



Sedi News

Mini Edition • Dec 2013



Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

“During my lifetime, I have dedicated myself to the struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.”

18 July 1918 – 5 December 2013



REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM FOR NO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Officially, the period set aside for the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children is 25 November - 10 December. However, this period is identified for symbolic purposes. The campaign to fight violence against women and children is a daily struggle that is unrelenting.

DON'T LOOK AWAY

ACT AGAINST ABUSE



Lifeline 086 132 2322
Childline 080 005 5555
Crime Stop 086 001 0111

All democrats and progressive people of our country in general and Sedibeng in particular, have a responsibility of ensuring that the scourge of beatings, rape, killing and abuse of women and children in their homes and elsewhere is halted.

Violence as a concept has no future in the construction of just families and societies. The necessary ingredients for good family and societal life includes love, compassion and engagement. There is no substitute for talking when there are issues to be resolved,

The rich value system that we want to develop in our homes and society must always be a product of interaction and debate. Community members must report any man who abuses women and children to the police. In recent times, we have regrettably witnessed a rise in the so-called "corrective gang-rape" syndrome and murder of lesbians by dangerous, ignorant wild animals which walk around, masquerading as men.

No effort must be spared in our quest to get these killers behind bars where they belong. Homophobia is a crime against humanity and must be tackled with all the energy we can master.

Heterosexuals are people sexually attracted to the opposite sex, while homosexuals are those sexually attracted to the same sex. Both groups have a right to live and enjoy their sexuality without any fear of intimidation or reprisal.

The sexual orientation of a person is determined at birth. You do not just wake up one morning and then decide that you are going to change your sexual orientation. History and research has shown that homosexuality existed from time immemorial. However, due to the violent and conservative nature of earlier societies, gay people had to hide their feelings for survival.

During those dark days of ignorance, any phenomenon that was not understood by society was killed. Twins and people afflicted with albinism were not tolerated.

It was only after the establishment of the United Nations in 1945 when concepts such as universal human rights took the centre stage that the gay community gradually came out of hiding. The Constitution of our Republic protects all people. Subsection 9 (3) of Chapter 2 reads, "The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth."

Finally, let us leave no stone unturned in our campaign to ensure the arrest and imprisonment of these disgusting thugs who rape babies! The killers, rapists and abusers of women and children have no space in our communities and belong in prison.

17th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE SA CONSTITUTION

And lest we forget, before the introduction of the Interim Constitution of 1993 in South Africa which came into effect in 1994, the official policy of the regime was racial separation and classification of citizens.

It was this policy, which the progressive world likened to Nazism of Adolf Hitler that decimated our country,

caused untold deaths, incarceration of leaders and pain, paralyzed and polarized our society to a point where many had no alternative but to leave the country and become refugees amongst other nations.



Some of those who left to wage the struggle from exile against the system never returned home and lie buried in shallow unmarked graves on foreign soil, with very little chance of their remains ever being found and returned home for a decent closure.

Many citizens were imprisoned just for starting romantic relationships with those deemed to be falling in wrong racial groups. To enjoy some private moments together when they were not in detention, such couples had to travel into neighbouring countries such as Swaziland!

The signing of the democratic Constitution in 1996 in Sharpeville by President Nelson Mandela was a watershed moment - the embodiment of a major paradigm shift of astronomical proportions.

The ruling party resolved on the signing of the Constitution to be conducted in Sharpeville - the same Sharpeville which the massacre of 69 of its beloved sons and daughters, and the maiming of many others caused the banning of political organisations in 1960!

It had to happen here in Sharpeville, to symbolize the victory of truth over fallacy and fabrication; to symbolize the victory of humanity, justice, peace, unity and determination over hopelessness and destruction.

The significance of the signing of the Constitution of South Africa in 1996 must forever generate enthusiasm and excitement in all of us at every anniversary of this historic event. We must relate the importance of this day everywhere, at home, at work, in religious services and schools and at every given opportunity!

History calls upon us to internalise and promote the occasion of the signing of the Constitution and of crediting the moment with socio-economic transformation that is beginning to take shape in our country.

When we popularize and discuss the contents of our Constitution, we must not just do it for the sake of doing it, but we must do it vigorously, majestically, impeccably, confidently and honourably - all to the superlative degree of comparison only! And that my friends, is putting it rather mildly!

What detracts somewhat from the joyous moment that is the 10th December 2013 when the signing ceremony will be celebrated, is the fact that President Madiba is now old and sick. As we approach this historic date, let us put the name and fragile condition of our hero in all our rituals of divinity.

We conclude by touching a little on a few words from the Preamble of our Constitution which is premised on the Freedom Charter of 26 June 1955. "We, the people of South Africa, Recognise the injustices of our past; Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land, Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity. . . ."

Long live the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa.

20th ANNIVERSARY OF DEMOCRACY

Preparations are at an advanced stage in South Africa and the world at large to celebrate 20 years of democratic rule in our country that was ushered in on the 27th April 1994. The miracle of that day in question and the positive events that unfolded henceforth, continue to mesmerize the world.



Because a tiny minority of denialists continue to claim that no changes have occurred in South Africa since 1994 and that the situation has indeed worsened, it becomes necessary to take a cursory look at some aspects of life in the old South Africa, in order to expose this shameful fabrication.

The fact of the matter is that even after the release of Comrade Nelson Mandela and other leaders from imprisonment and the unbanning of political organisations in 1990, terrorism was still an effective tool of the minority regime to kill and maim our people into submission and therefore cause anarchy.

Mercenaries, vigilantes and other agents of counter-revolution were very active during this period and unleashed massacres all over the country, including in the then Vaal region. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) played a crucial role to expose some of the hit-squads that harassed communities and to ensure a proper documentation of these heinous crimes.

Racial division underscored every aspect of life and turned the majority of our people into third class citizens in their country of birth.

Nevertheless, the collective strength of the Four Pillars of Struggle, which was a tactic employed by the African National Congress (ANC) to wage the national democratic struggle (NDS), forced the apartheid masters to negotiate a political settlement which saw the introduction of the new dispensation in the country.

The Four Pillars of the Struggle

- Mobilization of the international community.
- Armed struggle.
- Mass mobilization of the people against the system.

- Underground structures.

Achievements of the Democratic State.

- ▶ 1. Peace, Unity and Reconciliation: The new State moved quickly to disarm the armed combatants and gangs and to broker peace and promote unity and reconciliation. The morale and confidence of all our people rose sharply.
- ▶ 2. Democratic spatial planning began to create non-racial residential areas. People started living anywhere they desired.
- ▶ 3. Millions of poor South Africans were allocated free human settlements to restore their dignity and pride and to end informal settlements. In 1994 the townships of our region were very small in size, but today they have grown ten-fold. This is a big achievement!
- ▶ 4. More schools were built across the country, including here in Sedibeng, for the provision of free education. Many of our schools are No Fee Schools, to accommodate our poor communities.
- ▶ 5. More hospitals and clinics have been built across the country for the provision of primary health-care. No needy patient may be turned away from hospital for whatever reason. All chronic diseases are treated free of charge at public clinics.
- ▶ 6. The principle of the Trias Politica, which is the tripartite separation of State Authority into the Executive, Legislative and the Judiciary is embraced and highly respected. The three arms of the State act independently of each other.
- ▶ 7. Millions of South Africans enjoy a variety of social grants as government's way to fight abject poverty.
- ▶ 8. Government encourages and supports the previously marginalized communities to establish companies and cooperatives in order to play a meaningful role in the mainstream economy.
- ▶ 9. No citizen is forced to produce an ID book in the streets as it used to be the case in the past. People live and work where they want. They also fall in love with anyone of their choice.
- ▶ 10. Everyone is equal before the law!

These are just some of the successes achieved by the democratic state during the past 20 years. Obviously, more still needs to be done for us to win the war against the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

The legacy of apartheid will take longer than 20 years to address. We are determined to witness the creation of a truly united, non-racial, non-sexist, democratic and prosperous South Africa.

Voter Registration

It is by no means an accident or coincidence that we appeal to all our people who could not register with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) on the 9 - 10 November 2013 to make sure that they visit IEC offices which are located at local municipal offices, to register.

Before 1994, the majority of our people were not allowed to vote. The minority that was allowed to cast their ballots could only do so under racial policies. It is therefore an obligation of every citizen to make sure that they participate in next year's general election and play a significant role in how this country should be governed, going forward.



In some countries on the African continent and elsewhere, citizens are unable to vote because political violence has even forced them to flee their homes and become refugees in other countries. We are still enjoying our freedom here at home. That is a big difference. Let us do the right thing and register to vote. As the Executive Mayor of Sedibeng, I have confidence that you will not disappoint.

REMEMBERING THE NANGALEMBE MASSACRE

21st November 2013. The gallant people of Sedibeng have long before and after the notorious Sharpeville Massacre endured much pain and suffering, with many of its sons and daughters losing their lives at different times, at the hands of political thugs of the previous order.



On this occasion, the No 1 People's Servant of Sedibeng District Municipality, the hard-working and unassuming Executive Mayor, Cllr Mahole Simon Mofokeng wishes to particularly remember the Zone 7 Sebokeng Night Vigil Massacre of the 12th January 1991, which has since become known as the Nangalembe Massacre where 38 innocent souls were lost.

Comrade Chris Nangalembe was a staunch ANC member and freedom fighter. Messengers of death kidnapped him on the night of 5th January 1991 and brutally killed him. His body was later found at a rubbish dump in Boipatong.

During his night vigil which was held on the 12th January 1991, the killers arrived! Grenades and guns were used by the agents of oppression to butcher the mourners. 38 of our beloved comrades were massacred with over 40 injured!

The Executive Mayor thinks about all the victims of the massacre and their families and those of other massacres as well, all the time. We appeal to the people of Sedibeng in general and Sebokeng in particular, to draw strength and inspiration from this ordeal and to remain steadfast in our quest to strive for the creation of a national democratic society, where there is prosperity for all.

“Babolayiba Comrade Nangalembe ledinatlatsedingwebahlolehilehobanedinthotseobafu banengba di phelela di ntse di tswelapele!” Those who ordered the killings and those who pulled the trigger are the losers because apartheid is gone and economic empowerment of those previously marginalized by the old regime is high on the agenda of the government.

Let the collective pain that we suffered together in the

past help to re-kindle our love for each other. We are one big family and must never wait for the Festive Season to share. It is our responsibility to take care of each other and to wipe one another's tears.

Our region occupies a special place in the history of our country. This is by no means an accident. We are a force to be reckoned with and we stand squarely behind the selfless leadership of our nation. All of us must never rest until the ideals that our fallen heroines and heroes lived and died for, are fully attained. There are those who will try to set you up against your own municipality, those who criticize unfairly and without any justification. Be on the look out for them. We accept criticism all the time, as long as it is constructive and fair. The brave, peaceful and reconciliatory people of Sedibeng know where they come from. We will not be misled.

We are the descendants of Moshoeshoe, Moroka and Mandela. Forward we go, and backwards never!

SEDIBENG DISTRICT FIRST TO HIT TARGET

The Sedibeng District Municipality reached a momentous milestone on 3rd December 2013, when the Auditor General of South Africa released its 2012/2013 Audit Opinions on Gauteng Municipalities. The District Municipality became the first, and only, municipality in Gauteng to reach the 2014 target of Operation Clean Audit.

Operation Clean Audit was launched in 2009. Audit opinions on the affairs of government departments are expressed in terms that are often not understood by the general public. The worst opinion is an 'Adverse Opinion' which states that the financial statements do not fairly present the financial position, results of operations, and changes in financial position, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. A 'Disclaimer' is a special type of audit report that is issued when the auditor could not form, and consequently refuses to present an opinion, on the financial statements. A 'Qualified' opinion means that the auditor has taken exception to certain current-period accounting applications or is unable to establish the potential outcome of a material uncertainty. An 'Unqualified' option is a favourable outcome that has no reservations

concerning the financial statements. This is also known as a favourable opinion meaning that the financial statements appear to be presented fairly.



The Auditor General of South Africa hands over the 2012/2013 Audit Opinion for Sedibeng District Municipality together with a Certificate of Excellence for achieving a completely 'Clean Audit' (left to right) TsakanlRatsela, (AGSA National Office) Brendon Scholtz (Chief Financial Officer); Yunus Chamda (Municipal Manager); Cllr Mahole Mofokeng (Executive Mayor) and Ms MabathoSedikela (Corporate Executive, Gauteng, Auditor-General of SA)

The 'Clean Audit' target was a special target set by CoGTA since audits of public departments require more than just financially unqualified findings. A 'Clean Audit' is therefore based on three factors. Firstly, the financials must be unqualified. Secondly, the Performance of the institution must be managed consistently, reliably and accurately. Thirdly, an institution must have no areas of non-compliance with laws and regulations.

At a function held at ThabaYaBatsawana today, the AG handed over the final Audit outcomes to all Gauteng Municipalities and municipal entities for the 2012/2013 financial years. Sedibeng District Municipality was the only municipality in Gauteng to achieve the 'Clean Audit' status. Three other municipal entities achieved clean audits. The three local municipalities in Sedibeng, that of Emfuleni, Midvaal and Lesedi all achieved Unqualified Audits which shows that all municipalities are well on track to meet the 2014 OPCA targets.

In her address to the meeting of all Gauteng Mayors and Municipal Managers, the Corporate Executive of the Auditor-General of SA (Gauteng) Ms MabathoSedikela described Sedibeng District Municipality as "a beacon of hope for all Gauteng Municipalities". The Executive Mayor of Sedibeng District Municipality, Mayor Mahole S Mofokeng, was quick to point out that this bodes well for the new

Metro to be established in 2016 in the Vaal.

SEDIBENG ROADMAP TO A METRO

In December 2000 the elections for the Sedibeng District Municipality brought the LeKoa-Vaal Metro to an end; although the dis-establishment stipulated that the Emfuleni local Municipality be the lawful successor of the Lekoa-Vaal Metropolitan Council, it is imperative that we note that the root for this decision was centered around the account deficit of Vereeniging Town Council and that of the Lekoa Town Council, which, together form an equivalent of two deficits of the Vanderbijlpark Town Council's cash account deficit.



The economy of the district at the time was largely dependent on steel manufacturing which still contributes substantial revenue for the District. The steel industry was the sole contributor at the time of the Lekoa-Vaal Metropolitan and this sole dependence caused problems as there were hindrances such as: an increase in staff costs, shrinking of staff budget and an increase in maintenance costs- General fleet and Machinery aging spent more time in the workshops due to aging and lack of funds for spares and fleet replacement. Because of the problems that were faced by the “bread winning” industry for the district; basic service delivery goals were not met in time. Financial resources were drying out and there was no money to undertake new capital projects, this dilemma was worsened by the non-payment of basic services by the community.

In 2001 the District was cornered into finding ways to combat the above-mentioned predicament, it was then decided in an Emfuleni Local Municipality discussion that the following possible resolutions be considered:

The re-evaluation of the previous LED Strategy:

Because the previous Local Development Strategy was centered around a single contributor (Steel Manufacturing) it became a factor that needed careful re-evaluation. This was discussed on the 10th April 2001.

On the 26th of June 2001 a couple of resolutions were tabled in regards to the fore-mentioned re-evaluation of the LED strategy. These resolutions were under item “096” and “098” of the Council of Emfuleni Local Municipality discussions and were respectively titled **“A needs analysis and performance monitor for local governance”** and **“Progress report and strategic planning: Emfuleni Riverfront Development”**

Item 096 was based on establishing the service delivery challenges that the municipality was facing and item 098 was aimed at realising the Vaal Districts potential as a South African heritage hub and also explore the tourism potential of the district with the Riverfront developments being the centre of this endeavour. After careful consideration it was realised that the Riverfront developments could not be tackled by the Emfuleni Local Municipality on its own, as these developments warranted that both sides of the river be refurbished; Metsimaholo Local Municipality in the Free State was consulted to assist with the riverfront developments.

The “Vaal 21” initiative was birthed from these discussions between the 2 Municipalities and was spearheaded by the Sedibeng District Municipality in 2007. What the Vaal 21 initiative is tasked with achieving is to oversee the developments of both banks of the Vaal River and mould this natural resource into a recognized economic factor. Because of the magnitude of this development other spheres of government and stakeholders from the private sector will be called upon to endorse the initiative and be partners in this enormous project.

On the 28th August 2001 a **Restructuring of some of the Municipal Services** was tabled with the aim of suggesting alternative service delivery mechanisms to improve the effectiveness, efficiency economic rendering of services to the rate payers.

The results from this discussion were to do away with non-core municipal services and to eliminate non-

core assets:

- Pieces of land were put in the market e.g. Emfuleni Golf Estate, Vaal Mall and others
- Sell all the existing fleet and machinery and opt for leasing
- De-register Lewaco and establish Metsi-A-Lekoa
- Selling of Vaal Gate

On the 2nd of October an **Action Plan to Implement the Local Economic Development and Urbanisation and Development Plan: Core Strategic Tasks** was discussed with the aim of implementing some policy directives taken on the 10th April 2001 in line with the elections manifesto. Based on the policy directives that emerged from some of the reports the council embarked on the following activities:

- Conducted a survey on the state of the Economy in November 2001, which was found to be dependent steel manufacturing that was on a decline.
- **Urban Economic Development Review and Projection of Local Economic Sustainability up to 2012** was conducted in 2002 and necessary immediate, short, medium and long term interventions were identified and implemented.
- **LED Strategy** based on the above mentioned two studies was developed and approved for implementation.
- **Road and Pavement Maintenance Survey** to establish the degree of defects with the estimated costs to fix them was conducted.
- **Conducted Assessment of Level of Service Delivery** for water, electricity, sanitation, refuse removal which were found to be in appalling condition.

Mayoral Imbizos were held throughout the area to give the community a message of hope and to explain the challenges the government was facing and the fact that those challenges are inherited from the previous apartheid government as well as encouraging them to pay their services so that the municipality can improve services rendered to them. The unfortunate circumstance of having a relied source of revenue decline was fortunately not only subjected to the Vaal region, this allowed the region to undergo study to other Municipality that had suffered the same predicament, one such municipality was The Eindhoven Municipality which was consulted in 2001 and Tulbach Municipality in 2002 both these Municipalities had suffered and survived a decline of

lead industry and the textile industry, respectively. The study tours were aimed at new economic sectors and also retaining what's left of the already existing sectors. The other important factor was the identification of the economic leak that needed to be plugged.

In relevance to our region with regards to the economic leak we identified that a large number of our residents from Vanderbijlpark, Vereeniging, and Sebokeng as well as the Northern parts like Evaton and Palm Springs were doing their monthly buying in Johannesburg, Alberton and Germiston. The region was estimated to be leaking over R60m in just simple buying power per month.

In September 2007 another study tour was taken to Bilbao in Spain, the tour was primarily focused on exploring how this region which also faced the same predicament as the Vaal, has managed to reinvent itself: Faced with a high Unemployment rate, high levels of air and water pollution and a declining steel industry, Bilbao set up an agency called Bilbao Ria 2000 which set up transforming the economy from one based on steel to one based on tourism and services.

This is where the brainchild for the Vaal 21 was born. This birth of the "Smart city" concept is in line with the sentiments expressed by MEC Qedani Mahlangu at the GDS (Growth Development Summit) in November 2006 where the MEC said "Since Gauteng has moved to being a Global City Region, the objective was to build Gauteng as an integrated and globally competitive province, where the economic activities of all municipalities complement each other as opposed to competing against each other."

15-16 May 2008, IGR Lekgotla at Alpine Heath, Regional Planning and cooperation discussed during IDP alignment sessions.

11 August 2009, meeting with Pascal Moloi, in a presentation Mr. Moloi outlined the phases, conditions, conditions of success and other aspects of 'Towards A Metro' based on his experience working in the field.

June 2010, FIFA World Cup, The Sedibeng District and its 3 Local collaborates seamlessly work together to offer a World Cup experience as a single entity. The

test of working as a single authority is executed flawlessly.

September 2011, study tours to Buffalo City and Mangaung where engagements on possible challenges in "moving towards the metro" are observed; Kieviestroom Strategic Retreat, the SDM and its three locals reconfirm the pillars of GDS-02 and the flagship projects which include the 'Single Authority' as a key flagship project.
November 2011, GDS Summit at Emerald Resort; Stakeholders assess GDS-01 and develop GDS-02 which includes the move to a Metro.

6 August 2012, MDB public meeting- Vereeniging City hall, Stakeholders engaged on the Metro options.

14 March 2013, Midrand IGR Lekgotla, Engagements on 'Shared Services' further the Metro debate.

25 September 2013, Development overview of Emfuleni and Midvaal presented to MDB, the growth and development trajectory as stimulated by key projects in the relevant areas is consolidated into a report to the MDB.

15 October 2013, The MDB announces the re-establishment of the Vaal metro. This is the precipice of a decade long ambition and we welcome this decision with excitement and humility as it is not only a generation long objective that has been reached but is the direct manifestation of the fruit of hard work that was put in by all the residents of the district in regards to reclaiming the region's title as "The Vaal"

KEEP OUR SURROUNDINGS CLEAN

Once more, the Sedibeng District Municipality (SDM) would like to remind our communities to help us keep the natural environment clean. Clean surroundings help to reduce the proliferation of germs and even diseases and also assist to minimize the numbers of the marauding big rats which are taking over our neighbourhoods.

There are some basic things which individuals can do to contribute towards keeping our city clean. Firstly, all our industrial and residential areas have been allocated days on which refuse will be collected.

Residents are urged to stick to the arrangement by ensuring that their refuse bags are placed outside their homes, where the municipality's waste management staff can easily locate them, on the allocated days.

It would be highly appreciated if all families and businesses could cooperate in this regard. Every member of a family, including tenants, must understand this arrangement and help to implement it. Everyone must memorize their own dates and stick to them.



Never sneak out at night to place your domestic refuse bags at your street corner! Our city does not need illegal rubbish dumps which are difficult to manage. "Rata moahisane oa hao tje ka he o ithata!" Why is it so easy for you to leave your own refuse next to a neighbour's property? "Bo kae botho moo ngoaneso? Le kae lerato na?" Let us do the right thing, starting from today. No more illegal dumping! Those found breaking the law will be prosecuted.

The second challenge that we must tackle is that of littering. Some of our people take this matter for granted! Everything that they hold in their hands, especially food, ends up on the pavement and street.

The SDM has no desire to prescribe to community members where and when they should eat snacks, fruits and other foods. This is a matter for each individual to consider. However, we strongly encourage those who like to enjoy eating while walking in the streets to keep some plastic bags with them in which they can put food debris such as bones and fruit peels.

It is not right to just throw everything onto the ground and make our city dirty! All of us must make an effort to keep the natural environment nice and clean.

The little bag you are carrying for the food debris will be carefully placed in an official dust bin that you will come across while walking on!

We need to promote a new mindset of responsible and hygienic behaviour. Our children love these little snacks they call "Mazimba". Apparently, they find them to be very tasty. At every given opportunity they rush out to buy and crunch them fast!

Today we will not start a debate about whether or not these snacks are nutritious and healthy for our children. All we are doing here is to appeal to our people to educate the children to understand that as soon as they have finished munching the food, they must not throw the container on to the ground but must drop it into a dust bin. We must inculcate a sense of responsibility in our children so that their perception of earth and

life changes.

There are some amongst us who believe that earth is the extension of Heaven, and that when we pollute and degrade it, we actually pollute Heaven itself!

The above statement may or may not be true. What can however be deduced from it is that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness!" So, let us go for it.

Thirdly, it is often said that a dog is man's best friend. Those who keep pets such as dogs and cats must take proper care of them and show them love.

When a dog or cat dies, it is the responsibility of the owner to ensure that it is buried in the soil.

Please do not dump your dead friend in any open space around your area! You obviously know that it is going to cause a terrible stench when it decomposes (ha e qala ho bola). Leaving a dead pet unburied in the veld is therefore a show of serious disrespect for others! This habit has to stop.

Fourthly and finally, we wish to applaud the majority of men of our beautiful area who continue to utilize public toilets that are erected at shopping malls, taxi ranks and public institutes to relieve themselves when mother nature calls.

The advantage of using these toilets is that there are water taps therein where one can wash one's hands at the end of the experience.

A small number of our men unfortunately like to relieve themselves against the walls and fences of other people's properties. This is not in order. We concede that we still need to build more public toilets in and around our city to help our ever-growing population.

Nevertheless, this should not give anyone the excuse to relieve themselves just about everywhere. This kind of behaviour surely belittles our dignity and integrity as a people. Let us do the right thing and contribute towards the promotion of a clean natural environment and simple hygiene.

RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

To some people, the Festive Season, which is on the horizon, is about merrymaking and lots and lots of noise. Quite often, the noise becomes so unbearable to some residents that it causes conflict.

Perhaps we should start by confirming the fact that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 does indeed guarantee the rights of those who would like to blast away and dance to noisy music the whole night. However, these rights are not unlimited.

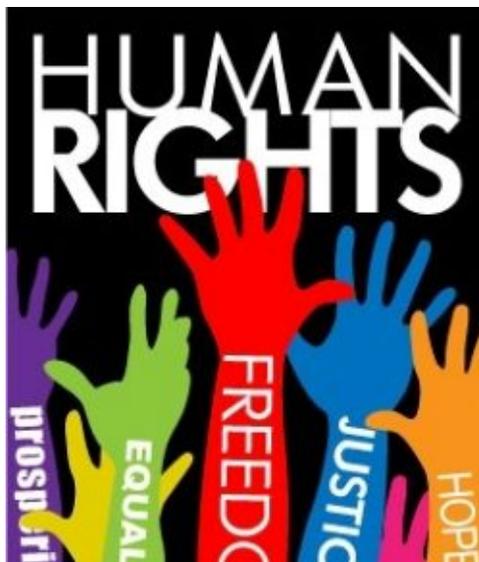
While all citizens have rights, they are expected to enjoy them in such a way that does not infringe on those of others.

It is in this context that the Sedibeng District Municipality appeals to all residents to celebrate the Xmas holidays intelligently and with respect and understanding.

Those who have the resources to celebrate must accommodate the feelings of others. Remember that there are sickly, traumatized, stressed and even elderly people who may want some peace and tranquility at night. Try to be more considerate and remember that not everyone is in the mood or position to enjoy like you.

The circumstances of various people differ from one person to the next. Some cannot even afford an ordinary meal. So, our actions must be well thought out and not torment others. You can enjoy your music without it blowing the roof off and frustrating some in the neighbourhood.

Control the noise levels and enjoy yourself reasonably. Do not act vindictively or arrogantly. Remember that for you to receive your blessings, many other people had theirs blocked. Therefore, always display gratitude, humility and respect.



This should apply to taverners and shebeeners as well, whose liquor licences allow them to operate until 2am the next morning. As a smart businessperson, is it really necessary to cause a disturbance until that time? Should you not close earlier and win the hearts and minds of your neighbours? Together we can do more. Happy Xmas!

WORLD AIDS DAY!

The Sedibeng District Municipality is absolutely grateful for the good work that is being done by our clinics and hospitals in the provision of treatment for HIV/Aids. Our health professionals continue to amaze with their counseling and monitoring of patients and national statistics show a remarkable improvement in the rate of new HIV infections.



These statistics also cover Sedibeng. We must therefore take this opportunity to thank the community of our region for working hard to fight the disease.

Although World AIDS Day in 2013 is on the 1st December, we urge our communities to regard every day as World AIDS Day. While public awareness about the scourge has clearly increased, the fact of the matter is that the challenge of teenage pregnancy is on the rise.

As you will surely agree with us, this is a huge challenge as it entails several elements which we will explore below.

Firstly, a variety of government departments including Health and Education have rolled out a massive campaign to educate both young and old about the importance of safe sex. The campaign is very visible in schools, clinics, hospitals and even religious houses.

The clear message has been around abstinence (not engaging in sexual activity) and condomizing. The two measures protect an individual, particularly a teenager, from contracting HIV and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) or falling pregnant.

The increase in the rate of teenage pregnancy is therefore indicative of an underperforming community in this instance. It tells us that our youth is not exerting itself and taking the education campaign as seriously as it should.

Young people (at least some of them) are defiantly involving themselves in unprotected sex. Some are being infected with HIV, while others are forced to leave school to give birth.

This is obviously unacceptable. All of us must join hands at home and everywhere to ensure that our children get the message and stop misbehaving. Failure to act decisively may complicate our lives and destroy the very social fabric of society.

Secondly and on a more serious note, evidence shows that some of these young learners are impregnated by adult males!

What kind of society do we want to build if some of our men sleep with children? Achieving moral regeneration and social cohesion require that we root out this shameful habit urgently!

We appeal to all parents, especially fathers, to take good care of

their children and to provide for them, to prevent them from soliciting their needs elsewhere.

Paedophiles (people who are sexually attracted to children) must not be given any opportunity to harm our children. They must be arrested.

In fact, happy and contented children who receive love and affection at home are likely to report any sexual advances made by adults at them.

Our first objective must be to encourage our children to abstain from sexual activity. However, if we fail, we must at least ensure that they use condoms. WORLD AIDS DAY must be observed every day. The campaign to test for HIV is an on-going one and must be encouraged at all times. The condoms that the state distributes across the country cost a lot of money. The least we can do is to ensure that they are utilized, to avoid fruitless expenditure.



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YEAR-END MESSAGE BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF SEDIBENG DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, THE HONOURABLE COUNCILLOR MAHOLE SIMON MOFOKENG

Good people of Sedibeng, as we all know, this year's Festive Season will be unlike any other, because of the passing of our international icon, the inimitable President Nelson Mandela. Although this moment was not unexpected, it still shook the whole world!

On behalf of the Sedibeng District Municipality and all its people, I hereby join millions and millions of people from around the globe and humbly extend our sincerest condolences to the Mandela family and his organisation, the African National Congress (ANC). We call upon all our people to wipe the tears from their faces, remain calm and to use this opportunity to pause and reflect on the legacy that Dr. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela has left behind. All South Africans have an obligation to protect and promote the values he ingrained in our society and the world which centres around unity of the people, love, respect, peace, justice, democracy and equality for all.

FESTIVE MOOD

The significance of the passing of our stalwart means that the South African national flags fly at half mast presently. The nation is in mourning. Although Madiba will be buried on the 15th December 2013, all of us are expected to grieve well beyond the day of his burial.

Therefore, the festive mood we were looking forward to, may have to be toned down a bit as a token of our respect for the huge loss we have sustained. Let there be peace and harmony during this Christmas period. We owe it to our hero to be restrained and dignified. We are not banning parties per se. We pray for orderliness and maturity.

VOTER REGISTRATION

The departure of our leader furthermore imposes a big responsibility on our sagging shoulders to ensure that the democratic state that he almost single-handedly created and inaugurated back in 1994, is sustained and defended.

The perpetual sceptics and pessimists expect the country to register low figures at the elections next year due to apparent apathy caused by Madiba's passing.

SIGNING OF THE DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION

The significance of the **10th December 2013, being the date for the Memorial service and the 17th Anniversary of the signing of the South African Constitution by the then President of the Republic, Tata Mandela in Sharpeville in 1996, is no coincidence, this is an indication to the Sedibeng region on how providential we have been to have lived during the times of this noble Leader.** This anniversary must inspire us to defend the gains made thus far in the liberation struggle.

Madiba is no more. From 2013 onwards we will have to commemorate this important event without him. It will be difficult. Nevertheless, our loneliness must urge and inspire us to work twice as much to ensure that our democratic Constitution is respected and not violated in any way. We must moreover strive for the protection of the rights of women and children, who continue to be subjected to the worst forms of abuse by animals

which masquerade as men.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF DEMOCRACY AND NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

On 27 April 1994 South Africa held the first democratic elections in the country's history. This was a major paradigm shift in the polity of the country. Next year marks the 20th anniversary of our democratic state. As we approach this date, we must be conscious of the sacrifices made by the stalwarts of our movement. We must remain humble, respectful and compassionate. The unity of our people is supreme. Our diversity is a friend that we must defend by all means.

COOPERATION

Through cooperation and tolerance, we were able to develop our District and communities throughout the year. The Sedibeng District Municipality welcomed the announcement of the Metro with a firm focus on the enormous task ahead in managing the migration process and establishing sound systems of governance and above all, service delivery for the new Vaal Metro.

Another momentous milestone was reached on 3rd December 2013, when the Auditor General of South Africa released its 2012/2013 Audit Opinions on Gauteng Municipalities. This District Municipality became the first municipality in Gauteng to reach the 2014 target of Operation Clean Audit.

We thank all Stakeholders such as business, the religious community, other government agencies and the sporting community for contributing towards a successful year.

This cooperation must grow in the New Year, so that we can achieve more.

CONCLUSION

We conclude by reiterating our plea for a peaceful festive season. Let us share with our neighbours, the few goodies that we shall be fortunate to acquire during the Xmas period. **Madiba was in love with humanity.** One of the core values he taught us is that of sharing. To those who are employed, we need the rest so that we may be refreshed in the new year and be more productive. May the passing of Madiba inspire us to do more henceforth and to be circumspect in the contemplation of the future. I wish you a happy Christmas and more prosperous new year.

Thank you.

**ROBALA KA KGOTSO,
SEAPARANKWE,
IT IS THROUGH YOUR SELFLESS
LEADERSHIP THAT SOUTH
AFRICA IS A BETTER
PLACE TODAY!**

*The Executive Mayor of
Sedibeng District Municipality,
Cllr. Mahole Simon Mofokeng*

