



# BAOBAB

## NEWS

### Fly directly from Hoedspruit to Cape Town Airport with FlySafair!



Premier Dr Phophi Ramathuba

**K**nown as quantum of the sky on the internet streets because of its landing punctuality, FlySafair is one of the trusted airlines that will boost the economy between Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces after it officially launched the Hoedspruit to Cape Town route on 02 October 2025 at Hoedspruit airport in the Maruleng Municipality.

The low-cost plane will allow tourists to directly reach the Kruger National Park from Cape Town without connecting at the OR International Airport. The route will enhance convenience and accessibility to the Kruger National Park, situated across Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces, and gateway to one of Africa's largest game reserves which offers the big 5.

The Hoedspruit to Cape Town route will improve connectivity towards economic growth nationally and internationally as it is in the borders of Mozambique and Zimbabwe, improving access to the Kruger National Park and increasing number of tourists without stretching their budget. With the cost of R1 570, one will be able to reach Hoedspruit from Cape Town on a single trip, a

more reasonable cost compared to other flights in the market.

The Boeing 737 aircraft will operate three times a week on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday departing Cape Town at 12h15 and arrive at 14h25 in Hoedspruit, with the return leg leaving at 15h20 arriving in Cape Town at 18h05.

FlySafair Chief Marketing Officer, Mr Kirby Gordon said the company is hoping to see more demands on flight schedule that will make the airline operate seven days a week as opposed to three.

"Today, 2 October 2025, our first flight will land here in Hoedspruit, a significant milestone for us. It is our first flight, but we are confident that the route will eventually operate on a daily basis because we cater a competitive price with our budget friendly tickets for our passengers, plus it gives access to the African biggest park. The Kruger National Park is one of the busiest in the country and we want to see tourists coming this side of the country not stressing about budget because we got their back with our flight packages," said Gordon

Sharing her excitement with the opening of the new route, Limpopo Premier Dr Phophi Ramathuba pleaded with the Maruleng Municipality and FlySafair that the 2025 matric class learners who wish to study aviation and meet the requirements after the release of matric results in January 2026, should be given a bursary as it signifies community development and strong ties between FlySafair and Limpopo province.

"70% of the Kruger National Park is in Limpopo province, it will be very significant if a learner who wants to venture into aviation from Mopani District Municipality is awarded a bursary in the next two months when results are announced. This is how private partnership is strengthened by giving back to the community in a developing manner. This is just the beginning of greater relationship with the province because you have proved that you can bring business in the province by utilizing our properties in a profitable way." **EC**

# The Boeing 737 aircraft FlySafair

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# Former President Kgalema Motlanthe honoured with SAAPAM highest award



Former President Kgalema Motlanthe



Delegates during SAAPAM 24th Conference

The South African Association of Public Administration and Management (SAAPAM) conferred its highest association award to former statesman, his excellency Kgalema Motlanthe for his contribution to ethical governance on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2025 at Thohoyandou.

During his presidency tenure from September 2008 to May 2009 following the resignation of former President Thabo Mbeki, Motlanthe contributed immensely to the ethical conduct of office bearers, shaping the country to what was uncertain following the 2009 eight days in September after the

governing party's elective conference in Polokwane.

Marking the significant milestone of being recognized as a professional body by South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) in May 2025, the association held its 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Limpopo Province gathering academics, public servants and politicians under one roof to debate and present commitments, that will translate to action especially in the public sector, to promote efficient professionalism.

The recognition by SAAPAM aims to

promote professionalism and professional development in the public sector, by aligning national standards for competence and ethical conduct.

Celebrating its most deserving recognition by SAQA, the 2025 SAAPAM conference was held under the theme of "Building State Capacity, Prospect and Challenges". The theme tailored with one of the three 7<sup>th</sup> administration government priorities of Building of an Ethical Capable and Developmental State.

The conference aimed at addressing skills and competency that government practitioners must have, to enhance the public sector in serving the people of South Africa.

It is during the conference that SAAPAM looks at new research papers that have been published, focusing on challenges facing public administration and how service delivery can be improved using academics research.

Being recognized as a professional body, government will move past misplacement of officials and appoint based on recognition of skills, service excellence and strengthening leadership and governance.

Prominent public figures that attended the conference included Limpopo Premier Dr Phophi Ramathuba, Statistician General Risenga Maluleke, Dr Naledi Pandor and Public Protector Adv Kholeka Gcaleka. **EC**

# Through the hills & beyond the rivers - the Two Countries Marathon between Zimbabwe and South Africa



Athletes at halfway mark of the two countries marathon

Smart watches were set, the sound of running shoes took over the streets lessening the heavy breathing of athletes participating in the much anticipated two countries marathon between Zimbabwe and South Africa. Elite and social runners gathered with one purpose, to participate and finish the race that has been in recess for six years.

This unique marathon took place on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September and offered 42 km, 21km, 10km and 5km distance running, giving athletes options to choose from, depending on their level of fitness.

With about 300 athletes participating, 100 of those were from Zimbabwe and the other South Africans, displaying each their countries flag with their sports regalia painting the streets with two African countries flag colours, promoting unity and people relations through sports.

Those who participated in the 42km were transported by buses to the Matebeleland Province in Zimbabwe where the race started, while the rest of the runners started at Eric Louw High School in Musina.

Athletes braved the hills and hot weather running through the Beitbridge boarder post across the Limpopo River which is one of the busiest posts in South Africa, runners got to experience the Limpopo landscape towards Musina Town enjoying the Baobab tree views, carried by the scenery, when the legs were no longer strong to carry the athlete through, the mind was strong to recharge and give the legs motivation to keep one foot in front of another to keep going towards the finish point.

Mr Samuel Manamela from South Africa won the Two Countries Marathon at a finish time of 02hrs and 30minutes while Evidence Mudzamiri from Zimbabwe walked away with a first position in a finish time of 3 hours, 44 minutes and 36 seconds with 5:13 pace in the women's category.

Amongst those who took part was Johannes Mosehla, the oldest person ever to finish the 89.9 km Comrades ultra-Marathon at the age of 83 on 11 June 2025. Mosehla completed the 21km at 2:13.

Another prominent athlete Maki, a trusted pacesetter of the 12-hour bus during comrades marathon graced the race after travelling more than 500km and finished her 42km race within 4 hours.

The only bus driver for the 21km was Lerato Molomo from Polokwane Athletic Club, she delivered her passengers a minute less than the 2:45 target allowing passengers to register their finish at 2:44.

"As a pacesetter, the objective is to deliver new passengers to the finish line within the target. I had two athletes who participated in the 21km race for the first time and that's what I enjoy. Ensuring that new runners get to experience the humanity and support while in my bus".

Learned lessons after a six years break, Stella Dhokotera, a Zimbabwean committee member acknowledges a few challenges that will be improved in 2026. Runners experienced delay in starting time, online registration and limited water points.

Runners who completed the race were awarded with a medal and race T-shirt that had the running route taken printed at the back and two countries flag in the front symbolizing international relations. **EC**



Two countries marathon medal finishers



# Ha se baloi, they are our elders



Community Elders attending the event

“Ge ba bona mokekolo a befile e bile a le yo mosehla, ba a mmoloaya bare o a loya. Aowa le seke la re feletsa bo nkgono ba rona, re sa ba rata ke badimo ba rona” the lyrics from the late Limpopo musician, Umanji's 1999 hit song titled “Moloi” describes how elder persons are associated with witchcraft. Moloi is a word that translates to a witch, a degrading word that infringes on a person's dignity that needs to be disassociated with older people in this century since more awareness is raised about conditions commonly associated with elderly people.

The world observes Alzheimer Day in September to raise awareness amongst older people and society in general, about the condition which contributes to dementia amongst majority of older people.

Aligning with the world, the Limpopo provincial government gathered various stakeholders with more than four hundred pensioners at Marotabongwasha Tribal Hall in the Fetakgomo Tubatse local municipality on Thursday, 18 September.

Alzheimer is described as a progressive brain disorder, and a common cause of dementia which destroys memory.

Ms Rose representing the Association for Dementia and Alzheimer's of South Africa (ADASA) said, there's generally lack of awareness and inadequate support for older people in rural communities especially in Limpopo province.

“Theres still so much stigma about elders suffering from Alzheimer and dementia, they are accused of witchcraft. Awareness campaigns like today assist in communicating with families of those affected. This is part of ageing and nothing to do with witchcraft”, said Rose

ADASA pleaded with families to be careful, and not allow themselves to be scammed by marketing and sales people who sell different types of medication, misinforming those suffering from Alzheimer and dementia that they will be healed. “There is no cure for this condition, it's part of adult life”.

A person suffering from Alzheimer will often be seen in engaging in strange behavior like walking around without clothes in the streets,

going to the neighbours houses thinking they are within their property, and doing what they will normally do like sleeping under the tree.

Signs suggesting that a person suffers from Alzheimer include repeating conversations and asking questions repetitively forgetting what a person mentioned already multiple times. Forgetting names including the people they stay with, and generally not having the ability to follow basic daily activities such as making meaningful conversation at home.

With memory loss condition, criminals and other family members thrive in executing criminal acts such as rapping elderly women taking advantage of their mental ability. Children and grandchildren rob those suffering by manipulating them to give out their bank cards to use the social grants and pension funds for their benefits not considering the best interest of Alzheimer patients. **EC**



Community Elders

“There is no cure for this condition, it's part of adult life”

# Limpopo Premier opens Risima Housing Expo



Premier Dr Phophi Ramathuba

**P**olokwane- Limpopo Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba has accentuated that adequate housing is substantial to every resident across the province following Risima Housing Finance Corporation (SOC) Ltd demonstrating consistent growth and commitment to accountability.

Risima Housing Finance Corporation (SOC) Ltd is a financial service provider that grants home loan finance, has over the years stood as a beacon of hope for those who find themselves in housing limbo like

those public servants who do not qualify for RDP housing yet are also not able to approach private banks for financing.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa enshrines the right of every citizen to adequate housing, an imperative that government take to heart as it aligns its effort with the Housing Act of 1997, the National Development Plan 2030, and the Breaking New Ground Policy.

These frameworks not only guide but also empower government to build integrated, inclusive and sustainable human settlements.

Housing is a fundamental human need to significantly impact individual wellbeing, economic stability, health, education and community development. It also provides shelter and security, serving as a foundation for personal and emotional well being as a stable home environment permits individuals and families to thrive, fostering a sense of belonging and community.

Addressing dignitaries during the opening of the Risima EXPO at the Ranch Hotel on Thursday, 18 September 2025, Premier Dr. Ramathuba highlighted the need to diversify government offerings, moving beyond loans to include Financed Linked Subsidy Programme (FLISP), Insurance and rental management.

“To realize this vision, RISIMA must adopt a bold approach. We must

step out of our comfort zones and aggressively pursue opportunities, reaching into every province and mobilizing funding in the market based on the strength of our balance sheet. If constraints exist, let us confront

them. If policy and legislative adjustments are needed, we stand ready to carry those discussions forward.” Said Dr. Ramathuba

Dr. Ramathuba also called on big commercial banks to proceed with their partnership with government to ensure that RISIMA continues to flourish.

“RISIMA must grow, and it must generate its own revenue to expand its mission- a mission that is vital in uplifting our people, especially public servants. RISIMA must boldly elevate its voice, reaching out to every corner of our province. It must welcome clients with open arms

and promote the diverse services it offers.” Premier Ramathuba concluded **MN**

**RISIMA must boldly  
elevate its voice,  
reaching out to every  
corner of our province**



Risima expo delegates

# Limpopo eyes 2025 Matric top five finish

**G**a-Nkoana- Limpopo Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba has backed the matric class of 2025 to emulate the class of 2024, by surpassing 85.1% pass rate and secure a top five finish on the national charts, as they prepare to sit for their final examinations later this month.

Accompanied by the Limpopo MEC for Education Mme Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya, Dr. Ramathuba was addressing learners of Sehlaku Technical High School, Mmiditsi High School, Mogolo High School, Maboa High School and Maputle High School during the provincial matric countdown held at Sehlaku Technical High School located at Ga-Nkoana village, Fetakgomo-Tubatse Local Municipality, on Monday 29 September 2025.

Proceedings began with a solidarity walk including Limpopo Provincial Government EXCO Members led by Premier Ramathuba, Mayor of Fetakgomo-Tubatse Local Municipality, Cllr. Eddie Maila, Officials from the Provincial Department of Education, dedicated School Principals, teachers, parents and community leaders and over 1 000 matriculants in full school uniforms respectively.

The Solidarity Walk marked the 23 days countdown before the start of the 2025 final Matric Exams.

Premier Dr. Ramathuba believes the class of 2025 have adequate support and resources to at least challenge for a top five spot on the matric results charts while also producing one of the top achieving learners nationally.

“We, as your government, your teachers, your parents, and your community, are walking with you in body, in spirit, and in unwavering support. You are not alone on this journey. We love you, we believe in you, and we will support you all the way. The world is waiting for you.

Careers are waiting for you. Opportunities are waiting for you. Think big, aim high, and refuse to be limited by anything.

This solidarity walk we are part of today is more than physical exercise. It is a statement of unity. It is a declaration that education is everyone's responsibility, government, educators, parents, communities, and yes, you the learners yourselves.” Dr. Ramathuba said.

To support this goal, the Department of Education has rolled out several intervention programs, including supplementary classes, targeted assessments, and preparation support for learners.

Schools across the province are currently running 'Last Push' programmes, focusing on subjects and learners in need of additional assistance.

The Seventh Administration continues to invest heavily in education since it is a cornerstone of development by improving school infrastructure, strengthening scholar transport, ensuring timely delivery of learning materials, and introducing digital learning, and Dr. Ramathuba reckons this will lay a good foundation.

She further emphasized to matriculants that no matter how much government invests, true success lies in their hands.

“We can build classrooms, but only you can fill them with knowledge. We can provide textbooks, but only you can read them.

We can create opportunities, but only you can seize them. Let me remind you of something very important: this examination is not just a test of memory; it is a test of perseverance. It is a measure of the discipline you have built, the sacrifices you have made, and the



Matric class of 2025

resilience you have shown.” Dr. Ramathuba added.

Meanwhile, one of the learners present during the matric count down, Refiloe Motlatswi, from Mogolo High School said she welome motivations from the Premier (Ramathuba)'s address and she believes that she has what it takes to achieve greater results in the upcoming final examinations.

“Of course, I'm grateful to what government did for us today as matriculants. This is exactly what we need ahead of our final exams.

What stood up for me today was when she (Dr. Ramathuba) said we must not be distracted by local old men who are mine workers trying their lucks with us but instead we must face them and say we're going to school and when we come back we'll be able to hire them.

“As a young person my duty now is to secure my future.” Motlatswi said. Motlastwi, 17, said she intends to pursue a medical degree at the University of Limpopo in 2026.

The final matric examinations for the academic year 2025 will commence on October 20. **MN**

I'm grateful for what  
Government did for us today as  
matriculants



Limpopo Premier and MEC for Education



# Happy Elderly Day!



MEC for Social Development Florence Radzilani

*“Never speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him respectfully as you would your own father. Treat older women as you would your mother.”*

Representing the Premier, MEC for Social Development in the province, Ms Florence Radzilani spent her Wednesday, the 01<sup>st</sup> of October 2025 with the elderly at Namakgale, Phalaborwa for the International Day of Older Persons.

Foskor Community Centre was buzzing with excitement as senior citizens from the area welcomed the celebration held under the banner, *“Older Persons Driving Local & Global Action: Our Aspirations, Our Well-being, Our Rights,”* a theme that seeks to celebrate the life, influence, and wisdom of elderly people in communities and province.

#### About the day:

◆ In 1990, the United Nations General Assembly declared 01 October as a day to celebrate senior citizens.

◆ Now, it has become an annual initiative that celebrates the contributions made by older persons that ultimately shape communities.

◆ It is also a day to highlight challenges faced by senior citizens and bring to light their rights and opportunities.

◆ The day is a platform to create awareness of cultivating societies that will promote active ageism and overall, instill respect for the elderly in people.

Moreover, a representative from the Limpopo Persons Forum, Ms Gloria Makhubela came with a suitcase to unpack all that is experienced by senior citizens in the province. Firstly, she is

pleading with people, especially the youth, to respect the elderly. Secondly, she emphasised that older persons have the right to live and the right to dignity.

Therefore, she pleads with the provincial government to tirelessly combat the abuse inflicted on senior citizens and take more strides in protecting them. Lastly, she encourages her peers to not shy away from participating in community building activities for inclusion and healthy living. On the same breath, MEC Radzilani delivered a keynote address, echoing the same sentiments and said, “Old people are not a burden, they are living libraries of wisdom who deserve to live with dignity and honour.”

She therefore implored collaborative effort from all parts of society to create a caring environment for the elderly. Wisdom belongs to the aged and understanding to the old. Thus, everyone plays a part in preserving these fountains of wisdom (older persons) by respecting, cherishing, and protecting them while time still permits.

*“Never speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him respectfully as you would your own father. Treat older women as you would your mother.”*

The day ended with a sweet performance by Dr Winnie Mashaba where our grandparents proved that age is nothing but a number as they danced like there is no tomorrow. **PM**



#### Baobab News

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