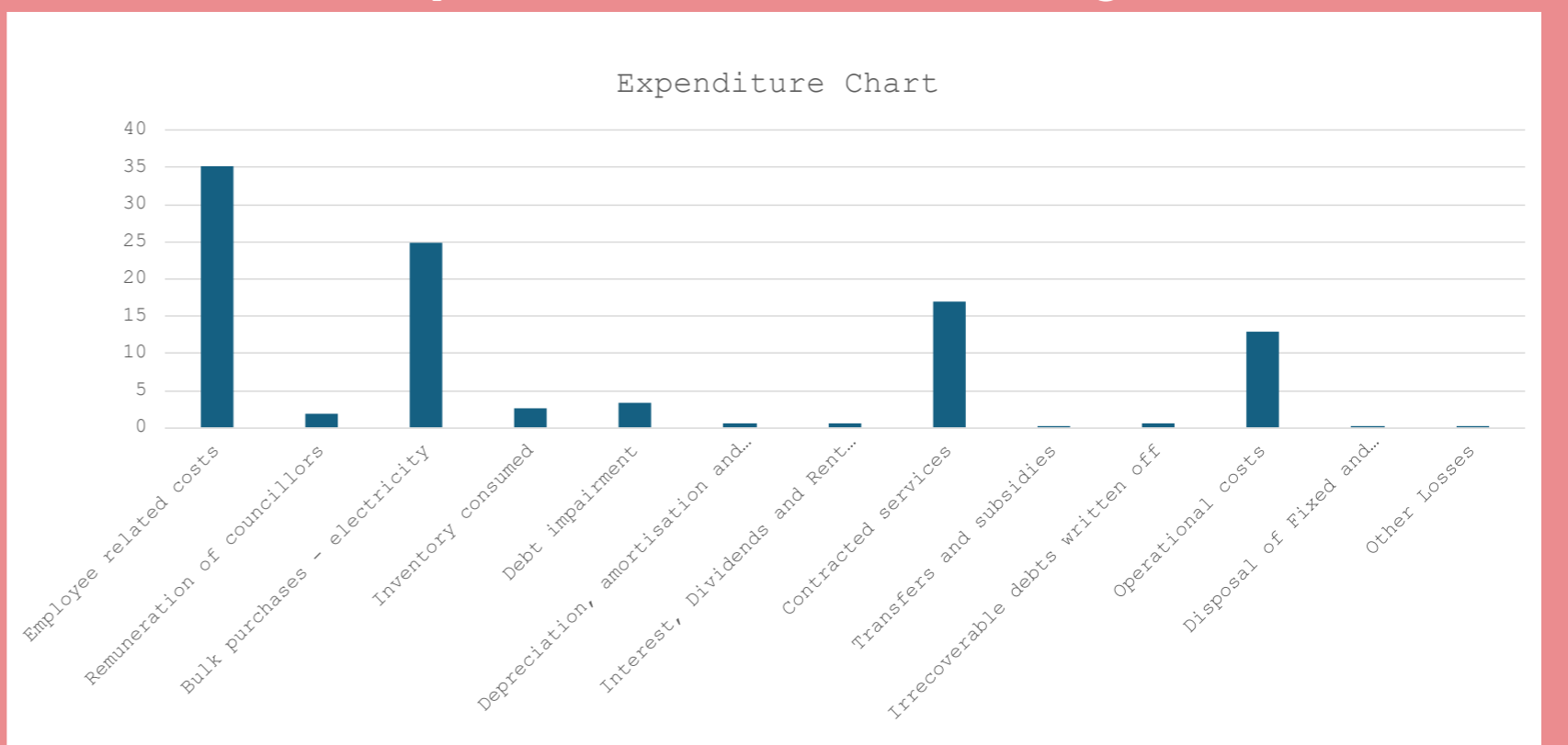
The operating expenditure budget, the operating revenue budget and the capital budge

Description R' 000	Adjustment Budget 2025/26	Budget 2026/27	Budget 2027/28	Budget 2028/29
Total Operating Revenue	1 526 150	1 666 686	1 721 747	1 777 102
Total Operating Expenditure	1 451 951	1 536 899	1 595 094	1 646 704
Surplus/Deficit	115 993	129 787	126 893	130 399
Total Capital Expenditure	85 879	71 728	92 741	95 238

Tariffs

Description	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Property Rates	5.10%	4.90%	4.90%	4.40%	3.70%
Electricity	8.60%	4.90%	12.40%	12.74	9.01%
Water	7.00%	4.90%	4.90%	4.40%	3.70%
Sanitation	5.40%	4.90%	4.90%	4.40%	3.70%
Refuse	5.90%	4.90%	4.90%	4.40%	3.70%
Other Income	6.10%	4.90%	4.90%	4.40%	3.70%

Expenditure % on the Total Budget



CAPITAL GRANT FUNDING

Project Name (as it appears on MIG-MIS)	Project type	Project Category: New Upgrade Rehabilitation Upgrade/Rehab New/ Upgrade	Planned job opportunities in 2026/27	Total Planned Expenditure for 2026/2027
General Text	Select from drop down as registered	Select from drop down as registered	Number format	Formula
Project Management Unit (PMU)	PMU		0	1 371 150,00
Rammulotsi (Northleigh): Development of Sports and Recreational Park -Phase 1 (MIS:498549)	Sport and recreation	New	0	2 879 006,87
Maokeng (Seisoville): Construction of 1.005km paved road at Makobe Street (MIS:498505)	Roads & stormwater	Upgrade	0	2 105 961,18
Maokeng: Upgrading of 11th Avenue 1,46km road to paved road connecting Khahliso and Brentpark (MIS:550166)	Roads & stormwater	Upgrade	15	-
Maokeng (Phomolong): Replacement of 17.94km ACwater pipes and installation of 2 booster pumps (MIS:550048)	Water	Upgrade	20	21 066 881,95
Matlwanglwang (Steynsrus): Refurbishment and upgrade of the Waste Water Treatment works (MIS:550174)	Sanitation	Upgrade	15	22 104 000,00
				49 527 000,00



SPORT



Mayoral Church Visit Programme Reaches Matlwangtlwang



As part of the Moqhaka Mayoral Church Visit Programme, Executive Mayor Cllr Ramasimong Tau, accompanied by councillors, today visited the Be Born Again Ministers Church in Matlwangtlwang under the stewardship of Bishop Siphosiso Moya.

The visit forms part of the Mayor's ongoing commitment to strengthening social cohesion and fostering meaningful engagement between the municipality, faith-based organisations and local communities. Through this programme, the municipality seeks to bridge the gap between residents and local government, creating platforms for dialogue, partnership and community development.

The initiative reflects Moqhaka Municipality's people-centred approach to governance, recognising churches and faith leaders as key stakeholders in building united, informed and empowered communities.

RESPECTING THE ROOTS:

MOQHAKA HONOURS SENIOR CITIZENS WITH SPECIAL AFRICA MONTH EVENT

Joy, music and cultural pride filled Constantia Hall in Maokeng as dozens of senior citizens gathered with Moqhaka Executive Mayor Cllr Ramasimong Tau for a special Africa Month Celebration dedicated to honouring the elders who helped shape the community.

The hall came alive with traditional dance, vibrant performances and heartfelt laughter as senior citizens shared stories, wisdom and memories that continue

to inspire younger generations. More than just a celebration, the event served as a sincere token of appreciation from the Executive Mayor to Bonkongo le Bo Ntatemoholo for their resilience, sacrifices and lifelong contributions, many of which were made under the difficult conditions of South Africa's past.

Addressing the gathering, Mayor Tau expressed his deep gratitude to the elderly for helping build the moral fibre of society and encouraged young people

to continue drawing wisdom and guidance from their experiences.

In his keynote address, the Mayor remarked: "A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots, and old people are the backbone of the community. Respect them, learn from them, and cherish them."

The event highlighted Moqhaka Municipality's commitment to strengthening community bonds,

preserving cultural heritage and ensuring that senior citizens receive the recognition and respect they deserve. Among those in attendance were MMC for Special Programmes Cllr Moipone Lulama, MPAC Chairperson Cllr Adriaan Botha, MMC for Public Safety Cllr Morena Thebe, MMC for Corporate Services Cllr Solly Ramathibe, as well as Cllr Sello Tsoto, Cllr Jakes Ramoolla, Cllr David Rankokosane, Cllr Mzimkhulu Baba and Cllr Marapo.



Restoring Dignity and Safety: Major Progress on School Sewer Repairs



Moqhaka Local Municipality is making significant progress in resolving the collapsed sewer line at Ntswanatsatsi Primary School in Rammulotsi, with repair work now at an advanced stage.

Demonstrating a hands-on commitment to service delivery, Executive Mayor Cllr Ramasimong Tau, accompanied by MMC for Community and Social Services Cllr Pule Phamotse, MMC for Human Settlements and Spatial Planning Cllr Thabo Mofokeng, and MMC for Local Economic Development Cllr Moekeetsi Tshabalala, conducted an on-site inspection to assess progress on the critical infrastructure repair project.

Municipal teams have successfully identified the source of the problem, and repair work is progressing well. The intervention is aimed at restoring a safe and healthy learning environment for learners and staff while addressing a long-standing infrastructure challenge.

The visit reflects the municipality's commitment to responsive governance and ensuring that community concerns, particularly those affecting schools and public facilities, are addressed with urgency and efficiency.

Mayor Tau Salutes Matlwangtlwang Elders

The senior citizens of Matlwangtlwang were in high spirits as they joined Moqhaka Executive Mayor Cllr Ramasimong Tau for a vibrant Africa Month celebration, marked by joy, unity and appreciation for the elders who have helped shape the community and the country.

Addressing the gathering, Mayor Tau said the event formed part of the municipality's commitment to recognising and honouring the invaluable contribution of senior citizens.

He praised them for their role in building South Africa and for providing the wisdom and guidance that continue to strengthen the moral fibre of communi-

ties. The Mayor emphasised that senior citizens deserve dignity, care and recognition in their later years, acknowledging the sacrifices they made to create opportunities for future generations.

The memorable celebration was attended by MMC for Special Programmes Cllr Moipone Lulama and MMC for Human Settlements and Spatial Planning Cllr Thabo Mofokeng, who joined residents in paying tribute to the community's elders.

The Africa Month programme will continue in the coming days, with similar celebrations set to take place in Maokeng and Rammulotsi as part of Moqha-

ka Municipality's ongoing efforts to honour African heritage, unity and community values.

Tau Honours Rammulotsi Elders

Tau brought the municipality's Africa Month celebrations to a memorable close with a special appreciation event for senior citizens in Rammulotsi.

The programme, which began in Matlwangtlwang on Monday and continued in Maokeng on Tuesday, was designed to honour the invaluable contribution of senior citizens while strengthening the social contract between local government and the communities

it serves.

The well-attended celebration was filled with energy and cultural pride, highlighted by electrifying live performances from the Rammulotsi Together As One Cultural Group.

The event provided an opportunity for residents, community leaders and municipal representatives to celebrate African heritage, unity and the important role of senior citizens in society.

Executive Mayor Tau, accompanied by several councillors, joined residents in recognising and appreciating the elders whose wisdom and leadership continue to shape the future of Moqhaka's communities.

