

MEDIA STATEMENT

GANDHI-MANDELA CENTRE OF SPECIALISATION FOR ARTISAN SKILLS LAUNCHED IN PRETORIA

08 October 2018

Almost as soon as the ink had dried, South Africa and India moved with speed in implementing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two countries at the BRICS Summit in July 2018.

The two countries agreed to cooperate with one another in setting up of a Centre of Specialisation for Artisan Skills in South Africa. This is in recognition of South Africa's drive to promote quality vocational education and training for young people, as well as to meet the need for artisan skills in the country.

The Minister of Higher Education and Training, Naledi Pandor and India's High Commissioner to South Africa, Ms Ruchira Kamboj, launched the Gandhi Mandela Centre of Specialisation for Artisans Skills at the Pretoria West Campus of the Tshwane South TVET College, in Pretoria, yesterday.

Aspiring mechanical fitters, boilermakers, electricians and millwrights who enrol at the Pretoria West Campus of Tshwane South TVET College in 2019 will be in the first group of apprentices to benefit from this investment.

In line with the agreement, the government of India is injecting a total of R48 million towards the establishment of the Gandhi Mandela Centre of Specialisation.

The Tshwane South TVET College is among the 26 centres of specialisation that the department is establishing for 13 priority trades at TVET colleges across the country. The first intake of apprentices will take place in January 2019.

Speaking at the launch, Minister Pandor said “its been under three months since our countries, under the proud umbrella of BRICS, agreed on a memorandum of understanding regarding the establishment of the “Gandhi Mandela Centre of Specialisation for Artisan Skills”

She said she was thrilled they have linked this programme to wider Centres of Specialisation initiative.

“From our side, the Centres of Specialisation Programme promises to pioneer the way forward in the transformation of our TVET college system, making colleges ever more responsive to industry needs at the same time as lifting their capacity to deliver really high-level quality occupational programmes.” Minister Pandor said.

This was echoed by the Indian High Commissioner to South Africa, Ms Ruchira Kamboj, who said since 1993, when India first established full diplomatic ties with South Africa, they have trained over 1 200 South Africans in India and this programme was going to assist to drastically increase that number.

About the Centres of Specialisation

The Centres of Specialisation Programme is a Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) initiative which addresses the demand for priority trades needed to implement the National Development Plan and specifically the National Infrastructure Plan. The Centres

of Specialisation aim to gear the public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) colleges to deliver quality trade qualifications that meet industry demands. It is for this purpose that the programme is delivered in partnership with employers.

“The dual apprenticeship model is at the heart of the programme,” says Adrienne Bird, the Deputy Director-General, responsible for Special Projects in the Department of Higher Education and Training. “This means that the apprentice will qualify through a three-year apprenticeship contract continuously weaving together theoretical learning, simulated practical learning in a training workshop and on-the-job learning at the employer.”

The department, through the National Skills Fund (NSF), allocated R150 million to seed-fund the initial set-up costs of the 26 centres of specialisation. This seed funding is for the initial refurbishment of workshops at all targeted centres.

The NSF, together with occupational team conveners who represent industry associations in the target trade areas, followed a rigorous approach in evaluating and selecting colleges to participate in the centres of specialisation programme.

The evaluation commenced in 2015 with a call to TVET colleges to signal interest in the programme. The eight-point assessment which followed, interrogated the colleges' financial management capacity to manage a centre of specialisation, learner enrolment and success rates, proximity to strategic infrastructure projects (SIPs), proximity to workplace learning opportunities, availability of practical facilities, existing partnerships with employers, SETAs and professional bodies, and whether the colleges' are registered as trade test centres or located near a registered trade test centre.

The response from employers has been enthusiastic and the occupational team conveners are now in advanced talks with potential employers to pledge to enlist apprentices.

The sector education and training authorities are on board and will provide the Artisan Development Grant to employers that commit to taking on apprentices. The grant will cover a substantial amount of the employer

Province	Trade	TVET College	Campus
Eastern Cape	Welder	East Cape Midlands	Uitenhage
	Automotive Motor Mechanic	Port Elizabeth College	Iqhayiya
Free State	Electrician	Flavius Mareka	Sasolburg
	Plumber	Flavius Mareka	Kroonstad
Gauteng	Boilermaker	Ekurhuleni East	Daveyton
	Mechanical Fitter	Tshwane South	Pretoria West
	Fitter and Turner	Tshwane South	Centurion
KwaZulu Natal	Millwright	Umfolozzi	Richtek
	Boilermaker	Majuba	Majuba
	Rigger	Umfolozzi	Richtek
Limpopo	Pipe Fitter	Mopani South East TVET College	Sir Val Duncan
	Diesel Mechanic	Mopani South East TVET College	Sir Val Duncan
	Carpenter and Joiner	Sekhukhune	CS Barlow
Mpumalanga	Millwright	Gert Sibande	Standerton
Northern Cape	Carpenter and Joiner	Northern Cape Urban	Moremogolo
North West	Bricklayer	Vuselela	Jouberton Centre Engineering Stud
	Electrician	Orbit	Brits
	Diesel Mechanic	Orbit	Mankwe
Western Cape	Bricklayer	South Cape	Mossel Bay
	Rigger	False Bay	Swartklip
	Pipe Fitter	West Coast	Vredenburg
	Plumber	College of Cape Town	Thornton
	Welder	Boland	Worcester
	Mechanical Fitter	False Bay	Westlake
	Automotive Motor Mechanic	College of Cape Town	Athlone
Fitter and Turner	North Link	Wingsfield	

costs including apprenticeship wages over three years.

The thirteen priority trades targeted are: mechanical fitter, boilermaker, electrician, millwright, bricklayer, plumber, automotive mechanics, diesel mechanic, carpenter and joiner, welder, rigger, fitter and turner, and pipe fitter.

Focus on these 13 trades is designed to meet the demand for skills to deliver government's 18 SIPs which cover social and economic infrastructure projects across all nine provinces.

26 centres of specialisation to be ready for 2019 intake

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