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Department:
Community Safety and Transport Management
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MOPALAMI

Sep-Oct 2023



Dr Hans Kekana alights fast moving COSATMA Train

‘Don’t spare criminals and reckless road users’- MEC Lehari

Learners receive bicycles to shorten traveling time to school

Provincial Taxi Council to receive funding

Let's Grow North West Together





Mr OA Konyaditse

Director Communication Services

MEC Lehari introduced him as the Department was distributing bicycles at Kopela during the Thuntsha Lerole Programme. His compelling life story is captured astutely in this edition.

We are also welcoming the new Media Liaison Officer, Mr Tshegofatso Lucas Mothibedi who is attached to the Office of the Executive Authority. Welcome Luther and we hope you will find the public service to be as equally fulfilling as journalism. Your responsibility will keep you interacting with erstwhile colleagues often. The difference is you are used to asking questions, in your new role you will answer them. But you are not alone, we are all in this together.

In this quarter the MEC activated the 'Safer Festive Season' and already our traffic officers have registered some commendable results in changing driver behaviour.

You will also find an article on the distribution of the Shova Kalula bicycles to 93 learners of the Ramokonyane Secondary School at Kopela in the Tswaing Municipality. The Department shall have distributed 850 bicycles by the end of this fiscus. Cumulatively, by the end of the Sixth Administration's term, 5 050 learners shall have received bicycles.

There is also an article on anticrime community engagements that the MEC and the HOD have been leading. It's all part of the expediting service delivery as per the Department's mandate.

Let me conclude by profoundly thanking Mr Thabo Sematle who led the Directorate and had considerably made himself available for reference. Best wishes in his new role as Director of Transport Terminals, which include managing airports.

The last edition was overseen by Ms Yvonne Maqoboza who consummately steered the ship when Mr Sematle was away on other Department's responsibilities. She deserves our collectively thanks and I must hasten to say she is still very much part of the Communication Team and we continue to appreciate her stewardship.

Lastly, let me thank profusely the MEC Office led by Mr Tebogo Motlhamme. I am grateful for the opportunity of having been part of such an important Office and I am beholden. Enjoy the ride.

Hello and welcome to the Third Quarter edition of our external newsletter, Mopalami. Get on board and ride on with us. Amongst articles you will find the profile of the Head of the Department who joined us at the beginning of September.

Standing at an impressive one point nine meters tall, Dr Hans Kekana is both conspicuous and propitious. His entrance equally histrionic and not some humdrum air-conditioned tea and biscuits affair.

Allow



Safely



This Festive Season

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DR KEKANA VOWS IMPROVEMENT IN SERVICES DELIVERY



Following his introduction by the MEC, Kekana accepted responsibilities by committing to take the department to greater heights of service delivery in ensuring that the communities of the province are and feel safe and further provided with effective and efficient transport services.

He acknowledged that public service is not an easy place to work in as there are lots of expectations towards making the difference in the communities.

“Education and knowledge are no longer enough, in the public service now we need people who must implement the policies to make an impact in the lives of people that we serve,” says Kekana who defined the role of head of department as a critical position that is responsible to deliver the policy statement of the Member of the Executive.

Kekana is not new in the public service. His experience in government is recorded as far as from the Land Claims Commission where he worked as a researcher in 1997 and later in 2002 appointed as Director for Land Reform. In 2005, he ascended the high ropes of government as Chief Director at the Department of Housing and Human Settlement in the North West. He was Head of Infrastructure Projects for BMP Projects in 2010 and Events Manager for the Gauteng Tourism Authority in 2016.

With his hardwork, commitment and desire to change people's lives, Dr Kekana intends to make an impact in the department, change perceptions and drive the crew to the right direction.

Appointed Head of Department (HoD) for the North West Department of Community Safety and Transport Management Dr Hans Kekana began his responsibilities by riding a moving train loaded with a sack of challenges, raising the bar high for his expectations.

Kekana was confronted by a number of road accidents where the province experienced fatalities, with more than nine people passing away in two major accidents within three days in the week he started as the accounting officer.

In this instance, Dr Kekana was even introduced to the media by conducting interviews as head of administration for the department following these incidents, before his official introduction to the rest of department's staff.

Affectionately known as “DJ HK”, following his career behind the decks of the entertainment industry, Kekana's appointment comes hardly a year and few months after receiving a PhD in geography during the North-West University's (NWU's) graduation ceremony in May 2022.

In his address during the official introduction to the Extended Departmental Management Committee (EDMC) in Rustenburg, the Department's MEC Sello Lehari said Kekana's appointment was part of the process of filling all positions at managerial level in the department.

His appointment is important as the process aimed at bringing stability at the department.

We have made a commitment at the Provincial Legislature that we will fill all managerial positions and today I can confirm that we have delivered on our commitment. We have filled all our managerial positions including the newly formed Chief Directorate for District Development Model, which we have already appointed the Chief Director and all four District Directors in this regard.”

“With this achievement, all we need now is to diligently deliver services to our deserving communities without fail,” these were the words of MEC Lehari introducing Dr Kekana as the head of department.

The head of department position became vacant when the contract of the former HoD, Ms Botlhale Mofokeng came to an end in April 2022.



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SAFER FESTIVE SEASON

'One wrong move, you will meet full might of the law' - says MEC Lehari

Festive period turns to be the most challenging season for the law enforcement fraternity in the province and the country at large, as traffic volumes dramatically increases, following movements of people travelling to different destinations.

Safety on both the streets and roads continues to be compromised as crime, crashes and fatalities increases.

This calls for stringent measures to be put in place by the law enforcement agencies, to create a crime free environment and fewer incidents on the road, all in order to save the lives of people.

In an effort to tighten against wrong doers, the North West MEC for Department of Community Safety and Transport Management, Sello Lehari activated the Provincial Safer Festive Season Operations. With this, the South African Police Service (SAPS), Provincial Traffic and all other key stakeholders in the law enforcement will join forces and increase their visibility in all major roads and streets of the Province.

In his address to the law enforcement officers parading at the SAPS Headquarters in Potchefstroom, MEC Lehari has sent a stern warning to those who will find themselves on the wrong side of the law during the festive season.

He said the law enforcement operations will be conducted throughout the season with intentions to ensure safety of all citizens including those who will be coming for festive holidays in the Province.

"We are not going to tolerate any deviance, wrong doing, contravention of any statute. Any wrong move, will meet the full might of the law.



Those using our province as a transit, will find the presence of law enforcement on all arterial routes," said Lehari stating that operations during the season will focus and not limited to combating aggravated robberies, vehicle hijackings, comparing drugs and human trafficking, enforcement of legislation in respect of firearms, liquor and further combating drunken driving, speeding and all moving violations

The MEC also encourages communities to report crime as and when it happens. "It is only by working together that we can defeat crime," said Lehari.

In his address, the Provincial Police Commissioner Lieutenant General Sello Kwena assured communities that the police are ready to show criminals that they do not have a place to hide in the North West.

"The citizens must feel relaxed and at ease, because men and women in blue will be on the streets and all corners, watching over them.

"We are going to combat crime through decisive police action and robust community involvement," Kwena affirmed citizens.

Speaking on behalf of the Provincial Community Policing Forum (CPF), Mr Mbulelo Makhaza committed to work with police and all law enforcement agencies in the Province.

He said, they will ensure mobilisation of communities to fight crime across. He added that as learners are about to start their final examinations, CPF structures will ensure that schools are protected and learners complete examinations without any disturbances.

"We will mobilise our communities to be the eyes of the police and inform or report any criminal activity because police cannot be everywhere," said Makhaza who assured that they will fully participate in all crime prevention activities during the festive season.

Both codes of conduct for the police and traffic were read during the activation where they commit men and women in blue and beige to uphold to their duties without any fear or favour.

This year's Safer Festive Season Operations is activated under the theme: "Combating Crime through Decisive Police Action And Robust Community Involvement." These operations will be conducted until the end of January 2024.



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Immediately after making an official commitment and received approval of the budget for the financial year 2023/24 during his Department's Policy Speech, at the North West Provincial Legislature, MEC for Community Safety and Transport Management, Sello Lehari established 'Crime Prevention Imbizo,' a platform that the department uses to strengthen the fight against crime.

In his policy speech, Lehari committed to strengthen the fight against crime, by working with all relevant stakeholders and timeously engage with communities across the province. "We need an integrated approach to fight crime and that requires cooperation of our entire sister departments, private sector and communities at large," he said.

The Crime Prevention Imbizo is a platform that allows the department and communities to have an open discussion, where citizens are able to articulate their concerns, identify the appropriate responses and solutions to crime problems that affect them. Arranged on a District Development Model (DDM), approach, these imbizos are further set to empower community members on government services and information that they can use to change their lives for better.

A recordable impact has been made so far around the Province, where the MEC has unlocked a number of unattended cases, elevated long term resolving cases to the Provincial Headquarters of SAPS, other to the National Department of Police, while others resolved on a short term basis, in ensuring that communities are being served diligently.

In Letlhabile under, Moretele Local Municipality, MEC Lehari led the crime imbizo that had to deal with the pandemic of Gender Based Violence & Femicide (GBV&F), an act of brutality directed at a person that affects a particular gender disproportionately. The pandemic has taken the country like a wild fire and it has been considered as a serious concern to the safety and freedom of women and children in our communities.

According to statistics by the time of the visit the Letlhabile Police Station ranked 15 out of 85 police stations in the Province according to various criminal cases recorded thus far, and this included GBV&F cases.

"South African Police Service (SAPS) is working hard to combat or reduce GBV&F in Letlhabile and surrounding areas but our community members whom are victims makes it difficult for police, prosecutors and courts to execute their duties properly by withdrawing cases after certain agreements with perpetrators.



After withdrawal of the abuse, rape and murder case's perpetrators repeat the same criminality again and turned the country into lawless society," said MEC Sello Lehari when addressing community members of Letlhabile.

MEC Lehari further requested community members to come together to fight this pandemic that causes uncertainty to public safety and steal their freedom. He called to all men and various associations to lead by example and be able to report anyone causing violence or act of the abuse towards women and children to law enforcement agencies in order to create a safe and conducive society for everyone.

Leading the Crime Imbizo in Lebaleng township in the Maquassie Hills Local Municipality, the angered Community Safety and Transport Management MEC Sello Lehari sent a stern warning to gangsters, after he got disturbed when certain young people stood up to confirm their membership to certain gangsterism groups in the area.

"We are not going to organise such a huge imbizo with government resources and services to listen to young people confirming that they are tormenting our community.

"We are not going to tolerate this kind of behavior. When you act against the law we are going to arrest you," said MEC Lehari giving strict instructions to South African Police Service seniors who attended the imbizo.

As crime patterns differ in areas across the province, in Tlhatlhaganyane village in the Moses Kotane Municipality,

MEC called upon community to help police fight the daily escalating crime, that is believed to be influenced by the illegal mining activities.

Despite that the community raised variety of issues, illegal mining operations, undocumented foreign nationals running unregistered businesses and proliferation of illegal weapons topped the list of issues raised.

Briefing the MEC ahead of the Imbizo, Kgosi Letlamoreng Batleng, said they have resorted to procuring private security companies. Everyone in the village is affected and this has even negatively impacted on schooling.

"We have already lost about four learners as a result of crime and illegal mining in our area. We as the traditional council have resorted to hire private security to protect our assets and ourselves. The money used for hiring security companies could well be used for development of our area," said Kgosi Batleng.

MEC Lehari implored on communities to work with the law enforcement officers to fight crime.

"We have noted all your concerns. Crime cannot and will not end, for as long as we abet and not abate it.

"You need to report crime as and when it happens. Do not wait for anti-crime Imbizo to report it," he said.

Adding more efforts to initiatives of routing out crime in the Province, the department continuous to facilitate the establishment of Community Safety Forums to implement government and community partnerships. The forums will coordinate and consult communities to participate in local planning, monitoring of safety and security interventions in the development of local crime prevention plans.



MINMEC VISITS NORTH WEST PROVINCE



As part of the National Police Minister and Members of the Executives meeting (MINMEC), activities in the North West Province, MEC for Department of Community Safety and Transport Management Sello Lehari has led an oversight visit at the Swartruggens police station.

In his visit, MEC Lehari was satisfied with the measures currently in place to deal with administrative challenges as well as combating crime in the precinct and said the department will continue to provide support where required.

“Some of the problematic crimes experienced around this community includes, sexual assault, residential and business burglaries as well as theft.

“Based on evaluation we are satisfied with the overall management of the station, it is well kept and there are measures already in place to fight crime such as increasing awareness campaigns and refining relationships with government entities as well as the community.

“We have also picked up on minor administration issues such as budget allocation and spending which affects daily operations.



However, the department will continue to work with the station and intervene where there is a need to do so” said Lehari who was also accompanied by the SAPS Provincial Commissioner of Limpopo, Lieutenant General Thembi Hadebe, the Western Cape Head of Department for Police Oversight and Community Safety, Advocate Yashina Pillay, Major General King Ngcobo from the National Protection and Security Services and Luyanda Qhomfo who is the Director of Monitoring and Evaluation (MNE: Police Conduct) at the National Department of Civilian Secretariat for Police Service.

Feedback from the visits was later deliberated during MINMEC debriefing session held in Runsterburg, Bojanala District.



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TAXI OPERATORS ACCREDITED FOR ADVANCED DRIVING



In an endeavour to significantly reduce road fatalities and preserve lives, the Department of Community Safety and Transport Management works with a range of stakeholders who all have a part to play. This includes working hand in hand with the taxi industry to strengthen their capacity and offer support where it is required. On an annual basis the department coordinates the Advanced Defensive Driving Workshop during October Transport Month (OTM) targeting taxi operators across the province. The department currently has a number of intervention programmes in line with the National Road Safety Strategy (2021-2030), this year 325 taxi operators have been successfully equipped with advanced skills in order to improve their driving efficiency.

The dynamic training introduces them to industry applauded methods of approaching potential hazards on the road, educates them on legislation governing the transport sector and most importantly it promotes responsible driving.

Olehile Sechoaro, is a training officer from NOWETRA (North West Transport Taxi Association) in Mahikeng. He spent many years as a taxi operator, worked his way up the ranks and has now become a mentor to many in the field.

“A number of taxi drivers who have attended this training previously, have been able to progress in their careers. Not only does it provide valuable teachings, it also comes with an added advantage of being accredited as an advanced driver and that is the key to unlocking career growth.

“I can also say that the information we received through the workshop is refreshing and much needed because we tend to think that training is a once off thing, but legislation changes, trends change and it is helpful to stay abreast of those fluctuations,” he added.

According to the Director for Road Safety Management, Ms Motshabi Tshukudu said influencing the behaviour of motorists remains an effective way to reduce road accidents.

“When people understand the full impact of irresponsible road use, from the financial, economic, social and psychological point of view; it becomes easier for them to change how they conduct themselves on the road.

“We also believe that the taxi industry as the heartbeat of the transport sector can also make a meaningful contribution to responsible conduct and working together with government to save lives,” said Tshukudu.

The workshops were held in the four districts of the province, and received full attendance as a result of the impact it continues to make on early basis.



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The North West Province has bagged the best speaker title in the National Road Safety Debate competition for a second year in succession. In 2022 the title was won under the rural category of the debate and in the 2023 Kismet Secondary School from Vryburg took the title under the urban category.

Kismet also came in second place in the same category. The Educator and Assistant Coach, Ms Wahnice Du Toit says it took much preparation, discipline and determination to get the team set for victory.

“It was a tough competition, the standard was very high and we delivered. As competitive as the debate was, we were determined to make a mark and represent not only the Naledi Local Municipality but the entire Province.

The learners are still at a tender age and we are so proud of the ability they have displayed. This entire process challenged them to break barriers and work as a team to conquer,” said Du Toit.

In the rural category, Setilo Secondary School from Mareetsane in the Mahikeng Local Municipality scooped the third position. The Director for Road Safety Management, Motshabi Tshukudu says the performance of the two schools is impeccable and should be commended.

“The provincial flag was flown very high and in bright colours. The standard that we have been producing through debates continues to improve, this year's teams were excellent and it shows in the results.

“These competitions are indicative of the work that we do on the ground to cultivate road safety and responsible road user behaviour. Hence we expose learners at a school going age to local, regional and global trends as well as to encourage them to become advocates of road safety,” said Tshukudu.

The Road Safety Debates are part of the Road Transport Management Corporation (RTMC)'s Participatory Education Techniques (PET) Competition. The flagship programme gives high school learners a platform to participate in a solution based exercise to interrogate road safety issues and come up with innovative ways to deal with the identified challenges.



The North West Department of Community Safety and Transport Managements' key roles are to ensure the safety of the province in regard of the Law Enforcement Administration and monitoring together with ensuring that the transport industry runs smoothly whether in the public industry and also private.

It is pivotal that the department plays its role in these fundamentals, exciting as how the department is assisting the under privileged in the farfetched areas as it has donated bicycles through the Shova Kalula initiative to sixty (60) learners in Sekhing Village in Taung on the 29th of September, 2023.

As a matter of fact, not all learners are beneficiaries of Shova Kalula, only learners who travel a distance of 5 to 7 kilometres to school on foot are the qualifying beneficiaries. "This initiative for those that travel a long distance on foot and it is therefore mandated to deal with the absenteeism of learners in the school due to them not being able to arrive in school on time and it is therefore to encourage the learners to attend school on time and good behaviour," this were the words of Departmental MEC Sello Lehari when handing over the bicycles.

While the focus is on Shova Kalula, the Department has braced itself on also ensuring the safety of road users, in regard to that, Joint Law Enforcement Operations are done across the province every Friday whereby all the law enforcement stakeholders led South African Police Services, This is done to verify the obedience of Road Rules on the roads by users, protecting pedestrians and drivers.



Communities at large are advised to be prepared of the visibilities of law enforcement operations as the department observes the October Transport Month, where the Department focuses on Transport mandatories, teaching and administering transport regulations across the country and the North West Province.

The department's response to transportation challenges in remote areas is steered by the Rural Transport Strategy which recognises transportation as a necessity for social and economic development. According to MEC Sello Lehari the framework guides the department in prioritising access and mobility in the province's rural communities.

"The Rural Transport Implementation Plan (RTIP) is enhancing our public and private transport network by including complementary modes of transportation like cycling, animal-drawn carts, and intermediate modes of transportation (IMT).

"The Shova Kalula bicycle initiatives have proven to be a practical non-motorised solution, which aids learners of low-income households in rural and peri-urban locations," he said.

Furthermore, the MEC indicated that the most rural districts in the province will continue to be prioritised in the roll out of the programme.

"Department will continue working with all relevant stakeholders in order to maintain an integrated solution based approach to address transportation challenges. Where the most rural districts will take priority in our planning and execution.

"The Shova Kalula acts as an ancillary to the scholar transportation service which we continue to provide across the province and contributes to the overall creation of an effective and efficient transport system," added MEC Lehari.

The Shova Kalula Bicycle Project is a National Department of Transport initiative, which was established in 2001. It promotes cycling as a low cost mobility solution and improves rural accessibility to basic services.



Walking a significant distance to access educational facilities remains an unfortunate reality for many learners particularly in remote areas. It often creates a reluctance to pursue learning and contributes to a dropout rate amongst school going pupils. Largely, this is attributed to the geographical and spatial arrangements that make up remote communities, where people in many instances have to travel far to access basic services.

The Department of Community Safety and Transport Management through the implementation of the Shova Kalula Programme, addresses this plight by making schools easily accessible for learners and enabling them to exercise their right to an education.

This involves the provision of rugged bicycles to learners who are ineligible for scholar transport services but still carry the burden of walking a distance of between three to five kilometres daily.

Ramokonyane Secondary School is located in Kopela village in the Tswaing Local Municipality, is amongst the schools earmarked to benefit from the programme in the 2023/24 financial year. To this end, over 90 learners of Ramokonyane were recently provided with bicycles and are now in a better position to travel between their homes and school. The principal, Mr Mothusi Luka expressed enthusiasm about the prospects of the initiative at the school and says it will improve pupils' overall schooling experience.

“Our learners have displayed a high level of discipline, in their school work and adherence to the rules and code of conduct. However we have also been experiencing late coming which has an adverse impact on our lesson plans.

“This has put them at a disadvantage and we hope the problem will be a thing of the past. We are truly grateful and confident that now our teaching and learning can continue smoothly,” said Luka who welcomed the bicycles on behalf of the school during the handover.



MOSES KOTANE COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM ESTABLISHED TO FIGHT CRIME



The fight against crime requires a coordinated approach that involves collaboration and integration of various structures. At municipal level this is achieved through the institution of Community Safety Forums (CSF). The forum focuses primarily on the implementation of the local crime prevention strategies and remains directly accountable to the community which it serves.

Through coordination by the Department of Community Safety and Transport Management, the Moses Kotane Local Municipality in partnership with the Bakubung Boo Ratheo Tribal Authority and other stakeholders under the Justice Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) cluster has become the first municipality to establish a CSF in the province, allowing it to micro manage criminality within the jurisdiction.

Speaking at the launch which took place in Bakubung village, the Head of Department, Dr Hans Kekana indicated that CSFs play an ancillary role to existing policing structures.

“The concept of CSF is closely related to community policing, however a clear distinction is that CSFs facilitate the delivery of a multi sectoral governmental approach on safety in local communities,

it is distinguished through its jurisdictions and tasks which are different from Community Policing Forums (CPFs).

“Once a CSF is established, it is aligned to the local or district municipality, bridges safety issues within the municipality and integrates planning and coordination of local safety programmes,” said Dr Kekana.

The Bakubung Boo Ratheo Traditional Authority welcomed the initiative and believes it will contribute towards further development in the community.

“Our community welcomes the move by government to ensure that we all play a role in prioritising the safety of our people.

“We believe that a safer community where crime is reduced will be better positioned to attract investors, bring more development and grow the local economy, “said Kgosi Solomon Mphuphuthé Monnakgotla who also pledged to support the CSF and its mandate.

The policy mandate guiding the establishment of a CSFs is derived from the National Crime Prevention Strategy (1996), White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance as well as the South African Police Service Act (1995) amongst other legislation.

“Our community welcomes the move by government to ensure that we all play a role in prioritising the safety of our people.

“We believe that a safer community where crime is reduced will be better positioned to attract investors, bring more development and grow the local economy, “said Kgosi Solomon Mphuphuthé Monnakgotla who also pledged to support the CSF and its mandate.

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NW TAXI COUNCIL TO RECEIVE FUNDING



The taxi industry is a valuable asset in the economy of the province and the country at large, providing transport to millions of citizens and creating jobs to a large majority of people.

The industry has grown into a public transport powerhouse, providing a flexible and affordable service to the people ensuring that they reach their destinations on a daily basis.

In this regard, the provincial government through the Department of Community Safety and Transport Management established a working relationship with the Provincial Taxi Council (PTC), for provision of effective and efficient transport system.

The relationship, has so far led to discussions on continuous improvement of services, which influenced the financial assistance to the council. "After lengthy engagements, finally we are at the end of this long process to assist the council with administrative costs. This is in line with departmental mandate which is to promote community and road safety through community mobilisation," said MEC Sello Lehari.

This was part of the Thuntsha Lerole Accelerated Service Delivery Programme that was held in Gopane village in the Ramothsere Moiloa Local Municipality.

It was a long term engagement process to reach the finalisation stage, hence the MEC expressed gratitude to the Provincial Taxi Council for their patience and cooperation.

He further encouraged the industry to work together to diffuse tensions and conflicts that often have a negative impact on commuters.

"We may not always agree on certain points, but our mission and vision for the industry is similar to yours. Unite the industry and ensure that there is peace and harmony in the Province," MEC Lehari added.

The Chairperson of the Provincial Taxi Council, Mr Ebusang Tladi appreciated the assistance and assured the MEC for the cooperation with the Department by the PTC.

"With this funding we will be able to implement a number of projects that are intended to improve our service in the industry and continue to work with the Department," said Mr Tladi.

The Department and the PTC has formed a team that will finalise the drafting of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a three year programme to address challenges in the industry.





The Department of Community Safety and Transport Management has donated bicycles to the Riviera Park Safety Forum in Mahikeng.

The bicycles will be utilised by the forum's daily patrollers, who do rounds in the area, and have been doing so by foot, this has made their work difficult.

The Chief Director for Provincial Civilian Secretariat for Police Service, Ms Mpho Maleme encouraged the Riviera Park Safety Forum, which is a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO), to follow processes of partnering with the Department to fight crime in the area.

"We will guide you on the processes that you should follow to form partnership with the Department. We do have a programme through our Directorate of Crime Prevention and Partnerships, where we fund NPO's, and continue with a partnership to fight crime.

"It is only through integrated approach for us to win the battle against crime, and our communities play a huge role in this instance," said Maleme handing over bicycles.

The Forum's Chairperson Professor Melvin Mbao appreciated the gesture from the Department and said this is the beginning of collaborative engagement for greater things. He said the Riviera Park Safety Forum is a small organisation which they established two and half years ago following spate of criminal activities in the area, mostly during the day.

"We experienced mostly housebreakings especially during the day because thieves know that most of people would be at work, and they also targeted elderly households.

"It is as a result of that, we then established this forum, which for now we only have two daily patrollers. We have limited resources, and so far we contribute on a monthly basis per household," said Prof Mbao who was accompanied by the forum's secretary Mr Martin Woodbridge and their two patrollers.

So far, the forum has managed to clear bushes around Riviera Park especially on empty spaces, and further installed a security camera in the area.

Professor Mbao said the Forum has to date a 770 household that are benefiting from security patrol and they intend to eliminate criminal activities and make their area a safer place of residence.



NOT A GOODBYE BUT A THANK YOU



It is with a heavy heart to accept the departure of colleagues after remarkable years of working together.

In this past month of October, we saw two of our colleagues in this industry of communication dropping their tools and singing us the "Time to say goodbye" song.

It is indeed a nice song to listen to, but it becomes a sad reality when the actual words of the song materialise. Mr Tiisetso Thiba – Principal Communication Officer here at the department of Community Safety and Transport Mngement and Ms Agnes Litheko – Sales Manager at the South African Broadcasting Centre (SABC) North West have downed tools.

Tiisetso Thiba resigns

It all started to sink in my mind when I have to attach my signature to the letter of my colleague, Tman when he officially wrote to the Human Resource Management of the department for his resignation.

For as much as we had lengthy discussions to the extent of understanding his reasons and future plans, I must say it was not easy during his last days in office.

Although he started working at the Internal Communication sub-directorate when he arrived in the department, while I am responsible for external, a person from outside couldn't notice separation of duties from us. The first time we met, I knew from the word go that we will definitely have a good working relationship.

O ne o ka tswa o le bonya ka nako e ntsi, mme tiro o ne o eitse ebile o e tlhologanya. The only thing that I had to learn was to understand you and take you as you are.

Thank you for being such an amazing coworker. I must say that I started knowing you better when you started working with me directly. By that time, we both had a similar situation where we were travelling more than 400 kilometers weekly between our homes and the workplace.

A strenuous situation it was, however, we were driven by the responsibilities and results of being a men, who at all times had to make sure that your family will at no point go to bed on an empty stomach.

SABC sales veteran downs tools

Having known Agnes Litheko for decades, it never came to my mind that at some point she will hand tools down. However, time has arrived for the affectionately known "Mama Aggie" after decades of serving the public broadcast.

A sad, emotional and breath taking moment it was when she delivered a short speech to her colleagues and clients of decades, mostly being Government Communicators with the likes of Ous Dineo Lolokwane, Rre Sethunya Moss Kgafela (both veterans in the industry), and the rest of us, ba re santseng re totobela maitemogelo a ba nang le o ne.

Looking at her when she gives us her last speech, at some point I lost concentration, as my mind was running memories of her soft voice on the phone "papa tlhe kante when are you giving me business, ka na bana, ba go bolawa ke tlala le go sa ye sekolong, when you don't buy *airtime*".

Come the time to buy media services from Mama Aggie, the tedious processes of SABC will frustrate me and when I complain she will say "papa, o ka se tlhologanye come to my office."

In my arrival at her office, I was welcomed by an aroma of nice coffee, smelling from the passages directing me to her office, on the table there's also a special container of sweets and chocolates.

Without more explanations, I guess her treatment and service that we received from Mama Aggie, was good enough for many of us to continue working with the public broadcaster. In my view, the SABC has lost an asset in her. She took her job seriously and I can tell that whoever will replace her position will have big shoes to fill.

Waving my hand of response Mama Aggie and Tman

This word goodbye is a cruel reminder that all good things in life must come to an end. We had a good working relationship, we had those difficulties, however we found working together being inspiring.

As you downed tools, your employment may be finished, but I guess our sweet memories of working together will never diminish.

We are grateful that you are not just leaving us barehanded but with richness of morals, ethics and wealthy experience that we've proudly gained by working with you.

Tman, time working with you felt short, however, we had a lovely time. Thank you so much for all we had and we wish you the best of luck on your new endeavours.

Mama Aggie bana ba godile, ba tsene sekolo, jaanong ke nako ya gore ba tlhokomele wena. O itlhokomelele ditlogolo le ditlogolwana. tiro o e weditse Mama, *serwalo sa tlholo re go rolela sone*.

Nelwang ke pula ya medupe, mme se seka ya nna ya ga Makeketa ko zone 16.



MEET MR MOTHIBEDI, THE NEW MLO



“Are you saying you are brave enough to repeat what you are saying?”, this has become his trademark. His no nonsense and unambiguous style of questioning his interviewees. He has made a name for himself first as a political reporter for SABC News and later as a current affairs host at Motsweding FM. Journalism was not even on the menu as a neophyte student at the Mafikeng Campus of the North West University. He registered for a law degree and somehow before going far changed streams and studied Communications instead. Three years later he emerged with Bachelor of Arts degree.

He crossed the road and joined SABC as an intern and his talents were quickly identified and he was set. Meet Mr Tshegofatso Lucas Mothibedi. Known as Luther to his friends, his demeanour often belie his tender age as he is still relatively a youth.

Any regrets that he is not some hotshot lawyer? “No. I don't have regrets at all. I think the decision was right and I am grateful I took that changed at the time I did”, he says.

He took his new role like a duck to the water. Very confident, outspoken and meticulous with words, he is quite a raconteur. Just what MEC Sello Lehari would have wanted. In fact that is exactly what the MEC said when introducing him to Management. “Listen to my speeches henceforth, they will contain bombastic and grandiloquent words”, said MEC to rapturous laughter of managers.

He arrived at the time when the Department is much busier. His arrival was during the Thuntsha Lerole Programme.

The Department begins the programme with law enforcement operations in early hours which are led by the MEC. There were also anticrime community engagement programmes underway. He has never really had time to settle in. Early mornings and late evenings have become a norm as is the characteristic of the of Office of the MEC.

Any compunctions for having joined Government from the comfort of the news desk where time is measured in microseconds and not in minutes? “It's a new experience and quite an enjoyable one, and I am learning every day. Political office is quite interesting and I am grateful for the warm welcome by everyone in the Department”, says the man they call Luther.



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Let's Grow North West Together

