

DID YOU KNOW?

At its ordinary meeting held on 13 March 2013, Cabinet condemned incidences of violence that occur in our society and called on communities to stand up against violence and seek peaceful ways of resolving conflict.



MY DISTRICT TODAY

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Outcome 5: A Skilled and Capable Workforce to Support an inclusive Growth Path

University of Mpumalanga gets go-ahead

Tiisetso Ramotse GCIS Mpumalanga and Zibonele Mncwango (Premier's office)

From the 2012 and 2013 state of the nation addresses by President Jacob Zuma, the establishment of Universities in Mpumalanga and Northern Cape attracted interest countrywide especially from residents of these two provinces.

Wednesday 6 March 2013 marked the beginning of a journey towards the establishment of a university in Mpumalanga when the Minister for Higher Education and Training, Blade Nzimande, and Premier David Mabuza signed a record of intent to hand over the provincial government land for the establishment of the university. This special Cabinet session was held at the Gert Sibande District Council Chamber.



Minister Nzimande and Premier Mabuza signing the record of intent to hand over provincial government land for establishment of the university in Mpumalanga.

Giving the progress report, Minister Nzimande said the launch and sod turning for the university will take place in September. Plans for the construction of the university are at an advanced stage, but they are awaiting a few critical arrangements.

Minister Nzimande said at least R10,3 billion has been budgeted for the ten-year developmental plan. The university is expected to be fully functional by year 2024. By 2024 the new university is expected to be admitting at least 15 000 students.

The main campus will be in Mbombela Local Municipality on an approximately 480 m² of land adjacent the Lowveld College of Agriculture. The university is envisaged by then to have established satellite campuses consistent with the socio-economic strength of Nkangala and Gert Sibande district.



Minister of Higher Education and Training, MEC Phosa, Prof Rensburg and his colleagues briefing media houses after the launch of the Siyabuswa College of Education. The shortage of teachers with relevant skills was said to be a concern. The minister also talked about building a strong foundation and improving the quality of education and pass rates.

The Siyabuswa College that offers Bachelor's degree in foundation phase education was launched a week ago and will be incorporated into the university according to the minister.

In terms of the establishment of the university, the minister encouraged all stakeholders to start working together for this project. He requested the Mbombela Municipality and the provincial government to upgrade the link roads and provide bulk infrastructure such as water and electricity for the university. The municipality and the province should also work on the required legislative processes as well as gazetting the university.

In conclusion, the minister mentioned forming technical and political committees to ensure proper progress in establishing the university. The premier immediately responded by appointing three members of the executive to form part of the working team: Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs MEC Simon Sikhosana, Education MEC Regina Mhaule and Roads Transport and Public Works MEC Dikeledi Mahlangu. At the appointment he said, "This is one of the best developments in our lifetimes. We are committing to help the minister and his department to work."

Minister Nzimande appreciated the support from the executive saying the university would definitely improve the future of Mpumalanga and South Africa.

"There is nothing that excites me more than this project. We want to move further now and put the shovel on the ground. We are excited about the support and the understanding we have received from the Mpumalanga executive council. All we need now is to assist Mbombela Municipality to revise its integrated development plan and include the building of the university," Minister Nzimande said.

Outcome 12. An effective and development-oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship

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Access to information for people living with disabilities
Karen Foutie, GCIS Northern Cape

Upington – Equal opportunities are available but not always for people living with disabilities. For them, access can be challenging. With this in mind the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) in partnership with the Oasis school for the disabled in Upington organised an event for persons living with disabilities.

SEDA was established to support the development of small business and to increase awareness of their products and services and that of other

stakeholders, focusing on equal opportunities available to persons living with disabilities.

The GCIS presented information of government programmes and services to the audience. Information was distributed in various ways to reach the disabled community, such as audio tapes, speaking books and CDs for the blind, the use of cartooned pamphlets and sign language for the deaf, the use of drama to simplify messages that are often not easily understood by people living with disabilities.

Attendants were informed about compulsory access to public buildings for the disabled. A wide range of SEDA products were on display as well as those of the Oasis school for the disabled. The Masakhane drama group presented a play to inform the audience. People living with disabilities from all over Siyanda were transported to the event.

Mrs Hanna Busa, a successful entrepreneur, assisted SEDA by sharing her success story. She said if you were not helped the first time, go back, because eventually you will be assisted. Mrs Busa said, "You cannot sit next to your house and move with the shades of the sun, you must get up and start doing something for yourself."



The Oasis school for the disabled rendering a musical piece.



People living with disabilities at the event.



Mr Ronal Isaacs, district manager of Siyanda SEDA, experiencing life in a wheelchair for the day."



Outcome 3: All People In South Africa Are and Feel Safe

Tsakane brings justice closer to home

Jacob Molete: GCIS Gauteng

Justice Minister Jeff Radebe opened a court worth R11 million in Tsakane, Gauteng Province as part of the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development's Infrastructure Programme. Speaking at the ceremony, Minister Radebe told the community the new court was part of the department's programme to expand court infrastructure to bring justice to the people.

Tsakane Court will ensure that communities no longer have to travel 17 km to access justice for criminal and family matters. "Building the court was justified as this will bring the courts even closer to the people," Minister Radebe said.

As the opening of the Tsakane Court coincides with Human Rights Month and International Women's Day, Minister Radebe encouraged the community in Ekurhuleni to use their new magistrate's court to report crimes, especially sexual crimes and those perpetrated against women and children.

He said the country needed the joint effort from all communities, NGOs and the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security (JCPS) Cluster to address the shocking violent crimes in society.

"As government, we will take decisive action against any violator of our laws and we call on all the people of Tsakane and other areas to ensure that we help

bring the perpetrators to book so that justice is dispensed in all criminal and civil matters," Radebe said.

He said cases such as those of Anene Booysen, where women suffered brutal human rights violations, will not be tolerated.

In addition, Minister Radebe said building the court and bringing justice much closer to the people was part of government's resolve to defeat this social scourge of gender-based violence.

Radebe said his department will take a harsh and uncompromising stand against rape and violence against women and children, hence the reintroduction of 58 sexual offences courts. These courts have shown high conviction rates compared to ordinary regional courts. Sites have been identified where these courts will be established where such matters will be heard.

The sexual offences courts will start operating next month and should be fully operational by September, Radebe said.

"Courts such as the Palm Ridge Court have been identified to host such specialised sexual offences cases, with minor adaptations in line with international standards to provide a victim-friendly environment and CCTV testifying rooms.

"This is because government takes human

rights violations and the rape of women and children seriously," Radebe said.

He made called upon all communities to ensure that the struggle for justice against the perpetrators of violence and abuse against women and children was not limited to the 16 days of activism, but rather that it became an all-year-round campaign.

"I am confident that this and all other courts as well as the judiciary, the prosecution and all stakeholders, will be part of the solution to rid South Africa of the negative reputation on crime both here and abroad," Minister Radebe said.

The new Tsakane court boasts four court rooms that will be used for criminal matters, civil matters, equality matters, family law and regional court.

There are also four offices for prosecutors, four offices for magistrates, one cash hall, one domestic violence office, civil clerk office, maintenance office, and office for Legal Aid South Africa, manager's office and three holding cells.

Currently, the court is operating as a branch court of Brakpan but from next month it will render full services, including regional court services. It will also deal with over 50% of matters that were held in Brakpan.

"This means that services will now be

rendered at your doorstep and that the work load and congestion at the Brakpan court will be halved."

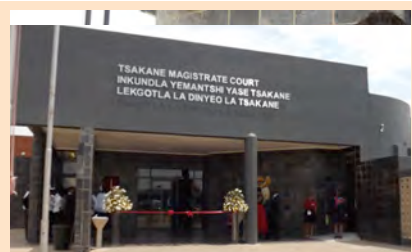
Accompanying the minister was Justice Raymond Zondo of the Constitutional Court and MEC of Community Safety, Nonhlanhla Mazibuko.

Justice Zondo reminded the court staff to serve the people of Tsakane with dignity.

"If we remind ourselves that we are the servants of the people, we will change our mind-set and appreciate that anyone who comes to the court must be able to say, 'I got justice and I was treated with respect and was helped,'" Justice Zondo said.

Minister Radebe also referred to the case of the Mozambican, Mido Macia, who was tied to the back of a police van and later died in custody. He made a call on all those in law enforcement to abstain from criminal acts as it breaks down confidence in the criminal justice system of the country.

During the event, Radebe signed contracts with civil society organisations that act as guarantees of the Access to Justice and Promotion of Constitutional Rights Programme, such as the Foundation for Human Rights.



The new Tsakane Magistrate Court worth R11 million boasts four court rooms that will be used for criminal matters, civil matters, equality matters, family law and regional court. Four offices for prosecutors, four offices for magistrates, one cash hall, one domestic violence office, civil clerk office, maintenance office, and office for Legal Aid South Africa, manager's office and three holding cells.



Plaque unveiling Minister Jeff Radebe and Justice Raymond Zondo looking on is Deputy Minister Andries Nel and Regional Head Ms Emily Dhlamini.



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Outcome 11: Create a better South Africa and contribute to a better and safer Africa and World

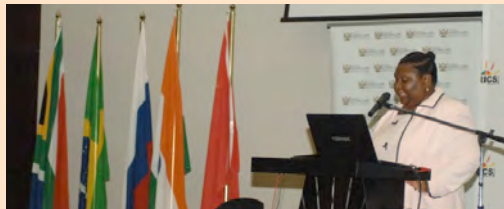
Brics Summit Fever Hits Town



Premier Noxolo Kiviet and members of the executive council during EC-Brics stakeholder engagement session in East London.



MEC Mcebisi Jonas sharing potential investment opportunities in the Eastern Cape. These are opportunities available to Brics counties to unlock provincial economic potential.



Premier Kiviet addressing stakeholders and members of community at the BRICS roadshow.



Student community of the WSU during the Brics roadshow engagement session at the Berlin campus

Tabita Ngqunge – GCIS Eastern Cape

“Our vision for a better Africa in a better world will receive great impetus when we host the fifth Brics Summit next month in Durban. We are inspired by the exponential growth of bilateral relations, diplomatically and economically between South Africa and other Brics countries.” President Jacob Zuma, SoNA 2013.

In the build-up to the summit to be held between 26 and 27 March 2013 in Durban, the Eastern Cape conducted a two-pronged roadshow that gave stakeholders and students from the Walter Sisulu University (WSU) the opportunity to engage the provincial leadership on the significance of South Africa’s involvement in Brics. The platform kept the province talking and raised awareness about economic opportunities and benefits thereof thanks to South Africa’s Brics membership.

The Eastern Cape roadshow on Brics led by the Office of the Premier in partnership with Department of International Relations and Cooperation (Dirco), Buffalo City Municipality (BCM) and the WSU proved to be a huge success.

Addressing the interactive stakeholder session at the East London ICC, the Premier highlighted the importance of the upcoming Brics Summit and how the province could leverage on potential spin-offs to fight poverty, inequality and unemployment.

She said, “We are very optimistic that the vast and on-going multi-billion rand infrastructure development in this province will translate into meaningful benefits for its people, and indeed the entire country. Our strategic position affords us easy access to African and global markets through our three ports: East London, Port Elizabeth and Coega Transshipment Hub backed by a solid and improving road, rail and air network infrastructure.

This entire infrastructure serves as an enabler for export growth that could stimulate the economy and increase employed in the province. Since its inception, the East London Industrial Development Zone (EL-IDZ) has created more than 500 direct jobs thanks to investments of about R755 million. The EL-IDZ offers a wide range of investment sectors, from marine aquaculture, agro-processing, pharmaceuticals and ICT to electronics.

With the projected investment by Transnet of billions of rand to increase the capacity of the East London harbour, the prospects for growth and exports of automobile products and coal exports to Brazil, have increased phenomenally. We also pride ourselves for hosting South Africa’s largest Industrial development zone – the Coega Industrial Development Zone.

We have a strategic development plan for Coega that focuses on socio-economic infrastructure development, which is in line with the theme for the 5th Brics Summit, NEPAD and the National Infrastructure Plan. Coega has grown from an idea on which we struggled to secure private investors to South Africa’s foremost investment hotspot for global markets, particularly Brics markets.”

At a student dialogue on Brics held at the WSU, the students shared these sentiments and supported South Africa’s hosting of the summit. In addition, they called for Brics countries to explore the possibility of a uniform education curriculum within Brics member states because this would help to address our struggling education system.

In attendance at the roadshow were Eastern Cape leadership led by Premier Noxolo Kiviet, and members of her executive council, municipal leaders, business, captains of industries, WSU management and student leaders, civil society, senior leadership from provincial administration as well as representatives from the ANC and opposition parties.

