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FROM STORM DAMAGE TO SYMBOL OF HOPE: MAHUMANI HIGH SCHOOL RISES AGAIN

By Conny Mabunda

What was once a scene of destruction has now become a powerful symbol of restoration, dignity and renewed hope. During a Service Delivery Outreach Programme led by the premier, MEC for education Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya had a significant visit to Giyani. The programme began at the Mahumani Empowerment Centre in Nkomo Village before proceeding to Mahumani High School, where the official handover of the refurbished school marked a major milestone for the community.

The Mahumani Empowerment Centre established by His Majesty Hosi Mahumani, was created with a clear purpose which is to

curb unemployment and equip villagers with meaningful and practical skills. The centre focuses on work-based training, ensuring that individuals gain hands-on competence. It also offers entrepreneurship development programmes, encouraging small business creation as well as life skills and career guidance to prepare learners for sustainable livelihoods. This impact is made possible through strong collaboration with government departments and the private sector.

The visit then shifted to Mahumani High School, a school that once bore the scars of a devastating storm in 2022. The damage placed it among schools classified under storm-damaged

category. Through the intervention of the collaboration between the department of education and Independent Development Trust (IDT), the school has now been fully refurbished.

The upgraded infrastructure includes a nutrition centre, two newly built blocks, improved ablution facilities and a combi court, all contributing to a restored environment that supports both teaching and learning.

For learners like Grade 12 pupil Precious Chabalala, the transformation is deeply personal. She reflected on how the school was once in a bad state after the storm and expressed how honoured both the school and the community feel to be recognised through the official hand-over.

Following the handover, a clear message was delivered that there can be no more excuses. Educators were urged to fully commit to their responsibilities, ensuring that teaching continues without disruption and that learners are supported in achieving excellent academic results. This call was reinforced by the MMC for Education, Basani Shivambu.

The MEC also took a moment to commend learners for wearing their uniforms with pride and acknowledged the role played by educators,

parents and School Governing Bodies in ensuring punctuality and discouraging late coming.

Beyond infrastructure, the MEC used the opportunity to engage learners on the importance of democracy education, a programme launched a month ago in Lephalale.

The initiative is aimed at empowering learners with knowledge, confidence and the ability to take charge of their future.

Emphasising the department's commitment, she described it as "a formidable force" that ensures all infrastructures are fully furnished before being handed over.

She stressed that value for money must translate into real change, especially in rural communities, where such investments have the power to reshape the narrative of a child's life.

Ultimately, the restoration of Mahumani High School is not just about rebuilding classrooms, it is about restoring dignity. It is about ensuring that no child feels overlooked and that every learner, regardless of where they come from, has access to a safe, functional and inspiring environment to learn and grow.







DRIVING CHANGE WHERE IT MATTERS MOST: BRINGING QUALITY EDUCATION TO EVERY LEARNER

By Hanedzani Mbedzi

As part of the Service Delivery Programme, MEC for Education Mavhungu Lerule-Ramakhanya, accompanied by DDG for Institutional Governance and Coordination Calvin Molongoane, visited Mhlanganisweni Primary School in the Mopani East Education District, reaffirming the Department's commitment to improving quality education and working closely with communities.

MEC handed over 50 pairs of school shoes to needy learners, while Library Services donated one thousand books for English and Xitsonga. The visit was not only symbolic but practical, learners were given the opportunity to read the newly donated books, helping to build a culture of reading. These contributions form part of the Department's ongoing effort to support schools and ensure that all learners have what they need to succeed.

MEC Lerule-Ramakhanya continued her visit to ELC ECD Centre at Ngove Village and Pfunanani Special School in Giyani Section A. in the

respective schools, she spoke directly with educators, learners, and stakeholders, highlighting the importance of working together to improve the state of education in the province.

Speaking during the visits, the MEC encouraged communities to be ready and take part in the programme. She spoke about the importance of early childhood development, explaining that strong foundations help learners to grasp concepts at an early age and to succeed later in school. The Department also provided educational toys to support learning through play.

"I urge you to get ready as this programme continues. In the coming years, we want all learners who start here to be able to read well and understand the subjects they choose. We are here to strengthen the curriculum and make sure ECD centres are aligned with primary schools," she said.

The programme concluded at Pfunanani Special School, highlighting the Department's commitment to supporting inclusive education. The

School Governing Body (SGB) Deputy Chairperson, Tintswalo Nkolele, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Department of Education and the MEC for visiting the school.

“We felt valued, honoured and truly grateful for the MEC’s visit and the donations we received, especially the beds and sewing machines. These will greatly benefit our learners, particularly as enrolment continues to grow. The sewing ma-

chines will now allow all learners to be accommodated in one class at the same time, instead of being divided into two groups,” said Nkolele. The MEC expressed her satisfaction with the progress made and confirmed the Department’s commitment to supporting public special schools. “We are excited today as the department because we have fulfilled our promise to give attention and the necessary support to public special schools,” she concluded.





THE CIRCUIT CORNER WITH MALATSI LEONARD KOPE, THE MANAGER FOR MOUTSE EAST CIRCUIT.

By Seshoka Lephale



According to Malatsi, the Principle of fairness should be applied to the world in a way that you are happy to apply to yourself. It is a principle that you are at ease to live with and comply to. Although it is based on personal perspective and value, it must work for everyone and so it is a lifelong challenge.

The success of an education system depends entirely on the strong leadership and the synergy at all its levels. Malatsi Leonard Kope, Circuit Manager of Moutse East in Sekhukhune South Education District turned around the image of the circuit and curriculum coverage by fostering effective school cultures to drive educational excellence.

Malatsi started his teaching journey at Mang Le Mang Secondary school where he was employed as an English teacher. He strongly believed in learners' abilities and for them to reach their full potential. Through his passion for language teaching, he was requested to represent Area (cluster) in a few district and provincial activities. Malatsi was part of a team that was

screening and recommending English books for the secondary phase becoming part of various responsibilities at school, and this helped him rise to position of leadership at the school. On the 1st of October 2000, He was appointed as the Principal of St Paul's High school in Sekhukhune area. Through collaborative efforts with all the relevant stakeholders of the school, Malatsi successfully builds a good collaboration with stakeholders and the school grew in leaps and bounds.

Malatsi is of the view that educators are the cornerstone of the department's commitment to providing quality learning and teaching to all learners at schools. He assumed responsibilities as circuit manager in May 2022 and through his dedication and commitment improved the results in Moutse East circuit from 56,7 in 2022 to 70,7 in 2024 academic years. The improvements of results in his circuit is attributed to higher level of engagement with stakeholders such as QLTS, functional SGBs, well-coordinated circuit activities and motivational sessions through prize giving across all grades.

As a circuit manager, He has consistently demonstrated his commitment to ensuring that the educators tasked with shaping the minds of future leaders are of highest quality. Through his leadership, the circuit introduced Telematics program in collaboration with the University of Stellenbosch where grade 10-12 learners were able to attend live lessons from 15h00 to 17h00 during the week.

The circuit is now moving forward with focus and determination to perform at the required level. Malatsi believed that it is the educators who carry the responsibility of shaping the learners and future children of this country so that they can become the kind of citizens who have the skills to contribute to the country's economic well-being and to the fabric of life in their communities.

What inspired him most was the improvement of results in the Moutse East circuit across all the grades, the overwhelming support of principals, collaboration with local service providers, religious formation, fraternal community, the support from the District and the Province.



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