

## LIMPOPO CELEBRATES THE FIRST FRUIT 'U LUMA MUKUMBI'

**By Jermina Kaka**

**Nzhelele:** The MEC for Sport, Arts and Culture, Mme Onicca Moloi and KhosiKhulu ya vhavenda vho Toni Mphephu Ramabulana, the Executive Mayor of Vhembe District Municipality, Florence Radzilani and the Chairperson of Limpopo House of Traditional Leaders, Kgoši Solly Dikgale, led the annual official opening of the First Fruit Season 2017 **U LUMA MUKUMBI'** which was combined with the annual Dzata day, to honour the cultural heritage of the Marula in Nzhelele, Vhembe District.

The ceremony which is held annually since its inception in 2005; is aimed at promoting knowledge and awareness about the African Tradition associated with the golden fruit of Africa 'Marula' and educate the public about the importance of preserving African culture and traditions. Furthermore, the celebration promotes tourism opportunities and economic development with regard to Marula fruits. This event is part of preserving the heritage of the province and marketing Limpopo's cultural and natural heritage, promoting conservation; appreciation and acceptance of indigenous knowledge through museums and living treasures.

The cultural celebration can be done in various ways in such as the history, performance, ritual, popular memory, skills and techniques, indigenous knowledge system and the holistic approach to nature, society and social relationships. The rituals play an important role in promoting cultural diversity, social cohesion, reconciliation, peace and economic development in South Africa.

Like the previous ceremonies, the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture as the custodian and the champion of social cohesion provided thousands of litres of Marula beverage, which was consumed by the public during the event. The day was celebrated through diverse cultural dances throughout the day.

During the programme the MEC for Sport, Arts and Culture, Onicca Moloi appreciated the fusing of two events of which both are led by traditional leaders with the same objectives of brining communities together and educating young people about their roots. The MEC called upon traditional leaders to make sure that the celebration of 'U luma Mukumbi' is not treated as an event but as a process that leads communities in realising the importance preserving our culture, tradition and practices.

KhosiKhulu ya vhavenda vho Toni Mphephu Ramabulana, commended government's initiative of combining Dzata day and U luma Mokumbi as they both have the same objectives of promoting social cohesion and nation building. He said bringing communities together to celebrate culture and tradition is part of restoring human dignity and preserving our heritage.