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DEPARTMENT CONTINUES TO PROVIDE QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING.

By Katlego Mashula

Limpopo MEC for Education Mavhangu Lerule-Ramakhanya officially handed over the newly constructed Mathede Secondary School at Murunwa Village in Vhembe West Education District. The project forms part of the Limpopo Department of Education's ongoing efforts to strengthen and expand school infrastructure across the province.

The construction of the new school reflects one of the key priorities of the 7th administration, which aims to ensure that every learner in Limpopo has access to a safe, dignified and conducive environment for teaching and learning. Prior to the intervention, Mathede Secondary School was operating under dilapidated conditions and

lacked adequate furniture, which posed significant challenges for both learners and educators. The school was established by the community in 1971 and currently has an enrolment of 321 learners for the 2026 academic year and achieved an impressive 90.7% pass rate in the 2025 matric results, demonstrating resilience and commitment to academic excellence despite infrastructural challenges.

The school offers Commercial, Science and General streams, preparing learners with diverse academic pathways. However, the school has identified additional needs, including a nutrition centre and ICT-related tools to further enhance learning.

The occasion was also marked by a performance from Hakhakhi Ratshisusu, Miss Venda Schools 2026, who honoured the MEC with a special item in appreciation of her visit and the great and excellent work she continues to do in advancing education in Limpopo.

In her address, MEC Lerule-Ramakhanya expressed gratitude to all stakeholders who contributed to the realization of the project. She acknowledged the presence of community members, former teachers, circuit managers and traditional leadership.

“We are here today because of the good work that has been done excellently. We thank the Independent Development Trust and the chieftaincy of Vhulaudzi for their continued support to foster confidence and promote social equality and enhances quality of life. When we build schools like this, we have our learners in our minds and in our hearts. We build them to secure the future. Education is a powerful weapon that can fight poverty and sharpen our minds so that we can

actively participate in the economy,” MEC said. Speaking in the context of Human Rights Month, MEC also called on parents and communities to discourage bullying among learners. “Rights come with responsibilities. It cannot be that when we want to exercise our rights, we end up bullying others. Let us guide our children to respect one another,” she urged.

The School Governing Body Chairperson, Johannes Mavhunga, expressed appreciation for the newly constructed infrastructure, describing it as a significant milestone for the community.

“We are very grateful for what the MEC has done for us. Our learners can now receive education in a conducive environment.

Your presence today means a lot to this community,” he said.

The handover of Mathede Secondary School marks another step forward in the Limpopo Department of Education’s commitment to building quality infrastructure that supports learner success and community development.







SCHOOL SPORTS IGNITED YOUNG TALENT AT UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO.

By Katlego Mashula

Limpopo Department of Education hosted a three-day Provincial School Sports at the Oscar Mpetha Stadium, Mankweng in Capricorn South Education District, bringing together young athletes from all Education Districts across the province for an exciting celebration of talent, discipline and sportsmanship. School sports are celebrated to foster holistic development thus boosting physical health and mental well-being social skills like teamwork and discipline.

The three-day sporting event, hosted at the University of Limpopo, was organised in collaboration with Limpopo Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, GIMTRAC, NELCO and Athletics South Africa (ASA). The programme kicked off with an energetic Track and Field competition that drew excitement from learners, educators and spectators.

Learners under the age of 15 from all education districts across Limpopo gathered to showcase their athletic abilities while competing for top honours in their respective categories. The competition highlights the province's commitment to

nurturing young sporting talent and encouraging active participation in school sports.

Young athletes competed in a range of track and field events including high jump, javelin, long jump, hurdles, heat races and shot-put. The competitions created an atmosphere of enthusiasm and healthy competition as learners pushed their limits and demonstrate remarkable determination.

Beyond the pursuit of medals, the Provincial School Sports event provides a valuable platform for learners to develop teamwork, resilience and discipline. It also offers an opportunity for talent identification, paving the way for promising athletes to progress to higher levels of competition. Chris Rakoma, Limpopo Department of Education representative from school sports appreciated everyone who was present, including athletes and all officials.

“This is a day of celebration, a day of discipline teamwork, resilience and teamwork and also to support our learners,” said Rakoma. Excitement amongst learners remained high as

learners aimed to deliver outstanding performances while proudly representing their districts. The Provincial School Sports programme continues to play a vital role in promoting physical wellness, unity and excellence among young people across Limpopo.



CHIEF DIRECTOR OF GITO, MARTIN MADUBANYA ON THE EXIT.

By Katlego Mashula



As he prepares to conclude his distinguished career in the public service at the end of this month, Chief Director of Government Information Technology Officer (GITO) Martin Madubanya reflects on a remarkable journey marked by dedication, innovation and meaningful contributions to the public sector.

Madubanya currently serves as Chief Director overseeing Information Technology, Auxiliary Services, Records, Communication Services and Knowledge Management at the Limpopo Department of Education, a role he has held since joining the department in 2018.

His professional journey began with the former Lebowa Government, where he worked as a programmer for seven years. He later joined Technicon North Gauteng as a lecturer and was subsequently promoted to Head of Department. He then moved to the Office of the Premier, where he served as an IT Director for 16 years before joining the Limpopo Department of Education.

Academically accomplished, Madubanya holds a Bachelor of Science and an Honours degree in Computer Science from the University of Limpopo, as well as a Masters degree in Computer Science from Jackson State University.

His passion for Information Technology developed during his university years while pursuing his BSc degree. He believed that public service provided an ideal platform to create systems and technological solutions that improve people's lives, a calling that guided him throughout his career.

Over the years, Madubanya had the privilege of working with dedicated professionals while building systems, strengthening governance and driving digital transformation initiatives that improved service delivery within government.

One of his most significant contributions has been strengthening ICT governance and ensuring that technology became a strategic enabler rather than merely a support function. During his tenure, he worked to align ICT systems with the broader goals of the Department, including infrastructure planning, the provision of digital devices, the establishment of server rooms, and the networking configuration of equipment. His work also included developing applications and governance frameworks to support efficient operations.

Reflecting on the evolution of ICT systems over the years, Madubanya notes the remarkable transformation from largely manual and fragmented systems, such as mainframes connected to terminals

to more integrated, secure and responsive digital platforms that include wireless networks and mobile connectivity. The shift towards digital transformation has positioned the Department to operate more efficiently and transparently. He is proud to have witnessed and contributed to this evolution

Several milestones stand out in his career, particularly the successful implementation of critical ICT systems, the improvement of cybersecurity measures and strengthened compliance frameworks. He emphasises that these achievements were collective efforts made possible through teamwork and a shared vision.

For Madubanya, some of the most rewarding moments in his career came from seeing projects successfully implemented and witnessing the positive impact of ICT improvements on service delivery. Mentoring young professionals and watching them grow into leadership roles has also been deeply fulfilling.

Like any long career, his journey was not without challenges. Budget constraints, system disruptions and resistance to change were among the obstacles encountered along the way. However, resilience, collaboration and maintaining focus on long-term goals helped the team navigate these challenges successfully.

Madubanya believes adaptability is essential in the ICT field. Change is constant and leaders must remain agile, patient and solution oriented. Most importantly, challenges often present opportunities for innovation.

He encourages future ICT leaders to remain curious, uphold ethical standards and continuously invest in developing their skills. Technology evolves rapidly and so should leaders. Above all, ICT in government exists to serve people and improve lives. Security is critical and must be prioritised to prevent system breaches. Continuous research, learning and adaptation are key.

Madubanya is proud of the systems built, the governance structures strengthened and the culture of professionalism nurtured over the years. Most importantly, he indicated being proud of the people he worked with. He hopes to be remembered as a leader who strengthened digital governance, upheld integrity and contributed to building a resilient ICT foundation for the future and also as someone who groomed future ICT leaders and inspired positive change.

As he bids farewell to public service, Madubanya encourages colleagues to continue striving for excellence. To embrace innovation, support one another and remain committed to serving communities with integrity and professionalism.

Retirement marks the beginning of a new chapter for Madubanya. He looks forward to spending more time with family, exploring personal interests and possibly contributing to the sector in an advisory capacity where needed.

Martin Madubanya leaves behind a legacy of dedication, integrity and innovation — having played a meaningful role in advancing ICT in both the public sector and the academic field.



THE CIRCUIT CORNER WITH MR. KGABO DIBETE, THE CIRCUIT MANAGER OF VLAKFONTEIN CIRCUIT.

By Seshoka Lephale



For three decades, Kgabo Dibete believed that education has the power to change the world and while the challenges in education are daunting, action get results and creates impact. Improving learner performance is one of his fundamental objectives and it has been his primary goal in his career path.

He believes that the quality of education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers, and that schools should be safe places for learners to receive quality education.

His greatest ambition in education is to see that all stakeholders within the Department of Education work collectively towards a common goal of achieving excellence. Excellence is ultimately measured by the success of the primary clients, the learners across the country.

Dibete firmly believes that through hard work, dedication and commitment, education has the power to transform lives and improve the socio-economic conditions of ordinary citizens.

He began his teaching career in 1994 at Selamodi Senior Secondary school in the Vlakfontein circuit as a CS1 educator, the position he held until 2006 and later promoted to departmental Head at Bataung Secondary school.

In 2007 he moved to Seshego High school and in 2008, he was promoted to the Deputy Principal post at Setotlwane ELSEN School, becoming the first deputy principal of the institution.

Dibete was transferred to Mmamoloko Primary school as a principal, where he served until 2021. In the same year, he was promoted to Malokaneng Primary school as the principal before assuming current position as Circuit Manager, the responsibility he took 5 years ago.

After 27 years of service in the Department of Education, spanning both primary and secondary school phases and progressing through all levels from CS1 educator to principal, he made a conscious decision to transform the school.

His passion for education compelled him to contribute at a higher level by ensuring improved learner performance across all grades. The scope of circuit management, particularly in policy implementation, monitoring and providing practical solutions at grassroots level deeply appealed to him. Being a frontline implementer within the education system solidified his commitment to this role.



DEPARTMENT CONVENES TWO-DAY ACCOUNTABILITY SESSION WITH UNDERPERFORMING SCHOOLS.

By Hanedzani Mbedzi

A two-day accountability session with chronic serial underperforming schools from all ten education districts in the province was held at Bolivia Lodge, Ivory Hall. The session was led by Head of Department (HoD) Maropene Seshibe alongside DDG for Institutional Governance, Coordination and Support, Calvin Molongoane. The session brought together departmental officials, including District Directors, Circuit Managers and school principals.

During the engagement, circuit managers presented reports on schools that had been underperforming, highlighting the challenges faced, which include the absenteeism of both teachers and learners, disrupting teaching and learning. This is further worsened by management challenges, learner ill-discipline and substance abuse. In addition, poorly maintained infrastructure and dysfunctionality within the School Management Team (SMT) affect the effective running of schools. The situation is also aggravated by a lack of teamwork, poor work ethics and time management, as well as poor subject packag-

ing. Management is therefore calling for curriculum-based interventions to address the situation.

The purpose of the session was to reflect collectively on the shared responsibility of nurturing young minds and shaping future leaders who will become responsible and productive members of society. It seeks to emphasise that the development and guidance of learners is not solely the responsibility of the principal, but a collective effort that requires the commitment and active participation of all stakeholders within the school community.

DDG for Institutional Governance, Coordination and Support, Calvin Molongoane, noted that, guided by the principles of the three C's of accountability, clarity, commitment and consequences, the session will further seek to ensure that participants leave with a clear understanding of both immediate and long-term actions required to improve the learning environment. It will also encourage a renewed commitment to responsible decision-making that ultimately sup-

ports the holistic development of young men and women.

“I wish these discussions to be honest and robust. It is only through honesty and intense scrutiny that we can truly move forward. As I have said, this process is not intended to remove anyone, but rather to ensure that, as a collective, we forge a way forward. Our responsibility is to guide the future of the young minds entrusted to us with the right spirit,” said DDG Molongoana.

Director of Labor Relations, Given Rafapa, provided guidance on labour relations processes in the education sector, focusing on the legal framework for disciplinary action, the distinction between incapacity and misconduct and the correct procedures for managing poor performance before dismissal.

Addressing concerns about the performance of some schools in the province, Head of Department Maropene Viniel Seshibe convened education leaders to reflect on the challenges affecting certain schools and to strengthen collective accountability within the Department. He emphasised that the session was intended to provide a platform for leaders to exchange views and ideas, reflect on the Department’s vision, mission and values and emerge with a renewed commitment to improving learner outcomes across all schools.

“Colleagues, we convened this meeting because, as the leadership of the Department, we are concerned about the performance of some of our schools. We believed that by bringing leaders together in a session of this nature, we could exchange views and ideas and emerge with a

heightened level of commitment to improving our results. It is deeply concerning that a school could achieve 0%, something that is rarely heard of and as leadership we are confronted with difficult questions from oversight structures about why our systems did not detect this earlier.

The vision, mission and values of this Department belong to all of us collectively, not to a few schools, and we must therefore support one another to ensure that learners across this province succeed. As schools, our fundamental purpose is to ensure that the children entrusted to us pass and are able to progress with life,” concluded HoD Seshibe.

HoD emphasised that the way forward is for principals and second managers to return to their districts and schools and implement the agreed strategies in ways that respond to their local contexts. They are expected to uphold the 2026 Principals and Second Managers Pledge, strengthen collaboration, support teachers and use data to improve learner performance. The department will continue to support schools through the provision of textbooks, standards support and ICT resources, while annual engagements will be used to monitor progress and reinforce accountability.

This session aimed to create a platform for open engagement and unity, allowing participants to clearly understand the challenges affecting learners and to identify practical ways of addressing these undesirable situations. By working together as a cohesive unit, stakeholders will be encouraged to strengthen their role as pillars of support and guidance for learners.





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