

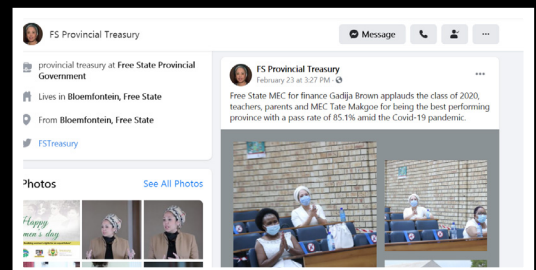
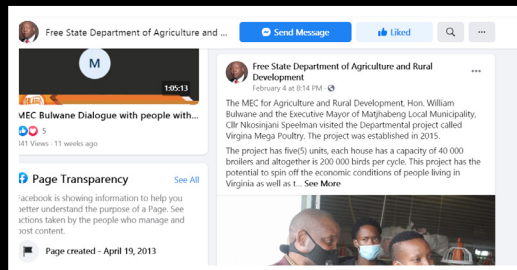
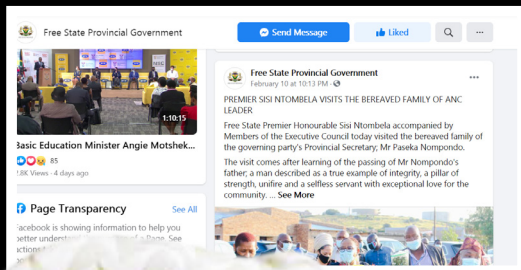
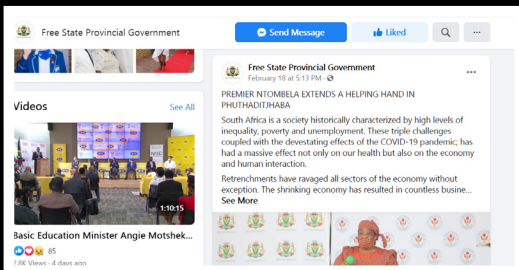
# THE UPDATE



FREE STATE PROVINCE

“THE PULSE OF COMMUNICATION EXCELLENCE IN THE FREE STATE GOVERNMENT”

## SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS FEED



**Sisi Ntombela,**  
*Premier of the Free State*



# SIMPLY THE BEST!



## FREE STATE RECLAIMS NUMBER 1 SPOT

On Monday, 22 February 2021, Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga announced the 2020 National Senior Certificate result.

The Free State province, with an 85.1 percent pass rate, was once again declared the best performing province. Premier Sefora Ntombela Ntombela said the matric class of 2020 exceeded all expectations and deserved all the credit. The Premier further said the achievements of the class of 2020, given the challenges that they were faced with, have to be celebrated.

“Our province is correctly known

across the country as the home of champions and that is all thanks to MEC Makgoe and his team of dedicated officials for a job well done. I would also like to thank and congratulate the parents for supporting the children in what was certainly a difficult year, where we had to deal with a wrecking ball known as COVID-19.

Most importantly, I would like to congratulate our brilliant learners for a job well done. My message to them is that the world is their oyster, and they must simply spread their wings and fly,” Premier Ntombela said.

The Premier also lauded the learners

for remaining calm, despite the panic, which was as a result of the outbreak of COVID-19, and ultimately disturbed their schooling. She added that, in addition to the unease and high stress levels often brought about by the thought of writing their end of the year Grade 12 examinations, the matric class of 2020 outdid themselves.

“Our learners made us proud, and I would like to thank them for a job well done. I also wish to thank the parents for supporting them, teachers and members of school governing bodies for your efforts. None of this would have been possible without your hard

work,” said Premier Ntombela.

She also reserved a special praise for Member of the Executive Council (MEC) responsible for Education in the Free State province, Dr. Tate Makgoe under whose leadership, the province has claimed the number one spot five times in the past eight years.

“MEC Tate Makgoe is the pride of our province and I am immensely proud of him and what he has done for the children of our province,” Premier Ntombela said.

MEC Makgoe said his aim was to retain the top spot for a third consecutive year, making it a ‘hat trick.’



# WOMEN AGRI TO WORK TOGETHER

**O**n 11 February, Premier Sefora Ntombela visited three agricultural projects in Tweeling, Mafube local municipality.

The Premier was accompanied by 35 aspirant women farmers on her visit. The projects were the Tweeling Goat Project, which was followed by Tweeling piggery and finally Shine The Way poultry. There are 218 goats at the Tweeling Goat Project, 117 pigs at the piggery, made up of 25 adult pigs and 92 piglets and 82 000 chicks at the poultry.

“These projects are led by women and they are doing very well. When the women approached us to assist them get the projects off the ground, our caring government listened and today the women have become a success and are now able to take care of their families,” said a beaming

Premier Ntombela.

Premier Ntombela said her hope was that the women who had accompanied her were inspired to also work hard and improve their lives.

“My hope is that, by taking them to all the projects and seeing first-hand how, through hard work and sheer determination, women have transformed their lives, we have sparked a desire in them to also want to succeed. At a time when women are constantly attacked, I am encouraged by initiatives such as training women with an interest in agriculture.

Seeing women taking charge of their own lives and determining their destiny was a sight to behold. If we continue holding hands and working together will we succeed,” Premier Ntombela concluded.



# WOMEN TO THE FRONT

**E**arlier this month, a total of 70 women from four different districts participated in what is termed Agricultural Skills Training for Women.

The program is an initiative of the Progressive Women’s Movement South Africa, which aims to empower women in rural areas with an interest in agriculture and to also equip them with the necessary agricultural skills to sustain themselves, ensure food security and sustainable income for themselves.

Premier Sefora Ntombela said the initiative came to being after an agreement between the Progressive Women’s Movement South Africa, of which the Premier is a convener, and the United Nations Development Programme to an Agricultural Skills Training Programme for women.

“In August last year, under the theme ‘Realizing Women’s Rights to Land Ownership and Financially Enabled Production’, we committed to training women in agriculture and to also develop an agricultural programme for women. By embarking on this

progressive and critical program, we hope to assist our women, who are often on the front line fighting the triple challenges of unemployment, poverty and inequality, to stand on their own two. This will also hopefully instil the spirit of entrepreneurship in them to not only rely on hand outs, but to independently do things for themselves,” Premier Ntombela said.

The Premier said with more women in agriculture, high poverty levels could be significantly reduced.

“It is through such programs that we can make a meaningful impact on the lives of our people. With more women getting into agriculture, our cries for land will be amplified. Our voices will be even louder. My appreciation goes to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, under the stewardship of MEC William Bulwane for their support in this project,” she said.

The trainees hailed from Fezile Dabi, Lejweleputswa, Thabo Mofutsanyana, and Xhariep District Municipalities.



# DEATH OF CHILDREN A TRAGEDY



**O**n 07 February, seven children and an adult drowned when the vehicle they were travelling in was swept by water into a river in Steynsrus.

The children, aged between four and thirteen years old, were occupants in a vehicle with three adults when the incident happened. The adults managed to escape the sinking vehicle, but sadly the seven children were still trapped.

In a heroic effort to save the lives of the children, Tshokolo Hlongwane, who was the driver, tried to go back to the car and rescue the children, but unfortunately he also drowned in the process. The bodies of the six children were discovered on the seventh, while the body of six-year old Karabo Kok was discovered on Monday, 08 February 2021.

The children were: Thapelo Tekanya (4 years old), Ntaoleng Mpeko (13 years old), Relebohile Mpeko (9 years old), Mojalefa Mosibi (12 years old), Bokamoso Maphakisa (8 years old), Hopolang Monyat-

si (6 years old) and Karabo Kok. The incident happened at a time when the country had been experiencing torrential rains, which in turn, has seen a number of rivers and dams fill up.

Premier Ntombela said she was saddened to learn about the



deaths of the children and Hlongwane.

"We have learnt, with heavy hearts, about the tragedy that befell Steynsrus when seven children and an adult male drowned. Their parents are undoubtedly, in

agony. As a parent, I too am gutted about what happened and I could feel their pain," Premier Ntombela said.

On the 9th February, Premier Ntombela was accompanied by MEC for Agriculture and Rural

each other would not bring the children back, and instead called for cooperation during that period.

"I agree with the words of MEC Mashinini who said this is not the time to point fingers, but to instead support all the families during this grieving period and

*"This is not the time to point fingers, but to instead support all the families during this grieving period"*

to also ensure that nothing of the sort ever happens again. The support of the neighbours and the community of Steynsrus was encouraging. I wish the families of the deceased strength and comfort and may the souls of all the departed rest in perfect peace," Premier said.

Groceries, two sheep and a cow were donated to the families for the funeral services of the deceased.



# MEC NXANGISA INTERVENES AT TSWELOPELE LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



**O**n 05 February 2021 Cogta MEC Thembeni Nxangisa joined the council meeting at Tswelopele local municipality in Bultfontein. The purpose of the meeting was to table issues relating to the municipality and to inform the Council about the decision of the MEC to invoke section 106 of the Municipal Systems

Act 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) as amended. The department has a mandate to provide support and ensure that municipalities carry out their service delivery efficiently.

In terms of section 103(i) of the Municipal Systems Act, Act 32 of 2000, if the MEC has a reason to believe that a municipality in the province cannot or does

not fulfil a statutory obligation binding on that municipality or that maladministration, fraud, corruption or any other serious malpractice, has occurred or is occurring, the MEC two options.

1) By written notice to the municipality, request the municipal council or municipal manager to provide MEC with information required in notice, or

2) If the MEC considers it necessary, designate a person or persons to investigate the matter.

In this regard, the MEC has designated a team to the Tswelopele municipality to assist with maladministration and other related matters.

# AGRICULTURE CAN CREATE JOBS : MEC BULWANE



**A**griculture and Rural Development MEC William Bulwane and the Executive Mayor of Matjhabeng local municipality Councillor Nkosinjani Speelman visited agricultural projects in Virginia on 04 February 2021 to assess their progress. The two projects visited were the Virginia Mega Poultry

project and the Lejweleputswa Agri-park. The Virginia Mega Poultry project was established in 2015. The project has 5 units, each house has a capacity of 40 000 broilers and 200 000 birds per cycle (altogether). MEC Bulwane emphasised that Mega Poultry project has the potential to spin off the economic

conditions of people living in Virginia as well as the entire municipality.

“The project of this magnitude should directly feed the government institutions such as hospitals, schools, prisons, etc. The government should start to create market for the producers who are struggling to access markets and

those producers should be able to supply the product consistently”, said MEC.

The department committed to providing the beneficiaries with training on poultry production before the birds can be housed. Major Speelman committed R1million for input production

and chickens as contribution to the project.

At the Agri-park, the pair led the team of officials to inspect the development. The Agri-parks will be the solution to some of the challenges that emerging farmers are faced with such as transportation, storage, bulk-buying and creation of markets.