



# higher education & training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

## **DEPUTY MINISTER MANANA CONCLUDES A SUCCESSFUL 2-DAY ENGAGEMENT WITH EMPLOYERS AND HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS**

*Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape, 26 July 2016* – Today, the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Mduzisi Manana, MP, engaged over 1200 learners from surrounding schools in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality as part of promoting the Decade of the Artisan advocacy campaign. The campaign slogan is, *it's cool to be a 21<sup>st</sup> century artisan*.

Deputy Minister Manana was accompanied by Dr Danny Jordaan, the Executive Mayor of Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality who encouraged the learners to choose careers that are aligned to what the economy of the Metro needs.

The aim of the learner engagements is to motivate learners to consider artisanship as a career of choice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as well as share information on critical scarce skills that will advance the economy of the country. About 30 000 artisans should be produced annually by year 2030 if the country is to advance on the economic development agenda. The Deputy Minister said, 'the country cannot afford to import thousands of skills while our youth are unemployed. We are sitting with a challenge of unemployable youth due to a lack of relevant skills. This is the time for young people to turn things around by making the right choices that will advance their families, communities and the country at large'.

'Out of the 100 careers in high demand released by the Minister in 2014, 47 careers are artisan related. Thus, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges and employers become central in the development of artisans'. There is no artisan without full participation of the employers', said the Deputy Minister.

The Deputy Minister led the learners to a try-a- skill exhibition where they were exposed to exhibitors that demonstrated what an artisan does in a real life experience. The learners participated in various touch and feel exhibition. 'We trust by exposing them to such an

exhibition, it will unleash an interest that could never be there if it were not for this advocacy campaign.

Mr Khaya Mathiso, the Principal of Port Elizabeth College, encouraged learners to take full advantage of the opportunities of the government. 'Most of you are coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is available for you for free if you study at TVET Colleges. The only thing you need to is – show up and be counted, by applying to the College and NSFAS timeously.

Yesterday, the Deputy Minister met with artisan employers from Automotive, Hospitality and Chemical Industries to garner for effective partnerships between employers and TVET Colleges. The Deputy Minister said, 'the private sector is the biggest employer of artisans in the country, hence the Decade of the Artisan Campaign that I am championing on behalf of the government has employers as an integral stakeholder as well as the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Colleges as the training partner. We need employers closer to the colleges as partners, where there are challenges let us work together'.

When engaging with the employers the Deputy Minister said 'there is a continuous need for suitably qualified artisans to sustain industries and support economic growth of the country. In a range of national strategies the need for artisans has been elevated and identified as a priority area for skills development. While the National Development Plan indicates that by 2030 the country should be producing 30 000 qualified artisans per year, this target has been brought forward by the 2014 – 2020 Medium Term Strategic Framework to 31 March 2026'.

At present the country is producing on average 13 000 qualified artisans per year and the number has to more than double in the next 11 years leading up to 2026, and reach 30 000 by 2030. To achieve such a significant growth not only needs considerable investment and commitment by all artisan development role players with a special focus on workplaces in South Africa, reposition of TVET colleges as institutions of choice but also requires a sustained, committed and high profile political leadership. Such political leadership has been put into place through the personal intervention of the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr. Blade Nzimande, and the Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr. Mduduzi Manana.

The Decade of the Artisan (2014 – 2024) is an aggressive advocacy campaign and a flagship project of Deputy Minister Manana. He travels quarterly to provinces to advocate

about artisanship to employers; youth not in employment, education nor training (NEET) and high school learners. It is necessary for this campaign to be pitched at this level to drive a skills revolution towards making artisanship fashionable, hence the slogan, it is cool to be a 21<sup>st</sup> century artisan.

The sitting government expects that Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges to become the cornerstone of the country's acute skills shortage. 'Hence, the partnership between the employers and the colleges is integral to advance artisan development in order to meet the 30 000 per annum artisans by 2030 as required by the NDP' said the Deputy Minister. Currently, the workforce is not keeping up with the skills needed to remain competitive in an increasingly knowledge-based economy. There is a need to ensure the continuous upgrade of skills in the workforce, to help ensure a measurable increase in the intermediate skills pool, especially in artisan, technician, and related occupations attributable to increased capacity at education and training institutions and increased workplace experiential learning opportunities.

***Ends***

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**Issued by the Ministry of Higher Education and Training**