



**NO CONFIDENCE
VOTE - A CHAOTIC
DAY IN KZN
LEGISLATURE**

**DRIVERS LICENCE
VALIDITY EXTENDED
TO EIGHT YEARS AMID
BACKLOGS**



**NEW BOOK ACCUSES
APARTHEID FOR
HIV "BIOLOGICAL
WARFARE"**

Collen Malatji Calls for Broader Disaster Declarations and Marks New Era for ANCYL Leadership



Newly elected leaders of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) join hands in unity on stage during the 27th National Congress, reaffirming their commitment to economic freedom and social change. Picture Credit: Facebook



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SAPS PROBE UNDERWAY AFTER DJ WARRAS GUNNED DOWN IN CITY CENTRE

By Aisha Zardad

Johannesburg – South Africa is mourning the death of former YFM media personality and DJ, Warrick Stock, popularly known as DJ Warras, who was fatally shot in Johannesburg Central on Tuesday. The South African Police Service (SAPS) confirmed that the 40-year-old was killed during an incident that occurred on Reconciliation Day, sending shockwaves across the music, media, and cultural sectors. According to Gauteng police spokesperson Captain Tinswalo Sibeko, DJ Warras was allegedly approached by three unknown suspects shortly after parking his vehicle in the city centre. The suspects reportedly opened fire before fleeing the scene on foot. Emergency services responded, but the DJ was declared dead at the scene. Sibeko said the motive for the shooting remains unknown, and no arrests have been made at this stage. Police investigations are ongoing, and authorities have appealed to members of the public with information to come forward. Several media reports have indicated

that Stock, who was also a property manager, may have been in the area conducting a building inspection at the time of the incident. The shooting is believed to have occurred within the Carlton Centre business precinct, where a strong police and private security presence was observed following the incident.

Johannesburg Metro Police Department spokesperson Superintendent Xolani Fihla said JMPD could not confirm further details regarding the circumstances surrounding the shooting, noting that the matter is being handled as a criminal investigation by SAPS. Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture Gayton McKenzie extended his condolences to the Stock family, describing DJ Warras as a patriot who was deeply passionate about South Africa. McKenzie said the DJ was known for speaking openly and honestly, even when his views differed from those in leadership. Tributes have continued to pour in from colleagues, friends, and public figures. Close associate Penuel "The Black Pen" Mlotshwa remembered DJ Warras as a loving father, a committed South African, and a hardworking



Police continue to investigate the fatal shooting of former YFM DJ Warrick "DJ Warras" Stock in Johannesburg Central. Picture Credits: Magic 828

individual known for his direct and uncompromising views.

Humanitarian and activist Ulrich Janse Van Vuuren also paid tribute, describing Stock as someone who genuinely cared about people and the country, and expressing condolences to his family

following his untimely death. Police have urged anyone with information related to the incident to contact their nearest police station or submit tips anonymously as investigations continue.

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DRIVING LICENCE VALIDITY EXTENDED TO EIGHT YEARS AMID BACKLOGS



South Africa extends driving licence validity from five to eight years to ease backlogs and system strain. Picture Credits: SA People



South Africa – The validity period for South African driving licences is set to increase from five years to eight, a move welcomed by motorists and advocacy groups. Director-General Mathabatha Mokonyana confirmed the extension last week during a briefing to Parliament's Select Committee on Public Infrastructure. The decision followed a detailed assessment showing that most South Africans prefer a longer validity period to avoid frequent renewals. "We have just concluded, although it took some time, the issue around extending the validity period of the driver's licence card from five to eight years," Mokonyana said. "They don't want to come back to us every five years. So we definitely will be moving to eight years soon." While the Department of Transport has confirmed the move, spokesperson Collen Msibi noted that a cost-benefit analysis is still pending. Advocacy group OUTA welcomed the decision, saying it will improve efficiency, reduce administrative burdens, and alleviate pressure on the government caused by frequent machine

breakdowns.

The department's current licence printing machine, which was due for replacement six to eight years ago, has experienced multiple failures. In early 2025, a breakdown resulted in a backlog of over 700,000 licence cards, now reduced to under 300,000. However, the extension applies only to ordinary drivers. Commercial drivers will continue to renew their licences every two years for safety reasons, Transport Minister Barbara Creecy explained, as heavy-vehicle and passenger drivers require more frequent checks of vision and other qualifications. The Department of Transport has also discussed the launch of an electronic licence system, which would allow motorists to store card information on their phones, though no timeline has been confirmed. The department plans to introduce new smart driving licence cards with enhanced security and biometric data, making them harder to counterfeit. The procurement process for these cards has faced scrutiny, with the Auditor-General finding the R828 million tender process awarded to French tech firm IDEMIA "irregular" and flawed.

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NTULI SURVIVES NO-CONFIDENCE VOTE AFTER CHAOTIC DAY IN KZN LEGISLATURE



Fireworks and Fury: Ntuli Survives No-Confidence Vote after Chaotic Day in KZN Legislature. Picture Credits: Daily News

By Duncan Mnisi

Petermaritzburg – The KwaZulu-Natal Legislature was the scene of loud celebrations and sharp confrontation on Monday after Premier Thami Ntuli survived a motion of no confidence brought by the MK Party. Outside the legislature, IFP supporters cheered and set off fireworks when the motion failed. Inside the chamber, tensions were high from the outset. The MK Party and its allies — including members of the EFF who supported the motion — demanded that the vote be conducted by secret ballot, arguing that some members had received threats and would not be able to vote freely in an open process. Speaker Nontembeko Boyce ruled that the vote would proceed openly. The decision sparked immediate objections, with heated exchanges erupting in the chamber. Several MK and EFF members were at one point ejected for disrupting proceedings. MK Party chief whip Bonginkosi Mngadi told the House that party members had been threatened and read out one of the alleged messages received. He said a police case had been opened and reiterated the party's call for a secret ballot to protect MPs. As the debate intensified,

MK and EFF members sang and disrupted proceedings in protest.

Speaker Boyce rejected the demand, emphasising the principles of transparency and public accountability in the legislature. After voting concluded, she announced the outcome and confirmed that Ntuli would remain premier.

Her announcement formally ended the sitting, but disorder continued as MPs clashed with security personnel and police were called in to restore order.

The voting process involved counting members by their positions in the chamber: those standing at designated points were counted as supporting the motion, while those who remained seated were counted as opposing it.

The motion failed after members of the governing coalition voted against it, securing Ntuli's position. "The motion has failed. Honourable Ntuli remains the premier. The House is adjourned," Boyce said.

The outcome was narrow, and the aftermath chaotic. At least one MK Party member was reportedly injured or collapsed, prompting paramedics to be called. The MK Party framed the motion as an effort to hold the premier accountable for alleged financial mismanagement and wasteful expenditure by the provincial government. Supporters of Ntuli and parties in the Government of Provincial Unity dismissed the move as political theatre that could destabilise the province. Political analysts warned that the tight margins in the 80-seat legislature make KwaZulu-Natal especially fragile.

What happens next remains uncertain. The MK Party has indicated it may explore legal or other avenues following the open vote, while tensions between parties in the province remain high. Monday's mix of fireworks outside and confrontations inside the legislature underscored a deeply divided province — and a delicate political balance that could shift at any moment.

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COLLEN MALATJI CALLS FOR BROADER DISASTER DECLARATIONS AND MARKS NEW ERA FOR ANCYL LEADERSHIP

By Thulane Madalane

Polokwane: As Collen Malatji takes the helm as President of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), his leadership signals a renewed commitment to tackling the pressing socio-economic challenges facing South Africa. In a recent statement, Malatji praised President Cyril Ramaphosa's decision to declare gender-based violence a national disaster but urged that the government recognize unemployment and economic inequality as disasters of equal magnitude. "We welcome the declaration on gender-based violence, but we must also confront the realities of unemployment and economic restructuring as disasters in their own right," said Malatji. "It is untenable that 20% of the population controls 80% of the economy, while the vast majority depend on a shrinking minority—this situation is a disaster waiting to unfold." Malatji poignantly underscored how unemployment affects personal dignity and social inclusion, stating, "We often say, 'How do you date without data?' But I ask, 'How do you date when you're unemployed?' Even in family circles, unemployed youth are often

excluded because they have nothing to contribute." This reflection highlights the social fabric's strain beyond the economic statistics. Malatji's election, alongside the new National Office Bearers—Deputy President Francisco Dyantyi, Secretary General Tsakani Tshivhiti, and others—is being hailed as a historic moment by the ANCYL Gauteng, which pledged its full support for this militant youth leadership committed to advancing economic freedom and social justice. The 27th National Congress of the ANCYL clearly marks a milestone in the organisation's long history of activism and radical political engagement. Established on April 2, 1944, by pioneering leaders including Anton Lembede, Nelson Mandela, and Walter Sisulu, the Youth League's founding mission was to galvanize young South Africans in the fight against segregation and oppression. The Youth League's initial manifesto, launched at Johannesburg's Bantu Social Centre in 1944, asserted the principle of Africanism, calling on African youth to unite and become disciplined leaders of the liberation struggle. Their motto, "Africa's cause must triumph," became a rallying cry for decades of resistance. Following its establishment, the ANCYL

developed a revolutionary Programme of Action endorsing protests, strikes, and boycotts. In 1949, the ANC adopted this programme, setting the stage for landmark campaigns like the 1952 Defiance Campaign, which challenged apartheid laws with mass civil disobedience, deeply shaped by Youth League activism. The Freedom Charter, adopted in 1955 at the Congress of the People in Kliptown, represented a transformative vision for South Africa, championing equality and democracy. Though it caused divisions within the Youth League—particularly between those aligned with the Charter and the Africanist faction led by Robert Sobukwe—the ANCYL remained a vital force in anti-apartheid efforts. The untimely death of Anton Lembede in 1947 left a leadership void, and political repression, such as the Treason Trial, along with ideological splits, challenged the organisation's cohesion during the 1950s. The breakaway of the Africanist faction to form the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in 1959 and the tragedy of the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre are key moments in the struggle that have shaped the league's path.

Now, as Collen "Noko" Malatji leads

a revitalised ANCYL, the organisation re-commits itself to its foundational principles—mobilising youth for freedom, equality, and economic emancipation. With Gauteng's ANCYL and others poised to support a militant and united front, the league is set to play a critical role in addressing the country's economic disparities and social injustices.

The newly elected national officials are:

- President: Collen Malatji (Gauteng)
- Deputy President: Francisco Dyantyi (Eastern Cape)
- Secretary General: Tsakani Tshivhiti (Limpopo)
- 1st Deputy Secretary General: Zama Khanyase (Kwazulu Natal)
- 2nd Deputy Secretary General: Venus Blennies (Northern Cape)
- Treasurer General: Jacob Tau (Mpumalanga)

As the ANCYL approaches its future, inspired by its storied past and visionary youth leadership, South Africa's fight for a just and equitable society continues with renewed energy and determination.

#ANCYLatWork #ANCLegacy
#YouthLeadership #EconomicFreedom

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GOODBYE GREEN ID: SOUTH AFRICA MOVES TO A FULLY DIGITAL IDENTITY

By Aisha Zardad

South Africa – South Africa is preparing for the eventual end of the green ID book as government accelerates plans to introduce a fully digital identity system ahead of the 2029 general elections. Home Affairs Minister Leon Schreiber has confirmed that the Department of Home Affairs hopes to stop producing green ID books from 2026, as part of a broader digitisation drive aimed at modernising civic services and reducing fraud. While no official date has been set to invalidate the green ID book as a legal form of identification, Schreiber said this would only happen once all South Africans have access to smart ID cards. The green ID book has been identified as a major vulnerability, with government warning it is the single biggest fraud risk in the country. Authorities estimate that 34% of fraud cases in Africa involve the green ID book. The move forms part of a wider digital transformation initiative under the Government of National Unity, led by President Cyril Ramaphosa's second-term administration. In May 2025, Communications Minister Solly Malatsi launched South Africa's Digital Transformation Roadmap, which outlines the creation of a unified digital public services platform known as MyMzansi. The roadmap was accompanied by the establishment of the Digital Service Unit (DSU) within the Presidency. In November, Malatsi unveiled a working prototype of the MyMzansi platform at the Global Digital Public Infrastructure Summit, demonstrating a digital driving licence card and an online licence renewal system.

According to Malatsi, the MyMzansi app will form the foundation of a single digital identity for all South Africans, allowing citizens to verify themselves and access government services through a centralised, zero-rated platform, even without mobile data. The Digital Transformation Roadmap is built around four pillars: digital identity, data exchange, digital payments, and trusted digital service channels. The rollout is divided into two phases, with Phase 1 running from 2025 to 2027, focusing on social protection, digital ID pilots, and integrated services. Phase 2, from 2028



South Africa is preparing to phase out the green ID book as government moves towards a fully digital identity system. Picture Credits: Myboardband

to 2030, will expand the system across healthcare, education, and business services.

Alongside this work, the Department of Home Affairs is implementing its "Home Affairs @ Home" strategy, which aims to expand access to smart ID and passport services through bank branches nationwide. Banks have committed to rolling out services to at least 153 branches by March 2026, with plans to reach 1,000 branches by 2029.

Home Affairs is also working with banks to integrate ID services into banking apps and eventually deliver smart IDs directly to homes or offices, reducing congestion at Home Affairs offices.

Despite progress, challenges remain. Schreiber has revealed that approximately 4.4 million South Africans over the age of 16 currently have no form of ID, while an estimated 16 million green ID books are still in circulation and must be replaced.

Home Affairs has urged citizens who qualify for smart IDs to migrate as soon as possible, warning that digital identity systems will significantly reduce fraud while improving access to government services.

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SHEBESHXT TO SPEND CHRISTMAS IN CUSTODY AFTER BAIL DENIED



Lekompo star Lehlogonolo "Shebeshxt" Chauke was denied bail and will remain behind bars as he faces multiple serious charges. Picture Credits: Bushbuckridge TV

By Duncan Mnisi

Polokwane – Lekompo artist Lehlogonolo Katlego Chauke, popularly known as Shebeshxt, has been denied bail by the Polokwane Magistrate's Court and will remain in custody over the Christmas period. The matter has been postponed to 18 February 2026 for further proceedings. Chauke was arrested in November following a shooting and several other incidents that police allege occurred in and around Polokwane. The state has laid multiple charges against him, including attempted murder, assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, malicious

damage to property, and possession of an unlicensed firearm. Several media reports indicate that the charge sheet was later expanded to include additional counts. During the bail hearing, the state argued that Chauke posed a danger to the public, citing his alleged involvement in previous violent incidents. The investigating officer opposed bail, highlighting multiple pending cases and past convictions.

Warrant Officer Phaladi Makola, the investigating officer, told the court that Chauke is facing several serious and interconnected matters, some of which are already scheduled for trial in February 2026. Makola also testified that Chauke is not a licensed firearm owner and raised concerns about public safety and the potential risk to witnesses.

The defence applied for Chauke's release on bail, arguing that he has strong community ties and significant family responsibilities. Defence counsel challenged aspects of the state's case and complained that additional charges had been introduced at short notice, making adequate preparation difficult. "You have to prepare... There are six counts that I'm not aware of. We were ambushed," the defence told the court.

Reporting on the case has been inconsistent. Earlier coverage in November indicated that Chauke had been granted bail in a separate Lebowakgomo matter, with some trial dates set for February 2026. However, more recent proceedings in the Polokwane Magistrate's Court resulted in bail being refused, with Chauke remanded in custody.

As a result, Chauke will spend the festive season behind bars, miss scheduled performances, and focus on preparing his legal defence ahead of the February court date and any related trials. The case has drawn widespread attention on social media, with reactions ranging from messages of support to serious concern over the gravity of the allegations.

The matter is set to return to court on 18 February 2026, when issues relating to remand, scheduling, or further proceedings are expected to be addressed.

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INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA'S SHOPPING HABITS IN 2025

By Aisha Zardad

South Africa – Pick n Pay has released its annual Smart Shopper Unwrapped report, offering detailed insight into how South Africans shopped in 2025, based on data from more than 11 million Smart Shoppers nationwide. The report, which analyses billions of shopping points, paints a picture of a country shopping with intent as households navigate ongoing cost pressures. During this period, the Smart Shopper loyalty programme has played a significant role in easing financial strain, delivering a total of R7 billion in customer savings since January 2025.

Pick n Pay Executive of Innovation and Digital, Vince Viviers, said the value offered by the programme continues to attract new users, with nearly two million customers registering as Smart Shoppers during the same timeframe.

Johannesburg emerged as the city with the highest total Smart Shopper savings, with customers collectively saving over R1 billion. Cape Town, while saving less in total, recorded the highest average Rand savings per shopper, highlighting regional differences in shopping behaviour.

The report shows that Fridays have become South Africa's preferred shopping day, reinforcing the weekly grocery

shop as a deeply ingrained routine. The Pick n Pay store in Tembisa recorded the highest number of Smart Shopper swipes nationally, followed by Pick n Pay Promenade in Cape Town and Pick n Pay Hyper North in Durban.

Convenience has also reshaped shopping habits through the integration of Pick n Pay asap! within the Smart Shopper app. The service recorded 1.7 million new installs and a 44% year-on-year increase in on-demand sales in the first half of the financial year. The platform maintained a 97% item availability rate, helping drive repeat usage.

One Cape Town-based customer placed 327 asap! orders since January, with top users in Johannesburg and Durban placing 246 and 228 orders respectively. According to Pick n Pay, these figures highlight how on-demand shopping has become embedded in daily routines.

The report identifies three dominant shopping missions among South Africans: Fresh Healthy Full Shop, Pantry Filling and Cleaning, and Sweets, Snacks and Groceries. Regional preferences remain distinct. Cape Town shoppers favour health-forward items such as free-range meats, avocados, and rice cakes, alongside local favourites like biltong and chutney. Johannesburg shoppers prioritise maize meal, beef, and chicken, with premium beer and



R7 billion in savings and shifting habits highlighted in Pick n Pay's 2025 Smart Shopper report. Picture Credits: Moneyweb

wine featuring strongly over weekends. Gauteng also emerged as the country's leading consumer of watermelon. Durban shoppers showed strong demand for samoosas, fresh chillies, and curry leaves, reflecting the city's diverse culinary culture. Beach lifestyle staples such as hot chips, seasonal treats, and strong sales of Irish whisky and spirit coolers also featured prominently. Viviers said Smart Shopper

continues to play a central role in South Africans' weekly shopping lives, with Pick n Pay committed to ongoing innovation aimed at delivering greater value and savings for customers.

The findings confirm that Smart Shopper has evolved beyond a loyalty programme, becoming an essential part of how South Africans plan, shop, and save.

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HOME AFFAIRS PROPOSES STRICTER ASYLUM RULES AND MERIT-BASED CITIZENSHIP SYSTEM

By Thulane Madalane

South Africa – The Department of Home Affairs has proposed sweeping changes to South Africa's asylum, immigration, and citizenship framework, including tighter asylum rules and the introduction of a merit-based system for naturalisation. The proposals are contained in a revised draft White Paper on Citizenship, Immigration and Refugee Protection, published on Friday by Home Affairs Minister Leon Schreiber.

Under the proposed changes, asylum seekers who have already been granted refugee status in another country will no longer be eligible to apply for asylum in South Africa. The White Paper also introduces a "first safe country" principle, which would disqualify applicants who passed through safe third countries before arriving in South Africa.

Minister Schreiber said the reforms are aimed at clamping down on fraud and abuse within the asylum system while strengthening national security and improving administrative efficiency. In a major shift, citizenship applications will no longer be assessed primarily on the length of time a foreign national has lived in the country. Instead, applications will be evaluated using clearly defined merit-

based criteria.

A Citizenship Advisory Panel will be established to objectively assess applications, while a points-based system will apply to those seeking citizenship or permanent residence through economic contribution. Applications for citizenship will also only be accepted during an annual window period to prevent administrative backlogs.

The White Paper makes it clear that existing protections for children remain unchanged. A child with at least one South African citizen parent at the time of birth will continue to automatically qualify for citizenship, while children born to non-citizen parents will still be required to apply for naturalisation.

Following the introduction of new visa categories through Operation Vulindlela, the document also proposes expanded use of points-based systems for certain visas and permanent residency permits.

In addition, the White Paper outlines civil registration reforms for births and deaths as part of preparations for the rollout of a digital identity system. Members of the public have until the end of January to submit comments on the draft White Paper. Public consultations are expected to take place across all provinces in mid-January.

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Home Affairs has released a draft White Paper proposing stricter asylum rules and a merit-based citizenship system. Public submissions are open until the end of January. Picture Credits: Corruption Watch

OR TAMBO AIRPORT OPERATION LEADS TO ARREST OF 30 FOREIGN NATIONALS FOR IRREGULAR TRAVEL



BMA steps up festive season security with arrests linked to human trafficking and visa fraud. Picture Credits: MSN

By Aisha Zardad

South Africa – OR Tambo International Airport officials have intercepted two groups of foreign nationals in operations linked to human trafficking, irregular migration, and visa fraud.

Acting Border Management Authority (BMA) Commissioner Jane Thupana confirmed that the interceptions took place on Thursday, 11 December 2025, as part of increased border security measures ahead of the festive season. In the first incident, 14 Ethiopian nationals – five men and nine women – were stopped upon arrival on an Ethiopian Airlines flight after advance passenger data flagged their travel patterns as suspicious. Preliminary checks indicated a method often associated with trafficking syndicates, in which travellers

transit through South Africa to neighbouring countries before attempting to re-enter the country irregularly. All 14 were detained for further processing.

In a separate operation, 16 Bangladeshi men were intercepted after officers discovered they were travelling with fraudulent visas. The group had arrived on another Ethiopian Airlines flight and were attempting to blend in with other passengers in the arrivals terminal. Immigration officers referred the group for secondary investigation, where the documents were confirmed to be fake. The BMA says the operations highlight ongoing efforts to strengthen border security and prevent irregular migration and human trafficking, particularly during the busy holiday season.

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FESTIVE SEASON MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR, CLLR VJ NHLAPHO



The Executive Mayor, Cllr VJ Nhlapho, extends his warm wishes to all residents of Emalahleni as we enter the festive season.

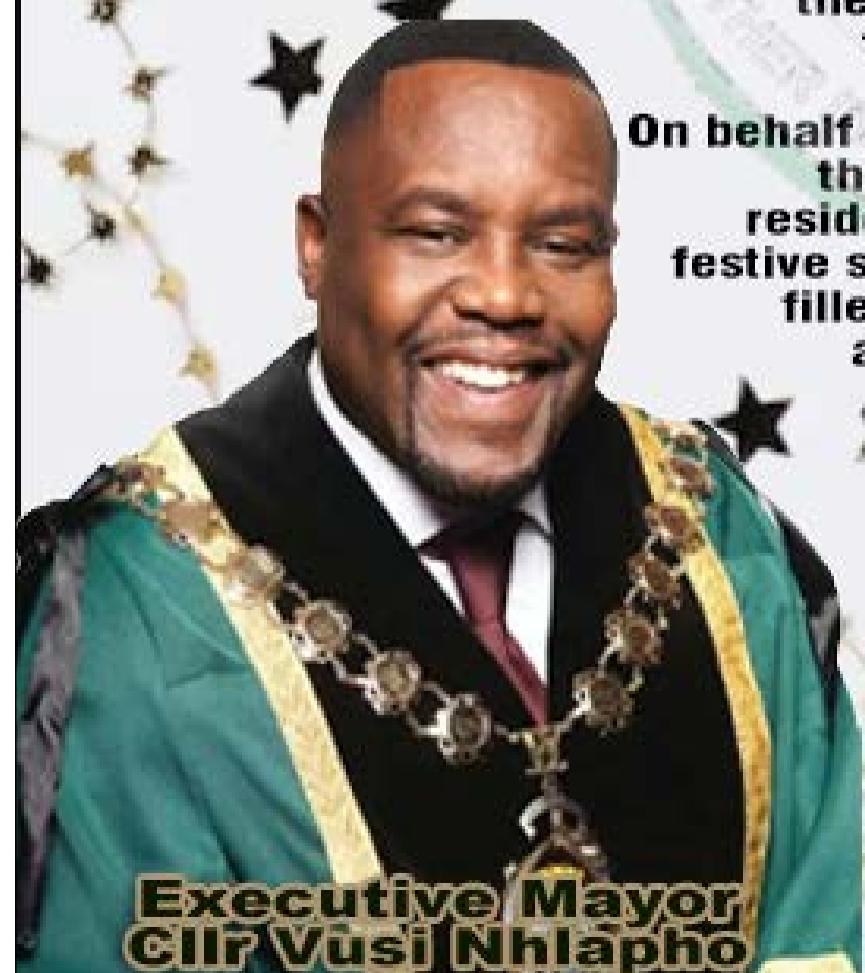
This period gives us a chance to reflect on the year, reconnect with loved ones, and strengthen the sense of community that keeps us moving forward.

Residents are encouraged to embrace the season with compassion, responsibility, and unity. May every household experience peace, comfort, and a renewed sense of hope.

The Executive Mayor further urges the community to remain alert, celebrate safely, and look out for one another during this busy period.

"Our focus must remain on building a safer, stronger, and more united Emalahleni. Let us carry this commitment into the New Year and work together to improve the wellbeing of every resident," the Executive Mayor states.

On behalf of the Emalahleni Local Municipality, the Executive Mayor wishes all residents a safe, joyful, and uplifting festive season, and anticipates a New Year filled with progress, development, and collective achievement.



**Executive Mayor
Cllr Vusi Nhlapho**



SPEAKER'S FESTIVE SEASON MESSAGE

eMalahleni Local Municipality

As we approach the close of the remarkable year 2025 and prepare to welcome 2026,

I wish you and your families peace, joy, and rest during this holiday season. May this period bring renewed hope and an opportunity to reconnect with your loved ones after a year of hard work and dedication to the growth and development of eMalahleni.

Let us enter 2026 with optimism and a collective resolve to strengthen public participation, enhance community development, and foster a safer, more inclusive, and prosperous eMalahleni for all.

May the New Year bring prosperity, good health, and continued unity.

Speaker of the Council

Cllr Millicent Shabangu





**As the Christmas season arrives,
I want to extend
my warmest and most sincere wishes to
every resident of Emalahleni.**

This is a time that reminds us of the incredible strength found in unity, compassion, and the simple acts of kindness we share with one another.

Throughout the year, I have witnessed the spirit of Emalahleni shine brightly—through neighbours supporting neighbours, families standing together through challenges, and community members giving their time, energy, and hearts to make our home a better place. Your resilience, warmth, and generosity reflect the very best of who we are.

Christmas encourages us to pause and appreciate the bonds that carry us through. It is a moment to honour the loved ones who fill our lives with meaning, to reach out to those who may need a hand or a word of comfort, and to reflect on the values that keep our community strong.

Christmas encourages us to pause and appreciate the bonds that carry us through. It is a moment to honour the loved ones who fill our lives with meaning, to reach out to those who may need a hand or a word of comfort, and to reflect on the values that keep our community strong.

May this Christmas bring peace to your hearts, joy to your homes, and hope for the year ahead. And as we step into a new year, may we continue to stand together, support one another, and build an even stronger, kinder Emalahleni.

**With warmest Christmas wishes,
Honorable Cllr G.S KOKO
Emalahleni Local Municipality Chief Whip**



N11, Hendrina Road
Pullenshope Road
Mpumalanga, 1096
Republic of South Africa

16 December 2025

NOTICE OF POSTPONEMENT OF LIBERTY COAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETING

Following various concerns raised by varied sections of the community, Liberty Coal has taken a decision to temporarily postpone the Community Engagement Meeting that was scheduled to take place Thursday 18 December 2025 at the Sydney Choma Banquet Hall in Middelburg.

Liberty Coal is committed to constituting its Stakeholder Forum in a manner that allows for maximum community representation.

Given these concerns and also taking into consideration the effect the festive season may have on broader participation, Liberty Coal has decided that postponing the meeting to a future date will allow for broader participation and representation in the process.

A new date of the meeting will be communicated in due course.

Issued by
Liberty Coal (Pty) Ltd
Communications & Stakeholder Management



LIBERTYMINING

17 December 2025

EXTERNAL VACANCY

Vacant Positions:

ADT Operator	RDT Operator
Grader Operator	Dozer Operator
Excavator Operator	Front End Loader Operator

Closing Date

02/01/2026

Time

23:59

Roles & Responsibilities

- To execute production activities according to the schedule in line with operational targets.
- Ensure timely and accurate reporting of all events and hazards to the Supervisor.
- Ability to adhere to the Mine personal protective equipment (PPE) policy and maintain individual PPE in a functional condition.
- Ensure the relevant SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) for the specific machine is followed.
- Conducting walk-around inspection & completing pre-start checklist.
- Report to Dispatch and/or Pit Foreman when the task is complete.
- Housekeeping and following the correct lock out procedure
- Adhere to defined standard procedures and apply safe work practices.

Qualification Criteria, Knowledge & Competencies

- Grade 12 or Equivalent.
- Valid operator license/certificates (will be verified).
- Minimum of 2-3 years' experience in the opencast mining industry.
- Valid driver's license (Code 10)
- Knowledge of MHSA and regulations
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively.
- Pass the medical test.
- Pass Dover test.
- If you have not been contacted within 2 weeks of the closing date of this advertisement, please consider your application unsuccessful.



How to Apply

- eMail your CV to careers@liberty-mining.com with all supporting documents and list of relevant work done as well as contactable references.
- Ensure that your CV and supporting documents **are all on one attachment and does not exceed 3Mb**
- Only submissions received from this email will be considered.
- No Late Submission will be considered.

NATIONWIDE TAXI WI-FI ROLL-OUT ANNOUNCED FOR SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUTERS



Taxi industry embraces connectivity and digital tools for the modern commuter. Picture Credits: MedAfricaTimes

By Aisha Zardad

South Africa – Sebenza Wi-Fi, the free connectivity service used by around two million South African commuters each year, is set to expand nationwide through a partnership with Toyota. The initiative will see Sebenza hotspots installed in all new Toyota Quantum taxis, giving passengers access to free Wi-Fi during their daily commutes. Speaking at a media event in Johannesburg, Sebenza co-founder and CEO Wesley Dornung explained that the company's business model centres on creating value for commuters, drivers, taxi owners, associations, and brands. Users earn "Sebenza Bucks" by engaging with advertising, surveys, or other content, which they can then redeem for free Wi-Fi access. "We're in 7 500 taxis in total and around a thousand buses," Dornung said. "Everybody that comes into contact with Sebenza gets value." The routers installed in taxis can accommodate up to 50 devices simultaneously, with speeds averaging between 30 and 50 megabits per second, depending on the quality of the 4G/LTE network in the area. The signal has a range of up to 100 metres, and sessions remain continuous, allowing commuters to retain their Sebenza Bucks across trips. Drivers also benefit from continuous connectivity at home, which some have used to help their children with homework or access study materials. Rapid National Roll-Out : Sebenza has designed its routers and installation cables to minimise downtime, allowing installation in just 10 minutes per vehicle. The efficiency of the process was demonstrated to Communications Minister Solly Malatsi at the Randburg taxi rank in Johannesburg. Dornung said speed of installation is essential for driver buy-in, as taxis cannot afford to lose revenue during peak hours. Through its partnership with Toyota,

Sebenza has simplified the installation process even further, making it an "activation-only" process. Once the South African National Taxi Association (Santaco) approves participation from its members, Sebenza can remotely activate Wi-Fi services in selected taxis, accelerating nationwide coverage. "This is important to us as we scale nationally because it enables us to get more commuters connected faster and seamlessly," Dornung said.

Minister Malatsi praised the initiative, highlighting the importance of filling connectivity gaps for commuters travelling to work and schools. He also encouraged Sebenza to expand the service to include educational tools that enable productive online engagement, saying: "Through education and skilling, we will get more South Africans to participate in the digital economy and give them an opportunity to better their lives through connectivity."

Taxi Industry Embraces the Digital Era: Santaco spokeswoman Rebecca Phala said the expansion of Wi-Fi lays the foundation for other digital initiatives, including cashless payment systems and tag-based loading options for commuters. "The taxi industry is embracing modernity both in daily operations and in the work that we do. While we know the business of operating licences and managing routes, we rely on partners like Sebenza to navigate the legislation and technology involved in digitisation," Phala explained. By partnering with Sebenza, Santaco says it has been able to accelerate the rollout of digital services more efficiently than if the association had attempted it alone. The initiative reflects the broader push by the taxi industry to modernise and enhance the commuting experience for millions of South Africans.

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TRAFFIC POLICE STEP UP FESTIVE SEASON CRACKDOWN ON SOUTH AFRICA'S ROADS

By Aisha Zardad

South Africa – South Africa's annual shutdown period has begun, with millions of motorists expected to travel long distances to visit family and holiday destinations across the country. Authorities have warned that the festive season remains one of the deadliest periods on the country's roads, prompting intensified law enforcement operations nationwide. According to the Transport Ministry, road fatalities surge sharply each December. In the first two weeks of December 2024 alone, 512 people lost their lives in road crashes, underscoring the ongoing risk associated with holiday travel. Transport Minister Barbara Creecy said government has once again heightened road safety measures as traffic volumes increase. She noted that while South Africa has made progress in reducing fatalities, the overall figures remain unacceptably high. "For the first time in five consecutive years, we have managed to reduce the road death toll by 700 people this year," Creecy said. "However, with more than 9,400 fatalities recorded on our roads as of November 2025, it is clear that much more still needs to be done."

As part of efforts to curb accidents over

the festive season, the Department of Transport has launched the 365-day Arrive Alive Road Safety Campaign. The campaign focuses on behaviour change, enhanced law enforcement, and increased visibility of traffic police, particularly on high-risk routes.

The theme of the campaign, 'It Starts With Me', emphasises individual responsibility among drivers, passengers, and pedestrians. Creecy stressed that most road crashes are preventable and are directly linked to human behaviour such as speeding, driving under the influence, fatigue, and failure to use seatbelts. The department has identified several priority routes for increased enforcement, including the N1, N2, N3, N4, and N17, as well as accident-prone secondary roads. Measures include 24-hour patrols, roadblocks, vehicle roadworthiness inspections, licence checks, and stricter enforcement against speeding and drunk driving.

Authorities have urged motorists to plan their journeys carefully, obey traffic laws, and make responsible decisions on the road, warning that heightened enforcement will remain in place throughout the festive period.

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THINK YOU CAN AFFORD A GERMAN CAR? HERE'S THE SALARY YOU'LL NEED

By Aisha Zardad

South Africa – Owning a premium German car in South Africa has become a luxury reserved for the country's top earners, as the cost of entry-level models from Audi, BMW, and Mercedes-Benz continues to soar well above inflation. According to the latest TransUnion Mobility Insights Report, new vehicle prices increased by 1.5% year-on-year in the third quarter of 2025, with hatchbacks—the typical entry point for luxury brands—seeing a slightly lower increase of 0.7%. However, over the past decade, even these models have more than doubled in price, making them increasingly exclusive. The Audi A1, currently the most affordable model among the three, is priced at R530,900, doubling from R265,000 in 2015. The BMW 1 Series now costs R713,395, while the Mercedes-Benz A-Class tops the list at R813,124, each reflecting a 109% price increase over the past ten years. Several factors contribute to this sharp rise in vehicle prices. A weak rand and a sluggish local economy have made importing cars more expensive. Additionally, global supply chain disruptions, increased manufacturing costs, and heightened demand for premium features have all added to retail prices in South Africa.

These challenges have significantly impacted the premium car market. Combined sales for Audi, BMW, and Mercedes-Benz have dropped by 63.5% since 2014, reflecting both affordability pressures and competition from Chinese manufacturers, who offer competitive pricing, advanced technology, and solid build quality.

What You Need to Earn: The affordability challenge becomes even clearer when looking at the monthly financial commitment required to own these vehicles. Financial experts recommend that car repayments should not exceed 25% of monthly income. For the Audi A1, financing over 60 months at an 11.5% interest rate results in a monthly repayment of R11,771, meaning buyers would need a minimum monthly salary of R47,100 to comfortably afford the vehicle.

This places them in the top 10% of South African earners, underscoring the exclusivity of owning even the cheapest Audi model. The numbers are even higher for BMW and Mercedes-Benz:

BMW 1 Series: Price R713,395; Monthly instalment R15,785; Monthly income required R63,200
Mercedes-Benz A-Class: Price R813,124; Monthly instalment R17,978; Monthly income required R71,900

These figures show that the majority of South Africans, approximately 90%, would struggle to finance these premium models without stretching their budgets significantly.

Shifts in the Market: The rising costs have also led to changes in consumer behaviour. More South Africans are exploring pre-owned luxury vehicles as a more attainable alternative, while others are turning to financing options that extend repayment periods beyond five years.

Dealers report that, despite high prices, demand for entry-level luxury vehicles remains steady among upper-income professionals, entrepreneurs, and executives, reflecting the prestige associated with German automotive brands.

Meanwhile, brands are responding with feature-rich packages, offering technology, safety, and comfort enhancements that justify higher price points, but further increase the financial barrier for first-time luxury car buyers.

Looking Ahead: As the gap between vehicle prices and average incomes widens, affordability will remain a key challenge for premium car brands in South Africa. Industry experts suggest that innovative financing options, fleet leasing, and digital sales platforms could help broaden access to these vehicles without diluting the brand's luxury image.

In conclusion, while owning an Audi, BMW, or Mercedes-Benz remains a marker of prestige in South Africa, it is increasingly a privilege reserved for the nation's top earners, illustrating how economic pressures and market dynamics shape luxury car ownership in 2025.

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FAITH MATTERS

“LAUNCH OUT INTO THE DEEP”- SERMON BY THULANE MADALANE

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 5:1-7



Beloved family in Christ, today we stand at the shores of the miraculous—where ordinary fishermen experienced an extraordinary breakthrough simply by obeying the voice of Jesus.

Look with me at Luke 5:1-7. Jesus finds Simon Peter and his friends washing their nets after a night of fruitless labor. They worked hard all night, and yet there was nothing to show for it. Many of us know this feeling—working tirelessly and coming up empty, discouraged, worn out.

But then, Jesus comes, stands in Simon's boat, and says something that challenges human logic: "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch."

Simon's response is honest. He doesn't pretend that the night was successful. He says, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing." Here is a man who is not blindly hopeful—he is realistic. But then he adds, "Nevertheless, at Your word, I will let down the net."

Herein lies the key moment: obedience at the word of God despite our past disappointments. Church, this is a mandate for us today. How many times have you toiled all night long, putting in your effort, only to feel like you are coming up empty?

In those moments of despair, God is calling us, just like He called Peter, to "launch out into the deep." To step out of comfort zones, to trust Him when it looks like there is no reason to expect fruit.

Notice that Jesus didn't say, "Keep fishing close to the shore," or "Give up for now."

No! He said, "Launch out into the deep."

There is a spiritual lesson here. Sometimes

God wants us to do more than just scratch the surface of faith. He wants us to take risks—not reckless, but obedient faith, stepping into the unknown with His Word as our guide.

When Simon obeyed, something supernatural happened. Their nets were filled beyond capacity; their catch was so great that the boats began to sink. What was impossible by human effort became possible by divine intervention.

This miracle teaches us that no matter how dry or unfruitful our present season is, God's blessing can overflow when we listen and obey. The abundance might not come on our timetable or in the way we expect, but it will come when we trust the Word of the Master.

Finally, remember this was just the beginning for Peter. This encounter transformed his life and set him on a path of divine purpose. When God speaks, it is not just for momentary provision, but for a breakthrough that changes our destiny. So, as you leave today, hear the call from Jesus: Launch out into the deep! Obey His Word even when your nets are empty and your efforts seem wasted. Trust that God's supernatural provision is just on the other side of obedience.

Be encouraged! God is ready to bless you beyond measure. This season, bring your empty nets, your hard work, your weariness to Jesus, and say, "At Your word, I will let down my net."

And watch as your life overflows with His grace and favor.

Amen.

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Luke 5:1-7

King James Version Bible

And it came to pass, that as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret. And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them; ..

BOOK REVIEWS

NEW BOOK ACCUSES APARTHEID OF HIV “BIOLOGICAL WARFARE”



By Duncan Mnisi

A controversial new book, *Who Really Killed Chris Hani?*, claims that in the final years of white rule, the apartheid government turned the emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic into a tool of population control. Author and former judge Chris Nicholson argues that the regime and its allies deliberately allowed—and in some cases facilitated—the spread of the virus to reduce the number of black South Africans ahead of the country's first non-racial election.

He supports this claim with apartheid-era documents, testimony from former security operatives, and references to global eugenics movements, suggesting that the disease was at times "actively facilitated rather than ignored".

Nicholson's allegations echo the darker realities of South Africa's early HIV history. The first AIDS case was recorded in 1982, and by the late 1980s the virus had already infected thousands, disproportionately affecting black communities.

The apartheid state responded with draconian measures, including mandatory 14-day quarantines for anyone suspected

of having AIDS—policies that reinforced stigma and undermined effective public health responses.

Modern research shows that apartheid's migrant-labour system, forced removals, and rigid racial segregation created the structural conditions for the epidemic to spread rapidly. By 2012, black South Africans accounted for 6.2 million of the country's 6.4 million people living with HIV. "The evidence points to a deliberate strategy to weaponise a deadly disease," Nicholson said in a recent interview. "We have documents that discuss 'population reduction', and former operatives who admit they turned a blind eye while the virus spread."

He added that the apartheid regime's biological-weapons research, detailed in classified files, provided the technical capacity to exploit the pandemic for political ends.

The book forces South Africa to confront a deeply uncomfortable chapter of its history—one many hoped had been buried with the end of apartheid.

Who Really Killed Chris Hani? is a must-read for anyone seeking to understand the hidden truths behind South Africa's past.



TIMELESS SPORTS

SOUTH AFRICA EDGES GHANA 1-0 IN STRONG AFCON WARM-UP SHOWING



Sipho Mbule's thunderous strike seals a confidence-boosting 1-0 win for Bafana Bafana over Ghana in a spirited AFCON warm-up at Dobsonville Stadium.

Pictures Credits: Supersport

By Aisha Zardad

Dobsonville - South Africa secured a narrow 1-0 victory over Ghana in a crucial warm-up match ahead of the Africa Cup of Nations, with Sipho Mbule's long-range strike proving decisive at Dobsonville Stadium in Soweto. Despite missing three key European-based players due to FIFA's adjusted deadline for AFCON squad submissions, Bafana Bafana controlled much of the game and earned a deserved win against a strong Ghanaian side coached by Hugo Broos. Ghana entered the match as favorites, even without the contributions of Lyle Foster, Shandre Campbell, and Sphephelo Sithole, who were unavailable after FIFA moved the deadline for player arrivals from December 8 to December 15. Nonetheless, Broos was able to field a competitive team, but it was South Africa's Mbule who capitalized on a moment of opportunity to break the deadlock, scoring a powerful strike in the 57th minute.

The South African attack was largely

focused on the flanks, with Mohau Nkota and Tshepang Moremi creating most of the chances. Evidence Makgopa, however, found little service and struggled to make an impact throughout the game. Substitute Oswin Appollis added energy when introduced, contributing to the offensive effort from wide areas.

The home side faced a late scare when Ghana's Emmanuel Annor pushed forward, forcing substitute goalkeeper Sipho Chaine into action. Annor's shot hit the post and was quickly followed by a deflected cross that Chaine acrobatically tipped over the bar, preserving South Africa's slim lead. This victory, despite the challenges posed by player availability and Ghana's reputation, provides a welcome boost for Bafana Bafana as they prepare for the AFCON tournament. The team showed resilience and tactical discipline, suggesting they are heading into the competition with confidence and a sense of readiness.

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