

Chippa soccer boss to launch radio station

Chippa United owner Siviwe Mpengesi has made a significant investment in the Eastern Cape's airwaves by purchasing a historic broadcasting building in Bhisho, previously home to TruFm.



Chippa United chair Siviwe Mpengesi (Randell Roskrug)

Chippa United owner Siviwe “Chippa” Mpengesi has invested in the Eastern Cape’s airwaves by purchasing a historic broadcasting building in Bhisho, previously home to TruFM.

The building has a rich history, having housed prominent radio stations, including the former Radio Ciskei and CKI FM (now TruFM).

Mpengesi said venturing into the broadcasting industry was one of many ways he was uplifting the province.

He is now negotiating to acquire an Icasa licence from Rhythm FM’s owners, who launched the station but failed to sustain operations due to financial constraints.

Rhythm FM was spearheaded by Umhlobo Wenene sports presenter Putco Mafani and radio guru Given Mkhari.

TruFM was the latest radio station operating from the building before moving to Gqeberha.

Mpengesi said he was looking forward to bringing life to the regional radio industry, showcasing local talent and providing vital news.

“We are aiming to open a commercial radio station that will cover the entire Eastern Cape,” he said.

He said the discussion about the licence was ongoing.

“We are ready to start; there’s already a set-up and everything. The studio already has everything we need.”

Though the entrepreneur masterminded the initiative, Mpengesi said he would pass on the baton to young and talented individuals to lead the station in the right direction.

“Like Chippa United, I own the team but I am not the coach. I am going to hire people in the industry and broadcasters within the Eastern Cape,” he said.

“It’s something that the community needs. There are lot of beautiful and untold stories. The radio station will be a radio station for black people — I’m not apologetic about that.”

Mafani confirmed the negotiations were continuing and that the issue was at board level.

“There’s nothing official as yet, but I hear from some of the board members that talks with them have begun.

“I don’t think it’s a bad move for him and neither do I think it’s a bad move for us.”

He said he was optimistic that Mpengesi’s venture into broadcasting would yield positive results.

“Mpengesi is an ambitious businessman, so I don’t think it’ll be a bad venture.

“If he owns the building where my career started, that’ll be interesting to see how far it’ll go and what he’ll bring to the table.”

Icasa spokesperson Milly Matlou said they had not received an application to transfer the licence at this stage.

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