



Media Release

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LEDET MEC, Seaparo Sekoati, launches enterprising 2017 Limpopo Marula Festival!

Phalaborwa: Limpopo Province is once again poised to receive high volumes of visitors during the 12th edition of the annual Limpopo Marula Festival, especially due to the wide variety and high quality of activities lined up for the event this year.

The MEC for the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET), Mr. Seaparo Sekoati, launched the event on Friday, 13th January 2017 at the Amarula Lapa in Phalaborwa, much to the excitement of stakeholders and the media that were present, announcing that this year, the event boast artists like Hugh Masekela, AKA, King Monada and many more. Revelers should brace themselves for a thriller and a much improved 2017 Limpopo Marula Festival, all thanks to a remarkable and enticing programme.

With international guests from Cuba, Venezuela, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Angola and Namibia, the festival is aimed at developing a sustainable local economy through various models of development of the marula industry and the value-chain that can benefit the local communities. Thus, the event has surpassed being merely a festival and has developed into the *Marula Industry Programme*. It is a partnership of several stakeholders like SEDA (Small Enterprise Development Agency), Limpopo Tourism Agency, Limpopo Economic Development Agency, Ba-Phalaborwa Municipality, Mopani District Municipality, Office of the Premier, Limpopo Department of Sport, Arts & Culture, National Department of Arts and Culture, the Phalaborwa Tourism Association and the Kruger National Park.

The Limpopo Marula Festival is a drawcard that attracts domestic, regional and international tourists to Limpopo during the Marula season, which officially begins in January and ends in



April each year. To develop the festival as a marketable brand for Limpopo, a fact-finding mission was carried out to the Munich Oktoberfest in Germany, an endeavor that will enhance knowledge and skills on the manner in which festivals can successfully be hosted in a sustainable manner.

Beyond the first decade of the Marula Festival, the department’s initiatives will extend into the establishment of the Limpopo Marula Industry Hub, which is meant to beneficiate marula all year round, providing employment opportunities for the local communities, including co-operatives and other small businesses.

Over the years, the Limpopo Marula Festival has grown into a sought-after brand the world over. It was imperative, at the time, that the Limpopo Provincial Government identifies a permanent venue for the implementation of the Marula Industry Programme, which culminates in the annual festival; a venue around which a strong and authentic brand could be developed and one that the people of Limpopo can proudly identify.

The Festival of the First Fruit, which is the ceremonial tasting of the first fruit hosted by the Traditional leadership of various communities, will mark the official opening of marula month. The MEC of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture, Ms. Onicca Moloï, will preside over the provincial build-up event, Ku Luma Vukanyi/Ku Luma Nguva/Go Loma Morula, which will take place at Dzata Museum in the Vhembe District on Saturday, 04 February 2017.

This year’s bumper lineup of activities begins with the Street Parade on Friday, 24th February 2017, during which the usually quiet streets of the town of Phalaborwa will be alive with the dance and delight of colorful cultural groups, including the South African National Defense Force.

This will be followed by a host of activities lined up by various organizers and stakeholders and include the following: -

Activity	Date	Venue
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Activity	Date	Venue
Ku Luma Nguva/Ku Luma Vhukanyi/ Go Loma Morula	04 February 2017	Dzata Museum
Ba-Phalaborwa Municipality build-up events:	28 January - 18 February 2017	Ba-Phalaborwa Municipality
Seloane Traditional Authority	28 January 2017 11 February 2017	
Mashishimale Traditional Authority	17 February 2017	
Maseke Traditional Authority	18 February 2017 18 February 2017	
Majeje Traditional Authority		
Makhushane Traditional Authority		
Maruleng Municipality build-up event	04 February 2017	Maruleng Municipality
Local Marula Heritage Festival (district events)	04-18 February 2017	All districts
Fun Fair (Kiddies World)	17 February - 04 March 2017	Impala Park Stadium
Street Parade	24 February 2017	Phalaborwa Town
Community Marathon	25 February 2017	Bollanoto Tourism Information Centre
4x4 Challenge	25 February 2017	Hlolwa Lodge
Youth Rugby (Bulletjies)	25 February 2017	Groen Skool
Hip Hop/Kwaito Youth Festival	25 February 2017	Impala Park Stadium
Brewing of the marula beverage by co-operatives	20 February - 03 March 2017	Ba-Phalaborwa Municipal Lapa
Career Expo	27 February - 03 March	Impala Park Stadium



Activity	Date	Venue
	2017	
Trade Fair & Exhibition	27 February - 04 March 2017	Impala Park Stadium
Golf Challenge	03 - 04 March 2017	Hans Merensky Golf Estate
Cuisine-a-la-Marula Corporate Dinner	03 March 2017	Phalaborwa Airport
Jazz Festival	04 March 2017	Impala Park Stadium

As was the case in previous years, 13 co-operatives under Mukumbi Industries, will brew 12 000 liters of the marula beverage, which will be consumed by the public during the festival. This initiative goes a long way in generating much needed finances for the municipality and the local community.

Entertainment highlights for the Kwaito & Hip-Hop Festival that will take place on 25 February 2017 include talent heavy weights and award-winning artists like AKA, Jabba, Thebe, Bricks, DJ Ganyani, the legendary Mdu Masilela, Cappacino, Complexion, Darque and many more. The festival will culminate in the Gospel and Jazz open air concert that will feature the world renowned musician Salif Keita, Bra Hugh Masekela, Mafikizolo, Penny, Joe Shirimani, King Monada, Benjamin Dube, Worship House, Brothers of Peace, Trompies and Candy amongst others. There will be an exciting line-up of local provincial talent in the form of artists and DJs that will contribute to the success of the concerts.

Tickets for both open air concerts will be available at Computicket at the highly subsidized amount of R150.

Limpopo Marula Festival packages are also available on the festival website. For more information, visit www.limpopomarulafest.co.za

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