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North West Provincial Government  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**



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### **Media Statement**

**To : All Media Houses**

**Date : 31 March 2025**

### **Inaugural Lobelo la Dipitsi traditional horse racing drives economic growth and cultural heritage**

The inaugural Lobelo la Dipitsi Traditional Horse Racing event, held at Bloomtech Lodge in Vryburg this past weekend, has successfully celebrated North West Province's rich cultural heritage while stimulating local economic growth. The event was graced by Premier Lazarus Mokgosi and MEC Bitisa Lenkopane, reinforcing the government's commitment to promoting cultural tourism and supporting small businesses.

Lobelo la Dipitsi marks a significant milestone in the North West's efforts to leverage traditional sports for economic development. The event attracted an influx of visitors from across the province and neighbouring countries such as Botswana and Namibia, boosting tourism and fostering cross-border collaborations.

A key feature of the event was the Small, Medium, and Micro Enterprises (SMME) exhibition, which showcased 69 stalls supported by the North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation, and Tourism (DEDECT) and Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality. These enterprises, ranging from flea market vendors to informal traders, displayed an impressive variety of artisanal products, including handcrafted African-themed clothing, footwear, organic herbs, spices, perfumes, and wooden vases.

MEC Lenkopane emphasized the race's role in economic transformation, stating, "Lobelo la Dipitsi is not just a celebration of our cultural heritage but also a strategic initiative to drive local business growth. This platform empowers Black entrepreneurs, facilitates job creation, and strengthens our local economy. Through the North West Gambling Board we envisage to empower emerging race

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associations with compliance in terms of acquiring relevant licenses in relation to gambling legislations.”

During a walkabout of the flea market, MEC Lenkopane engaged directly with small business owners to assess their experiences and the impact of the event on their enterprises. She alluded to the fact that the department will continue to offer support to small businesses and cooperatives to ensure that their products are well packaged, properly labelled, and adhere to South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) requirements. The economic activity generated by the event reaffirmed the potential of public-private partnerships in promoting sustainable economic development.

The event reached its highlight with an exciting prize-giving ceremony, officiated by Premier Mokgosi, MEC Lenkopane, AHOD Relebohile Mofokane, and NWGB ACEO Boitumelo Qalinge.

Winners of the various races were recognized for their outstanding performances:

- Race 1 Winner: Maximus (Owner: Lloyd)
- Race 2 Winner: Rock My Soul (Owner: Matsego Satang)
- Race 3 Winner: Hlankanisa (Owner: Siphumile)
- Race 4 Winner: Roction (Owner: Tsupa)
- Race 6 Winner: Bar One (Owner: Phenyo)

MEC Lenkopane commended the participation of young riders and the involvement of our regional partners from Botswana, Namibia, and Lesotho, highlighting the significance of this initiative in fostering strong economic and cultural ties. “I am confident that Lobelo la Dipitsi has the potential to grow into a flagship event on North West’s tourism calendar”.

She further extended her gratitude to the event sponsors, including G Bets, Goldrush, Sunbets, CGM, and other contributors, for their commitment to making this vision a reality. She also expressed gratitude to community members and horse riders for their enthusiastic participation and support.

Lobelo la Dipitsi will be rotated annually across the districts of the province, ensuring continued economic impact, cultural preservation, and regional integration. This groundbreaking initiative has reinforced the North West Provincial Government’s commitment to empowering local communities through strategic events and sustainable economic initiatives.

**Issued by the Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation, and Tourism**

