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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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ALL HAIL THE QUEEN!!!

BALOBEDU CELEBRATE THE OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF MODJADJI QUEENSHIP STATUS



Lighter moment: Premier Mathabatha and President Ramaphosa with the assistance of Candy, showing the guests how to get down.

The scorching sun could not dampen the spirits of thousands of people who attended the celebration of the official recognition of Modjadji Queenship Status. The momentous occasion was held at ga-Mokwakwaila Stadium on Saturday, 07 April 2018. The guests who attended the historic event include President Cyril Ramaphosa, former President Jacob Zuma, Premier Stan Mathabatha, His Grace, The Right Reverend, Dr Barnabas Lekganyane and Minister of Education, Ms Angie Motshekga and her husband Member of the ANC NEC and Advisor to the Modjadji Queenship, Dr Mathole Motshekga, the Minister of CoGTA, Dr Zweli Mkhize, the MEC for CoGHSTA in Limpopo, Mr Jerry Ndou, Traditional Leaders and other government dignitaries from across the three spheres of government, celebrities and members of the diplomatic core.

The Balobedu Community has been recognized as the first and only Queenship in the Republic of South Africa. The recognition emanated from the investigation that was conducted by the Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims, which determined that the Balobedu Community is a Queenship.

The Minister of CoGTA, Dr Zweli Mkhize said the event is a celebration of a unique long standing traditional leadership which has a rich history, starting with the period between 1600 to 1800 which may be referred to as the era of kings. The period of kings was then followed by era of queens. "This important occasion does not only enable us to celebrate the Queenship. It provides an opportunity for government to

engage and interface with traditional communities and their leadership in the spirit of *Thuma Mina*, as we embrace the new dawn announced by the President. The declaration of the Queenship cements the new spirit of moving forward and working together to build the South Africa we dream about, which is free of poverty, unemployment and inequality".

President Ramaphosa thanked the Royal Family for inviting him to be part of the celebrations and said the recognition of the Modjadji Queenship is a truly historic milestone in the democratic South Africa. According to Ramaphosa, the celebration reminds all of us of where we come from and where we want to go as a country. He went further and said that 25 million South Africans live in villages which are under the authority of traditional leaders. He pointed out that it is against for this background that they must work with government in ensuring that land is returned to the rightful owners. He also said that he is aware that Balobedu have requested that Khelobedu be recognized as one of the official languages in South Africa. He said that the request is receiving the necessary attention.

Ramaphosa had an opportunity to meet with the Queen elect, Masalanabo Modjadji (13) who will be installed Queen Modjadji vii once she graduates in terms of the Balobedu determination of major or adult in line with customs and traditions. He also met with her uncle, the Regent, Bakhoma Mpatatla Modjadji.

Later on that day, it rained cats and dogs at Bolobedu- a sign that the recognition is welcomed by the Kingdom.



Former President Jacob Zuma and the Queen elect Masalanabo Modjadji.



President Cyril Ramaphosa and Premier Stan Mathabatha attending the celebration.