

## KEY MESSAGES

Workers Day and Month is under the ambit of the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL).

This year (2024), South Africa will commemorate May Month under the theme: **“30 Years Commemoration of Elijah Barayi” supporting the government theme for the 30-year celebration of Freedom**. The Sub-Theme: **“Fighting for justice, equality, and democracy”**. The main event for May Month will be an Elijah Barayi Labour Law lecture in honour of Elijah Barayi which will be held on 15 May 2024 at the University of Johannesburg (UJ), in the Soweto campus, Gauteng. The Labour Law Lecture anticipated to be delivered by the President.

The theme pays tribute to the 30th anniversary of freedom and democracy and 30 years of commemoration since the passing of Elijah Barayi. The whole month of May will be used to reflect on achievements in promoting respect for basic workers' rights and the services provided by the Department of Employment and Labour, its entities and funds, including other government departments' services.

May Month will be activated by Worker's Day also known as May Day. Celebrations of Workers Day will be led by Federations with the Government providing a message to all Workers.

The history of May Day is grounded in the courage of Elijah Barayi and others who opposed racial discrimination and underpayment. As the first president of the Congress of South Africa Trade Unions (COSATU), Barayi played a crucial role in building COSATU into a powerful organization that could effectively negotiate for workers' rights. Elijah Barayi advocated for workers' rights and left a lasting impact on the fight for workers' rights in South Africa. Through these actions, Barayi helped shape South Africa's labour laws and policies, ensuring they were more equitable and fair for workers. The month is also used to honour those who fought for our liberation and to celebrate the many rights guaranteed under our Constitution that we continue to enjoy today.

The key messages are developed to drive talking points during the May Month. They encapsulate the vision and mission of the Department of Employment and Labour, highlighting its commitment to creating a labour market that benefits everyone. The Department and its entities and funds are part of the Department's strategic plan to stabilize the climbing unemployment rate and ensure that immediate actionable steps are put in place.

Key Message	Supporting Statement
<b>Join us as we commemorate Workers' Day/ Month 2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Workers Day is an opportunity to remember and honour those who made it possible for us to achieve freedom and democracy</li><li>➤ This includes the courage of Elijah Barayi who opposed racial discrimination and underpayment.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ As the first president of the Congress of South Africa Trade Unions (COSATU), Barayi played a crucial role in building COSATU into a powerful organization that could effectively negotiate for workers' rights.</li> <li>➤ Through these actions, Barayi helped shape South Africa's labour laws and policies, ensuring they were more equitable and fair for workers. His contributions continue to influence South Africa's labour landscape today</li> </ul>
<p><b>Promoting Economic Efficiency and Productivity</b></p>	<p>The Department of Employment and Labour strives to improve economic efficiency and productivity through well-crafted policies and programmes</p>
<p><b>Services designed to protect workers' rights, promote fair labour practices, and foster a conducive work environment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Short-term relief to workers when they become unemployed or are unable to work because of maternity, adoption leave, or illness.</li> <li>➤ The Inspection and Enforcement Services works to realize decent work by advocating employment laws to employers and regulating non-employment and employment conditions through inspection and enforcement, to achieve compliance with all labour market policies.</li> <li>➤ Regulate the labour market by ensuring compliance with employment laws through advocacy, inspections and enforcement.</li> <li>➤ Registration of Incidents, occupational diseases and complaints relating to labour relations and occupational health and safety matters, as reported by members of the public, and communicates these to the relevant structures within the Compliance, Monitoring, and Enforcement sub-programme for investigation.</li> <li>➤ Job creation, and job opportunities through the Labour Activation Programme.</li> <li>➤ focus on the development of labour policy and legislation, collective bargaining, and industrial relations</li> <li>➤ Provision of services to assist companies to fill vacancies more quickly and help job seekers find work through the Essa system.</li> <li>➤ Provision of compensation for disablement caused by occupational injuries or diseases sustained or contracted by employees in the course of their employment, or for death resulting from such injuries or diseases</li> <li>➤ Offering a range of online services including the Web Self Service Ticketing System for Contact Centre, Employment Services of South Africa</li> </ul>

	(PES), Inspection and Enforcement Services (IES), ROE Online, Employment Equity Online Reporting (EE), UIF Online Services (Ufiling), UIF e-Compliance Certificate, COVID 19 TERS online applications, National Minimum Wage (NMW), and eCOID- Compensation Made Easy.
<b>Creating Decent Employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Department of Employment and Labour's mission is to create decent employment opportunities for all, fostering a labour market that is conducive to investment, economic growth, and employment creation</li> <li>➤ Short-term relief to workers when they become unemployed or are unable to work because of maternity, adoption leave, or illness.</li> <li>➤ The Inspection and Enforcement Services works to realize decent work by regulating non-employment and employment conditions through inspection and enforcement, to achieve compliance with all labour market policies</li> </ul>
<b>Upholding Labour Standards and Rights</b>	We are committed to promoting labour standards and fundamental rights at work, ensuring a fair and equitable workplace for everyone.
<b>Providing Social Safety Nets</b>	We provide adequate social safety nets to protect vulnerable workers, ensuring no one is left behind
<b>Fostering Sound Labour Relations</b>	<p>We aim to foster sound labour relations, promoting a harmonious and productive work environment <b>through:</b></p> <p><b>Freedom of Association</b></p> <p>This fundamental principle is enshrined in the Act to protect the rights of workers to join and participate in trade unions of their choice. The LRA recognizes the importance of workers' ability to organize collectively and bargain collectively with employers. It prohibits any form of discrimination or victimization against workers based on their union membership or participation in union activities.</p> <p><b>Conferring Organisations Rights</b></p> <p>The trade unions registered with the Registrar of Labour Relations enjoy various organizational rights. These include seeking recognition from employers for collective bargaining, accessing workplaces to recruit members and represent their interests, engaging in collective bargaining for better wages and conditions, and having union dues deducted from employees' wages. These</p>

	<p>rights aim to support trade unions in their functions and ensure workers can organize, bargain collectively, and advocate for their rights in the workplace effectively.</p> <p><b>Promote Collective Bargaining</b></p> <p>The Act provides a framework for collective bargaining processes, including procedures for negotiating collective agreements on wages, working conditions, and other employment-related matters. By promoting collective bargaining, the LRA aims to foster constructive dialogue between employers and employees, facilitate the negotiation of mutually beneficial agreements, and maintain stable labour and sound relations.</p> <p>The Minister can extend collective agreements concluded by bargaining councils to non-parties as way of protecting vulnerable workers in the sector.</p>
<p><b>Eliminating Inequality and Discrimination</b></p>	<p>The DEL is dedicated to eliminating inequality and discrimination in the workplace, promoting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity and inclusion.</li> <li>• Principle of equal pay for work of equal values.</li> <li>• Prevention and Elimination of Harassment in the Workplace (Harassment Code)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enhancing Occupational Health and Safety</b></p>	<p>The DEL OHS aim for an improved culture of compliance through enhancing occupational health and safety awareness and compliance in the workplace</p>
<p><b>Valuing Social Dialogue</b></p>	<p>We value social dialogue in the formulation of sound and responsive legislation and policies to attain labour market flexibility for the competitiveness of enterprises which is balanced with the promotion of decent employment</p>
<p><b>Programmes, Entities and Funds of the Department UIF, CF, LAP, LP&amp;IR</b></p>	<p>Through our programmes entities and funds, we are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ provide short-term relief to workers when they become unemployed or are unable to work because of maternity, adoption leave, or illness<sup>1</sup>. It has recently launched a new R23.8 billion Labour Activation Programme to provide training for employment and entrepreneurship programmes.</li> <li>➤ Create job opportunities. For instance, the Department of Employment and Labour, through its entity, the UIF, has entered into partnerships</li> </ul>

	<p>with private businesses, SETAs and NGOs to create thousands of employment opportunities for residents of all nine provinces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Focus on the development of labour policy and legislation, collective bargaining, and industrial relations</li><li>➤ Provide services to assist companies in filling vacancies more quickly and help job seekers find work</li><li>➤ Provide compensation for disablement caused by occupational injuries or diseases sustained or contracted by employees in the course of their employment, or for death resulting from such injuries or diseases</li></ul>
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