WEEK 8

DIGITAL BUZZ

SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYSIS OF THE #LGE2026

Compiled by
Keamogetswe Sere

Edited by
Ntombifuthi Kubeka

Designed by
Kgothatso Baatile Mohale

www.moxiiafrica.org

Introduction

Week 8 marks a significant milestone in tracking online conversations around the upcoming Local Government Elections (LGE), representing two months of sustained public discourse. Throughout this period, social media discussions have reflected evolving voter priorities, campaign narratives, political developments and emerging issues influencing public discourse. This week's brief highlights the key themes, trends and drivers shaping online conversation as election campaigning to intensify.

This 8th edition of the LGE Digital Buzz report, compiled by Moxii Africa covers the period 24 to 30 September 2026. As with previous editions, monitoring is conducted using the Meltwater platform, applying a keyword set spanning major political parties, leading candidates and figures, and broad electoral terms designed to capture organic conversation across the online space.

Insights and Trends framing this week

- This week, election-related discourse was framed by growing public demands for accountability, safety, economic opportunity and effective service delivery.
- While political parties continued campaigning around jobs, housing and municipal governance, online conversations were heavily influenced by concerns over violent crime, gender-based violence, governance failures and broader debates around South Africa's social and political identity.
- Service delivery, housing, infrastructure and municipal performance remained dominant electoral issues.
- Opposition narratives focused on governance failures such as housing delivery and title deeds, even as the ANC's campaign messaging emphasized employment opportunities and economic growth.
- Persistent unemployment continued to fuel criticism of government performance, particularly among youth, graduates and older job seekers, reflecting broader national discussions around municipal governance and community demands ahead of the elections.
- Public outrage over violent crime remained one of the strongest drivers of online conversation this week. This discovery of multiple murdered women in Ekurhuleni intensified concerns around GBV and femicide.

About Moxii Africa's Election Work

Moxii Africa has monitored every democratic election in South Africa since 1994, bringing three decades of independent, evidence-based media monitoring to safeguard information integrity. For #LGE2026, Moxii Africa anchors the Partnership on Information Integrity in Elections (PIIE) —working in partnership key stakeholders and with the IEC to safeguard information integrity in elections. Other election work focuses on tracking media coverage, monitoring political party ad spending via PAdRe, and holding candidates accountable.

Explore live media tracking, accountability tools, and election insights at Moxii Africa's LGE2026 Hub or learn more about the coalition at PIIE. Important Notice: For official election dates, voter registration details, candidate lists, and official results, please consult only the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

Report Online Harm: Seen something misleading online? Report disinformation, hate speech, or incitement through Real411, the official platform for reporting digital electoral harms.

- Mass shootings and rising crime levels contributed to growing criticism of policing effectiveness and criminal justice outcomes.
- Government responses to GBV were met with scepticism, with many users demanding investigations, prosecutions and tangible action rather than public sentiments.
- President Ramaphosa's acknowledgement of public anger and the announcement of new GBV intervention received significant attention online.
- Conversations around apartheid legacy, reconciliation, privilege and land reform remained highly contested, with "white genocide" narratives resurfacing and generating significant engagement both domestically and internationally, notably disputed by figures including President Ramaphosa and Ambassador Roelf Meyer, both of whom rejected the claim.
- South Africa's diplomatic role on the continent remained visible through the President's engagement on South Sudan's electoral transition, reinforcing the country's positioning as a regional mediator and advocate for African-led solutions.
- Immigration enforcement and international diplomatic tensions generated debate around sovereignty, national interests and African solidarity, with foreign policy discussions often overlapping with domestic conversations about governance and international perceptions of South Africa.
- Corruption, governance failures and public sector accountability remained recurring points of criticism directed at government institutions.
- Discussions reflected growing demands for transparency and consequences for poor governance
- Ongoing scrutiny of political leadership, public spending and institutional performance contributed to broader election-related dissatisfaction
- Online audiences increasingly linked local government performance to voting decisions ahead of the elections.

About Moxii Africa's Election Work

Moxii Africa has monitored every democratic election in South Africa since 1994, bringing three decades of independent, evidence-based media monitoring to safeguard information integrity. For #LGE2026, Moxii Africa anchors the Partnership on Information Integrity in Elections (PIIE)—working in partnership key stakeholders and with the IEC to safeguard information integrity in elections. Other election work focuses on tracking media coverage, monitoring political party ad spending via PAdRe, and holding candidates accountable.

Explore live media tracking, accountability tools, and election insights at Moxii Africa's LGE2026 Hub or learn more about the coalition at PIIE. Important Notice: For official election dates, voter registration details, candidate lists, and official results, please consult only the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

Report Online Harm: Seen something misleading online? Report disinformation, hate speech, or incitement through Real411, the official platform for reporting digital electoral harms.

What are people talking about?

- Conversation remains anchored around the ANC and EFF with Cyril Rampahosa and Julius Malema again the most visible figures, alongside Herman Mashaba's ActionSA and continued hashtag activity (#voteanc2026, #voteeff2026, #voteactionsa, #lge2026)
- The prominence of Nelson Mandela, apartheid, land, and AfriForum highlights the extent to which historical grievances, reconciliation and land reform and racial tensions continue to shape political discourse.
- Conversations reflected competing interpretations of South Africa's democratic transition, with users debating Mandela's legacy, apartheid's long-term effects and responsibility for contemporary socio-economic challenges.
- These discussions were often linked to broader debates around race relations, national identity, transformation and land ownership
- Race, land, and "apartheid2.0" framing drove further polarization, tied to renewed international attention including disputed "white genocide" claims and a broader diplomatic rift between Washington and Pretoria over land expropriation, farm security and racial-redress laws, with AfriForum featuring prominently in this thread.

About Moxii Africa's Election Work

Moxii Africa has monitored every democratic election in South Africa since 1994, bringing three decades of independent, evidence-based media monitoring to safeguard information integrity. For #LGE2026, Moxii Africa anchors the Partnership on Information Integrity in Elections (PIIE)—working in partnership key stakeholders and with the IEC to safeguard information integrity in elections. Other election work focuses on tracking media coverage, monitoring political party ad spending via PAdRe, and holding candidates accountable.

Explore live media tracking, accountability tools, and election insights at Moxii Africa's LGE2026 Hub or learn more about the coalition at PIIE. Important Notice: For official election dates, voter registration details, candidate lists, and official results, please consult only the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

Report Online Harm: Seen something misleading online? Report disinformation, hate speech, or incitement through Real411, the official platform for reporting digital electoral harms.

- The Madlanga commission remained a significant institutional story, with its public hearings paused for in-camera evidence and set to resume on 9 November 2026 alongside Sibanyonis PUTCO negotiations drawing scrutiny over a photograph with Ramaphosa and Mantashe and questions about whether his community engagement crossed into coercive conduct.
- The appearance of violence and Ekurhuleni reflects significant engagement around the discovery of multiple women's bodies and the broader GBVF crisis.
- Discussions focused on public safety, policing effectiveness, accountability and government responses to gender-based violence.
- The strong presence of these terms indicates that crime and safety concerns continued to influence perceptions of governance ahead of the elections.
- Immigration remained a major flashpoint with "foreigners" and "immigration laws" being both prominent keywords.
- Debate centred on lawful enforcement and documentation versus broader claims blaming foreign nationals for job, tender and public resource competition which is an argument some commentators pushed back on directly.
- The prominence of governments, Johannesburg, Pretoria, PUTCO Bus Services, Gwede Mantashe and Ronald Lamola suggests ongoing scrutiny of political leadership, public institutions and government decision-making.
- Conversations reflected broader concerns about transparency, corruption, service delivery failures and political accountability.
- Municipal governance issues remained particularly visible in discussions relating to Johannesburg and surrounding metropolitan areas.
- The visibility of UNGA, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Nigeria, Peter Obi and Trump indicate that international and continental political developments formed part of local conversations.
- Discussions also frequently connect South Africa's domestic challenge with foreign policy, international perceptions, migration and diplomatic affairs.

What are people talking about?

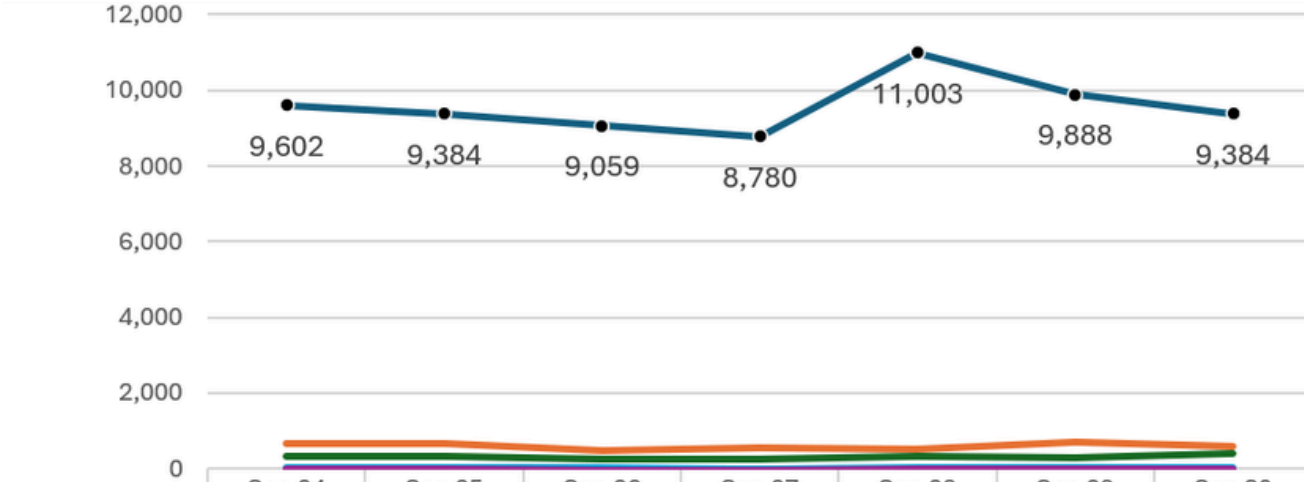
About Moxii Africa's Election Work

Moxii Africa has monitored every democratic election in South Africa since 1994, bringing three decades of independent, evidence-based media monitoring to safeguard information integrity. For #LGE2026, Moxii Africa anchors the Partnership on Information Integrity in Elections (PIIE) —working in partnership key stakeholders and with the IEC to safeguard information integrity in elections. Other election work focuses on tracking media coverage, monitoring political party ad spending via PAdRe, and holding candidates accountable.

Explore live media tracking, accountability tools, and election insights at Moxii Africa's LGE2026 Hub or learn more about the coalition at PIIE. Important Notice: For official election dates, voter registration details, candidate lists, and official results, please consult only the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

Report Online Harm: Seen something misleading online? Report disinformation, hate speech, or incitement through Real411, the official platform for reporting digital electoral harms.

Mentions Over Time by Source Type



	Sep 24	Sep 25	Sep 26	Sep 27	Sep 28	Sep 29	Sep 30
X	9,602	9,384	9,059	8,780	11,003	9,888	9,384
Facebook	670	656	492	543	511	688	603
YouTube	327	336	245	262	343	288	407
Bluesky	39	13	11	10	14	26	12
LinkedIn	6	5	0	0	5	7	7

- **Overview:** X carried most of the daily volume throughout the week, consistently above 8700 mentions while Facebook, YouTube, Bluesky and LinkedIn combined stayed under 1200 mentions on every single day. There was also a high spike on the 28th of September 2026 with 11 003 mentions on X.
- **Peak Activity:** Mentions dipped steadily from 9602 on the start of the monitoring week to a low 8781 on 8780 on 27th September, before spiking sharply to 11 003 on 28 September which is the week's highest volume then easing back to 9888 on 29th September and 9834 by 30 September
- **Likely Drivers for the peak:** The 27th of September dip reflects a quieter day of routine political discourse with ongoing service delivery complaints and no major mobilizing event. The spike on 28th September was driven primarily by the announcement and mobilization around the "March and March" national protest planned for 30 September which shifted focus toward GBV and crime following recent femicide cases, rather than its original anti-immigration framing. President Ramaphosa's national address responding to the planned protest alongside continued coverage of crime, governance failures and EFF/ANC electoral legitimacy debates further amplified conversation on the day.

About Moxii Africa's Election Work

Moxii Africa has monitored every democratic election in South Africa since 1994, bringing three decades of independent, evidence-based media monitoring to safeguard information integrity. For #LGE2026, Moxii Africa anchors the Partnership on Information Integrity in Elections (PIIE) —working in partnership key stakeholders and with the IEC to safeguard information integrity in elections. Other election work focuses on tracking media coverage, monitoring political party ad spending via PAdRe, and holding candidates accountable.

Explore live media tracking, accountability tools, and election insights at Moxii Africa's LGE2026 Hub or learn more about the coalition at PIIE. Important Notice: For official election dates, voter registration details, candidate lists, and official results, please consult only the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

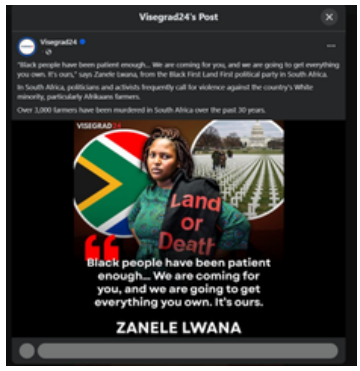
Report Online Harm: Seen something misleading online? Report disinformation, hate speech, or incitement through Real411, the official platform for reporting digital electoral harms.

Top 10 Authors

	Accounts	Mentions	Estimated Views	Engagement	Reach
1	ces	1	386K	32.6K	1.76K
2	Herman Mashaba	28	534K	18.3K	22.3m
3	Danilo	1	295K	14.9K	406K
4	Ivyn Sambo	4	200K	10.1K	329K
5	Sir Lebona Cabonena	39	111K	8.57K	624K
6	La-Ndlovu	2	61K	8.19K	34.4K
7	Economic Freedom Fighters	36	289K	8.02K	85.5m
8	V.Mkhza	5	68.8K	7K	2.89K
9	Khoisan_Duduza CD	3	86K	6.29K	37.7K
10	News Algebra	2	205K	6.24K	1.62m

- The conversation was primarily driven by audience engagement with news and political pages, rather than individual politicians or public figures with comment sections emerging as the main spaces for discussion.
- Comments on SABC News were the most active author, generating 846 mentions, 36 800 engagement and an estimated 116 million reach. This highlights the role of mainstream media in shaping election-related discourse
- ANC-affiliated accounts, including ANC 24/7, MyANC AND ANC Eastern Cape, feature prominently, reflecting continued campaign activity and supporter mobilization ahead of the LGE
- Several authors achieved high engagement and reach despite relatively low mention volumes, demonstrating that influence was driven more by audience resonance than posting frequency.
- For example, ANC 24/7 generated only 22 mentions but achieved 30.7K engagements and a 73.4M reach, while Comment on The Presidency generated 27 mentions but reached 23.5M users.
- Visegrad24 and Man's NOT Barry Rou, a very well-known X user, record only 1 and 2 mentions respectively, yet both generated more than 13K engagements, indicating that a small number of highly engaging posts can significantly influence conversation
- Comment sections on SABC News, eNCA, Newzroom Afrika, ActionSA and The Presidency collectively generated substantial engagement, suggesting that users were actively debating key issues rather than simply amplifying campaign content
- Compared to previous weeks, the discussion was less driven by prominent political personalities and more public reactions to issues such as governance, GBVF immigration, service delivery and election campaigning reflecting a more grassroots and issue driven conversation.

Top 5 Most Engaged Content



Click on the image to see the actual post

Call to action for the public and platforms

As the Local Government Elections draw closer, the online conversation continues to reflect growing public concern around service delivery, community safety, governance, economic opportunities, and social cohesion. Citizens are encouraged to engage responsibly in political discussions, verify information before sharing it, and participate constructively in democratic processes. At the same time, social media platforms should continue to monitor and address harmful misinformation, coordinated manipulation, and inflammatory content that may contribute to polarization or undermine public trust. Promoting informed, respectful, and fact-based engagement will be critical to ensuring that online spaces support meaningful democratic participation and help voters make informed decisions ahead of election day.

About Moxii Africa's Election Work

Moxii Africa has monitored every democratic election in South Africa since 1994, bringing three decades of independent, evidence-based media monitoring to safeguard information integrity. For #LGE2026, Moxii Africa anchors the Partnership on Information Integrity in Elections (PIIE) —working in partnership key stakeholders and with the IEC to safeguard information integrity in elections. Other election work focuses on tracking media coverage, monitoring political party ad spending via PAdRe, and holding candidates accountable.

Explore live media tracking, accountability tools, and election insights at Moxii Africa's LGE2026 Hub or learn more about the coalition at PIIE.
Important Notice: For official election dates, voter registration details, candidate lists, and official results, please consult only the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

Report Online Harm: Seen something misleading online? Report disinformation, hate speech, or incitement through Real411, the official platform for reporting digital electoral harms.

Moxii Africa has monitored every democratic election in South Africa since 1994, bringing three decades of independent, evidence-based media monitoring to safeguard information integrity. For #LGE2026, Moxii Africa anchors the Partnership on Information Integrity in Elections (PIIE), working with key stakeholders and the IEC to safeguard information integrity in elections. Other election work focuses on tracking media coverage, monitoring political party ad spending via PAdRe, and holding candidates accountable.

Stay ahead of the LGE26 narrative with Dexter, Moxii Africa's media monitoring platform that captures live and near-live election trends across print, broadcast, and digital news. Discover who gets heard, what drives headlines, and how media quality shapes public understanding in real time.

Explore live media tracking, accountability tools, and election insights at Moxii Africa's LGE2026 Hub or learn more about the coalition at PIIE.

Important Notice: For official election dates, voter registration details, candidate lists, and official results, please consult only the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

Report Online Harm: Seen something misleading online? Report disinformation, hate speech, or incitement through Real411, the official platform for reporting digital electoral harms.

CONTACT US

For any questions, comments, or clarifications, please contact Moxii Africa Formerly Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) from Media Monitoring Africa on (011) 788 1278 or email:keamos@mma.org.za

About Moxii Africa's Election Work

Moxii Africa has monitored every democratic election in South Africa since 1994, bringing three decades of independent, evidence-based media monitoring to safeguard information integrity. For #LGE2026, Moxii Africa anchors the Partnership on Information Integrity in Elections (PIIE) —working in partnership key stakeholders and with the IEC to safeguard information integrity in elections. Other election work focuses on tracking media coverage, monitoring political party ad spending via PAdRe, and holding candidates accountable.

Explore live media tracking, accountability tools, and election insights at Moxii Africa's LGE2026 Hub or learn more about the coalition at PIIE.
Important Notice: For official election dates, voter registration details, candidate lists, and official results, please consult only the Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC).

Report Online Harm: Seen something misleading online? Report disinformation, hate speech, or incitement through Real411, the official platform for reporting digital electoral harms.