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Mbalula's subtle Presidential Campaign

"Pula ya Mbalula ha ene" praise song, causes a stir



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Presidential hopeful and ANC Secretary-General Fikile Mbalula received praise and endorsement during a memorial lecture for Rivonia Trialist and ANC activist Andrew Mlangeni held in the Eastern Free State last week. Picture: Supplied

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NGWATHE DISSOLUTION:

FS people deserve better – High Court

By: JN Reporter

In a scathing judgment, the Bloemfontein High Court slammed the Ngwathe Local Municipality for failing to provide basic services to the people and ordered the dissolution of the council. In his opening statement when delivering his judgment, Judge Johannes Daffue referred to the Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Namane Dickson Masemola, who concluded his speech at the Free State Local Government Summit in December by saying, “The people of the Free State deserve better.”

Daffue stressed, among other things, that the municipality and its council are dysfunctional and that provincial government departments, and particularly the MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), have

failed to intervene in the affairs of the municipality in accordance with the Constitution.

He also pointed out that he deems this a “suitable case where the court should play the role of a watchdog.”

In terms of Judge Daffue’s ruling, the Premier of the Free State, the province’s Executive Council, and the other relevant respondents are directed to implement a recovery plan to restore service delivery and ensure that the municipality meets its financial obligations.

They must also dissolve the Ngwathe Municipal Council and appoint an administrator until a new municipal council can be elected.

The executive must further approve a temporary budget, revenue-raising measures, or any other measures that will give effect to the recovery plan. However, in his response to the



Ngwathe Mayor Victoria de Beer-Mthombeni defend her administration. Picture: Facebook

judgment, provincial spokesperson for Cogta, Zimasa Mbewu, said the department is “currently studying this judgment further and will issue a full statement in due course relating to the way forward.” Multiple attempts to get comment from the municipality also drew blanks, as

Mayor Victoria de Beer-Mthombeni—through her communication office—said they are studying the judgement in detail. However, speaking on NewsRoom Africa, Mthombeni defended her administration and insisted that progress had been made in turning the municipality around.

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"Inside the Lotto Tender":

Did Mashatile's Ties Tip the Scales?

By: Selloane Khalane

Deputy President Paul Mashatile has denied accusations that he influenced the awarding of an estimated multi-billion rand National Lottery license to Sizekhaya Holdings, amid intensifying scrutiny over the company's ties to his immediate family.

The denial follows a searing investigation by amaBhungane, published on 23 June, which connected one of Sizekhaya's shareholders, Bellamont Gaming, to Mashatile's sister-in-law, Khumo Bogatsu. The company is co-owned and co-directed by Bogatsu and Moses Tembe, a KwaZulu-Natal businessman and the current chair of Sizekhaya. Both individuals have links—personal and professional—to the Deputy President.

Bogatsu is the twin sister of Humile Bogatsu, now known as Humile Mashatile, whom the Deputy President married in 2023. Though Mashatile insists that he played no role in the awarding of the contract, critics and analysts are questioning whether proximity alone constitutes undue influence.

A Tender With Powerful Ties

Sizekhaya was officially awarded the National Lottery license on 28 May, following extensive delays in the adjudication process. The announcement came just three days before Ithuba Holdings' existing license expired on 31 May. The new license grants Sizekhaya the power to operate the lottery for the next eight years, beginning in June 2026, and is expected to generate billions in revenue.

This significant contract was overseen by the National Lotteries Commission (NLC), which falls under the portfolio of Trade, Industry and Competition Minister Parks Tau. The Department had received eight bids for the license, with the process described by Tau as “arduous.”

In light of the amaBhungane exposé, Minister Tau responded before Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Trade, Industry and Competition on 24 June. In that session, he acknowledged the seriousness of the claims and promised that his Department and the NLC would seek independent legal advice to assess whether a conflict of interest or political bias had compromised the fairness of the bidding process.



Deputy President, Paul Mashatile denies influencing Lottery license. Picture: GCIS

“It would be irresponsible to ignore concerns raised by investigative journalists,” Tau said, pledging transparency and adherence to due process.

Mashatile: “Where Must They Do Business?”

In a televised interview with SowetanLIVE on the same day, Mashatile shrugged off the allegations, suggesting that the idea of “guilt by association” was both unfair and unrealistic.

“There are so many people who know me in this country—family, children, cousins, and friends. Where must they do business, in Zimbabwe?” he said, adding: “They can do business as long as I’m not involved... Because once you say Mr. Mashatile is capable of influencing, even if he is sitting in his house, it’s unfair.”

He dismissed the idea that connections alone should imply corruption, noting that the chairperson of the NLC had publicly stated no political pressure influenced the decision. “Why don’t we believe him?” he asked.

Mashatile further defended his 30-year track record in government, saying, “There is no single department that I have run where the Auditor-General came and said there was a problem... If I’ve done something wrong, I’ll be the first to accept it—but if not, I won’t.”

An Ethics Cloud That Lingers

This is not the first time Mashatile has been forced to answer tough questions about his ethics and political connections. In 2023, he was questioned by Parliament's Ethics Committee following allegations linking him to controversial businessman Edwin Sodi, a key figure in the R255-million Free State asbestos corruption case.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) filed criminal charges against Mashatile last year, citing evidence that he was living a lavish lifestyle, allegedly subsidized by businesspeople under criminal investigation. The party accused him of benefiting from high-end properties, luxury vehicles, and extravagant hospitality with murky sources of funding.

DA Chief Whip Siviwe Gwarube pressed Mashatile during a Q&A session to come clean about these allegations, asking why his name repeatedly appeared in stories detailing ethically questionable relationships between government leaders and business elites.

In response, Mashatile claimed ignorance: “I don’t know where these allegations come from. People just go around picking stuff, and I don’t know what their motive is. They would know why.”

The Shadow of Succession

While the Deputy Presidency is not a guaranteed springboard to South Africa’s highest office, the role has historically positioned leaders at the heart of ANC succession battles. As President Cyril Ramaphosa’s second term winds down, competition for the party’s top post is slowly intensifying. Factions are forming, alliances are being tested, and scrutiny is falling heavily on those next in line for power.

Mashatile, long considered a shrewd operator with deep roots in Gauteng’s political machinery, now finds himself at a crossroads. With questions of cronyism, proximity-based enrichment, and political influence dogging him, his ambitions—whether stated or not—may face serious obstacles.

When Proximity Breeds Distrust

The growing controversy surrounding Deputy President Paul Mashatile isn’t just a question of legality—it’s a question of public confidence. In a nation still reeling from successive waves of corruption scandals, even the appearance of impropriety can erode already fragile trust in democratic institutions.

While Mashatile insists on his innocence, the echoes of influence reverberating from boardrooms to Parliament continue, not just for his political future, but for the integrity of the systems that govern us all.

If the lottery is about chance, the people deserve to know the process wasn’t rigged before the draw began.

Driven by Ambition:

Is Fikile Mbalula Thirsty for the ANC's Top Post?



Free State ANC members singing praises for SG, Fikile Mbalula. Picture: Supplied

By: Refilwe Mochoari

A silent storm is brewing as the African National Congress is set to hold its national elective conference in less than two years (2027).

Without any formal declaration by those eyeing to replace President Cyril Ramaphosa as the party's president, a campaign for the top position is unlocked and faction wars within the organisation have erupted.

In this conference, someone will be elected to succeed Ramaphosa.

From fiery rebukes in the Eastern Cape to melodic chants in the Free State, the party's Secretary General Fikile Mbalula's silent spring to the top post has sparked controversy with some members accusing him of leveraging meetings and abusing his position to gain popularity for the presidential race.

A metaphor - "A yene Pula ya Mbalula"

A controversial moment broke in the Eastern Free State last week (21 June) during a memorial lecture of Rivonia Trialist and ANC activist Andrew Mlangeni when some members of the ANC in the province ordained Mbalula as a potential candidate in the presidential race through a song called "A yene Pula ya Mbalula", which simply means "May Mbalula's territory increase".

Members who were seen endorsing Mbalula through song and hand actions amongst others include Free State Premier MaQueen Letsoha-Mathae and the ANC Women's League Provincial Chairperson Connie Msibi who is also the Mayor of Thabo Mofutsanyana District municipality.

What was meant to be an honorary event to commemorate the life of Mlangeni, who dedicated his life to the struggle for freedom, justice and dignity for all South Africans suddenly evolved into a subtle and strategic move which revealed the SG's ambitions to become the next ANC Pres-

ident.

A Hardcore Factionalist

This move has sparked a public outcry on social media platforms with one ANC PR councillor from the Thabo Mofutsanyana region, Setshwana Chabeli, ridiculing Mbalula and calling him disorderly and "A Hardcore Factionalist".

Chabeli wrote a letter to Mbalula on her social media pages.

Dear SG,

You are a hardcore unrehabilitated factionalist with presidential ambitions but your verbal diarrhoea is appalling to say the least.

We are aware of what you want to do with the 'Vrystaat', but my cadre you will find us on the ground, we will take you toe to toe.....In case you forgot, even if we have no struggle credentials but we do have a history of relentless fights for your likes.

"AMANDLA!" You are highly divisive.

If I can be charged, I am more than ready, it will be lovely to engage you on such a platform.

I have a few questions for you, Sir.

"You are an enabler of factionalism"

Factionalism in the ANC Free State

The ANC in the Free State has been plagued by internal factionalism, and according to sources within the organisation, Chabeli's stance stems from a broader political cleavage.

Sources in the party say she is a staunch supporter of the provincial chairperson Mxolisi Dukwana and secretary Polediso Motsieneng. Dukwana's support base has been hostile towards Mbalula.

Mbalula: "Leading the ANC is not like leading a football club..."

Meanwhile, earlier this month at the Eastern Cape's Chris Hani regional conference, Mbalula reprimanded party members who are making pronouncements on who will lead the ANC and strongly spoke against South African billionaire and mining magnate Patrice Motsepe, accusing him of running a presidential bid.

Mbalula ridiculed Motsepe saying that if he wants to lead the party, he must show evidence that he is a member of a branch.

"The are talks of people we don't even know

have a branch, that they'd be ANC president because they have money.

"Leading the ANC is not like leading a football club and all that. You work for this" Mbalula said.

In an interview with Journal News, Political analyst and the Academic Head of the Department of Sociology at University of the Free State, Sethulego Matebesi, says Mbalula is exploiting his position. He says he believes that Mbalula is not being fair and because of the key position he occupies, he is not being a disciplined member of the organisation. "If it was anybody else who started a presidential campaign like that, he would have come out guns blazing and probably would have led to disciplinary processes of the party.

When asked his opinions on Chabeli's social media outburst, Matebesi said he thinks Chabeli needs to tread carefully.

ANC Free State responds

ANC Provincial Spokesperson Thabo Meeko says they do not find anything wrong with the song. He says ANC members are allowed to sing about their leadership as long as it does not contradicts the ANC's Code of Conduct.

Meeko responded to a praise song does not mean endorsement.

Does he qualify to take the top post?

Mbalula was born on 8 April 1971 in Botshabelo a township. He entered politics through the Botshabelo Youth Congress which he led between

1986 -1987

He joined the local United Democratic Front in 1989. Regional Secretary of ANC Youth League 1991 -1994. Provincial Secretary ANC Youth League 1994 - 1996. National Secretary for Political Education for ANCYL 1996 -1998

Secretary General for ANCYL 1998 - 2004

ANCYL President 2004 -2008

National Executive Appointments

Deputy Minister of Police 2009 - 2010

Minister of Sport and Recreation 2010 - 2017.

Minister of Police 2017 - 2018

Minister of Transport 2019 - 2023

ANC Secretary General 2022 - present

Young Entrepreneurs Honorary Business Breakfast



Picture: Life Motion Photography

By: JN Reporter

To round off youth month, the Free States business community came together in an exclusive and intimate honorary award ceremony to celebrate the next generation of excellent entrepreneurs. The Youth Business Breakfast hosted by FS Online Network in collaboration with TeamzDynamics Consulting took place at Art Café in Bloemfontein under the theme "Skills for the changing world and empowering youth for meaningful economic participation", was aimed to recognize young entrepreneurs who are making impact in their communities through the creation of employment and by being part of economic development in the province.

The five entrepreneurs who received honorary awards are the CEO of Veronica Planning an events management company, the CEO of logistics company Voice Express Lentswe Tihogo, Nkosana Mtambo who is in agriculture, and Tha-

bo Khateane who is in the manufacturing sector.

CEO of TeamzDynamics, Tshidiso Thinane, says the primary intent of the programme was to create a platform where young entrepreneurs are recognized and awarded for their outstanding business achievements.

The event was graced by MEC for Economic Development and Treasury Toto Makume, Provincial manager for National Youth Development Agency Boitumelo Dithebe, and influential businessman Ben Moseme amongst others.

In his keynote address, Makume encouraged young entrepreneurs to start running their businesses professionally.

He says that to be taken seriously when they apply for assistance in government they need to start taking themselves seriously.

"First of all, when you identify a location for your business, look at the surroundings. "Choose a decent place and ensure that it is attractive and clean.

Emerging details reveal why Whitfield was fired from Cabinet



Democratic Alliance (DA) MP Andrew Whitfield. Picture: BF

Details are emerging of the reasons for the sacking of the Deputy Minister of Trade Industry and Competition, and Democratic Alliance (DA) MP Andrew Whitfield.

Whitfield was fired by President Cyril Ramaphosa after failing to secure the president's permission to travel to the US in his personal capacity as part of the delegation that met with the Trump administration, earlier this year.

The DA has given President Ramaphosa 48 hours to reconsider his decision, threatening dire consequences for the government of national unity.

"It is because deputy minister Whitfield, visited the United States, earlier this year, without

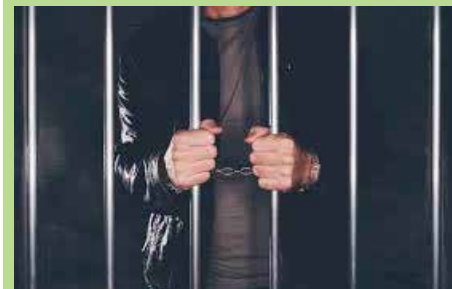
having the proper prior confirmation that he can do so from the president. He did, however, apply to the president, and he notified the president of the dates, but the president, in 10 days, did not respond," says DA Spokesperson, Willie Aucamp.

Aucamp says Deputy Minister Whitfield also wrote a letter to the president, where he apologised and explained the situation.

"The DA's ultimatum is that the president must fire the people in his own cabinet that faced charges such as Justice Minister Thembi Simelane and Minister in the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshaveni; ministers who are really disgraceful to this parliament," he added. - SABC

CrimeWatch

Fraudster behind bars



By: Lerato Mutlanyane

The Hawks Serious Crime Investigation team arrested a 49-year-old female for alleged fraud and alternative theft.

The female was allegedly said to be a co-director of Rowen Tree 60 Pty Ltd with two other directors in 2012. The suspect in question withdrew an application for renewal of prospecting mining rights that was already in progress at the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE).

In 2015, all the aforesaid co-directors were in agreement to put the company up for sale and sign all prospecting rights to a businessman in the Northern Cape. Proceeding to the conclusion of the sale agreement, payments were made, but she withheld mining prospecting rights which were still to be approved by the DMRE and were not in good standing.

As a result, the money that was paid by the complainant was R1 368 000, and an alleged amount of R100 000 was paid to a personal account that belongs to a fellow co-director of the suspect. Recurring fraudulent payments were made from the initial payment, which resulted in the complainant losing all his money.

The investigation is still ongoing, and more arrests are to be made.

The suspect will appear in Douglas Magistrates Court on 19 June 2025.

Alleged drug dealers arrested

Two African males aged 27 and 26 were arrested in separate incidents following allegations of dealing and being found in possession of drugs this week.

Police Spokesperson, Sergeant Palesa Thabana said the Welkom Anti-Gang Unit members were allegedly alerted to information about two males selling drugs in Odendaalsrus, which led to the arrests.

“Information was operationalised, and it first led them to an area in Kutloanong, Odendaalsrus where the 27-year-old African male was arrested after he attempted to evade arrest. Police confiscated one small packet of crystal meth, eleven small packets of nyaope drugs weighing 0,05g, and money to the amount of R118-00,” said Thabana.

Further investigations led members to the Odendaalsrus CBD area where the other suspect was found 20 packets of nyaope drugs weighing 0,17g, and cash to the amount of R162-00.

The two suspects are expected to appear in the Welkom Magistrate's Court soon.

Gold suspect matter postponed

52-year-old Itumeleng Dinku appeared at the Postmasburg Magistrate's Court with charges of possession of a suspected illegal melted gold bar.

Postmasburg SAPS and Crime Intelligence received a tip-off about a man selling a gold bar in the Mountain View area in Postmasburg. A raid at this gentleman's house was conducted, and a gold bar valued at approximately R10 million was discovered.

The suspect appeared in court on 23 June 2025, but the matter was unfortunately postponed to 2 July 2025, open for formal bail application.

Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre

Major boost for Eastern Free State's rural tourism sector and economic growth



Minister of Tourism Patricia de Lille, on Sunday unveiled the R120 million state-of-the-art Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre. Picture: Supplied

By: Abigail Visagie

Following a significant setback suffered by the tourism sector across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Golden Gate Highlands National Park is on course to recovery. Minister of Tourism Patricia de Lille, on Sunday unveiled the R120 million state-of-the-art Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre set to boost the park and retain its former appeal.

She was accompanied by the Free State Premier, Maqueen Letsoha-Mathae, and MEC for Tourism, Ketso Makume as well as the visibly delighted executive mayor of Dihlabeng Local

Municipality, James Tseki.

According to De Lille, the centre is a unique interactive facility with a strong potential for both tourism and economic growth in the region, province, and the country.

The attraction offers visitors an innovative, creative and quality demonstration of scientific knowledge (paleontological, archaeological and geological), with a broader appreciation of cultural heritage through interactive exhibitions.

“It is a joyous occasion for our county as we unveil this new exciting cultural and scientific tourism product. This facility is a wonderful addition to our diverse tourism offerings and

it will ensure repeat visits, keep visitors longer, and more importantly, help visitors spend more money in our captivating destinations,” said De Lille. “We envision that this tourism facility will boost economic development, create employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for surrounding communities, and further attract investment and development.”

Unveiled under the theme: “A Nation That Works for All – Unearthing Our Past, Building Our Future,” the new centre further offers an immersive experience with interactive exhibitions that promise to awaken curiosity and delight in every visitor - young and old.

“Our fossil record provides evidence for us to say to the entire world, 'Welcome Home!'. From the fossil evidence, we know that Africa is both the Cradle of Humankind and the Cradle of Human Culture. Our fossil wealth, long rock and fossil record, is so unique that it is impossible to write about the development of life on Earth without referring to the South African fossil record,” said De Lille.

Echoing the minister's words, Makume said the province will ensure that the centre is preserved to further maintain the history of the Basotho nation.

“The centre should be used to attract tourists in the province and further create jobs for our people. The Free State should be known as a place to go to and not a place to go through,” he said. Additionally, De Lille revealed that 30 tour guides from the local community, trained by the department, will be employed full-time at the centre.

Dihlabeng welcomes dinosaur center's expected tourism boost

By: Abigail Visagie

The Dihlabeng Local Municipality has welcomed with excitement the launch of Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre, with high anticipation of economic and tourism growth in the region.

Despite the centre being located in the heart of Golden Gate Highlands National Park, it is also 20km away from the a mall tourist town of Clarens, which is also known as - the jewel of the Free State – for its spectacular sandstone mountains and wonderful climate. It is one of the most picturesque, arty little towns and it has recently been acclaimed as the best Trout Fishing waters in South Africa.

According to James Tseki, the Mayor of Dihlabeng Local Municipality, the launch of the

dinosaur museum means a lot to the Municipality because it will contribute to the economic development of this area.

“We experience an influx of tourists who we believe will be interested in the rich history of the South African dinosaurs, but our people will also take pride in the educational and cultural diversity we have.”

He excitedly announced that the Municipality will be focusing on projects that will promote the township economy and tourism, adding to the Seriti Street in Clarens, which has also been a local attraction.

“We will have more tourist activities. We will be looking at other activities that will link our township economy to the dinosaur museum as the townships is quite a distance from the museum,” said Tseki.



Executive Mayor of Dihlabeng Municipality, James Tseke. Picture: Abigail Visagie

Paleontologists cheer dinosaur fossil discoveries

By: Abigail Visagie

Scientists are optimistic that the Golden Gate National Park in the Eastern Free State will become a dinosaur fossil hotspot in the coming years.

This comes after Minister of Tourism Patricia de Lille on Sunday unveiled the Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre in the Park, which offers – among other things - an immersive celebration of Africa's ancient story, spotlighting one of the world's oldest known dinosaur embryos ever discovered.

According to Jonah Choiniere, a palaeontologist from Wits University, it is exciting that the park is celebrating the egg-nesting site and many other fossils still to be unearthed at that nesting site.

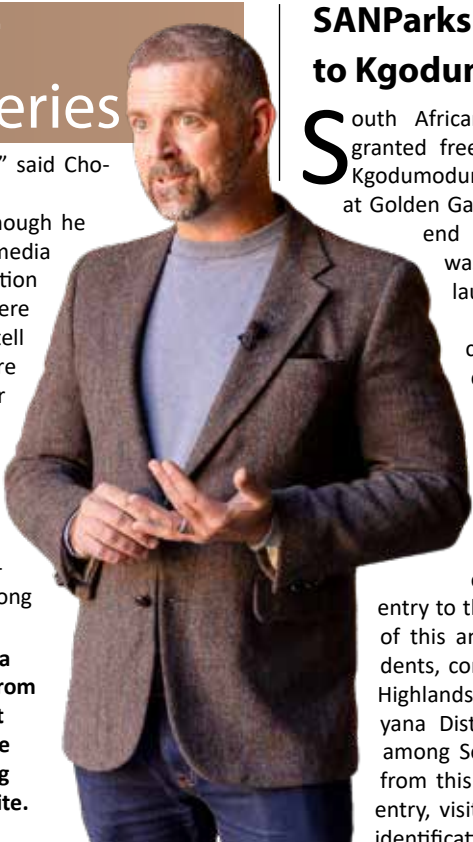
“We need to do this carefully... in fact, the rest of the part has fossils and we have been training rangers here to identify those fossils in a proper way for

conserving them,” said Choiniere.

He said that though he share with the media the exact location where fossils were found, but “I can tell you that they are actually all over the park. From the day you discover a fossil to when you make it accessible to a scientific community is a bit of a long road”.

Jonah Choiniere, a palaeontologist from Wits University, it is exciting that the park is celebrating the egg-nesting site.

Picture: Supplied



SANParks announces free entry to Kgodumodumo Centre

South African National Parks (SANParks) has granted free access to the multi-million rand Kgodumodumo Dinosaur Interpretation Centre at Golden Gate Highlands National Park until the end of September. The announcement was made on Sunday during the official launch of the centre.

The centre is a unique interactive facility that offers visitors an innovative, creative and quality demonstration of world-class scientific knowledge in the paleontological, archaeological and geological disciplines.

SANParks Head of Communications and Spokesperson JP Louw said in recognition of this significant development, there will be free entry to the centre for all visitors. “As a result of this announcement, schools, tertiary students, communities adjacent to Golden Gate Highlands National Park, and Thabo Mafutsanyana District Municipality residents will be among South Africans who stand to benefit from this offering,” said Louw. To qualify for entry, visitors are required to present a valid identification document.

Unemployment, a ticking time bomb - ANCYL

By: JN Reporter

The obviously frustrated young lions of the ruling party (ANC Youth League) have vowed to face off with its mother body... accusing its leadership in government of betraying the Freedom Charter and burying the dreams of young people in a mass grave.

According to the party's young wing in the Free State, the leadership in government has opted to nurse their neo-liberal policy frameworks that have failed and continue to fail the poor and the working class, especially the youth, rather than focusing on the implementation of concrete action in response to the deepening crisis of youth unemployment.

The recent Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for the fourth quarter of 2024, released by Statistics South Africa in February this year, shows that the Free State's unemployment rate has increased by 1.9 percentage points and currently stands at 38.5%, which rises to 41% with the expanded unemployment definition.

The league's Provincial Secretary, Jackson Mthembu, said the young lions will not stand idle while young people are being condemned to permanent unemployment and will lead a disciplined and militant march to the Office of the Premier, Maqueen Letsoha-Mathae, which is scheduled to take place on Monday.

"After studying the 2025 State of the Province Address (SOPA) and the R45.8 billion 2025/26 Provincial Budget, it is clear that the Free State government is not taking youth unemployment seriously. What we are witnessing is not merely an oversight, it is a political choice. The Free State's entire budget planning remains anchored



ANCYL members in the Free State set to bring the unemployment war to Premier's door step. Picture: north-coast-courie

in neo-liberal policy frameworks that have failed and continue to fail the poor and the working class, especially the youth," said Mthembu.

During her State of the Province Address that she delivered just days after the release of unemployment statistics in February, Premier Letsoha-Mathae, effortlessly vowed that the 2025/26 financial year will see her administration driving inclusive growth and job creation to set the province on a daring developmental path.

"We will implement more programmes to increase access to finance and opportunities for mainly women, youth, persons with disabilities, and businesses owned by military veterans. We are not apologetic about this," promised Letsoha-Mathae.

However, speaking to Journal News, political analyst Prof Sethulego Matebesi from the University of the Free State (UFS) believes the challenge faced by the current Youth League is failing to detach themselves from contaminated

leaders in the organisation.

"I am not sure what the league aim archive, however, if this is meant to fight internal party battles between the party leadership in the Free State and the premier, it will further serve as a prove that our youth have mastered the wrong doing of our current leaders and unable to detach from them. The question then becomes, how is this going to assist them inherit a healthy organisation in the future as the next leadership?" asked Matebesi.

Nonetheless, Mthembu, warned that the province is sitting on a ticking time bomb.

"If this crisis is not addressed with urgency, the province will face a revolt of the excluded. If the Free State government does not act, it will face its own version of the Arab Spring. When hope is denied, unrest becomes inevitable," warned Mthembu, adding that

"the Free State holds the shameful and unacceptable title of having the highest youth unemployment rate in the country, even exceeding

the national average. More than 442,000 young people aged 15–34 are not in employment, education, or training. This is not just a statistic; it is a mass grave of dreams."

He said that the Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) of the Youth League has resolved to lead a provincial Youth March to Letsoha-Mathae to demand urgent and concrete action in response to the deepening crisis of youth unemployment.

"The province has no targeted industrialisation strategy, no green jobs programme, no youth cooperative development plan, no investment in township and rural economies, and no meaningful rollout of the Presidential Employment Stimulus.

The budget merely recycles promises and projects that do not speak to the urgency of the youth crisis. The obsession with fiscal restraint over social investment, the reliance on private sector-led growth while the state retreats from direct job creation, and the absence of a youth-focused industrial policy, all reflect a deliberate ideological alignment with neo-liberalism.

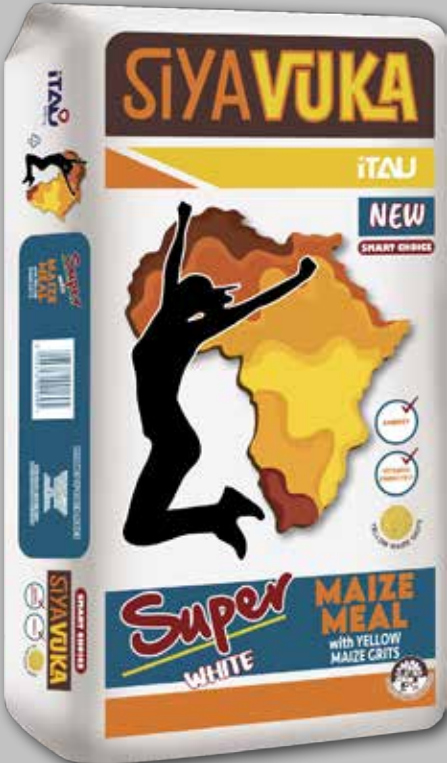
This represents a betrayal of the Freedom Charter and a tragic abandonment of the developmental state vision long championed by our movement," he said.

Meanwhile, Mthembu revealed that young unemployed people from all sectors will be expected to join in the march and hand over their CVs to the premier as a symbolic and direct challenge to the status quo and refuse to celebrate hollow victories of Youth Month while they are being sacrificed on the altar of budget cuts, austerity, and economic exclusion.



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By: Abigail Visagie

Thank you for the opportunity to engage with you ahead of the most anticipated upcoming local government elections next year. It is your first term in office as the political head of the municipality. The ANC has shown faith in you despite the challenges you have faced since your election into office. What do you say to that?

We have worked hard as the elected administration and the ANC to ensure that the ruling party retains the municipality. We will renew

our organisational mandate with the people, we do know that the municipality will still be under the reign of the ANC... come elections.

Like I have just mentioned, you have faced so many challenges and criticisms since. Can you share with us what that was all about, or is there any truth in those accusations and criticisms?

This is all because we are working in this municipality... that is all. We always welcome constructive criticism we receive. That is because we want our people to play oversight over us.

You have mentioned that your administra-

Election talks with Matjhabeng Mayor Thandixolo Khalipha

As the anticipation grows for the municipal elections next year, Journal News caught up with the mayor of Matjhabeng Local Municipality, Thandixolo Khalipha, on issues affecting the municipality and its residents, as well as his plans to retain the office.

tion has done the work in servicing the community of Matjhabeng. What can you list as your achievements to this point?

Indeed, we have worked for our people, and I am not saying there haven't been challenges in the process. We have uncounted challenges too. But I can tell you without any hesitation that we are going to secure victory in this municipality based on the services we provide to our people.

How confident are you that the organisation will still have faith in you to lead this municipality should it win elections?

Well, I did not put myself here as a mayor, my organisation will decide on that. I was given a term of five years to bring about some changes in the municipality, the second term will be de-

cided by the organisation.

What plans do you have in place for the people of Matjhabeng to be able to elect your organisation again?

We do have plans that are already working for the people. For instance, we have now embarked on a massive cleaning campaign to educate our people about littering and service delivery. I have also decided to launch a campaign that all municipal employees embark on a cleaning campaign every Friday, and they will be joined by the community. Matjhabeng must be regarded as one of the cleanest towns in the province.

For more on this interview, please log on to www.journalnews.co.za for a full video clip.

Strategic sessions to boost the Xhariep District Economy



MEC for Public Works and Infrastructure, Dibolelo Mance. Picture: Supplied

By: JN Reporter

The Department of Public Works and Infrastructure under the leadership of MEC Dibolelo Mance, hosted its first-ever Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) awareness and information session with political leaders from the Xhariep District's local municipalities.

The session brought together Executive Mayors, Municipal Managers, and EPWP Coordinators to discuss the programme's goals and performance.

During the session, Manche emphasised the importance of building open and inclusive relationships between political principals and government departments.

The main aim of this session was to strength-

en working relations between all three stakeholders by improving how EPWP projects are managed, how they are reported, and essentially how the Xhariep economy can be empowered.

The session comes in the wake of an assessment made by Mance's office that there was a need to talk about the objectives and importance of EPWP.

During the session, Manche spoke about the opportunities that can be created through programmes such as EPWP.

"We need to champion an open and inclusive way of working because it will help us as a collective.

The session was followed by a cleaning campaign that took place at the Alfred Nzula District Hospital.

"Court Orders, Sol Plaatje's silence: Who will save Kamfers Dam?"

By: Selloane Khalane

In the heart of the Northern Cape, where flamingos once danced across the mirrored waters of Kamfers Dam, silence now reigns. Not the peaceful kind—the uneasy hush of something gone wrong.

At the edge of Kimberley, the Homevale Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) was once a promise of progress. Today, it stands as a corroded symbol of municipal neglect—poisoning ecosystems, choking farmland, and drowning public trust.

Brenda Booth, a private landowner whose crops were destroyed by sewage-laced floodwaters, took the Sol Plaatje Municipality to court. Her battle wasn't for compensation—it was for accountability. Birds have died, farmland has blackened, and the iconic lesser flamingos—once a rose-pink signature of the region—are gone.

Despite billions in infrastructure grants from the National Treasury and the Department of Water and Sanitation, only one treatment line at the plant wheezes along. Aeration beds are clogged, the facility is largely unsupervised, and raw effluent continues to spill into Kamfers Dam, crawling toward Transnet railway lines, threatening to paralyze both nature and commerce.

Into that vacuum, the opposition has raised its voice. Northern Cape DA leader Harold McGluwa condemned the "gross inability" of the Sol Plaatje Municipality to manage water levels and quality at the dam. "Kamfers Dam used to be world-renowned as home to the largest lesser flamingo population in the southern hemisphere. This is no longer the case," McGluwa said.

He pointed to the DA's ongoing oversight ef-

forts since 2019 and criticized the Department of Environment for ignoring early warnings. "It cost a private landowner a court battle to place the demise of the dam in the spotlight," he added, noting that DA MP Delmaine Christians supported the case as a friend of the court.

Though Sol Plaatje has yet to comply fully with the court's supplementary ruling, the DA welcomed the Department of Water and Sanitation's recent action against the municipality for failing to uphold environmental regulations. McGluwa emphasized that the Homevale plant remains "largely dysfunctional" despite repeated interventions.

The party also lodged a complaint with the South African Human Rights Commission about a broken sewerage pipe feeding directly into a stormwater canal flowing into the dam. Last week, the SAHRC accompanied DA councillor George Joseph to inspect the site.

McGluwa was emphatic: "We want to see the city's sewerage problem resolved. We also want to see the world-renowned flamingo population return to Kamfers Dam."

He confirmed the DA is closely monitoring a proposed plan by a private consortium to drain and rehabilitate the dam and anticipates a site visit from Deputy Water and Sanitation Minister Sello Seithloho around 21 July.

Meanwhile, the Northern Cape High Court, having exhausted patience, ordered the municipality to submit a progress report—outlining a plan, a budget, a reason to believe—by 30 May 2025. As of today, there has been no compliance. No word. Just silence.

Sol Plaatje Municipality did not respond to questions from this publication by the time of going to print.

And still, the dam waits. Bloated. Sick. Watching.

Pelonomi hospital staff down tools

- *Overcrowding and staff shortage, a major challenge*
- *Nehawu threatens a full-blown workers' strike*
- *Premier warns of the danger of neglecting patients*

By: Abigail Visagie

A persisting severe shortage of staff has hit the functioning of the Pelonomi Tertiary Hospital in Bloemfontein, prompting the staff to launch a protest demanding urgent intervention by the provincial health department.

During the recent demonstration outside the hospital by staff members, a number of patients were turned away, while others were left unattended.

The demonstration, which subsequently prompted an urgent visit by Premier Maqueen Letsoha-Mathae and MEC for Health Monyatso Mahlatsi to the hospital, happened a week ago.

Speaking to the Journal News, one of the frustrated staff members, who wished to remain anonymous in fear of victimisation, revealed that workers are grappling to deal with the heavy inflows of patients due to staff crunch.

“The situation has deteriorated since the closure of the casualty ward at the National District Hospital last year. We have been receiving an increasing number of patients, trying to assist them, but that has also taken a serious toll on us to the point where we are labeled as lazy workers by the management. We cannot work like this anymore, and we demand that the National District Hospital be opened again urgently,” said the staff member.

The National District Hospital was closed in June last year after a fire broke out in one of the wards. No injuries or fatalities were reported as

a result of the fire.

This was echoed by the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union (Nehawu)’s Provincial Secretary Khauhelo Mnqibisa, who said their demonstration is emphasized by non-operational wards and urged the department to address the hazardous working conditions or face a workers' strike.

“We have met with the MEC, and a team was established to monitor progress made in terms of decisions taken in the meeting. The demonstration also emphasized that there is a continuous experience of critical influx of patients while operating with severe staff shortages in a form of both clinical and non-clinical staff. This pressure has been exacerbated by the closure of some wards at the National Hospital, which has remained non-operational since the fire incident last year. As a result, Pelonomi is bearing the burden of an overstretched system, leaving its limited staff overwhelmed and struggling to meet the demands of patient care,” said Mnqibisa.

However, the dire situation at the Pelonomi Hospital was confirmed by the Head of the Department (HOD), Masechaba Sesing, during her reply at the Portfolio Committee on Public Accounts and Finance (PROPAC) meeting in March this year.

She told the committee that the increased patient load is affecting both healthcare workers and the patients themselves.

“The closure of National is providing immense pressure on Pelonomi because most of those pa-



Pelonomi Tertiary Hospital demonstrate outside the hospital Picture: Supplied

tients now go to Pelonomi. It affects them badly because they move from the neighborhood that they are close to. It also affects the workers who now have to move from the area that they have applied to and go to another area,” said Sesing.

She added that the department has allocated over R500 million to construction projects and servicing facilities across the province, which included an extension to Pelonomi’s maternity ward and the long-awaited reopening of the government mortuary.

However, a significant portion of the allocated funds is being diverted toward day-to-day operations, given the shortage of skilled artisans in the sector.

Mathae - following her emergency meeting

with Mahlatsi and the hospital’s executive management held on Friday - warned that no patient should ever be turned away or left unattended at a healthcare facility.

She said that while she acknowledges the challenges brought forward by the severe shortage of space and medical personnel at Pelonomi Hospital, her administration will work relentlessly with all stakeholders to find sustainable solutions that protect the most vulnerable.

“We acknowledge that our hospitals operate under strict regulations and norms. But when lives are at stake, leadership demands bold and compassionate action. These patients are not just statistics. They are mothers, fathers, sons and daughters, and they deserve care,” she said.

Classifieds

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3

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9323

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JN_A0007

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JN_A0008

NOTICE TO CREDITORS IN THE DECEASED ESTATE OF GAELEBALE HILDA HATI

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Identity No: 540104 0721 081

Date of Death: 2023-08-09

Name of Executor or Authorised Agent and Advertiser: Ponoane Attorneys, 44 Westburger Street, Suite 110 Library House, Bloemfontein, 9301.

TEL: 051 430 7700

Email: ponoaneattorneys@gmail.com

Period allowed for lodgement of claims is 30 days, after that no claims will be entertained"

JN_A0009

NW battles teenage pregnancy 'pandemic'

By: JN Reporter

Teenage pregnancy continues to pose a significant threat to the future of young girls in the North West province, leading to a growing crisis, according to MEC for Social Development Basetsana Sussana Dantjie.

With an increasing number of school-aged girls falling pregnant each year, Dantjie has encouraged all stakeholders to join hands in efforts to curb the new pandemic in the province.

Dantjie’s plea follows the recent cases of alleged statutory rape involving three young girls in the Lekwa Teemane local municipality.

It is alleged that the trio – aged between 14 and 15 – were confirmed pregnant by a medical practitioner last week after visiting the Lekwa Teemane service point without the supervision or accompaniment of parents.

According to the MEC, it was further discovered during the preliminary investigation that two of the three girls were by underage boys, 17 and 18 years of age.

Expressing her disappointment on the three statutory rape cases, Dantjie said the govern-

ment has implemented measures to address teenage pregnancy in schools, such as the integrated school health programme which is led by the education, health, and social development departments.

She said her department has also partnered with the Shout it Now organisation to educate young people about HIV, teenage pregnancy, and other social ills across the province.

“We cannot be deterred by these incidents in our resolve to prevent teenage pregnancy and gender-based violence in our communities. Our social workers, including our social cluster departments and the civil society organisations are on the ground to break the barrier of ignorance among young girls by educating them about teenage pregnancy and other social pathologies that are tormenting our communities,” said Dantjie, adding that the issue of teenage pregnancy requires the collaborative efforts of key role players, which include parents, teachers, guardians, and the community at large.

She further confirmed that the three cases were reported to the police for further investigations

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

Discover the power of your unique message



Pastor Motsamai Kareli
Empowerment Ministries
International

Leaders who are intentional with their gift and message won't only help others. God returns the favor to them. I have seen this happen with those I serve, but I've also discovered it firsthand. God took me – an ordinary boy from Welkom – and put me on a path of unprecedented favor and success. The Bible teaches us that when we give, we

will be blessed in return: "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap" (Luke 6:38, NIV). I'm not talking about the offering plate, though there is nothing wrong with tithing. I'm talking about giving to those who have been entrusted to you.

Consider this thought: You are a gift sent by God to the world.
You are a gift when you add value to others. You are a gift when you pour into others expecting nothing in return. God promises to give something back to you: a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over!
You have an opportunity to bring your unique message to market and to do it effectively. You can become an agent of change in a world that pressures us to adapt to the status quo.
You've been given a message, a force given to you to change the world around you.

Can someone please give Floyd Shivambu a HUG



Refilwe Mochoari
Editor In Chief

Despite his strong academic and political resume, recent shifts including his removal from key leadership roles, my opinion is that Floyd Shivambu needs to take a break or completely retire from politics just to save his credibility.

He is a smart man, a critical thinker and a well-educated gentleman, but he has always been behind someone's shadow.

What exactly does Floyd Shivambu Stand for?

His political trajectory started in 2004 as a Student Representative Council at the University of Witwatersrand.

He was in the ANCYL until his expulsion in 2012.

In 2013 he co-founded the Economic Freedom Fighters alongside Julius Malema and served as his Deputy until 2024.

In August 2024, he resigned from the EFF to join the uMkhonto Wesizwe Party as national organizer and Secretary-General.

Earlier this month he was stripped of all his powers from the MK party, demoted from the Secretary General position to being a member of parliament, and was left to have no voice as usual.

"Mayibuye iAfrika"
Political suicide or a rebirth?

Today (27 June) Shivambu hosts a second press conference in less than a week, this time to announce the Mayibuye Consultation Team (NCT) of the Mayibuye Consultation Process.

"As always we will use the opportunity to exercise what Amilcar Cabral taught us that as revolutionaries we should hide nothing from the masses of our people.

"Tell no lies. Expose lies whenever they are told. Mask no difficulties, mistakes, failures, and claim no easy victory...."

Shivambu says he is humbled by the responses that he has been receiving from people in all provinces and regions who are interested to volunteer and participate in the initiative.

What is his strategy?
Is Mayibuye another break away political party with the same methods and strategies he learned from the ANC, EFF and MKP?

His fall from grace within the MK starts when he publicly clashes with the MK party leader Jacob Zuma's favorite daughter Duduzile Zuma.

Who does that?
He has gone from being a man of honor to insulting people and accusing them of being drug addicts.

He has gone as far as visiting Malawi to seek miracles from a pastor who has been accused of being a "a fake prophet"

He is acting out of character...
Please, give that man a hug. He is going through a lot.

Opinion

July Masango

Mental Health in Tertiary Students: Understanding, Supporting, and Thriving

The transition to tertiary education is often seen as a gateway to independence, growth, and opportunity. However, beneath the surface of academic pursuits and campus life, many students grapple with mental health challenges that impact their overall well-being, academic success, and future prospects. As the global conversation around mental health gains momentum, it is essential to shine a light on the mental health experiences of young people in tertiary institutions.

How Mental Health Affects Tertiary Students

Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being. For students in universities, colleges, and technical institutions, poor mental health can manifest as anxiety, depression, burnout, sleep disturbances, or feelings of hopelessness. These conditions often interfere with concentration, motivation, time management, academic performance and many other functional challenges. Research has shown that students with untreated mental health issues are more likely to drop out, perform poorly, or disengage from campus life.

Beyond academics, mental health challenges affect students' ability to form healthy relationships, make decisions, and engage in personal development. A struggling student may isolate themselves, neglect self-care, or experience a decline in physical health. The consequences are far-reaching—not only for the individual but also for families, communities, and future workforce productivity.

Contributors to Mental Health – The Good and the Bad

Several factors contribute to the mental health status of students, with both positive and negative influences playing a role.

Contributors to Poor Mental Health:

- **Academic Pressure:** Deadlines, exams, and high performance expectations can

lead to chronic stress and anxiety.

- **Financial Stress:** Tuition fees, living costs, and debt often weigh heavily on students who may also need to balance part-time work.

- **Isolation and Homesickness:** Being away from family support systems can lead to feelings of loneliness, especially for first-year or international students.

- **Social Pressures:** Navigating relationships, identity, peer expectations, and social media comparisons can impact self-esteem.

- **Lack of Access to Mental Health Services:** Many institutions have limited resources to provide adequate support, especially in under-resourced settings.

Contributors to Good Mental Health:

- **Strong Social Support:** Friendships, mentors, and family connections act as buffers against stress.

- **Healthy Lifestyle Habits:** Exercise, sleep, balanced diets, and structured routines promote overall wellness.

- **Campus Resources:** Institutions that offer accessible counseling services, peer support programmes, and wellness workshops foster a culture of mental health awareness.

- **Academic Flexibility and Support:** Lecturers and tutors who accommodate students' mental health needs make a significant positive difference.

How Students Can Take Care of Their Mental Health

Promoting mental well-being requires proactive effort. Students are encouraged to adopt habits and strategies that protect and nurture their mental health:

1. **Prioritize Self-Care:** Regular exercise, adequate sleep, nutritious meals, and hobbies are essential to maintaining emotional balance and physical health.
2. **Stay Connected:** Building a support

system of peers, mentors, or family members can provide emotional relief and reduce feelings of isolation.

3. **Manage Time Effectively:** Break tasks into manageable goals, avoid last-minute cramming, and use tools like planners to stay organized.

4. **Seek Help Early:** Students should be encouraged to use on-campus counselling services or community mental health resources when experiencing distress.

5. **Limit Screen Time and Social Media Use:** Being mindful of online habits can reduce anxiety and improve sleep.

6. **Practice Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques:** Deep breathing, journaling, or meditation can help reduce stress and increase self-awareness.

7. **Set Realistic Goals:** Embrace progress over perfection and learn to be kind to oneself during setbacks.

A Collective Responsibility

While students must take charge of their mental health, institutions also have a critical role to play. Campuses must foster environments that de-stigmatize mental health discussions, expand psychological services, and promote inclusivity and academic compassion.

In conclusion, mental health in tertiary students is a shared concern requiring both personal agency and systemic support. By raising awareness, building resilience, and nurturing supportive communities, we can empower students not just to survive—but to thrive—during their academic journeys.

Written by: July Masango, Vice President – Public Relations, Marketing, and Advocacy at OTASA (Occupational Therapy Association of South Africa)

Business

Markets and Indicators

Rand/Dollar	17.78	-0.05%	▲
Rand/Pound	24.44	-0.69%	▲
Rand/Euro	20.83	-0.60%	▲
Platinum	1 406.25	4.31%	▲
Brent Crude	67.38	0.65%	▲
Gold	3 325.95	-0.18%	▲
Etherium	43 169,88	0,76%	▲
Bitcoin	1 904 865,95	0,19%	▲

SALGA to reposition Ditsobotla municipality as an economic hub

By: JN Reporter

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) in collaboration with Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality and the Departments of Cooperative Governance & Traditional and Economic Development, Environment, Conservation & Tourism this week hosted a three-day investment workshop to improve the Ditsobotla Local Municipality’s local economic development strategy.

The investment and growth workshop which was officially launched by Mayor Molefe Morutse took place from 24 to 26 June in Lichtenburg in North West was hosted to improve the local economic development strategy which currently is unable to bolster the local economy and create viable business and investment opportunities.

SALGA’s Thotoane Shale says the strategy was reviewed to improve the municipal business climate and taking into cognisance



Ditsobotla Local Municipality. Picture: Supplied

the prevalent level of disinvestments and the gloomy economic conditions in the municipal jurisdiction. “The reviewed strategy, if implemented correctly, will leverage resources for unlocking opportunities for entrepreneurship, Small Micro Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) and ultimately inclusive growth and development

within the municipality, for the benefit of communities.”It will pave the way for the municipality to attract and retain investment within the municipal area. “It will also strengthen collaboration between the public and private sector, non-governmental organisations, and civil society for the benefit of local communities.

Business Brief

Take-home pay declines for third consecutive month: Report



The latest report by BankServ Africa shows that take-home pay declined for the third consecutive month in the month of May.

BankServ Africa attributes the decrease to a challenging economic landscape characterized by slow economic growth domestically and a deteriorating global economic outlook amid tensions in the Middle East.

The latest data shows that the nominal average take-home pay dropped by 1,3% to reach R17,296 in May compared to April.

Independent Economist, Elize Kruger says despite the current decline, take-home pay had been moving in a positive direction from mid-2024 to early 2025.

“2025 has turned out to be quite a volatile year with multiple global shocks and a host of local challenges. This has resulted in downward revisions to growth and this has subsequently resulted in an environment of low confidence and uncertainty, which is not conducive to economic activity. I think that is what we are seeing in the salary space with companies’ conservative in terms of salary increases in the light of uncertainty and reduced economic growth prospects,” says Kruger. SABC

National Assembly to meet over Division of Revenue Bill



The National Assembly will this afternoon consider the report of the Standing Committee on Appropriations on the Division of Revenue Bill.

The Bill outlines how government revenue is divided between national, provincial and local spheres of government.

It was approved by the House last year despite being opposed by some opposition parties.

The sitting will be at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.

Early this month, the Fiscal Framework and Revenue Proposals were passed by 268 votes against 88 while two MPs abstained.

The Fiscal Framework allowed for the implementation of a general fuel levy increase.

SA takes action against foot and mouth disease



Minister in the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni Picture: GCIS

Minister in the Presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni has confirmed that South Africa is actively addressing the recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) affecting four provinces.

On Thursday, Ntshavheni indicated that the Cabinet also welcomed the arrival of much-needed vaccines, sourced from Botswana, which she said would help combat the FMD

outbreak, which has spread to four provinces, including Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, and the North West.

“The vaccines are being distributed and administered free of charge to the affected areas, especially in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and those farms in other provinces where the disease has been identified. A second batch of vaccines is on order with the Botswana Vaccine Institute,”

she said.

Ntshavheni, who was speaking during a media briefing on the outcomes of a Cabinet meeting held on Wednesday, also stated that the Cabinet is “deeply concerned about the escalation of hostilities between Israel and the Islamic Republic of Iran, along with airstrikes by the United States of America.

“The ongoing attacks by both countries have led to loss of life, casualties, and destruction to property. Cabinet calls for an urgent de-escalation of hostilities, restraint, and full compliance with international law by all parties to prevent further human suffering.

“Cabinet further calls on the USA, Israel, and Iran to create room for constructive dialogue and give the United Nations the opportunity to lead the peaceful resolution of the dispute, including the inspection and verification of Iran’s status on uranium enrichment, as well as its broader nuclear capacity.

“As a continent, we in Africa are still suffering the consequences of the balkanisation of Libya 14 years later, with the escalation of terrorism across the continent,” she said.

Following the recent travel by President Cyril Ramaphosa to Canada for the G7 Summit, the minister said Ramaphosa had used the recent trip to mobilise support for the country ahead of the G20 Summit later this year, where he participated in the G7 Summit Outreach Session.

“President Ramaphosa used the opportunity of the G7 to urge for greater cooperation between the G7 and the G20, and mobilise support for reforms in the international institutions of global governance, such as the UN Security Council and the global financial system.

“The president’s participation in the G7 clearly points out that South Africa does not hold an anti-West policy position, but we are ready to work with everyone to pursue South Africa’s national interests and to advance the African agenda,” said Ntshavheni. IOL

GET TO KNOW YOUR DJ

Voyaging through Lucky D's Soul and RnB experience



By: Lerato Mutlanyane

Lucky D's fingers fly across the decks, bringing us acoustic sounds of Soul and R&B.

Emerging from Motse Thabong in Welkom, Lucky David Mapena, known as "Lucky D," is known for crafting a unique blend of soul, R&B as well as Afro Pop and has captivated great audiences with his craft.

With his career taking off as a mere hobby, it eventually transitioned into a passion for playing soul/R&B, which landed him huge gigs with the likes of Wilson B, Sentle Lihoko, David Mashabela, the late Peter Mashata, and many more. Navigating the soul/R&B genre presents numerous challenges, as its appeal is limited to a specific audience. However, Lucky D is thriving despite these obstacles.

Lucky D indicated that the many occurring challenges within the industry are that there is a vast number of DJs that want to join the pool, gunning for the ball, which seems not to be sustainable for all, and how the people in the industry are disjointed. "Events are just not normal, there is a lot of duplication and there is no creativity at all," he mentions.

With DJ Teddy's exceptional mentorship, Lucky D has rowed this ship for a good 15 years, making appearances at Bloemfontein's most astounding establishments like Cubana and Sechaba Lounge. With aspirations of owning a soul and R&B lounge that supports the curation of live music and will be one of the city's key tourism points.

Catch Lucky D at Sechaba Lounge every Sunday for the "Extended Sunday Soul Sessions."

Friday 27 June 2025
Friday After Work Get Together
Sechaba Lounge
Bloemfontein

Saturday 28 June 2025
Winter Wave with Sfarzo RTEE
Chicaco & Bar
Bloemfontein

Saturday 28 June 2025
House of Glo
16A 2ND Avenue
Bloemfontein

DJ Skuzabell's "fake" GBV case continues to stir up controversy

By: JN Reporter

Exactly a year after a popular DJ and radio presenter, Nkunyana Nkunyana, was fired at Lesedi FM over an alleged "fake" assault on his wife, Thakane Ramakau, and showing no remorse on air, his latest exposé continues to spark controversy on social media.

This comes after Nkunyana – better known as Skuzabell to his fans and followers – spoke for the first time in 12 months, since the incident, about the damage it has caused to his personal life and career.

The famous Soul and R&B DJ's revelation on QwaQwa's Finest Podcast, in an episode released late last month, of his difficult journey in sustaining his life following Ramakau's accusation, met with empathy from his fans, who used the platform to turn against Ramakau, while others continue to believe there are always two sides to a story.

The controversy began when the Facebook handle "Momamedi wa radio" posted podcast video footage, and fans commented and sympathized with the DJ by calling for both the radio station and the women to face consequences for false accusations. **"MamaOlwethu Ngubeni... I**



think women should also face consequences for false accusations, just like men. Imagine someone getting arrested or losing their job due to lies."

"Edward Seithleko... Some women are so cruel this is heartbreaking."

However, others like Vee Mfene simply warned of the danger of believing everything read and heard.

"Vee Mfene... If people were readers n good listeners, they'd know the reason behind the dismissal. No employer has the right to middle in family affairs. (Sic) The guy actually made a joke of a GBV case while in the similar case. People who domt read or listen will be-live what they hear."

"Hofmeyer Motaung... It depend on who you are at Lesedi fm there are those who are untouchable at Lesedi FM for me it was unfair dismissal to dismiss him."

"Hofmeyer Motaung... It depend on who you are at Lesedi fm there are those who are untouchable at Lesedi FM for me it was unfair dismissal to dismiss him."

"AfrikaEinstein Fairbridge Mosala... What goes around comes around."

Nkunyana maintained that he had never assaulted Ramakau and claimed that the case was a fabrication that continues



Former Lesedi FM presenter, Nkunyana Nkunyana. Picture: Tladi Moloi

to haunt him emotionally and financially, despite it being withdrawn.

"I am speaking out for the first time about the alleged gender-based violence drama involving my name. I want to clarify that I never physically assaulted my wife. This ordeal has taken a toll on my career and personal life. Talking about it, especially my time at Lesedi FM, is emotional for me," said Nkunyana.

The former Lesedi FM presenter was arrested and released on bail in April last year, and later fired from Lesedi FM before Ramakau subsequently dropped the charges.

He stated that the stigma persists, and the accusations have cost him jobs and damaged his industry relationships.

"What is painful now is that the situation affected my career. Today, I'm unemployed. Some people still look at me as someone who beats women," he said.

The deep-voiced DJ has since launched his online radio station called Beezy FM.

Wings of change: Mokoallo makes history in aviation industry



SA's drone woman pilot Lebohang Mokoallo. Picture: Supplied

By: Abigail Visagie

Born and bred in the dusty streets of Phelindaba location in Bloemfontein, Lebohang Mokoallo, has carved her flight path with determination and courage in the mostly male-dominated aviation industry. A qualified aircraft maintenance engineer who officially entered the aviation sector close to a decade ago as an aircraft maintenance technician at South African Airways Technical is now not only commanding aircraft with confidence but also inspiring a new generation of women to chase their dreams above the clouds.

Journal News caught up with the 34-year-old Mokoalla this week, who describes her current achievements as both humbling and empowering, and also claims to stand out as being the only drone pilot in South Africa to operate the newly imported Tiltrotor VTOL manufactured by a South Korean company, New AeRoMission Accomplishment (NARMA). According to the Mokoallo, the drone is an unmanned vehicle that can land verti-

cally without the assistance of a traditional runway and is used as an ambulance drone to transport and deliver medical and other hospital supplies.

"Being trusted to operate such an advanced aircraft speaks volumes about the journey I have walked, the knowledge I have gained, and the trust my company and mentors placed in me. It is exciting to be part of something that pushes the boundaries of what is possible in African airspace," said Mokoallo.

She said that she aspires to become a leading female in aerospace innovation with artificial intelligence across the country.

"I want to expand drone applications in education and development and to start an Aviation Career Centre that nurtures future pilots, engineers, and creators, especially for young people from the Free State," hopes Mokoallo. "Building the drone academy resonates with one of my beliefs. I believe in building things that I wish existed, even if that means I have to be the first one to do so." She said. "I have always been deeply passionate about technology, flight, and education. Over the years, I have built my career in both manned and unmanned aviation, and I currently serve in key roles at TAU Aerospace and Safomar Technologies, including being the person responsible for aircraft and head of training at a well-renowned leading aviation company."

Mokoallo has been privileged to establish a drone training academy for a SACAA-accredited Aviation Training Academy from scratch, which gave her first-hand experience in shaping the curriculum and operating complex aircraft.

Fat Joe refutes trafficking and sexual abuse

Rap artist Fat Joe, born Joseph Cartagena, has vehemently rejected the allegations levelled against him in a recent lawsuit filed by his former hype man, Terrance "T.A." Dixon.

The lawsuit, which includes serious claims of pedophilia, forced labour and sex trafficking, has sparked uproar in the entertainment world, prompting Joe's impassioned response on Instagram.

In a post shared on Wednesday, June 25, Joe addressed the scandal head-on, calling the allegations "disgusting lies" and labelling Dixon a "coward".

According to the legal complaint submitted in the US District Court, Southern District of New York on June 19, Dixon has accused Joe of running a vast racketeering enterprise that involves the trafficking of underage girls and imposing abusive conditions on his employees.

Joe's attorneys have denied the claims, asserting that they are fabricated to extort money from the rapper. They have already initiated a counter-lawsuit against both Dixon and his lawyer, Tyrone Blackburn, accusing them of attempting to shake down the artist for financial gain.



CODE Launches ‘iCourt Yethu’

- A Court Restored
- A Legacy Reignited

By: Refilwe Mochoari

This Youth Month, CODE is doing more than just commemorating history — it’s helping shape the future.

In celebration of Youth Day, CODE introduces iCourt Yethu (Our Court) — a bold, purpose-driven campaign focused on community upliftment and youth empowerment.

As part of this initiative, CODE has refurbished the basketball court at Isaac Morrison School in Soweto, turning it into a vibrant, world-class space where movement, creativity, and pride come alive.

iCourt Yethu means “Our Court” — a name that speaks to ownership, inclusion, and a lasting legacy for the youth.

CEO of Pepkor Speciality, Tyrone Vieira says the initiative reflects the heart of CODE.

“We lead with purpose and invest in projects that create real impact in our communities. iCourt Yethu is about backing young people, creating access, and igniting pride.

To bring this vision to life, CODE teamed up with Soweto-born illustrator Senzo Nhlapo, who transformed the court into a living piece of art. His work, full of local culture and bold



In celebration of Youth Day, CODE introduces iCourt Yethu (Our Court). Picture: Supplied

Four uncapped players in Proteas T20 tri-series squad

Proteas Men’s head coach Shukri Conrad has named a 14-player squad for the upcoming T20 International (T20I) tri-series against hosts Zimbabwe and New Zealand, set to take place in Harare from 14 - 26 July.

Rassie van der Dussen will captain the side, which features four maiden T20I call-ups. They are Momentum Multiply Titans duo Corbin Bosch and Lhuan-dré Pretorius, North West Dragons batter Rubin Hermann and Dafabet Warriors spinner Senuran Muthusamy.

Both Pretorius and Hermann were among the breakout stars of the 2025 edition of the

Betway SA20 for Paarl Royals.

Rassie van der Dussen (captain, DP World Lions), Corbin Bosch (Momentum Multiply Titans), Dewald Brevis (Momentum Multiply Titans), Nandre Burger (World Sports Betting Western Province), Gerald Coetzee (Momentum Multiply Titans), Reeza Hendricks (DP World Lions), Rubin Hermann (North-West Dragons), George Linde (World Sports Betting Western Province), Kwena Maphaka (DP World Lions), Senuran Muthusamy (Dafabet Warriors), Lungi Ngidi (Momentum Multiply Titans), Nqaba Peter (DP World Lions), Lhuan-dré Pre-



torius (Momentum Multiply Titans) and Andile Simelane (Hollywoodbets Dolphins).

NEWSWATCH

Gallants appoint a 28-year-old as new head coach



Marumo Gallants have appointed a new head coach ahead of the 2025/26 season, with 28-year-old Alexandre Lafitte taking over the reigns.

Lafitte will become the youngest coach in the PSL this season after being unveiled by Gallants, taking over from Abdeslam Ouaddou who has since joined Orlando Pirates.

Abdeslam Ouaddou guided Gallants to a tenth-place finish and the Nedbank Cup semi-finals this past season.

Statement:

Marumo Gallants F.C. confirms the appointment of Lafitte Alexandre as the club’s new Head Coach.

The 28-year-old French coach brings a strong track record in leading teams in both France and Côte d’Ivoire. Alexandre most recently managed Stade d’Abidjan, where he guided the team to the Ivorian League title.

His appointment follows the departure of Abdeslam Ouaddou, who parted ways with the club at the end of the recent season.

The club have confirmed that the French coach will join up with the team in a couple weeks.

“Coach Alexandre has a clear understanding of the direction we are taking as a club,” said club president Abram Sello.

“He joins ahead of pre-season, which is critical for continuity and alignment with our objectives.”

Orbit College roars into Betway Premiership

By: Lerato Mutlanyane

Orbit College sealed their spot in the Betway Premiership after claiming a 1-0 victory over Cape Town City FC on Wednesday at a packed Olympia Stadium in Rustenburg.

The Mswenko Boys netted a second-half strike through Letsei Koapeng, a strike that ultimately relegated CT City to the Motsepe Foundation Championship and broke their hearts.

Originating from the heart of North West province in Rustenburg, the Orbit Football Club, known as the "Mswenko Boys", with a smooth operation of over 8 years under the management of Head Coach Pogisho Makhoye, the team has reached an effortless peak to get where they are at this present moment.

The team has a remarkable league record, having competed in the second division of the South African Football Association

(SAFA) from 2015 to 2023, consistently ranking among the top scorers.

"Being part of the PSL has always been a goal for the team, so we had to work very hard and be extremely strategic to achieve it. The team is very excited." Coach Pogisho Makhoye comments confidently.

Orbit College FC made a historical move when they scored 1-0 against Cape Town City FC on their home grounds in Rustenburg, not only that, but they also notably got promoted from the ABC Motsepe Premiership to the big Premiership in a sequence of just two seasons.

"The NFD is very challenging, but it has positively assisted in shaping the team," Makhoye adds. All the players of the Orbit College FC are of fully fledged age, and the recruitment system is going to remain fixed.

"We won't be getting any new or additional players as of yet, the players will be promoted within the team," Makhoye emphasizes.

The Orbit College FC has put the North West province back on the map after almost a decade of no motion and has secured a sponsorship of R1 million from the North West Provincial Government (Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation) for the team's development and operations for the season. A final, resonant quote that sums up the feeling,

"We are ready for the Premier League, in fact, we have been ready," Makhoye concludes.

Erasmus picks four uncapped players for Barbarians clash



Boks coach Rassie Erasmus Pictures: X - @Springboks.

Springbok coach Rassie Erasmus has named four uncapped players in his 23-player match-day squad for Saturday's match against the Barbarians in Cape Town.

It's the defending Rugby World Cup Champions' opening match of the international season.

Tighthead prop Asenathi Ntlabakanye and flanker Vincent Tshituka have both been named in the starting lineup. Hooker Marnus van der Merwe and another tighthead prop, Neethling Fouche, will feature alongside a few Rugby World Cup-winners and seasoned campaigners on the replacements bench.

Another notable inclusion in the starting team is Lood de Jager who'll partner Jean Kleyn at lock. De Jager last played for the Springboks in 2023 when he featured against the All Blacks in a Rugby Championship test match in New Zealand. Many of Erasmus' combinations are tried and tested. Aphelele Fassi, Cheslin Kolbe and Kurt-Lee Arendse join forces in the back three, with double Rugby World Cup-winners, Damian de Allende and Jesse Kriel, the center pairing. Sacha Feinberg-Mngomezulu and Morne van den Berg are the halfbacks. Erasmus opted for a loose trio of Jean-Luc du Preez, Tshituka, and captain Siya Kolisi, while Franco Mostert and Kwagga Smith will join up with Van der Merwe, Wessels, and Fouche as the replacement forwards. The bench is a split of five forwards and three backs with Cobus Reinach, Manie Libbok, and Andre Esterhuizen the replacement backs.

SABC

Orbit College captain Atisang Batsi Pictures: BackPagePix.

Sundowns bow out of Club World Cup

Mamelodi Sundowns have missed out on the Club World Cup knockout stages after a goalless draw against Brazil's Fluminense on Wednesday night at the Hard Rock Stadium in Miami, Florida. The defeat meant Bafana Bafana finished third in the group stages.

Lucas Ribeiro was the first to pull the trigger of the match outside the box, but his shot was met by the goalkeeper's bucket hands. Fluminense were giving Downs space, which allowed them to not only dominate possession but also create chances.

Tashreeq Matthews spurned a good chance in front of the goal, but his effort was smacked away by the keeper's chest. Divine Lunga also came close to breaking the deadlock for his side after Themba Zwane delivered him the ball on the left flank, but the Fluminense defence made

a clearance to deny them a goal.

Counterpressing almost benefited the Pretoria-based side, but Fluminense managed to clear the ball away from the danger area. Danger loomed for Downs just after the 20-minute mark, but luckily, Khuliso Mudau headed the ball away to keep the scoreline at 0-0.

The Rio de Janeiro-based side were close to opening the scoring after the cooling break, but the ball went slightly wide.

Despite Bafana Ba Style dominating the opening half, they went to the break with a goalless draw.

The second stanza kicked off with an early corner kick awarded to Masandawana.

Taken by Lucas Ribeiro, the shot was too powerful to find the right person in the area.

In the 58th minute, the Brazilian-based outfit



came close to opening the floodgates, but they were denied by the woodwork. Substitute Mosa Lebusa saved the day for Downs after he slid to make an important tackle, denying Fluminense a goal just inside 70 minutes. In added time,

Masandawana almost saw a goal, but the effort was headed out by the Fluminense defence.

After 90 minutes of a titanic tussle between the two sides, the match ended with no goals, seeing Downs exit the tournament.