

TRIBUTE BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE FUNERAL OF THE LATE MRS DITEBOGO THEBOLA CANDICE MANGALA, MOKOPANE MULTI-PURPOSE CENTRE, MOKGALAKWENA MUNICIPALITY, WATERBERG DISTRICT

10 APRIL 2026

Programme Director,

The Mangala Family,

Mayor of Mogalakwena Local Municipality, Cllr Ngoako Taueatsoala,

Councillors,

HOD of Limpopo Department of Education, Mr Maropene Viniel Seshibe,

Traditional Leaders,

Faith-Based Leaders,

Community Members,

Fellow Mourners,

Thobela, Avuxeni, Ndi Matsheloni, Dumelang, Good Morning, Goeie Môre,

We gather here today with heavy hearts, in a month of profound remembrance for our nation, a time when we honour the lives and sacrifices of our liberation heroes, Solomon Kalushi Mahlangu and Chris Hani. It is in this solemn period of reflection that we also confronted with the painful loss of Mrs Mangala, a woman whose life, in its own right, echoed the values of courage, resilience and selfless service that defined these giants of our struggle.

Her passing during such a significant month invites us not only to mourn, but to reflect deeply on the legacy she leaves behind. Like Mahlangu and Hani, she understood the importance of standing firm in the face of adversity, serving others with humility and of contributing meaningfully to the betterment of her community.

They say when a great tree falls, the forest feels its absence, but it also opens a space for the sun to shine through. Mrs Ditebogo Thebola Candice Mangala was that great tree in our lives, a pillar of strength, a canopy of comfort and a shelter from many storms. Her presence grounded us, her wisdom nurtured us and her love carried many through life's most difficult seasons.

Today, we mourn not only a teacher by profession, but a lifelong student of knowledge, a nurturer of minds and a builder of futures. Mme Mangala understood that education is not merely the transfer of knowledge, but the shaping of character and the awakening of dreams. Her passion for advancing her own education was a reflection of her belief that learning is a lifelong journey, one that she embraced with humility and determination.

Her life reminds us that teachers are the architects of society. Through her work, she planted seeds of excellence, discipline and hope in the hearts of countless learners. Those seeds will continue to grow and bear fruit long after her passing.

We must also take a moment to reflect on the remarkable partnership between Mr and Mrs Mangala, a union built on shared values, mutual respect and a deep commitment to education. Together, they devoted their lives to the upliftment of our communities through learning. Indeed, the Mangala household was not just a home, but a centre of inspiration, a family of

educators whose legacy challenges all of us to take a more active role in shaping the future of our children through education.

Programme Director, as a provincial government, we draw inspiration from families like the Mangalas. In Limpopo, we remain steadfast in our commitment to improving the quality of education. We are working tirelessly to ensure that our province rises to be counted amongst the top-performing provinces in the country in the National Senior Certificate results. While we celebrate the strides already made, particularly the consistent performance of districts such as Mokgalakwena, the one that is led by Mr Ndo Mangala, we know that more work lies ahead.

As we mourn the passing of our mother, we are equally mindful of the devastating challenges confronting our province. The task before us is not easy, but through unity, resilience and collective effort, we will overcome. Just as Mme Mangala dedicated herself to building futures, we too remain committed in changing the lives of our people.

Programme Director, the journey and life of Mme Mangala was truly an inspiration to us. She was woman of deep faith, a devoted Christian who found strength in her relationship with God and joy in fellowship with her church community. Her spiritual life was not separate from who she was; it was the foundation upon which she built her life of service, compassion and humility. Her kindness and love for people knew no bounds. She gave freely of herself, always ready to uplift, comfort and guide.

To the Mangala family, when you see all of us gathered here today, that must be a testimony that Mme Mangala touched many lives. We say your loss is our loss. The pain you carry today is shared by all of us who had the privilege of knowing and loving Mme Mangala.

To her beloved husband, Mr Ndo Mangala, your partner in purpose, your pillar of support is no more, we extend our deepest condolences. You stood side by side in service to education and community and we know that her absence leaves a void that words cannot fill. May you find strength in the legacy you built together and comfort in the knowledge that her impact will live on.

To the children, your mother was a remarkable woman whose life was a testament to love, discipline and service. Carry her values with you. Let her teachings guide your path. She may no longer be physically present, but her spirit will forever walk beside you.

To the community of Mokopane and beyond, let us honour Mme Mangala not only in words, but in action. Let us commit ourselves to the ideals she stood for, education, compassion, faith and unity.

As we bid farewell to this extraordinary woman, let us take comfort in the words of Scripture, that a life well lived is never lost, but transformed. Mme Mangala has fought a good fight, she has finished her race and she has kept the faith.

May her soul rest in eternal peace.

I thank you.