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MEC Lenkopane Dismisses Misleading Claims on Taung Hotel School, Reaffirms Commitment to Project Recovery.

The MEC for the North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT), Bitsa Lenkopane, has noted with serious concern the misleading and politically motivated claims currently circulating in the media regarding the Taung Hotel School project.

The allegations, including claims that the project was halted due to intimidation involving foreign nationals, are entirely false, unsubstantiated and irresponsible. The department views these assertions as part of a broader attempt to mislead the public and distort facts, particularly within the context of the current local government electoral environment.

The department places it on record that the challenges affecting the Taung Hotel School are historical and well documented. Reports by the Auditor-General of South Africa have previously outlined irregularities dating as far back as 2016, necessitating decisive intervention to restore governance, accountability and compliance within the project.

Since assuming office, MEC Lenkopane has been actively engaged in stabilising and repositioning the project through a coordinated approach with national stakeholders, including the Independent Development Trust and the Department of Public Works and Infrastructure. These efforts have focused on reviewing contractual obligations, addressing identified irregularities, strengthening oversight mechanisms, and ensuring full compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks.

The MEC emphasised that funds allocated for the development of the Taung Hotel School remain secured within government. The delays experienced are a direct result of necessary corrective measures aimed at addressing past shortcomings, enforcing accountability, and safeguarding public resources.

“These interventions are critical to ensure that the project proceeds on a sound, transparent and sustainable footing,” she said.

MEC Lenkopane further rejected, in the strongest terms, the narrative suggesting any improper engagements with foreign nationals, describing such claims as baseless and

deliberately misleading. Government has long acknowledged the prolonged period during which the facility has not been operational. The matter has since been elevated to the Office of the Premier and the Executive Council, which has mandated the MEC to restore governance, enforce consequence management where necessary, and appoint capable and credible implementing agents to drive the project forward.

Premier of the North West Province, Mr. Lazarus Kagiso Mokgosi, continues to receive regular progress reports, while the department works closely with national partners to resolve all outstanding issues and transition the project into a new phase of implementation anchored in accountability and good governance.

The MEC has condemned the conduct of individuals advancing false narratives for political gain, noting that such actions undermine public trust and seek to exploit legitimate developmental challenges for narrow interests. The department is firmly committed to restoring the Taung Hotel School to full functionality and ensuring that it delivers meaningful economic and skills development opportunities for the people of Taung and the broader North West Province.

Issued by the Department of Economic Development, Environment,

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