



a world class African city



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REVAMP OF COURTYARD AT HECTOR PIETERSON MUSEUM AND MEMORIAL



The [Johannesburg Development Agency](http://www.jda.org.za) (JDA), on behalf of the City of Johannesburg, will soon begin upgrading the courtyard exhibition at the [Hector Pieterse Memorial and Museum](http://www.joburg.org.za) in Orlando West. The project aims to uphold the dignity of this internationally recognised heritage site while enhancing the overall visitor experience.

The planned revamp focuses on refreshing and upgrading the courtyard to create a respectful, accessible, and safe space for visitors, learners, and families who come to reflect and remember.

Building a better city

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A key feature of the upgrade will be the installation of a prominent series of engraved granite panels bearing the names of more than 500 victims of the 16 June 1976 events.

Additional improvements that visitors will notice include:

- Replacing worn and uneven courtyard surfaces to improve safety and comfort
- Installing new paving and waterproofing to enhance durability and reduce water damage
- Upgrading lighting to ensure clear visibility and always preserve the dignity of the space
- Adding seating and landscaped planting to create a calm and contemplative environment

The upgrades are scheduled for completion ahead of the 50th Anniversary of the 1976 Student Uprising, commemorated in June this year, ensuring the site is enriched for current and future generations.

A Site of Deep National Significance

The Hector Pieterse Memorial and Museum stands as one of South Africa's most important places of remembrance. It honours the young people who lost their lives during the 1976 Soweto Uprising, when students protested the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in schools.

Named after 12-year-old Hector Pieterse, one of the first casualties of the protests, the site preserves the memory of a generation whose bravery played a defining role in South Africa's journey toward democracy.

Through photographs, oral histories, and memorial design elements—such as the Garden of Remembrance and engraved names—the museum ensures that the story of 16 June 1976 continues to be told. Youth Day, observed annually on 16 June, serves as a national reminder of the sacrifices and courage of the country's youth.

Preserving Memory for Future Generations

The courtyard revamp forms part of the City of Johannesburg's ongoing commitment to maintaining heritage infrastructure and safeguarding spaces that carry profound historical and emotional significance.

By improving the condition and accessibility of the memorial environment, the project ensures that learners, residents, tourists, and future generations can continue to visit, reflect, and connect with this pivotal moment in South Africa's history.

ENDS

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[Hector Pieterse Museum](#)

[Hector Pieterse gets his Memorial](#)

[Soweto Museums](#)