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Leadership must serve the people says Premier



Premier Mandla Ndlovu with some House of Traditional leaaders and Khoi son.

Staff Reporter

Mpumalanga's Premier, Mandla Ndlovu, reaffirmed the critical role of traditional leadership in governance, development and social cohesion, describing it as a cornerstone of the province's identity and future.

He was speaking during the official opening of the Mpumalanga House of Traditional and Khoi-San Leaders on May 06. He reflected on the country's history and the enduring strength of traditional institutions. "As we gather today in this sacred space, we do so not as people without memory, but as a nation shaped by history, sacrifice and endurance," he said.

The premier emphasised that traditional leadership had survived colonialism and apartheid despite being marginalised. "Traditional leadership was never abolished; it was wounded, marginalised and distorted, but it survived because of strong royal leadership supported by the people and rooted in the African worldview," he said.

Ndlovu stressed the importance of people-centred leadership. "A leader must always remember that the people must be carried along. Leadership divorced from the people is leadership destined to fail," he said. He also paid tribute to historical figures such as King Sekhukhune, King Musi ka Mahlangu, Hosi Soshangane Nxumalo and King Zulu kaMalandela, describing them as African symbols of resilience and dignity

Ndlovu said traditional leadership remains vital in linking government with communities, advising on policy, preserving culture and ensuring development reflects the identity of the people. "There can be no sustainable development in Mpumalanga without the active and meaningful participation of traditional leaders," he said.

Ndlovu outlined plans to strengthen rural economies through agriculture, including supporting farmers with equipment, inputs and access to formal markets. He also pointed to initiatives such as the Masibuyele Esibayeni programme, aimed at improving livestock quality and boosting rural incomes.

The premier further committed to improving infrastructure for traditional councils, including the construction and renovation of offices, provision of vehicles, installation of boreholes and access to digital connectivity. These efforts, he said, are aimed at restoring dignity and ensuring traditional leaders operate in functional environments.

He called on traditional leaders to play a stronger role in combating crime, gender-based violence and substance abuse.

He described them as key agents of social cohesion and moral authority within communities.

Referring to the upcoming local government elections announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa, Ndlovu urged traditional leaders to promote unity, peaceful participation and democratic values.

"As we open this House today, we are not merely opening doors; we are reaffirming a covenant between government and traditional leadership," he said. "Let us lead with humility, govern with integrity and serve with courage."

Ndlovu concluded by calling for unity and collaboration in building a province which honours its heritage while embracing progress, ensuring no community is left behind.

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Some of the communities members who attended the Imbizo.

Mayoral Imbizo turns community hall into a room of truth, plans and promises kept

Staff Reporter

The air in the Perdekop Community Hall was thick with expectation on Friday, May 08, 2026. Chairs filled to capacity and voices rose in anticipation as, for a few hours, the distance between the government and the people felt significantly shorter.

Dr. Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality brought its Mayoral Imbizo to Ward 6, and Executive Mayor Cllr BJ Mhlanga arrived ready to speak plainly trading jargon and excuses for hard facts and a clear path forward.

"This is your Municipality," the Mayor told the crowded room. "It does not belong to me, and it does not belong to Councillors. It belongs to you, and today we account to you."

The session served as a progress report on what has changed since 2021. The results are most visible in the basic necessities of life. According to the 2022 statistics report, over 2,050 households serving a population of 9,957 can now turn a handle and receive clean water directly at home. However, the Mayor was candid about the challenges ahead; as the population continues to grow, service delivery backlogs will not cease to exist. During the session, community members stepped forward to register their specific concerns regarding these backlogs, ensuring their voices were heard in the municipal planning process.

The impact of recent governance extends beyond water. Children in the ward now walk safer routes to school, and scores of young people have earned honest wages through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). These individuals have taken pride in their streets by clearing roads and maintaining public spaces.

As the Mayor noted, these are not just abstract statistics; they represent mornings that start easier, safer daily journeys, and pay packets that put food on the table for local families. The Mayor's central message was one of shared responsibility: "This relationship only works if it goes both ways." He made a direct plea to the residents to protect public infrastructure, report vandalism, and stay active in civic life. "Come to ward meetings," he urged. "If we don't see you, we cannot know what you need."

By the time the Imbizo concluded, the atmosphere in the hall had shifted. It felt less like a standard complaint session and more like a partnership with a concrete plan. This engagement forms a vital part of the Municipality's ongoing commitment to public participation and transparency, proving that when leadership meets the community halfway, progress becomes a shared reality.



The municipality leadership.

Ziwelile primary learners explore the heart of local governance

Staff Reporter

In a powerful effort to bridge the gap between local government and the youth, the Speaker of Council for Mkhondo Local Municipality, Cllr. Muzi Ngwenya, hosted an immersive educational session for learners from Ziwelile Primary School. The event, held within the prestigious Municipal Council Chambers, transformed the heart of local decision-making into a live classroom for the day.

The primary objective of the gathering was to demystify the inner workings of local government. By bringing the learners into the very room where municipal laws and budgets are debated, Cllr. Ngwenya provided a practical look at how proceedings and operations are conducted.

The session aimed to foster a sense of civic responsibility and understanding from an early age, ensuring that the leaders of tomorrow understand the systems that govern their communities today.

During the presentation, Cllr. Ngwenya provided a comprehensive breakdown of the legislative arm of the municipality. He outlined his specific role as Speaker, explaining his responsibility for presiding over council meetings, maintaining order, and ensuring that the council operates within the bounds of the law.

The learners also received insights into the responsibilities of councillors, who act as the voice of the community and represent the needs of their specific wards. Furthermore, the session touched on political pluralism, providing an overview of the different political parties represented within the Council and how they collaborate or debate to reach decisions for the benefit of all Mkhondo residents.

The students were even introduced to the concepts of council etiquette and the formal rules and decorum required during official municipal sittings.

The session was far from a one-sided lecture. The learners from Ziwelile Primary demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm and attentiveness, actively participating in a Q&A session.

Cllr. Ngwenya tested their knowledge based on the information shared, and the learners impressed the delegation with their quick grasp of complex local government concepts.

Beyond the technicalities of governance, Cllr. Ngwenya used the platform to inspire the children personally. He urged the learners to remain dedicated to their studies and emphasized that education is the ultimate tool for community transformation.

"Work hard throughout the academic year and always strive to achieve your best," Ngwenya told the learners.

"The dedication you show in the classroom today will determine your ability to lead this municipality in the future."

The visit concluded with a renewed sense of motivation among the students, highlighting the Mkhondo Local Municipality's commitment to transparency, youth development, and building a more informed citizenry for the years to come.



Speaker Cllr Sizwe Ngwenya with some learners.

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Tourism fund boosts black-owned enterprises



Deputy Minister Maggie Sotyu.

Staff Reporter

The National Empowerment Fund (NEF), in partnership with the Department of Tourism, hosted a Tourism Transformation Fund (TTF) Investee Showcase at the Tourism Grading Council stand during Africa's Travel Indaba 2026 on Tuesday.

The showcase formed part of government's ongoing efforts to advance transformation, promote inclusive participation and strengthen the competitiveness of black-owned tourism enterprises across South Africa.

The platform also provided prospective applicants with guidance on how to submit proposals for funding consideration under the Tourism Transformation Fund, with approvals aligned to the strategic objectives of the programme.
The Tourism Transformation Fund is a dedicated capital investment initiative established by the Department of Tourism in collaboration with the NEF.

The fund provides financial support to black-owned tourism businesses and entrepreneurs with the aim of accelerating transformation within the tourism sector while supporting the growth of sustainable and competitive enterprises.

Stakeholders at the event described the fund as an important opportunity for tourism entrepreneurs to access funding, unlock business growth, expand market participation and contribute meaningfully to South Africa's tourism economy.
Entrepreneurs with innovative and scalable tourism projects were encouraged to apply for funding through the National Empowerment Fund website.

where information on qualifying criteria, application processes and funding opportunities is available.
The event also marked the official launch and celebration of several Tourism Transformation Fund beneficiaries, while showcasing other NEF-supported tourism enterprises from different provinces. These businesses reflected progress in advancing government's vision of inclusive economic growth and broader participation within the tourism value chain.

Among the participating beneficiaries were Galenia Hotel Group, Kgabo Safaris, Yacoob Yachts (Tigresse Cruise) and Elangeni Lodge.

The keynote address was delivered by Deputy Minister of Tourism Makhotso Sotyu, who encouraged tourism businesses to collaborate and support one another to strengthen the sector and create sustainable economic opportunities.

Director-General Victor Vele delivered the vote of thanks.
The Tourism Transformation Fund continues to play a key role in shaping a more inclusive tourism industry by empowering black entrepreneurs to build thriving businesses that contribute to job creation, regional development and South Africa's global tourism appeal.



Mpumalanga tourism shines at Africa's travel Indaba 2026

Supplied

The Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA) has described its first day at Africa's Travel Indaba 2026 as a major success, following productive engagements with tourism buyers, stakeholders and members of the media.

Representing the province under the banner of the "Place of the Rising Sun," Mpumalanga's small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) attracted significant interest from both local and international buyers eager to explore the province's tourism offerings.

According to the agency, the engagements created valuable networking opportunities for tourism operators from Mpumalanga, while also showcasing the province as one of South Africa's leading travel destinations.

The MTPA said the strong interest shown by buyers is expected to open doors for future partnerships, business opportunities and increased tourist arrivals to the province. The agency believes these opportunities will play an important role in stimulating economic growth and creating jobs within the tourism sector.

Apart from engaging with buyers, the agency also held successful discussions with various stakeholders, including members of the fourth estate, as part of efforts to strengthen relationships and promote Mpumalanga's tourism potential on a wider platform.

Africa's Travel Indaba is regarded as one of the continent's leading tourism trade shows, bringing together exhibitors, buyers and tourism professionals from across the globe.

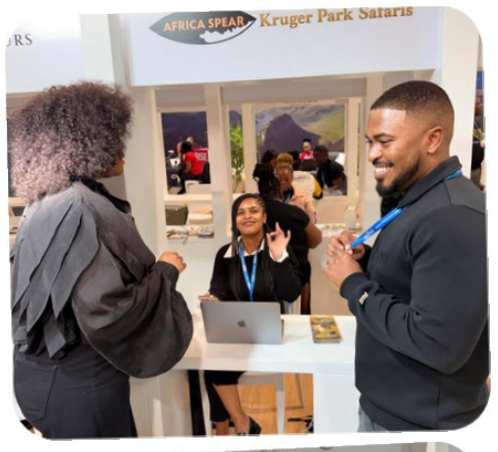
The event provides provinces and tourism businesses with an opportunity to market their destinations, products and services to the international market. Mpumalanga's participation at the event forms part of broader efforts to position the province as a preferred tourism destination known for its natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage and adventure tourism experiences.

The province is home to several world-renowned attractions, including the Kruger National Park, the Blyde River Canyon and the Panorama Route, which continue to attract thousands of visitors every year.

The agency said "Team Mpumalanga" remains optimistic and is looking forward to an even more productive and successful second day at Africa's Travel Indaba 2026 as engagements with buyers and stakeholders continue.

















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Patricia Dlamini: a journey of purpose, resilience and empowerment

Staff Reporter

From the heart of Mpumalanga rises a woman driven not only by ambition, but by purpose. Mrs Curve South Africa 2026 semi-finalist Patricia Dlamini is using her voice, platform, and personal journey to inspire confidence, healing, and meaningful community impact.

More than a pageant contestant, Patricia represents resilience, compassion, and the courage to stand for something greater than herself. Her journey in Mrs Curve South Africa is rooted in empowerment, leadership, and the belief that every woman has the power to create change within her community.

Mrs Curve South Africa, an international empowerment brand, celebrates women of confidence, substance, and influence.

Through leadership development, public speaking, community engagement, and personal growth, the platform empowers women to embrace their authentic selves while becoming impactful leaders in society. For Patricia, this journey is not only about the crown — it is about purpose.





At the center of Patricia's mission is her advocacy for children who have experienced trauma or abuse. Deeply passionate about creating safe spaces and restoring hope, she is committed to raising awareness around child protection, emotional wellness, and healing within communities.

Through outreach programmes, awareness campaigns, and community conversations, she hopes to encourage early intervention, support systems, and environments where vulnerable children can feel seen, heard, and protected.

Patricia believes that healing begins when communities choose compassion over silence. Her advocacy focuses on empowering families and communities with knowledge while reminding children that their stories and lives matter.

Beyond advocacy, Patricia stands for women empowerment, confidence, self-love, and authenticity.

She believes beauty is not defined by perfection, but by resilience, kindness, growth, and the ability to rise despite challenges.

Her journey reflects the reality that women can embrace both strength and vulnerability while still walking boldly in purpose.

As a semi-finalist, Patricia continues to use her growing platform to inspire others to believe in themselves, embrace their journeys, and pursue meaningful impact.

Whether through community initiatives, social media engagement, or public appearances, she remains committed to representing hope, empowerment, and positive change.

With grace, determination, and a heart for people, Patricia Dlamini is not only walking a pageant journey — she is building a legacy of empowerment, healing, and transformation.

Kruger park controversy: driver in viral videos claims SANParks never contacted him

Staff Reporter



The driver at the centre of viral Kruger National Park videos claims SANParks never responded to his enquiry about using a sports car inside the reserve, nor contacted him afterwards.

Facebook teaser: Petrus Janse van Rensburg says SANParks never contacted him after viral videos of his alleged reckless driving in the Kruger National Park sparked backlash online. Read more here:

Petrus Janse van Rensburg, the man at the centre of viral videos showing alleged reckless driving inside the Kruger National Park (KNP), has claimed that no one from SANParks contacted him after the videos were shared online.

Janse van Rensburg said despite public claims that SANParks were searching for him, he had always been easy to reach.

"Now the media makes it seem like SANParks were searching for me. My Instagram is public, my car registration is visible and I gave my cellphone number at the gate. But none of them called me or asked me to meet.

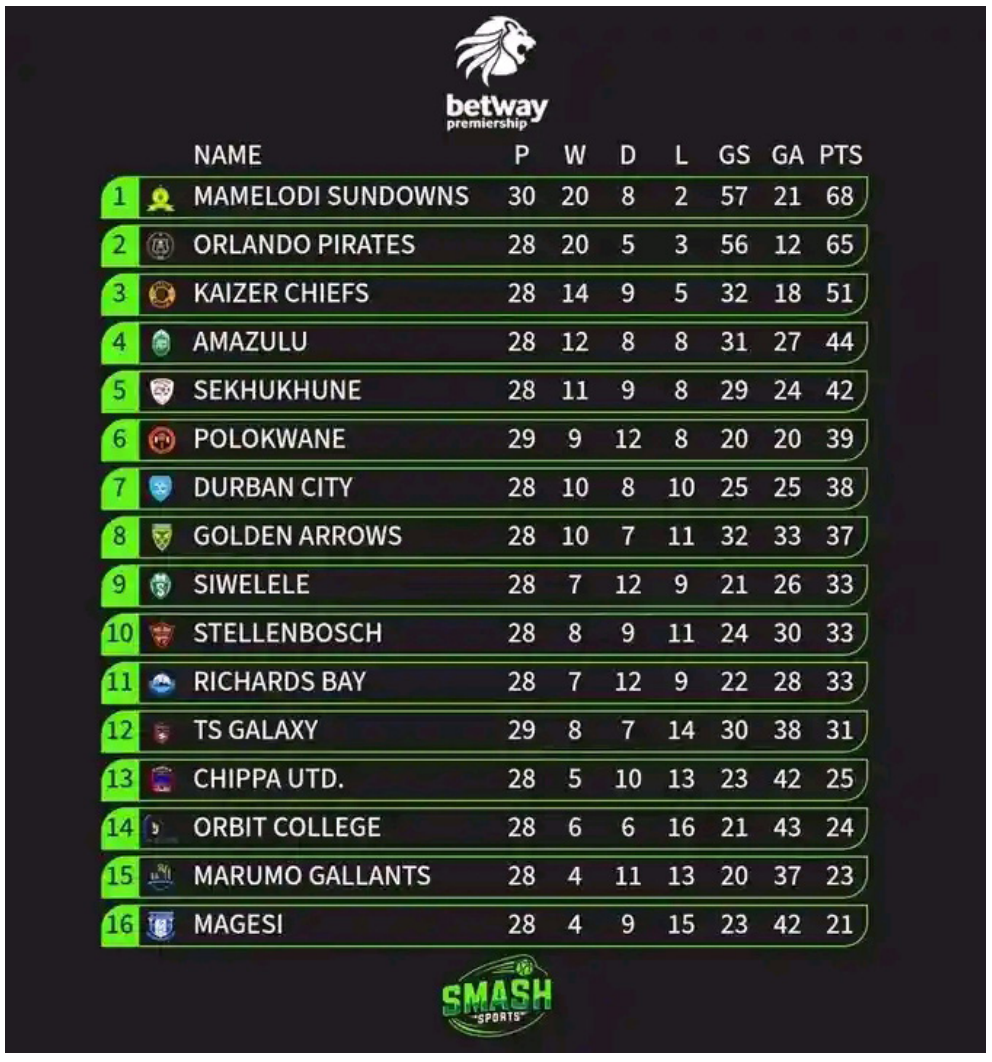
Photo Credit: Petrus Janse van Rensburg





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Betway premiership midweek results at Mbombela stadium





Sibusiso "Ace The Coach" Ndimande

Mamelodi Sundowns Lost their second match of the season in the Betway Premiership after Succumbing to a 2-1 defeat at the hands of TS Galaxy at Mbombela Stadium on Tuesday 12 May 2026.

TS Galaxy Scored Two Quick Goals by Victor Letswalo in the 7th minute and George in the 18th minutes to take a Surprise two goal lead just before 20 minutes of the first half.

However the current league champions Sundowns also scored 2 quick Goals by their Colombian Striker Leon in the 38 and 41 minutes to level the score just before half Time and both teams went to interval locked at 2-2.

Just immediately after the second Half underway starts TS Galaxy took the lead again to make it 3-2 after Mvelase Scored from a Well Timed Cross from Mahlambi Sundowns tried everything to get the equalizer but unfortunately Bernard Parker men stood firm at back and win their first Match after several Defeats and Draws. It was Bernard Parker first win as TS Galaxy Interim Coach after losing in the Nedbank Cup Final and drawing 3 matches in the league. The lost by Sundowns opened a door for Orlando Pirates to overtake them if they will Win their two games in hands and win the league after Sundowns has been winning it in the last 8 seasons.

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