



BAOBAB NEWS

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Limpopo Celebrates 30th Freedom Day in Maruleng

Maruleng-The 2024 Freedom Day Celebrations were held at Calais Stadium in Maruleng Local Municipality and was themed “30 years of Democracy, Partnership, and Growth”.

The celebrations included government departments, municipalities and government stakeholders services where audiences were entertained by various traditional and cultural dances from all districts within the Limpopo Province.

Speaking at the event, Premier Chupu Stanley Mathabatha says, “On this day, we salute our brothers and sisters on the African Continent and friends across the world whose solidarity made it possible for us to defeat apartheid. We single out and salute the people of Russia and Cuba who through their determined struggles and efforts ensured that South Africans today have the possibility to build a just united nation”.

“Although there has been progress in better service delivery, fighting poverty, allocation of housing, upgrades of road infrastructure, access to health care and education, there is still more to be done to the people of Limpopo to eradicate pit latrine toilets and water provision to the most affected communities such as Giyani”.

Komishinara Shai (60) who came to the celebrations highlighted the brutality of the apartheid that he went through before the first democratic elections in 19194.

Shai was employed by various mines as a rock driller before retiring. He was arrested on two occasions for not having the “Dompas” which was a required



MEC Nakedi Kekana and school learners during Freedom Day Celebration

official document for black society to carry with them all the time, to prove their identity and where they could live or work.

“I have experienced the brutality of the apartheid force twice and it feels like yesterday, I was arrested for being at the township because I did not have permission from the police to travel from the hostels where all mine workers resided.

They arrested me at 2 am while sleeping over at a friend's place and the other time I was arrested for being in South Africa with the expired dompas as I came from the Republic of Lebowa” Shai narrated.

Shai explained how the police

force strategy was to arrest black people in the early hours of the morning during their inspection which was humiliating and indecent, men will be forcefully and aggressively taken to the police vehicle without clothes but just an underwear and be beaten before being taken to the police station.

“There will be many of us assaulted during the arrest but there was nothing that we could do, the living conditions in the hostels were inhuman, coming back home was not an option because of poverty conditions. We held on just to provide for our families, it was tough because we

were not even allowed to go out at night. Older men like me were treated like 10-year-old by white people both at work and anywhere we went”.

As South Africa celebrates democracy, Shai continued to praise the milestone because he is an RDP housing beneficiary, have a free flow of movement to Gauteng without any documentation to visits family and friends and enjoying the older person's grant.

Mathabatha handed over soccer balls to the local teams to enhance their performance, and a significant reminder that as aspirant professional football players, they have the opportunities to showcase their skills nationally and internationally without any limitations compared to before democracy was attained. He also reminded the people of Limpopo to cast their vote on 29 May as the country will be voting for the seventh time since the dawn of democracy.

“This is a very important day to cast your vote in the general election and vote for people that will bring change into your communities and South Africa.

Before 1994 a black person was not allowed to vote or make any decisions affecting their lives. This day came with blood, death, and negotiations. Those who died for this democracy, their death can never be in vain. We use this democracy to celebrate people that confronted apartheid regime without any fear guided by the love of their country and people and we are indebted to them by casting our votes on 29th May”. Concluded Mathabatha

EC

Limpopo Province Announces Annual Marula Festival Activities



Marula tasting during the Marula Festival Launch

Polokwane-The Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism has announced the details of the 18th Marula Festival during the launch on 21 April 2024 in Polokwane.

Speaking at the Launch, MEC Rodgers Monama said the 18th Limpopo Marula Festival is an annual event to celebrate the indigenous tree and its fruit.

"Since the inception of the Marula festival in 2006, after the economic

intervention of developing Marula industries as a viable business, the province has been able to sustain the annual festival that positively impacted the livelihoods of the Phalaborwa Community which is the home of the Marula festival and boosting tourism in the area". He said, marula beverage is prepared by 60 women who belong to co-operatives from all districts of Limpopo. This year, 12 000 litres of marula beverages will be available including products such as

soap, jam, nuts, peanut butter and marula achar.

"The festival will include a cultural parade on 26 April, a marathon on April 27, a theatre and film festival on May 2, the marula golf challenge on May 4 and open air concert on May 4. The festival will also feature an SMME Flea Market with 30 small business owners within the marula industry".

In Conclusion he said, the festival aims to increase domestic and international tourism, to promote

marula festival and activities associated with it, and promote the province by increasing commercial value of the marula products by exporting and marketing it to countries such as Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Mozambique and Lesotho to strengthen investment opportunities.

Tickets are available at Computer ticket for R200 general and R800 VIP access. **EC**

Premier Mathabatha donates laptops



Premier during his visit at Mafato Primary School in Motetema situated in Groblersdaal

Premier Chuphu Stanley Mathabatha visited Mafato Community Primary School on Tuesday, 16th of April 2024, in Motetema, Elias Motsoaledi local municipality, to hand over 17 laptops to the learners and teachers.

This gesture was a continuation of his birthday celebration that took place in January where he handed over 10 laptops, and committed to install solar system and air conditioners for the efficiency of the school and ensure that learning and teaching continue unabated.

Premier Mathabatha expressed that this is not charity work nor a political stunt but a gesture that is close to his heart as an alumni of the school.

"Initially, I wanted to celebrate my birthday with the school but my good friends initiated more tangible things to be done for the school. I am

talking about friends that I grew up with and also shared childhood memories" says Mathabatha. During the visit, the Principal Ms Stephina Pheeha and educators couldn't hide their excitement and welcomed the Premier and clapped in an exuberant and joy and also thanked Mathabatha for honoring his commitment.

"We had tablets allocated to grade 1s and 2s but they were not enough. What the Premier did for the school is unforgettable. Educators have been sharing one laptop to prepare for lessons but with these 27, our allocation will improve effective planning and allowing kids to use the rest for their school work. We are even in a better working environment because Motetema is a very hot place but since the air-cons

were installed in my office and staff room things are better" said Pheeha. Stephina Pheeha said: "There will be no reason for learners to fail now, as we have all the resources we need to succeed."

She further explained that these generous gestures have improved the quality of their lesson preparations as teachers, as well as a conducive environment for learners to learn.

Mathabatha said as his political career is coming to an end in few weeks, he needed to express his love he has for children and committing to a continuous relationship with the school that shaped his leadership character.

"This is not a charity but an act of hope and expression of love I have

for the school and community, this is a commitment to equip future leaders, I have seen number of desks in classroom without a space for any flexible movement and when I asked, I was told that it is because the school does not have enough space to accommodate learners" said Mathabatha.

"I commit to assist with the construction of the two blocks of classrooms to make enough classrooms for these learners, I will engage the friends of Mathabatha and business people to intervene. I further commit to deliver the remaining 7 laptops, it might be even more than what is expected". **EC**

Government aims to increase internet access to rural communities



Broadband connection beneficiary with Deputy President

Government aims to increase internet access to rural communities

Deputy President, Paul Mashatile says government has put aside R2.2 billion for the connectivity project, aiming to increase internet access to rural communities.

He was speaking in Limpopo Province at Ephraim Mogale Stadium in Modimolle - Mookgophong Local Municipality, on the 19th of April 2024, during an event to connect households to the internet. He was accompanied by the Limpopo Premier Chupu Stanley Mathabatha, Minister of Communication and Digital Technologies, Mr. Mondli Gungubele and Waterberg District Mayor, Cllr Morris Mataboge.

This government flagship program is designed to bridge the digital divide by providing Wi-Fi access to rural communities with inclusive internet access. Mashatile committed to have more than 700 000 households nationwide



Deputy President Mashatile and Premier Mathabatha

connected by the end of 2024/2025 financial year.

Mashatile says government intends to connect more than 5 million households within three years."

Today's society including children

rely on internet and this project helps to narrow digital gaps by providing accessible internet to communities who cannot afford to buy data "said Mashatile.

He further said, more than 500

households already benefited from the Connect Project in Modimolle. They pay R250 monthly for unlimited access.

Tshepang Mathye, a Modimolle resident said having access to internet will provide various opportunities, search jobs online and to connect with families especially those who reside in remote areas.

Some local business owners highlighted the fact that having unlimited internet connections in Modimolle is an advantage for them and they believe that it will assist in expanding their businesses.

Minister Gungubele explained that this project is divided into three pillars which will connect service providers, public institutions such as schools and health facilities, as well as government organizations.

"This will also boost the economy of local communities and small businesses "adds Gungubele.

PM & MN

A Journey towards Economic Empowerment



Esteemed Guests - LAP Launch

On the 30th of April 2024, the 8th edition of the Labour Activation Programme Project Launch took place at Xilumani Hotel in Giyani, Greater Giyani Municipality in the Mopani District. It was led by esteemed guests including; the Minister of Employment and Labour, Thulas Nxesi, his Deputy, Boitumelo Moloi, the MEC for Limpopo Economic Development, Environment, and Tourism, Rodgers Monama, the MEC for Limpopo Provincial Treasury, Seaparo Sekoati, as well as the MEC for Sport, Arts and Culture, Nakedi Kekana.

The launch was hosted by the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), an entity of the Department of Employment and Labour, forming part of the national roll out plan to create more than 700 000 employment opportunities across the country. "Initially, the idea was to preserve jobs, but now we do more than that," detailed the Commissioner for the UIF, Teboho Maruping.

He further added that now it's a self-funded structure with paid benefits that enhances employability, enables entrepreneurship, and promotes economic growth. "The main objective for the programme is to transform people

to become either employees or employers," said the Commissioner.

One of the beneficiaries of the programme, Palesa Kutumela, explained how much she has benefited from the initiative. "I receive funding from the UIF, and run a well-supported business," expressed the Bachelor of Arts graduate from the University of Limpopo. After failing to find employment upon completion of her studies, the young lady went into the catering and culinary industry and opened her kitchen called "The Crunch" to sustain herself. Now she is able to uplift her community with her business.

This solidifies the MEC for the Limpopo Provincial Treasury, Seaparo Sekoati's statement when he said: "Young people who might have lost hope, can find hope again through programmes like these." He proclaimed that he acknowledges the contribution that this will bring to the already growing fight against unemployment that we are making. "Last year alone, we created 180 000 jobs, making us the second growing province in South Africa," added Sekoati.

The Minister of Employment and Labour delivered a keynote address and emphasized on the purpose of this Activation Programme. He mentioned that only substantial economic recovery and development will rescue the country's unemployment woes. "These initiatives are not a silver bullet that can be used to end unemployment completely but can be used to bridge the gap between job seekers and empowerment through skills development," continued the Minister.

"This project launch is a partnership between all stakeholders such as the Department of Employment and Labour, UIF, and service providers, with the aim of activating employment opportunities for every qualifying and competent individual in South Africa, and contribute to the growth of the economy. "The ultimate target for now is to create two million jobs for young people in South Africa," said Thulas.

P.M

Baobab News

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