

HALF BILLION RAND PLEDGE TO SUPPORT YOUTH BUSINESS FOR JOB CREATION



Patrick Phungwayo, one of the beneficiaries demonstrates his business offer to the Premier during the breakfast session in Secunda.

The Premier's Youth Development Fund (PYDF) has received a major boost when the banking sector pledged to inject funding to the tune of half a billion rand. The pledge was announced by ABSA bank during the Premier's Breakfast session with beneficiaries of the PYDF, in Secunda.

The function was part of the Provincial Youth Month commemoration. ABSA's Regional Manager, Mr Makhosini Nkosi told the session that about the bank's commitment to invest in business support. "The bank's focus is to support Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs). We view SMMEs as catalysts of job creation," Mr Nkosi explained.

The announcement created a wave of jubilee celebration at the venue, in the session designed as a confluence of relevant stakeholders, that are key to business support, mainly the banking sector.

The PYDF, as the Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane explained, is a flagship project established in 2021, as a direct response to curb the high rate of youth unemployment, through the improvement of economic opportunities. "Over the past three years, since we introduced the PYDF, 97 youth entities have been financially supported, in a broad range of business initiatives, and several job opportunities have been created," she stated.

Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane called on the youth to take advantage of ABSA's pledge. "As many of you are aware, we conceptualised the PYDF as one of the most important pillars of our strategy to recalibrate the Provincial economy and to facilitate the meaningful participation of young people in the mainstream economy," she stressed.

The Premier added that ABSA's pledge will be incorporated with Local Economic Development (LED) directorates of all local and district municipalities to broaden the scope of the PYDF.

MPG'S EDUCATIONAL INVESTMENT PRODUCES 99 GRADUATES FROM RUSSIAN UNIVERSITIES



MEC Majuba congratulates Mpumalanga graduates who studied in the Russian Universities.

The rural profile of Mpumalanga, costs the Province valuable skills. Many people in a broad range of specialised fields are attracted to other areas that are urban, leaving Mpumalanga to grapple with a brain drain of skills.

Lack of inadequate training institutions such as universities, compounds the challenge. Through the implementation of the Provincial Human Resource Development Strategy, the Province is clawing back lost ground, albeit gradually. Several investment measures, such as supporting students with bursaries, to study at universities locally and abroad, has yielded the desired outcomes.

Among these, is a cohort of students who completed their studies of medicine in the Federal Republic of Russia. The outcome of the investment is the successful completion of studies by ninety-nine (99) students. The students graduated from various universities in Russia in June 2023. Of these, twenty three (23) have already returned to Mpumalanga, and the rest were expected to arrive by the end of July 2023.

MEC for Education in Mpumalanga, Mr Bonakele Majuba has congratulated the graduates. "The Department is grateful to see these students achieve their academic goals. We are committed to supporting

them throughout, as they will contribute to the development of the Mpumalanga Province in particular, and South Africa in general," he emphasised.

Forty eight (48) out of the ninety nine (99) graduates, are qualified medical doctors, and the Department has activated support through the Provincial Post Graduate Training Advisory Committee for Russian Medical Graduates, for them to register with their respective professional bodies and to find placement opportunities.

MPUMALANGA GOVERNMENT WINS TROPHY IN CONTINENTAL SHOWPIECE IN ZIMBABWE



Team Mpumalanga in a celebration mood (L-R): Ms Nonhlanhla Dooka, Ms Dudu Ndala, Dr Maseke Mabelane, Ms Radha Srinivasah and Mr Jerry Skhosana.

The Mpumalanga Provincial Government has been awarded a trophy after participating in a continental competition contested by several African states in Zimbabwe recently. This was during the Africa Public Service Day (APSD). The Provincial Government claimed a second spot in a category of service delivery innovation. Although Kenya won the competition in this category, the team is on a quest to win in the near future.

Preparations are to start in earnest to win even more trophies in 2025 in the 10th edition of the competition to be held in Ethiopia. The Provincial Government was represented by officials from various departments, led by the Office of the Premier. According to the Acting Deputy Director General, Dr Maseke Mabelane, the trophy represents the aspirations of South Africa and Mpumalanga, "This trophy is for South Africa, represented by Mpumalanga, the Department

of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs. We got this position because of the Smart Agriculture and Zonda Insila innovation projects. We have put Mpumalanga and South Africa on the map," she explained.

The competition is held annually in June, to showcase the role of public servants in the delivery of services to communities. The APSD was launched in Tangiers, Algeria in 1994, and is held under the auspices of the African Union.

Meanwhile, this year's Provincial APSD was held at Mgobodzi Community Hall in Nkomazi Local Municipality on the 15th of June 2023. The celebration kicked off with brimming exhibitions as a government mandate to bringing service delivery to the people.

The local community manoeuvred every stall

sponging all the knowledge being offered, from registering SASSA grants, learning steps for opening new business enterprises, agricultural assistance for the local farmers and young aspiring entrepreneurs and inquiring about the Premier's Youth Development Fund (PYDF).

Mr Solly Mhaule of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism guided the community on how to register new businesses and renew companies. Mr Nhlamhla Mkhabela of the Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency (MEGA) explained the requirements for the PYDF application. Mr Ndlovu of DARDLEA expanded on the Phuezuikomkhono Mlimi Programme that aims to assist the locals with fertilisers, tractors, veterinary services and fortune 40 programmes.

DIPALESENG MUNICIPALITY SHELTERS CITIZENS IN BRAND NEW HOUSES



Ms Jane Maria Tsotetsi is among the beneficiaries of the Municipality's housing project.

Twenty five (25) local residents in Dipaleseng Local Municipality have a place called home. The new owners took occupancy of their houses in June 2023 when the Municipality handed them with the keys for their assets at Ridgeview, in Siyathemba.

Ms Jane Maria Tsotetsi is among the beneficiaries of the Municipality's housing project. This changed her status from that of a farm dweller to that of a home owner at Ridgeview. Her excitement was written in her face, when the Municipal Manager, Mr Lwazi Cindi handed over the keys to her.

Unlike in some areas where houses are vandalised before completion, and some occupied without permission and resist removal, the Municipality commended the local community for patience. "Your patience was tested, and you passed. You waited until the construction process was completed. And none of you was tempted to jump the queue and take occupation of the houses without permission. We commend you for patience," Mr Cindi told the gathering.

The housing project is an outcome of the Municipality's commitment to provide

dignified human settlements to the under-privileged communities. It subscribes to the Provincial Government's war against informal settlements, as announced by MEC for Human Settlements, Mr Speed Mashilo when tabling the Department's Policy and Budget vote in the legislature in June 2023.

Ms Tsotetsi is the proud owner of a new house at Ridgeview. The Dipaleseng Municipality's delegation, led by Municipal Manager, Mr Cindi (extreme right) present keys to the new owner.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ENGAGES TRADITIONAL HEALERS IN BUSHBUCKRIDGE



Traditional healers gathered at the offices of the Malele Traditional Council to engage MEC Manzini.

There are more than 200 000 traditional healers across South Africa, many of whom are located in rural areas. This suggests that some of them are accounted as citizens of Mpumalanga, one of the Provinces with a rural profile.

Statistics suggest that more than eighty (80) percent of South Africans consult traditional Healers for health and medicinal purposes. This data affirms the vital role played by Traditional healers in the health care system of the country. In recognition of this role, MEC for Health in Mpumalanga, Ms Sasekani Manzini engaged them as part of the Department's stakeholders, during the EXO Outreach and Premier's Imbizo Programme in Bushbuckridge.

Central to MEC Manzini's message, was the promotion of ethical behavior to protect the

image of Traditional Healers. "I have no doubt that people choose you because of the health solutions that you provide them. So do not break that trust, by associating yourself with people whose questionable conduct will ultimately tarnish the image of this sector," she stressed.

MEC Manzini emphasised the importance of a collaboration among all health care workers, including Traditional Healers. She says this is key to achieve the same objective of saving lives. She expressed the Department's commitment to enhance the role of Traditional Healers through a training workshop. "There is an expectation from Traditional Healers to refer patients to medical health care facilities. If you realise that the patient is suffering from cancer or diabetes and should be treated in an environment with health care

facilities, we advise you to duly refer them. We will coordinate a training workshop to support your role in the treatment of patients," MEC Manzini explained.

Provincial Chairperson of Traditional Healers, Sarah Pula echoed MEC Manzini's sentiments. She emphasised the need to protect the image of traditional health practices, through working in a safe and hygienic environment. She further emphasised the treatment of patients with respect and dignity. "Most importantly, let us show the world that real Traditional Health Practitioners are not associated with mutilation of human bodies for muti purpose," Pula stated.

MPUMALANGA INTENSIFIES CRIME FIGHTING MEASURES TO REDUCE THE SCOURGE.



Mpumalanga Provincial Commissioner, Lt- General, Seakamela paints a picture of crime statistics in the summit.

A two-day CRIME PREVENTION SUMMIT was held in Quarter 1 of 2023-24 financial year to intensify crime prevention measures. Crime is a scourge in the country and Mpumalanga is pulling out all stops to eradicate it.

The Summit was led by the Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane. Among those who attended are the MECs, the Provincial Commissioner, Lt-General Seakamela, the Chairperson of the Public Service Commission (PSC), Prof. Somadoda Fikeni and a myriad of stakeholders in the security sector and community representatives. The DG Mr Mampuru led the Administration.

THE SUMMIT RESOLVED THE FOLLOWING;

1. ROLE OF COMMUNITY IN FIGHTING CRIME

- Intensify community participation with Amakhosi (Traditional Leaders) in the implementation of social crime prevention programmes;
- Provide adequate resources for SAPS and CPFs (stipends) to improve police visibility and effectiveness of CPFs;
- Enhance implementation and monitoring of school safety strategy;

- Prevent the spread of liquor outlets by strengthening roles and responsibilities of key role players in issuing liquor licenses
- Monitor implementation of the Provincial Drug Master Plan;
- Improve road safety and visibility by introducing 24 hour shifts.

2. EFFECTIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- Continuous training of SAPS officials must be enhanced.
- Specialised training especially in crime scene management must be strengthened.
- Probation system for detectives must be reinstated.
- Mentoring and Coaching Programme must be institutionalised
- There must be consequence management for those who are embroiled in corruption and neglect to follow the prosecutor's guide.
- Poor statement taking jeopardises effective prosecution of cases, therefore; the constitutional right for use of official languages must be encouraged.
- Witnesses/Victims must be assured of their protection and encouraged not to withdraw cases.
- Empower women, so that they can be independent (stand up for



One of the participants validates the Premier's assertion to clamp down on criminal activities in Mpumalanga.

- Sector Departments must plan and report on the implementation of the GBVF National Strategic Plan (NSP) and Office of the Premier must consolidate.
- Resource and renovate Victim Empowerment Centres in each police station according to the National Instruction on Victim Empowerment Act 2 of 2012.
- Strengthen partnerships (e.g. Faith Based Organisations, Civil Society Organisations) in addressing the scourge of GBVF and redress moral decay in communities.
- Municipalities must develop and enforce by-laws that address GBVF issues, access to drug and toxic substances.
- Improve turn-around time in response to GBVF cases
- Strengthen implementation of Mental Health issues and resourcing thereof
- Mobilise Safety Ambassadors and introduce the 'green door' programme in communities
- Invest more on re-socialisation of men to eradicate GBVF
- Recruit Forensic Social Workers to ensure substantive evidence to support effective prosecution of GBVF crimes
- Ensure gender egalitarian perspective in addressing GBVF

3. TRANS-NATIONAL CRIMES AND THE ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Municipal planning (Ward based planning on security issues that are affecting the wards).
- Strengthen Municipal Integrated Planning – i.e. IDPs/DDM from street/ward/community based planning for security issues that are affecting the wards and to redress lack of service delivery and eradicate service delivery protests.
- Strengthen monitoring of border control measures and law enforcement on undocumented/illegal foreign persons and permit holders
- Intensify intelligence based operations to eradicate illegal mining, gambling and hijacking of businesses.

GRAIN PROJECT CREATES MUCH NEEDED JOBS IN MARAPYANE



Members of the Bakgatla Coops in Marapyane share a lighter moment during the official launch of the grain project.

A grain project has created over 100 temporary jobs for the locals in Marapyane, in Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality. The project started as a concept in 2016 by a group of farmers, the Marapyane Bakgatla Primary Cooperative. It is one of the broad range of projects supported by the Mpumalanga Provincial Government for jobs massification and food security.

According to the beneficiaries, the project is an outcome of resilient six men and women, who after establishing a cooperative, worked jointly with the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA) and the Bakgatla Traditional Council. Ms Minah Lebeya, is one of them. She says the group overcame a number of obstacles for the realisation of the project. She cited a lack of funding, as one of them.

The 145 hectares of land was provided by the Bakgatla Ba Mocha Traditional Council. It is

now history that the piece of land was used for the 75 hectares of yellow maize and 53 hectares of sunflower.

In a Province where agriculture is the backbone of the economy, the decision to approach the Traditional Council for land acquisition and DARDLEA for financial support, has produced the desired outcome. "Chief Moepi heard us as the children of this soil to work on the land. He granted us 145 hectares of land. We are farming on a virgin land. "Through DARDLEA support we have managed to pass all these challenges and as we speak we are on our harvesting season of our yellow Maize," Ms Lebeya explained.

DARDLEA has further supported the project with infrastructure development, production inputs, mechanisation support, training, extension and with advisory, in addition to the market linkages. The Department has built more than 5km boundary fence worth R2.5 million and the planting of both sunflower

and maize with service providers for R2 million. The Marapyane Bakgatla Primary Cooperative is currently expanding with a slight shift towards vegetable production.

Mpumalanga Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, accompanied by Minister Thoko Didiza of the Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, MEC Busi Shiba of DARDLEA, Executive Mayors and representatives of traditional leadership, joined the local community to witness the launch of the project.

Mtshweni-Tsipane and the Minister were in unison in their commitment to ensure that resources are channelled towards supporting the agricultural sector. The Premier emphasised the importance of agriculture as a key lever for the economic reconstruction and recovery in Mpumalanga.

MPUMALANGA – A PERFECT HOST OF THE NETBALL WORLD CUP TOUR



MEC Thandi Shongwe (extreme left) glances at the Netball World Cup at Kamhlushwa during the tour.

A Provincial-wide Netball World Cup tour has spurred communities in Mpumalanga into action, to support team South Africa, the Spar Proteas. Mpumalanga was the second province to touch the cup, ahead of the Netball World Cup Games in July 2023 in Cape Town.

The Kruger Mpumalanga International Airport was a hive of activity as citizens from different walks of life welcomed the Cup in style. Cultural dancers entertained the crowd, before MEC for Culture, Sports and Recreation, Ms Thandi Shongwe delivered a key note address.

The cup toured various parts of the Province. From Tonga and Kamhlushwa in the Nkomazi

Local Municipality, to the Middleburg Mall in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, Elukwatini in the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality, to afford the Mpumalanga citizens an opportunity to witness the rare occasion.

In the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, the Executive Mayor, Cllr Mhlonishwa Masilela and Netball South Africa's President, Ms Cecelia Molokwana, addressed the audience. Molokwana introduced members of the Technical Team for the South African Netball team, originally from Middleburg. She congratulated the Mpumalanga Province for producing people with the technical expertise needed to help Team to win the Cup in Cape Town.

This prompted Cllr. Masilela to express confidence about the Team's prospects of winning the Cup for the first time. "Definitely the Cup will remain in South Africa," he said adamantly.

A netball walk, in which a group of maidens and the locals braved the cold weather, and marched from the Gert Sibande District Offices to the Civic Centre in Ermelo on youth day, lifted the Netball World Cup spirit high, as the nation waited in anticipation the cup games in Cape Town.

MAJOR INVESTMENT TO OVERHAUL CHIEF ALBERT LUTHULI MUNICIPALITY



Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality wins the heart of investors to build a shopping mall.

A major investment to overhaul the socio-economic status of Mpuluzi in the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality has been unveiled. The construction of the first shopping mall in the area is underway. A sod-turning ceremony to mark the start of construction was conducted by the Executive Mayor, Councillor Dan Nkosi of Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality and Gert Sibande District Municipality's Executive Mayor, Councillor Walter Mngomezulu

In an era of jobs massification in Mpumalanga, the project is a major boost towards the

achievement of the jobs creation aspiration. This has prompted Cllr. Mngomezulu to urge the local community not to interrupt the project. "The construction of this shopping mall was long overdue and once completed would serve not only the community of Ward 5, but the greater eMpuluzi area," he explained.

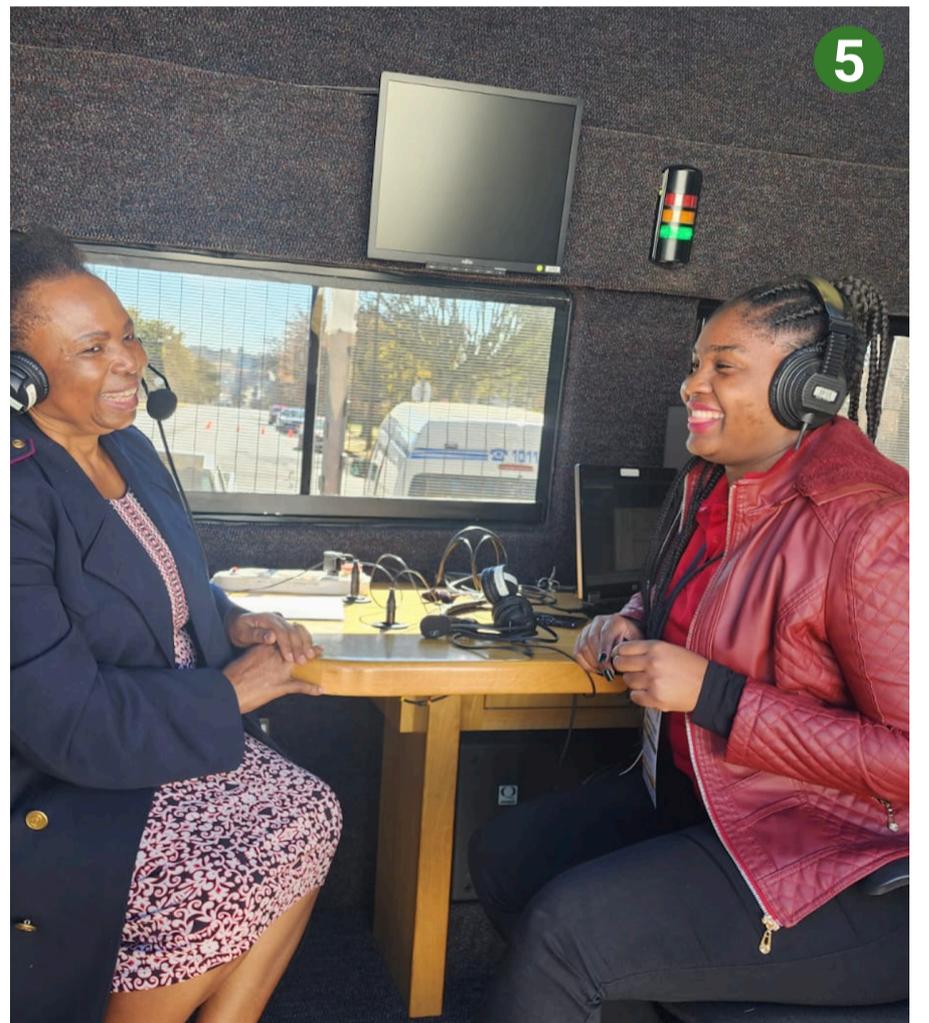
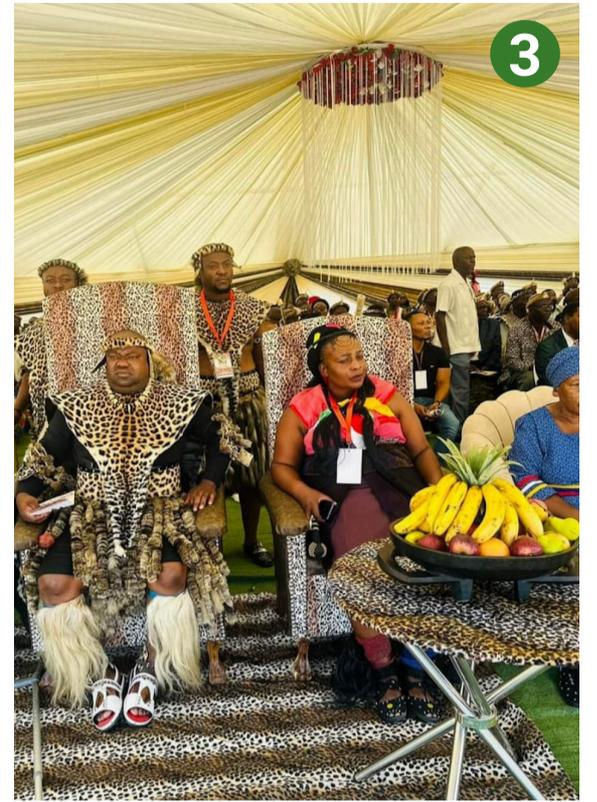
Crime and vandalism are the threats that should be militated against. These sentiments were echoed by the Project Manager, Mr. Hugo Van Coller. He emphasised the importance of protecting the project, to

sustain the much required jobs for the locals. "We request cooperation. Any community instability, crime and violence is a threat to potential investors, which then delays development in many places," he cautioned.

Councillor Nkosi also urged all to work with the developers in completing the project in time for the benefit of the community at large.

With no anticipated interruption, the new shopping mall will be completed in April 2024.

IN BRIEF



1. Newly elected Emalahleni Executive Mayor, Cllr. Leah Mabuza (centre) was sworn in during Council meeting.
2. Kgoshigadi Clara Bontle Mashile of the Mashilane Traditional Council in Lydenburg addressing a media briefing at the end of her coronation.
3. Hhosi Abednigo Nxumalo of Amashangana Traditional Council ascends to the throne during his coronation in Bushbuckridge.
4. A public celebration of the first Ndebele TV series, Komkhulu was held in Kwamhlanga. Acting Premier, Ms Sasekani Manzini and several MECs and Executive Mayors attended the function.
5. MEC Thandi Shongwe of Culture, Sport and Recreation emphasises government's job creation initiatives in a Ligwalagwala FM's interview in Ermelo during the youth day celebration.



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EDITORIAL TEAM:

HEAD OF EDITORIAL & PRODUCTION	GEORGE MTHETHWA
PRODUCTION MANAGER	UNATHI MBUBE
JOURNALIST & PHOTOGRAPHER	LINDA NGWENYAMA
	MS XOLISILE DLOU
SENIOR DESIGNER	UNATHI MBUBE

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Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane
Premier of Mpumalanga