

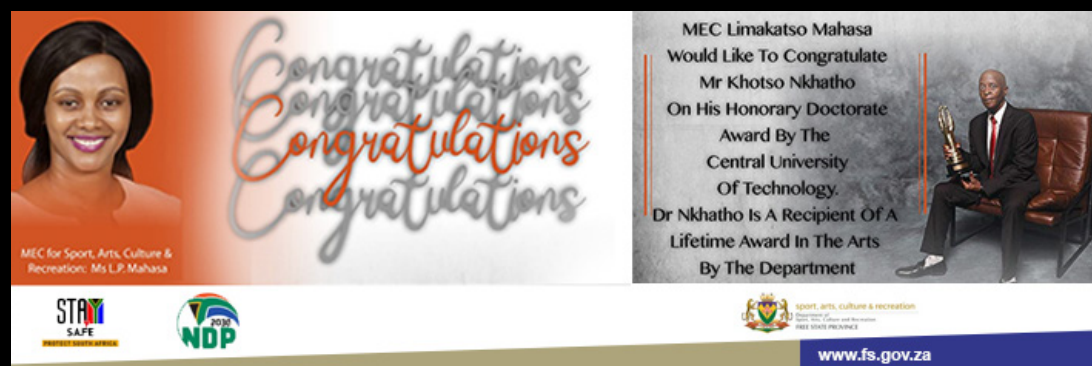
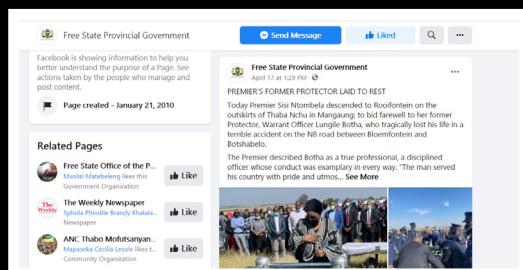
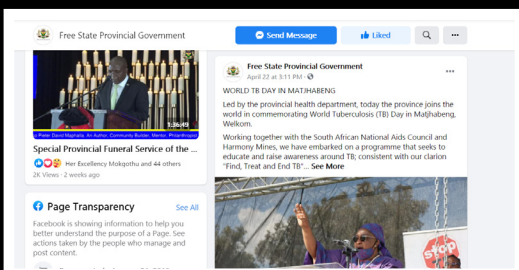
# THE UPDATE



FREE STATE PROVINCE

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

## SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS FEED



# PRESIDENT RAMAPHOSA VISITS MANGAUNG

## FREEDOM DAY CELEBRATIONS HELD IN BOTSHABELO

President Cyril Ramaphosa says government remains committed to improving the quality of life of South Africans.

The President was speaking in Botshabelo on Tuesday, 27 April, in celebration of 27 years since South Africa attained freedom. Accompanied by Premier Sefora Ntombela, minister Fikile Mbalula and acting minister in the presidency Khumbudzo Ntshavheni, President Ramaphosa said 27 April remains a special day which gave birth to a new nation.

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“On this day we recall the historic events of the 27th of April 1994 when we voted for the first time. There are celebrations taking place across the land, and we will be waving the national flag and singing our national anthem. We will share stories with the younger generation of where we were

on that day, and the experience of standing in the voting queues. Today we have a country where all enjoy human rights and freedoms,” President Ramaphosa said.

The President also said that, while a lot has been achieved in the past 27 years, the painful legacy of apartheid still remains and government needs to work even harder to ensure that the lives of ordinary South Africans are transformed for the better.

“We have made great progress towards realising the rights of our people to a better life and in advancing human dignity. And yet, even as we have lived in a democratic country for the past 27 years, we know that across many parts of South Africa, the promise of 1994 has not yet been fulfilled. Millions of South Africans still live in conditions of poverty and deprivation.”

He continued: “For those who

continue to suffer from lack of basic services like running water; for those living in fear every day from violence and crime; and for those who have no jobs to support themselves and their families, true freedom remains elusive. The legacy of apartheid remains a defining feature of our land,” he said.

President Ramaphosa called on all South Africans to work together for the benefit of the

country. Premier Ntombela also said much progress has been made, but that much more still needs to be done. Also present were MECs, the deputy minister of Social Development Hendrietta Bogopane-Zulu and the deputy speaker of the national assembly, Lechesa Tsenoli.

President Ramaphosa and Premier Ntombela also officially opened the Charlotte Maxeke Treatment Centre.



## FREEDOM DAY CELEBRATIONS HELD IN BOTSHABELO



## DIGNIFIED SEND OFF FOR DR. MAPHALLA



**T**he death of renowned Sesotho author Dr. Kgotso Pieter David Maphalla has robbed the province of an organic intellectual whose work has inspired generations across the country.

These were the words of Premier Sefora Ntombela following the passing away of Dr. Maphalla in Bethlehem on 5 April 2021 following a prolonged illness. At his funeral service, held on 14 April 2021, speakers spoke glowingly about Dr. Maphalla's work, which spanned four decades, and saw him pen over seventy books. Premier Ntombela said, even in death, Dr. Maphalla continues to inspire the nation.

"We are grateful that, even in death, Dr. Maphalla's teachings will continue to inspire us. Yes, he is gone from us physically. Yes, Dr. Maphalla will never come back to

us again. However, his work will always be here to remind us that, in our lifetime, there once lived a giant whose pen shaped the lives of generations of people of our province and indeed, our country at large," Premier Ntombela said.

Dr. Maphalla left an indelible mark in the hearts of many who were familiar with his work and this will help preserve his rich legacy.

"In my heart, Dr. Maphalla will always live. His memory is well and truly etched in my heart. I will see him whenever I read one of his poems. I will see him whenever I see or talk to Setchaba, his son, who heads communications in The Office of the Premier. I will see him on the faces of little boys and girls, men and women who take pride in SeSotho language. I will see him everywhere I go, because he cannot die. His legacy must and will be preserved. He was that precious to us," Premier Ntombela said.

la said.

She continued: "We looked back, with great pride, on a life well lived. It was a rich life. A life of great sacrifice, pain but also a life of great rewards. I was reminded of the words of a great word smith who once said:

"Man cannot possess anything as long as he fears death. But to him who does not fear it, everything belongs. If there was no suffering, man would not know his limits, would not know himself." ... His accomplishments bear testimony to a life lived without any fear of the inevitable. His death has robbed us of a fountain of knowledge. A man of immense talents who was only too happy to share his gift with the world."

His son Setjhaba, paid a glowing tribute to his father, describing him as his hero. Dr. Maphalla was afforded a category 2 Special Provincial Official funeral.





# TICKING THE RIGHT BOXES



On 22 April, the Free State province commemorated World TB Day at Harmony Gold mine, Welkom under the theme, 'The Clock is Ticking'. The provincial commemorations were lead by Premier Sefora Ntombela, who was joined by MEC for Health Montseng Tsiu, MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation Limakatso Mahasa, the Executive Mayor of Matjhabeng Local Municipality Nkosinjani Speelman and the management of Harmony Gold mine. The Premier said government and the mine management agreed to host the event at the mine to raise awareness about the dangers of the disease because that is where it is most prevalent. "TB remains one of the world's deadliest diseases. By taking the commemoration to the mine, where communicable diseases like tuberculosis are sadly prevalent, we hope that

mining communities were once again reminded of the grave danger this disease poses," Premier Ntombela said. Premier said statistics do not make for pleasant reading as many people across the world and in the country are infected and continue to fall victim to tuberculosis. "Statistics from the World Health Organisation (WHO)

those who have fallen ill of the disease is to please take their medication and they will recover," said Premier Ntombela, further adding that sadly, once people begin to feel better, they stop taking their medication. However, in Lejweleputswa district, where the commemorations took place, there seems to be improvements.

"Fortunately in Lejweleputswa district we seem to be making inroads. Our officials have managed to screen 86 percent of people who visited health facilities. Unfortunately, they were not able to identify those who showed symptoms. The



paint a dim picture. According to WHO, there were 360 000 active cases of TB in South Africa in 2019 and 10 million people globally. Sadly, 1,4 million people succumbed to the disease in 2019. These are alarming numbers, more so because tuberculosis is a curable disease. Our message to

good news is that 2 673 people who were registered as symptomatic were tested and 2 043 of them completed their treatment."

Willem Gouws from Harmony Gold mine pledged to work together with government in fighting the disease.

# LATE MORAPELA HONOURED

On 15 April, the Ishmael Moketa Morapela public library was officially opened. The library, named after late councillor Morapela who passed away last year, was opened in his hometown of Smithfield. The event was attended by Premier Sefora Ntombela, MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation Limakatso Mahasa and MEC for Public Works, Infrastructure and Human Settlements, Tshidi Koloi. The day's program started with the Premier, MECs and the family of the late councillor visiting Morapela's grave site for a prayer before going to the library for the official opening of the library. Premier Ntombela said naming the library after Morapela, who was fondly known as 'OR' will ensure that his legacy lives on. "It was befitting that, in his honour, we named a public library in Mofulatshope after Morapela. The Ishmael Moketa Morapela public library will, we hope, blow fire into the people of Smithfield and resuscitate the proud culture of learning which saw Morapela, and many others, emerge from their townships to lead their people. The event was made even more special by the presence of Mama Tsoki Morapela, Moketa's mother," Premier Ntombela said.

Premier Ntombela then lead the delegation to a community meeting where:

- A bicycle was donated to young Ishmael Lephaila. The aspirant professional cyclist had written to the Premier requesting that Premier Ntombela buys him a bicycle.
- Premier Ntombela was introduced to Puleane Qhomane, a BA Land and Rural Development graduate. Qhomane's twin sister Puleng holds an Honours in Population and Development Studies. Unfortunately, Puleng was hospitalised due to depression, a result of unemployment. MECs Limakatso Mahasa and Tshidi Koloi have committed to employing them in their respective departments.
- Premier Ntombela also announced that 25 young people have been recruited for a three year welding learnership. They will receive a monthly stipend of R1 500. In addition to that, 50 graduates from Mofulatshope will undergo a 12 months internship programme to get the necessary work experience. They will get a R3 500 stipend.
- MEC Koloi also allocated 488 sites as well as title deeds to deserving beneficiaries.

"We have a duty to work and improve the lives of our people and that is exactly what we are going to continue doing," Premier Ntombela said.



*"We have a duty to work and improve the lives of our people and that is exactly what we are going to continue doing"*



# GRANT RECIPIENTS WELCOME HELP FROM MINISTER ZULU

The Minister of Social Development, Ms Lindiwe Zulu and MEC Mamiki Qabathe in partnership with Harmony Gold Mine acknowledged the academic performance of social grants beneficiaries who were part of the Class of 2020 in Virginia, in Matjhabeng Local Municipality.

The recognition ceremony and the handover of laptops could not have come at a better time as the learners make a transition from high school to institutions of higher learning to further their studies. Many of the learners are from poor and vulnerable households and the laptop



donations will go a long way towards bridging the digital divide, especially in light of the growing need for access to online learning due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Amongst guests in attendance were the sponsors, Harmony Gold Mine, MTN, Cell C, and the local businesses who congratulated the best achievers,

including social grants beneficiaries. "We are proud of the learners for their achievements, particularly given the challenges that we faced in 2020. They showed resilience in the face of adversity and I wish them everything of the best in their future endeavours," MEC Qabathe said.



## PREMIER NTOMBELA READIES FREE STATE PROVINCE FOR THIRD WAVE

Premier Sefora Ntombela says the Free State province is currently in the 3rd wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the past few days, the province has seen a sharp increase in new infections and casualties. The latest statistics paint a grim picture of the impact of the virus in the province.

As of Wednesday, 28 April 2021, statistics for the Free State were as follows:

- A total of 88 006 cases, with 182 of these recorded in the last 24 hours
- Three thousand, eight hundred and thirty nine (3 839) deaths; the total case fatality rate is 4.4% which means that 4.4% of the people who have contracted the virus in the Free State, have died;

- Eighty one thousand, three hundred and forty one (81 341) people have successfully recovered. This makes up a 92% recovery rate;

- 41% of the positive cases are from the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality, with an aggressive increase in the number of new cases in Thabo Mofutsanyana district municipality.

Premier Ntombela attributed the increase in new infections to a number of factors, key amongst them being noncompliance with COVID-19 regulations. The Premier further added that such behavior kicked into effect a chain reaction which has unfortunately resulted in the increase in new infections and sadly deaths resulting from the disease.



The resumption of Sisonke Vaccination programme at facilities across the country will hopefully arrest the further spread of the virus. Premier Ntombela also said the Department of Health has already vaccinated 18 080 Healthcare Workers, which constitutes just above 50% of known Healthcare Workers in the Free State. There are currently 11 registered vaccination sites and Premier Ntombela said government aims to turn all hospitals to be vaccination sites as quickly as possible.

“My biggest concern at the moment, is that we now know for sure that in the Free State, we are experiencing the beginning of the 3rd wave. Just in the past 14 days, we have recorded 3 170 new cases; a steady increase in the number of deaths and the number of people being

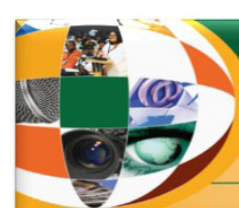
admitted into our hospitals. It is now important that we reactivate the measures we were taking right at the beginning of the outbreak.

We need to make sure our intergovernmental collaboration is against strengthened. I am concerned that our people have not been adhering to lockdown regulations such as the curfew; number of people allowed in public places at a particular time and mass gatherings at social events such as parties. We need the police and other stakeholders to really be aggressive in assisting us,” Premier Ntombela said.

She also appealed to citizens of the province to continue washing hands, use of sanitizers and practicing social distancing.

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### GOVERNMENT NEWS

Let's grow South Africa together

#### Electronic Vaccination Data System

- ✓ Government calls on all citizens aged 60 years and above to register for vaccination on the Electronic Vaccination Data System (EVDS).
- ✓ The data from the system will assist government to allocate the vaccines to the vaccine service points, ensuring that enough vaccines are available on a particular vaccination day.
- ✓ The registration of the EVDS can be done through a smartphone or computer. To register connect to internet and go to [vaccine.enrol.health.gov.za](https://vaccine.enrol.health.gov.za)
- ✓ Should you encounter problems during the registration process, you may contact the COVID-19 Hotline at 0800 029 999.
- ✓ COVID-19 vaccine will be administered for free at point of service.
- ✓ The launch of the EVDS aims to strengthen the health system by developing an information system that will guide health policies, strategies and investments.

On 28 April the Free State Department of Health resumed the Provincial Covid-19 vaccine rollout plan following a two week suspension by national government. The suspension followed calls by the United States: Centres for Disease Control to suspend administration of the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine due to

rare severe blood clots that developed in 6 American woman after receiving the J&J shot.

On 13 April the Health Minister, Dr Zweli Mkhize announced that the precautionary suspension was to determine a causal relationship between the development of clots and the Johnson and Johnson (J&J) vaccine.

According to Dr Mkhize so far no reports of clotting formed after vaccination have been reported in South Africa.

The national rollout programme will hence resume with an expanded 95 vaccination sites across the country.

Government has called on all health care workers, including traditional healers,

and citizens above the age of 60 who have not registered for vaccination to make use of the Electronic Vaccination Data System (EVDS).

EVDS is an online self-enrolment portal where South Africans can register via a digital device for a vaccination appointment.

The system is intended to help government plan

ahead on the amount of doses needed at any particular point in time.

All South Africans who are vaccinated will be placed on a national register and provided with a vaccination card.

Qualifying citizens can access the EVDS system on the following government website: <https://vaccine.enroll.health.gov.za>