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Young people reenacting the iconic moment in June 1976 that changed South Africa.

# MPUMALANGA CELEBRATE YOUTH DAY IN STYLE

Lwazi Raul-Shongwe and Kopano Dibakwane

Mpumalanga MEC for DCSR (Department of Culture, Sport and Recreation), Leah Mabuza, has challenged the province to match the courage of the 1976 youth with urgent action on jobs, skills and economic inclusion, saying the “struggle of our generation” is to ensure political liberation is matched by economic empowerment.

Speaking at Perdekop in the Dr. Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality during the provincial

Youth Day commemoration under the theme “Reset @50 – The Future Calls”, Mabuza paid tribute to the students of 16 June 1976 who “stood up against oppression and injustice, demanding quality education and equal opportunities.”

The MEC said the youth of 1976 demonstrated extraordinary courage and sacrifice, by challenging an unjust system and paying the ultimate price for the freedom and democracy enjoyed by all South Africans today.

She said the struggle of the youth of 1976 reminds society that young people have always been at the forefront of social change and nation-building.

“As we commemorate this important day, we must ask ourselves a critical question: What kind of future are we creating for the young people of today? The responsibility of government, the private sector, communities and families is to ensure that the dreams of our youth are not limited by poverty, unemployment, crime, substance abuse and inequality,” Mabuza said.

Addressing young people directly, Mabuza said today’s challenges are

different but the mission is just as critical.

“Young people of Mpumalanga, your generation faces challenges that are different from those faced by the youth of 1976.

However, your mission remains equally important. You are called upon to be innovators, entrepreneurs, creators, leaders and active citizens.”

“The future of Mpumalanga is in the hands of its young people. We have confidence in your ability to lead, innovate and transform our province and our country for the better.

“Let us honour the heroes of 1976 not only through words, but through action. Let us create opportunities, unlock potential and build a prosperous future for every young person in Mpumalanga,” said Mabuza.

While marking 32 years of democracy, Mabuza said gains in education, housing,

healthcare and social protection “were not accidental” but warned that youth unemployment threatens those gains.

According to MEC Mabuza, unemployment remains one of the greatest challenges confronting young people, with many graduates struggling to find work, while others are excluded from economic opportunities because of poverty and inequality.

She said these challenges threaten the hopes and aspirations of a generation that deserves a brighter future.

“As leaders, we must speak honestly. Political freedom without economic inclusion remains incomplete.

The struggle of our generation is therefore to ensure that political liberation is matched by economic empowerment.

Continued on page 2

# Youth must be given opportunities

*Continued from page 1*

We must build an economy that creates jobs, supports entrepreneurs, develops skills, and opens doors for young people regardless of their background.”

“The youth of today are not asking for handouts; they are demanding opportunities. They want quality education, meaningful employment, access to funding for businesses, digital skills, and participation in the mainstream economy. These demands are legitimate and must be met with urgency,”

Mabuza emphasised.

MEC Mabuza said the

Department of Sport, Arts and Culture is investing in youth through libraries, community arts centres, sporting facilities and cultural programmes.

“In Mpumalanga, we are committed to empowering young people through education, skills development, sport, arts, culture and heritage programmes. We recognise that the creative and cultural industries are not only platforms for self-expression but also important drivers of economic growth and job creation.

“Through our programmes, we continue to nurture young artists, athletes, musicians, writers and cultural practitioners who are making their mark locally, nationally and internationally. As the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, we believe that investing in youth development is investing in the future of our province,” she said.

The MEC highlighted the Premier’s Youth Development Fund as a key intervention for economic participation, as well as job creation.

“The Provincial Government is concerned about the number of young people who, after completing Matric and the academic studies, find it difficult to participate in the economy. The Premier, Hon. Mandla Ndlovu is leading the campaign to ensure that the youth participate meaningfully in the economy, through the Premier’s Youth Development Fund.”

“Since the introduction of this flagship programme in 2021, more than

2000 jobs have been created through grant funding of Youth-led Enterprises that create opportunities.

“Some of the beneficiaries of the Premier’s Youth Development Fund joining us today, to share their experiences.

Some are in the mining sector, some in farming, and some are in the Transport and Logistics sector. We are proud of them,” said MEC Mabuza.

Mabuza has further given harsh warning against division and urged unity around development.

“We must also reject those who seek to divide our people through misinformation, intolerance, and narrow political interests. The future of South Africa depends on unity, social cohesion, and a shared commitment to development.

The youth of 1976 united around a common purpose, and we too must unite around the mission of building a prosperous, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, and inclusive society.

“The struggle continues, not against apartheid, but against unemployment, poverty, inequality, crime, and hopelessness. Together, we can overcome these challenges and build the South Africa envisioned by those who sacrificed for our freedom,” said MEC Mabuza.

She urged Mpumalanga residents, particularly young people, to register for an opportunity to vote in the coming elections.

“Together, we can ensure that the sacrifices of the youth of 1976 were not in vain,” Mabuza concluded.

MEC Leah Mabuza calling for more opportunities to be given to young people.

## Mpumalanga International Food Market opens doors, lands major client

Lwazi Raul-Shongwe

Monday, 08 June 2026, marked the first day of operationalisation of the MIF (Mpumalanga International Food Market) with the onboarding of its first major client producing macadamia nuts, Green Farms Nuts Co, for storage of the product in kernels.

Green Farms Nuts Co reportedly shifts storage from Gauteng to MIF, cutting logistics costs and boosting provincial value chain. Bringing the value chain home.

Green Farms Nuts Co is said to be one of the biggest producers of macadamia in South Africa, an industry with export value in excess of \$130 million annually, about R2.1 billion.

Prior to relocating to MIF, Green Farms Nuts Co had their products reportedly stored in warehouses in Gauteng. This was despite the bulk of their produce being grown in Mpumalanga and their processing facility located in White River, also in Mpumalanga.

“The decision by Green Farms to concentrate their full operation in Mpumalanga is a direct consequence of impactful investment made by the province in establishing MIF infrastructure, and is a beautiful story to tell about Mpumalanga claiming its natural authority not only as a production hub, but a base to facilitating efficient aggregation, storage, trade and export in a variety of fresh produce commodities,” MIF said.

Globally, South Africa is the top producer of macadamia nuts, contributing over 25% to total worldwide production.

Along with China and Australia, South

Africa forms part of the three-pole market that dominates global output.

The country’s prime position is said to be primarily driven by large-scale commercial farming in the Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces, with Mpumalanga being the largest macadamia-producing region in the country.

Extensive farming is concentrated in the Lowveld areas, including Hazyview, Nelspruit, and Barberton.

Physical Trade to Start Next Quarter

While storage operations have begun,

the MIF said it is preparing for full trading.

“Meanwhile, the market is conducting final tests of the facility and systems and is gearing to open its doors next quarter for physical trade in fresh produce,” said MIF.

Once fully operational, the MIF will reportedly serve to fill the existing gap where agricultural produce from the province and across the country intersects with traders, buyers and consumers.

The facility aims to “charter a new path in reinventing and reshaping the structure of the food industry, thus Future-Proofing SA Food Security the inclusive way.”



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MEC Sidel (In black) Visiting some of the stalls before tabling her budget.

# DEDT 1.4 Billion to uplift Mpumalanga economy

Lwazi Raul-Shongwe

Mpumalanga MEC for DEDT (Department of Economic Development and Tourism), Jesta Sidell, tabled a R1.406 billion budget for Vote 6, declaring the Department's funds "must work to disrupt poverty, restore human dignity, and transform 'The Place of the Rising Sun' into a self-sustaining, globally competitive powerhouse."

Tabling the 2026-2027 Policy and Budget Speech in the Provincial Legislature, Sidell said the Department faces a "socio-economic tightrope" with provincial poverty at 52.5% and youth unemployment at "an alarming staggering 47.3%."

"Not Mere Statistics – A Clear Call to Action"

"I stand before this House today with a profound sense of humility and absolute responsibility to table the Policy and Budget Speech for Vote 6: Department of Economic Development and Tourism for the 2026-2027 financial year," Sidell opened.

"These are not mere statistics; they are a clear call to action. They tell us that our public resources cannot simply maintain status quo bureaucracy; they must work to disrupt poverty, restore human dignity, and transform 'The Place of the Rising Sun' into a self-sustaining, globally competitive powerhouse."

The MEC said the Department's mandate is "unambiguous": catalyse high-absorption sectors to add at least 60,000 sustainable jobs annually. Provincial growth is projected at 1.3% this year, rising to 1.9% by 2027, with agriculture, finance, transport, and tourism "anchoring this defense."

"It Always Seems Impossible Until It's Done"

Quoting Nelson Mandela, Sidell said: "It always seems impossible until it's done. This statement serves as a profound reminder that daunting challenges often look insurmountable until we act, commit to the work and push past the fear of the unknown."

"We believe that it is, indeed, possible through our collective efforts and commitment, to change the lives of our people for the better, as envisioned by our forebears."

Sidell tied the budget to the ANC's declaration of 2026 as "The Year of decisive action to fix local government and transform the economy".

"The ANC, as the leader of society, understands that it will be practically impossible to attain the aspirations espoused by the National Democratic Revolution, without efficient and proper functioning local government," she said.

"It is a worrisome historical fact that our economy has not transformed; it remains skewed and in the hands of the minority. Therefore, we require a radical paradigm shift to change the economic landscape."

## Honouring 1976 Through Economic Freedom

With the 50th Anniversary of the June 16 Soweto Uprisings five days away, Sidell said the youth of 1976 "fought for the right to choose their future."

"Today, the class of 2026 inherits that legacy, but their battlefield has shifted. Their struggle is no longer against forced language policies in classrooms; it is against the structural chokeholds of poverty, inequality, and unemployment."

"As a Department tasked with steering the economic ship of the Province, we recognise that political freedom without economic freedom is an incomplete victory. We cannot honour the sacrifices of 1976 while 52.5% of our people live below the poverty line."

"This budget framework is not just a ledger of numbers; it is a direct response to the economic aspirations of our youth. It is a tool for transformation designed to move our young people from being mere spectators of economic growth, to being its primary drivers."

## Re-industrialisation: Nkomazi SEZ, Petro-Chemical Park Gain Traction

Sidell reported progress on the Nkomazi Special Economic Zone in Nkomazi Local Municipality.

"I am pleased with the progress made at SEZ, as the project has now gained significant traction. The infrastructure development programme continues to make measurable progress, particularly in the advancement of bulk water, roads, and electrical infrastructure."

"Undoubtedly, the Nkomazi SEZ is a vital catalyst for the Province's economic transformation, job creation and poverty reduction. The Entity is the axis of economic integration, linking Mpumalanga, Gauteng and Limpopo with the neighboring Kingdom of Eswatini and the Republic of Mozambique."

The SEZ has signed an investment agreement with DP World, with advanced talks underway with Vutomi Energy, Lebombo Cotton Gin, Salamax Pty Ltd and Innoteq Renewable Fuels Solution. An MOU with the University of Mpumalanga will "promote innovation, research and development."

On the Energy SEZ in Steve Tshwete, a feasibility study found it "both technically and financially viable." The Petro-Chemical Industrial Technology Park in Secunda has completed

township registration. "This initiative represents a significant step towards positioning Mpumalanga as a competitive petrochemical and industrial hub, while creating opportunities for investment attraction, enterprise development, industrial diversification, and sustainable job creation."

## Green Economy: Wind, Solar Projects Powering Jobs

"Our Department continues to place the green economy at the centre of Mpumalanga's economic diversification agenda," Sidell said.

She highlighted the Umbila Emoyeni Wind Energy Project: "We are pleased to report that Phase 1 and 2, with an estimated generation capacity of approximately 155 MW, is at an advanced stage of construction and is nearing completion. Notable progress has been achieved on site, with more than 25 wind turbines already erected."

Phase 3 has reached financial close. The 400/132 kV Vunumoya Main Transmission Substation has been handed to Eskom and energised.

The Grootvlei Climate-Smart Horticulture Centre in Dipaleseng has launched in partnership with Eskom and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

"The initiative is expected to contribute significantly to job creation and agricultural development over the next five years." The Highveld Solar Power Plant in eMalahleni, a R4.3 billion investment by Pele Green Energy, will create 179 jobs. "This project demonstrates the province's growing attractiveness as a destination for renewable energy investment."

## Tourism: The Goose That Lays the Golden Egg

"Tourism is, undoubtedly, the goose that continues to lay the golden egg for our Province," Sidell said.

To retain Mpumalanga's second-place ranking for international arrivals, the Department will support MTPA to revitalise ageing infrastructure. "We are moving directly into aggressive rehabilitation mode," focusing on access roads, perimeter fencing, and security at high-volume sites. Public-private partnerships will unlock the Blyde River Canyon Cable Car and God's Window Skywalk. "These flagship assets will elevate tourist spend, lengthen stays, and directly incorporate local communities into the lucrative tourism value chain."

The Bourke's Luck Potholes accommodation is nearing completion. Mtomeni Camp in Mahushe Shongwe Nature Reserve has a new concessionaire.

## SMMEs & Local Government: Fixing the Engine Room

"As a Department, we have a unique responsibility to ensure that we contribute meaningfully to the project of fixing local government, by fulfilling our legislative mandate of championing local economic development through strengthening our support to the informal sector of our economy, leveraging on the District Development Model."

The Department has scaled up support to MSMEs with equipment, tools of trade and aftercare for women and youth in textiles, automotive and green economy. Fifty MSMEs were on boarded on Take a lot.com.

MEGA is "intensifying its interventions to ensure that these groups receive targeted and meaningful support" including finance, mentorship and market access. The Incubation Programme will train 20 young people in steel fabrication and 30 in wood and furniture manufacturing.

On industrial parks: "I am particularly pleased that the fencing of the entire Ekandustria Industrial Park, as well as the refurbishment and commissioning of the Waste-water Treatment Works, was completed in the first quarter of the 2025-2026 financial year."

MEGA received R15 million from the Department of Small Business Development to refurbish Kabokweni, Kanyamazane, Siyabuswa, Kameelrivier, Verena and Dundonald Small Industrial Parks.

## Budget Breakdown: R1.4bn to Drive Execution

"This Policy and Budget Speech is not an exercise in optimism; it is a meticulously calculated roadmap engineered for economic execution," Sidell said.

<b>Vote 6 Allocation:</b>	R1,406,635,000
<b>Administration:</b>	R146.928 million
<b>Integrated Economic Development:</b>	R358.585 million, including R281.598 million for MEGA
<b>Trade and Sector Development:</b>	R135.545 million, including R80.439 million for Nkomazi SEZ, R21 million for Mpumalanga Green Cluster Agency
<b>Business Regulation and Governance:</b>	R165.017 million, including R136.728 million for MER
<b>Economic Planning:</b>	R25.564 million
<b>Tourism:</b>	R574.996 million, including R563.560 million for MTPA
<b>Total transfers to public entities:</b>	<b>R981.886 million.</b>

# DARDLEA tables R1.82bn budget

Lwazi Raul-Shongwe & Kopano Dibakwane

The MEC for Mpumalanga DARDLEA (Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs), Khethiwe Moeketsi, said the province is betting on agriculture to end hunger and drive inclusive growth.

MEC Moeketsi eloquently presented the 2026/2027 Policy and Budget speech, revealing a R1.82bn budget anchoring the department's plans in the unfinished struggle of 1976, the Freedom Charter, and a call for food sovereignty.

"This Budget Vote takes place during the Youth Month, a period when the nation reflects on the courage and sacrifice of the youth of 1976 and recommits to advancing their unfinished struggle for freedom through tangible economic transformation," Moeketsi emphasised.

## Guided by the Charter, Sankara and Cabral

"We are guided by the enduring vision of the Freedom Charter, which boldly proclaimed that 'the land shall be shared among those who work it,' a vision that continues to inspire our commitment to land justice, equality and shared prosperity," Moeketsi told the legislature.

She invoked Amílcar Cabral: "People are not fighting for ideas alone, but for material benefits, for the improvement of their lives, dignity, and the concrete conditions of their existence," and Thomas Sankara's warning that "he who feeds you controls you," adding: "It is in this spirit that this Budget Vote advances the empowerment of the people of Mpumalanga to produce their own food, strengthen agricultural productivity, and build resilient communities."

## Agriculture: Backbone of Rural Mpumalanga

"Agriculture remains the backbone of many rural communities in Mpumalanga, sustaining livelihoods, supporting agro-processing industries, and contributing significantly to employment across the province," Moeketsi said.

"In a world confronted by rising food prices, climate uncertainty and growing socio-economic challenges, our responsibility is clear: to ensure that no household goes to bed hungry and that agriculture becomes a catalyst for



MEC Moeketsi and DARDLEA staff at the provincial legislature.

inclusive growth and shared prosperity," said Moeketsi.

The MEC aligned the budget with Premier Mandla Ndlovu's State of the Province Address, which identified agriculture as one of the sectors with the greatest potential to drive economic growth, create sustainable jobs and improve quality of life.

## R1.82 Billion Budget: Where the Money Goes

**The 2026/27 budget for Vote 10 amounts to One Billion, Eight Hundred and Twenty Seven Million, Twenty Three Thousand Rand (R1,827,023,000), allocated across nine programmes:**

**Administration:** R237,951,000  
**Sustainable Resource Use and Management:** R80,208,000  
**Agricultural Producer Support and Development:** R818,607,000  
**Veterinary Services:** R172,515,000  
**Research and Technology Development Services:** R78,253,000  
**Agricultural Economics Services:** R213,298,000  
**Agricultural Education and Training:** R44,528,000  
**Rural Development Coordination:** R27,627,000  
**Environmental Affairs:** R154,036,000

## Mpumalanga International Food Market: "Future-Proofing SA Food Security"

Moeketsi celebrated progress at the MIF (Mpumalanga International Food

Market), calling it a "top-tier food market that will revolutionise the sector."

She said the market is now fully compliant with all statutory standards and has appointed licensed market agents.

"As of 08 June 2026, the MIF has begun on boarding its first client, Green Farms, for storage of macadamia nut in kernels. Prior to signing up with the MIF, the client was storing their nuts in Gauteng. This was despite the product being grown in Mpumalanga.

"The decision by Green Farms to relocate their business to Mpumalanga is a classic example of the impactful investment made by the province in establishing MIF, and a beautiful story to tell about Mpumalanga claiming its natural authority as a base to Future-Proofing SA Food Security," said the MEC.

Eleven market agents have been reportedly appointed, with nine being 100% Black owned and two youth owned.

"This means 82% of MIF Market Agents are Black... Significantly, five of the nine black Agents are start-up enterprises from Mpumalanga," she said.

## 30 Food Market Squares: R78m for Township Traders

Moeketsi said DARDLEA will implement 30 Food Market Squares across 30 wards at a budget of R78 million in the 2026/27 financial year.

"The market squares are an extension of Mpumalanga International Food Market, and will provide local trading infrastructure for informal traders, and community-based enterprises, bringing markets closer to communities," said MEC Moeketsi.

Each square is expected to create at least four SMME opportunities, totaling 120 enterprises.

## Nutrition Sourcing Bill: Buy Local

To further advance agricultural transformation, the department has gazetted the Mpumalanga Nutrition Sourcing Bill, which seeks to ensure that food purchased by government is sourced, as far as possible, from farmers and agro-processors within Mpumalanga through Agri-hubs and the MIF. The Bill will be introduced to the Legislature in Q2 of 2026/27.

## Hybrid Rice: 388,000 Jobs Targeted

In partnership with the University of Mpumalanga and Hainan Tropical Rice Agricultural Technology Co., Ltd, the department is piloting hybrid rice production.

Seven cultivars will be tested across multiple sites.

"The Honourable Premier has stated before that this project upon full implementation is expected to deliver production yields of up to 10 tons per hectare. Job creation of more than 388,000 employment opportunities across the value chain is expected by the time it reaches full capacity," she said.

## Food Security: 12,075 Households Supported

During 2026/27, support will reportedly continue to prioritise Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities. Of the 12,075 vulnerable households targeted, at least 50% will be Women, 20% Youth and 7% Persons with Disabilities.

MEC Moeketsi said DARDLEA will invest in irrigation infrastructure, protected production systems and climate smart agriculture.

Projects include Danica, Elmora Green irrigation systems and Keletso Trading in Bushbuckridge; Tekwane Farm, Jibha Jolwane, One Touch Investments and Awdalia Farming Greenhouse Tunnels in Mbombela.

## FMD (Foot and Mouth Disease) Crisis: 500,000 Cattle Vaccinated

Since April 2025, Mpumalanga has experienced more than 243 Foot and Mouth Disease outbreaks, with cases in all municipalities except Thaba Chweu Local Municipality, as President Cyril Ramaphosa declared FMD a National Disaster in February 2026.

"To date, we have vaccinated more than 500,000 cattle as of 5 June 2026, placing the province firmly on track to achieve our target of vaccinating 80 per cent of the estimated 1.9 million cattle population—approximately 1.5 million animals—by the end of August 2026," said MEC Moeketsi.

Despite the outbreaks, the province issued 2,990 veterinary health certificates, facilitating export of 20,000 tons of animal products to SADC, the USA, Peru, Russia, China, Iraq, Jordan, the UK, Middle and Far East, and Mexico.

## Poverty Is Not Natural:

"This Budget Vote is more than a statement of expenditure; it is a statement of intent. It reflects our determination to build a modern, inclusive and resilient agricultural sector, strengthen food security, create jobs, protect our environment and unlock opportunities for all the people of Mpumalanga," MEC Moeketsi concluded.



PARLIAMENT  
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## VAKALISA LUVU LWAKHO SICELO SEKUTSI UMMANGO UNGENISE UMBONO

**Likomidi Lelibandla Lavelonkhe Letetimbiwa Nemitfombolusito Yephethroliyamu Umtsetfosisekelo Wavelonkhe Wetinkampani Taseningizimu Afrika Tephethroliyamu [B2 – 2026]**

Ngekuhambisana nenjongo lemcoka yekuchuba inchubo yekutibandzakanya kwemango etinchubeni yekushaya umtsetfo, Likomidi Lelibandla Lavelonkhe Letetimbiwa Nemitfombolusito Yephethroliyamu limema lowo lonenshisekelo nalabantsintseko labafanele kutsi bangerise kuphawula kwabo lokubhalwe phasi kanye nekusho Sifiso sabo sekwenza setfulo ngemlomo lesimayelana neMtsetfosivivinyo Wavelonkhe Wetinkampani Tephethroliyamu taseNingizimu Afrika [B2 – 2026].

Inhloso yaloMtsetfosivivinyo kwenta kutsi kube nekusungulwa kweNkampani Yephethroliyamu yaseNingizimu Afrika (i-SANPC); kuchaza tinjongo tayo nemisebenti; kanye nekulawula kubusa kwayo, lokufaka ekhatsi kukhetfwa kwekwakheka kweBhodi yayo kanye nelulawulo lwesigungu lesiphetse. LoMtsetfosivivinyo uchubeka futsi wente kutsi kube nekuhlenganiswa kanye nekwendululiselwa eNkampanini; kwetimphahla; ubeka timiso letiphatselene nelulawulo lwayo lwetitimbiwa; kanye nekuchaza kucashwa kweSisebenti Lesikhulu, Sisebenti Lesikhulu Setetimali, kanye nalabanye basebenti. Kwengeta kuloko, wenta kutsi kube netinhlalambiso tetingucuko kuze kwendluliswe imitfombolusito yebantfu nempahla lesuka eNkampanini Yekutfutukisa Igese yaseNingizimu Afrika (i-Gas), Sikhwama Semafutsa Selisubuciko (i-SFF), kanye neKoporasi Yegesi Na-oyili yaseNingizimu Afrika (i-PetroSA) ka-SANPC, kanye netindzaba letiphatselene naloko.

Setfulo letibhalwe phasi kufanele kutsi tibhalwe ticondziswe eKomidini Lelibandla Lavelonkhe Letetimbiwa Nemitfombolusito Yephethroliyamu, tinakwe: nguMk. Ayanda Boss, PO Box 15, Cape Town, 8000, tittfuyelwe ngencwadzigezi ku: [sanpc-pcmpr@parliament.gov.za](mailto:sanpc-pcmpr@parliament.gov.za) nome ngefeksi ku: **086 691 4093** futsi kufanele titfolwe kungakashayi insimbi ye-16:00 ngaLesihlano, mhla ti-10 Kholwane 2026. Ucelwa kutsi usho nangabe unesifiso sekwenza setfulo sakho ngemlomo ekomidini.

Mayelana nemibuto nome kuffola ikhophi yaloMtsetfosivivinyo, ucelwa kutsi utsintse **Mk. Ayanda Boss kulenombolo yelucingo: 021 403 3768; Makhalekhikhini: 083 709 8515; incwadzigezi: aboss@parliament.gov.za**; nome uvakashele iwibusayithi yasePhalamende ku: [www.parliament.gov.za](http://www.parliament.gov.za)

Lesikhangisi sikhishwe nguMhlonishwa M. Mahlaule, i-MP, Sihlalo weLikomidi Lelibandla Lavelonkhe Letetimbiwa Nemitfombolusito Yephethroliyamu.

Iphalamende – Sigcina kutinikela kwetfu kuBantfu  
– Kwenta likusasa lakho likubentele kancono



# Best Camps In Kruger National Park

Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency Proudly Celebrates 100 Years of Kruger National Park #kruger100 #krugercentenary #discovermpumalanga

Winter school holidays fall right in Kruger's prime game-viewing season. From late June to mid-July 2026, expect cool mornings, sunny days, thin bush, and animals gathered at water.

Winter in Kruger with kids is unbeatable. Short grass means you actually see the animals, cold mornings mean hot chocolate tastes better, and there's nothing like a lion roaring outside your bungalow at 3am.

What to Expect in Winter: Mid-June to Mid-July

## Weather

**Mornings:** 5°C to 9°C. Frosty on open game drive vehicles. Pack beanies, gloves, puffers.

**Daytime:** 20°C to 26°C. Perfect t-shirt weather by 11am.

**Nights:** Cold. Great for boma fires and stargazing.

**Rain:** Almost zero. Dry, dusty, clear skies.

## Wildlife

Winter is the dry season. Grass is short, trees are bare, and water is scarce. That means:

**Easier sightings:** Lions, leopards, elephants and buffalo are harder to miss when the bush opens up.

**Action at waterholes:** Rivers like the Sabie, Olifants and Crocodile are packed. Expect elephant herds, hippo pods, and predators waiting.

**Fewer bugs:** Mosquitoes drop off, so malaria risk is lower. Still check with your clinic about prophylaxis for kids.

## Where to Stay: Best Family-Friendly Camps

SANParks (South African National Parks) camps work well for school holidays because they have shops, pools, and activities. Book multiple nights in one camp to avoid packing up daily.

## For first-timers & facilities

**Skukuza:** Biggest camp. Restaurant, takeaways, pool, grocery shop, car rental, golf. Game drives and walks depart here. On the Sabie River with constant activity. Bungalows, family cottages, camping.

**Lower Sabie:** Best location in Kruger. Most units overlook the Sabie River. Kids can watch elephants from the deck. Restaurant, pool, shop. Bungalows sleep 2-4. Book the perimeter units if you can.

**Berg-en-Dal:** Near Malelane Gate,



60km from Mbombela. Quieter, good for short trips. Rhino and leopard territory. Pool, restaurant, mountain views.

## For wildlife & open plains

**Satara:** "Cat central". Lion, cheetah and leopard country. Open plains make sightings easier for impatient kids. Pool, shop, restaurant.

**Olifants:** Dramatic views over the Olifants River from camp. Two pools, restaurant. Bungalows on the ridge are worth it.

## For a quieter stay

**Pretoriuskop:** Oldest camp, near Numbi Gate. Good for 1-2 nights if you enter from Mbombela. Pool, shop. Often has last-minute availability.

**Tamboti or Maroela:** Tented satellite camps near Orpen. No restaurant, but you get privacy and proper bush atmosphere.

Braai only. Kids 12+ for Maroela.

## Accommodation types

**Bungalows:** Most popular. 2-3 bed, bathroom, kitchenette, braai. Fridge and bedding included.

**Family cottages/guest houses:** Sleep 4-6. Good for two families sharing.

**Safari tents:** Permanent tents with beds at Lower Sabie, Skukuza, Punda Maria. A step up from camping.

**Camping:** Cheapest. All main camps have powered sites, ablutions, communal kitchens. Winter nights are cold, so bring -5°C sleeping bags.

## Activities to Enjoy in Winter

### Game Drives

**Self-drive:** Gates open 6:00am in June/July, close 5:30pm. That's your window. Pack padkos, use the SANParks app for latest sightings, and drive slowly.



**SANParks Sunrise/Sunset/Night Drives:** 3-hour guided drives in open vehicles. Night drives are magic in winter. Rangers use spotlights for leopard, owls, hyena, genet. Book at reception when you check in. Kids must be 6+ for night drives

## Bush Walks

Morning walks with armed rangers leave from most camps. Winter is the best season. Cool temps, good visibility, and fewer snakes. Kids 12+ only. You'll learn tracking, trees, insects. About 3-4 hours

## For Kids

**Junior Ranger Programme:** Booklet from reception. Kids complete activities, get a badge.

**Swimming:** Skukuza, Lower Sabie, Satara, Berg-en-Dal all have pools. Essential for hot afternoons.

**Elephant Hall at Letaba:** Life-size tusks and great info. Breaks up driving days.

**Bird & game hides:** Lake Panic near Skukuza and Sweni near Satara are top. Take snacks, sit quiet, let kids use binoculars.

## Other

**Masorini Heritage Site:** Iron Age village near Phalaborwa Gate. Short walk, interesting for older kids.

Movies at Skukuza: Free wildlife documentaries most nights in the outdoor amphitheatre. Take blankets.

## Winter Packing List for School Holidays

**Clothes:** Layer up. Thermal vest, fleece, windbreaker, beanie, gloves for 6am drives. Shorts and cap for 1pm.

**Gear:** Binoculars for each kid, bird/wildlife book, headlamps, power bank, camera.

**Food:** Shops are available for basics, but you can pack meat, snacks, rusks, coffee. Most units have a braai and basic kitchen.

**Health:** Sunscreen, lip balm, chronic meds. Talk to a healthcare professional about malaria meds. Winter is low risk but not no risk.

**Extras:** Blankets for the car, flask for coffee, packets for rubbish, SANParks Wild Card if you visit often.

## Quick Contacts

**SANParks bookings:**  
<http://www.sanparks.org> | 012 428 9111  
 Malelane Gate to Mbombela: 60km, about 1 hour  
 Gate times winter: 6:00am – 5:30pm

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Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency



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Middle: DCSSL HOD, Gloria Mazibuko, flanked by CSPA D-G, Thulani Sibuyi, and SAPS Deputy Provincial Commissioner, Maj-Gen Samuel Sekgobela.

# Police pledge action plan against gangs, drugs and violence in schools

Lwazi Raul-Shongwe and Kopano Dibakwane

Mpumalanga HOD(Head of Department) for DCSSL(Community Safety, Security and Liaison), Gloria Mazibuko, joined the Director-General for CSPA(Civilian Secretariat for Police Service), Thulani Sibuyi, and the Deputy Provincial Police Commissioner, Major-General Samuel Sekgobela, during a courtesy visit to Cyril Clarke Secondary School in Mattafin, Mbombela, on Tuesday 16 June 2026.

According to Mpumalanga DCSSL spokesperson, Moeti Mmusi, the senior government and police officials met with school management and the SGB(School Governing Body) to confront violence, gangsterism, drug abuse, and teenage pregnancy, as part of creating a safe environment for teaching and learning.

DCSSL recently collaborated with

the Department of Education, Social Development, City of Mbombela (By Laws officers), various units from SAPS, and Department of Correctional Services, to conduct a school safety operation at the school on 8 June 2026, following numerous complaints relating to challenges such as gangsterism and learners carrying dangerous weapons into the school.

“As part of the way forward, the meeting resolved that a multi-stakeholder action plan be developed to assist the school. The school was also presented with a laptop and printer to support its administration work,” said Mmusi.

The intervention comes as schools across Mpumalanga grapple with safety and social issues that disrupt learning.

The CSPA is said to play an oversight role on policing, while DCSSL drives community safety programmes in the province.

The visit was reportedly in line with a two-day Provincial School Safety Indaba held at Floreat Hotel in Sabie, under Thaba Chweu Local Municipality, on 28 and 29 May 2026.

The Indaba was led by Mpumalanga Premier, Mandla Ndlovu, alongside DCSSL MEC, Jackie Macie, Acting Mpumalanga Provincial Police Commissioner, Major-General(Dr) Zeph Mkhwanazi, as well as various stakeholders including the Department of Education, CPFs(Community Policing Forums), learners and community members.

During the Indaba, Premier Ndlovu gave a directive to produce a consolidated Provincial School Safety Framework, accompanied by practical implementation strategies aimed at creating safe, secure and child-friendly learning environments throughout Mpumalanga.

## Illegal initiation school shut down in Hazyview

Lwazi Raul-Shongwe and Kopano Dibakwane

Five children were reportedly rescued from an alleged illegal initiation school operating near Mkhuhlu in Hazyview, resulting in the arrest of a 50-year-old male suspect Wednesday 17 June 2026.

The clamp down was reportedly conducted by the Mpumalanga PICC(Provincial Initiation Coordinating Committee) and Ingoma Task Team following a tip-off.

The five initiates rescued during the operation were reportedly taken to Calcutta police station in order to be reunited with their families.

Ingoma Task Team member, Amukelani Mhlabini, said the suspect faces charges of not having a legal permit in terms of Section 26 of the Customary Initiation Act.

He added that the Act makes it an offence to operate an initiation school without a permit, hold initiates without consent, or endanger their health and safety.

“We’ve received a complaint about an illegal initiation school that is taking place here. We acted swiftly together with our stakeholders, including the police and doctors in the province. We had an operation plan, we closed the initiation school.

As Mpumalanga PICC and Task Team, we are saying that we want our children to go to initiation schools alive and come back alive,” said Mhlabini.

The raid reportedly forms part of ongoing provincial efforts to clamp down on illegal initiation schools ahead of and during the winter initiation season. The PICC and Ingoma Task Team have repeatedly warned that unregistered schools place initiates at risk and undermine cultural practices.

Mpumalanga COGHSTA(Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs) is urging communities to report suspected illegal schools.

The authorities added that legal initiation schools must be registered, inspected, and comply with health, safety, and age requirements.

The 50-year-old suspect is expected to appear in court for contravening the Customary Initiation Act 2 of 2021.

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Team MTPA at the Comrades Expo in Durban.



# MTPA runners represent Makhonjwa mountain

Lwazi Raul-Shongwe

Riding the wave of Comrades Marathon excitement, the MTPA (Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency) was in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal province, at the Comrades Expo, urging runners to trade the road to Pietermaritzburg for a run through the world's oldest mountains.

The MTPA (Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency), in partnership with Bella's Athletics Club, participated in the Expo

to encourage runners to register for the Barberton Makhonjwa Mountain 4-in-1 Marathon.

The Comrades Marathon generated tremendous excitement, with runners from all walks of life celebrating their passion for the sport and looking forward to their next challenge.

According to the MTPA, the Barberton Makhonjwa Mountain 4-in-1 Marathon is scheduled to take place on 12 September 2026.

"It promises to be a unique and

exciting experience, offering runners the opportunity to race through the world's oldest rock formations while appreciating the area's breathtaking scenic beauty and rich geological heritage," said MTPA.

The Makhonjwa Mountains, also known as the Barberton Greenstone Belt, are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The rocks date back 3.6 billion years, preserving some of the earliest evidence of life on Earth.

MTPA used the Comrades Expo to tap into that energy, positioning Mpumalanga

as a sports tourism destination beyond the iconic ultra.

The 4-in-1 format offers multiple distances, opening the event to both elite runners and social athletes.

By linking sport with geology, culture and scenery, the Barberton Makhonjwa Mountain Marathon aims to draw domestic and international visitors to the province, boosting local hospitality, tourism operators, and small businesses in Barberton and surrounding Lowveld towns.

# Mpumalanga learners shine at choral competition

Lwazi Raul-Shongwe and Kopano Dibakwane

As South Africa commemorates the 50th Anniversary of the Soweto Uprising, 30 years of the Constitution, and 30 years of the South African Schools Act, the ABC Motsepe South African School Choral Eisteddfod is highly regarded as a powerful symbol of the progress made in empowering young people through education, arts and culture.

Melodious voices of learners from various schools across Mpumalanga province serenaded the Sydney Choma Banquet Hall in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality during yet another exciting and highly competitive Eisteddfod attended by parents, guardians, educators, communities and music enthusiasts, witnessing the remarkable artistry of young performers from 10 to 13 June 2026. The competition covered opera, folklore, and everything in between, also catering for various age groups including primary and secondary School categories, choirs, solo and small ensemble.

Mpumalanga MEC for Education, Lindi Masina, sat in the crowd and watched it all unfold. She was accompanied by senior officials from the Department who could hardly contain their excitement as they witnessed the remarkable standard of musical excellence on display.

"It gives me great pleasure to be part of this Provincial Installment of the ABC Motsepe South African School Choral Eisteddfod. Since Wednesday, I have been following the developments, and I must say that you have outdone yourselves. You deserve to applaud yourselves.



Primary school category didn't disappoint.

Siyabonga Kakhulu," MEC Masina told the learners.

She described the Eisteddfod as

a celebration of hope, harmony and excellence, highlighting the role of music in nurturing confidence, creativity,

discipline and social cohesion among learners.

"Today, the voices of our learners told stories of hope, resilience and aspiration.

Their performances demonstrated that Mpumalanga continues to produce young people who are not only academically capable, but also artistically gifted and culturally grounded.

"Judging by the exceptional talent displayed over the past three days, one thing is clear, Mpumalanga is ready to make its mark on the national stage.

This is more than a competition, it is a celebration of talent, a celebration of unity in diversity and celebration of the limitless potential of our learners," said MEC Masina.



MEC Masina and HOD Lucy Moyane amongst the crowd.

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## SOUTH AFRICA KICKS OFF LATIN AMERICA TOURISM

**Kopano Dibakwane**

**Big Names Back the Big Push**

South Africa is taking the beautiful game and turning it into business. With the world's eyes on the FIFA World Cup 2026, South African Tourism and the Department of Tourism launched a high-stakes play for Latin American travellers on Wednesday 10 June, unveiling the Aldea Global Showcase in Mexico City as part of a full Team South Africa push to grow arrivals, trade, and investment.

According to SA Tourism spokesperson, Thandiwe Mathibela, Mexico is the South Africa's next big market, and Team SA launched the Aldea Global Showcase to turn football fever into flight bookings.

Mathibela said this unites South African Tourism, the Department of Tourism, Brand South Africa, the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, DIRCO, SAFA (South African Football Association), and the South African Embassy in Mexico to sell the country's culture, wildlife, luxury, and sporting heritage to one of tourism's fastest-growing regions.

A key milestone on Wednesday 10th June was the official launch of South Africa's presence at the Aldea Global Showcase.

The event was attended by South Africa's Ambassador to Mexico-Beryl Rose Sisulu, Minister of Tourism-Patricia de Lille, Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture-Gayton McKenzie, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation-Ronald Lamola, and representatives from Brand South Africa and other Team South Africa partners.

"The launch marked the beginning of South Africa's destination promotion activities within the broader FIFA World Cup programme and underscored the country's commitment to leveraging major global events to drive tourism growth, market development and international engagement," Mathibela said.

**"Increasingly Important Growth Market"**

Minister of Tourism Patricia de Lille made it clear why Mexico matters.

"Mexico is an increasingly important growth market for South African tourism and forms a key part of our broader strategy to expand our footprint across Latin

America. We are seeing growing interest from Mexican travellers seeking authentic, long-haul experiences that combine wildlife, culture, adventure, gastronomy and luxury tourism," De Lille said.

"The FIFA World Cup provides an unparalleled platform to engage directly with consumers, travel trade partners, media and investors from across the region. Through our participation in Mexico, we are not only showcasing the very best of South Africa as a world-class tourism destination, but also strengthening the partnerships and market presence that will support increased visitor arrivals, economic growth and job creation in the years ahead," she added.

**From Wildlife to ETA (Electronic Travel Authorisation): The Pitch to Mexico**

South African Tourism's participation at Aldea includes a dedicated destination activation designed to showcase the country's diverse tourism experiences.

"The activation forms part of a broader market development strategy focused on growing arrivals from Mexico and the wider Latin American region," Mathibela explained.

"Mexico continues to represent an

important growth market for South Africa, with increasing interest in experiences such as wildlife, culture, gastronomy, adventure tourism, luxury travel and sports tourism," said Mathibela.

In addition to consumer-facing activities, South African Tourism will host tourism trade and media engagements aimed at strengthening relationships with tour operators, travel agents, destination specialists and media representatives.

To remove friction for new visitors, South Africa will promote the Electronic Travel Authorisation in partnership with the Department of Home Affairs.

"The ETA is designed to provide a safer, more efficient and seamless travel experience for international visitors," Mathibela said.

**One Team, One Goal**

"The FIFA World Cup 2026 programme demonstrates the value of collaboration across government and industry stakeholders and reflects South Africa's commitment to using sport, culture, tourism and diplomacy as powerful tools for international engagement, economic growth and destination promotion," Mathibela added.