



24 June 2020

Proposed Renaming of Goble Park Stadium:

The Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation (DSACR) has noted the ongoing discussions on social media platforms about the proposed renaming of Goble Park stadium after the late chairman of Free State Stars football club, Mr Liphaphang Michael "Mike" Mokoena. Goble Park stadium is situated in Bethlehem, Dihlabeng Local Municipality in the Free State.

The DSACR, as the custodian of the Geographical Names Change process mandated by the Constitution, has taken note of these discussions and would like to provide clarity to some of the apparent misrepresentations that have characterized those discussions.

While the Department welcomes and embraces these discussions, it is befitting that the discussions take place from an informed position to avoid unnecessary confusion and misunderstanding. It is also befitting to do so in respect of the memory of the late Mr Mokoena whose name is proposed for the renaming of Goble Park stadium.

It is regrettably noted that, as one example, the proposal to rename Goble Park stadium after the late Mr Mokoena has been linked to Charles Mopeli stadium. We want to assure the public and stakeholders that there are no

such intentions to rename Charles Mopeli stadium after the late Mr Mokoena or any intentions to rename this specific stadium at all.

The plan is indeed on the cards to rename Goble Park stadium after the late Mr Mokoena. Anything other than this assertion is false and should not be entertained.

It should also be noted by all that, while the intention is there to engage in the renaming process for Goble Park stadium, the necessary legal and procedural processes will be followed as informed by the Geographical Names regulations. The Free State Provincial Geographical Names Committee (PGNC) will lead the renaming process in accordance with the relevant guidelines. Such a process includes, amongst other procedural requirements, public hearings amongst those communities affected.

At this present moment the Department, as the custodian of the Geographical Names Changes process, is in consultation with Dihlabeng Local Municipality, who are the custodians of the stadium, on how to take the process forward. Once all the necessary consultations and processes have been undertaken and followed the outcomes will be communicated to all interested parties and the general public.

Reflecting on this matter, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation, Mrs Limakatso Mahasa, asserted that: "It is befitting that the person of the caliber of Mr Mike Mokoena, who has played such a pivotal role in the promotion of sport not only in our province but also in the country, should be honoured in this manner. It is no accident that his Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa has granted a status of Special Provincial Official Funeral Category 2 to Mr Mokoena's funeral".

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MEC Mahasa would like to reiterate her condolences to the family, relatives, friends, colleagues and associates of Mr Mokoena. The support to and working relations that has existed between the Department and Free State Stars under the chairmanship of Mr Mokoena will continue unabated. We want to reiterate that Free State Stars has been the pride of the province having been one of the two provincial teams in the Professional Soccer League, and will continue to be the pride of the province even after the unfortunate departure of Mr Mokoena.

End.

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

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