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Iconic building renamed after struggle hero Latlhi Mabilo

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THE provincial government has vowed to transform buildings and infrastructure with the intention of rewriting history.

The message was delivered during the renaming of the building of the department of social development on Wednesday from Mimosa Complex to Latlhi Mabilo by Premier Sylvia Lucas.

Social development MEC Gift van Staden said the building had a rich history of housing orphans in the early '70s.

"This place was once a home to many

orphaned, abandoned, foster children and children in conflict with the law," Van Staden said.

"It was a safe haven where young people could live and learn in relative peace and security. This was one of four homes or places of safety as it became known later.

"But it had an ugly side to it as it was part of segregated system where people were placed based on race.

"It was only after 1994 when the late Dr Mothlopane who served as MEC for welfare services started with an integration

process and the children of Mimosa home of safety were moved to Tlhokomelo and Lorato Park of Safety.

"Mimosa place of safety was after a consultation process converted to offices from where social development services are rendered."

Van Staden said it was a milestone for the government of the day to have received blessings from the family of Latlhi Mabilo to rename the building after him because he played a very pivotal role in securing the democracy the province enjoys today.

"Today is not just about change, it is also a step in rectifying the past and part of a healing process.

"With the change that we effect today, we not only pay our debt to those gallant fighters for liberation and equality, but we also inspire hope in the generations to come."

Meanwhile, Lucas said although the event was to remember Latlhi Mabilo, it was a sad moment especially on how he lost his life.

Mabilo was killed by the apartheid security branch members in August 1987.

Student was shot in the head, Lucas said the government was continuing with its plans to rename the public buildings and streets after heroes who fought against apartheid in the province.

"We are beneficiaries of ideas and struggles which were aimed at freeing this country from the apartheid regime," Lucas said.

"We must ask ourselves what Latlhi was going to be if he was still alive, drawing from his dedication in the movement and changing the lives of the people.

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