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North West Commemorates World Ranger Day with Award Ceremony Honouring Park Rangers

The North West Province marked the celebration of **World Ranger Day** at Lefa Boutique Hotel in the Moses Kotane Local Municipality, on 11th August 2025, with an award ceremony officiated by DEDECT MEC Bitsa Lenkopane. The day paid tribute to the dedication, courage, and sacrifices of Park Rangers - frontline custodians who work tirelessly to safeguard wildlife, a cornerstone of both provincial pride and economic growth through tourism.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Jonathan Denga, Acting CEO of the North West Parks and Tourism Board (NWPTB), highlighted the importance of ensuring that rangers receive the same protection they provide for the province's natural heritage. *"The support must start at home, by uplifting the Rangers' morale and giving them the tools they need to safeguard our province's natural treasures,"* said Mr. Denga.

Delivering the keynote address, MEC Bitsa Lenkopane reaffirmed the department's commitment to transforming the environmental and biodiversity sectors in the North West. She emphasised the importance of this transformation for the benefit of both rangers and communities across the province.

The MEC further highlighted that the Board and Department remain dedicated to training rangers, offering wellness support, and enhancing their professional capabilities. *"We are facing a situation where too many of our rangers resign, and this needs to end. Capacitating our rangers and making sure they are well taken care of is of utmost importance to our conservation efforts,"* she said.

The ceremony concluded with the presentation of awards recognising the invaluable contributions of rangers. Honours were given for their excellence in competitive skills drills, field knowledge, shooting, obstacle courses, cross-country running, and other exercises designed to sharpen their physical and mental readiness in the field.

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

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