



WELCOMING ADDRESS BY THE EXECUTIVE MAYOR, CLLR DANNY THUPANE AT PREMIER PANYAZA LESUFI'S STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MEETING WITH THE LIQUOR INDUSTRY HELD ON 3 MAY 2023 AT CENTENARY HALL, MOGALE CITY

Thank you Programme Director,
Premier of Gauteng, Panyaza Lesufi,
MEC for Economic Development, Tasmeen Motara,
Speaker of Council, Cllr Lucky Sele,
Chief Whip of Council, Cllr Tsholofelo Ramaisa,
Heads of government departments represented here,
Honourable councillors,
Leaders of society across various sectors, especially those in the Liquor Industry who we are honoured to join today,
People of Mogale City,

Today is a very important day in the calendar of our province as we set about to improve the lot of our people in the townships. We are pleased that the Gauteng Provincial Government has decided to zoom in on one of the oldest enterprises in our communities, the liquor business.

Liquor has moved from those days when it was a prohibited item for the general black population to carry the hopes of many of our people. It is from making a living out of the sale of liquor that parents of many of our professionals in the townships financed their education.

There was a time when it was prestigious to be known as a shebeen king or queen; to have the coolest and most popular spot in the village or township. So many beautiful stories are told of those days. Yet there are many stories that hurt because it is in the abuse of alcohol that many of our people lost their dignity while others lost their lives. No doubt, alcohol has contributed to many of our trials and tribulations. And, in the same vein, alcohol has also contributed to many of our successes.

Programme Director, many of these businesses we are talking about have collapsed along the way for various reasons. Some have been sustained by owners for many years, while others developed into newer forms like bed and breakfasts.

No doubt the shebeen of the olden days was a place for entertainment, but also, it was a place for serious consideration of our plight as a people. It was a favourite and undetectable platform to plant and spread the seed of resistance because every manner of respectable man and woman could be found there. Lawyers, journalists, teachers and many more.



The old shebeen was a melting pot for talent and that talent was for resistance against the system of oppression, discrimination and exploitation, land hunger and other injustices. We did it with all the arms and ammunition: it was the music, the wise and constructive conversation (not only about Moroka Swallows, Premier Lesufi) and, of course, there would be A VERY COLD ONE.

The township economy has changed from the old shebeen and the corner shops. It has become extremely competitive and, most of all, impressively young. Many of the things we could not get in the township, the agile and robust young businessperson is bringing them aggressively to the township consumer.

As the township business changes, so do its challenges grow. The Government of Local Unity in Mogale City is pleased that the Gauteng Provincial Government is tackling these challenges head-on.

We are more than impressed that the liquor business is being taken into the new business environment which demands deployment of new technologies in order for businesses to survive. We want to encourage business to embrace these new technologies. We say this because our people have grown tired of burying prominent business people because the rascals in our townships rob and kill them.

Many of our people with bright ideas are discouraged from venturing into business because criminals have chosen to hijack other people's dreams. The investment in ideas, financial and other resources get wasted when a life is lost to crime. These businesses employ people, and we do not need to mention how much of a devastating effect any loss of that employment is when the owner is killed by criminals!

However, be that as it may, we in the Government of Local Unity in Mogale City are encouraged that our provincial government does not throw hands in the air and complain non-stop about what is happening to our business people.

Government should be a shield of the people, guiding and protecting every small or big dream. Therefore, we want to commend you, Premier Panyaza Lesufi and your team, for giving this area of business the desired focus. We promise to cooperate with you and other departments in bringing these opportunities that change the lives of the people for the better.

We wish all businesspeople gathered here the best in their ventures and we hope the innovations proposed here shall take their business to new and greater heights.

With these few words, we want to welcome you to the City of Human Origin and wish you all fruitful deliberations.

I thank you.