



Brought to you by Government Communications (GCIS)

April 2013



School children stand up against rape

> P 4



New court brings justice to Tsakane

> P 6

New dawn for teacher education

Samona Murugan



Government's efforts to address the growing demand for teachers received a major boost when Higher Education and Training Minister Dr Blade Nzimande launched a new Teacher Education Programme recently.

The programme, through the introduction of the new Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase Teaching, aims to address the gap that currently exists between teacher supply and demand.

This will result in the opening of former teacher colleges where the qualification will be offered.

As part of the launch of the programme, the Minister re-opened the Siyabuswa Campus in Mpumalanga.

The campus, which was previously known as the KwaNdebele College of Education, was among the teacher colleges closed in the mid-1990s. It now forms part of government's plan to produce 14 000 new teachers by 2014.

The re-opened college will also form part of the new university in Mpumalanga, which is expected to be completed next year.

"This is indeed an exciting day for South Africa's entire education system. This programme is informed by the Integrated Strategic

Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development, which I launched with Minister (Angie) Motsepeka two years ago," said Minister Nzimande.

The process of introducing the Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase Teaching by re-opening former colleges of education is already underway in Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo.

In Mpumalanga, the Siyabuswa Campus is driven by a partnership between the Department of Higher Education and Training, Mpumalanga Department of Education, National Institute for Higher Education and University of Johannesburg.

This year 100 students enrolled for the Bachelor of Education in Foundation Phase Teaching at the Siyabuswa Campus. Enrolments will increase over the next few years until the campus is fully utilised.

Minister Nzimande also announced that an estimated 18 000 new teachers would be produced in the short to medium term. He explained that the department is already putting in place a three-step approach to strengthen and expand teacher education.

"The establishment of a full teacher education footprint at the two new universities to be established in Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape, the establishment of three additional teacher education campuses, the new and growing involvement of the Vaal University of Technology in initial teacher education, will bring us very close to producing the required 18 000 new teachers per year in the medium term, and better address the teacher supply demand gap," he said.

The programme is still in the planning stages in other provinces. Over the course of this year the sites will be finalised and the universities to



Higher Education and Training Minister Blade Nzimande says the newly opened Siyabuswa Campus will help the country produce 14 000 new teachers by 2014.

which they will be linked confirmed.

Teacher unions have welcomed the programme.

"We are excited that the initiative is twinned with a reputable university like the University of Johannesburg to provide foundational expertise to launch the institution as well as share its teacher education programme," said the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa President Basil Manuel.

He stressed that South Africa needed more well trained teachers to cope with the demands of the 21st century curriculum and the technological world.

"We embrace the promise that this new venture holds," he added.

South African Democratic Teachers Union's media officer Nomusa Cembi described the Teacher Education Programme as an answer to the union's pleas.

"It is the answer we have been seeking for many years - to have more colleges of education re-opened. We need more qualified teachers and the current universities cannot provide the numbers of teachers needed. This programme provides quality and quantity which are urgently needed in education sector at the moment," Cembi said.

Albert Pule



South Africa's R1.15 trillion budget for the 2013/14 financial year will be used to improve the lives of people, with significant amounts set aside to achieve this.

"In this Budget we continue to invest in education, health, housing, public transport and social development – components of the social wage which add up to about 60 per cent of public expenditure," Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan said during his Budget

Budget digs deep for a better life

Speech in Parliament.

Important budget allocations announced by the Minister include:

HEALTHCARE

The health system was given R133.6 billion of the national budget. According to Minister Gordhan, the money will be used to complete building 1 967 health facilities and 49 nursing colleges across the country.

INFRASTRUCTURE

R430 billion was allocated to build schools, hospitals, clinics, dams, water and sanitation projects, expand electricity networks and supply electricity to over a million new homes.

The money will also be used to build more

courts and prisons, as well as construct better bus, commuter rail and road links.

SOCIAL GRANTS

Minister Gordhan announced that for the first time child support grants would increase twice this year to R290 in April and R300 in October. Old age and disability grants rise from R1 200 a month to R1 260 from April. The foster care grant increases from R770 to R800.

PROVINCES

The nine provincial governments will share R338 billion, while conditional grants given to provinces and municipalities will total R77 billion.

The Minister said money would be set aside to employ more social workers and provide

additional support to non-governmental organisations, which provide critical welfare services.

Provinces were also granted funds to expand HIV/ AIDS programmes and improve their TB diagnosis systems.

EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE

These three areas will jointly get R233 billion in 2013/14. During this period the basic education sector is expected to focus on improving numeracy and literacy, expanding enrolment in Grade R and reducing school infrastructure backlog. Together with the broader education infrastructure grant, R23.9 billion was allocated to provincial education departments for infrastructure over the next three years.

For more on the Budget Speech go to page 14.

Vuk'uzenzele is

FREE

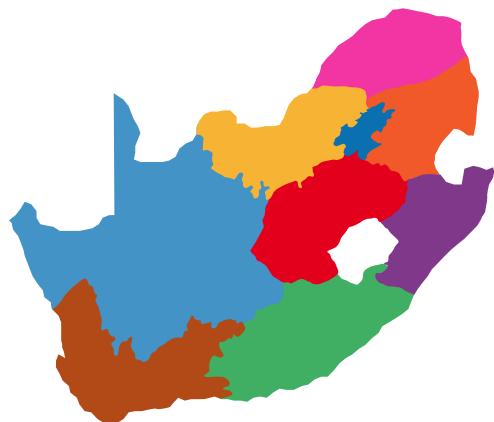
... but please pass it on when you are done

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure upgrades give provinces facelifts

Heavy machinery operated by busy workmen will be a common sight across South Africa this year, as provinces go to work, building and upgrading infrastructure.

In their State of the Province Addresses recently, the nine Premiers outlined the infrastructure projects their provinces would deliver to boost economic and social development.



KWAZULU-NATAL

In KwaZulu-Natal infrastructure will receive a major boost through the upgrading of regional airfields.

Four regional airports will be revamped including the Oribi Airport in Pietermaritzburg, Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi Airport in Ulundi and airports in Margate and Mkuze.

Premier Zweli Mkhize said the province would complete 285km of new gravel roads.

The province will also expand coal rail link to open access for coal mined in Limpopo. Parts of the rail line will pass through Swaziland to Richards Bay.

"Transnet is proceeding with investment of R31.6 billion to upgrade the coal export line to 81 million tons per annum," Mkhize added.

Rail passengers will enjoy travelling in new trains as the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) refurbishes the existing fleet.

The province will be allocated 936 new, modern coaches to be procured by the agency at an estimated R123 billion over the next 20 years. Next year 72 coaches will be delivered to the province at a cost of R161 million.

EASTERN CAPE

In the Eastern Cape R2.3 billion will be spent on the upgrade of East London Harbour.

Premier Noxolo Kiviet said the harbour upgrade would enable the Eltheni Coal Mine to export coal.

"The initial contract will result in 2.5 million tons of coal exports per annum by 2014, creating 2 000 direct and 20 000 indirect jobs," she said.

The upgrading of the Mthatha Airport at a cost of R465 million is also underway.

The Premier also revealed that the province had spent R59.3 million of the R123 million allocated for building the Nkosi Dalibhunga Mandela Legacy Bridge and Road.

The province is currently upgrading two national roads - the N2 and N6 - in partnership with the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL).

A total of R1.5 billion has been budgeted for renovating hospitals including St Patricks in Mbizana, Cecilia Makwane in Mdantsane,



The new Medupi Power Station, currently under construction in Limpopo, is one of the many infrastructure projects underway in the country.



Roads across the country are being upgraded and rehabilitated as part of government's efforts to develop and improve infrastructure.

Frontier in Queenstown, St Elizabeth in Lusikisiki and Madwaleni in Elliotdale.

Premier Kiviet said 50 more schools would be constructed this year to replace mud schools.

NORTHERN CAPE

Acting Premier Grizelda Ciekella announced that the Northern Cape would invest R2.2 billion on road infrastructure development. Roads to be upgraded include Carnarvon-Vosburg, Hotazel-Tsineng, Hopetown-Douglas, Hondeklip Bay-Garies roads and the Hakskeen Pan Project.

The province will spend R4.2 billion building a new university, which is expected to enrol 5 000 students by 2014.

"The prospects for the construction sector are expected to improve with the planned construction of the university, the Square Kilometre Array project, the investments in the rail upgrades for the Oryx Iron Ore line and the Sishen-Coega manganese line," said the acting Premier.

The Sishen/Saldanha railway line will be upgraded, increasing its capacity from 4 million tons to 16 million tons of iron ore a year.

A feasibility study for the R150 billion solar park to be built in Upington is to be completed this year, she added.

Health infrastructure will also be upgraded. This includes hospitals in Upington, Kuruman, De Aar Hospital and Postmasburg. Clinics will also be built in Williston, Kagung, Durham and Postmasburg.

MPUMALANGA

Mpumalanga will dedicate R10.3 billion over 10 years to ensure that the new university, currently under construction in the province, is fully functional by 2024.

The university is expected to accommodate 15 000 students.

Premier David Mabuza said construction would also start shortly on the R5 billion Ma-

juba Rail Siding Project, aimed at establishing a private railway line to transport coal from the existing Transnet Coal Export railway line to the Majuba Power Station coal stockyard in Amersfoort.

On the health front, eight hospitals are to be demolished and reconstructed including Bethal, Elsie Ballot, Ermelo Sesifuba, Sabie, Lydenburg, Barberton, Mapulaneng and the Standerton TB Hospital.

A Maths, Science and Technology Academy will be developed to improve the capacity of teachers. In addition, a High Tech Centre of Excellency will be established to increase the skills base in the province, prioritising artisan and agricultural skills.

Eskom is also playing a role by providing water and sanitation to schools and health facilities to communities in four municipal areas. These beneficiaries will be connected to a power grid from the Majuba Power Station.

WESTERN CAPE

Premier Helen Zille announced that 70 per cent of provincial government buildings, rural libraries and schools will be connected to the broadband network by the end of 2014, turning them into wireless internet hotspots.

The province will also build and upgrade schools and hospitals this year.

This includes the construction of 26 new schools to replace 46 others and the building of 124 Grade R classrooms. Over the next three years, 420 schools will be refurbished.

The R33 million Malmesbury Community Day Centre Clinic opened last year, she added.

Other health projects include the construction of the new Du Noon Community Health Care Centre and a R53 million emergency centre at Karl Bremer Hospital.

GAUTENG

In Gauteng construction to expand the City Deep/Kaserne terminal, the largest and busiest

container terminal in Africa, and upgrades to roads are currently underway.

Premier Nomvula Mokonyane said the province would upgrade roads including the R55 (Voortrekker Road) carriageway, William Nicol Drive and the Old Pretoria to Cullinan Road.

The province will also work with municipalities to expand the Bus Rapid Transit network, especially in Ekurhuleni.

Premier Mokonyane said PRASA would deliver 45 per cent of its new rolling stock fleet to the province.

LIMPOPO

The Limpopo government has partnered with the Department of Trade and Industry to establish Special Economic Zones (SEZs).

SEZs are geographical regions that have economic and other laws aimed at increasing foreign direct investment, development of infrastructure and increasing employment.

Premier Cassel Mathale announced that the first SEZ will be in Musina and will focus on logistics and coal, while the second will be in the Greater Tubatse Municipality, where it will explore possibilities in the platinum sector.

The establishment of the hydrogen fuel cell industry will also create an additional demand for platinum.

Also on the cards is the development and installation of bulk infrastructure in Lephalale.

Eskom is also currently building the new Medupi Power Station in the area.

The power station is expected to become the largest dry-cooled, coal-fired power station in the world.

FREE STATE

The Free State government plans to provide 100 per cent broadband coverage to all households in the province by 2020.

Premier Ace Magashule said the construction of a 1 000km link connecting Bloemfontein with Johannesburg and East London was progressing well and that it would improve internet connectivity.

The Durban-Free State-Gauteng Development Corridor will support the logistics and transport between South Africa's industrial hubs, improve access to Durban's export and import facilities and integrate the Free State Industrial Strategy, he added.

The province is also making steady progress with the construction and rehabilitation work on the province's roads.

Premier Magashule announced that the construction of a new road in Thaba Nchu, the Monotsha Boarder Pass and Qwa-Qwa Route 4 was going well.

NORTH WEST

In the North West six schools in Ngaka, Modiri and Molema and three more in Dr Kenneth Kaunda and Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati are being constructed to replace mud schools, Premier Thandi Modise said.

The Mmabatho and Execelsius nursing colleges are being extended and nursing schools in Moses Kotane, Potchefstroom, Lichtenburg and Taung are to be upgraded.

Twenty-five roads are also being upgraded.

Premier Modise said R200 million would be spent on road rehabilitation and maintenance in the 2013/14 financial year.

The Brits Hospital, which falls under the Hospital Revitalisation Programme, was nearing completion, she added.

During the 2013/14 financial year, the province is also expected to build 15 230 housing units in four regions to the value of over R1 billion.

Provinces prioritise health of pregnant women, babies

Samona Murugan
and SAnews.gov.za

As concern grows over the number of pregnant women and newborn babies dying from preventable medical complications, provincial departments of health are stepping up efforts to reduce such deaths.

Mpumalanga Premier David Mabuza said despite the progress made in the province, "maternal and child mortality continue to be unacceptably high".

One of the major reasons was because pregnant women visited health facilities late in their pregnancies, he pointed out.

In a quest to reduce the high maternal mortal-

ity rate in the province, three District Clinical Specialist Teams have been employed in each district to provide support to district hospitals and clinics.

In addition, the Campaign for the Accelerated Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality in Africa was also adopted and launched in the Mkhondo Municipality recently to implement basic interventions that promote the health of women and children.

As part of this campaign, Maternity Waiting Homes will be established in all district hospitals to eliminate delays in accessing maternity care during emergencies.

"We call on all families and communities to support the welfare of women and children," urged the Premier.

In the Free State, Premier Ace Magashule said making sure that mothers had safe deliveries and ensuring the survival of newborn babies was among of the province's key priorities.

To tackle the issue, the provincial Department of Health launched a campaign to educate communities about the dangers of unplanned pregnancies and the risks of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV / AIDS, as part of Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections Awareness Week held in February.

Health promoters visited high schools and communities across the province to address various topics linked to teenage pregnancy and urged expecting mothers to visit a clinic as soon as they found out that they were pregnant. The aim was to empower learners with information on reproductive health so that they can make wiser choices.

So far the province's efforts to curb maternal and child mortality has paid off with the province's under five mortality rate dropping from 53 per 1 000 live births to less than 30 per 1 000 live births.

However, Premier Magashule emphasised that more could be done.

In Gauteng, Health MEC Hope Papo urged young men and women to know their reproductive health rights and responsibilities.

"Contraceptive services are freely available at all public health institutions. Young men and women are encouraged to practice the ABC strategy which is: Abstain, Be Faithful and Condomise in order to avoid unplanned pregnancies and infections," MEC Papo said.

He encouraged young people to delay engaging in sexual activities until they were old enough to take full responsibility for their actions.

The Gauteng Department of Health has seen a significant increase in the number of pregnant women who visit clinics for antenatal care before 20 weeks gestation.

More than 40 per cent of pregnant women attended antenatal classes, allowing health professionals to identify pregnancy related complications at an early stage and ensure that they gave birth to healthy babies.

This, according to the department, is an improvement from the 34.6 per cent who got antenatal care in the last financial year. In that year, 203 865 babies were born in health facilities across Gauteng.

The department is currently conducting a campaign at Vaal University of Technology, which will focus on reproductive health for men and women, contraceptives, cancer and condom demonstration.

The Department of Health has called on pregnant mothers and their partners to visit clinics to learn more about pregnancy and the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases.

For more information contact the department on 012 395 8000.

School grooms doctors for rural hospitals

Noluthando Mkhize

In what is a first for the country, a clinical school has been built in the Winelands/Overberg region of the Western Cape to prepare and encourage doctors to practise in rural areas.

The Ukwanda Rural Clinical School was built as a joint effort between the Department of Higher Education and Training, Western Cape Provincial Government and Stellenbosch University.

"It [the clinical school] is the first of its kind in South Africa and, as far as we know, on the continent," said Stellenbosch University's rector and vice-chancellor Professor Russel Botman.

More doctors were needed in rural areas and the clinical school had a role to play in grooming these doctors, he added.

"International research has shown that if you recruit students from rural areas and provide

them...with extensive exposure to rural health challenges and opportunities, there is a better chance that they will base themselves in rural areas when they start practising. That is what makes the Ukwanda Rural Clinical School special," Botman explained.

The school has a campus in semi-rural Worcester, which is equipped with an academic building and a student residence that can accommodate 40 students.

The campus is within walking distance of the Worcester District Hospital, which is one of the school's clinical training sites.

Students who are based at the clinical school do their practical training in rural district hospitals and clinics situated in Worcester, Ceres, Roberson, Caledon, Hermanus and Swellendam. The theory component is done at the clinical school.

Rohan du Plessis, a medical student who completed his final year at the school, said the time he spent there was important preparation for when he starts practising.

"I am very interested in primary healthcare and would one day like to work in a rural area, that is why I decided to do my training at the rural clinical school."

"The advantages are that you get a lot of practical experience in primary healthcare and are exposed to a wide variety of health issues.



The Ukwanda Rural Clinical School in the Western Cape is preparing doctors for work at rural hospitals.

The fact that you stay here for the whole year means that you also build relationships with patients and experience continuity of care," said Du Plessis.

Marcia Vermeulen, a final year medical student, said being in a rural setting was both challenging and rewarding.

"The challenges of training at the rural school are that you have more clinical responsibili-

ties, portfolio cases and assessments. I would advise students to attend the rural clinical school, especially if they are interested in primary healthcare and would like to work more independently."

In 2011 the first eight medical doctors graduated from Stellenbosch University after completing their entire final year of clinical training at the school.

N West steps up fight against HIV transmission

SAnews.gov.za

The North West Department of Health has set an ambitious target of circumcising 70 000 men per year to prevent the ongoing transmission of HIV.

North West Health MEC Dr Magome Masike said the department had set the target following clinical trials done in Uganda, Kenya and in South Africa, which showed consistent results that male circumcision reduces the risk of contracting HIV.

To help reach the target, MEC Masike opened a high volume male medical circumci-

sion clinic at Tshewong Hospital recently. The clinic is a partnership between the Perinatal HIV Research Unit and provincial health department.

Called Gola Monna, meaning "grow Men" in Setswana, the circumcision clinic is capable of doing at least 200 circumcisions per week at each site in Klerksdorp and Potchefstroom.

"By 2016 over four million men should have been circumcised in South Africa. Here in the North West we are required to do an additional 70 000 circumcisions per annum to contribute to this target," MEC Masike said.

He urged communities to encourage all young men aged 15 to 45 to go to the new clinic for circumcision.

However, the MEC also warned that circumcision was only partly protective.

"Men must still condomise and be mutually faithful with their partners. We trust, therefore, that Gola Monna lives up to its name and ensures that many young boys protect themselves to manhood and contribute to

us all eventually living an HIV-free society," MEC Masike said.

Dr Limakatso Lebina, a founder of the clinic, said the clinic would circumcise men to ensure that they had lifelong partial protection against HIV.

"Removal of the foreskin clearly can't stop all HIV infections but it certainly prevents most. We tell all the men that we circumcise that they must continue to condomise," said Dr Lebina.

The clinic is gearing up to respond to a high winter demand in June and July, when it plans to provide circumcision seven days a week.

Bafana Montweli, who was among the first to be circumcised at the new clinic, encouraged other men to step forward and do the same.

Statistics about male circumcision:

- The risk of HIV is reduced by 60 per cent if a man in South Africa is circumcised.
- The age of first sexual activity in South Africa is 16 years, which highlights the

importance of early circumcision.

- Government's target is for four million men to be circumcised by 2016, while the target is to circumcise 114 000 young men in the North West over the next two years. Gola Monna plans to contribute 19 000 circumcisions to this total.
- Circumcision is a very safe procedure. There are problems with only one to two per cent of all circumcisions and in most instances it is minor and resolved within a few days.
- Those who are circumcised can go back to school or work the next day.
- It takes about two hours at the clinic to be circumcised – this includes HIV testing, counselling about circumcision and the procedure. The actual circumcision takes about 15 minutes.

For more information contact the North West Department of Health on 018 388 3805.

EDUCATION

School children stand up against rape

Samona Murugan

About 10.2 million learners have spoken out against the high number of rapes in the country, lending their voices to the Stop Rape Campaign.

The campaign is an initiative of the Department of Basic Education and Lead SA, who have joined forces to raise rape awareness among the country's pupils.

Launched by Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga, the campaign also has the support of President Jacob Zuma, who visited a school in Mitchells Plain at the start of it.

Noting the on-going abuse of women and children, the President said there was a need to build a more caring society, in which the rights of all were respected, especially that of women and children.

"We have come together to say that these horrendous attacks must stop. No woman or child should be beaten, raped, stabbed, shot or attacked in any manner anywhere in our country, whether by known or unknown attackers," he added.

As part of the campaign to eliminate rape and sexual violence in schools, special assemblies were held at schools across the country on 1 March.

After singing the national anthem, principals, teachers and activists spoke to learners about rape and sexual crimes, advising them on what to do if they become victims of these



Learners of Glendale Secondary School in Mitchells Plain were among the first in the country to add their support to the recently launched Stop Rape Campaign.

crimes.

A Rape Response Booklet and pledge, based on the Bill of Responsibilities, which includes a statement on violence and rape, were also circulated.

Minister Motshekga urged teachers and learners to adopt the pledge at assemblies.

The booklet, which will help guide teachers on how to cope with the sensitive topic of rape and sexual violence, can be downloaded from the department's website.

The pledge, which is available in all 11 official languages, encourages pupils to:

- Uphold the Constitution of the country.
- Abide by the laws of the country.
- Respect the rights of others irrespective of age, race, sex or sexual orientation.
- Not commit rape or any form of sexual harassment, abuse or violence.
- Report any form of wrongdoing to authorities.

- Honour the responsibilities that come with these rights.
- Be good citizens.

The department has also called on schools to prepare worksheets for learners about violent and sexual crimes and discuss these issues further in classrooms.

"This initiative is critical not only to highlight rape but also to educate our children," said the Minister.

She also urged every citizen to adopt the pledge.

"Take it to your offices, factories and homes ... say no to rape. We call on civil society to support the Stop Rape initiative," Minister Motshekga added.

For more information contact the department on 012 357 3000 or go to www.education.gov.za

Awards revive pride in teaching



Bilkes Vawda, principal of Marlboro Gardens Combined School, was rewarded for her years of service to the teaching profession at the National Teaching Awards. She was handed the keys to a new car and a cheque for R25 000 by Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga.

President Jacob Zuma has pledged government's commitment to restoring pride in the teaching profession, which is universally acknowledged as the mother of all professions.

"We want children to look up to teachers and learn from them more than the formal curriculum. Through watching the conduct of teachers, learners must want to be successful, respectful and to be good citizens, who will take the country forward to prosperity," said President Zuma.

He was speaking at the National Teaching Awards, which took place in March in Gauteng.

The awards salute the nation's hardworking and dedicated teachers.

The President challenged teachers to play their part in helping government make education an essential service.

He also urged them to turn around the image of the profession.

President Zuma, who is passionate about education, said he wanted South African children to get good quality education.

He stressed that an investment in education was a prerequisite for building a country that works and most importantly, advances the ideals of the Constitution.

Scooping the biggest win at the awards was Bilkes Vawda, who walked away with the Lifetime Achievement Award for her continued dedication and contribution to quality education in South Africa.

Vawda has been teaching for 39 years and is the principal of Marlboro Gardens Combined School in Gauteng. Her school caters for learners from Grade R to 12. Originally the school catered for Indian learners but has since transformed into a multi-cultural institution.

"We grew from only 400 Indian learners to

a staggering 1 300 learners who represent our diversity. We have boldly embraced transformation," she said. The school has achieved a 100 per cent matric pass rate.

Vawda's prizes included a car and R25 000. Johannes Monnaphiri Melesi, the principal at Kopanong Secondary School in the Free State, won the Professor Kader Asmal Excellence Award.

Kopanong Secondary is situated in an informal settlement and is characterised by abject poverty. Despite these challenges, Melesi said he chose Kopanong Secondary over a former Model C school, where he was working previously, because he wanted to help disadvantaged children.

"I derive pleasure in serving the poorest of the poor. My transfer was easy and comforting," said an elated Melesi.

He also attributed his achievement to his staff. "My success is not mine but that of the people from the schools I went to and the province I come from."

OTHER WINNERS INCLUDED:

- **Excellence in Primary School Teaching:** Julie-Ann Lendrum, Winchester Ridge Primary School, Gauteng.
- **Excellence in Secondary School Teaching:** Ismail Teladia, Spine Road High School, Western Cape.
- **Excellence in Primary School Leadership:** Mmakgopi Messina Mokgope, Tsitsing Primary School, North West.
- **Excellence in Secondary School Leadership:** Derick Petersen, Imizamo Yethu Secondary School, Western Cape.
- **Excellence in Grade R Teaching:** Karin Adlem, Pietersburg English Medium Primary School, Limpopo.
- **Excellence in Special Needs Teaching:** Hanlie Swanepoel, Estralita Special School, Mpumalanga.
- **Excellence in ICT-Enhanced Teaching:** Anita van Vuuren, Universitas Primary School, Free State.
- **People's Choice Award:** Melanie Vandayer.

Education paves the way for brighter future

Samona Murugan

The Department of Basic Education is forging ahead with plans to improve the quality of learning and teaching in schools, as part of government's Action Plan to 2014.

Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga said the plan would tackle issues such as teacher recruitment and development, learner enrolment, school funding, mass literacy and numeracy and the overall quality of education.

One of the major new initiatives launched by the department is the biometric system for teachers. A recent survey showed that South Africa had the highest teacher absenteeism rate of all Southern African Development Community countries – with about 10 per cent of South African teachers absent for an average of 19 days annually.

The new biometric electronic system would allow the department to collect real-time data on what schools are affected by high teacher absenteeism, she said.

The system would address the main reason behind the high absenteeism rate, which is poor administration, lack of management and a serious neglect of duties and responsibilities, said the Minister.

Another priority of the department is to ensure that all mud schools are eliminated by 2015. In the Eastern Cape, a team is currently conducting a headcount of pupils and teachers.

Minister Motshekga said that often the department would build a school on the basis that there were 500 pupils, only to find out later that the school only had 50 pupils.

In such instances, the department could end up building fewer new schools than planned.

Learner wellness will also receive the department's attention in the form of the Integrated School Health programme. The department will continue with programmes to promote the health of learners and to tackle gender based violence in schools.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Government is also taking steps to improve higher education.

Infrastructure development features prominently as one of the major priorities of government with more than R6.8 billion allocated for the upgrading and expansion of infrastructure at tertiary institutions.

This financial year, the Department of Higher Education and Training has allocated a further R3.8 billion for infrastructure expansion.

In addition, the department is also establishing a new comprehensive University of Health Sciences on the Medunsa campus, which is currently being separated from the University of Limpopo.

The new university will be an expanded institution, which will include the training of medical doctors and other health professionals such as dentists, veterinarians, nurses, physiotherapists, medical technologists and radiographers.

Govt projects give hope to Diyatalawa residents

Noluthando Mkhize

During the more than 20 years that Pinkie Moloi has lived in Diyatalawa in the Free State, the mother of four has struggled to find a job to support her family.

But all that changed when President Jacob Zuma launched the Comprehensive Rural Development Project (CRDP) in 2009 and Diyatalawa, due to its extreme poverty, was identified as one of the pilot sites for the project.

The CRDP is an effective response to poverty and food insecurity. It helps with land redistribution, improving food security, creating business opportunities and expanding opportunities for rural women, youth and people with disabilities.

In 2011 President Zuma visited Diyatalawa to check up on the project as part of the Siyahla Presidential Monitoring Programme.

Moloi and other community members had the opportunity to tell the President about the poverty they had to deal with and their difficulties in finding jobs.

President Zuma instructed that an intervention task team be established and put in place plans to help and develop the people of Diyatalawa.

To assist Moloi and other residents, government land was allocated for a number of projects and this became known as the Diyatalawa Communal Property, with residents electing a committee to oversee the running of the project.

The committee is supported by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, which serves as an advisory council.

Moloi belongs to a cooperative under the umbrella of the Diyatalawa Communal Property, which farms apples, beans and wheat.

She and her group sell their produce at the Harrismith market, earning an income to pro-



Pinkie Moloi is reaping the rewards of government-aided farming projects, such as this apple orchard in Diyatalawa in the Free State.

vide for their families.

"When people say that government does nothing for the people it's not true. I wake up with a purpose to feed my family. We were living in poverty but things are a lot better. We also received training on how to run our cooperative," said Moloi.

Fusi Radebe, chairperson of the communal committee, shares Moloi's sentiments.

Radebe explained that after farming parastatal Agri-Eco was liquidated in 1998 people were left jobless.

"In 2009 government started to intervene, advised us to start cooperatives and trained us to farm. Currently, there are seven cooperatives that farm beans, apples and wheat. The Agri-Village is supporting 50 households, creating employment opportunities," she said.

Diyatalawa Communal Property's farming projects are collectively known as the Diyatalawa Agri-Village.

Free State Department of Agriculture's acting

district director Alta Mayor said R500 000 was used to clear the old apple orchards to make way for new crops, which also created a number of employment opportunities for locals.

The national department also stepped in and set aside R2.5 million to revive apple orchards in Diyatalawa.

The cooperative is also reaping the rewards of their wheat crops.

According to the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, 418 hectares of wheat was planted in 2010/2011 season.

About 314 tons of wheat was harvested, generating an income of more than R800 000. The money was ploughed back into the business. A tractor was bought and R293 000 was used to plant 50 hectares of beans. Households also received an income.

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and the provincial Department of Agriculture set aside about R1.5 million for the farming of crops.

During a visit the area to monitor progress of the project recently, Free State MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development Mosebenzi Zwane said government was starting to see results in the development of the area.

"We have taken time to learn about the project. We trust that the success of Diyatalawa will be implemented across the country. At a later stage we would like to see the committee run itself without the involvement of government," he added.

Moloi is also grateful for the project's success. She was optimistic that the success would continue and help improve the lives of her grandchildren and Diyatalawa's youth, just like it improved hers.

**For more information contact the
Free State Department of Agriculture on
051 506 1585.**

Piggery helps villagers bring home the bacon

Neville Maakana

Inspired by a community meeting that urged them to take control of their destiny, unemployed Nwamitwa villagers turned to pigs to earn an income.

Residents combined their resources and determination to set up the Hluvukani Khubu Piggery Cooperative in Limpopo.

Now, seven of them farm about 100 large white pigs, which are sold to residents and local abattoirs for up to R1 500 per adult.

"We run the project in the spirit of vuk'uzenzele (wake up and do it for yourself). With the money we make we are able to buy food and school uniforms for our children," said project manager Agnes Tivani, 53.

Selina Nukeri, a single mother of three, explained that the initiative started in June 2010 after a community meeting.

"At the meeting we were told to stop moaning about the lack of jobs and create our own projects. A group of us met to discuss what we could do. After a lengthy discussion, looking at the advantages and disadvantages, we settled on a piggery," said the 48-year-old.

The group got more information from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture and attended a two-day training workshop.

"The workshop was an eye-opener. We learnt how to construct a pigsty and got information on feedstock, immunisation and other important aspects of pig farming," she added.

To kick start the project, each member contributed R500 over five months. The money was used to make bricks, build pigsties and buy 13 piglets. A local ward councillor also gave them two piglets.

Last year the project was registered as a cooperative with the help of the Small Enterprise Development Agency (Seda), an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry. Seda is currently helping the group draw up a business plan and apply for funding.

Nukeri added that it had not been an easy road. Eleven people were initially involved in the project but four later quit.

"For the first two years we didn't make any profit. In fact, we wouldn't be here without the support we received from the Department of Agriculture. They provide us with transport to buy feedstock and they continue to offer advice and constant monitoring," she said.

The cooperative has big dreams for the future. "We want to become a major player in the meat business," said 62-year-old Samuel Hlatshwayo.

He feeds the animals twice a day and lets them out of their pigsties to run around the yard.

"It is important for the animals to exercise. When an animal gets sick, we call a veterinarian.

ian from town to come and treat it," he added.

Anna Nkuna, 53, a single mother of six, said the piggery gave her a sense of purpose, allowing her to do something good for herself, her children, community and country.

Limpopo Department of Agriculture spokesman Kenny Mathivha said the piggery is one of more than 500 agricultural projects supported by the department.

"We don't give farmers money but provide the necessary training and facilities they need

in order to grow and produce food for all. We provide piglets to those who want to start piggeries," he said.

He encouraged emerging farmers to form cooperatives, saying this made it easier to link them with other farmers and access the markets.

**For more information contact the
Limpopo Department of Agriculture
on 015 294 3000.**



Agnes Tivani and Samuel Hlatshwayo, proud members of the Hluvukani Khubu Piggery Cooperative in Limpopo, earn a living thanks to the pigs they farm.



SAFETY AND SECURITY

New court brings justice to Tsakane

Residents of Tsakane in Gauteng will no longer have to travel 17km to get access to basic justice services.

Thanks to the new magistrate's court, which was recently opened in the area, they will have these services at their doorstep.

The new court boasts four courtrooms, which will be used for criminal, civil and equality matters, as well as family law and regional courts.

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

The court was operating as a branch court of Brakpan but as of April it began rendering full services, including regional court services. It



The newly opened Tsakane Magistrate's Court will make the lives of Tsakane residents that much easier as they no longer need to travel to Brakpan for justice services.

will also deal with over 50 per cent of matters that were held in Brakpan.

"This means that now services will be rendered at your doorstep. This also means the

workload and congestion at the Brakpan Court will be halved and that the workload in this new court will equally not be as congested as the Brakpan Court was before we built this new

court," said Justice Minister Jeff Radebe at the court opening.

It was a win-win situation for those using either the Brakpan Court or the new court, he pointed out.

The Minister urged residents to use their new magistrate's court to report crimes, especially sexual crimes and those against women and children.

Minister Radebe said the country needed a concerted effort from communities, non-governmental organisations and the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster to address the shocking, violent crimes in society.

"...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," he added.

The Minister also called on all those in law enforcement roles to stop committing criminal acts, saying this sort of behaviour did not help to inspire confidence in the criminal justice system of the country.

Special courts to tackle sex crimes

Albert Pule

Government is set to open 58 dedicated courts across the country to deal with sexual offences.

Justice Minister Jeff Radebe recently said that sexual offences courts would start opening by the middle of the year and should be fully operational by September.

Sites across the country have been identified for these courts.

"Courts such as the one in Palm Ridge [in Alberton] 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," said Minister Radebe.

The Minister stressed the need for the specialised courts, saying that government was serious about dealing with the rape of women and children.

The dedicated sexual offences courts were rolled out more than a decade ago but the programme was later discontinued.

"These dedicated courts are necessary. When there are these dedicated courts, the conviction rate goes up but when we stopped them the conviction rate went down," he said.

The Minister also urged communities to act against violence and abuse against women and children every day and not just when there were campaigns highlighting the issue, such as the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children.

"The scourge of sexual assaults against women and children must be dealt with very firmly and with harsh sentences," Minister Radebe added.

Department of Justice spokesman Mtunzi Mhaga said the sexual offences courts would be located in areas where incidents of sexual abuse were most prevalent.

"We plan to have these courts in the most disadvantaged areas where ... people struggle to access the courts," he explained.

The new courts will sit in existing courts and will hear all cases of sexual assault, including attacks on lesbians and gays.

In his State of the Nation Address President Jacob Zuma said cases related to sexual offences would be given priority.

"I have directed law enforcement agencies to treat these cases with the utmost urgency and importance," he said.

Legal Aid South Africa to the rescue

*Isaac Dhludhlu



After paying for his house for 20 years, pensioner Tutu Lennox Mande struggled to get the title deed for the house from the bank.

Fortunately for Mande, from Witbank, he had Legal Aid South Africa in his corner to sort out his dispute with the bank.

Mande, a retired police officer, faithfully paid his bond over the years but when he had paid it off the bank refused to give him the title deed.

Mande called the bank's call centre and was told that he did not appear on the bank's database and there were no records to prove he had a bond with the bank.

After seeing an advert about the services offered by Legal Aid South Africa, the pensioner approached the Witbank Justice Centre, where paralegal Verica Nkuna took up his case.

She consulted with Mande and then arranged a meeting with the bank.

After intense discussions with Nkuna and Mande, the bank manager agreed to investigate the matter and two weeks later Mande's file was found at the bank archives.

The matter was referred to the relevant office for the deed to be registered and Mande was eventually handed the title deed.

"The most important thing is that the matter has been laid to rest and the property has been registered in my name. I am grateful to Legal

Aid South Africa," said Mande.

But Legal Aid South Africa's work goes beyond just helping South Africans with their legal issues.

The Standerton Satellite Office recently donated food and clothes to an ailing, elderly man and his unemployed sister.

Community Development Workers told staff at the office about the plight of the siblings.

A group from the office then paid them a visit at the Sakhile informal settlement and handed over much-needed clothes and food.

"We will try to help the man get a grant from the Department of Social Development, since he doesn't yet qualify for old age pension," said paralegal Bernard Malaka during the visit.

***Isaac Dhludhlu works for Legal Aid South Africa.**



Tutu Lennox Mande finally has the title deed for his house after Legal Aid South Africa helped him resolve his dispute with the bank.

Do you have a legal problem involving children, family or land, but cannot afford a lawyer?

For immediate and professional assistance call the Legal Aid SA toll free number 0800 110 110

Legal Aid Advice Line
Thetha Nathi
0800 110 110

Legal aid is for the unemployed or persons earning R5 000 or less

www.legal-aid.co.za



Employment News

April 2013

International business lessons for young entrepreneurs

Samona Murugan

The programme offers opportunities for young business owners to acquire skills and learn business theory through workshops, lectures and online training, giving them the skills they need to grow their businesses.

The programme is a partnership between the NYDA, the International Business Association (IBA) Global and Amaanah Business Consulting.

In its fourth year, the YEP offers aspiring and established young entrepreneurs the chance to absorb skills from top international entrepreneurs in the USA, Germany, Italy and Spain.

According to NYDA's executive manager for economic development Tamari Mavasa, the programme encourages entrepreneurship

development, promotes employment opportunities and develops skills, which could address the high rate of unemployment among South African youth.

IBA Global president Emiley Vollmer noted that the 25 youth were selected from a range of talented entrepreneurs from across the country.

"We identified and selected those who stood out as the most deserving of a place on the mentorship programme. We have contacted them and they are all raring to get started," she said.

Leena Shimpana, of Mono Transport, is one of those excited to start the programme. "I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to take part in this prestigious programme. Thank you very much for getting me a step closer to realising my goals and for believe-

ing in the dreams of every young entrepreneur who has made it this far," she said.

The group will leave for the USA on 30 April.

Entries for the next intake into the YEP opened in April 2013. Twenty-five more youngsters will be chosen to be part of the fifth mentorship programme, which is scheduled to start in February 2014.

All young entrepreneurs aged between 18 and 35 are urged to apply.

Requirements for applicants include being a South African citizen, having a valid passport, willing to travel, ability to speak English and demonstrating a passion for business.

Application forms are available from www.nyda.gov.za or from your nearest NYDA branch.

For more information contact the NYDA on 08600 96884/0800 5252 or email info@iba-global.com



Young star awarded astronomy bursary

Noluthando Mkhize

Sinenhlanhla Sikhosana,

18, never thought her dream of studying astronomy would come true.

Sikhosana, of Harding in KwaZulu-Natal, knew her family could not afford university fees.

During her matric year at Durban Girls Secondary, she was among the top learners in mathematics and physics from Durban and the surrounding areas who were invited to a career day.

The event, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), focused on astronomy, astrophysics and cosmology.

Sikhosana and the other top achievers were told about the bursaries offered by UKZN's Astrophysics and Cosmology Research Unit (ACRU) in conjunction Square Kilometre Array and the National Research Foundation.

She wasted no time applying and was elated when she was offered a bursary.

Sikhosana is now a third year astronomy student at UKZN.

"Receiving the bursary was a dream come



The University of KwaZulu-Natal, together with the Square Kilometre Array and the National Research Foundation, is changing the lives of students who have a passion for astronomy, astrophysics and cosmology by offering them bursaries.

true. It has opened many doors for me and has allowed me to achieve my goals. I have a passion for astronomy and intend pursuing research once I complete my undergraduate

studies," says Sikhosana.

According to UKZN, each year four outstanding students are awarded the bursary, which ranges from R40 000 to R91 000 a year and

covers university costs.

Potential students who want to apply for the bursary need to have good matric results and an interest in astronomy, astrophysics and cosmology.

Good mathematics and physics results are also very important.

Once all applications are received, shortlisted candidates are called in for an interview. The bursary is awarded when successful candidates pass their final matric exams.

The ACRU has a ground-breaking research programme that aims to promote astronomy, astrophysics and cosmology among university communities, school learners, teachers and the public.

It is made up of a dynamic group of researchers, postgraduate and undergraduate students.

The unit has a strong outreach programme that promotes astronomy among school learners, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The ACRU runs a career week every year. This year the career week is expected to take place from the 15 to 19 April.

To apply for the bursary contact budreep@ukzn.ac.za. Application forms are available in the last week of April.



INVITATION TO ALL QUALIFIED EDUCATORS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

The Department of Basic Education would like to invite all appropriately qualified individuals seeking either permanent or temporary employment in public schools in South Africa to register for the Qualified Educators Recruitment Database.

To register you should complete the form provided on the website and attach certified copies of your teaching qualifications. If you are in possession of qualifications awarded in higher education institutions outside South Africa, you must attach, in addition to certificates, an academic transcript. All fields in the form are compulsory. The completed form and attached certificates should be posted to:

The Directorate: Education Human Resource, Planning, Provisioning and Monitoring,
Department of Basic Education
Private Bag X895
Pretoria
0001

OR hand delivered to: 222 Struben Street, Pretoria

Once you have submitted all the relevant documentation, your name will be added to Qualified Educators Recruitment Database which will be available on our website. Schools with vacant posts will be able to select appropriately qualified candidates from the database thus helping you find employment faster.

A copy of the form can be obtained on the dbe website: www.education.gov.za



EMPLOYMENT NEWS

KZN sets sights on job creation

Albert Pule

KwaZulu-Natal aims to create about 2.1 million jobs for its residents over the next decade.

This is according to the province's Premier Zweli Mkhize, who said that KwaZulu-Natal would play a leading role in ensuring that government reaches its target of creating 11 million jobs by 2030, as set out in the National Development Plan.

"As a province we accept that for the country to create 11 million new jobs by 2030, KwaZulu-Natal will have to create 2.1 million jobs. To achieve this, we have to ensure that the KwaZulu-Natal economy grows at an average of at least 4 per cent per annum between now and 2030," he pointed out.

The province will concentrate on stimulating sectors in which it had a competitive advantage.

Premier Mkhize said the information and communication technology (ICT) sector had good growth and job creation prospects.

"The potential for job creation in the ICT sector is unbelievably high, especially in the business process outsourcing industry. The brokering unit in the Office of the Premier, together with Trade and Investment KwaZulu-Natal, have facilitated investment of about R2.4 billion in this sector, creating over 10 000 jobs by 10 investing companies."

According to the Premier, the Richards Bay Industrial Development Zone will also contribute to the job creation drive.

The zone is expected to conclude its infrastructure development programme and has reached agreements with two investors, who will be investing over R3.5 billion.

"This is in addition to the current Tata Steel manufacturing plant, a R1.2 billion operation providing 400 jobs," he added.

Premier Mkhize noted that KZN was home to Africa's biggest vehicle manufacturing components and a world leader in heavy equipment manufacturing.

The component automotive manufacturers enjoy a combined turnover of about R10 billion and employ well over 20 000 employees in KZN. This contributes significantly to the growth of the economy and sustainable jobs, he added.

The Premier said the province had a responsibility to build its own economy, while contributing to the growth of the country's.

Gauteng matrics empowered for life after school



The High School Turnaround Strategy, which will be introduced in 41 technical schools in Gauteng, will provide youngsters with the skills that will help them find work after matric.

Gabi Khumalo

Gauteng Education
MEC Barbara Creecy has unveiled a High School Turnaround Strategy, which will empower over 5 000 matriculants annually with the appropriate skills and workplace experience.

The programme, launched recently at John Orr Technical High School in Johannesburg, will ensure that more young people leave school with the knowledge and skills they need to get into an institution of higher learning or find decent work.

The Gauteng Education Department and private companies will implement the programme at 41 technical high schools across the province. John Orr is a flagship school, which will pave the way for the other 40 schools.

Speaking at the launch, MEC Creecy stressed the need to increase the number of technically trained learners that are ready

to make a contribution to the economic growth of the country.

Through the turnaround strategy, the department hopes to raise the status of technical education in Gauteng and attract high performing learners to fields that can directly impact on various industries.

"Our intention is that John Orr will be transformed from a conventional technical high school into Gauteng's leading educational institution that offers state-of-the-art technical education and training, and serves as our model for the upgrading of [the other] 40 technical schools," MEC Creecy said.

In January 2011, John Orr was declared a school of excellence. A vigorous selection process was then put in place to identify high potential learners, who had just completed Grade 7 in primary schools throughout the province.

A total of 160 learners were selected and they became the Grade 8 class of 2012, the first class of the new centre.

A second group was selected at the end of 2012 and in 2013 the school has 142 Grade 8 and 161 Grade 9 learners.

In 2012 the school's infrastructure improvement programme began, which included four laboratories being overhauled and improved at a cost of R3 million.

R5 million was spent on revamping the mechanical and electrical workshops, while Imperial donated a new car and 10 engines.

All information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure was also

upgraded and a new ICT laboratory built at a cost of R2 million. Teachers at John Orr now have laptops to assist in their teaching and a variety of new maths textbooks and resources have been provided to Grade 8 and 9 learners.

MEC Creecy noted that the process of refurbishing and upgrading workshops at technical schools in the province had started.

"To date 83 workshops in 23 of the schools have been refurbished at a cost of R22 million. An amount of R14 million has been budgeted for in this financial year to continue this process.

"By June 2013, 41 schools will receive at least two metal turning lathes and one milling machine. These plans over the next three years include resourcing schools with specialised tools and equipment," the MEC announced.

The partnership between the department, Sasol Inzalo Foundation, Imperial and Ukhamba Community Development Trust as well as the Wits and Johannesburg Universities, has made it possible to transform John Orr into a centre of excellence in maths, science and technology.

Sean Fenn, divisional general manager in development and learning at Imperial Automotive Retail Division, said Imperial put an estimated 700 apprentices through their academies annually to become mechanics in various trades.

"They are just so hard to find ready to be employed and so the John Orr investment is about establishing of a pipeline of employment for John Orr and for Imperial," Fenn said.

He added that there was a desperate need for business, education and government to repair the feeding pipelines into the academies and the industry.

Sasol Inzalo Foundation's Dr Yvonne Muthien said the programme would offer excellence in teaching and learning, particularly in maths, science, engineering, technology and related subjects.

"It will deliver school leavers who are effectively prepared to succeed in post-secondary education and training in science, engineering and technology and in the technical world of work," she said.

John Orr principal Johan Venter described the programme as a great innovation and hoped that more great things were on the cards for technical high schools.

Putting out fires of unemployment

Samona Murugan

More than 5 000 men and women have been employed as veld and forest fire fighters across South Africa as part of the Working on Fire (WoF) programme.

Funded by government, the programme helps municipalities, land owners, farmers and institutions like South African National Parks and Fire Protection Associations to fight veld fires which threaten lives and property countrywide.

According to WoF spokesperson Linton Rensburg, the project recruits and trains mostly young men and women from rural communities to become skilled veld and forest fire fighters.

These fire fighters are stationed at more

than 200 bases across the country, with a particular emphasis on rural communities, which are vulnerable to uncontrolled fires.

Through the programme, young people develop skills that make them employable and at the same time are part of efforts to reduce the personal and economic harm caused by veld fires.

To date women make up about 36 per cent of those employed by the programme.

All fire fighters must complete compulsory fitness and several fire fighting courses before they can participate in operations.

These courses include a Fire Induction Course, Basic Safety Orientation, Advanced Fire Fighting, Personal Finance Management, HIV / Aids Awareness and the Working on Fire Life Skills Programme.

Launched in 2005, the programme is part of government's Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and is funded by the Department of Environmental Affairs. The programme's success earned it the top prize in the Kamoso Awards as the best performing EPWP programme in 2012.

To learn more about the Working on Fire programme or to apply to be a fire fighter in your community, visit www.workingonfire.org.za or call 021 685 8839.



The Working on Fire programme is taking unemployed men and women from rural communities and turning them into skilled veld and forest fire fighters.

Big boost for Mpumalanga's emerging farmers

Siphiwe Nyathi

Small-scale farmers in Mpumalanga now have a ready-made market for their produce after it was announced that they would start supplying food to selected government schools.

Provincial government spokesman Zibonele Mncwango said that from 1 April, all school feeding schemes in municipalities that fall under the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme would buy their food from small-scale farmers.

These municipalities include Nkomazi in Malalane, Chief Albert Luthuli in Carolina, Pixley Ka Seme in Volkrust, Dr JS Moroka in Siyabuswa, Thembisile Hani in KwaMhlanga, Mkhondo in Piet Retief and Bushbuckridge.

Premier David Mabuza announced the development during his State of the Province Address recently.

The Mpumalanga government wants to ensure that every small producer is given an opportunity to actively participate in the economy.

"As a build-up, government will provide markets for small-scale farmers and encourage them to keep on farming," Mncwango explained.

He said small-scale farmers would also be given an opportunity to sell their crops at the fresh produce market that will be built in the province this year.



Emerging farmers, such as those of the Varimi va Bush Secondary Cooperative in Bushbuckridge, can look forward to supplying their produce to local schools.

"Farmers will work with their municipalities to ensure that no cooperative is left behind. The opportunity will encourage and motivate emerging farmers to produce more food knowing that they have a market," Mncwango added.

Farmers in the province are excited at the latest developments.

Grace Mndawo, of the Silwanendlala Agriculture Cooperative, said the opportunity bears a lot of promise for their vegetable project.

"We are very thrilled about the opportunity and we cannot wait to expand our farming hectares as we also feed orphans in the area. It is always encouraging and inspiring knowing that when you harvest, there is a market waiting for your products," she said.

Silwanendlala grows beetroot, tomatoes,

spinach, butternut and onions.

Another farmer Sanny Ndinisa, who represents Thathani Ku Phila Cooperative, said members of the project would now be able to earn salaries. "Some of the cooperatives were struggling due to a lack of market and poor demand because many farm the same crop in the area. This will inspire many farmers, especially women," she said.

However, their farm still has water challenges. "We hope that government can help us with boreholes so that we can use more hectares," Ndinisa added.

For more information contact the Mpumalanga provincial government on 013 766 1000.

Wine mellows youth for working world



Excitement was the order of the day when a group of students graduated from the Sommelier Level 1 programme, which prepared them for careers as wine advisors.

Noluthando Mkhize

About a year ago Zethu Koma, of Mdansana in the Western Cape, did not know much about wine.

Today she's a wine expert, able to advise others on the right wine to suit any occasion, using words like crispy and buttery to describe the texture of wine.

Koma was one of 200 young people selected to take part in a Wine Advisor - Level 1 Sommelier Programme funded by the Department of Tourism.

A sommelier or wine advisor is a trained

and knowledgeable wine professional, normally working in a restaurant and specialising in all aspects of wine.

The department invested R11 million in a year-long pilot training programme in partnership with the Wine Cape Academy.

Two hundred unemployed people, between the ages of 18 and 34, were selected for the course, after they responded to advertisements in local newspapers and Koma was one of them.

She started the course in March last year and graduated in February.

"Before attending the course I did not know anything about wine. I can now tell what type of wine should be served with which foods, like white wine goes well with seafood. The course has equipped me with skills to work as a sommelier in a restaurant, a representative for a wine company or a tour guide in the winelands," she said.

Her favourite wine is the Sauvignon Blanc because she enjoys the crispiness and flavour of it.

Tourism Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk said the department decided to create opportunities in the field because of the shortage of sommeliers in the hospitality industry.

The success of another of the department's initiatives, the Youth Chef Training Programme, prompted it to fund the sommelier programme, he added.

"The wine advisor sommelier programme forms part of the broader perspective of the National Tourism Sector Strategy, which addresses the need for job creation and economic growth, as outlined in government's New Growth Path," said the Minister.

The department was committed, through its Social Responsibility Implementation programme, to developing skills and encouraging a supply of skilled manpower that would benefit the local hospitality industry, he added.

The sommelier programme includes a Wine Service Course, Preliminary Wine Course, Certificate Wine Course, Front of House, Marketing and the Wines of the World Course.

The programme includes four six-week practical work segments in the wine industry.

During the first practical, wine distributors and wholesalers took in students.

The practicals included front-of-house training in restaurants, retail outlets and hotels.

The department is still assessing whether the pilot project is suitable to be rolled out nationally and for a second intake.

As for Koma, after receiving distinctions in all four modules she is on her way to being one of the best sommeliers in the country.

More boats for Lambert's Bay fishermen

Albert Pule

The fishermen of Lambert's Bay in the Western Cape are looking forward to smooth sailing and better catches after they were given 16 boats by the Department of Trade Industry (dti).

The new boats are not only a boost for their businesses but could potentially be life saving, considering the state of the boats they relied on in the past.

Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies handed over the boats to a local fishing cooperative recently.

Nico Waldech, a member of the cooperative, said it was a remarkable day in the lives of fishermen and others along the West Coast.

"This is not only empowerment but a healing process for all of us. This says we as fishermen can continue with our livelihood and that government is putting measures in place to correct the past and put people first," Waldech added.

Before government's intervention, the community of Lambert's Bay was using unsafe fishing boats and equipment.

"We welcome this initiative from government and will make the best of this opportunity handed to us to improve the working conditions of our fishermen and women," said Executive Mayor of Cederberg Local Municipality Jonas White.

And it is not only the Lambert's Bay fishing community that can look forward to a helping hand from government.

Minister Davies told the community that government would step up efforts to support cooperatives.

So far dti has spent R11 million on cooperatives through its Cooperative Incentive Scheme. The scheme makes cooperatives more competitive by lowering their cost of doing business through an incentive that supports Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment.

"Government has identified cooperatives as a drive for job creation and it has shown that more than 650 jobs will be created from the fishing cluster initiative. With more activities around the fishing community, 2000 jobs can emanate from this drive," said Minister Davies.

He encouraged cooperatives to form clusters and make themselves more effective in their sectors.

"Fishing is not an easy job but it can improve the lives of many people and give more opportunities that can lead to other projects taking place in the area," added Minister Davies.



EMPLOYMENT NEWS

SETAs provide skills for job market



The country's 23 Sector Training and Education Authorities prepare thousands of youngsters for the working world every year by ensuring that they receive the necessary training.

Samona Murugan

For the past 13 years Sector Training and Education Authorities (SETAs) have been training young job seekers, preparing them for the world of work.

SETAs were set up to narrow the gap between available skills and the job market.

Each year thousands of young graduates seek employment and more than 50 per cent of Grade 12 learners leave schools without basic employment skills.

To address the huge skills gap facing the country and to improve skills development, in March 2000 the then Minister of Labour Membathisi Mdladlana formerly established 23 SETAs.

Each SETA has its own clearly defined sector and sub-sectors. The SETAs are also very involved with learnerships, internships, skills programmes and apprenticeships.

One of the primary objectives of SETAs is to collect skills levies from employers in each sector, in terms of the Skills Development Levies Act, and make the money available for education and training in that sector.

These funds are allocated to employers, training bodies and learners, in the form of optional grants and bursaries.

During April the Safety and Security Sector Education and Training Authority (Sassetta) and the Agriculture Sector Education and Training Authority (AgriSETA) will tour the country to spread word about their work.

ROADSHOWS

For Sassetta, the roadshow is an opportunity to spread awareness about grant regulations and processes, as well as the latest developments. The roadshows target skills development facilitators, labour unions, correctional services, as well as the justice, legal, state security and policing sector.

The roadshows will take place in Durban on 4 April, Cape Town on 9 April, Johannesburg on 11 April and Pretoria on 16 April.

Registration starts at 8am and the programme will run from 9am to 2pm. To register visit www.sassetta.org.za or call 0861 102 477.

AgriSETA will also host its 2013 Information Sessions with skills development facilitators and training providers to inform them of the changes in the SETA grant regulations. These information sessions will take place in Polokwane on 2 and 3 April, Centurion on 4 and 5 April, Stellenbosch on 8 and 9 April, Bloemfontein on 11 and 12 April, Nelspruit on 15 and 16 April, Durban on 18 and 19 April, Upington on 23 April, East London on 24 April and Port Elizabeth on 25 April.

SETAs CONTACT DETAILS:

FASSET: Financial and Accounting Services Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 476 8570, fax: 011 476 5756, www.fasset.org.za

BANKSETA: Banking Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 805 9661, fax: 011 805 8348, www.bankseta.org.za

CHIETA: Chemical Industries Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 726 4026, fax: 011 726 2425, www.chieta.org.za

FP&M SETA: Fibre Processing Manufacturing Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 234 2311, fax: 011 234 2350, www.fpmseta.org.za

CETA: Construction Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 265 5900, fax: 011 265 5924/5, www.ceta.org.za

ETDP: Education, Training and Development Practices, tel: 011 372 3300, 0866 048 934, www.etdpseta.org.za

EWSETA: Energy Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 689 5320, fax: 011 689 5340 / 5341, www.eseta.org.za

FOODBEV: Food and Beverages Manufacturing Industry Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 253 7300, fax: 011 253 7333, www.foodbev.co.za

HWSETA: Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 607 6907 fax: 011 616 7393, www.hwseta.org.za

INSETA: Insurance Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 544 2000, fax: 011 484 0862, www.inseta.org.za

LGSETA: Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 456 8579

fax: 011 450 4948, www.lgseta.co.za

MICT: Media, Advertising, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 207 2600, fax: 011 805 6833, www.isett.org.za

MQA: Mining Qualifications Authority, tel: 011 630 3503, fax: 011 832 1044, www.mqa.org.za

MERSETA: Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 484 9310, fax: 011 484 9319, www.mersetra.org.za

SASSETA: Safety and Security Sector Education & Training Authority, tel: 011 347 0200, 0861 102 477, www.sassetra.org.za

AGRISETA: Agriculture Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 012 301 5600, fax: 012 325 1677, www.agriseta.co.za

PSETA: Public Service Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 012 314 7045/7133, fax: 012 314 7152, www.pseta.gov.za

SSETA: Services Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 276 9600, fax: 011 276 9650, www.serviceseta.org.za

CATHSSETA: Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 217 0600, fax: 011 783 7745, www.cathsseta.org.za

TETA: Transport Education and Training Authority, tel: 011 781 1280, fax: 011 781 0200, www.teta.org.za

W&RSETA: Wholesale and Retail Sector Education and Training Authority, tel: 012 622 9500 fax: 012 665 2559, www.wrseta.org.za



LEARNERSHIP

What is a learnership?

A learnership is a professional education and training programme which aims to combine structured learning and work experience so that a learner obtains a qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

Who is eligible to enter the learnership programme?

Any person, employed or unemployed, may apply to register for a learnership:

- If you are employed, you may register for a learnership programme within the sector where your company or organisation operates; or
- If you are unemployed, you may register for placement in a learnership programme at your local labour centre or employers in your area. The Department of Labour refers unemployed individuals, who meet the minimum criteria, to employers looking for learners.

How does one apply for a learnership programme?

- If you are employed, find out what learnerships are available in the sector in which you work. Upon deciding which learnership programme is appropriate, you will need to enter an agreement with your employer stating your rights and responsibilities as a learner; or
- If you are unemployed, you must register your profile at the nearest labour office, after which you may be referred to employers who may be looking for learners on learnership programmes.



APPRENTICESHIP

What is an apprenticeship?

The apprenticeship system is a well known technical training system which includes practical and theoretical training. Apprenticeships are offered in listed trades, and upon passing a trade test, the candidate will be recognised as an artisan.

Who is eligible for an apprenticeship programme?

Any South African citizen, 16 years or older. There are different admission requirements for the various trades. Competence in Maths, Science and English will enhance your chances of selection.

How does one apply for the apprenticeship programme?

- If you are unemployed, you may apply to a company that is offering an apprenticeship programme; or
- If you are employed, consult with your employer as to the correct procedures to be followed so that you may pursue such training.

The merSETA offers a limited number of bursaries in the Engineering and Manufacturing sectors at Universities and Universities of Technology. Students who wish to apply for study in 2014 need to start the process in June/July 2013 based on their mid-year results.

Youngsters talk their way to Cambridge University

Samona Murugan

Four youngsters will be jetting off to the University of Cambridge soon after they impressed with their debating skills at the 2013 Africa Institute of South Africa's (AISA) Young Graduates and Scholars Conference.

The four students – the winner and runners-up in the Africa Union Debate Challenge category – will spend a month at the prestigious University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom.

They all participated in the conference, which took place at North-West University in February under the theme *2050 – Africa's future on the horizon: Prospects and challenges for development*.

Its aim was to mobilise young African graduate scholars on important challenges facing the



Lindelani Mukhovha, Marvellous Ndhlovu, Naledi Modise and Simphiwe Ngwane have been rewarded with a trip to the University of Cambridge after excelling at the 2013 Africa Institute of South Africa's Young Graduates and Scholars Conference.

continent such as climate change, energy and water supply security, governance, poverty, development, peace and security.

Delegates were encouraged to submit papers on issues that affect youth development in Africa.

AISA experts then reviewed the papers. The

best papers will be published by AISA and made available in academic, government and political circles.

Fatoumata Keita from the Bamako University in Mali scooped the Best Research Paper award.

Keita's winning paper provides concrete

proposals on settling conflicts in the Sahel region, which lies between the Sahara desert in the north and Sudan in the south.

Marvellous Ndhlovu, a third year international relations student from the University of Venda, won the 2013 Africa Union Debate Challenge category.

The highlight of the conference came when AISA announced that, in partnership with the Guggenheim Foundation, it would be sending Ndhlovu, together with AU Debate Challenge runners-up Simphiwe Ngwane from the University of Witwatersrand, Lindelani Mukhovha from the University of Johannesburg and Naledi Modise from the North-West University, to the University of Cambridge.

The four will spend a month at the university in July, interacting with other students from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The University of Cambridge also provides a platform for emerging African scholars to exchange ideas on how to resolve the challenges faced by African societies, uphold African value systems and work towards integrating the African continent.

On the local front, the Young Graduates and Scholars Conference provides a platform for young African scholars to communicate, have their work published, debate the challenges facing the continent and explore ways of uplifting it.

Winners in all categories walked away with a floating trophy and certificate.

French adventure for young volunteers

*Nawhal Kara-Foster and Albert Pule

Despite growing up in a community ravaged by drugs, violence and crime, 20-year-old Lucretia Maarmen did not let circumstances deter her from chasing her dream of travelling overseas.



Lucretia Maarmen's desire to help others is paying off after she was among the volunteers selected for a six-month exchange programme in France.

Maarmen, of Rosemoore in the Western Cape, is one of the 10 volunteers who will take part in an exchange programme between the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and Service Civique, a French institution responsible for voluntary civic service.

The exchange programme started two years ago and has grown in leaps and bounds.

It allows volunteers from various non-governmental organisations (NGOs), peer motivators and community mobilisers to volunteer in France for six months, while a French group spends six months volunteering at South African NGOs in the Western Cape.

Maarmen lives with her unemployed mother and father, who works as a local bus driver. She said it has always been her dream to travel overseas.

"I'm over the moon to have the opportunity to explore a new country for the first time, especially France where I know now there is so much to learn. I also want to show the French exactly what it means to be a South African," she said.

After finishing school, Maarmen completed a first aid course, worked as a cashier, volunteered with the Metro Ambulance Service as a first aider and is currently a volunteer counselor with NGO loveLife.

"My passion is the protection and development of children and I would love to study social work next year so that I can improve conditions for the children in my community," she added.

NYDA CEO Steven Ngubeni said the participation of young people in these programmes would help develop their skills and open doors for career opportunities.

"We are very proud of all our French exchange volunteers and all the young people that participate in National Youth Service (NYS) programmes nationally throughout the year. NYS opens so many doors for young people to develop skills, travel and uplift their communities. Cultural exchanges allow for personal growth and a broader perspective on the world for young people," he added.

The exchange programme is one of the joint ventures between the NYDA and loveLife.

"The French/South Africa Exchange Programme gives young people an opportunity to be global citizens. It marries international dynamics, youth and the developmental



NYDA IS RECRUITING!

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) is responsible for mainstreaming and integrating youth development in all organs of the state, private sector as well as civil society for young people to have sustainable livelihoods.

The NYDA will be opening a Branch in Thohoyandou (Venda, Limpopo) and is offering 10 positions to promising graduates aged between 18 and 35 years.

In addition, two vacancies exist for Officer: Micro Loans for the NYDA Tshwane and Secunda Branch.

Interested candidates should visit www.nyda.gov.za and click on Careers@NYDA on the home page (top right navigation) to view adverts and access the application form.

The application form should be emailed to recruitment@nyda.gov.za. Applicants should use the vacancy reference number in the subject line when submitting the application.

www.nyda.gov.za | 0800 52 52 52

context. The youth get a chance to learn and share international perspectives and get excited about gaining foreign language skills," said Dr Andile Dube, loveLife's director of youth programmes.

The programme allows young people to explore the world while discovering more about themselves, he added.

"The cherry on top is that these youth are South African ambassadors to the world and represent the world back home."

The South African volunteers left for France in March. They will return to South Africa in August with their counterparts from France.

***Nawhal Kara-Foster works for the NYDA.**

For more information on the programme contact the NYDA on 0800 525 252.



Provinces promise job creation, economic growth

Taking their cue from President Jacob Zuma's State of the Nation Address, the country's nine Premiers have declared themselves ready to lead economic development and job creation in their provinces.

Delivering the State of the Province Addresses in February, Premiers reviewed the progress made so far, while announcing measures to grow the economy in their provinces and create jobs.



GAUTENG

Premier Nomvula Mokonyane announced that the Gauteng Provincial Government plans to create 196 000 work opportunities at provincial and municipal level through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in the coming year.

A further 51 000 temporary and permanent jobs will be generated through other initiatives.

This will be an improvement on the 22 000



WESTERN CAPE

The Western Cape provincial government will pilot four job creation initiatives under the National Development Plan (NDP).

Premier Helen Zille said her province had been chosen by national government to pilot three NDP initiatives and would add a fourth of its own.

The three include reducing red tape related to small businesses, creating an Economic Development Partnership to facilitate growth and jobs, as well as an afterschool programme to keep young people involved in work activities in the afternoons.

The province has added a fourth component - the expansion of the Work and Skills Programme.

Since it was launched in 2009, the Work and

direct permanent jobs, 44 000 direct temporary jobs and 151 000 work opportunities created through the EPWP in the last financial year.

The province is also expected to collaborate with business and Sector Education and Training Authorities to place 6 500 youth in learnerships, internships and work places to gain on-the-job training.

Turning to health, the Premier reported that the province's public health system was on its way to recovery. One hundred new ambulances and 20 specialised obstetric ambulances will be added to the Gauteng ambulance fleet.

More Gauteng residents are also receiving counselling and treatment for HIV/AIDS.

"We have reached over four million people through HIV counselling and testing initiatives since 2011. Of the estimated 1.2 million Gauteng residents who are HIV-positive, close to 900 000 now have access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) through the public health system; an exponential increase compared to just 75 000 on ART in 2006," said Premier Mokonyane.

She also announced that the Bus Rapid Transit networks in Johannesburg and Tshwane will continue to expand and that planning is under way for a similar system in Ekurhuleni.



KWAZULU-NATAL

KwaZulu-Natal has to date created 89 455 full time equivalent jobs and 324 951 work opportunities under the EPWP.

"We have been commended by the national Department of Public Works as the top beneficiary of the incentive grant totalling R165 million and growing since 2009," said Premier Zweli Mkhize.

The challenge for the province, said Premier Mkhize, will be to create 2.1 million jobs by 2030 in line with the NDP.

The Premier said information communication technologies had growth potential in the province.

Growth was also expected in the tourism

Skills Programme has helped create 2 810 job opportunities for unemployed youth, with 60 per cent of participants finding permanent jobs after completing the programme.

The Development Bank of South Africa has granted R64 million from its Jobs Fund to supplement the programme, which will help fund more work opportunities.

Premier Zille said 89 per cent of the 921 administrative bottlenecks reported to the province's Red Tape Reduction Unit since August 2011 had been cleared.

She said the province also spent R442.5 million on skills development programmes and provided more than 5 500 bursaries during the 2012/2013 financial year.

The Western Cape government has also sourced R265 million from other government

departments for rural development projects in seven areas. This has helped create 1 636 job opportunities and 2 905 skills training opportunities.



industry, he added.

"A new Provincial Tourism Master Plan

was approved by the Cabinet with a target to increase tourism jobs to 180 000 by 2020 and the number of domestic arrivals to 24 million by 2030."

On the issue of housing, Premier Mkhize said the province had provided 85 733 housing units in urban and rural areas and upgraded 6 386 units in informal dwellings.

Efforts to address HIV/AIDS in the province were also paying off, he noted.

"Since 2009 we have stabilised HIV prevalence in our province from 39.5 per cent to 37.4 per cent as a direct result of our integrated approach through the Provincial Council on Aids," the Premier added.



LIMPOPO

Limpopo, the province that created the most number of jobs in the last financial year, according to Statistics South Africa, is on course to repeat the achievement.

"In this financial year our province is still the highest, having increased its job creation by 6.5 per cent whilst the second province is at 5.1 per

cent," said Premier Cassel Mathale.

Looking ahead, new jobs will come from mining, small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), professional hunting and agriculture.

"The construction phase of the Venetia Underground Mine will create up to 1 000 new jobs, the majority of which will come from the local area," said Premier Mathale.

When completed the Venetia underground mine will replace open pit mines (mines where minerals are close to the surface) as South Africa's largest diamond mine and extend the life of the resource until 2042.

"This is a long term commitment to the future of South Africa and the largest by De Beers anywhere in the world. This is a strong sign of confidence in South African diamond and mining industry," he added.

The province will also partner the Department of Trade and Industry to establish Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the Musina and Greater Tubatse municipalities.

"We are happy to report ... that we are the

only province to receive provisional approval for two SEZs," he said.

SEZs are geographical regions that have

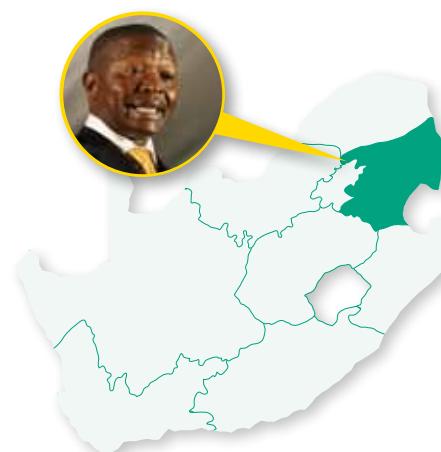
economic and other laws aimed at increasing foreign direct investment, development of infrastructure and increasing employment.





NORTH WEST

The North West provincial government's priorities for the year ahead include stimulating



EASTERN CAPE

The Eastern Cape Provincial Government exceeded its own target when it created close to 110 000 job opportunities by the end of last

agriculture, SMMEs and strengthening the EPWP.

Premier Thandi Modise announced that her government had allocated R22 million to SMMEs.

"To date loans to value of R18.5 million have been granted to 96 deserving SMMEs, creating 263 permanent and 97 temporary jobs."

According to the Premier, the EPWP has created 21 196 job opportunities in the province.

"As part of our support towards employment creation through agriculture, a total of 1 502 jobs were created by implementing 401 projects and over 19 681 farming community beneficiaries were supported as part of the departmental job creation plan," the Premier said.

She added that the province had formed a

MPUMALANGA

Mpumalanga created 40 690 job opportunities through the EPWP from April to September 2012.

"The main beneficiaries of these jobs were 33 674 young people and 25 228 women," said Premier David Mabuza.

This has placed the province in line to receive an incentive grant of about R56 million for exceeding its target for creating full time equivalent jobs, said the Premier.

The province created more than 19 000 jobs through the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme in the past year.

He added that Mpumalanga had set a job creation target of 76 000 for the year ahead, which will focus on construction, maintenance

year through the EPWP.

In addition, 2 622 people across the province were trained in technical and life skills through the EPWP, said Premier Noxolo Kiviet.

But the Premier was cautiously optimistic in her assessment, saying unemployment in the province remained unacceptably high at 29.8 per cent at the end of 2012.

On the positive side, the province got more than R100 million from the Jobs Fund to work with Mercedes Benz South Africa to establish a training centre.

"Furthermore, the investment of R600 million from our new Chinese original equipment manufacturers, FAW, is on track, with factory construction underway in Coega," she added.

Premier Kiviet said more than R24 million was set aside to support 27 struggling companies, with R10.5 million having been disbursed to companies, where 2 460 jobs were saved.

Admitting that 2012 had been a bad year for education in the province, the Premier prom-

ised that the coming years would see a significant investment in school infrastructure critical for improvements in the quality of education.

The province had made progress in eliminating mud schools, she added.

In addition, more subject advisors, education development officers and district curriculum heads have been appointed to improve education.

Premier Kiviet reported that the majority of critical vacancies had been filled and the province's turnaround strategy, overseen by national government, had begun showing positive outcomes as seen in last year's improved matric results.

She also pledged to channel more resources towards HIV/AIDS and TB prevention.

Notable strides have been made in the fight against HIV/AIDS in the Eastern Cape as more patients have been put on antiretroviral (ARV) therapy, the Premier noted.

The number of facilities providing ARV

reduces maternal deaths.



established in the province.

It will provide an in-service learning platform for teachers to improve their teaching skills and ensure that learners have access to relevant learning material, equipment and e-learning technologies.

"Through this academy, the province is hoping to increase output in maths and science at Grade 12 level in order to have a bigger pool of learners who will follow maths and science related careers at tertiary level," said Mabuza.

He also stressed the importance of healthcare in schools, saying the province would continue to increase preventive healthcare for school-going children through the Integrated School Health Programme.

treatment increased from 85 in 2009 to 780 by the end of 2012. More than 1 400 nurses were trained to administer ARV treatment instead of this being done by a doctor. Close to 200 000 people were registered on the ARV programme in 2012 compared with just over 102 000 in 2009.



NORTHERN CAPE

The Northern Cape is on the verge of an economic boom, riding on the back of the Square Kilometre Array project and renewable energy initiatives.

Acting Premier Grizelda Ciekella reported that the provincial economy managed to create 36 000 jobs between the fourth quarter of 2010 and the fourth quarter of 2012.

She said the province had created 4 709 jobs in the renewable energy sector with more projects on the way.

"The Renewable Energy Independent Power Producer Procurement Programme has awarded preferred bidder status to certain solar projects to be located in the Northern Cape," she pointed out.

The acting Premier also welcomed the R2 billion allocation from National Treasury for

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.



and support will be given to underperforming schools.

To ensure good healthcare, the Premier said the province will continue to screen the qualifications of all medical practitioners in the province.

Access to primary healthcare in all the province's municipalities will also be expanded, with the main focus on combating HIV/AIDS and decreasing maternal and child mortality.

Six hundred fully trained community health workers will be employed in 47 wards to help achieve this.

"The maintenance of health facilities in the province will continue to receive priority attention," he said.

The province plans to build new hospitals in Bloemfontein, Amelia in Sasolburg and in the rural areas of Qwaqwa and Botshabelo.

The SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new order, democracy, inclusiveness, growth and opportunity as it will be the first post-1994 university for our country."

She welcomed the establishment of a university in the province in 2014, saying it would provide critical skills to the key sectors locally and would help to advance research and innovation.

the SKA project, saying the project "presents an opportunity to intensively recruit and train young South Africans to pursue careers in the field of science and technology".

The SKA telescope will be the world's most powerful telescope. The majority of the SKA will be built in Africa, while the core - the region with the highest concentration of receivers - will be constructed in the Northern Cape.

Turning the spotlight to the new university to be built in the province, the acting Premier said she was happy with developments so far.

"The Northern Cape provincial government foresees the new university to become a symbol of the new

GENERAL

Presidential Hotline all ears to SA's problems

Noluthando Mkhize

The Presidential Hotline is making significant headway in resolving the problems of South Africa's citizens, having successfully dealt with about 87 per cent of queries by January 2013.

More than 154 549 calls have been received since the inception of the call centre in 2009.

Of these, 87 per cent have had a happy ending. This includes the story of a widow who logged a query after failing to receive her husband's pension.

When she went to the Department of Labour, where her husband had been employed, she was told that his information did not appear on the system.

She then called the hotline for assistance and was told to submit certain documents.

After the correct documents were given to the department the pension was paid out to the widow.

The hotline was launched in October 2009 as

a tool for citizens to talk to government.

According to the Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME), which oversees the hotline, by November 2009, 39 per cent of cases received had been resolved.

From October 2009 to September last year 144 345 calls were logged, 47 per cent of which could not be dealt with by call centre agents and were referred to The Presidency.

The hotline referred 27 per cent of queries to national departments and agencies and 26 per cent to provinces.

The Departments of Home Affairs, Human Settlements, Social Development, Labour, Justice and the South African Social Security Agency received the highest volumes of queries, but were able to resolve most of them, DPME said.

The Departments of Basic Education, Correctional Services and Public Enterprises started 2012 on a low note as they were under performing and failed to resolved 80 per cent of cases received.

By September 2012 things had changed and they had resolved about 80 per cent of queries.

Departments which managed to increase the number of cases it resolved included Correctional Services from 41 per cent to 95 per cent, SAPS from 47 per cent to 75 per cent, Rural Development and Land Reform from 56 per cent to 79 per cent and Public Enterprises 65 per cent to 99 per cent.

To successfully deal with more queries,

DPME introduced the Technical Support Plan (TSP) in January 2012 for departments and provinces that were resolving less than 80 per cent of cases.

These included KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Eastern Cape, SAPS, Mpumalanga, North West, Limpopo, Transport, Rural Development and Land Reform and Correction Services.

The plan advises provinces on how to operate the hotline system.

the Presidential Hotline if they needed to speak to government or register complaints about unresolved service delivery issues.



Contact the Presidential Hotline by calling 17737, fax: 086 681 0987/012 323 8246 or email president@po.gov.za

Govt sets aside billions for social grants

Vuyo Bathembu

In the coming year government will spend R134.9 billion on social grants, Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan has announced.

For the first time, child support grants will increase twice this year – from R280 to R290 in April and to R300 in October.

In the Budget Speech delivered in Parliament in February, Minister Gordhan stressed that while government would continue to encourage job creation, support for vulnerable households through old age, child support and other social assistance grants would remain important.

Old age and disability grants increase from R1 200 a month to R1 260 from April. Foster care grant rises from R770 to R800.

South Africa is among the few countries in the world that have a wide social security network for its vulnerable citizens. More than half of all households in South Africa benefit from social assistance. According to the National Treasury, social grants are the main source of income for 22 per cent of households.

More than 11 million children receive child support grants. The social assistance budget has increased by an average of 11 per cent a year since 2008/09, in part due to the extension of child support grants to children up to the age of 18. Minister Gordhan said spending on social assistance will rise to R120 billion next year.

The Minister allocated more money to the priority areas identified by government.

"In this budget we continue to invest in education, health, housing, public transport and social development – components of the social wage which add up to about 60 per cent of public expenditure," he said.



Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan announced massive spending on social grants when he detailed how the country would spend its national budget recently.

public employment. Programmes to support these objectives include Sector Education and Training Authorities and further education and training colleges.

As part of plans to boost opportunities for young work seekers, government recognised the need to share the costs of expanding job opportunities with the private sector.

A revised youth employment incentive will be introduced in Parliament after consultations, together with a proposed employment incentive for certain sectors of the economy.

To improve South Africa's health system, the health sector has been given R133.6 billion from the national budget.

Minister Gordhan said some of the money would be used to complete the building of some 1 967 health facilities and 49 nursing colleges, which he said, were in different stages of planning, construction and refurbishment.

More than R800 million has been allocated to provide antiretroviral treatment for people with HIV. Spending on general health infrastructure increased from R3.3 billion in 2009/10 to R5.4 billion in the 2012/13 financial year and this is expected to grow to R6.5 billion over three years.

This is because of the National Health Insurance (NHI) Scheme that government plans to introduce. The NHI will provide universal access to quality healthcare for all South Africans.

Minister Gordhan increased spending on defence, public order and safety by 9.7 per cent a year from 2008/09 to 2011/12. This means the budget for the army, the police and other armed formations will grow from R140 billion in 2012/13 to R158 billion in 2014/15.

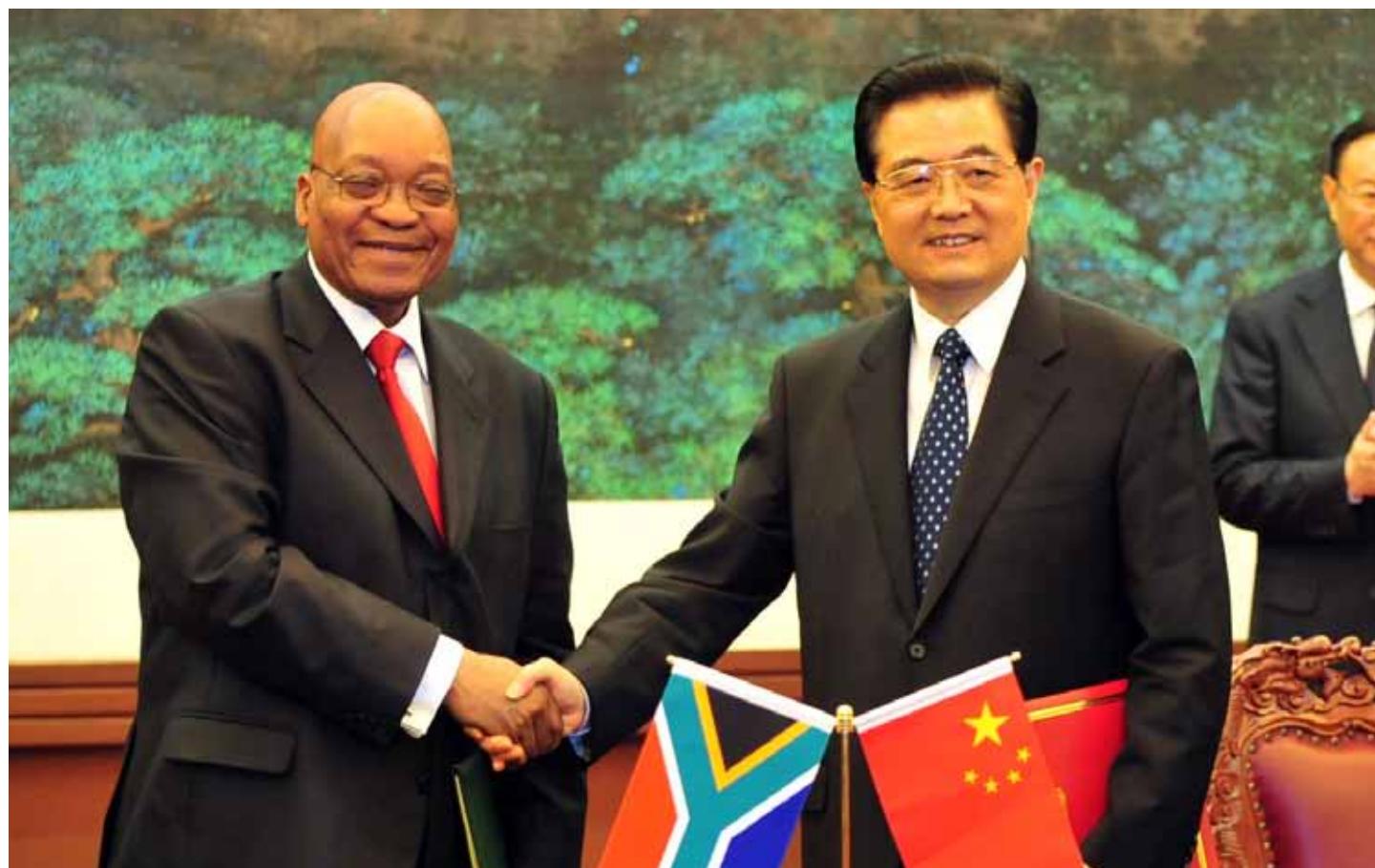
The Minister also allocated money to improve courts, strengthen the Office of the Public Protector and boost the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID).

"Additional funding of R300 million is allocated for court infrastructure, including new high courts in Polokwane and Nelspruit. The Office of the Public Protector and the IPID are allocated additional funds to expand capacity. Funds are provided to the defence force to increase personnel deployment for border protection," he added.

new universities in the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga.

He added that government's existing approach to supporting employment growth focused on training, skills development, labour market activation and short-term

SA, China mark landmark in relations



President Jacob Zuma and former Chinese President Hu Jintao have shaken hands on a number of agreements over the years, as relations between the two countries have blossomed.

Thomas Thale

The 15th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and South Africa is a momentous occasion that will be celebrated in both countries throughout 2013.

This is according to South Africa's Ambassador to the People's Republic of China Bheki Langa.

South Africa and China established full diplomatic relations in January 1998. Since then, relations between the two countries have blossomed.

International Relations and Cooperation Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane says the 15th anniversary of relations between the two countries is a joyous occasion.

"An occasion such as [this] affords us the opportunity to reflect on past achievements with a sense of pride, whilst also looking into the future with a sense of optimism, purpose and determination."

China has become South Africa's largest trading partner.

According to Minister Nkoana-Mashabane in 2012, total trade between the two countries stood at R201 billion.

South Africa's exports to China stood at R84 billion in 2012, according to data released by the South African Revenue Service.

South Africa's exports to China are mainly mineral products such as iron ore, chrome, manganese and coal. Other exports include chemicals, plastics, steel, aluminium, paper, pulp, alcohol, wool and copper.

"Over the past one-and-a-half decades, the relationship between the two countries has gone through some three principal stages - from a partnership in 2000, through a strategic partnership in 2004, to a comprehensive strategic partnership in 2010. From 2010, China became South Africa's largest trading partner," says Ambassador Langa.

The Chinese Ambassador to South Africa Tian Xuejun says China sees South Africa as a strategic partner.

"South Africa is now China's largest trading partner in Africa. The scope and depth of our economic cooperation has expanded."

He says the two countries have also forged closer cooperation in areas such as education, arts, culture, science and technology, sports and protection of heritage sites.

The strengthening of relations between the two countries is also reflected in the increasing number of Chinese tourists visiting South Africa.

Over 96 000 Chinese tourists visited South Africa between January and September 2012, up from the 59 187 who visited over the same period in 2011. This makes China the country's fourth-biggest overseas tourist market.

Minister Nkoana-Mashabane says a Joint Working Group on Trade Statistics under the Bi-National Commission has been established to address the trade imbalance between China and South Africa. This refers to the fact that Chinese imports outweigh South African exports.

"Furthermore, South Africa is actively expanding its market share in China by introducing 10 priority products and investment projects in various fields," she says.

China and South Africa are both members of the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) bloc of countries.

South Africa also works with China on the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation.

"This forum has proven to be a key instrument in advancing Africa's development agenda. For the next six years, South Africa and China will collaborate vigorously, yet with sensitivity, in order to address the interests of all stakeholders," says Minister Nkoana-Mashabane.

South African, Nigerian accountants strengthen ties

Albert Pule

South African accountants and their Nigerian counterparts have agreed to work together to promote the interests of the accountancy profession in the two countries.

The South African Institute of Professional Accountants (SAIPA) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Council

for the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) recently.

According to the memorandum, members of one body can now become members of the other, meaning South African professional accountants can practise in Nigeria and those who belong to ANAN will be able to practise in South Africa.

"Nigeria's business environment is in strong growth mode and so offers South African professional accountants a great new market in which to operate," said CEO of SAIPA Shahied Daniels.

Trade between the two countries stood at \$30 million (approximately R267 million) in 2012. Nigeria has been one of the world's fastest growing economies since 2001, and its gross domestic product is expected to average 6.8 per cent until 2015.

Daniels said SAIPA was looking forward to working closely with its Nigerian counterpart and together they would work on building reliable standards framework that will support bilateral trade and business.

ANAN CEO Terkaa Gemade said the MoU between two of Africa's leading economies was a step in the right direction and would strengthen accountancy on the continent.

"Africa is steadily building a business-friendly environment that is attractive to international investors and promotes intra-regional trade. This link between two leading professional accountancy bodies in Africa's two most important economies is an important step in building that environment and offers potential to the members of both organisations," Gemade added.

Japan, SA to increase investment

Albert Pule

The Department of Trade and Industry (dti) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Japan's largest bank, Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, to promote industrial and economic cooperation between South Africa and Japan.

The agreement also aims to increase South African-Japanese cooperation in various areas including the platinum sector and transport infrastructure.

The MoU comes as a result of a recent visit to Japan by Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies, where it was agreed that the two countries would look at ways of increasing their investment in each other.

The agreement will be supported by a plan of action and a schedule of events, which will include investment seminars in both countries, skills transfer activities and collaboration on projects in South Africa and the rest of the continent.

Director-general of dti Lionel October said the agreement would improve the bilateral relationship between the two countries.

He said there had been an increase in Japanese investment in South Africa, citing Toyota as one of the companies that had invested and grown its business in the country.

"Japan is one of the leading countries when it comes to information communication technology and manufacturing. It's quite fitting for us as government to enter into an agreement that will benefit and help industrialise both South Africa and the rest of the African continent," October added.

Muneo Kurauchi, a senior managing executive officer at the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, said South Africa was a promising country to do business with.

He was optimistic that the agreement would be beneficial to both countries.

Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi has a representative office in South Africa and will shortly open a fully-fledged branch that will support the needs of their clients locally.

"Africa's economy is growing and more countries are investing in the continent to set their footprint. The investment is likely to increase and more Japanese companies need to be educated on doing business in Africa," he added.

The action plan will start with the distribution of information about opportunities in South Africa to Japanese companies. This will be followed by investment targeting strategic sectors.

Western Cape salutes sport stars

Albert Pule



Western Cape's top sports men and women were rewarded for their outstanding performances at the recent Western Cape Sports Award.

Twenty-three winners received recognition for their achievements and are expected to represent the province at the upcoming South African National Sport Awards ceremony.

The event was hosted by the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport in partnership with regional federations, sport councils and district municipalities.

Provincial Minister for Cultural Affairs and Sport Dr Ivan Meyer reminded the winners that their accomplishments were achieved with the help of others.

"You can only move from good to better with your family's support. The fact that you are better together shows that the impossible is possible. We see our athletes as an extension of who we are and what we can achieve," he said.

SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR

Vernon Philander scooped the award for Sportsman of the Year for his amazing performance on the cricket field in 2012. He became the second fastest test player to reach 50 wickets in February 2012, with 50 wickets in seven test matches. Philander was voted Cricket South Africa's Cricketer of the Year and Test Cricketer of the Year in 2012.

SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR WITH A DISABILITY

Ilse Hayes came out tops in the category of Sportswoman of the Year with a Disability. She holds the African record for long jump. She won gold in long jump at the Paralympics in London in 2012 and silver in the 100m (T13) event.

SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR WITH A DISABILITY

For his achievements in the swimming pool, Charles Bouwer was named Sportsman of the Year with a Disability. Bouwer won gold in the 50m freestyle, silver in the 100m freestyle and silver in the 100m backstroke at the Paralympics.

COACH OF THE YEAR

Suzanne Ferreira emerged as Coach of the Year for taking athletes with disabilities to new heights. The athletes she coached were selected to represent the country at the International Wheelchair and Amputee Sport's World Championships. Ten of her athletes were selected for the South African Paralympic Team and they set three world records and five African records.

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Dyan Buis was recognised as Newcomer of the Year. He came onto the scene in late 2010 and by January 2011 was selected to represent the national team at the World Championships.

He won two Paralympic medals - silver in the 100m (T38) and silver in the 200m (T38), both were world records.

TIM NOAKES SCIENTIFIC/Academic Excellence Award

The award for Scientific/Academic Excellence went to Professor Mariom Keim, who has written and published extensively in the past 15 years.

Since 2009 she has been the director of the Interdisciplinary Centre of Excellence for Sport Science and Development at the

University of the Western Cape. Under her guidance, the centre has published nine articles in various books and journals.

JUNIOR SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR

Bianca Buitendag, who has made her mark in surfing, was lauded as Junior Sportswoman of the Year. She is ranked fifth on the Association of Surfing Professionals World Star women's rankings.

JUNIOR SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR

Kickboxer Gregory Gans won the award for Junior Sportsman of the Year. He represented South Africa in the 2012 World Junior Kickboxing Championships. He is the reigning South African Boxing Champion and South African Youth Games Champion.

SA celebrates historic days



South Africa will mark Freedom Day on 27 April in remembrance of the country's first democratic elections held in 1994.

On this historic day the country will commemorate the achievements that have been made in entrenching democracy and creating a better life for all.

As the nation celebrates Freedom Day, South Africans can be proud of the resilient and maturing democracy that has been built, thanks to the contribution of all citizens.

The country has come a long way from its divided and bitter past to a society that is based on equality, dignity and respect for human rights.

South Africa has held four successful democratic elections and created a government that represents the will of the people.

All South Africans have a responsibility to ensure that democracy and freedom is maintained and strengthened for future generations.

On 21 March the country also marked Human Rights Day, which was commemorated under

the theme: *United in advancing socio-economic freedom for all.*

The day is celebrated to remind South Africans of the great suffering and loss of life that accompanied the struggle for human rights.

It is a reminder that people in South Africa will never again be denied their human rights.

Human Rights Day also commemorates the events that took place on 21 March 1960, when Africans protested against the Pass Laws of the time.

On this day people decided to go to police stations without their passes and demand that the police arrest them.

At Sharpeville in Gauteng, thousands of people gathered at the police station and demanded to be arrested. They were met by 300 police officers.

After a scuffle broke out, police opened fire on the crowd. At least 67 people were killed and 180 injured.

Proteas remain at the summit of test rankings

Albert Pule

The South African cricket team has retained its number one spot on the International Cricket Council (ICC) Test rankings after a three test series victory over Pakistan.

Before the win against Pakistan in February, the Proteas had also won a home series against New Zealand.

The three-nil series victory over Pakistan means the Proteas cannot be overtaken by their closest rivals England, Australia and India in the rankings until the beginning of the Champions Trophy.

The team entered the Pakistani series on 124 ratings points and needed only to draw the series to retain the number one test spot.

The Proteas will not only retain the prestigious Test Championship title but will also earn nearly R4 million for their achievement.

Cricket South Africa acting CEO Jacques Faul congratulated the Proteas squad on their clean-sweep of the test series against Pakistan.

"It is difficult to find new words to describe the way the Proteas have been playing. There probably aren't any more superlatives left in the dictionary to acknowledge both their brilliance and their consistency," he said.

The Proteas will now set their sights on the Championship Trophy tournament to be held in England and Wales.

They will compete against seven other teams, who with South Africa make up the top eight on the ICC One Day International rankings.

The tournament will start on 6 June and teams will be divided into two groups of four.

The Proteas will battle world champions India on 6 June, followed by a match against Pakistan on 10 June and the last group match against the T20 champions West Indies on 14 June.