



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNANCE,
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS

MEDIA STATEMENT BY THE MEC FOR COGHSTA ON THE STATE OF READINESS FOR THE 2025 INITIATION SCHOOLS SEASON.

Let me start by thanking the members of the media for honouring our invite to this media briefing on our state of readiness for the 2025 Initiation Schools season under the theme “***A ba ye ba Phela, Ba boye ba Phela***”. My heart flows like a flooded river seeing you here as members of the fourth estate. I am standing here in front of you as the acting Premier as our Premier Dr. Phophi Ramathuba is out of the country on government business.

Our plans for the 2025 initiation season are well on track. As the Department we have received 569 applications for both the winter and summer initiation schools. Out of these number, a total of 530 of applications were approved by the Provincial Initiation Coordinating Committee. This comprises 322 and 208 schools for males and females respectively. The PICC, under the chairpersonship of Hosi SE Chauke disapproved 40 applications which were found to not have complied with section 26 (4) (a) (b) (i) (ii) of the Customary Initiation Act no. 2 of 2021.

The breakdown of the disapproved applications are as follows:

Mopani District

- In Modjadji Traditional Council, ten (10) male applications were disapproved because the Modjadji Royal House under Her Majesty Queen Masalanabo Modjadji VII issued a letter to the PICC to suspend all the initiation schools under their jurisdiction.
- Two (2) male applications under Khakhala Traditional Council were also rejected in terms of the Court Order obtained in the High Court of South Africa, Limpopo Division (Case no: 2651/2021).
- Four (4) male applications under Mokgolobotho CPA were also disapproved due to the dispute in leadership of the Mokgolobotho CPA.
- A male application by Malepe Traditional leadership was disapproved due to land jurisdiction.
- A male application by Maupa traditional leadership was disapproved because of land jurisdiction.
- Two (2) male applications by Banareng Ba Letsoalo Traditional Council were disapproved because the Traditional Surgeons had criminal records

Capricorn District

- Two (2) male applications by “Matabola Kingdom” were rejected because of land jurisdiction.
- Three (3) applications (2 male and 1 female) by Mankweng Traditional Council were disapproved due to the dispute in traditional leadership
- An application by Mr. Lekota JT was disapproved due to land jurisdiction

Sekhukhune District

- Matlala Dichoeung, Bakopa and Matlala traditional councils applied for male initiation schools respectively; and each application was turned down due to land jurisdiction.
- Another four (4) male applications by individuals (private applicants) were turned down due to land jurisdictions.

Waterberg District

- One female application was declined because the applicant did not attach the required documents.

As we ready ourselves for the upcoming initiation season, it is important to take note of the track record of the 2024 initiation season, where as the province we had a total of 631 legal initiation schools and 18 illegal schools operating across the province. In total we registered 60612 initiates at legal schools against 898 initiates at illegal schools. These brought the total enrolment to 61510, whereby a total of 45373 were males, and 15239 females all at legal schools. In contrast 737 males and 161 females were admitted at illegal schools.

Members of the media

As much as we take pride for being the leading light and good example of running incident free and successful initiation schools, we are saddened by the deaths of 3 initiates during the 2024 initiation season. This happened in Mopani, Sekhukhune and Vhembe who all recorded one death each. Although it is a small number, we always say this can be avoided because one death is one too many.

Once again, we will be working closely with key stakeholders to ensure compliance with the regulations of the Customary Initiation School Act. These include South African Police Service, the Department of Health,

Department of Education, National Prosecuting Authority, Permit Holders, Traditional surgeons, and the caregivers.

Once again, we take initiation as the rite of passage that prepares young men and women for adulthood, and it is for this reason that we are prepared to pull all the stops to ensure an incident free 2025 initiation schools.

“A ba ye ba Phela, Ba boye ba Phela”

Thank you