

**Mandla Msibi finds new political home in Service Delivery Party, public reaction divided**



Read More on Page 5

**SANCO raises concerns over prosecutor reassignment in Machadodorp rape case**



More on Page 7

**Thousands of boys head to initiation schools as winter season begins in Mpumalanga**

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

Full Story on Page 2

# TWO SUSPECTS ARRESTED OVER 2023 DELMAS MURDER

Read More on Page 3

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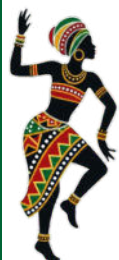


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Full Story on Page 4

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# Thousands of boys head to initiation schools as winter season begins in Mpumalanga

● EMMANUEL N MTHIMUNYE

**MPUMALANGA** — Thousands of boys across Mpumalanga have begun attending initiation schools this winter as the provincial initiation season officially gets underway.

The provincial initiation programme officially commenced on 15 May 2026, with government and traditional leaders intensifying monitoring efforts to ensure safety and compliance at registered initiation schools.

The practice is regarded by many communities as an important cultural tradition marking the transition from boyhood to manhood.

Kgoshi Speedy Katisho Mashilo, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Human Settlements, Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA), said government officials had already begun visiting initiation schools across the Nkangala District to verify their legitimacy and monitor compliance with regulations.

“Today is a very exciting day full of emotions as boys head to the mountain to engage in their cultural practices. As someone authorised to oversee the initiation school process, I can confirm that we have around 921 legally registered initiation schools in Nkangala District,” Mashilo said.

He said inspections would continue across Mpumalanga to identify and shut down illegal initiation schools.

“We will also visit other areas in Mpumalanga to determine the total number of initiation schools so we can address any that are not legitimate,” he said.

“We know there will be those who try to take advantage. Therefore, the government is working closely with

traditional leaders, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) doctors, the Ingoma Forum and the SAPS to ensure a safe initiation school programme with no fatalities,” he said.

Mashilo said authorities were committed to enforcing health and safety protocols to prevent injuries and deaths during the initiation season.

“We will take firm action against illegal initiation schools if we find them. We want to change the mindset that says initiation schools are useless and turn our children into unruly individuals. We need to address such behaviour because it is part of our culture, and we must preserve it with dignity,” he said.

Medical practitioner Dr Vusi Masombuka urged parents to disclose initiates' medical conditions to traditional leaders and ensure children continue taking prescribed medication while at initiation schools.

“This is the most difficult time for both parents and children, even though we are all excited that our boys are entering a new phase of becoming men,” Masombuka said.

“I urge parents to share any information about their children's health so that there are no initiates who will go without their necessary medication.”

He warned that no initiate should be denied access to prescribed medication during the initiation process.

“Even though this period is going

to be a very challenging one with hiccups, parents can't shy away from the fact that they are happy for their sons to embark on this journey,” he said.

Father of initiate Lucas Mahlangu (43) said he was proud to see his 18-year-old son, Sibusiso Mahlangu, take part in the cultural tradition.

“I'm happy that my son is going to perform his culture with dignity. I pray that he comes back as a better person with respect and cultural values,” Mahlangu said.

“I know this is not going to be an easy ride; however, I have assured him that I'm going to be with him every step of the way, together with other initiates. As parents, we have to support our children in order to create a better society of future leaders.”

Mashilo said his initiation school alone had approximately 800 initiates this season.

Initiates are expected to return home on 31 July 2026 following the winter initiation season.



Medical practitioner, Dr Vusi Masombuka and MEC for CoGHSTA Kgoshi Speedy Katisho Mashilo

## R300 000 bail for alleged R26,9 million COVID-19 TERS fraud suspects

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

**MIDDELBURG** — Two suspects accused of defrauding the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) of nearly R26,9 million through the COVID-19 Temporary Employee Relief Scheme (TERS) have each been granted R300 000 bail by the Middelburg Magistrate's Court, while a third accused was released on R3 000 bail.

The accused are Fumu Mkalira Msiska and his wife, Gladness Msiska Mkhonto, both aged 48, as well as his brother-in-law, Bongani Zoran Mkhonto (39).

The trio handed themselves over to the Hawks' Serious Corruption Investigation unit in Mbombela on Sunday, 17 May 2026, before appearing in court on Monday.

According to the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks), Msiska, a director of construction company A and F Consulting, allegedly unlawfully benefited from the COVID-19 TERS programme in 2020 by submitting claims for more than 700 ghost employees and former workers, resulting in losses of approximately R26,9 million to the UIF.

Investigators further allege that the funds were channelled through several bank accounts linked to the accused, including accounts

belonging to Msiska, his wife and her company, Khulani Quality Contribution.

Authorities allege that the money was used to acquire assets, including properties in Pretoria, Middelburg and White River.

Investigators also allege that Bongani Mkhonto acted as a runner by sourcing identification details used to facilitate fraudulent claims involving ghost employees and former workers. The investigation was conducted jointly by the Hawks, the Special Investigating Unit (SIU), the UIF and the National Prosecuting Authority's Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU).

During the investigation, the AFU secured freezing orders on several bank accounts and seized five vehicles, household goods and office equipment linked to the alleged scheme.

The matter was postponed to 20 July 2026 for further investigation.

Mpumalanga Hawks Provincial Head, Major General Nico Gerber, welcomed the collaboration between law enforcement agencies involved in the investigation.

“This case is another example of how law enforcement agencies can work together to ensure that those involved in criminal activities are held accountable and that proceeds of crime are recovered,” said Gerber.



The accused Fumu Mkalira Msiska (48) and his wife, Gladness Msiska Mkhonto (48) IMAGE: SIU

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



### God's Calm Control

By Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Then I heard the LORD asking, “Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?” I said, “Here I am. Send me.” (Isaiah 6:8)

Isaiah says, “I saw the Lord!” His earthly situation turned his eyes upward. That's what happened to me back in the late 1950s. My disappointment, my loneliness and confusion, rather than hardening the soil of my soul, plowed deeply. Those things cut away at me, made me sensitive to my Lord . . . in a way I would otherwise never have been.

For you it may be a lingering illness or an unexpected move to a new location, a job change, or perhaps a sudden loss of employment entirely. I know an individual who claims that it took a divorce to bring him to his knees and (for the first time in his life) to become aware of God's presence.

A couple my wife had known for 15 years lost their 18-month-old baby girl. Their grief could hardly be relieved—some wondered if they would ever be the same. As time passed, it became obvious that her death was the turning point in their spiritual pilgrimage. That couple got off the fence and into action. God became more real, more significant to that couple as a result of the loss of their child than He had ever been before.

It was the year his friend died that Isaiah “saw the Lord.” And what was He doing? Was He frowning or pacing back and forth? No, He was sitting down. The Lord was calmly seated on His throne. I think of majestic sovereignty when I read of the Almighty's position. He was totally in charge. He was not wringing His hands, wondering what in the world He was going to do. He was “lofty and exalted.”

With height comes perspective. And His exalted role speaks of authority. Isaiah saw no confused or anxious deity, but One who sat in sovereign, calm control with full perspective and in absolute authority. Interestingly, the death of Uzziah is not mentioned again. From now on it's the prophet and his God—His presence “filling the temple.”

GOD IS IN CONTROL



# Two suspects arrested over 2023 Delmas murder

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

**DELMAS** — Two suspects wanted in connection with the 2023 murder of Sibongiseni Sithole in Delmas have been arrested following a police manhunt and assistance from members of the community.

Mpumalanga police confirmed that Xolani Masuku was arrested in Tweefontein on Thursday, 21 May 2026, after community members alerted authorities to his whereabouts. The second suspect, Samuel Mthokozisi Mabethé, handed himself over to police in Delmas on Friday.

The pair are expected to appear before the Delmas Magistrate's Court on Monday, 25 May 2026, on a charge of murder.

The arrests come just days after police issued a public appeal for assistance in locating the two suspects following the reopening of the case and the issuing of warrants of arrest.

Police allege that Sithole was stabbed at the suspects' residence in RDP Extension 3 on 12 June 2023. His body was allegedly dumped a few metres from the house and discovered by a passer-by the following morning.

The suspects were initially arrested shortly after the incident; however, the case was not enrolled due to insufficient evidence.

“However, following a thorough investigation by the assigned

investigating officer, who collected additional evidence and statements from witnesses, the docket was resubmitted to court. The court then issued warrants of arrest for both suspects,” said police spokesperson Colonel Mavela Masondo.

Acting Mpumalanga Provincial Commissioner Major General (Dr) Zeph Mkhwanazi welcomed the arrests and thanked members of the public for assisting police.

“The arrest of these suspects demonstrates the importance of cooperation between communities and law enforcement agencies. We appreciate the information provided by members of the public, which assisted police in tracing the suspects,” said Mkhwanazi.

A family relative, who spoke to the *Highveld Chronicle* on condition of anonymity, alleged that one of the suspects, Xolani Masuku, was a close friend of the deceased.

“Xolani was Sibongiseni's best friend. On the day of the incident, he went to Sibongiseni's mother and asked him to accompany him to

assist at a ceremony because he needed extra hands. His mother agreed, only to later find out that her son had been killed,” the relative said.

The relative further alleged that the family discovered a knife with blood stains, clothing allegedly belonging to one of the suspects with blood on it, as well as a wheelbarrow believed to have been used to transport the body.

“When we went to Xolani's home, we found the knife that was allegedly used, and it had blood on it. Some of Xolani's clothes also had blood stains, and the wheelbarrow they allegedly used to dump the body also had blood. We handed everything over to the police, yet people are still walking free,” the relative claimed.

The family also expressed frustration with the handling of the case, accusing authorities of failing them during the early stages of the investigation.

“This has affected the family deeply. We feel like the police failed us. Even when we went to the police station for updates, we were sent from one officer to another. We were not even informed about the suspects' first court appearance; we only saw it on a Facebook group,” the relative

claimed. Sibongiseni's mother, Siphwe Sithole, said the family remains devastated and continues to seek justice.

“I even got arrested for demanding justice for my son. I am still hurt even today because the police failed us. My son deserves justice,” she said.

Meanwhile, a close family relative to Masuku said they were surprised to see the matter widely reported in the media, including on provincial and national platforms, without first being contacted by the investigating officer handling the case.

According to the family member, discussions had already taken place between the family, the station commissioner and the branch commander of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID).

He further stated that the family plans to meet with police officials on Monday to discuss the matter further and invited the *Highveld Chronicle* so that it can get “both sides of the story” and hear what they described as serious concerns on their side, which they said could have legal implications.

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## MEC Sidell believes the strategic engagements she held at the 2026 Africa's Travel Indaba will translate into real tourism growth in the province

**M**BOMBELA – The MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Ms. Jesta Sidell, says the 2026 Africa's Travel Indaba, recently held at the Durban ICC served as a springboard in our quest to grow the tourism sector in Mpumalanga.

MEC Sidell led a delegation from Mpumalanga - the Place of the Rising Sun to the annual Africa's Travel Indaba to promote Mpumalanga as the prime tourist destination.

As the Executive Authority responsible for tourism development in the Province, MEC Sidell, together with the Interim Board Chairperson of the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA), Mr. Fish Mahlalela, held a number of strategic engagements with both local and international buyers and key stakeholders. The engagements were rooted on establishing symbiotic partnerships and collaborations with a view of increasing tourist arrival and spend in our respective countries.

Among other engagements, the MEC and the Interim Board Chairperson held productive meetings with the Indian Consulate, delegations from the Republic of Mozambique, and the Kingdom of Eswatini, as well as neighboring provinces including Gauteng, Limpopo, and KwaZulu-Natal, with the objective of strengthening partnerships and promoting tourism collaboration.

During the engagement with the Indian Consulate, a number of strategic undertakings and commitments were made towards building a strong partnership aimed at developing tourism between the parties. The Indian Consulate committed to use its social media platforms and various marketing platforms to promote Mpumalanga as a preferred tourism destination of choice.

As it relates to the current existing TriLand Agreement between South Africa (Mpumalanga), the Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of Mozambique all parties reaffirmed their commitment to service the agreement for the benefit of the three countries. Through the engagements, the parties have agreed to consider the possibility of establishing a joint website to promote the TriLand tourism package. Furthermore, the

MEC also held a successful high-level Mpumalanga Tourism Investment Dialogue with potential investors. The dialogue served as a catalyst to build investor confidence in Mpumalanga by positioning the province as an attractive, credible and investment-ready tourism destination and to unlock investment. The dialogue also served as a precursor for our inaugural Mpumalanga Tourism Investment Conference, proposed to take place later this year

“We are delighted to indicate that we held a successful Tourism Investment Dialogue with potential investors to engage on various investment opportunities Mpumalanga tourism can offer. Our discussion with the potential investors were anchored on the understanding that tourism is a vital, labor-intensive pillar on the developmental agenda, driving inclusive economic growth, poverty alleviation and infrastructure investment. I can assert without fear of contradiction that the Place of the Rising Sun is uniquely positioned to become a leading tourism investment destination,” explained MEC Sidell.

The Africa's Travel Indaba presented the province with a strategic opportunity to promote Mpumalanga's tourism product offering to predominately international hosted buyers.



MEC for Economic Development and Tourism, Ms. Jesta Sidell at the Africa's Travel Indaba 2026



## Nkangala launches just transition programme to drive inclusive economic future

● NODICAH FUNDAMA

**MIDDELBURG** — Nkangala District Municipality, in partnership with the National Business Initiative, supported by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), the Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency and GIZ through the Just SA initiative, officially launched its Just Transition Programme in Middelburg on 22 May 2026 to help prepare communities and workers for South Africa's shift towards a low-carbon economy.

The programme aims to strengthen institutional capacity, attract investment opportunities and diversify Nkangala's economy through practical development plans focused on inclusive and sustainable growth.

Historically reliant on coal mining, power generation and related industries, Nkangala plays a major role in South Africa's energy sector and is expected to undergo significant socio-economic changes as the country moves towards cleaner energy sources.

The district is home to eight coal-powered stations, including the now decommissioned Komati Power Station, where plans are already in place for repurposing towards green energy generation. The district currently supplies about 23.7GW to the country's grid, accounting for more than a third of South Africa's electricity generation and supporting approximately 150 000 jobs.

Acting Executive Mayor Taylor Pookgadi said the initiative marks the start of a coordinated district-wide

implementation process.

“This engagement marks the beginning of a coordinated district-wide process to position Nkangala within South Africa's evolving economic, energy and environmental landscape,” he said.

Pookgadi said the transition should be viewed as both an environmental and socio-economic necessity.

“It is not only about sustainability, but also about protecting livelihoods, reducing unemployment and poverty, and building resilient communities,” he said.

He further stressed the importance of coordinated investment to ensure communities benefit from the transition.

“We must channel resources and investments in a coordinated manner to ensure that the transition benefits our people and leaves no one behind,” said Pookgadi.

Mpumalanga Chief Director for Climate Change Services Philemon Mathebula said climate change is already affecting communities across the province.

“Climate change is no longer theoretical. It is being felt through rising temperatures and changing weather patterns,” he said.

Mathebula said increasing floods, droughts and cold spells are signs of broader climate disruptions largely caused by human activity.

“Carbon emissions from energy production and consumption are a key driver of global warming, which in turn disrupts weather systems,” he said.

He commended Nkangala District Municipality for taking proactive steps towards environmental protection and a

greener economy.

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) also outlined its role in supporting municipalities during the transition process.

SALGA Just Transition Specialist Babalwa Mboho said the organisation is leading national coordination efforts.

“SALGA is constitutionally mandated to provide, promote and support municipalities. We are the lead institution of Chapter 10 of the Just Transition implementation plan,” she said.

Mboho added that SALGA is prioritising municipal readiness assessments to strengthen implementation at local government level.

“The first work stream is looking at municipal capability, how ready our municipalities are when it comes to the Just Energy Transition. For municipalities that are struggling, we are working on addressing challenges that we identify,” she said.

She further revealed that financial and technical support programmes are already being introduced in parts of Mpumalanga.

“There is funding for a municipal utility reform programme where we are focusing on four municipalities in Mpumalanga. We will capacitate municipalities and ensure feasibility studies are conducted for projects,” said Mboho.

The launch highlighted the importance of collaboration between government, business, labour, communities and development partners to ensure the transition remains inclusive and economically sustainable.



The Nkangala team set to lead the Just Transition Programme poses for a photo alongside key stakeholders and invited guests.

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# Mandla Msibi finds new political home in Service Delivery Party, public reaction divided

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

**MBOMBELA** — Former African National Congress (ANC) provincial treasurer Mandla Msibi has found a new political home after officially joining the newly formed Service Delivery Party (SDP), a move that sparked mixed reactions from members of the public. Msibi was unveiled as the party's national convener and mayoral candidate for the City of Mbombela during a gathering held in Pienaar near Mbombela on Tuesday, 19 May 2026, where the SDP also outlined plans to contest the upcoming local government elections. The announcement had been highly anticipated, with many closely watching to see what Msibi's next political move would be following his resignation from the ANC after the party's recent provincial conference, where he failed to retain his position as provincial treasurer. SDP national coordinator Thabo Motau said Msibi would lead the party's national mobilisation and organisational programmes in his role as national convener.

Motau said the SDP was formed in response to growing frustrations over poor municipal services, corruption and the lack of accountability in local government. "We want leadership that listens to communities and responds to their daily challenges," said Motau. "People are tired of empty promises while basic services continue to collapse." He said the party would prioritise water provision, electricity, road maintenance and local economic development. "We believe decision-making must start from the ground up," he added. Msibi said the party aimed to restore public trust and place communities at the centre of governance. "We are building a movement that puts service delivery first and gives communities a voice," said Msibi. He added that political leaders

should focus on serving residents instead of competing for positions. "Leadership is not about titles. It is about working for the people and responding to their daily struggles," he said. Msibi also called on young people and community leaders to join the party's structures ahead of the elections. The announcement drew mixed reactions on social media and within communities across Mpumalanga. "That's a great leader," one social media user commented, while another said Msibi should be given an opportunity to lead. "Who knows, maybe he can help us here in Mpumalanga," the resident said. Others, however, criticised the move, describing it as "a very old strategy", arguing that politicians often move to other parties after losing influence in their former political homes.

Another resident claimed that while Msibi was still a member of the ANC, service delivery challenges continued to affect communities. Some members of the public also raised concerns about corruption, warning that the SDP could risk

"infiltration" by former ANC leaders who leave the party before it "sinks". Despite the criticism, the SDP said it plans to establish structures across provinces ahead of the local government elections. The ANC had not responded to requests for comment at the time of publication.



Mandla Msibi, SDP national convener and mayoral candidate for the City of Mbombela

## MHRF confirms Jomo Segage as mayoral candidate

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**MIDDELBURG** — Middelburg and Hendrina Residents Front (MHRF) has announced its chairperson, Jomo Segage, as its mayoral candidate for Steve Tshwete Local Municipality ahead of the upcoming local government elections.

Segage said his nomination was confirmed during a party meeting held two weeks ago. He will also stand as the MHRF's candidate for Ward 22, which covers Mountain View, Rockville and Chromeville. Segage said residents were increasingly frustrated with service delivery and governance challenges in Steve Tshwete. "For quite a long time the Steve Tshwete municipality has been under siege, and it is time for the people of Middelburg to stop it," he said. He said the party aimed to restore public confidence through improved governance, infrastructure renewal and better service delivery.

"This town used to be better in the past. I am referring to infrastructure, service delivery, economic activity and civic pride, which have since deteriorated. This is what we need to restore as MHRF," Segage said. According to Segage, the party's campaign would focus on both service delivery and preserving the town's identity. The announcement comes as the MHRF prepares to launch its manifesto in July. The MHRF manifesto focuses on merit-based governance, improved service delivery, infrastructure upgrades and lower municipal rates for residents. "We choose the path of meritocracy and good governance to deliver us unity, hard work, development, inclusivity and shared prosperity," the manifesto states.

**What the Manifesto Proposes**  
The MHRF says it will continue a programme aimed at reducing rates and taxes for residents. It also commits to intensifying the fight for clean and transparent governance and building administrative capacity so services are delivered on time. On economic development, the manifesto proposes a resource-based economic model focused on diversification. It links this to extensive human resource development, saying skills growth is central to expanding the local economy. The organisation says it plans to improve municipal infrastructure,

strengthen governance, support economic development and prioritise local residents for employment opportunities. The manifesto lists portfolios it will prioritise, including the Office of the Municipal Manager, Technical Services, Local Economic Development, Spatial Development,

Environmental and Waste Management, Community Services, Corporate Services and Financial Services. "The MHRF manifesto provides realistic, achievable goals aimed at addressing the challenges facing residents," Segage said.



Jomo Segage has been announced as Middelburg and Hendrina Residents Front's mayoral candidate for Steve Tshwete Local Municipality and Ward 22 ahead of the local government elections.

## EFF to fill vacant council seats after councillors leave party

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**MIDDELBURG** — The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) in Steve Tshwete is preparing to fill two vacant proportional representation (PR) council seats after councillors Thabiso Tshoane and Mapheto Maredi left the party following allegations that they failed to fulfil deployment duties. The party said the seats would be filled internally without the need for by-elections. Both councillors left the party after being asked to resign for allegedly failing to honour deployment duties, according to EFF provincial secretary Jackson Malatjie. Malatjie alleged that Tshoane, who served in the subregional elections task force (SRETF), failed to carry out assigned work at branches within the subregion. "Currently we are engaged in a mass voter registration process compiling data for new members and first-time voters. Thabiso has never done that work. So he was recalled from the SRETF," Malatjie said. He said once Tshoane was removed from the SRETF, he was expected to resign from public office. "The office of the secretary-general instructed him to resign, but he did not do so. The party then terminated his membership," Malatjie said. Tshoane was among five party members in Steve Tshwete who were suspended in October last year for allegedly disrupting a branch general

assembly (BGA) meeting and sowing divisions within the organisation. Regarding Maredi, Malatjie said he served in the subregional command team (SRCT) and resigned from the SRETF, citing excessive workload. "Once you're elected to the SRCT, you are now the leader of that subregion because you're part of the collective elected in an assembly of the EFF. Therefore, once you resign, you have defined yourself outside that collective," he said. Malatjie said he informed Maredi that resigning from the SRETF also meant he had to resign as a public representative. "He then sent a letter withdrawing the resignation after being asked to resign. He then voluntarily left the organisation," Malatjie said. Malatjie said the party would proceed with filling the two seats through its internal processes. "We are currently in the process of replenishing our list. We will then make an announcement very soon," he said. Tshoane is believed to have joined the newly formed Amalgamated Steve Tshwete party, while Maredi has reportedly joined the Democratic Alliance (DA). Attempts to obtain comment from Tshoane and Maredi were unsuccessful at the time of publication.



Thabiso Tshoane, former PR



Johannes Maredi, former PR

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## ILIZWI

### Amalungelo wabantwana kanye neembopho

Esikhathini sanamhlanjesi abantwana abanengi babonakala sele balahlekelwa yilawulo, ihlonipho, ukuziphatha, ukulalela kanye neminye imikghwa elungileko. Nanyana abantwana banamungelo begodu bakwazi lokho, kuqakathekile bona bazi bona ilungelo elinye nelinye linesibophho sakhona. Kuvamile esikhathini esinengi bona abantwana kanye nababelethi, barhabe ukufuna amalungelo wabantwana kodwana bakhohlwe ziimbopho zakhona.

Nanyana kuqakathekile bona abantwana bazi amalungelo wabo, kuqakathekile bona bazwisise bona ngaphandle kwesibophho, alikho ilungelo. Ngokuya ngokwe athikili Convention on the rights of the child (1989) ilungelo lokufunda liza nesibophho sokuya esikolweni, ukuhlonipha abotitjhere, nokufunda ngokuzimisela. Ilungelo lokukhuluma ngokukhululeka liza nesibophho sokukhuluma ngenhlonipho nangeqiniso, kanye namanye amalungelo.

Ngetjhu elimbi, inengi labantu abatjha esifundeni seMpumalanga, abakutjheji ukuqakatheka kwamalungelo

kanye neembopho zakhona. Sithoga iinhlango ezinengi emiphakathini ezizokusiza abantwana nelutjha ukuzwisisa ukulingana okuqakathekileko hlangana namalungelo neembopho ngefanelo. Iinhlango ezizobafundisa ukusebenza ngeenqema ukuhlonipha, nokuziphatha kuhle. Iinhlalo ezingavuselela amagugu wokuziphatha begodu zilungiselele iutjha lethu bona libe zizakhamuzi ezihle ksasa.

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Umhlaziyi : Sbhongile Precious Skosana

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The best Companion in the City

### ABOUT EMALAHLENI FM

Established in 2010, eMalahleni FM is a trusted community radio station broadcasting 24/7 on 98.7 MHz across Mpumalanga's key economic hubs. With over 96,000 listeners and a strong digital presence, we connect brands directly to an engaged and loyal audience. Our dynamic mix of 60% talk and 40% music — including local news, current affairs, and diverse genres — caters to all age groups and LSM 0-8 markets. Broadcasting in four languages, we ensure inclusive, relevant communication.

Partner with eMalahleni FM — The Best Companion in the City — and grow your brand where it matters most.

### VISION & MISSION

#### VISION

To have a continuous interaction with our listeners and clients.

#### MISSION

Deliver a professional, community-centred and financially sustainable broadcasting service that informs, educates and entertains the community.

### KEY STATISTICS

Frequency

98.7 MHz

Listenership

96,000+

Broadcast

24/7

LSM Profile

0-8

Social Media

110 000+

Reach

50km Radius

### Languages:

English 20% | Sepedi 30% | IsiZulu 30% | IsiNdebele 20%

Content mix: 60% Talk | 40% Music

### OUR REACH & FOOTPRINT



Primary Areas: Emalahleni, Middleburg, Ogies, Kriel

Extended Reach: Arnot, Rietspruit, Thubelihle, Bronkhorstpruit, Belfast, Machadodorp

### PROGRAMMING EXCELLENCE

#### Diverse Music

We play a diverse mix of music, including House, Kwaito, Hip Hop, traditional wedding songs, Afro-pop, R&B, Gospel, Bubblegum, Reggae, and Jazz.

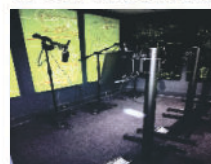
#### Trusted News - 60% Local

One hour of unpacking top trending stories live on air with relevant officials in our current affairs show.

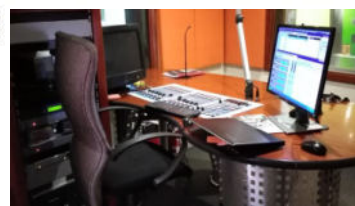
#### Best Content for ALL

We broadcast 24/7 with 20 shows catering to all age groups — from children and teenagers to adults, students, professionals, businesses, and the unemployed.

### OUR FACILITIES



Recording Studio



Studio A - On-Air



Studio B - Production

### DIGITAL PRESENCE

eMalahleni FM boasts a combined Facebook following of over 164,000 followers and maintains a strong presence across its social media platforms, giving brands extended digital reach and meaningful audience engagement beyond the airwaves.

**STATION ADDRESS:**  
5546 Hectorway Lynnville  
Municipality Offices  
Kwa-guqa  
Emalahleni 1039

**CONTACT US:**  
Marketing: 087 150 2353  
Studioline: 071 175 1528  
WhatsApp: 071 175 1528

### CONNECT WITH US:

- Facebook: Emalahleni FM (+52 000) | Emalahleni FM News (+112 000)
- Website: <http://ndstream.net/emalahlenifm>
- Website: [www.emalahlenifm.org.za](http://www.emalahlenifm.org.za)
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# SANCO raises concerns over prosecutor reassignment in Machadodorp rape case

● LUCAS SHONGWE

**BELFAST** — The South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) in Machadodorp, under the Emakhazeni Local Municipality, has raised concerns over the reassignment of a prosecutor in a rape case involving a 32-year-old man accused of raping his stepdaughter and niece.

The accused was arrested on 15 April 2026 and has remained in custody as the matter was repeatedly postponed for a formal bail application.

SANCO alleged that the reassignment of the prosecutor was concerning and questioned whether it could influence the outcome of the bail process.

SANCO zonal coordinator Humphrey Ndlovu alleged that there may be a relationship between the new prosecutor and the defence attorney, a claim denied by the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA).

“If that is the case, we fear that the move could be aimed at securing the suspect's release on bail,” he said.

SANCO described the accused as “a very dangerous person” and said its main concern remains the safety of the children.

“Our fear is that if he is released, he will want to go back to the victims and finish what he started,” Ndlovu said.

The matter returned to court on 19 and 21 May before it was postponed to 28 May 2026 for the continuation of bail proceedings.

“We are happy with how the first prosecutor dealt with the matter so far. She managed to keep him behind bars, which is what the community wants. But we are now disappointed because changing her will make the suspect come back to society,” Ndlovu said.

The NPA rejected SANCO's allegations, saying there was “no substance” to the claims.

The NPA stated that the first prosecutor was never removed from the matter and had been ready to proceed on several occasions, but the case was postponed at the request of the defence.

“The prosecutor informed the court professionally that she would be on leave from 19 May 2026 to 30 June 2026,” said NPA Mpumalanga spokesperson Monica Nyuswa.

Nyuswa added that the court then ordered that the matter be postponed for another prosecutor to continue with the bail application.

“The only other available District Court public prosecutor indeed continued with the bail application on 19 May 2026,” she said, adding that the accused remained in custody throughout the process.

She further stated that there was “no indication that there is anything but a professional relationship between the attorney and the prosecutors.”

“The magistrate will make a ruling on bail based on the facts before the court,” she said.

Nyuswa also indicated that the NPA's internal review process remains available should the community wish to submit additional information or make representations to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in Mpumalanga. The NPA also requested that the publication withhold the identities of the suspect and the victims' parents to protect the children from further harm.



## Victory for taxi boss Sibanyoni and co-accused, NPA appeals contempt ruling in extortion case

● EMMANUEL N MTHIMUNYE

**KWAGGAFONTAIN** — It was a big victory for taxi boss Joe “Ferrari” Sibanyoni and his co-accused, Mvimbi Masilela, Philemon Msiza and Bafana Sindani, after the extortion matter against them was struck off the roll following prosecutor Mkhuseleli Ntaba's absence during proceedings on Monday, 18 May 2026. The charge relates to extortion allegations by a mining businessman involving R2.2 million between 2022 and 2025. The accused have maintained their innocence, with Sibanyoni stating that the charges came as a shock to him as he had always had close ties with the complainant and had at some stage borrowed him R900 000, which he allegedly repaid in full.

The ruling got the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) working tirelessly throughout the week after one of its prosecutors, who has since been suspended and now faces disciplinary action, was charged with contempt of court and faced the authorisation of a warrant for his arrest, with his failure to attend court being the main reason behind the magistrate's ruling.

The NPA has now drawn the first card in challenging that decision and has filed an application for leave to appeal against the contempt of court ruling and authorisation of a warrant of arrest against prosecutor Mkhuseleli.

In a statement issued on Friday, 22 May 2026, the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) in Mpumalanga confirmed that the application

follows the ruling handed down by Chief Magistrate T. Tonjeni on Monday, 18 May 2026.

The NPA said the appeal application relates to the conviction of prosecutor Ntaba for contempt of court and the subsequent authorisation of a warrant for his arrest after he failed to appear in court during the bail hearing. According to the NPA, the filing of the application for leave to appeal automatically suspends the orders pending the outcome of the appeal process. The DPP has also filed a formal request for written reasons for the ruling in order to supplement the grounds of appeal if necessary.

“The implication of the filing of the said application is that the orders are automatically suspended until the hearing of the application for leave to appeal and finalisation thereof,” the statement read.

The NPA further indicated that it had appointed a legal team led by a senior counsel to look into the matter relating to the decision to strike the criminal case off the roll and would act on the matter once it had received legal advice from the senior counsel.

National Director of Public Prosecutions Advocate Andy Mothibi said the NPA remained committed to ensuring accountability and fulfilling its constitutional mandate.

Adv Mothibi further assured the public that the NPA would continue to act in the interests of justice despite the latest developments in the matter.

The developments follow proceedings at the Kwaggafontain Magistrate's Court where Sibanyoni's lawyer, Shaun Abrahams, a former

National Director of Public Prosecutions, told the court that the repeated delays were damaging his client's reputation and questioned the prosecutor's absence.

“We've been waiting for hours for the prosecutor to arrive, but he is nowhere to be found. He has not communicated with the court to let us know if he is coming or not. Therefore, I ask the court to charge prosecutor Mkhuseleli Ntaba with contempt of court because he cannot simply postpone things at will. This is a serious case with major allegations. I urge the court to take strong action against prosecutor Ntaba's behaviour,” said Abrahams. Advocate Mpati Lebakeng, representing co-accused Bafana Sindani, also described the prosecutor's conduct as unprofessional and unacceptable.

On Friday, 15 May 2026, prosecutor Ntaba informed the court that he would not be available on Monday due to other obligations. However, the court had reportedly directed him to attend the proceedings. The magistrate subsequently found Ntaba in contempt of court following the application by the defence. A warrant for Ntaba's arrest was also issued after the court found he had failed to appear without adequate explanation. Mpumalanga police said investigations into the extortion case would continue in cooperation with the NPA. The matter remains struck off the roll, although the NPA has indicated that the case may be reinstated.



Community members gathered outside Belfast Magistrate's Court during the bail hearing of a man accused of rape. SANCO has raised concerns over the reassignment of a prosecutor in the matter.



Jubilant Joe Ferrari Sibanyoni and his co-accused, Mvimbi Masilela, Philemon Msiza and Bafana Sindani, celebrate through dance after the magistrate's ruling



## Mpumalanga football administrator joins COSAFA executive

● RODNEY HLATSHWAYO

**DELMAS** — From the football structures of Mpumalanga to the leadership ranks of regional football, Linda Zwane says his appointment to the Council of Southern Africa Football Associations (COSAFA) Executive Committee presents an opportunity to open doors for young players across Southern Africa.

Zwane was co-opted onto the COSAFA Executive Committee during the organisation's 2026 Elective General Assembly held in Harare, Zimbabwe, on 17 May 2026.

Speaking to the *Highveld Chronicle*, Zwane outlined a vision focused on football development, strengthening regional competitions and creating opportunities for young talent.

Zwane, who also serves as Vice-President of the South African Football Association (SAFA) and President of the Mpumalanga Sport Confederation, said the role gives him an opportunity to help shape football development across COSAFA's 14 member nations.

"As a member of the COSAFA Executive Committee, my responsibility is to contribute to the collective governance, strategic oversight and policy formulation for football across our member nations," said Zwane.

He said one of his priorities would be strengthening regional competitions and ensuring football structures across member countries benefit from commercial growth and development opportunities.

"COSAFA must become an enabler of football development, not just a regulator," he said.

Zwane said his appointment could also create opportunities for football development in Mpumalanga and South Africa through increased regional exposure and investment.

"Leadership is about creating pipelines. By sitting at the regional

table, I intend to bridge the gap between local talent and international exposure," he said. He added that he would advocate for regional tournaments, coaching clinics and scouting programmes to be hosted in South Africa, while encouraging cross-border football development initiatives.

Zwane identified poor infrastructure, financial instability and weak youth development systems as some of the biggest challenges facing football in Southern Africa.

"Too many talented players slip through the cracks because we lack uniform scouting and academy structures across the zone," he said.

On grassroots football, Zwane stressed the need for improved scouting and coaching systems in rural communities.

"Talent is not confined to major cities," he said.

Zwane also highlighted the importance of growing women's football through expanded competitions and leadership opportunities.

"Women's football is the fastest-growing sector of the sport, but it needs structural equity, not just lip service," he said.

He said transparency would remain critical in attracting investment into football structures.

"Trust is our ultimate currency. To attract major corporate backing, we must operate with absolute transparency through independent auditing, compliance and long-term strategic planning," he said.

Zwane also called for stronger cooperation among Southern African football associations to improve competitiveness and



Linda Zwane, COSAFA Executive Committee Member, SAFA Vice President and Chairperson of the Mpumalanga Sport Confederation  
IMAGE: Supplied



attract sponsors.

"By cooperating regionally, whether through shared officiating standards or future regional club competitions, we create a larger economic footprint that attracts broadcasters and sponsors," he said.

Despite his multiple leadership responsibilities within SAFA, the Mpumalanga Sport Confederation and COSAFA, Zwane said the roles

complement one another and all focus on football development.

Speaking about the legacy he hopes to leave behind, Zwane said he wants football to become more accessible to young people across Southern Africa.

"I want my legacy to be measured by the accessibility of the game, knowing that during my tenure we built a transparent pathway that allows a young boy or girl from any

corner of Southern Africa to realise their dreams through football," he said.

The Mpumalanga Sport Confederation and Mpumalanga MEC for Culture, Sport and Recreation, Leah Mabuza, both welcomed Zwane's appointment, describing it as an important moment for football in the province and the broader Southern African region.



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