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**67 MINUTES OF IMPACT: GOVERNMENT, BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES UPLIFT NKANGALA DISTRICT**

Full Story on Page 4 & 5

**NELSON MANDELA DAY**

**NELSON MANDELA TRANSFORMED THE WORLD CELEBRATE HIS LIFE**

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First with the People, First with the News

**9 YEARS ON, STILL THE VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS**

# Mpumalanga Premier appoints new leadership team and fires DCSR HOD

● KATLEGO MKHONTO

**MBOMBELA** – Mpumalanga Premier Mandla Ndlovu officially announced on Tuesday, 15 July 2025, the reshuffling of Members of the Executive Council (MECs) in the Mpumalanga Provincial Government. The decision to reshuffle the MECs, Ndlovu said, was taken “in the best interest of good governance, efficient service delivery and public trust”.

“We have made several assessments in all our departments and realised that we need to make certain changes aimed at strengthening the work of government to address service delivery and a number of challenges confronting the province,” Ndlovu said.

Among the most notable changes is in the Department of Education, where MEC Cathy Dlamini was replaced by Lindi Masina, the former Speaker of the Legislature.

In the media briefing on 15 July, Premier Ndlovu outlined Masina's key performance areas, including improving academic outcomes, enhancing learner performance in Maths and Science, and introducing technology in schools.

“The department must work towards a target of a 90% pass rate for the Matric class of 2025. We must also holistically implement the eLearning strategy by providing technological aids such as tablets, starting from Grade 10 in the 2026 academic year,” he said. “Working together with teachers, SMTs, SGBs, parents and communities, we must ensure that education is everybody's business.”

Former Ehlanzeni District Mayor Jesta Sidell has been appointed as the new MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, replacing Makhosazane Masilela, who has been excluded from the new executive.

New appointments also include Khethiwe Moeketsi as MEC for Agriculture, Rural Development, Land

and Environmental Affairs, and Nompumelelo Hlophe as MEC for Social Development. Both are expected to bring fresh leadership to departments critical for supporting rural communities and vulnerable groups. Moeketsi is expected to operationalise the Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market by the end of the month.

“We believe that these changes will help us towards the achievement of the apex priorities of inclusive growth and job creation, reduction of poverty, and tackling the high cost of living,” said the Premier.

The Premier also extended appreciation to the outgoing MECs, saying: “I wish to extend my appreciation to all outgoing MECs for their services rendered to the people of Mpumalanga.”

In a significant accountability move, Premier Ndlovu confirmed the termination of the contract of the Head of Department for Culture, Sport and Recreation, Godfrey Ntombela, with immediate effect.

Ndlovu revealed that Ntombela had allegedly extended his contract fraudulently, using the former Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane's electronic signature without her knowledge. The former Premier has denied signing any extension beyond September 2024.

“This has not been an easy decision. It comes after a thorough process of engagement, assessments, and consideration of all the facts at hand,” he said. “There is an alleged payment of R80 000 that was exchanged for the misuse of the former Premier's electronic signature. This matter is viewed in a very serious light.”

He confirmed that the case has been handed over to the Acting Provincial Police Commissioner, Lieutenant-General Dr Zeph Mkhwanazi.

The newly appointed MECs have been sworn in and are expected to begin their duties with immediate effect.



**BACK FROM LEFT: Newly sworn-in MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Jesta Sidell; former Speaker and now Education MEC, Lindi Masina; High Court Judge Takalani Ratshibvumo; and Premier Mandla Ndlovu.**

## Political parties' reaction to Makhosazane Masilela's re-election as Mpumalanga legislature speaker

● KATLEGO MKHONTO AND LUCAS SHONGWE

**MBOMBELA** - The return of Makhosazane Masilela to the Speaker's position has received warm welcome from various political formations in the Mpumalanga Legislature.

On Thursday, 17 July, Masina was re-installed to the position of Speaker during a sitting presided over by the Judge President of the High Court, Segopotje Sheila Mphahlele.

Her election follows a vacancy created by the redeployment of Lindi Masina, former Speaker, to the education portfolio following Premier Mandla Ndlovu's cabinet reshuffle on Tuesday, 15 July. Masilela previously served in the Speaker's role from 2021 until 2024 before her appointment to be a Member of Executive Council (MEC) for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

Speaking after her election, she expressed her commitment to strengthening the Legislature's role in holding the Executive accountable and enhancing public participation in law-making processes. “I am deeply honoured to be entrusted with this responsibility. I pledge to lead with fairness, transparency, and in the best interest of the people of Mpumalanga,” she said.

Masilela's re-election brings the total number of women who occupied the position to seven. She brings with her a wealth of experience in governance, public service, and community leadership.

When conveying a message of support, the ANC said Masilela's second stint as speaker is a firm demonstration of their trust on her to once again lead the Legislature to greater prosperity. “We have no doubt that Masilela is now bringing an added experience from the executive which must help the Legislature to improve its efficiency on lawmaking, oversight and public participation. We also wish our former speaker comrade Lindi Masina well in her new responsibility as an MEC for education,” said ANC caucus leader, Eva Makhabane. Mpumalanga chairperson of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Collen Sedibe said his party will support Masilela if she is not biased. “As we welcome you honourable speaker, you are not new in this seat. We cannot praise you because we cannot praise a fish for swimming, it's your duty to swim. You know your responsibilities, all we would request from you is to hold the decorum of the house without biasness and treat all members equally,” he said. “You are



**Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature Speaker Makhosazane Masilela**

warmly welcomed and we are ready to work with you in the remaining years of the 7th administration.”

Trudie Grovè-Morgan of the Democratic Alliance (DA) said her party has endorsed Masilela's appointment. “We wish you the best as you prepare to take up the responsibilities and challenges of this honourable office. As you embark upon your new responsibilities, the DA wishes to assure you and the people of Mpumalanga of our continuous support, that is if you don't become biased with favouritism to your party,” she said. “We are looking forward to working with you. Not only to forge proper functionality of this house, but to also work towards developing close relations between us and the people who voted for us to be in this house.”

The Freedom Front Plus (FF+), through its leader Werner Weber, expressed it is convincingly satisfied that Masilela will discharge her duties with dignity and fairness across the divisions of parties in this house. “I know that she is going to do that because I know her. I believe that if she does that, she will eventually, notwithstanding our political divisions, unite us in all our diversity,” Weber said.

Mpumalanga leader of ActionSA, Thokozile Mashiane stated her party saw Masilela's re-election as a significant moment, not only for the speaker. “But for the people of Mpumalanga who continue to look to the Legislature for leadership accountability and service. We trust that under your stewardship, this legislature will uphold the principles of transparency, fairness and robust democratic debate,” she said. “As you take on this responsibility, may you be guided by the values of impartiality and integrity and may your leadership help restore public confidence in the work we do as elected representatives. We wish your strength and wisdom in your speaker.”

“the path of the righteous winds upwards to flee from hell beneath us” Prov 15:24



## A Steady Stream of Love

By Pastor Chuck Swindoll

1 Peter 4:8

Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.

(1 Peter 4:8)

Nothing is a more compelling witness than the love and unity that Christians exhibit toward each other, and nothing is more disturbing or disruptive to the unity of the body than Christians who are stirred up against each other and experiencing strife. Nothing is a poorer witness.

Don't think the unsaved aren't watching when we bash our brothers and smash our sisters! They love it when we can't get along with each other. It makes

news. They love to quote one Christian who is after another Christian. It's as if the journalist or pundit leans back and says, “Aha! Gotcha!”

What is Christ like? He is characterized by love and forgiveness. An insightful person once said, “We are most like beasts when we kill. We are most like men when we judge. We are most like God when we forgive.”

I have never met a person who didn't have a reason to blame someone else. Every one of us can blame somebody for something that has happened in our lives. But don't waste your time. What we need most is a steady stream of love flowing among us. Love that quickly forgives and willingly overlooks and refuses to take offense. Some people are so easy to love that you just naturally fall into their arms. But others are so hard to love, you have to work overtime at it. There's something about their natures that's abrasive and irritating. Some are the opposite of magnets. They repel. Yet even they need our love, perhaps more than the others. How very important that we “stretch fervently” to love each other.



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# Delmas women gather in worship to fight GBV

*‘Together, we can make a difference and advocate for a future free from GBV.’*

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

**DELMAS**— The Delmas First Women’s Prayer Summit brought together about 250 women to worship and bring awareness to gender-based violence (GBV) and health issues that women are grappling with.

The summit held on Saturday, 12 July, organised by the Delmas First Women and the House of Prayer Ministry Church, aimed to create a safe space for women who have experienced health issues and those who have been victims of GBV to share their experiences and find support.

Portia Masango, a community member and one of the speakers in the event, shared her experience of being a victim of domestic abuse.

“My husband used to beat me when we had heated arguments, especially when

he was drunk. Sometimes he would hit me for cooking late, even though we were both coming home from work,” Portia said with her voice filled with emotion. “I could not talk about it because I loved him.”

Masango is one of too many women who have been abused by her partner. Statistics South Africa’s latest figures highlight that approximately 7.3 million women aged 18 and older have experienced physical violence in their lifetime. Furthermore, 35.5% of women have endured physical or sexual violence, with one in three women aged 16 and older having faced physical violence and one in five having experienced sexual abuse.

Nozipho Mapukata, one of the speakers from Devyton in Gauteng, also shared her story, highlighting her journey through profound loss and resilience. After losing her first husband just three weeks into their marriage, Mapukata faced immense grief and emotional turmoil. Her second marriage brought additional challenges, including infertility, leading to societal ridicule and pain.

“I suffered a lot, mentally and emotionally,” Mapukata said. Through her darkest moments, she found solace in her faith and has transformed her pain into purpose by advocating for victims of GBV.

Bishop E. Mthombeni concluded the summit with a call to action, urging participants to pray against cancer and GBV. He reinforced the

importance of community engagement in creating a safer environment for all.

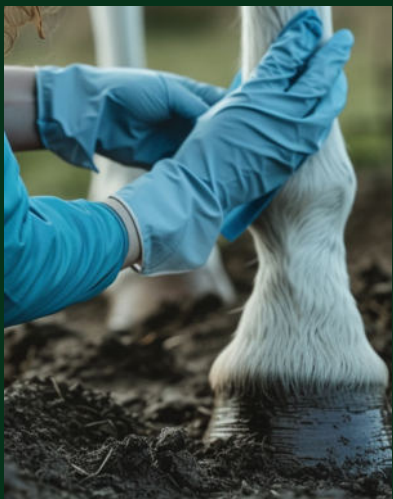
“Together, we can make a difference and advocate for a future free from GBV.”



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## DARDLEA PUTS MEASURES TO CURB FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE FROM SPREADING

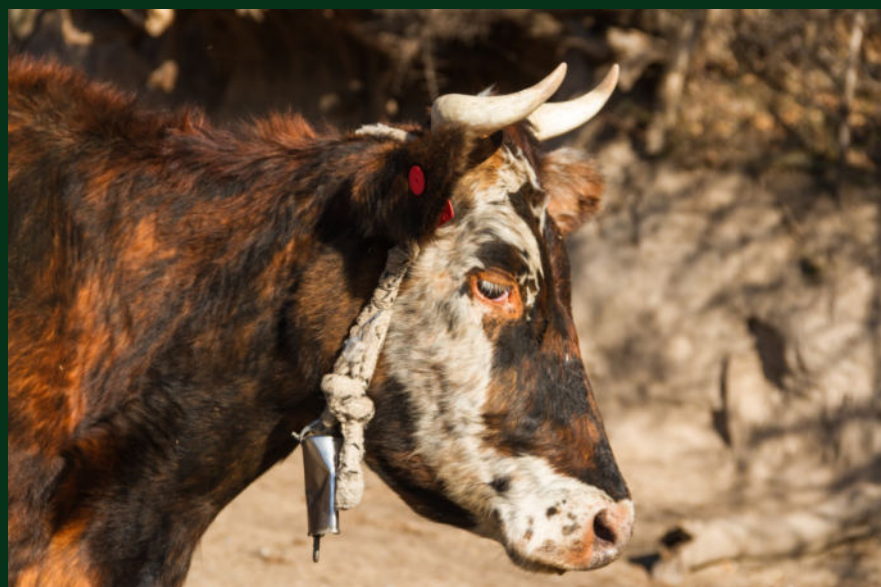
The Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs’ (DARDLEA) Veterinary Services continues to strictly monitor the four confirmed outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), one from a farm in Dr Pixley ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality, three from two farms and one abattoir in Dipaleseng Municipality. The outbreak investigations demonstrated the source for farm outbreaks was unmonitored movements of cattle from livestock auctions in neighbouring provinces and the abattoir outbreak was traced back from the feedlot in Gauteng.



The Department has since put control measures in place to curb any potential spread of the disease in the vicinity of the affected farms. This includes the deployment of Veterinary officials to affected areas, quarantine, cloven-hoofed animal movement control, surveillance and sampling in surrounding farms, public awareness, controlled slaughter of the affected animals, and no movement of animals from the affected areas. The outbreak at the abattoir has been eradicated and the remaining three farms are in processes of depopulation which will include vaccination of animals and later their slaughter out while under strict quarantine.

“Since October 2022, all livestock owners in the country must provide a declaration of health and origin and must obtain the necessary Stock Theft documents for all cloven-hoofed animals like cattle, sheep, pigs and goats, to be moved from their property of origin onto other properties. Recipients of such animals must give written agreement to isolate new livestock

for 28 days before introducing them into the main herds of the destination farm. This requirement was again emphasized in the Government Gazette Notice No. 6319 of 13 June 2025, issued by the Minister of Agriculture. All cattle presented at auctions must be inspected before being admitted to the auction pens. If any animal presents with clinical signs, the auction must be suspended and necessary veterinary actions will pursue to control and prevent possible infection”, said DARDLEA MEC, Ms Khethiwe Moeketsi. FMD is a highly contagious viral disease of cloven hooved domesticated and wild animals. Wild cloven-hoofed animals are buffalo, giraffes, impala, etc. Buffalo usually serves as asymptomatic carriers of the disease. It can spread amongst cattle at a fast rate; it does not have a high mortality rate, but its effects are economic.



Busisiwe Mavuso  
Busani Mining

### This isn’t a story, it’s a journey.

I’m Busisiwe Mavuso, from Albion, eMalahleni. Growing up in a community surrounded by mining activities, I was inspired to pursue a career in this field. With a background in Safety and Business Analysis, I founded Busani Mining to contribute to my community and create job opportunities.

In the early days, I wore many hats, facing limited resources and countless challenges. Yet I persevered, driven by a determination to succeed.

Acquiring crucial equipment, which allowed us to enhance our operations and expand our services, was one of our proudest moments. This was made possible by the support of Glencore, who provided steady work for us in the process of Discard Compaction.

Giving back to the community is important to me. Last year, we donated food to a local school, and this year, we’re helping them hire additional teachers.

In the next 5 years, Busani Mining will expand into hauling and loading coal. My advice: if you love it, just do it. You’ll never be fully ready, but you’ll always learn on the journey.

# 67 minutes of impact: Government, businesses and communities uplift Nkangala District

By Mathabatha Maila, Simphiwe Jennifer, Zinhle Masilela, Rodney Hlatshwayo, Nelisiwe Skhosana, Parmella Zondo, Nodica Fundama & Portia Nkambule

**NKANGALA** - This year's Mandela Day brought a glimmer of hope to 83-year-old Boy Innos Dimba, a man long forgotten in Phola, eMalahleni Local Municipality, whose life had been marked by poverty and a quiet loss of dignity.

For years, Dimba lived without an identity document or access to his SASSA grant, after a relative—under the guise of helping him—took his documents and left him with no income, care and recognition from the very system designed to protect the vulnerable.

But hope came knocking when Betty Masilela, a devoted community health worker, got aware of Dimba's difficulties while doing routine door-to-door visits to her patients. Shaken by what she saw, Masilela immediately escalated the matter to the SoGutjhe

Royal House, under the leadership of Ndabezitha Siphohle Mahlangu.

The Royal House worked with builders, volunteers and community members to give *mkhul'* Dimba a new home.

Speaking at the handover, the SoGutjhe Royal House emphasised that Mandela Day is not about publicity, but purpose. "We are not here just to paint walls; we are here to heal lives," said Ndabezitha Siphohle Mahlangu. "Every elder deserves to be safe, warm and recognised."

Dimba was deeply moved by this gesture. "I had given up," he said. "I thought the world forgot me. But today, I see I'm not alone."



TOP: The old house, a shack, and the newly built house (left)

## Steve Tshwete Local Municipality

While the SoGutjhe Royal House was restoring Dimba's dignity, the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality distributed 120 blankets across wards 23 to 28, bringing warmth and relief to elderly residents in Middelburg.

The donation drive aimed at assisting vulnerable community members battling the winter chill. Leading the initiative was the Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Human Settlements and Spatial Development, Letsatsi Ernest Nkwana, who emphasised the municipality's continued commitment to supporting those in need.

Ward 26 Councillor Madoda Amigo said the beneficiaries were carefully

selected. "In my ward, I personally selected 23 individuals who are truly in need. Many residents cannot afford to buy blankets, and this donation will go a long way in helping them cope with the cold," he said. One of the grateful beneficiaries, Elinah Sgudla from Ward 26, said: "I'm very happy to receive this blanket. It shows that the municipality still carries the spirit of kindness and democracy that Mandela stood for. This day means so much to me. We've come a long way with democracy, and I hope the municipality continues doing this in the years to come."



Keeping the elders warm during the chilly winter

## WARD 17 - eMalahleni Local Municipality Overline

Sgudla isn't the only one who was thrilled at receiving blankets. Ward 17 Councillor Sizwe Mathebula, in partnership with Thungela Resources, also handed

over blankets and food parcels to residents in need at Overline, under eMalahleni. Mathebula and Thungela Resources delivered the blankets at



Witbank Primary in Schoongezicht, where nearly 60 people gathered at the school to witness and partake in the occasion. "I could not attend it last year because of bad knees, but today I prayed and asked God to give me strength to go and get my blanket," explained one of the beneficiaries, Mimi Jacobs. "I'm so happy that my knees allowed me to come." Councillor Mathebula expressed gratitude to Thungela Resources' continued partnership in serving the community. "Mandela Day is not just about one day of service; it's about making a lasting impact. Today, we are reminded that dignity can come in the form of a blanket or a meal, and that no act of kindness is ever too small," he said.

## Spirit of giving and service in the Victor Khanye Municipality

In Delmas, the MEC for Culture, Sport and Recreation Leah Mabuza, along with Executive Mayor of Victor Khanye Local Municipality Vusi Buda, spearheaded a community upliftment initiative.

Backed by stakeholders such as MTN, Exxaro, Thungela Resources, Stuart Coal and Sephaku Cement, the event brought hope to various wards. The Botleng Library in ward 5 received laptops and blankets, senior residents in the community and those who reside at Botleng Old Age Home in ward 6 received blankets and groceries.

They also renovated the structure at the elderly home and have provided exercising equipment for the senior citizens who reside at the facility. In ward 2, they delivered books and groceries to the Thuthukani Day Care while the Ekukanyeni Drop-in Center in Ward 4 received cleaning services and groceries.



Victor Khanye Municipality Executive Mayor Vusi Buda (centre) surrounded by his councillors and representatives of businesses who contributed to touching many lives in the spirit of Madiba.

## Thembsile Hani Local Municipality

The ZADAN Projects, together with the Joe Sibanyoni Foundation, King Fanas Foundation and SipVic Security Services, were extremely busy visiting six schools and one disabled centre in Kwaggafontein, Thembsile Hani Local Municipality.

They renovated some classrooms at Mafu Secondary School, Mphalali Secondary School and built a new wall to separate the male and female toilets at Mkhophuli Secondary School, donated a printer worth R50,000 at Sokapho Secondary School, provided school uniform to Mgwezani Primary School. For the Qedusizi Disabled Centre, in addition to renovations, they donated two JoJo tanks and food hampers while Sindawayo Primary School received two laptops and five dustbins.



Various donations and renovation works were done, including a printer valued at R50,000, handed over to Sokapho Secondary School.

Continued on Page 5

# Mbuyelo-Manungu Colliery marks Mandela Day by investing in early childhood education

RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

In the spirit of service and giving back, Mbuyelo-Manungu Colliery dedicated its Mandela Day efforts to early childhood development by supporting Wisdom Day Care Centre in Botleng, Delmas. The mine partnered with the Department of Social Development to identify a centre in need, and Wisdom Day Care was selected following severe storm damage in February, which left much of the centre's infrastructure destroyed. Rencilwe Mphela, Community Engagement and Development Specialist, explained how Mbuyelo-Manungu Colliery helped the centre, "As part of our commitment to giving back, we assisted by painting the new

structure, tiling classrooms, and revamping the play area to create a better learning space." Mbuyelo-Manungu Colliery's efforts to transform eight classrooms, with new doors fitted and damaged ones and broken glass replaced, went beyond the symbolic 67 minutes. Founder and principal Thokozile Mahlangu expressed deep gratitude for the intervention. "The timing was perfect. We had already rebuilt five classrooms from scratch, which left us financially stretched. The mine stepped in and completed the rest of the repairs," she said. "Wisdom was started in 2017 with just four children. We now care for 180 children, mostly between the ages



The Mbuyelo-Manungu Colliery team, Wisdom Day Care staff, the contractor, and a DSD official celebrated together after completing the hard work.

of two and four, with a team of nine staff. Some of our learners come from households headed by grandmothers who can't afford the fees, and we allow them to contribute whatever they can manage. We also make sure every child receives snacks daily." Speaking on the significance of Mandela Day, Manungu Colliery General Manager Humphrey Mokwena said, "Mandela Day reminds us of the values Madiba stood for: commitment to social justice, human dignity, and community service. As Manungu Colliery, we aim to inspire a sense of ubuntu and encourage our workforce to make a positive contribution to society." Beyond infrastructure improvements, the mine empowered a local, youth-led business from Delmas to carry out renovations and do signage, while staff and management personally handled most of the painting as part of their 67 minutes. On the broader impact, Mokwena

said: "We partnered with a youth-led business from Delmas to execute the renovation of the daycare centre. This collaboration not only supports the local economy but also instills a sense of pride and achievement within the community. By engaging local enterprises, we aim to stimulate job creation, enhance skills development, and drive sustainable growth, ensuring that our impact resonates far beyond the immediate project." Responding to the experience of being with the jubilant kids who shared speeches and sang, Mokwena said: "The experience of being here and interacting with the children has been truly enriching. Engaging with the children brings a unique joy and energy that's hard to replicate. Each interaction serves as a reminder of the incredible spirit and resilience that children possess, underscoring the fundamental role we play in their lives." Looking ahead, and in line with

their mantra "Kuti yimisela i ku humelela!", Mokwena hopes this legacy continues: "Through collaboration and commitment, we aim to leave a lasting impact. Our Mandela Day efforts are about more than a single day—they're about creating resilient, empowered communities for generations to come."



Wisdom Daycare Principal Thokozile Mahlangu, Mbuyelo-Manungu Colliery General Manager Humphrey Mokwena, and Social Development official Ophelia Manda cut the Mandela Day 67 Minutes cake.



Paying close attention to detail, Mbuyelo-Manungu Colliery General Manager Humphrey Mokwena paints with precision.

## 67 minutes of impact: Government, businesses and communities uplift Nkangala District - Continued

### eMalahleni Local Municipality



**Continued from Page 4**  
The eMalahleni Local Municipality brought together residents and local organisations to participate in various activities in Kriel. Some of these activities include cleaning up public spaces, painting community facilities and distributing food to vulnerable households. The event was a testament to the power of collective action and the impact that can be made when individuals come together to give back to their community. The Klarinet Clinic, in collaboration

with the South African Police Service (SAPS), held an Open Day in Siyanqoba township to promote healthy living and crime awareness. The outreach focused on bringing essential services to a community with limited access to healthcare and policing. Residents received free health screenings and educational talks from professional nurses who stressed the importance of early detection and maintaining a healthy

lifestyle. SAPS officers engaged with the community to raise awareness about crime prevention and encouraged residents to report criminal activity through proper channels rather than resorting to vigilantism. The initiative aimed at strengthening trust between the police and the community. The organisers described the outreach initiative as a continuation of Madiba's vision — reaching out to the vulnerable and ensuring no one is left behind.

### Extending love to the streets



In the spirit of not leaving anyone behind, the Kakarambha Foundation in partnership with Commodity Logistics Management Africa held a haircut drive meant to show care to young people navigating challenges related to substance use. The event underscored the critical role of community support in promoting youth well-being. By

focusing on young people affected by substance abuse, the partnering organisations shed light on the importance of inclusive and compassionate support systems. Though modest in scale, the initiative was a powerful and meaningful gesture of giving back, perfectly aligned with the values of compassion, dignity, and community upliftment that Mandela Day represents.



# ISIKO LETHU

# Our Story

WITH SIPHO MAHAMBA

## ILIZWI

### INARHA NGEYEENGWENYAMA NAMA KHOSI!

Inarha esindzinde kiyo le, ungangungu bonyana kuyi narha lesizibetha isifuba ngayo kodwana akusinjalo, amakhosi wekhetu kunye nesitjhaba babethwa bujamo behlalo. Ukungenelela kwePolotiki yesi modeni kwakhinyabeza isiitjhaba sengwenyama uNyabela. Singase sizibethe isifuba ngombana ipilo yethu seya ndzinda khona la enarheni etjhisa bhe! Ama Khosi wekhetu aboSoMntjongweni amakhehla amadala abakatjalwa enarheni le. Qobe minyaka sithi! Kgedlhu emuva silunguza lapha imirabhu yabokhokho bethu yasala khona. Iye! Khona zikhona iingwenyama nama Khosi wekhetu akhothama khotamela magegana nenarha le esindzinde kiyo, ngikhuluma nge Wonderboom ukuya Emasongololo "Cullinan" neenarha ezimagagana lapha iingwenyama zekhetu bezi qaqada khona. Akusi kumbi njalo njengombana vele ezinye zeendawo zanganeno vele iingwenyama zekhetu besele zizithumbile nanga phambi kobanyana i-Polotiki yesi modeni isonge amaKhosi wekhetu kunye nesitjhaba iinmkhono ngombana lapha sasuswa khona namhlanjesi ama mayini nama pulasi akhiqiza ubusaphasapha. Inarha ngeyeNgweenyama namaKhosi, ekuligugu esaphiwa lona ukusukela kubo khokho bethu sisi t j h a b a s a m a N d e b e l e ngokwehlukahluka. E-Pumalanga ukusukela eMthambothini ugege nayo ukhuphuke ukufikela kibo Panela ziindawo zamaKhosi wekhetu ingasi ama Khansela

namtjhana uRhulumende. Iinmrabhu yethu sisi tjhaba samaNdebele idzimelele khulu ebezimini bekhethu, ekukulapho lapha sizifumana khona lokhu kulathisa bonyana lapha kwalala khona bekhethu kuligugu kithi kunye neenzukulwaneni zamaNdebele. Kungakho ukufuduka namtjhana ukufudukiswa asihlobani nakho ngombana sitjale bekhethu kileyo ndawo. Iingwenyama zekhetu zalwa kwarathuka ibhetjhe. Zilwela iinarha lezi esele zilawulwa bondlebe zikhanya ilanga knye nabo somaPolotiki. Nasele sitjheja ngama bomu bonyana iye! Khona siya vuma kwenzekile ekwenzekileko. Sitjheja itjhebiswano nasiza ehlangothini lenarha ekuyilawuleni ngaphasi kwesandla seeNgwenyama nammaKhosi wekhetu kunye norhulumende nalaba bePolotiki yesi modeni bonyana likhona lona na, iingwenyama zethu zikhona eziku zuzako njenba nikazi benarha na. Kuya vela bonyana iinghonghoyilo zimmango njengombana amaKhosi wekhetu aphiwa mbijana. Isikhethu satjho sathi iinkunzi eembili azihlali esibayeni esisodwa. Iingwenyama zekhetu zikghonile ukubulunga iindwao, zazivundisa zanotha kunye nabantu abandzinde kizo bahlonyiswa ngesimilo kodwana mvanje azisa kghoni ukuzuzisa khona esitjhabeni sabo kodwana kuzuzisa yena Rhulumende nehlelo lakhe lePolotiki yesi modeni. Inarha kuthogeka kwamambala bonyana ibuyele kubanikazi bayo. Iingwenyama zethu zikghone ukuba nelawulo elipheleleko ngenarha.

**Umtloli**  
(Themba Emanuel Mashobane)  
**Umhlaziyi**  
(Ngemani Sbusiso Mahlangu)



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# Innibos art exhibition reflects soul of Mpumalanga's artistry

● KATLEGO MKHONTO

**MBOMBELA** – It was in early July when thousands of artists, lovers of the craft and art collectors gathered for the annual Innibos Lowveld National Arts Festival.

The Innibos art festival, sponsored by Toyota and officially opened by the Mpumalanga MEC of Culture, Sport and Recreation, Leah Mabuza, is known for its vibrant mix of music, theatre and arts and has been held annually in Mbombela since 2004.

This year's exhibition focused on home-grown visual talent. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, it had become one of South Africa's biggest arts festivals, with its main stage drawing up to 35,000 people per night.

Curator Dana MacFarlane had an exhibition that provided a calm and engaging space within the exhibition's grounds. It featured 24 artists from across the province, showcasing a mix of painting, photography, sculpture, and mixed media— all echoing themes of identity, social challenges, and cultural heritage.

“The exhibition is called 'Taste Combs'

or 'Homecoming', and the idea was to track down artists who were not only born or raised here but who also found their creative voice in Mpumalanga – even if they've since moved away,” she said. One of the most celebrated artists this year was Reuben Mpangane, named the official Innibos festival artist in honour of his 50-year contribution to South African art. Born in 1953 in Kaapsehoop, Mpangane is not only an artist but also a teacher, former school principal, mentor and advocate for creative expression. He had his solo exhibition on Thursday, 03 July at Casterbridge in White River.

His mixed-media works made from recycled plastics are vibrant and textured. “It is a journey to search for the beautiful and bold that we hope for at Ngodini, in condemnation of all social ills caused by poverty, pollution, and population,” he said.

Festival Director Sandra Jacobs said the focus on visual art this year was deliberate. “Art is an important part of our culture. We

wanted to ensure our local artists were not only seen but supported. The response from the public has been fantastic,” Jacobs explained.

Among the standout emerging artists was Linda Shongwe from Kabokweni, whose portrait series explored township life and youth identity. “Waking up every day is my inspiration. Then it's up to me to create something from what life brings – that's how I embrace existence,” said Shongwe.

Also from Kabokweni, Winston Thekiso impressed with pen

drawings on vinyl records, merging music and visual storytelling. “By using vibrant colours and intricate patterns, I transform once-functional records into artworks that pulse with new life,” he said.

For many young artists, the gallery was more than a platform – it was a career opportunity. Several pieces were sold, and some artists received offers for future commissions and collaborations. Community members, tourists, and even international guests visited the space, expressing admiration

and pride. The gallery not only enriched the festival but offered tangible value to the creative community – exposure, income, and a chance to tell their stories on a larger stage.

The Innibos Art Gallery reminded visitors that art isn't just to be admired – it's something to feel, discuss, and take forward. Through works that reflect the soul of Mpumalanga, the gallery played a crucial role in preserving culture, sparking thought, and nurturing local creative growth.



## Ndebele newly crowned Queen and King of Indoni

● NELISIWE SKHOSANA

**ZANDSPRUIT**- The week-long Ndebele Cultural Camp with 18 contestants saw Thulisile Skhosana (20) being crowned Queen of Indoni Ndebele SA 2025/26 while Mthobisi Mahlangu (23) was crowned King. The event held at Mdala Environmental Centre in Dr JS Moroka Municipality took place on 6 to 12 July and had about 200 young boys and girls in attendance.

Skhosana joined Indoni in 2018 at the age of 12. “I feel so happy. I'm someone who truly loves my Ndebele culture,” said the newly crowned queen Skhosana. “My mission is to go into schools and teach young girls about our traditions and what I learnt at the camp.”

For Mahlangu, becoming king was a dream come true. He said Indoni gave him purpose. “Indoni has played a very big role in transforming my life for good. I guess if I didn't join Indoni, I would have been flooding in drugs,” he said. “I learnt respect, dignity, and how to honour people and culture. I feel so great because I've been trying for years, contesting with no luck. Finally, God answered my prayers. My goal now is to bring home the crown at the national Indoni finals in December.”

In the week-long event participants learned about Ndebele traditional attire, how to make *unotlabalala* (traditional beer), the meanings of

cultural beads, and practices around initiation and marriage. The boys were also taught important life skills like how to slaughter a cow, respecting women, and conducting themselves as future husbands and leaders.

Khaya Bhuda from Mabhoko Village, who secured 4th position as a male contestant, said the camp opened his eyes. “It was my first camp and what a wonderful experience. I learnt how Ndebele men should behave, wear, and treat women with respect. These are teachings I was not taught at home. I'm so grateful.”

Indoni Champion Sbhongile Mahlangu, affectionately known as Mam Bhuda, said the movement aims to bring back lost traditions and instill morals in the youth. “The main reason for Indoni is to group young people to have morals, take care of themselves, and remain virgins until marriage,” she said. “Teenage pregnancy is a big issue in our country. Many young people don't get advice at home. Indoni gives them both cultural and life guidance.”

The national finalist cultural Indoni event will take place in December in Durban, where winners from various cultural groups will represent their provinces.



Thulisile Skhosana (20) crowned Indoni Ndebele SA Queen 2025/26, and Mthobisi Mahlangu (23) crowned King

## Grieving family marches to Vosman Police Station to demand for answers

● ZINHLE MASILELA

**EMALAHLENI** – The grieving family of 13-year-old Siyamthanda Nkosi, who died on 26 June at an initiation school, marched to Vosman Police Station to demand answers and progress about the case. “All I wanted was an update on what's happening with the case, but there was no response. That's why we decided to protest,” said Nkosi's grandmother, Bongisiwe.

Bongisiwe said Nkosi ran away from home and attended the initiation school at Emalahleni without his family's consent. While at the school, he fell seriously ill with diarrhoea, which tragically led to his death.

Bongisiwe said the family was never informed of Nkosi's condition until they received a call from the Local Clinic—only to be told upon arrival that Siyamthanda had already died. “I was devastated. We had no idea he was even sick,” said Bongisiwe.

The family's march to demand answers was supported by advocacy organisations such as KwaneleMama Foundation and eMalahleni Civic Foundation, along with concerned community members who stood in solidarity, demanding accountability and transparency from law enforcement. In response to the protest, the Vosman Police Station finally provided the family with a long-awaited update, informing them that investigators are still waiting for postmortem and DNA results to determine the exact cause of Nkosi's

diarrhoea. No arrests have been made at this stage. “We sat down with the family and explained to them that these things take time and we understand their frustration,” said Vosman Police Station communication officer Captain Mnisi. Mnisi added that he informed the lead detective to urge their counterparts, a laboratory in

Pretoria, to prioritise the matter. While the community continues to rally around the Nkosi family, calls grow louder for stricter regulations and oversight of initiation schools to prevent further tragedies.

Portia Makgatha, a member of the KwaneleMama Foundation in solidarity with the family, said: “Siyamthanda's life cannot be lost in vain.”



Gogo Bongisiwe Nkosi standing with the protesters in solidarity of the protest.



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# Phola youth auditions for a Netflix series

● MATHABATHA MAILA

**PHOLA**— A wave of excitement was buzzing in the air in surrounding areas of Phola as aspiring actors flocked to Makause Combined School to audition for an upcoming Netflix series.

The auditions held on Saturday, 12 July 2025, were hosted by Gejile, a local creative organisation known for promoting grassroots talent and creating platforms for underrepresented youth.

The auditions attracted not only hopeful performers but also known figures in South African entertainment, local leaders, and law enforcement came to support the initiative.

Among the most revered guests was legendary actor Jerry Phele, popularly known as "Mofokeng" from the classic sitcom *Emzini Wezinsizwa*. Speaking exclusively to *Highveld Chronicle* he reflected on how such initiatives can change lives. "When I started acting, there were very few opportunities for people in the townships. Today, seeing this kind of platform reaching Phola makes me emotional," Phele said. "I

saw talent today that reminded me of where I began. My message to these young people is simple: stay focused, respect the industry, and don't ever stop learning. Even if you don't get selected now, your time will come." Joining Phele was Amos Mnguni, known for his powerful role in the SABC1 drama *Uzalo*. "There is real fire here," said Mnguni. "I saw boys and girls today who could easily hold their own in front of any camera. We need to stop thinking that talent only lives in the big cities. These rural and township youth are ready. What they need is investment, access, and continued support."

The event wasn't just about acting, it was about inspiration. This was best captured by Lwandle Sithole, a finalist in the 2025 Miss Teen Emalahleni pageant, who delivered an impassioned speech to the audience.

"We all have talents. Whether it's

acting, singing, dancing or speaking. Your gift is valid," Lwandle said. "This audition proves that you don't need to leave your town to chase your dreams. The dream can come to you. But we have to be prepared, focused, and ready when it does."

Representing the SoGeorge Ndzundza Royal House, Chief Mhleka Mahlangu, extended his gratitude to Gejile and Netflix for bringing such a life-changing opportunity to the youth of Phola.

"Too often our children are left idle during school holidays, and that's when they fall into dangerous habits [such as] substance abuse, crime, peer pressure," Chief Ndzundza said. "We wish this could happen every holiday season to keep them engaged, hopeful, and driven. We must build the creative economy right here in our villages and townships."

Ensuring the event ran smoothly and safely was Sergeant Siphon Ntokozi Mtshweni from Phola Police Station. "I was also touched by the discipline and passion shown by these young

people," Mtshweni said. "It reminds us that policing is not just about enforcement, it's also about community support and protecting."

The Gejile team expressed gratitude for the turnout and vowed to continue bringing talent-search initiatives to underrepresented communities.



# Four teenage footballers in Thembisile Hani Municipality become Stars of Africa

● NELISIWE SKHOSANA

Our reporter, Nelisiwe Skhosana, went to the Sy Mashia Sports Ground to catch up with two of the four teenage soccer players from Royal Classic Football Club in Thembisile Hani Local Municipality who will be living their dreams after being selected to join the famous Stars of Africa Football Academy.

Nhlakanipho Mahlangu (14) and Siyamthanda Mahlangu (13) were selected to train at the Stars of Africa Football Academy in Johannesburg renowned for producing top professional footballers in South Africa and overseas.

Their selection is a moment of pride for their team and families.

Nhlakanipho known as Maguire began playing soccer at the age of 11 while doing Grade 6. He currently plays as a left winger for Royal Classic and is studying at Ekangala Engineering School of Specialisation.

"I'm so happy, finally my hard work and dedication to soccer has paid off," he told Highveld Chronicle. "I understand that I still need to push harder. This is just the beginning. I'm so grateful for the opportunity." He also gave advice to younger players. "Never give up. Push hard, one day you will be recognised by big clubs or an academy. Don't be lazy for practice."

Siyamthanda known as Potjoza plays both left and right wing for Royal Classic. He lives in Tweefontein B2 and attends Qedudlame Primary School.

His journey is not easy, he walks two kilometres each day to practice in Tweefontein K.

"I'm in tears with the opportunity I got," Siyamthanda said. "I always take my practice seriously. My parents are so happy. Seeing their smiles makes me want to work even harder."

He also encouraged his peers. "To

all my peers who love soccer let us push, bafowethu. Practice every day, listen to your coach, and also take your school books seriously."

Both Nhlakanipho and Siyamthanda dream of playing for Mamelodi Sundowns one day.

Stars of Africa, founded in 2003 by respected coach Farouk Khan, is more than just a football academy. It aims to grow future stars both on the field and in life. Based in Johannesburg, the academy teaches discipline, respect, and hard work values that help young players succeed in football and beyond.

Coach Farouk Khan has helped many boys turn their football dreams into real careers. He has trained players who've gone on to play for top clubs and national teams. The academy also supports community projects and shares knowledge with local coaches.

Coach Eucan Mathibela of Royal Classic said the team is proud of the boys' achievement. "This shows that the vision of our team is going forward. Out of seven boys who went to trials, four were selected for the under 15s. We are happy with the result."

They will officially start their classes in 2026.



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