Government takes services to the people
By Pakeng Matsetse: GCIS, Gauteng

The Government Communication and Information system together with the Department of Public Service and Administration held a successful outreach programme on 15 March 2019 at Zandspruit Sports Ground. The event was led by the Minister of Public Service and Administration, Ayanda Dlodlo. The programme attracted more than 500 people who came from areas around Zandspruit to receive government services at their doorstep.

Community members have to travel to Randburg or Johannesburg to receive services from institutions such as the Department of Home Affairs, Department of Labour, South African Revenue Service, Department of Human Settlements, and South Africa Social Security Agency among other services. The outreach was organised to respond to numerous calls made by the community of Zandspruit that government must bring these services closer to their area. Various government departments and institutions provided services and information to the public.

“As government we are committed to the principles of Batho Pele, putting people first, aimed at responding to service-delivery challenges experienced by citizens in their communities. I have engaged all the departments here and they have agreed that they will continue servicing the community even beyond this outreach,” said Minister Dlodlo.

The outreach ran through the entire day and gave community members an opportunity to engage with officials from various service-delivery institutions and receive first-hand information on how to access services quicker and more efficient.
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Lerato Nyembe said:
"I came here to reapply for a birth certificate for my child. I am happy that government is operating at my doorstep today and it saved me money and time to travel to Randburg."

Robert Mogale said:
"I am here to engage with Tahepo 1 million and other agencies that can assist me in finding a job. These kinds of outreach activities should be conducted more often."
Good Green Deeds campaign in Kimberley
By Masego Mollo: GCIS, Northern Cape

The Minister of Tourism, Derek Hanekom, and the Northern Cape Premier Sylvia Lucas led the provincial campaign of the Good Green Deeds in Kimberley at the Kutlwanong Community Hall in Galeshewe on 8 March 2019. Minister Hanekom said the critical part of the Good Green Deeds campaign was to educate people and make them aware of the importance of a clean environment. Furthermore, he said littering was caused by a lack of awareness and that people needed to be mobilised and educated about cleanliness. “If people love and have pride in their country, they would want to live in a clean country and it takes all of us to do the right thing,” said the Minister.

“If we want our country or province to be welcoming to tourists and other people to come visit us, we need to ensure that our areas are at least in a state that people can appreciate,” said Premier Lucas. She further said members of the community needed to be educated about the significance of reusing and recycling. Moreover, Sol Plaatje Municipality Executive Mayor Patrick Mabilo said the programme was a step in the right direction especially if they needed to display the beautiful estates that they have. He said they would work with all the role players to ensure that the city remains clean.

Lerato Lebina said:
“The Good Green Deeds campaign is a great idea in instilling discipline on the minds of members of the community about keeping their streets clean. It is another way of attracting tourists into the country and this is good for economic growth.”

Thato Chabalala said:
“All I can say is that I welcome the launch. South Africa is dirty and this is dangerous. A dirty town attracts crime and violence. A clean or untidy place says a lot about its inhabitants. People need to be mobilised around this initiative.”
President Ramaphosa launches new school in Thabong

By Ntombi Mhlambi: GCIS, Free State

President Cyril Ramaphosa together with Free State Premier Sefora Ntombela and the MEC for Basic Education Tate Magoe, officially opened the Adelaide Tambo Secondary School in Thabong, Welkom on 7 April 2019. President Ramaphosa said the vision of government is to make the school one of the best information and communications technology school in South Africa.

The President encouraged learners and communities to make education the foundation of their lives. He also mentioned that government regards education as a very important tool hence it is on top of the key priorities and it has also been allocated the highest budget. The MEC urged the community to take care of the school.

Moleboheng Lephondo said: “This is such a blessing, not many share a stage with the President. I am also happy with the promises he made that government is going to provide us with digital text books.”

Karabo Kankula said: “I am excited that I am now able attend school near my home, meaning no more walking long distance to get to school. Thanks to our government.”
Minister engages SASSA beneficiaries
By Joy Themba: GCIS, Mpumalanga

The Minister of Social Development, Susan Shabangu, visited Oakley, Bushbuckridge, for the Integrated Community Registration Outreach Programmes on 26 March 2019. The Minister met with senior citizens, particularly with the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) beneficiaries at the Mathibela Sports Ground to ensure that services are extended to beneficiaries, to reduce overcrowding and to improve customer relations at local offices and pay points.

SASSA beneficiaries were warned against fraudsters who pose as the agency’s officials and take social-grant cards from beneficiaries to create illegal loans without the knowledge of the card holder. Beneficiaries were urged to be vigilant of such scammers and not fall prey to them. The Minister further warned beneficiaries not to give out their pin to anyone because even their own children and grandchildren can rob them of their money.

The event was also attended by the President for the Congress of Traditional Leaders South Africa Kgoshi Mathibela Mokoena. During engagements with the Minister, Kgoshi Mokoena said: “If all tribal authorities can have at least one post office, it would reduce the long queues at SASSA and this will also create job opportunities for the people of Bushbuckridge as there is a high rate of unemployment.” He also mentioned the importance of creating work opportunities for the youth of Bushbuckridge, especially those that have graduated. He further requested for government’s intervention in building centres for skills development in the area. Wheelchairs, walking sticks and social-relief packages were handed over to deserving citizens.

Thuli Nkosi said:
“I am very pleased today that SASSA officials identified me and that the Minister gave me this wheelchair. I have been using crutches and some house chores were difficult to conduct. Now, I can do everything for myself.”

Lettie Mkhondo said:
“We did listen to what the Minister said and we appreciate what she did.”