

THE RAIN QUEEN REIGNS!

Rebirth of Queenship Status celebration since downgraded in 1972



President Ramaphosa addressing the guests who attended the celebration of the Recognition of the Modjadji Queenship Status



Queen Masalanabo Modjadji VII

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 Mokwakwaila Stadium on Saturday, 07 April 2018. 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 has a Queenship status. Their Queenship status was demoted by the Apartheid government in 1972 to a Senior Traditional Leader status. The Queenship status was reinstated on the 31 March 2016 after 34 years by the former President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Jacob Zuma.

President Ramaphosa appreciated the invite from the Royal Family and the Modjadji Traditional Council 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 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 Xhosa 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 turns 26 years. He also met, the Regent, Bakhoma Mpatatla Modjadji.

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 - 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". Said the Minister of CoGTA.

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, 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, members of the diplomatic core and other government dignitaries from the three spheres of government.



Minister of CoGTA, Dr Zweli Mkhize and the MEC for CoGHSTA, Mr Jerry Ndou.



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