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## DSACR MOURNS PASSING ON OF NTATE TSEPO TSHOLA

On this chilly winter's day, we have sadly lost our village's Pope. Ntate Tsepo Tshola will be remembered as a musical genius whose music communicated the lived realities of the society in which we exist. Dubbed the "Village Pope", he indeed became a voice for the voiceless and marginalised among our populace hence he vociferously called out social ills through his music and rallied those in high echelons of power to action.

As a Department, we attribute the success of the Mangaung African Cultural Festival (MACUFE) to artists of his calibre who graced the festival from its inception and continued to play a pivotal part throughout its history spanning over two decades. MACUFE is now a global concert and funfair because he was among those who believed in the strength and capabilities of local artists to attract international audiences.

Upon learning about these tragic developments, the Free State MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation Mrs Limakatso Mahasa stated that, "The Free State Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation mourns the passing on of Ntate Tsepo Tshola. He was a musical giant whose music shaped the cultural identity of Africans on the continent and across the diaspora. He also leaves behind a rich discography that we all treasure as part of his legacy. Personally, I had the rare honor of spending time with Ntate Tsepo Tshola from 2003-2005. He was indeed a father, leader and musical genius. May his soul rest in peace."

MEC Mahasa further commented, "The advent of COVID-19 global health pandemic continues to claim lives of our country's most celebrated cultural icons and loved ones. We are really saddened that death has struck our

fraternity once more. We convey our deepest condolences to his family, friends, fans and colleagues.”

END.

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

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