



arts & culture
Department:
Arts and Culture
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Media Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THURSDAY, 27 AUGUST 2015

Attention:

All Media/News Editors, Journalists

Deputy Minister Mabudafhasi leads the Unveiling and Commemoration of Burial and Memorial site of the first African woman to be banished by the apartheid regime

Arts and Culture Deputy Minister, Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi in partnership with the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) will lead the unveiling and commemoration of Burial and Commemoration site of the first African woman to be banished by the apartheid regime, the late former regent Chieftainess Mme Makwena Matlala in honour of her struggle against injustice and land dispossession under the apartheid regime.

The unveiling will take place on Monday, 31 August 2015 at Bakone Traditional Council, Ga-Matlala in Limpopo under the theme, ***“Remembering the Forgotten, Honouring Victims of Political Banishment in South Africa”***.

The Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) through the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) is mandated to coordinate the identification and management of South Africa’s heritage resources. Section 36 of the National Heritage Resources Act no 25 of 1999 (NHRA), stipulates that SAHRA must identify and record graves of victims of conflict and any other graves which it deems to be of cultural significance and may erect memorials associated with the grave.

“As such sites where banishment occurred should either be declared, or memorials should be erected; and graves of people who strove against the unjust system of apartheid should be restored and rehabilitated. Banishment was one of many methods used by the both the colonial and apartheid governments to silence opponents who were opposed to their policies under the Bantu Authorities Act No 68 in 1951”, said Mabudafhasi.

In essence, this Act was a system of indirect rule through which legitimate chiefs were turned into vehicles of effecting policies of the apartheid state. During her reign, *Mme Makwena Matlala* refused to accept the government's betterment policies. The government then deposed Makwena Matlala as Chieftainess and later banished her to Temba in Hammanskraal, then to King Williamstown. Her banishment sparked a revolt among other local people. Subsequently, the Apartheid government removed and banished over 50 people who were identified as supporters of Makwena Matlala in an attempt to quell the rising tide of discontent.

"Given her prominence as the first known African woman to be banished by the apartheid regime, unveiling and commemoration of the Burial and Memorial site of this unsung heroine is a fitting tribute as it culminates Women's Month", said Mabudafhasi. Through this project, SAHRA seeks to demonstrate the multi-faceted dimensions of the struggle against apartheid. In essence the historical narrative of our democracy is incomplete without reflecting the multiple voices including those of people who were banished.

The focus at the moment will be in areas where a large number of people were banished, particularly on the restoration and rehabilitation of the graves as well as the erection of memorial sites of the traditional leaders (Regent Chieftainess *Mme Makwena Matlala* – Ga Matlala, Limpopo; Chief *Jeremiah Mabe* – Mabieskraal, North West; Chief *Paulus Howell Mopeli* – Witzieshoek, Free State) who spearheaded resistance against policies of the apartheid government.

Media are invited to the unveiling and commemoration ceremony as follows:

Date : 31 August 2015

Time : 09h00

Venue: Bakone Traditional Council, Ga-Matlala in Limpopo

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Thomas Khakhu – Manager Communications and Marketing –
SAHRA: TEL: 021 202 8653, **CELL:** 061 962 1884 / tkhakhu@sahra.org.za

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