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## **A befitting gesture as Mama Ruth Mompoti's sculpture is unveiled...**

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The people of South Africa, in particular the community of Vryburg town in the Bokone Bophirima Province has been challenged to emulate the strong characters of resilience and selflessness, which Mama Ruth Mompoti demonstrated in the freedom struggle and especially women emancipation.

Unveiling the struggle icon's sculpture at an event held on Friday, 10 April 2015 at the now renovated Hayes community Park in Vryburg town, Premier Supra Obakeng Ramoetsi Mahumapelo said honouring Mama Ruth when she is still alive, is the decent and right thing to do.

"Recognising and celebrating the exceptional role Mama Ruth played in the liberation struggle could not be any better than this, as this will help us never to forget our past. We thank you Mama Ruth for having laid a solid foundation for us", said Premier Mahumapelo.

In her acceptance speech, Mama Ruth expressed her gratitude to all for sharing this honour with her. "This statue symbolises the struggle of all races because it is the struggle I was involved in. I dedicate it to all South Africans, especially the people of Vryburg and women of this country", said Mama Ruth Mompoti who further said the sculpture must always be seen as a mark of unity, which all must embrace.

The Hayes community Park where the sculpture is located was recently renovated to the tune of R2.6 million by the national Department of Public Works, and was officially handed over to the Naledi Local Municipality as part of the day's programme which was themed "Celebrating our living heritage and legend".

The event was attended by amongst others, the Deputy Minister of Defence and Military Veterans Mr Kebby Maphatsoe, the Executive Council of the Provincial Administration, Mr Max Sisulu and his wife, the Luthuli Detachments - Military Veterans, the Ruth Mompoti Foundation and hundreds members of the community who were entertained by the renowned Mzwakhe Mbuli's moving poetry which he dedicated to the stalwarts of the struggle, and the legendary William Mthethwa's gospel music.

Mama Ruth as she is affectionately known was born in 1925 at Tlapeng village in Ganyesa outside Vryburg, and was one of the first women to go on exile to pursue the struggle of women liberation. She will be turning 90yrs in September this year.

She received the highest honour of Isithwalandwe – Seaparankwe from President Jacob Zuma in January last year, in recognition of the enormous contribution and sacrifice she made to the struggle for liberation.

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