

Congratulations Speech by Limpopo Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba
Welcoming Dinner for Magesi Football Club, Meropa Casino and Entertainment
26 November 2024

Programme Director,
MEC for Sports, Arts and Culture, Mr Jerry Maseko,
Executive Mayor of Capricon District Municipality, Cllr Mamedupi Teffo,
Executive Mayor of Polokwane Municipality, Cllr John Mpe,
Kgoshi Kgabo Moloto III
SAFA Limpopo Chairperson, Mr Jack Maluleke,
Fistinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen
Good evening, ladies and gentlemen,

Thobela, Ndi Madekwana, Riperile, Good Evening, Goei Naand

It is with immense pride and joy that I stand before you tonight to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Magesi Football Club—affectionately known as Dikwena Tsa Meetsi. Tonight, we gather not just to celebrate your monumental victory, but to honor the incredible journey you have taken to place Limpopo firmly on the map of South African football excellence.

Your historic 2-1 triumph over Mamelodi Sundowns in the Carling Knockout Cup final at the Toyota Stadium in Bloemfontein is nothing short of extraordinary. This victory is not only a proud moment for our province but also a statement to the nation that dreams, when backed by hard work, resilience, and determination, can indeed become reality.

Magesi Football Club, as newcomers to the Betway Premiership, has shattered expectations and carved a unique legacy in South African football history. Winning a major cup competition in your debut season is a feat that will be remembered for generations to come. You have shown us that the talent rooted in disadvantaged communities, like your home in Moletjie, has the power to rise above challenges and shine on the national stage.

To reach this point, you had to defeat formidable opponents—teams like Orlando Pirates, TS Galaxy, and Richards Bay—culminating in an unforgettable victory against the mighty Mamelodi Sundowns. Your unwavering spirit and teamwork are an inspiration not only to the youth of Limpopo but to every aspiring footballer in South Africa.

Programme Director, this evening, we also take a moment to celebrate the people who made this dream possible. Allow me to start with the visionary leader and owner of Magesi Football Club, Mr. Solly Makhubele. Sir, your selfless sacrifices and unwavering commitment to this team have not gone unnoticed. Running a football club, especially without sponsorship, is a task that requires immense courage and belief.

You have demonstrated what true leadership and resilience look like, pouring your own resources into this team and inspiring them to achieve greatness. Tonight, we salute you, Mr. Makhubele, for proving that even in the face of limited resources, passion and determination can yield remarkable results.

To the players, your dedication, skill, and teamwork on the field have brought this trophy home. To the coaching staff, your strategic planning and ability to motivate your players were instrumental in this success. To the management and supporters, your unwavering faith and encouragement have carried this team through every challenge. This victory belongs to all of you.

Programme Director, Magesi FC's victory is a powerful reminder of the untapped talent and potential within Limpopo. It highlights the importance of investing in grassroots sports development and supporting athletes from rural and disadvantaged communities.

Your triumph is more than just a football victory; it is a story of hope, inspiration, and possibility. To the young boys and girls in Moletjie and across Limpopo who watched this journey unfold, Magesi FC has shown them that their dreams are valid and achievable.

As a provincial government, we are committed to creating more opportunities for young athletes by investing in sports facilities, programs, and partnerships. We believe that with the right support, Limpopo can continue to produce champions who will excel on both national and international stages. Furthermore, we take pride in having three teams in the Betway Premiership—Polokwane City, Sekhukhune United, and now Magesi Football Club. Together, these teams showcase the wealth of talent Limpopo has to offer, and we pledge to continue supporting you as you build on this incredible success.

Sports have always served as a powerful tool for uniting people, transcending barriers of color, creed, and background. Over the years, we have witnessed how success in sports brings us together as a nation, creating moments of collective pride and celebration. When our national teams excel, South Africans from all walks of life stand united, waving the same flag and sharing the same joy, proving that sports have the unique ability to foster unity and harmony.

We dream of seeing more young talents from Limpopo rise to don the iconic Bafana Bafana jersey, representing our province on the grandest international stages. We want them to follow in the footsteps of stars like Aubrey Modiba, Grant Kekana, Khuliso Mudau who shines for Mamelodi Sundowns, and Sydney Mobi, a standout for Sekhukhune United, Evidence Makgopa from Orlando Pirates and Velli Mothwa from Amazulu.

All these players hail from our province, and we take immense pride in seeing them raise the Limpopo flag on both national and international stages. Their inclusion in the Bafana Bafana squad is a testament to the immense potential within our province, and it inspires us to nurture the next generation of footballing greats.

While we celebrate this monumental achievement tonight, we also look forward to what lies ahead for Magesi Football Club. Your journey is just beginning, and the entire province stands firmly behind you. We are confident that this is the first of many trophies to come, and we will continue to cheer for you as you rise to even greater heights. Furthermore, we trust that the club will retain its status in the future, preserving its legacy and inspiring generations to come.

Prorgamme Director, we call upon the business community to step forward and sponsor our local football clubs, enabling them to continue representing us in the Betway Premiership. Such support will help ease the financial burden on club owners, who are responsible for paying players' salaries- salaries that, in turn, provide for their families.

In closing, let me once again congratulate Magesi Football Club for making Limpopo immensely proud. You have united us as a province, inspired our youth, and reminded us of the power of resilience and belief.

Ladies and gentlemen, let us raise our glasses to Dikwena Tsa Meetsi—the pride of Moletjie, the pride of Limpopo, and the pride of South Africa.

Thank you.