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Clean-up for the ages

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Kagiso — On 16 June 1976, thousands of young people from Soweto began a protest against the apartheid government after the introduction of many discriminatory laws.

In the wake of clashes with the police and the violence that ensued for weeks following the protests, approximately 700 people (the majority being young people) sacrificed their lives for a great cause that would ensure a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and non-discriminatory South African society.

The aftermath of the events that took place on June 16 had significant consequences for the apartheid government.

Images of the police shooting and killing peacefully demonstrating learners was followed up by international outcry against South Africa as the brutal apartheid system no longer had a place to hide. Meanwhile, liberation movements would be revived as more young leaders would elevate their voices and play their part in making South Africa a democratic nation.

The commemoration of Youth Day last week is still very significant and saw many youngsters and citizens of Mogale City come out to show how they can play a role in making society a better place to live. Whether it is in the form of participating in a school clean-up campaign or a community outreach, residents made sure they would be seen playing their part.

Friends of Emergency Services embarked on a project of making a difference for the youth by cleaning and refurbishing Thuto-Pele Secondary School in Kagiso. Many came out in their numbers to support the project even with some youngsters giving their time when they could have been at home enjoying the long weekend to themselves.

"In today's world, there is no excuse not to do something on behalf of the community.

"There are more ways to be a helpful citizen, hence, we have taken the initiative that we will be cleaning the school for our children," said David Selemogo, who took part in the clean up.

Among the participants who partook in the clean-up event were government stakeholders such as Expanded Public Works Programme workers, youngsters, residents, politicians and more.

The aim of the clean-up was to ensure that the school would not just be a place of learning but a safe space for young people to develop into well-rounded members of society.



Lethabo Magagane was among the youngsters enjoying the clean-up.



A view of the sports grounds at Thuto-Pele Secondary School.



An aerial shot of Thuto-Pele Secondary School. *Photos: Beyers van Staden.*

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