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April - 30 May 2026

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**Ndungane's
Rise To Power**

**Mashonisa
Warning**

**BRT Taxi Millionaires
Dumped**

**Sokhela Taxi
Industry Lecture**

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Taxi drivers' improved working condition is crucial for commuter safety and customer care

The minibus taxi industry deserves recognition for prioritizing customer safety and service. It has transformed from a once-feared sector into a leading public transport option, thanks to initiatives like SANTACO's Hlokomele and the National Taxi Alliance's Ndlelanhle Safety campaigns, which have promoted professionalism, road safety, and customer care.

Treatment of women and children at taxi ranks has improved significantly from the past, when media frequently reported insults and assaults by taxi drivers.

Today, most drivers understand the importance of respecting cus-

tomers—seen as abalengu abekhu-lu (“the real bosses who pay their salaries”).

As a result, women activists no longer march against taxi drivers to demand better treatment for women passengers.

There is a notable improvement in how drivers treat passengers, with some communities even celebrating drivers' birthdays. Taxi owners are encouraged to value their employees' contributions to the improved image the industry currently enjoys, and its success as a majority black-owned business.

A happy driver ensures a safe journey!



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Government faces R80 billion BRT dilemma as funding shortages put taxi operators at risk



It took a decade for Rustenburg taxi operators to back the government's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, but their hopes were dashed in minutes by a media statement issued by transport authorities announcing the integrated public transport program budget cuts and a shift in government support for the bus service expansion.

Herman Sebege of the Taxi Negotiating Forum says operators feel betrayed, having only learned about the project's fate through news reports.

"It has taken 10 years to convince taxi operators to come onboard – to be dumped unceremoniously without any consultation or at least prior warning before media announcements by the government," protested Sebege.

The withdrawal of funding led to protests by taxi operators accusing the Rustenburg

municipality of corruption and theft of funds," calling for Justice Madlanga Commission and the Hawks to investigate the allegations," read BAMTA taxi protesters' placards.

Sebege says the budget cuts decision left operators confused and financially exposed.

"Many operators have decided not to buy new taxis in preparation for the full roll out of the BRT service in their routes and had not been renewing their operating licenses hoping the project is going ahead as planned," he said.

Godfrey Mahlangu, director of Rustenburg Rapid Transport, stated that current priorities focus on maintaining existing operations and infrastructure.

"The immediate focus is on protecting and maintaining that which directly support existing operations and commuter services," Mahlangu said.

Sebege said all that they expect from government is transparency and communication with regards to the status of the project going forward.

"We are in the dark we lack clarity as to what are the implications of government budgetary

cuts – will this affect the daily operation of the BRT or the expansion plans?" Sebege asked.

Sebege says 600 minibus taxis were removed from their normal route to give way for the BRT's limited three-route service.

Despite challenges taxi operators benefited from investment poured by government estimated at R780,000,000.00 (seven hundred and eighty million rand) making Rustenburg taxi operators instant millionaires.

According to Sebege each taxi operator received a once-off payment of R1.3 million per surrendered taxi to make way for the BRT.

Taxi operators were offered an opportunity to participate in share options in the Yarona BRT operating company IPTOC.

For every surrendered taxi and operating license individual taxi operator purchased 1 share for the price of R120 000.00 (one hundred one and twenty rand). If an operator has five taxis, he is entitled to buy 5 shares for R600,000.00 (six hundred thousand rands). In addition, shareholders received a monthly dividend of R5,000.00

Western Cape's new leadership urged to put taxi operators first



The newly installed provincial executive committee of Western Cape SANTACO has been encouraged to improve conditions for taxi operators across the region.

This follows the recent elective conference held in Grabouw at Houw Hoek on the 07-09 April, where Besuthu Ndungane was elected unopposed as the new provincial chairperson.

For the first time in years, the provincial structure—previously challenged by instability and lack of unity within the taxi industry—was able to elect leadership that is broadly accepted by various regions.

Much of this stability is attributed to the outgoing chairperson, Mandla Hermanus, who fostered unity after his election in 2021.

Delegates at the conference praised Hermanus's leadership style for bringing consistency and cohesion to the industry. His administration is credited with efforts to combat vehicle impoundments and reduce taxi-related violence.

Despite these achievements, Hermanus's exclusion from the

new provincial leadership surprised many in both the industry and business sectors, as he isn't part of the new executive committee.

One delegate remarked, "We hoped the delegates would at least include him in the new executive for deployment in the national office, given his leadership skills and contributions to the Western Cape taxi industry." Another added, "The outgoing executive deserves thanks for their good work from start to finish."

SANTACO Secretary General Godfrey Qumbu reminded the newly elected representatives to stay focused on guiding the industry toward its business goals, stating, "We are in the taxi industry to make money – nothing else."

Kurt Hendricks, Western Cape Department of Mobility official praised the conduct of the leadership and delegates at the conference, noting that an unopposed leader was chosen for the first time. He saw this as evidence of professionalism and growing democracy within the taxi industry, and urged provincial

leaders to promote unity, emphasizing, "Without unity, there can be no progress."

Taxi industry veteran Junaid Petersen advised chairperson Ndungane and his executive team not to forget why they were elected, encouraging them to serve the regions and avoid personal gain.

Other delegates echoed this sentiment, calling for more projects that benefit ordinary operators and a closer working relationship with government. "Don't run away from the government; it has projects we can benefit from," said one delegate. He also urged the new leadership to reach out for support when facing challenges and to take steps to prevent taxi violence and loss of life in the industry.

The election results are as follows:

- > **Besuthu Ndungane**
Chairperson
- > **Nkululeko Sityebi**
First Deputy Chairperson
- > **Nazeem Abduraman**
Second Deputy Chairperson
- > **Ashley October**
General Secretary
- > **Nyanisile Siyona**
Deputy Secretary
- > **Denzel Ferguson**
Treasurer
- > **Sicelukwanda Mdunana**
Deputy Treasurer
- > **Nadeem Masalisa**
Training Officer
- > **Makhosandile Tumana**
Public Relations Officer
- > **Linda Roman**
Secretary for Members' Affairs



Boy Zondi Delivers Bheki Sokhela Memorial Lecture: History of Taxi Industry & His Life

The life of the former chairperson of the Umngungundlovu Regional Taxi Council was honoured at an event held at Shuku's Green Leaf Estate in Pietermaritzburg recently, attended by members of the taxi industry, community, and business leaders.

The memorial lecture, initiated by the Imbali1&2 Taxi Association in partnership with Umngungundlovu Regional Taxi Council management, is the first of its kind to celebrate a taxi leader for his leadership skills and positive contributions to both the industry and his community.

KwaZulu-Natal SANTACO provincial leader Boy Zondi reflected on his association with Bheki Sokhela, highlighting that he was instrumental in introducing him to the taxi industry during their tenure as furniture sales representatives and debt collectors. Zondi recalled the training provided by their employer on effective debt

management practices at the furniture store.

He also noted that the late Sokhela was known for his impeccable sense of dress style and took pleasure in grocery shopping. He said that his friend took pride of being a one-woman man and never believed in polygamy. Something that Zondi differed with his position.

Zondi explained that prior to the establishment of democratic elections in the industry—before the formation of the South Africa National Taxi Council (SANTACO) in 2000 via SATACO—there were no such processes for leadership selection. He reminded attendees that SANTACO is a business organization, and urged taxi operators to always conduct themselves as professionals.

He described Sokhela as a man of integrity, committed both to the taxi industry and his community, and said he was not surprised by the celebration of

Sokhela's life. Several speakers shared stories about Sokhela's positive impact, highlighting how he encouraged taxi operators to professionalize and run their businesses as corporate entities rather than as a last-resort sector outside the mainstream economy.

He said together with Sokhela they made it possible for the taxi operators to buy vehicles without a deposit including assisting with operating licenses.

Zondi also called on taxi operators to protect the industry they have built, praising the hard work that has made it a successful industry founded by black South Africans.

He commended the Imbali1&2 Taxi Association for honouring their late leader and raising the profile of the Mngungundlovu region. He expressed hope that this event becomes annual, inspiring other regions to similarly honour their leaders.



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Meter Taxi Organisation and SANTACO's national, provincial leadership at Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.



Bheki Sokhela Memorial Lecture event
KwaZulu-Natal



Scholar Transport Conference 2026 held at
Coastlands, Umhlanga



Bheki Sokhela Memorial Lecture held at Shuk's Leaf Estate, Pietermaritzburg

Mashonisa: Illegal lending surges in South Africa amid rising living costs



Did you know that according to the law, if you owe an unregistered “mashonisa” (loan shark) money, you are not legally obliged to pay it back?

According to the National Credit Regulator (NCR), any loan granted by an unregistered credit provider is illegal and unenforceable. Even if they take you to court, they cannot legally enforce the loan agreement or charge interest, as the contract itself is void – although a court may, in some cases, allow recovery of the original amount lent.

But while that may sound like a relief, it’s not a reason to breathe easy, warns Salem Nyati, Momentum Group Foundation’s Consumer Financial Education Specialist.

“For many South Africans, that legal protection is meaningless in reality, as many mashonisas operate outside the law – and so do their collection methods.

“We’ve seen cases where people have had their bank cards, ID books or even SASSA cards confiscated. In extreme cases, intimidation and violence are used to recover money that legally isn’t owed,” she says.

More South Africans are turning to mashonisas

The NCR’s investigations unit recently reported a sharp

increase in illegal lending activity across South Africa. These unregistered lenders often offer instant loans without checking whether borrowers can afford to repay, and charge sky-high interest rates that can double or triple the original amount borrowed. So what’s driving this surge?

Nyati says it comes down to the state of the economy and tightening access to formal credit. Out of desperation, they turn to informal loan sharks, who ask no questions but charge exorbitant interest rates.

What you can do instead

Nyati shares a few steps to help consumers avoid the mashonisa’ trap and regain control of their finances.

Cut back: Start by getting close to your monthly spending. Identify your essential costs – such as rent, food, electricity and transport and see where you can adjust. “You might be able to save by switching to a more affordable grocery store, cutting back on non-essentials for a while, or pooling resources with others – for example, starting a lift club,” says Nyati.

Take a (payment) break: If you’re struggling to meet your existing credit obligations, speak to your credit providers before defaulting.

If you have to borrow, do it safely: Only borrow from registered financial services providers bound by the National Credit Act. “Ask to see their NCR certificate; it must be visible on their premises. Avoid lenders that advertise ‘no credit checks’ or ask for upfront payments. These are red flags. A legitimate lender will always assess affordability and provide a clear breakdown of costs and repayment terms.”

Prevention is better than cure: Lastly, plan ahead to prevent the same situation recurring. “Take stock of your finances and start putting a little away for emergencies – even R50 a month is a start. Building a small emergency fund can help you avoid relying on expensive credit when life throws you a curveball,” she says.

The bottom line

While the NCR’s recent reminder may sound empowering, Nyati cautions that no law can protect you from the real-world risks of borrowing from mashonisas. “The best protection is prevention – staying informed, budgeting carefully, and using only registered credit providers. Borrow wisely, and when in doubt, seek financial advice before desperation drives you to dangerous decisions.”

Article: Salem Nyati, Consumer Financial Education Specialist at the Momentum Group Foundation

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Growing calls for VAT Exemption for taxi industry



Taxi operators in the Western Cape are calling on the government to scrap Value Added Tax (VAT) on purchases of new vehicles.

This they believe would make the prices of new vehicles affordable, as it would enable them to pay lower instalment and also benefit commuters with lower taxi fares.

Kurt Hendricks, Western Cape Department of Mobility, Deputy Director: Formalization & Empow-

erment, told *TaxiWorld* publication that taxi industry is worthy of government support.

Hendricks says he supports the proposal for VAT exemption as one of the ways the government can help taxi industry become sustainable and profitable.

“Taxi operators’ call for VAT exemption should be investigated further as it makes sense. For example, a 15% reduction in VAT on the total costs of financing a taxi vehicle could enhance afford-

ability by lowering vehicle repayments,” Hendricks said.

Taxi operators in most cases buy vehicles as individuals who are not VAT registered, hence they are unable to claim a refund for VAT.

To avoid fraud from claims by illegal taxi operators – the Provincial Regulatory Authority and local municipalities can play an important role in the prevention of fraudulent VAT claims by illegal taxi operators if the VAT proposal becomes a reality.

Mark Skriker, Head of Provincial Regulatory Entity in the Western Cape echoes: “Municipalities have an important role to play in assisting taxi industry including addressing challenges of registration and combatting illegal operations.

“There are taxi operators that are registered for VAT through their companies or CC entities that are able to claim for VAT.

However, the reality is that most taxi operators are unable to claim VAT refunds simply because they run their businesses as self-employed individuals on an informal basis as they don’t have necessary accounting books to substantiate their VAT claims,” added Hendricks.

Skriker said any initiative to support taxi operators is welcomed but cautioned that only “Parliament has authority to pass tax laws”.

Wanatu receives e-hailing license ahead of Uber



Wanatu, a South African e-hailing company, became the first to secure a certificate of operation before international competitors like Bolt and Uber. Records from the National Public Transport Regulator (NPTR) as of March 2026 show that at least three platform providers—Wanatu, Bolt, and Maxim—were officially registered and granted operational certificates in line with new legal requirements. Wanatu received its certificate on February 12, while Bolt and Maxim followed on February 27, 2026.

Despite being the leading e-hailing service, Uber was considered to be operating illegally based on timelines set by law. The National Land Transport Amendment (NLTA) Act, gazetted in September 2025, formally recognised e-hailing services and laid out registration requirements for operators and drivers. Following the enactment, platforms had a 180-day period to apply for and obtain their registration certificates, which would expire accordingly.

No official extension to the registration deadline was announced, meaning any provider not compliant by March 11, 2026, is considered to be operating outside the law. The department clarified that drivers using unregistered platforms cannot apply for individual operating licences until their platform registers.



Bishop Solly MSIZA

The Power of Unity

The Bible presents unity as both beautiful and powerful. “How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1). Unity is not just harmony—it is a reflection of God’s heart.

Believers are called to pursue it intentionally. “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3). This requires humility, patience, and love.

Jesus Himself prayed for unity among His followers: “That all of them may be one” (John 17:21). Such unity becomes a testimony to the world.

Ultimately, unity is sustained by love: “Above all, love each other deeply” (1 Peter 4:8). Where love leads, unity grows—and God’s blessing follows.

Bishop Solly Msiza

Taxi commuters face rising fares



The South African National Taxi Council (Santaco) has stated that fare increases are unavoidable following recent rises in fuel prices.

Taxi commuters across the country will be subject to higher fares as associations implement adjustments in response to petrol and diesel price increases. These developments create substantial financial pressure on the taxi operators.

Santaco representatives have advised that each taxi associa-

tion will independently determine both the extent and timing of fare increases. Sifiso Shangase, office manager for KwaZulu-Natal SANTACO, explained that operators are facing “significant challenges maintaining profitability due to escalating operational costs”, which include but are not limited to fuel expenses.

He said that considerations such as vehicle financing and issues affecting the families of those involved in the industry are also impacted.

Although many commuters understand the reasons behind the fare adjustments, there remains considerable dissatisfaction. Some individuals raise concerns regarding disproportionate pricing for shorter routes, while others emphasize the increased financial burden amid stagnant wages.

“We are over stretched already. When taxi fares go up taxi owners rarely adjust their prices down when the price of fuel comes down,” said Jabu Sithole, a commuter.



BRT decision is going to bankrupt taxi operators

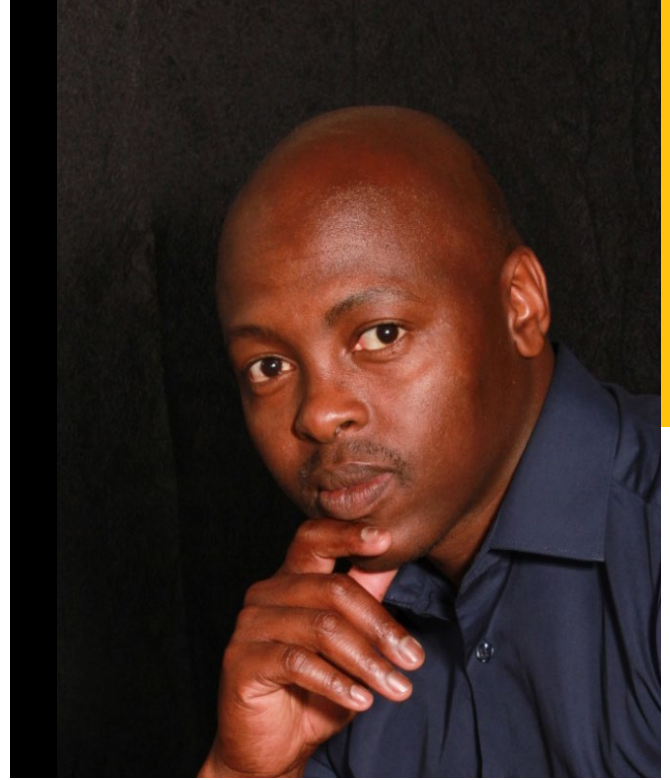
The recent decision regarding the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system poses significant financial challenges for taxi operators.

Once again, the taxi industry finds itself marginalized in government planning processes. Despite numerous negotiations between the government and the taxi sector, tangible results remain elusive.

For example, the Lekgotla resolutions adopted under former Minister of Transport Fikile Mbalula and successive ministers have yet to be effectively implemented, raising concerns about the impact of these policy decisions on the livelihoods of taxi operators.

Many business owners now face potential bankruptcy as they had to relinquish their taxis and operating licenses in order to participate in the BRT initiative. It is imperative that the government acknowledges the critical role played by taxi operators and avoids making commitments that cannot be honoured.

Steps should be taken to protect the interests of those who dedicated their resources to the BRT project, especially in light of the government's decision to discontinue funding without authorities communicating through proper channels well established between authorities and taxi industry – most importantly to acknowledge the financial anxiety of those affected. We need assurances that taxi operators' financial safety net will be considered going forward.



My Help Comes from the Lord

“My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth” — Psalm 121

Friends,

These are challenging and uncertain times for the taxi industry, with constant pressures and changing conditions. Yet we must not lose sight of this truth: our help comes from the Lord.

God remains constant when everything else changes. He sees, He knows, and He is able. This is not the time to lose hope, but to trust Him more and continue calling on His name.

His promises are sure—yes and amen.

Stay encouraged, stay faithful, and remember: you are not alone.

God bless you.

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