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**PRIORITY 2: EDUCATION, SKILLS AND HEALTH.**

**Deputy Minister visits Tikwe Primary School**

*By Ntombi Mhlambi: GCIS, Free State*

The Deputy Minister in The Presidency, Ms Thembi Siweya, visited Tikwe Primary School in Meloding, Virginia on 17 February 2020, as part of a Back-to-School campaign. The purpose of her visit was to monitor how the school was functioning in the new academic year.

Deputy Minister Siweya encouraged the teachers and learners to keep on pushing to be the best, and also handed out stationery to the learners. The School Principal, Ms Amelia Mofokeng, said the school appreciated the visit by the Deputy Minister. Among other activities, the Deputy Minister inspected the school to assess some of its challenges.



Deputy Minister Thembi Siweya inspecting the school's kitchen.



Tikwe Primary School learners welcoming the Deputy Minister.



**government communications**

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**Karabo Mofokeng said:**

“I am so happy for the stationery received as I did not have it.”



**Rethabile Goarai said:**

“It feels nice to be visited by the Deputy Minister at our school. I feel special.”



**Cynthia Mkhathswa said:**

“I want the President to talk about the prioritisation of GBV cases and more specialised prosecutors that deal with GBV. We (NPA) need more Thuthuzela Care Centres and resources to reach out to rural communities to conduct dialogues on GBV.”



**Thapelo Babedi said:**

“I want the President to talk about NSFAS challenges as some of the deserving students are rejected and this means they will not pursue their studies because they do not have funds. There is a need to improve the NSFAS system to cater for all deserving students.”

## PRIORITY 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

### Radio dialogues reflect on government achievements

*By Livhuwani Todani: GCIS, Mpumalanga*

The GCIS collaborated with the Nkangala Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College, beneficiaries of the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS), National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and the Foundation of Victims of Crime (FOVOC), to reflect on government achievements during a live broadcast on Moutse and Emalahleni community radio stations respectively. The radio engagements were held on 13 February 2020 ahead of the State of the Nation Address by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The talk shows highlighted achievements made in the fight against gender-based violence and femicide (GBVF) as well as the increase in enrolment at the Nkangala TVET College. In 2020, admissions at the college’s five campuses increased and more than 4 000 of the 7 900 new students were NSFAS beneficiaries.

The discussions noted the establishment of Thuthuzela Care Centres which encourage and help victims of GBV, as well as the work done by FOVOC to assist victims of GBV with safe accommodation. FOVOC appreciated the subsidy from government to assist victims and urged the private sector to also assist with funding or food.

Other highlights from government were the recent opening of the Mpumalanga High Court by President Ramaphosa to help reduce the backlogs of GBV cases and the appointment of social workers to deal with GBV cases in the area.



Stakeholders and beneficiaries of NSFAS during radio dialogues at the Moutse and Emalahleni community radio stations.

## PRIORITY 6: A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

### Cosmo City learners debate on SoNA

By Boipelo Ramotse: GCIS, Gauteng

The GCIS – in collaboration with the Gauteng Department of Education, City of Johannesburg, departments of Social Development, Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation, and Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs – held a successful State of the Nation Address (SoNA) School Debate at Cosmo City Secondary School on 13 February 2020. The debate, under the topic: “25 Years of Democracy. Is South Africa today better than yesterday?”, targeted Grade 11 Economics learners.

Each of the two debating teams consisted of five participants. The first team was pro-democratic government and its first speaker, Victress Maphangisane, eloquently expressed the strides the democratic dispensation had made in providing for the basic needs of the people of South Africa. She said “South Africa today is far better than it was yesterday, just look around, the lives of ordinary South Africans have changed for the better.” She added that “there is a high number of previously disadvantaged students who are now entering into the tertiary space that they had been previously barred from by the previous system.” In addition to outlining the progress that government had achieved, the team also acknowledged that more still needed to be done.

The opposing team had a general consensus and argued fiercely that the democratic government had lost the plot. They pointed out the pending cases related to state capture and how the rampant looting was affecting communities. They also highlighted the socio-economic challenges due to lack of service delivery, including the rat infestation caused by illegal dumping.



Victress Maphangisane debating on the state of our economy after 25 years of democracy.



Cosmo City Secondary School learners attending the SoNA debate.



#### Victress Maphangisane said:

“If I was a President, I would put an emphasis on education, and prioritise the safety of women and children. I would impose harsher prison terms for corruption.”



#### Thabang Dikana said:

“I expect the President to provide a clear plan on how government will create meaningful jobs and sustain those jobs. I would appreciate it if he says something about institutions like the National Youth Development Agency, Small Enterprise Finance Agency and National Student Financial Aid Scheme.”

## PRIORITY 6: A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

### Plans to improve communication in communities

By Kaone Lekgetho: GCIS, North West

On 13 February 2020, the GCIS joined other provincial communicators during the Provincial Communicators' Forum in Mmabatho, North West. The GCIS Provincial Director, Ms Boitumelo Mosadi, presented the approved National Communication Strategy Framework and reported back to communicators concerning the National Communication Policy, which sets out the rules, processes and procedures on how communication will operate across national, provincial and local government.

Furthermore, the Acting Head of Communications in the Office of the Premier, Ms Bonolo Mohlakoana, presented a draft Provincial Communication Approach 2019-2024, along with a draft Provincial Communication Lekgotla Programme.

Communicators were encouraged to submit Setswana articles to the provincial online newspaper and write in indigenous languages in February, as the month was declared Language Activism Month by the Pan South African Language Board.



North West communicators who attended the forum.