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**Kusile Power Station hands over resources to Delmas ECD centres**

Read More on Page 5



**Mpumalanga backs green MSMEs to create jobs**

More on Page 7



## MACUA and Seriti clash over Kriel evictions

Full Story on Page 2

**10 YEARS ON, STILL THE VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS**



## FROM 400 TO 30 000 EGGS A DAY: LEBO CREATES 60 JOBS

Full Story on Page 3

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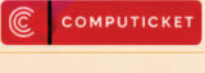
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# MACUA and Seriti clash over Kriel evictions

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**KRIEL** – A dispute over Eskom-owned staff housing in Kriel, eMalahleni, has intensified, with mining advocacy group MACUA calling for evictions to be halted, while Seriti Power maintains that it has followed due legal process and cannot continue housing non-employees. MACUA, which stands for Mining Affected Communities United in Action, said it had met with eMalahleni Local Municipality officials to discuss the matter. The organisation argued that evictions should be paused because the municipality told the High Court in November 2024 that it was “severely constrained” and could only offer unserviced stands at Thubelihle Extension 6. “Housing is not a benefit you lose when you lose your job, it's a human right,” MACUA spokesperson Sabelo Mnguni said. “We cannot allow mining companies to use eviction as a first resort while municipalities have no capacity to respond.” MACUA proposed that Seriti, Eskom and the municipality jointly fund transitional housing instead of leaving families to move to unserviced land. The matter involves 59 respondents before the Mpumalanga High Court in Middelburg. The properties are owned by Eskom and were originally made available to Anglo American employees and subsequently to Seriti employees as part of their conditions of service. On 31 May 2022, the Mpumalanga High Court granted an eviction order, declared the occupants unlawful and ordered them to vacate by 31 October 2022. The court also directed the municipality to assist qualifying respondents with temporary emergency accommodation. Costs were awarded against the respondents. An appeal was lodged, with judgment delivered on 22 May 2024. Later that

year, the Supreme Court of Appeal refused leave to appeal. The eviction order remained in place, with the provision of temporary accommodation identified as the municipality's responsibility. Responding to MACUA on 12 August 2026, Seriti said evictions were not a first resort. “The houses were allocated to employees. When Seriti acquired Kriel Colliery in 2018, we continued that arrangement. Over time, approximately 59 households came to occupy the properties with no employment link to Seriti,” Seriti senior communications officer Tshifhiwa Ramotombu said. “Given financial pressure, Kriel Colliery could no longer sustain municipal service costs for occupants who are not employees. We have followed due legal process for several years and delayed enforcement to support a managed transition.” Ramotombu added that while Seriti acknowledges the hardship, it cannot continue to bear the cost of housing non-employees or withhold accommodation needed for current staff. The company said it remains willing to work with Eskom, the municipality and other stakeholders on practical solutions “within the framework of the court orders.” Some affected residents told *Highveld Chronicle* they had lived in the houses for more than 30 years. It remains unclear how many households have vacated since the October 2022 deadline. MACUA said it would continue engaging the municipality and may approach the South African

Human Rights Commission. eMalahleni Local Municipality said it had indicated during previous engagements that it could assist qualifying households with residential stands, but clarified that these were currently unserved. “We must, however, clarify that these stands are currently unserved. To render the stands fully serviceable, bulk infrastructure processes must be completed. This includes the provision of water, sewer and electricity distribution networks. These are critical steps required before occupation can take place,” municipal spokesperson Lebo Mofokeng said. “At this stage, the municipality is unable to commit to specific timeframes for the delivery of bulk services or for the allocation of stands.” Mofokeng added that the allocation process falls under the mandate of the provincial

Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA), and that the municipality “is dependent on provincial timelines and funding.” CoGHSTA, however, said it was awaiting a formal report to determine the nature and extent of the problem. “We have engaged with the Municipality on this matter, as well as other issues related to illegal evictions and the need for housing,” spokesperson Freddy Ngobe said. “We are awaiting a formal report from them to understand the nature of the problem, the extent of the challenge, and whether intervention is required from our side. “Once the report has been finalised by Council and submitted to the department, we will respond accordingly based on our available resources and programmes, and determine where we can best intervene.”



Advocacy group MACUA wants the Kriel evictions halted, saying housing is a human right

## eMalahleni official arrested over alleged extortion

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**KRIEL** – eMalahleni Local Municipality has confirmed the arrest of one of its Public Participation Office employees in Kriel, while Mpumalanga police identified the official as Bhekumusa Mahlalela. According to police, Mahlalela was arrested by members of the Organised Crime Investigation (OCI) unit on Monday, 17 August 2026, following an undercover operation in Kriel. It is alleged that Mahlalela demanded money from a contractor to facilitate a “peace agreement” between the contractor and community members. Police said the money was recovered and seized as evidence. Mahlalela appeared in the Kriel Magistrate's Court on Wednesday, 19 August 2026, on a charge of corruption. He was granted R1 000 bail and the case was postponed to 7 October 2026 for further investigation. “The matter is now before the relevant law-enforcement and judicial authorities. We will respect due process and the presumption of innocence,” municipal spokesperson Lebo Mofokeng said. Asked about measures to protect community engagements, internal disciplinary processes, a parallel municipal investigation and support for the contractor and community, Mofokeng said the

municipality has a code of conduct and policies that deal with all forms of misconduct. “We urge all employees and members of the public not to engage in any unlawful conduct. Anyone with relevant information should report it through the proper authorities or the municipality's established reporting channels. No individual is above the law, and any verified wrongdoing will be addressed firmly and transparently.” The arrest comes more than a year after two senior Mayoral Committee councillors from the same municipality were arrested at Witbank Dam in April 2025 for allegedly accepting part of a R500 000 bribe. The councillors were allegedly caught receiving R20 000 in cash from a businessperson seeking a lease extension. Police alleged that another R40 000 had been paid in February 2025, with both amounts split between the suspects. Mpumalanga Provincial Commissioner Lieutenant General Apaphia Modise welcomed Mahlalela's arrest, saying it sends a strong message that police will not tolerate corruption or extortion that disrupts service delivery. “I commend our members for their swift response. We will continue working with municipalities, businesses and communities to fight this scourge,” she said.

bring them joy.” Riches will not result in the satisfied life. Happiness cannot be purchased. About now you're probably asking, “How can I ever enjoy life? What will it take for me to get purpose and meaning back into life?” Well, the next line in Solomon's journal offers a second flash of insight: Enjoyment is God's personal gift. “For who can eat and who can have enjoyment without Him?” (v. 25 NASB). Isn't that the truth! Unless God is in the middle of it, lasting enjoyment is impossible. Is there any place better to be than with a group of Christians who get together to have fun? It's incredible how hilarious our times can be when, as believers, we get together and enjoy what we commonly call “fellowship”! We have the idea that the world is the one that gives enjoyment and God's the One who clubs us when we have fun. But the fact is, it's the other way around. If you really want to have fun—I mean the kind of fun that is really enjoyment (without a hangover)—then you need only one ingredient in your midst; you need a relationship with the living God. According to Solomon, “Who can have enjoyment without Him?” As God's people, we're the ones who ought to be having the time of our lives!



“the path of the righteous winds upwards to flee from hell beneath us” Prov 15:24



### A Flash of Insight

By Pastor Chuck Swindoll

*So I decided there is nothing better than to enjoy food and drink and to find satisfaction in work. Then I realized that these pleasures are from the hand of God. For who can eat or enjoy anything apart from him? (Ecclesiastes 2:24–25)*

Solomon gets a rare flash of insight that suddenly grabs his attention. And it comes, ironically, on the heels of this bleak series of frustrating scenes. Translated literally from the Hebrew, Solomon's next statement reads: “There is nothing better for a man than to eat and drink and tell himself that his labor is good” (2:24 NASB 1995). Here is his first flash of insight: There is nothing inherent in humanity that makes it possible for us to extract enjoyment and purpose from the things we do. Go back and read that again. Solomon said, “I've seen this, because it comes from the hand of God. God has revealed this piece of information to me, and I'm ready to announce it to all who will listen: 'This is true; there is nothing within you (or your children) that will automatically give you happiness or keep them at peace and

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# From 400 to 30 000 eggs a day: Lebo creates 60 jobs

EMMANNUEL N MTHIMUNYE

**KWAGGAFONTEIN** – There was a time when Lebogang Mashigo pushed a wheelbarrow loaded with eggs through Vlaaglaagte 1, selling them to make a living. Today, that humble beginning has grown into a commercial poultry business producing 30 000 eggs a day and employing 60 people.

On Tuesday, 18 August 2026, Mashigo's journey reached another milestone when the Mpumalanga Provincial Government officially handed over fully automated poultry layer infrastructure to her business, Eggsellent by Lebo Pty Ltd, in Kwaggafontein.

Following the official opening at the farm, the formal proceedings moved to a packed community hall, where community members came in numbers to witness and celebrate Mashigo's success journey. Among them were several Eggsellent resellers who are now earning a living by selling eggs supplied by the business.

Speaking at the handover, Mpumalanga MEC for Department of Agriculture ,Rural Development Land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA) Brenda Khethiwe Moeketsi used Mashigo's journey to encourage women and other entrepreneurs to become self-reliant and pursue business ownership opportunities.

“Our generation has its own responsibility. We must advance economic freedom for women. As a government we are intentional about it. Our continuous pursuit is to see more and more women receive support through finance, infrastructure, access to markets and productive enterprises ownership,” Moeketsi said.

She encouraged women to participate in agriculture and move beyond being employees to becoming owners across the agricultural value chain.

“We want to see more women move from being workers within agriculture to becoming owners. We want women owning farms. We want women owning processing businesses. We want women owning logistic companies. We want women developing agricultural technologies. We want women employing other women and young people,” she said.

Moeketsi said Women's Month should not only celebrate the struggles women have overcome, but should also focus on expanding their economic opportunities.

“And you, Lebo, are helping us to demonstrate exactly what that can look like,” she said.

She added that while the project belongs to Mashigo, its economic impact extends to the surrounding community through the jobs and opportunities it has created.

Moeketsi also urged residents to protect the infrastructure, saying government had invested public resources in the business because of its potential to contribute to the development of Kwaggafontein, Thembisile Hani and surrounding areas.

For Mashigo, the achievement is the result of years of persistence and support from various institutions.

“I used to sit in my corner with eggs and use a wheelbarrow as my source of transport to sell my eggs. I then reached out to Thembisile Hani Local Municipality for funding. I went to the NYDA office, that is where I got assistance. They first funded me, then after seeing the progress, I reached out to the Department of Agriculture including other stakeholders, to mention a few, the National Empowerment Fund and the National Environmental Fund. That is when everything started,” Mashigo said.

She acknowledged that the journey was not always easy.

“What I would say is that my journey was not easy.

It had a lot of hiccups. I nearly gave up, but having the potential and knowing where I am coming from kept me going and uplifted my spirit,” she said.

Mashigo said the new infrastructure had taken the business to another level.

“Today I am happy to announce that they built this magnificent state-of-the-art layer infrastructure for eggs. So far the business is growing well and I have employed sixty people, twenty of them are in permanent positions,” she said.

DARDLEA HOD Mfana Chunda said the department was proud of Mashigo's growth from a backyard farmer producing 400 eggs a day to a commercial farmer

producing 30 000 eggs a day.

He said the project was funded through a blended finance model called AgroFund, in partnership with the National Empowerment Fund (NEF).

Ikosi Robert Mahlangu of Ndzundza Somphalali in Kwaggafontein said Mashigo first presented her business idea to the traditional authority during Youth Month in June 2022 in KwaMhlanga.

He said the traditional authority later visited her backyard operation and decided to provide her with a piece of land at no cost to develop the business.

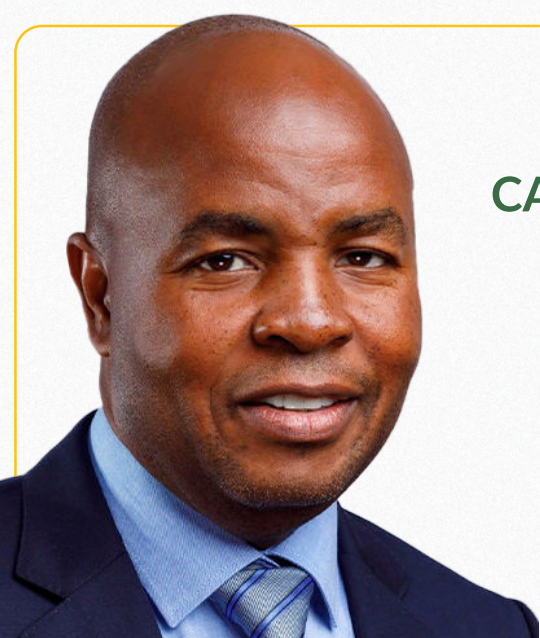
Mahlangu urged the community to protect the enterprise from vandalism, saying it would provide livelihoods while helping to address unemployment in the area.

National Empowerment Fund CEO Mzimuhle Dayimani said the NEF and DARDLEA had combined funding of approximately R30 million for the construction of chicken houses and the provision of equipment and vehicles. He said compliance requirements, including Environmental Impact

Assessments, could be demanding but were important as they opened opportunities for businesses to supply major retailers such as Boxer and SPAR. Dayimani encouraged young people and women interested in funding to approach the NEF office in Mbombela or apply through its website.



Mpumalanga MEC for DARDLEA Brenda Khethiwe Moeketsi hands over a certificate of compliance to Eggsellent by Lebo founder and CEO Lebogang Mashigo.



## CALLING FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS PREMIER'S YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND 2026/27-2027/28

The Office of the Premier of Mpumalanga is calling for funding applications from interested young entrepreneurs to apply for 2026/27 - 2027/28 Premier's Youth Development Fund (PYDF). The fund is aimed at assisting deserving young people aged 18-35 years to kick-start and grow their business ventures.

Potential candidates should ensure that their application is in a form of a **SOUND BUSINESS PLAN** accompanied by the following returnable documents:

- » Certified ID copy
- » Curriculum Vitae
- » Proof of Residence (certified)
- » Company Registration Documents (100% Youth-Owned)
- » Valid SARS Tax Pin
- » BEE certificate (CIPC or Sworn Affidavit)
- » Proof of active business account
- » Proof of market / offtake agreements

Applications should be submitted in the 2026 PYDF Application Form, which is accessible on [www.mpg.gov.za](http://www.mpg.gov.za)

Enquiries should be directed to Mr. SA Dhlamini: 013 766 2006 or Ms. RV Zwane 013 766 2005  
NB: faxed or emailed applications will not be accepted.

Beneficiaries of the PYDF are not encouraged to apply.

Please forward your application to:  
The Deputy Director – Youth Development, for the attention of Mr SB Ntandane,  
Private Bag X11291, Mbombela, 1200.

Physical Address: Office of the Premier, Makhonjwa Building, First Floor, Riverside Park, Government Boulevard, Mbombela

Closing Date: **Friday, 28 August 2026 at 16h00**  
If no correspondence is received within six months after the closing date, applicants must accept that their applications have been unsuccessful.



Community members and resellers linked to Eggsellent came out in numbers to witness the historic moment.





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SWAB SAMPLES CONTRACTOR EXCITING OPPORTUNITY  
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Exxaro Coal (PTY) LTD, company registration no 2000/011078/07, is a private company registered in terms of the Company Laws of the Republic of South Africa is looking service provider for conducting and analysing swab samples .  
Scope of Work includes.

- Conducting and analyzing swab samples as required at Mine.

LEGISLATION AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

The contractor shall ensure that all practices and services comply with:

- a) Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002
- b) Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993
- c) Mine Health and Safety Act 29 of 1996
- d) SANS 17025 General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories
- e) SANS 7218 Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs - General requirements and guidance for microbiological examinations

SCOPE STATEMENT (KPI’S)

- a) Conducting the swab samples at the ablution facilities:
  - Urinals
  - Toilet cubicles
  - Wash basins
  - shower facilities

ACTIVITIES AND REQUIREMENTS TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY CONTRACTOR:

- a) The contractor must ensure that the swab samples are conducted at the shower facilities, urinals and basins at the mine
- b) Parameters to be tested for
  - E. coli
  - Total coliform
- c) Detection Limits and Standards
  - Results must be reported in CFU/cm²

AREAS AND THE NUMBER THAT MUST BE SWAPED

| Area     | Number | Frequency |
|----------|--------|-----------|
| Urinal   | • 80   | Monthly   |
| Cubicles | • 150  | Monthly   |
| Basins   | • 100  | Monthly   |

INCLUSION

The following is included in the Scope of Work:

- Induction of all personnel
- HIRA and other risk assessments applicable to the work.
- Safety File.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SERVICE PROVIDER

The service provider must do the swab samples and provide the report to the Mine within 14 days.

The service provider shall:

- Execute all sampling activities as per this scope
- Ensure competent and trained personnel conduct the samples as stipulated in the MHSA (Act 29 of 1996)
- Provide all equipment and materials (Swabs)
- Maintain communication with the Client
- Submit reports within agreed timelines (14 days after the sampling is conducted)

QUALIFICATIONS

- a) The service provider should have the following as stipulated under the MHSA (Act 29 of 1996) under Chapter 22.15:
  - Mine Environmental Control (**MEC**) Certificate (Minerals Councils)
  - Registered with **SAIOH** (South African Institute for Occupation Hygiene) as Occupational Hygienist

EXCLUSIONS

Any other exclusion as agreed upon between the service provider and the Leeuwpan coal mine.

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                  |                            |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| REFERENCE Nr.                     | 241550                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                  |                            |
| NAME OF BU:                       | Leeuwpan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                  |                            |
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Former Eskom employee, associates convicted in R8.5 million fraud, money-laundering case

RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

MPUMALANGA – A former Eskom employee, three other individuals and three companies have been convicted in a fraud and money-laundering case involving contracts awarded through a fraudulent tender process. The convictions were handed down at the Middelburg Specialised Commercial Crimes Court on Tuesday, 18 August 2026, following an investigation by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks) in Mpumalanga.

The case was investigated by the Hawks' Secunda Serious Commercial Crime Investigation unit in collaboration with the Priority Crime Management Centre, Priority Crime Specialised Investigation and the National Prosecuting Authority.

According to evidence presented in court, the offences took place between October 2016 and May 2019.

The Hawks said Nozipho Ntuli, 39, a former Eskom buyer, abused her position by fraudulently awarding tenders to companies allegedly linked to people close to her. Three companies were identified as having benefited from the contracts: Phoenix Motion Enterprise, Hustle Hard Development and Itireleng Masheleng.

Phoenix Motion Enterprise, directed by Edward George Sekatane, 46, received contracts worth R5.38 million. According to the investigation, Sekatane was in a relationship with Ntuli at the time.

Hustle Hard Development benefited by R2.23 million, while Itireleng Masheleng received approximately R913 712.

The total financial loss to Eskom was R8.53 million.

The investigation also uncovered links between the companies and Sekatane. Thulani Harries Mahlalela, 43, was a director of Hustle Hard Development, while Alfred Lebogang Sekatane, 62, was identified as Edward Sekatane's uncle.

The Hawks further alleged that Edward Sekatane continued running Phoenix Motion Enterprise while he was incarcerated.

Ntuli was convicted of fraud, while Edward George Sekatane, Mahlalela and Alfred Lebogang Sekatane, together with Phoenix Motion Enterprise, Hustle Hard Development and Itireleng Masheleng, were convicted of money-laundering offences under the Prevention of Organised Crime Act (POCA). The matter was postponed to 19 October 2026 for sentencing.

The Asset Forfeiture Unit is also expected to pursue a restraint order as authorities seek to identify and secure assets linked to the proceeds of crime.

Mpumalanga Hawks Provincial Head Major General Nico Gerber welcomed the convictions, saying the outcome demonstrated the law-enforcement agency's commitment to tackling complex commercial crimes.

“This conviction demonstrates the Hawks' commitment to investigating complex commercial crimes and holding individuals accountable when they abuse positions of trust for personal gain,” Gerber said.

He added that public institutions needed to be protected from corruption, fraud and organised criminal activities that undermine service delivery and public confidence.

The Hawks said the investigation and subsequent prosecution demonstrated that individuals who unlawfully benefit from public resources will be pursued.

The case also highlights the role of the Asset Forfeiture Unit in preventing those convicted of serious economic crimes from retaining the proceeds of criminal activity.

Sentencing is expected to be the next significant development when the convicted individuals return to the Middelburg Specialised Commercial Crimes Court in October.

# From vision to legacy: Lorraine Mbokane's journey of faith, business and empowerment

**● NODICAH FUNDAMA**

**NHLAZATSHE** – For Lorraine Mbokane, entrepreneurship is about more than building successful businesses. It is about creating opportunities, contributing to her community and laying the foundation for a legacy that can benefit future generations.

An entrepreneur, philanthropist and founder and director of several construction companies, Mbokane is also the founder of Silver Park Resort in Nhlazatshe, Mpumalanga.

Her journey has been shaped by faith, determination and a belief in the power of business to create opportunities and contribute to local economic development.

“I wanted to build businesses that align with my calling and create jobs within my community,” she says.

That vision eventually led to the establishment of Silver Park Resort after Mbokane identified a need for a safe and enjoyable recreational space where families and children could spend time together.

“It is a dream that became a reality and a symbol of hope, growth and community development,” she says.

The resort employs about eight people during off-peak periods, increasing to as many as 25 during peak seasons, while also supporting local suppliers, service providers and small businesses.

For Mbokane, seeing families enjoy the resort and knowing that employees are able to provide for their families are among the most rewarding aspects of entrepreneurship.

Her efforts have also received recognition. In 2024, Silver Park Resort received the Best in Tourism Award at the Sunrise Excellence Awards, an achievement she says affirmed the hard work and dedication invested in developing the business.

Mbokane believes tourism and hospitality offer significant opportunities for women in entrepreneurship, accommodation, catering, event management and other tourism-related services.

Her journey, however, has not been without challenges. As a woman in business, she has had to prove her capabilities while dealing with financial difficulties, construction-related obstacles and the demands of balancing several businesses with family and community responsibilities.

She credits her faith, prayer, determination and hard work for helping her navigate difficult periods.

“Challenges have taught me patience, perseverance and strength,” she says.

Mbokane believes setbacks should not be a reason to abandon a vision, but an opportunity to learn, adapt and grow. She encourages young women who want to enter business to begin with what they have instead of waiting for perfect conditions.

“Start with what you have and where you are,” she advises.

For Mbokane, Women's Month is an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of women, remember those who fought for equality and encourage the next generation of women leaders, professionals and entrepreneurs.

She believes being a woman

entrepreneur means having the courage to follow one's dreams, overcome barriers and create opportunities for others.

Her motivation comes from seeing the impact of her work – from employees supporting their families to visitors enjoying a space created with the community in mind.

Her message to women across South Africa is simple:

“Never give up on your dreams. Believe in yourself, trust your abilities and keep moving forward despite challenges.”

For Mbokane, the journey continues, not only to grow her businesses, but to build a legacy that extends beyond her own success.



Lorraine Mbokane, founder of Silver Park Resort in Nhlazatshe



Silver Park Resort offers swimming pools and play areas where families and children can relax, have fun and spend quality time together

# Kusile Power Station hands over resources to Delmas ECD centres

**● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO**

**DELMAS** – Two Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres in Botleng, Delmas, received equipment and learning materials from Eskom's Kusile Power Station through the Eskom Development Foundation on Thursday.

Bokamoso ECD and Dalimfundo Day Care Centre received resources aimed at supporting their daily operations and improving the learning environment for children.

Bokamoso ECD received two computers, a Canon printer, office chairs, executive desks, A4 paper and colour ink, while Dalimfundo received a 5 250-litre JoJo tank, tables, toddler chairs, mattresses, a carpet, a potjie pot, toys and various learning materials.

Dalimfundo Day Care Centre founder Sunnyboy Mntakwende told Highveld Chronicle that he was grateful for the support after the centre approached Kusile for assistance.

“We are so excited to know that our children will be having material to use so that they can develop. As we all know, we are busy with early childhood development, and we are in need of material to assist the children to develop,” Mntakwende said.

For Bokamoso ECD founder Yvonne Thathane, the computers and printer will reduce the centre's reliance on internet cafés for administrative work.

Thathane said that since ECD services transitioned from Social Development to Education in 2022, centres have increasingly been required to submit typed and printed documents, placing an additional financial burden on them.

“I was struggling to the extent that I was relying on internet cafés. I was able to pay R1,500 a month at the internet café. But now that these things are here, at least R1,500 will no longer go to the internet café.”

She said the savings could now be redirected towards other needs, including maintenance and installing a proper gate.

Victor Khanye Local Municipality Executive Mayor Vusi Buda welcomed the handover, saying partnerships with businesses and community organisations were important in addressing local needs.

“Kusile is really helpful in the community as the municipality sometimes cannot afford to assist with everything. We therefore thank Eskom Kusile Power Station for helping our community,” Buda said.

The handover was also attended by Victor Khanye Local Municipality Speaker Henry Ngoma.

Joseph Mashaba, Eskom Kusile Power Station Manager of the Stakeholder and Communications Department, said the initiative was aimed at providing immediate support while contributing to the development of young learners.

“We want these young minds to start learning about different careers while they are still young, so that they grow up with aspirations of what they can become,” Mashaba said.

He called for communities and organisations to work together to create better opportunities for future generations.

The handover forms part of Eskom's Corporate Social Investment programme and will provide the two centres with practical support for administration, infrastructure and learning activities.





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### PLAN A – VIP

|               | No service: R12 500 |       |
|---------------|---------------------|-------|
|               | 18–64               | 18–74 |
| <b>FAMILY</b> |                     |       |
| 1+5           | R380                | R430  |
| 1+9           | R450                | R500  |
| 1+13          | R520                | R570  |
| <b>SINGLE</b> | 18–64               | 65–74 |
| Single        | R150                | R160  |

**WHAT WE OFFER**

*Grocery provision included.*

Goat R1,800; Cow R5,000; bus R1,000; tent/chairs R500; airtime R200; hearse + 2 family cars; programmes, décor, Standard Dome and tea R1,000.

### PLAN B

|               | No service: R7 500 |       |
|---------------|--------------------|-------|
|               | 18–64              | 18–74 |
| <b>FAMILY</b> |                    |       |
| 1+5           | R320               | R370  |
| 1+9           | R410               | R450  |
| 1+13          | R450               | R550  |

**WHAT WE OFFER**

*Grocery provision included.*

On notification R1,000; cow R5,000; bus R1,000; tent/chairs R500; airtime R200; hearse + family car; programmes, décor, teak quarter view and cash-back for deceased.

### PLAN C – EXECUTIVE

|               | No service: R8 000 |       |
|---------------|--------------------|-------|
|               | 18–64              | 18–74 |
| <b>FAMILY</b> |                    |       |
| 1+5           | R340               | R370  |
| 1+9           | R440               | R470  |
| 1+13          | R480               | R540  |
| 1+17          | R570               | R640  |

**WHAT WE OFFER**

*Grocery provision included.*

On notification R1,000; goat R1,800; cow R5,000; bus R1,000; tent/chairs R500; airtime R200; hearse + family car; programmes, décor and teak quarter view.

### PLAN C

|               | No service: R7 500 |       |
|---------------|--------------------|-------|
|               | 18–64              | 18–74 |
| <b>FAMILY</b> |                    |       |
| 1+5           | R300               | R330  |
| 1+9           | R400               | R430  |
| 1+13          | R440               | R500  |
| 1+17          | R530               | R600  |
| <b>SINGLE</b> | 18–64              | 65–74 |
| Single        | R80                | R90   |

**WHAT WE OFFER**

*Grocery provision included.*

On notification R1,000; cow R5,000; bus R1,000; tent/chairs R500; airtime R200; hearse + family car; programmes, décor and teak quarter view.

### PLAN D

|               | No service: R5 000 |       |
|---------------|--------------------|-------|
|               | 18–64              | 18–74 |
| <b>FAMILY</b> |                    |       |
| 1+5           | R210               | R260  |
| 1+9           | R280               | R310  |
| 1+13          | R310               | R380  |
| 1+17          | R460               | R500  |

**WHAT WE OFFER**

*Grocery provision included.*

Goat R1,800; Cow R5,000; bus R1,000; tent/chairs R500; airtime R200; hearse + 2 family cars; programmes, décor, Standard Dome and tea R1,000.

### PLAN E

|               | No service: R2 500 |       |
|---------------|--------------------|-------|
|               | 18–64              | 18–74 |
| <b>FAMILY</b> |                    |       |
| 1+5           | R180               | R200  |
| 1+9           | R220               | R270  |
| 1+13          | R270               | R300  |

**WHAT WE OFFER**

*Grocery provision included.*

Removal within 100 km; airtime R200; hearse + family car; programmes and décor; standard coffin; On death notification R500 and tent/chairs R500.

### PLAN G

|               | No service: R5 000 |  |
|---------------|--------------------|--|
|               | 18–74 ONLY         |  |
| <b>FAMILY</b> |                    |  |
| 1+5           | R250               |  |
| 1+9           | R300               |  |
| 1+13          | R350               |  |

**WHAT WE OFFER**

On notification R1,000; removal within 100 km; casket; delivery; hearse and family car.

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|---------------|--------------------|---------|
|               | STANDARD           | PREMIUM |
| <b>FAMILY</b> |                    |         |
| 1+5           | R180               | R200    |
| 1+9           | R230               | R250    |
| 1+13          | R280               | R300    |
| 1+17          | R330               | R350    |

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Umtloli: Emmmanuel N Mthimunye

Ukusulwa komsizi kusigaba soku gqina sekhambo lengoma njengoba sazi bona ingoma iyawela beseke igoduke. Yeke ngesindebele lokha nakuzoku sulwa umsizi akuqalwa amalanga, kodwana kuqalwa inyezi ukuba yiqephe, njengoba nalokha ingoma nayikhambako kuqalwa iqephe. Ukusulwa komsizi akukhethiseli bona usulelwaphi kodwana kuneenzathu zoko bana kusulwe umsizi, lokha naku zoku sulwa umsizi amasokana amatjha nabe rhugi babo kanye nabo sobesi baya buthana babuthanele ngekosini lapho begade kuphume khona ingoma, namkha babuthanele ekhabo lesokana ebeliyikosana ngebundwini labeba hlome khona um'zabo, beseke bagude iinhloko ziphazime, phela ngokuya kwesintu ukuguda kuhlathulula bona uthoma ikhasi elitjha lepilo, yeke ukuguda kuhlathula ukusulwa komsizi nokuthoma ikhasi elitjha lepilo Amasokana azokugudwa kuthi nabe rhugi babo bagude kanye nabo yise bagude ngombana nabo beba gade b a k h a m b e n a b e n t w a n a babatlhogomela yeke lokho kubenza batjhilafale babe nomsizi kungakho baguda nabo. Lokhu kuhlathulula bona gadesi isokana selinga mangana, nentombalo, unina udadwabo namkha unakwakhe nangoba lelo sokana liwele sele lingakwalo. Ngokwesintu isokana elinomsizi alihlangani nomuntu wengubo liyamzila ngombana lisese serherhweni lamakhosi yeke kufuzeke lihloniphe ikambiso yesiko. Isazi seze sintu ubaba u Elmon Pondo

Mahlikihla Mahlangu usihla thululela bona ukusulwa komsizi kuhlathulula bona isokana sele linga ragela phambili ngepilo likhululekile ngombana nakuyi nyongo kayise eliyithwele esandleni sesinqele kanye nomkhala zobe seliziwuhlubulile beseke ibandla liyatjhiswa Yeke uMahlikihla ukhalima khulu izenzo ebezibona kala zisenzeka eenkundleni zoku thintana njengoba amasokana bekabonakala amangana nabentazana, "Kumphambo nokungahloniphi isintu lokha isokana nalisanthwele umkhala limbethe nenyongo libonakala lihlangana nabantu bengubo, into leyo ilulaza isintu ilulaza isindebele yeke abantu kufuzeke bazikhalime begodu balise ukwenza isinto ezibutjhophori eziphambene nokulunga ngombana lezo ngezinye zezinto eziba valela itjhudu epilweni, lokha isokana nalifuna ukufoda nonina namkha nomuntu wengubo kufuzeke kube nomuntu obaphahla phakathi, kungaba mrhugi, ngiyise lesokana namkha msegwabo a k u k h e t h i k o d w a n a lingahlangani nomuntu wengubo kufuzeke liphahlwe. Bese kuthi linga sula umsizi lithome lihlangane nabantu bengubo" Undabezitha uZwelibanzi Mahlangu. Uyale amasokana angathe akhosele kuye bona abuyele esikolweni aberegako abuyele emisebenzini yabo ipilo iragele phambili

Kuthi kulaba abaseenkolweni, undabezitha ubawe abotitjhere bona basebenzisane nobukhosi ukuthi bakwazi ukukhalima amasokana amatjha bona angaletha i n g o m a n g e e n k o l w e n i nakungenzeka bona kube nama sokana enza into ephuma esandleni ephambene nokulunga lelo sokana kuyoku fuzeke lihlawuliswe. Isintu sithi ingoma ayikhitjhela ilanga thizeni nakufuzeke iwele kodwana kucalwa iqephe lenyezi bona lijame njani beseke kubekwe ilanga ingoma iwele nalokha nakuzoku sulwa umsizi kuqalwa iqephe beseke kubekwe ilanga kusulwe umsizi, kusisintu leso, lo msizi osulwako namhlanje emalangeni alisumi nanne kumsizi wengoma yama Rhorha aMaphaswana yinyone mhlophe Ndabezitha.



Amasokana amatjha asula umsizi eKosini Kwa Mahlangu B'sehla

Ikosi u Zwelibanzi Mahlangu ne Rhorha I Phaswana uso July Mahlangu

NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORISATION GRANT FOR A SAND MINING RIGHT ON PORTION 2 AND PORTION OF PORTION 3 OF THE FARM MALOEKZYNKOP 58 JS WITHIN THE MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF THEMBSILE HANI, MPUMALANGA PROVINCEWITH A DMPR REF: MP 30/5/1/2/3/2/1 10467 EM

Notice is hereby given in terms of EIA regulations 2014, published under Government Notice No. 982 in Gazette No. 3822 of 4 December 2014, amended on 7 April 2017 and by GN 517 on 11 June 2021, promulgated under the National Environmental Management Act (Act No. 107 of 1998), Section 22 of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Act (Act No.28 of 2002) (as amended). The authorisation was received by the applicant (Nkazimulo Resources (Pty) Ltd) on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August 2026.

Description of Project

The study area falls in the Nkangala District Municipality and Thembsile Hani Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province. The mining right application will be on Portion 2 and Portion of Portion 3 of the farm Maloekzynkop 58 JS (approximately 1328.688 Ha) wi thin the Magisterial District of Thembsile Hani, Mpumalanga Province. The study area is located approximately 18.3 km East of Kwaggafontein, approximately 2 km Southwest of Elandsdoring and 6.5 km West of Thabakhubedu. The proposed project lies on the border of Mpumalanga Province and Limpopo Province and can be accessed by R25 from Verena to Groblersdal.

Applicable Activities

|                  |                                              |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Listing Notice 1 | Activities 9, 10, 12, 13, 19, 24, 31, and 56 |
| Listing Notice 2 | Activities 6, 15, 17, 19, and 24             |
| Listing Notice 3 | Activities 4, 10, 12, and 14                 |

Invitation to Register and Participate

In terms of the National Appeal Regulations, 2014, and the EA, any person wishing to appeal against the decision must submit an appeal to the Appeal Administrator (see contact details below) and forward a copy of the appeal to the Project EAP, all register ed Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs), any Organ of State interested in the matter, and the decision-maker within 20 days (21 August 2026 – 11 September 2026) calendar from the date I&APs were notified of the decision.

THE APPEAL MUST BE SUBMITTED IN THE PRESCRIBED FORM TO APPEALS AND LEGAL REVIEW:

Email: [appeals@environment.gov.za](mailto:appeals@environment.gov.za)

Postal Address: Private Bag X447, Pretoria, 0001

Physical Address: Environment House, Corner Steve Biko and Soutpansberg Street, Arcadia, Pretoria, 0083

THE COPY OF APPEAL SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO DEPARTMENT MINERAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY:

Regional Manager: Mpumalanga Region

Lydia Maphopha

[lydia.maphopha@dmre.gov.za](mailto:lydia.maphopha@dmre.gov.za)

Postal: Private Bag 7279, Witbank, 1035

Physical: Saveways Centre, Nelson Mandela Drive, eMalahleni, 1035

NOTICE OF AMEDEMMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AUTHORIZATION GRANTED FOR LISTING ACTIVITY 14 OF GOVERNMENT NOTICE R983 (AS AMENDED) AS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED OPERATION OF A FILLING STATION ON PORTION 477 OF THE FARM KWAMHLANGA 617 JR THEMBSILE HANI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE.

Notice is hereby given in terms section 4 (2) of environmental impact assessment (EIA) regulation of 2017 for environmental Authorization granted for Development and related Operation of a Filling Station by Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA). (REF NO: 1/3/1/16/1N-492)

Please be advised that DARDLEA (Mpumalanga Province) decided to grant EA in terms of section 24(2) (a) of National Environmental Management Act ,1998(Act No: 107 OF 1998) in respect of GN. R327 of EIA regulation 2017

The Environmental Authorization is granted for Portion 477 of the farm Kwamhlanga 617 JR within Thembsile Hani Local Municipality, Mpumalanga Province.

The EA reasons for the decision can be obtain upon the request from Hlamiz Enviro Consulting. Contact details below, should you wish to appeal to the Minister of Environmental Affairs, and copy of such appeal to department of DARDLEA (Mpumalanga Province) within 20 days of this notification by means of the following methods:

Appeal to the Department of Agriculture ,Rural Development Land and Environmental Affairs

Attention: Appeal to the Directorate of DARDLEA

Email:[appeals@environment.gov.za](mailto:appeals@environment.gov.za)

By post: Private Bag X447, Pretoria,0001

By hand: Cnr Justice Street and Beaty Street,Pietkoorenhof Building

Copy of the lodged appeal to the DARDLEA

Attention: MEC: Mpumalanga Province

Postal: Private Bag X 11219, Mbombela,1200

Fax: 013 766 6067/8

By hand: 7 Government Boulevard, Building 6, Riverside Park, Mbombela ,1200

| North Edge Consulting Group |                |                        |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Contact Person              | Contact number | E-mail                 |
| Mr Ngoako Ramaboea          | 077 493 3344   | hlamienviroc@gmail.com |

# Methadone pilot tests opioid treatment at Ezinambeni clinic as families demand more support

**NODICAH FUNDAMA AND SHARON CHILOANE**

**EMALAHLENI** – A pilot programme testing methadone as part of opioid agonist treatment is offering a new approach to substance-use treatment, while highlighting the growing demand for rehabilitation and support services in Ezinambeni.

The programme was discussed with community members during an information session held on 19 August 2026 at Siphosensimbi Community Health Centre (CHC).

Led by the Department of Health together with researchers from the University of Pretoria, the 12-month pilot aims to test whether opioid agonist

treatment can be successfully delivered at community health centre level.

The pilot is being implemented at selected clinics in Mpumalanga and North West, with one clinic selected in each province and 15 participants to be enrolled at each facility.

At Siphosensimbi CHC, eligible participants will receive methadone as part of a structured treatment programme.

“We want to initiate about 15 people on methadone to test the feasibility and acceptability of providing methadone in a CHC,” said Dr Kgalabi Ngako from the

National Department of Health.

Methadone is used to help people with opioid dependence manage withdrawal symptoms and reduce cravings. However, treatment will not be limited to medication, with participants also receiving psychological support, social work services and counselling.

University of Pretoria researcher Mmaila Molebatsi said interested participants would undergo screening to determine whether they qualify. Those who do not meet the study criteria may be referred to alternative support services where appropriate.

Although residents welcomed the pilot, many questioned whether 15

places would be enough to meet the demand for addiction treatment in Ezinambeni and surrounding communities.

For many families, access to rehabilitation remains a major challenge, particularly for those unable to afford private treatment.

“We don't have the money to send them to rehab,” said one mother, who asked not to be identified.

Nkululeko Mathibela, who said he had been using substances for approximately 21 years, said he did not believe methadone was the treatment he needed.

“For me, this issue of methadone won't help me,” Mathibela said.

He said he believed he needed

detoxification and rehabilitation and wanted to seek assistance through organisations such as SANCA.

His experience highlighted that methadone is specifically aimed at opioid dependence and is not a universal treatment for every form of substance use.

The pilot will provide evidence on whether opioid agonist treatment can be delivered through South Africa's primary healthcare system and could help inform decisions on expanding the service.

For Ezinambeni residents, however, the session also highlighted a broader challenge: demand for substance-use treatment remains greater than the services currently available.

# Mpumalanga backs green MSMEs to create jobs

**LUCAS SHONGWE**

**MIDDELBURG** – The Mpumalanga government has moved to connect green MSMEs with major industry players and support programmes to create jobs and expand opportunities in the province's green economy.

Speaking at the 2026 Mpumalanga MSME Green Innovation Challenge on Tuesday, 18 August 2026, at Eastdene Community Hall in Middelburg, MEC for Economic Development and Tourism Jesta Sidell said the event was aimed at showing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) where real opportunities exist.

“Our message to MSMEs is simple: there are real opportunities in green energy and the renewable energy sector,” Sidell said. “We have brought together young entrepreneurs to share ideas and showcase innovation. We want them to develop programmes and projects for the green economy that can ultimately create jobs.

“By presenting what they are already doing in their businesses, we can identify opportunities for growth and expansion. That is how we ensure more job opportunities for communities across Mpumalanga.”

Sidell said special focus was being placed on towns affected by power station closures.

“What is particularly encouraging is seeing young people from communities such as Komati taking part. We all know the difficulties that the community faced when the power station closed down. So the question for us as a provincial government is: what more can we do in those areas? Especially in communities across Nkangala and Gert Sibande where renewable energy opportunities exist.” She added that government's role is to connect entrepreneurs with companies involved in Just Energy Transition programmes so they can access skills, funding and private-sector partnerships to establish incubators.

The Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency (MGCA) said its role was to facilitate these connections and build capacity.

MGCA Enterprise Development Officer Samukelisiwe Chirwa said the Challenge was designed to identify and showcase green MSMEs and link them to markets.

“The Green MSME Innovation Challenge was designed to identify and showcase green MSMEs in Mpumalanga and connect them with potential partners and opportunities,” Chirwa said. “The solutions reflect the diversity of the green economy, including areas such as renewable energy, circular economy and waste, sustainable agriculture and other green products and services.”

She said MGCA brings partners such as JUSTSA, Seriti Green, Sasol, ENERTRAG and GIZ into the programme so MSMEs can engage directly with organisations active in the province's green economy.

“The immediate focus is to identify businesses, strengthen their capacity, expose them to opportunities and connect them with relevant partners, markets and support programmes,” Chirwa added.

The Challenge forms part of broader work that includes the SME Loop, which aims to take 200 MSMEs across Mpumalanga through the programme in 2026.

At the end of the pitching session, Karabo Ngobeni of MaFlo Farm from Emalahleni was crowned the overall winner, walking away with R150 000.

Ngobeni was among 10 finalists who presented solutions in renewable energy, battery storage, solar and green hydrogen.

Dzumani Mathebula of JumpStart Your Career from Mbombela took second place, winning R75 000, while Tiisetso Ngwenya of Thlompho Investment, also from Emalahleni, finished third and received R50 000.

The Challenge is a provincial initiative hosted by the Mpumalanga Department of Economic Development and Tourism in partnership with the Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency.



Karabo Ngobeni of MaFlo Farm in Emalahleni was crowned the overall winner of the 2026 Mpumalanga MSME Green Innovation Challenge, walking away with R150 000. Pictured with Ngobeni is Seriti Green Chief Operating Officer Chabisi Moutlong.





Date: 20 August 2026

**NOTIFICATION OF THE ISSUANCE OF AN ATMOSPHERIC EMISSIONS LICENCE (AEL)**

**Atmospheric Emissions License Reference Number:** NDM/AEL/MP311/19/01  
**License Holder:** Omnia Fertilizer, a Division of Omnia Group (Pty) Ltd  
**Licensing Authority:** Nkangala District Municipality

Dear Interested and Affected Party,

In accordance with Condition 10 of the Atmospheric Emissions License (AEL) issued in terms of Section 43 of the National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act, 2004 (Act No. 39 of 2004), this letter serves to notify you that Omnia Fertilizer, a Division of Omnia Group (Pty) Ltd, has received its renewed Atmospheric Emissions License from the Nkangala District Municipality.

**1. Validity of the Atmospheric Emissions License**  
The Atmospheric Emissions License (AEL Reference No. NDM/AEL/MP311/19/01) issued to Omnia Fertilizer, a Division of Omnia Group (Pty) Ltd, is valid until 12 August 2031.

**2. Appeal Procedure**  
Interested and Affected Parties are hereby informed that an appeal against the decision to issue the Atmospheric Emissions License may be submitted in accordance with the appeal procedures provided for in Chapter 7 of Government Notice R543 of 18 June 2010 and as referenced in the license conditions.  
Any appeal must be lodged in writing with:

Nkangala District Municipality  
PO BOX 437, Middleburg, 1050  
Tel: 013 249 2000 | Fax: 013 249 2173

**3. Availability of the license and Reasons for the Decision**  
In accordance with Condition 10.2 of the Atmospheric Emissions License, a copy of the license and the reasons for the decision will be made available upon request.  
Requests may be directed at:  
Environmental specialist  
Omnia Fertilizer, Sasolburg  
Email: Mankileng.Moukangwe@omnia.co.za and

Environmental Officer  
Omnia Fertilizer, Sasolburg  
Email: Nelson.Lekganyane@omnia.co.za

**4. Facility Details**  
**Facility:** Omnia Fertilizer Dryden  
**Physical Address:** Portion 1 and R/33 of the Farm Weltevreden, 227 IR Farm, Weltevreden

Should you require any additional information regarding the Atmospheric Emissions License, please contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully,

Responsible Officer / Emission Control Officer Omnia  
Fertilizer, a Division of Omnia Group (Pty) Ltd Zakhele  
Dube (SHERQ and Sustainability Manager) Email: Zakhele.Dube@omnia.co.za

**Cc:** Nkangala District Municipality Air Quality Officer  
**Email:** Simelanenl@nkangaladm.gov.za



# Steve Tshwete sets the bar high ahead of final NkAMA Activation in eMakhazeni

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**MIDDELBURG** – The Steve Tshwete NkAMA Activation, held on 15 and 16 August at Kees Taljaard Stadium, showcased local talent and produced competitive football and netball action



Nkangala District Municipality Municipal Manager Lucas Mahlangu in action as NDM bowled out in the semi-finals.

ahead of the main NkAMA Awards on 11 and 12 September 2026.

The activation was the second-to-last build-up event ahead of the main awards, giving spectators a glimpse of the talent and entertainment expected in September.

The weekend showcased several NkAMA nominees. Local dance group Igugulamatsitshi, nominated for Best Traditional Dance, opened the proceedings and impressed spectators.

Vocal group Legacy Voices delivered a strong performance in support of their Best Group nomination, while classical performer Londiwe Sibanyoni held the crowd with two opera pieces. Artists MK AKA Mike and Beezy Sane also impressed, further strengthening their case for recognition at the main awards.

The Masters football tournament produced a thrilling contest, with T Masters crowned champions of the Middelburg NkAMA Top 6 tournament on Sunday after beating Mtoni Masters 7-6 on penalties following a goalless draw in the final.

Saturday's fixtures saw Mtoni Masters edge T Masters 5-4, NDM Masters receive a 3-0 walkover against Paramount Masters, while

Arnot Masters beat Zim 11 Masters 2-1. On Sunday, T Masters defeated NDM Masters 2-1 in the semi-finals, while Mtoni Masters beat Arnot Masters 2-1 to book their place in the final.

The tournament was supported by Highveld Chronicle, Nkangala District Municipality and Zokosani KwaMhlanga Funeral Parlour.

On the netball court, Mighty Divas dominated, beating Vuka Ubone 48-11 to be crowned the Steve Tshwete NkAMA netball champions.

With Steve Tshwete setting a strong benchmark, attention now turns to eMakhazeni, which will host the final NkAMA Activation on 22 and 23 August 2026.

**Highveld Chronicle** Business Strategist Mulawu Mathye said the eMakhazeni activation “will be the final opportunity for communities to experience the NkAMA activation of the Nkangala District before the awards gala in September.”

eMakhazeni will now have to match, and possibly surpass, the standard set by Steve Tshwete as the district-wide activation programme reaches its final stop.

Whether eMakhazeni can match the energy and turnout of Middelburg remains to be seen, with the final activation setting the stage for the main NkAMA programme in September.



T Masters players keep their eyes on the ball during the NkAMA Activation. The team went on to be crowned Steve Tshwete Soccer Champions.



Igugulamatsitshi, a local dance group from Doornkop,



Mighty Divas crowned the Steve Tshwete NkAMA netball champions.

## From Belfast to the national stage, DeonM turns creativity into opportunity

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

**EMAKHAZENI** – Artist and entrepreneur Deon Sakhile Mahlangu is turning his passion for art into a growing creative enterprise that serves artists, schools, businesses and young people in eMakhazeni.

Mahlangu laid the foundation for DeonM Art Gallery & Branding in 2011 before formally incorporating DeonM Art Gallery (Pty) Ltd in July 2018. What began with drawing and visual art has since expanded into a business combining traditional art, branding and digital production.

“Art and branding are two sides of the same coin, both tell a powerful story,” Mahlangu says.

Today, DeonM offers pencil and charcoal drawings, acrylic and oil paintings, custom picture framing, graphic design, signage, large-format digital printing, apparel printing and embroidery.

The business grew partly in response to needs Mahlangu identified locally. Artists needed professional framing and high-resolution scanning, while schools, organisations and small businesses required branded clothing, signage, logos and promotional material. DeonM developed these services locally, reducing the need for customers to travel elsewhere. Operating from Belfast has, however, brought challenges, including accessing specialised materials and raising capital for machinery such as embroidery machines and large-format printers.

Mahlangu responded by developing supplier networks, pursuing enterprise development opportunities and building relationships with larger businesses, including the local mining sector and Exxaro, which he says has provided valuable opportunities for the growing SMME.

While DeonM remains rooted in Belfast, its work has reached the national stage. Mahlangu has exhibited at platforms such as Decorix and Africa's Travel Indaba. He also sold five major artworks to Artbank South Africa, marking the company's largest artwork sales to date.

His relationship with Artbank also opened opportunities for other creatives. Between 2021 and 2024, DeonM hosted and mentored 10 creative graduates, providing them with practical industry experience. Youth development has also become an important part of the business. DeonM has hosted after-school art workshops and weekend sessions, while its Irhono Visual Arts Project in Schools was listed among the National Arts Council's 2023 Presidential Employment Stimulus Programme funding outcomes, with an allocation of R405 000.

Mahlangu has also participated in the My Body My Space Public Arts Festival, helping to take visual art into the community.

“I've learned that versatility and persistence are essential,” he says.

For Mahlangu, creative talent must be supported by business knowledge, including administration, compliance, customer relationships, technology and innovation.

His next ambition is to establish a Container Gallery and Arts Hub in Belfast, where the public can watch artists at work and emerging creatives can learn practical skills. He also plans to expand the digital apparel side of the business, acquire advanced production machinery and strengthen private-sector partnerships.

At the centre of his long-term vision is a youth training academy aimed at developing local talent and connecting eMakhazeni creatives with opportunities across Mpumalanga and South Africa.

“Master your craft, but also learn the business behind it,” Mahlangu advises young creatives.

What began as a passion for drawing has grown into a creative business, a platform for other artists and a vehicle for youth development, with Mahlangu determined to create more opportunities for creative talent from eMakhazeni.



From Belfast to the national stage: Artist and entrepreneur Deon Sakhile Mahlangu proudly displays one of his artworks.