



19 July 2020

HAPPY BELATED BIRTHDAY TO AN INTERNATIONAL BANTAMWEIGHT CHAMP – MATSHIDISO MOKEBESI

On 18 July an International Bantamweight Champion celebrated her 31st birthday. She is an epitome of anti-sexism and the struggle for women's liberation. The Free State MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation Mrs. Limakatso Mahasa, extended her best wishes to Ms. Matshidiso Mokebesi who is a beacon of hope in the quest for gender transformation of sport, particularly what is perceived as a male sport and is indeed a male dominated sport code.

Ms. Mokebesi is a proud Free Stater hailing from the town of Kroonstad, Maokeng. She is one of the few female boxers in the Free State and indeed in the country who have exhibited their skill in the boxing arena with a mark of distinction. She is currently holding a title of International Super Bantamweight Champion. Because of her prowess as a boxer she has earned herself the name "Scorpion Queen".

During her maiden Budget Vote Speech as the MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation Mrs. Limakatso Mahasa made a commitment to promote boxing as one of the peripheral sporting codes in the Free State Province. As part of the drive to realize this vision, the International Mandela Day Boxing Tournament was staged in Rouxville, Xhariep District, on 18 July 2019.

Ms. Mokebesi featured prominently during this tournament as she strutted her stuff in the boxing ring to defend her South African Female Junior Lightweight title against another formidable female opponent of note, Ms. Kabisile Tshabalala, who hails from Gauteng. The pride of the Free State won this battle of titans.

“It is befitting that you share your special day with the icon of our liberation struggle, the founding father of our democratic state, Ntate Nelson Mandela whose birthday we also celebrate on 18 July. He was a lover of the sport of boxing and a fighter for the liberation of women. I trust that you enjoyed your special day. We will continue to be by your side and support you in advancing your talent as a female boxer of note”, stated Mrs. Mahasa.

During her forthcoming Budget Vote Speech, scheduled for 29 July 2020, MEC Mahasa will further outline her plans for the promotion of boxing in the Free State in the context of COVID-19.

End.

Issued by the Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation (DSACR)

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