



THE UPDATE

FREE STATE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT NEWS

"THE PULSE OF COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE IN FREE STATE GOVERNMENT"

Issue: 11, 2020

NEWS

STUDENTS MAKE FS PROUD



Students who studied and completed their studies abroad were given a rousing welcome by Premier Sefora Ntombela at the Harry Gwala multi-purpose centre in Sasolburg.

The ceremony, which was held on 16 September 2020, to welcome back and celebrate the students for completing their studies, was also graced by all the Members of the Executive Council. The students were beneficiaries of the Free State Provincial Government's bursary program and graduated in different disciplines. Of the 51 students, 10 of them studied medicine in Turkey, two (2) studied Informatics in Belarus and 39 studied Agriculture in Portugal. Of the 39 Agriculture students, 35 of them are Undergraduate students while four (4) are Masters Students.

The Premier said that the Free State had made a decision to invest in the education of young people, most of whom came

from underprivileged families, and was pleased to see the investment finally bearing fruit.

"The Free State Provincial Government took a conscious decision to invest in the education of its youth. Government has identified education as one of its priorities and to demonstrate our commitment, we identified deserving students and placed them in different institutions of higher learning abroad. We are proud that after many years of hard work, they are coming back as graduates," Premier Ntombela said.

She also praised the students for their conduct while they were studying abroad, far away from their families.

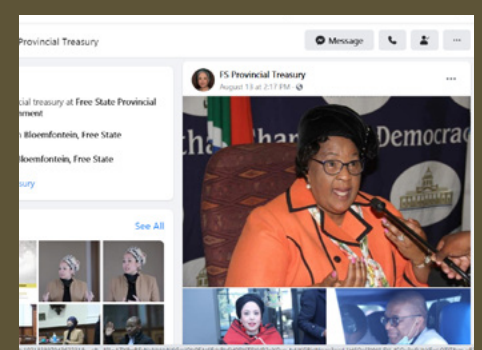
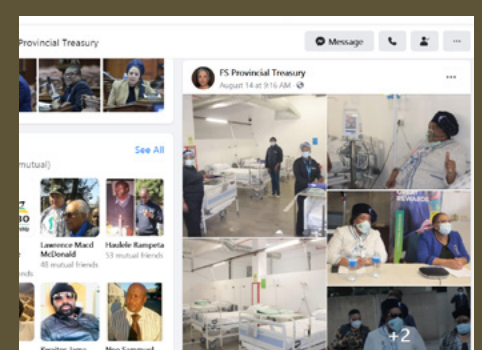
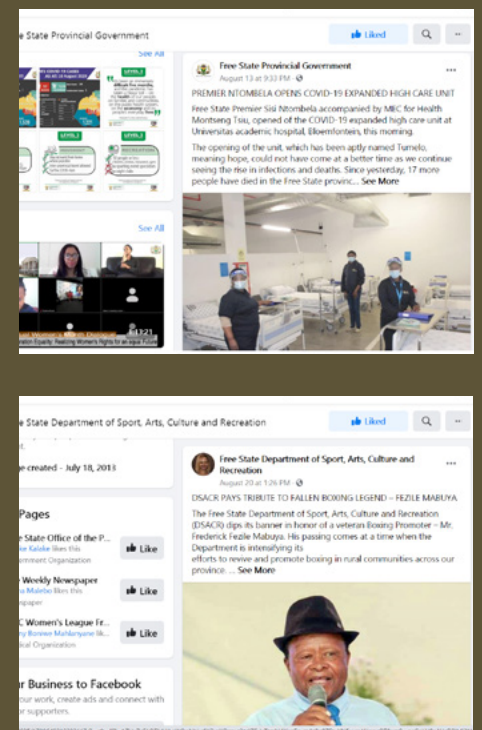
"I take my hat off to our students for exercising restraint and discipline while they were abroad. We have previously learned about the disappointing conduct of some of our students in foreign countries. I therefore wish to applaud our graduates

for making their studies a priority and making not only their families, but all of us proud by completing their studies. Government invested massive resources on their education and they did not let us down," she said.

Premier Ntombela added that her wish is to see the graduates helping the Free State get back on its feet and resuscitate the economy.

"We have a proud history of being the bread basket of the country, and our agriculture students will help us reclaim that honour. Medicine students will also come in handy as we are battling the COVID-19 pandemic. All of the graduates will, one way or the other, contribute to the growth of our economy. On behalf of the Free State Provincial Government, I wish to congratulate our graduates and wish them everything of the best in their future endeavours," said Premier Ntombela.

SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS FEED





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FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS DEATH STRIKES FAMILIES OF MECS MOHALE & NXANGISA



The cruel sting of death struck the families of Members of the Executive Council (MEC) responsible for Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Makalo Mohale and Thembeni Nxangisa, MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

MEC Mohale's mother, Kelebene Alina Mohale passed away on 6 September 2020 while MEC Nxangisa lost his brother, Fezani Petrus Nxangisa last week. He was buried on Sunday, 27 September 2020.

In paying tribute to MEC Mohale's mother, Premier Ntombela thanked her for raising the MEC from a young boy to a leader of society.

"A lioness that she was, we are forever appreciative to her for birthing, nurturing and grooming the young lion that is MEC Mohale who has roared

his way into leading masses of our people. We cannot thank her enough for raising MEC Mohale, the youngest member of the executive council, into a respectful and humble leader of our people," Premier Ntombela said.

At the Nxangisa home in Section N of Botshabelo township on Friday 25 September 2020, the Premier thanked the late brother to MEC Nxangisa for the positive role he played in the MEC's life.

"We gained a deeper appreciation for the important role that Fezani played, not only in the life of MEC Nxangisa, but of all his siblings. MEC Nxangisa himself alluded to the important role that his brother played in shaping his life, not only as a man, but also as an activist," Premier Ntombela said. She also thanked the family for uniting during their time of grief.



DEATH OF BABY SPARKS OUTRAGE

The community of Petrus Steyn was shocked at the news that a 21 month-old baby was abducted, raped and murdered.

The body of baby Bokamoso Blessing Mpembe was found in a farm in Petrus Steyn, four days after she was abducted by Chepete Petrus Mngomezulu, her mother's former lover. The baby girl went missing after her mother, Conny, went to the neighbours to seek help after being savagely assaulted by Mngomezulu, who was also found dead in a farmhouse, having committed suicide.

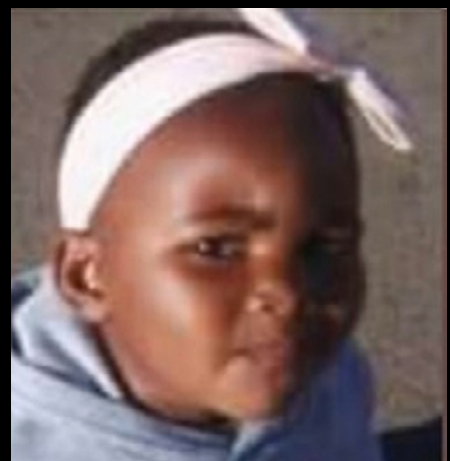
Premier Sisi Ntombela said the killing of baby Bokamoso was yet another painful reminder of the scourge of gender based violence and child abuse.

"The killing of the child was another painful reminder of the violence both women and children are subjected to daily. That a grown man had the temerity to not only abduct a child in the middle of a cold August night, but to also brutally kill her says a lot about our society.

The killing of Bokamoso and all women and children in our country is indeed a declaration of war against all law abiding citizens of this country," said Premier

Ntombela. She said she struggled to understand how a grown man could, without any mercy, kill a small baby, despite her haunting screams.

"Our society in general and some men in particular have become so heartless and



cold that even the painful cries of a 21 months-old baby does not hurt them. It is apparent that women and child abusers in our country have reached a new low, which must be faced with more tenacity and focus by the entire society," said Premier Ntombela.

The Premier said South Africans must

stand up to the thugs who have now set their sights on defenceless women and children.

"Our children and women have become sitting ducks, preyed on by cowards masquerading as men. We call on decent and responsible men of our country to work even harder in rooting out these rotten potatoes who see children and women as tools to be abused and murdered. We are not going to cower against these thugs. Bokamoso and many other children may have lost the battle against their murderers, but we are ultimately going to win the war," said Premier Ntombela.

Meanwhile, the body of 9 year-old Boipelo Mesi of Kroonstad was found in a shack a week after she had gone missing. Mesi was last seen on 01 September and her body was only discovered on 12 September, after children who had been playing nearby, noticed a stench emanating from a nearby shack. They alerted their parents, who made the grisly discovery.

A man, whom the community accused him of the crime, was assaulted and later died. Premier Ntombela called on residents not to take the law into their own hands.

DEATH OF MAYOR SHATTERS PROVINCE



On Monday, 14 September 2020, Free State residents woke up to the devastating news of the death of the Executive Mayor of Moqhaka Local Municipality, Lucky Phooko.

As news of the death of Mayor Phooko gathered pace, messages of condolences were received from all corners of the country. Premier Ntombela, upon hearing the sad news, said she was 'shattered' by Mayor Phooko's sudden death. The Mayor, said Premier Ntombela, was someone who was down to earth and strived for the betterment of the quality of life for the people of Moqhaka local municipality. "I am absolutely shocked and shattered by these news. Death,

by its very nature, is devastating and even more so when a person of Mayor Phooko stature leaves us in the manner that he did: very abruptly. We have lost a number of esteemed leaders this year alone and Mayor Phooko is the latest one of our leaders to depart this world. His death cuts deep because I know that he had great plans for the Moqhaka local municipality. His death has truly robbed us of a great leader. The people of Moqhaka local municipality and the Free State province in general are poorer without the mayor," Premier Ntombela said.

The Executive Mayor had only been in the position for a little over a year.



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PREMIER NTOMBELA NOTES ARRESTS OF SENIOR FS OFFICIALS PREMIER



Premier Sefora Ntombela has disquietly noted with concern recent arrests as a result of the evidence presented at the commission looking into allegations of state capture, chaired by Deputy Chief Justice, Raymond

Zondo.

The Premier is naturally alarmed by evidence currently being presented at the commission and shares the collective view that theft of public resources, meant to improve the quality of life of our people, is deplorable and individuals found guilty of such disgraceful acts must face the full might of the law.

Premier Ntombela indicated that she fully supports the work of the commission, and believes that the judiciary is competent to determine the facts from fiction and must be allowed to conduct its work without favor or prejudice. The Premier further added that, given the unacceptably high unemployment levels and limited government resources, action must be taken against those found to have violated the law for their own selfish needs.

The Premier has reiterated her consistent view that the commission must be afforded the necessary opportunity to conduct its work and conclude it without any interference. She however will not make any pronouncement of the proceedings until the commission has concluded its work.

“The Free State Provincial Government has, since the inception of the commission, pledged its support to the work of the commission. We will continue to observe the processes with keen interest and only make our views known once the process is concluded. It remains our firm view as the activist government of the Free State Province that corruption and any form of malfeasance will never form part of our project of building the Free State we want” the Premier said.

The Premier believes strongly in the separation of power doctrine, and is committed to supporting any legal process intending to provide justice and services to our people, she is of the firm view that the competent court of law must determine the guilt or innocence of those implicated.

Furthermore, the government officials who appeared in court today in Bloemfontein have been placed on precautionary suspension, pending the outcomes of an internal investigation.

The Premier remains committed in fighting corruption mercilessly, she wishes to reassure the people of the Free State Province that her administration will do everything in its power to defend their interests and advance their development.

DEPUTY MINISTER KEKANA CONDUCTS DIGITAL MIGRATION AND DISTRICT DEVELOPEMT MODEL PROGRAMME INSPECTION IN WARDEN AND KROONSTAD

The Deputy Minister of Communications and Digital Technologies (DCDT), Ms. Pinky Kekana on Tuesday, the 29th and Wednesday, the 30th of September, visited the Phumelela and Moqhaka Local Municipalities respectively.

The visit was part of an effort by the DCDT to fast track the rollout of the Broadcasting Digital Migration programme (BDM) in the Free State. Once the project is complete the Free State will be the first province in the country to migrate from analogue to digital services.

This means that through the BDM projects, citizens from indigent households (with a combined household income of less than R3200) will have free access to over 10 television channels as well as a wide variety of radio stations from the SABC radio bouquet.

During her visit to Warden in the Phumelela Municipality, Deputy Minister Kekana bestowed trainee certificates to 31 youths that have successfully completed a set-top box installation course with MultiChoice. During the certificate hand out, the Deputy Minister



encouraged the trainees to work diligently and honestly while serving the community until the project is complete.

The trainees are now qualified to not only install Set-tech, set-top boxes on behalf of the government, but they are able to self-employed and create job opportunities by installing set-top boxes for private users.

As per the District Development Model, President Cyril Ramaphosa has appointed Deputy Minister Kekana as a District Champion for the Fezile Dabi District Municipality. In keeping with her duties, the Deputy Minister also conducted a working visit to Kroonstad where she was, accompanied by the Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, MEC Limakatso Mahasa.

The Kroonstad visit included a visit to the SAPO walk-in Centre which was previously vandalised during community protests, as well as a door-to-door inspection of beneficiaries of BDM set top boxes. Qualifying households that have not migrated to digital technologies are encouraged to visit the nearest Post Office and register for digital migration.