

## AGANANG LOCAL MUNICIPALITY EMBRACES THE BRAVERY OF 1976 SOWETO YOUTH



**Pictures sourced: Statues of Tsietsi Mashinini and Hector Pieterse memorial.**

Agananag Local Municipality joins South Africa in commemoration of the Youth Month. On 16 June 2015, the municipality will remember the historic moment that took place on 16 June 1976 in the so-called Soweto Uprising. Many lives were lost as many school children protested against the implementation of Afrikaans and English in schools. Today, South African schools are enjoying the use of their mother tongue languages in both public and private schools. Despite many challenges faced by the youth of today, a lot has been done by government in providing education to all children in higher learning. The efforts of 30 students who gathered outside the Phefeni Junior Secondary School have borne good fruits to celebrate under democratic dispensation.

### **Background on Soweto Uprising**

On 16 June 1976, school children protested the implementation of Afrikaans and English as dual medium of instruction in secondary schools on a 50:50 basis. This was implemented throughout South Africa regardless of the locally-spoken language and some exams were also written in Afrikaans. Students gathered to peacefully demonstrate, but the crowd soon became very aggressive when the police arrived, they then started to throw stones. A crowd

of approximately 10,000 started rioting, killing two West Rand Administrative Board members, and burning a number of dogs, vehicles and buildings associated with the police and the Transvaal Education Department.

A group of 30 students gathered outside the Phefeni Junior Secondary School singing the traditional Sotho anthem 'Morena Boloka Sechaba Sa Heso'. When the police arrived the crowd became violent, throwing rocks at the police. The police in turn fired tear gas into the crowd in order to disperse them. There are conflicting accounts of who gave the first command to shoot, but soon children were turning and running in all directions, leaving some children lying wounded on the road.

When Hector was shot, he fell on the corner of Moema and Vilakazi Streets, he was picked up by Mbuyisa Makhubo (an 18-year-old schoolboy) who together with Hector's sister, Antoinette (then 17 years old), ran towards Sam Nzima's car. They bundled him in, and the journalist Sophie Tema drove him to a nearby clinic where he was pronounced dead. Mbuyisa and Nzima were harassed by the police after the incident and both went into hiding. Mbuyisa's mother told the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that she received a letter from Mbuyisa in 1978 from Nigeria but she has not heard from him since. Hector and Hastings Ndlovu are buried at the Avalon Cemetery in Soweto.

### **Aganang supports to Youth programmes**

Aganang Local Municipality provides support to youth programmes and initiatives through various stakeholder forums. As part of celebrating the bravery of 6 June 1976 youth, the municipality will conduct youth empowerment seminar, launch SBCF Youth Structure and conduct road safety campaigns to deal with the use of dangerous weapons and drugs in institutions of learning.



**“Youth taking South Africa forward”**

**Mmogo re tla kgona.**