
Bibi Cash & Carry and NEF celebrate the launch of new flagship store in Phuthaditjhaba

[SOUTH AFRICA] Phuthaditjhaba, Free State Province – Today, Bibi Cash & Carry Supermarket, in collaboration with the National Empowerment Fund (NEF), proudly celebrated the grand opening of its new flagship store at Setsing Plaza, Phuthaditjhaba, attracting more than 15 000 shoppers.

This event marks a significant expansion of a leading 100% black-owned retail enterprise and highlights a pivotal moment in township economic development.

Bibi Cash and Carry's beginnings and strategic expansion

Founded in 1999 by Mr Tommy MacMillian Makhatho, Bibi Cash and Carry has grown from humble beginnings to become a significant player in the Free State retail sector.

Makhatho's journey began in the early 1980s with a modest hair salon venture in Soweto, which eventually led him to distribute hair-care products across the Free State, Northern Cape and Lesotho. This early business experience paved the way for the establishment of the salon business, Jabula Cosmetics in 1991 and the subsequent transition to the supermarket sector.

Says Mr Makhatho: "Today's launch is a proud milestone for Bibi Cash & Carry and was made possible by the NEF's valued support. This new flagship store demonstrates our commitment to our customers' convenience and our ongoing efforts to deliver non-stop value to our community."

"The company's expansion has been driven largely by Mr Makhatho's vision and determination, primarily from personal resources and some loans. Bibi Cash and Carry's growth trajectory has included the opening of new stores, distribution centres and the introduction of innovative services such as the Bibi Funeral Grocery Scheme," says Mr Mziwabantu Dayimani, the Acting Chief Executive Officer of the NEF.

Market Segmentation and Growth Potential

Bibi Cash and Carry primarily serves lower-income market segments (LSM 1-3), focusing on affordability and accessibility. The company operates two distribution centres, five supermarkets, four bottle stores, a Training Academy and seven spaza shops, employing over 800 black South Africans. The new flagship store features expanded parking, a broader product range and improved infrastructure, positioning Bibi to attract a wider customer base and enabling it to compete more effectively against national chains.

"The new store in Setsing is funded by the NEF and the investment is a testament to our commitment to supporting black-owned businesses and fostering economic growth in under-served regions. This partnership will enable Bibi Cash and Carry to enhance its operations, create new job opportunities and strengthen the local

economy. It is a vital step in advancing inclusive growth in the Free State,” Mr Dayimani said.

Competitor landscape and industry overview

In South Africa, the wholesale and retail trade of food is predominantly controlled by major national supermarket chains such as Shoprite, Pick n Pay, Spar and Woolworths, says Mr Makhatho.

In Phuthaditjhaba and the surrounding region, Bibi Cash and Carry competes with both national and independent retailers, including Shoprite, Pick n Pay and Spar. Despite this competitive pressure, Bibi has secured meaningful market share in the province, reflecting its resilience and strong resonance with the target market.

A new dawn for the township economy

“The NEF is proud to be part of this success story and looks forward to seeing its continued positive impact on the community,” concluded Mr Dayimani.

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NOTES TO EDITOR

About the National Empowerment Fund (NEF)

The National Empowerment Fund (NEF) is committed to promoting black economic empowerment and driving sustainable economic growth in South Africa. Through strategic investments and funding, the NEF supports black entrepreneurs and businesses, fostering inclusive growth and job creation across various sectors.

About Bibi Cash and Carry

Bibi Cash and Carry Supermarket (Pty) Ltd is a leading black-owned wholesale and retail business based in the Free State. Since its establishment in 1999, the company has expanded its operations significantly, contributing to local employment and community development through its diverse retail outlets and services.

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