

## **NEW BITYI MAGISTRATE'S COURT:** VIOLENT CRIMES UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

# 'Wheels of justice will move faster'

### **LUVO CAKATA**

**J**USTICE and Correctional Services Minister, Ronald Lamola, said he hoped the newly opened Bityi Magistrate's Court would make the wheels of justice move faster to deal decisively with the rampant crime in the area.

Lamola said this as he officially opened the state-of-the-art court on October 25.

"The state-of-the-art infrastructure in this court, I believe, will allow justice to be dispensed

quickly and the people of the area will feel that justice is being done to deal with violent crimes such as rape, murder and the high rate of stock theft in the area," said Lamola.

The court, which previously operated as a periodical court, for almost 20 years, has now been revamped and boasts infrastructure such as two modern court rooms, which are also equipped with victim-friendly equipment for minors and sexual violence victims to give evidence from another area without interacting with the perpetrator.

Bityi farmer and United Democratic Move-

ment Councillor, Bandile Gqwetha, who had been a victim of stock theft, said he hoped the court would be assigned competent prosecutors and magistrates to deal with the serious crimes in the area.

"As the Bityi community, we welcome the opening of the court and our hope is that the court will assist us in dealing with high crime in the area. We appeal to the government to assign passionate prosecutors and magistrates to this court so that the violent crimes happening in this area can be a thing of the past," said Gqwetha.

As part of his visit to Mthatha, Lamola also paid a visit to the Mthatha High Court for an inspection on the renovations that were recently done to the court, where he was briefed on the scope of work done on the court by the Department of Public Works.

He also visited the AbaThembu acting king Azenathi Dalindyabo and when asked about the progress on the release of incarcerated King Buyelekhaya Dalindyabo, Lamola said that he was not at liberty to divulge the details of the meeting, as it was only the president who could pronounce on the matter.