



AZAPO

AZANIAN PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION

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TO: ALL MEDIA HOUSES FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: Publicity Secretary: Gaontebale Nodoba

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SUBJECT: AZAPO'S CONDOLENCE MESSAGE ON THE PASSING OF LEBO MALEPA

AZAPO conveys a message of condolence to the Malepa family on the passing of Lebo Malepa, owner of Lebo's Soweto Backpackers.

Lebo's Soweto Backpackers is a justifiably celebrated black business establishment that was one of the first pioneering tourism businesses in Soweto to revolutionise township tourism. Lebo's work contributed remarkably to the growth of the township economy in Soweto.

Lebo started off small, but because of his authenticity and love for tourism and history, he was able to turn his family home into a living legacy of storytelling about the significant history and culture of black people. In his business he employed some family and nearby community members. His vision was that of taking his people along hence his inclusive approach in employing members of his community. He leaves a legacy of inclusiveness and ensuring the rand circulates. Lebo's approach in his business resonated with AZAPO's *Stretch the Rand Campaign*.

In 2019 he offered his space for AZAPO to engage the community of Orlando and his tourists around the fire over well-cooked *potjie kos* and storytelling. His gesture was important in many ways, as it signified his understanding of the various instruments needed to conscientize people – he made his contribution towards educating to liberate.

He was dedicated to his community and that is reflected in how he ran his business.

AZAPO and surely members of the Orlando community will remember him for his love and passion for community development. As young as he was, Lebo had already contributed immensely to the *Kasi economy* and helped change the negative stigma around Black owned businesses. Lebo epitomises black excellence and black self-reliance.

Soweto and the Tourism industry is without a doubt poorer without him.

May his soul rest in peace to rise in glory.

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