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### **MEC RAISES FUNDS TO REPAIR 'SPIRITUAL HAVEN'**

Agriculture MEC Msebenzi Zwane has raised R40000 for the renovations of a Uniting Reformed Church in Bolata village in QwaQwa. The church served as one of his political havens during apartheid.

Today, however, the structure is crumbling and in dire need of repair. The roofing is caving in and there are visible cracks in the walls. The toilet is not working properly, a problem which is made worse by water problems in the area.

According to one of the church leaders, Mojalefa Borotheo, the church needed major repairs.

"We approached the MEC about the challenges and he came by without hesitation. He used to help us when he was still the mayor of Thabo Mofutsanyana (district) and so it was not difficult for us to approach him," said Borotheo.

"Our church accommodates about 3000 people and we really needed a safe place for all."

Zwane recalled his younger days at the church which he said played a crucial role in his formative years as a political activist.

"The church defeated apartheid and must still play a key role for South Africans to overcome challenges of unemployment, poverty, inequality and underdevelopment. If you believe, and I believe, the church will make the province a better place for all," he said.

Zwane, who is also the chairperson of the ANC in the Thabo Mofutsanyana region, honoured the life of Charlotte Maxeke, the first black woman to receive a BSc in South Africa.

He urged young women in the congregation to study hard to emulate the achievements of Maxeke and other progressive women.

"Together with the church, we will make the Free State a better place," said Zwane.

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