

**Statement by the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation,
Professor Blade Nzimande on the establishment of the Tshwane University of
Technology, Giyani Campus**

The Minister of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, Prof Blade Nzimande has become aware of the circulation of information on various social media platforms that is designed to create the false impression that the Minister is blocking or deliberately delaying the finalisation of the establishment of the Tshwane University of Technology, Giyani campus.

The impression being created is horribly false and designed to create confusion, ferment chaos and disrupt the finalisation of this important project.

In the interest of transparency and out of concern for the future of the young people of Giyani and surrounding areas, the Minister wishes to provide the necessary clarification.

The decision to establish the Giyani Campus of Tshwane University of Technology was made by the Department of Higher Education and Training, under the leadership of Minister Nzimande.

This decision was informed by a number of strategic considerations, including the need to extend access to higher education for the young people of Giyani and surrounding areas.

It then becomes utterly ridiculous and mischievous to suggest that the Minister is delaying or frustrating his very own initiative.

In line with this decision, in May 2023, the Department commenced with a feasibility study for the establishment of the TUT Giyani, campus, but it then experienced a delay of more than 5 months from the side of the Limpopo Department of Education.

However, we have been working with the Limpopo MEC for Education, Ms Lerule Ramakhanya, to address these problems and obstacles.

An agreement on the way forward was reached on 16 October 2023.

Notwithstanding this delay, in September 2023, the Minister allocated R31.916 million to TUT for the University to carry out refurbishments and deferred maintenance on existing facilities upon the completion of the feasibility study.

TUT will now commence with the refurbishment and deferred maintenance in February this year (2024), which will enable the first intake of students during the 2025 academic year.

Subject to the current budget allocations, more funding will be allocated from 2024/25 onwards and over an anticipated 6-year period.

The funding to be allocated during 2024/25 will enable TUT to start with the planning of the major projects during the 2024 calendar year.

As this work was unfolding, the Departmental project team that was appointed by the Minister and is responsible for the implementation of this project has been engaging the relevant community, government and private sector stakeholders in Giyani, regularly.

Additionally, these stakeholders were also provided with regular feedback and together with the Departmental project team, they mutually agreed on a mechanism to resolve any concerns that may arise in the process of the implementing of this project.

It is also in the public interest that we should also state that there was a group of individuals who actively prevented the appointed technical team from carrying out its work.

As stated, all this seems to be calculated to create confusion, ferment chaos and block the finalisation of this important project.

Furthermore, it is the experience of the Department that this project has regrettably attracted all manner of interest groups some of which seek to hijack the legitimate concerns of the community of Giyani and use these for their narrow and malicious ends.

We also notice the malicious attempt to exploit the legitimate concerns of the community of Giyani to further what seems to be an established campaign to tarnish the name and reputation of the Minister, through lies and mis-formation.

Notwithstanding some of the challenges we have encountered so far, the Department continues to enjoy the full support of Tshwane University of Technology, the Limpopo provincial government and in particular that of the MEC for Education, Ms Lerule Ramakhanya.

As the Department of Higher Education and Training, we remain committed to completing the establishment of the Tshwane University of Technology campus in Giyani.

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INNOVATION***