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## JDA COMPLETES HECTOR PIETERSON MEMORIAL COURTYARD REVAMP AHEAD OF HISTORIC 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION



The [Johannesburg Development Agency](http://www.jda.org.za) (JDA), on behalf of the City of Johannesburg, has successfully completed the revamp of the courtyard at the [Hector Pieterse Memorial and Museum](http://www.joburg.org.za) in Orlando West, Soweto, ahead of the landmark 50th anniversary of the 1976 Soweto Uprising.

The completion of the project ensures that one of South Africa's most important heritage sites is ready to welcome thousands of visitors, dignitaries, residents, learners and international guests who will gather to commemorate the bravery and sacrifice of the young people of 1976.

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The courtyard revamp included the installation of new paving, upgraded lighting, enhanced memorial features, new seating, landscaping improvements and the installation of engraved granite memorial panels bearing the names of those who lost their lives during the uprising. Waterproofing and other infrastructure improvements were also undertaken to preserve the site and improve the visitor experience.

The Hector Pieterse Memorial and Museum stands as a powerful symbol of youth resistance and courage. Named after Hector Pieterse, whose death became one of the defining images of apartheid-era South Africa, the site commemorates the students who took a stand against injustice and helped change the course of the nation's history.

This year marks a significant milestone in South Africa's democratic journey. 16 June 2026 marks the [50th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising](#) and presents an important opportunity for reflection on the events of that time and their enduring impact on South African society.

The commemoration will be observed under the national theme: "RESET @50 – Our National Commitment to the Future for Freedom Lives in Every Generation."

As part of the City's official programme, a wreath-laying ceremony will take place at the Hector Pieterse Memorial, led by President Cyril Ramaphosa, Gauteng Premier Panyaza Lesufi and Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Cllr Dada Morero.

The ceremony will be followed by a solemn commemorative march to Orlando Stadium, retracing the route taken by the students whose courage and determination became a defining moment in the struggle for freedom.

The completion of the courtyard revamp forms part of the City's broader commitment to preserving heritage infrastructure and ensuring that future generations can continue to engage with the stories, sacrifices and lessons of the past.

The wreath-laying ceremony will serve as the centrepiece of Johannesburg's Youth Month programme, which is being rolled out across all seven regions of the city. The programme seeks to balance remembrance with initiatives focused on youth empowerment, participation, development and active citizenship.

As Johannesburg joins the nation in commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Soweto Uprising, the revitalised courtyard stands as both a tribute to those who came before and an investment in ensuring their legacy continues to inspire generations to come.

ENDS

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[Hector Pieterse Museum](#)  
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