

**External Communications Unit
Press / Media Release**

To : All media
Attention : News Editors & Journalists
Date : 25 August 2010

For the attention of all media houses

Sedibeng Commemorates the 26th Anniversary of the September 3, Vaal Uprising

The Sedibeng District Municipality will be joining the entire country in observing the National Heritage Month which commences on the 1 to 31 September 2010. In its Heritage month awareness programmes and campaigns, the Sedibeng District Municipality lined up various community outreach programmes which in the main will be highlighting the importance and richness of our cultural heritage of our diverse cultures in our country and the Region.

During this year's Heritage Month Programme, the activities will seek to tell the Heritage Story of the Sedibeng Region and promote and develop it. It will further remind the people of Sedibeng of the happenings of the September 3 1984, when major protests broke out in the then Lekoa Vaal Municipality (the then black authorities of the Vaal which included the townships of Sebokeng, Sharpeville, Evaton, Boipatong and Bophelong).

Lekoa workers were among some of the lowest paid in the country. The average rent for residents in Lekoa was R62.56, which was R10 higher than most black townships in the country and twice the national metropolitan average for blacks. In addition to the rent, all Lekoa households had to pay fees amounting to R51.20 that included electricity, service charges and a tariff for the wiring of houses.

On Monday, 3 September, black workers in the Vaal Triangle observed a stay-away in protest against the rent increases announced by the Lekoa Council. No public transport was allowed to operate. Protest marches took place in all the townships in the Vaal, but it was in Sharpeville that things took a horrific turn.

The initial plan was to march *peacefully, with a strong presence*, to the administration building. The departure point was the police station. As the demonstrators reached Nhlapo Street, where Dlamini lived, someone shouted "*This is where Dlamini the sell-out lives*" and the crowd started stoning the house. Dlamini subsequently opened fire on the crowd, angering them even more. Petrol bombs were thrown at the house, which caught fire.

The crowd grabbed and disarmed Dlamini and the stoning continued until he was unconscious. Meanwhile, his car was pushed onto the street, rolled over onto its side and set alight. Some members of the crowd dragged Dlamini, drenched him with petrol and set him alight. When the police arrived at 9am, Dlamini was already dead and rioting had broken out.



The police retaliated with tear gas, dogs and water hoses and bullets. Many died and hundreds more were wounded. The police detained more than 2 000 people.

The Sedibeng District Municipality has among the various Heritage Month Programmes lined up a Memorial Lecture which will be telling the story of September 3, 1984. It will be attended by all Executive Mayors of our local municipalities, led by the Sedibeng District Municipality Executive Mayor, Councillor Mahole Simon Mofokeng, Community Based Organisations & Structures, families of the victims of the Vaal Uprising and the members of the public

It is with the above assertions that the Executive Mayor of Sedibeng District Municipality, Councillor Mahole Simon Mofokeng invites the people of Sedibeng to join him together with our local municipalities' Executive Mayors in commemorating this historic anniversary.

This year's Anniversary of the September 3, Vaal Uprising will be commemorated as follows:

- *The September 3 Memorial Lecture to be held on Thursday, 2 September 2010 at 16h00 at the Sebokeng College of Education, Sebokeng*
- *A photo exhibition to be conducted on Friday, 3 September 2010, starting at 09h00 at Mphatlalatsane Theatre in Zone 14 Sebokeng;*
- *The Ahmed Kathrada Foundation in partnership with the SABC will be hosting a preview screening of **Have You Heard from Johannesburg**, a Clarity Films Production. This is a powerful seven-part documentary series that shines light on the global citizens' movement that took on South Africa's apartheid regime. **It starts at 10h00 and ends at 12h00 on Friday, 3 September 2010 at the Mphatlalatsane Theatre in Zone 14 Sebokeng;***
- *A rally which will be held in honour of this day from on Friday, 3 September 2010, 12h00 at the Saul Tsotetsi Sports Complex, Zone 14 Sebokeng.*

This year's Commemoration will be held under the theme, "**Together With Our Communities ~ Final Push Towards Reclaiming Our Heritage**". **Refreshments will be served at both events.**

Ends!

**Issued by the External Communications Department
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