



MY DISTRICT TODAY

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Outcome 3: All people in South Africa are and feel safe.

Atlantis women reclaim their town

By: Sikelela Zokufa

The Department of Justice and the South African Police Service (SAPS) commemorated the Women's Month Campaign by addressing over 300 women in Atlantis about the high incidence of domestic violence and crimes against women and children.

Advocate Hishaam Mohamed, the provincial head of the Department of Justice in the Western Cape, encouraged the women to report court officials that are involved in corruption directly to him as the department will not tolerate corruption and fraud.

He promised the women that he would ensure that they receive the services that they deserve to protect themselves from all forms of abuse.

Hazel Siyaya was among the residents who raised questions on drugs, which

is the cause of abuse. She said the police should ask drug users who their suppliers are, and immediately arrest the dealers. She continued by saying the community will forward the information once they know someone who is selling drugs and will expect the police to take action.



Major-General Sharon Jephta, the Deputy Commissioner of the SAPS in the Western Cape, promised the community that she will take action against all police officials that do not uphold the constitutional rights of victims of crime.

The women were encouraged to reclaim Atlantis as their own and stand together to protect each other in reporting crime. The other departments present were correctional services and social development as well as the National Prosecuting Authority that addressed the women on bail procedures, domestic violence and the rehabilitation of offenders into the community.

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Outcome 3: All people in South Africa are and feel safe.

Palm Ridge receives a R220-million state-of-the-art court

By: Jacob Molete – Faranani Thusong Service Centre

As part of the infrastructure programme that President Jacob Zuma announced earlier this year, the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Mr Jeff Radebe, officially opened the Palm Ridge Court at Palm Ridge, Ekurhuleni.

The spacious 33-roomed court, which was completed at a cost of R220 million, will offer a host of justice services that includes criminal court sessions, High Court sittings and civil justice services such as maintenance and Master’s services.

Minister Radebe told the audience that the opening of the Palm Ridge Court signifies the tireless efforts of the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster. The assurance that all people

in South Africa are and feel safe, will become a reality to the communities of Palm Ridge, Alberton, Katlehong and Thokoza.

“The construction of the Palm Ridge Magistrate Court forms part of the Department of Justice’s programme to build courts in areas that were previously underserved. Other courts soon to be launched in Gauteng include Tsakane and Kagiso,” said Minister Radebe.

“I am happy that I don’t have to spend money and travel a long distance to go to court, now that a new court has been built in our area. More importantly, this court has more services that the Alberton Court as it can deal with both criminal

and civil cases,” said Samkelo Dimanda, waiting in the queue to have the court deal with his civil claim case against his former employer.

Shirley Nkosi-Petersen commended the Department of Justice for making justice accessible to Palm Ridge and the surrounding communities. “I work with vulnerable children. The presence of this court in our community will assist in ensuring that we can access justice nearer to home. However, I would like to appeal to the Minister to establish a desk that will ensure that cases are not withdrawn or domestic-violence perpetrators don’t get bail easily,” she said.



Community members waiting for court proceedings to get underway.

The Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Mr Jeff Radebe, Deputy Minister Andre Nel, Judge President Justice Mlambo and Community Safety MEC, Faith Mazibuko, after unveiling Palm Ridge Court plague to mark the official opening of the court.



Outcome 10: Environmental assets and natural resources that are well protected and continually enhanced.



Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi addressing the audience during the Women in Water Awards ceremony.

Rural women take the lead in water conservation

By: Cholo Mothibi, Namahadi Thusong Service Centre

Women from the nine provinces converged on Qwaqwa to attend the Women in Water Awards ceremony that the Department of Water Affairs held there in Makwane village around the theme *56 years of women united against poverty, inequality and unemployment.*

The Deputy Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi, district mayors, councillors, provincial government representatives and various community organisations attended the ceremony.

The awards serve as a vehicle to recognise the good work women do and the vital role they play in the water sector and to encourage communities to learn good practices of water management. The Women in Water Awards focus on government's five key priorities specifically on rural development and creating job opportunities for women.

The winners of the awards clearly demonstrated that water-resource management is not only for engineers, scientists, or educated people. The women applied their indigenous knowledge to address the water-related challenges in their communities, identified various problems in their communities and embarked on action.

When they saw that the rivers were highly polluted they initiated the Adopt a River Project and while cleaning the rivers they also grow vegetables to feed their families.

They heeded government's call of Vuk'uzenzele and approached the department to sell their innovations. The innovations did not only address the water issues but were multifaceted, looking at job creation, saving the environment and food security.

The Thabo Mofutsanyane District Municipality won the Blue Drop Award for the second consecutive year.

Before she handed over the awards the Minister said, "As government we need to gear up awareness campaigns for other women out there in rural areas to know that there are resources and programmes available to them and support them in ensuring that they participate in such initiatives.

"The recipients of the awards have clearly demonstrated that they can assist the department in solving a myriad of challenges, which, amongst other things, include water leaks, river pollution, waste dumping, wasting water, inadequate participation and decision making by communities, youth in water resource management and lack of awareness about water-resource management."



Sesotho Women Enterprise with their cheque and Executive Mayor, Mofumahadi Mathokoana Mopeli, on the right.



Outcome 7: Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities and food security for all.

Tshwaraganang Barolong women bring hope to Motsitlane community



Tshwaraganang Barolong women display the school uniform they designed for the primary school in Motsitlane.

The women of the Motsitlane village in the Ratlou Municipality, North West, run the Tshwaraganang Barolong Women's Project.

The purpose of the project is to reduce unemployment by making fruit juice and cleaning products, sewing and knitting, and doing upholstery.

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the National Development Agency funded the project during its initial stages.

The project brought economic relief to the community of Motsitlane village by supplying the local supply markets with locally-produced products such as fruit juice, school uniforms for the local schools and different cleaning products, much cheaper than other stores.

The women are planning to supply big businesses with their products so they can stretch their markets, said Mrs Motlagomang Mogoera, the treasurer. As part of their social responsibility, the women give away school uniforms to the needy children in the community.

Mrs Elizabeth Moraladi, a community member said, "The existence of the Tshwaraganang Barolong Women's Project has made a difference in the community. The women supply school and church uniforms to the local schools and churches and they also sell cleaning products and fruit juice, which is convenient as the community members don't have to travel long distances to buy these products."



Tshwaraganang Barolong Women's Project's sewing machines.



Some of the cleaning material made by the Tshwaraganang Barolong Women's Project.

