



basic education

Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

THUTO



NEWSLETTER

Human Rights Month 2016

SOUTH AFRICA UNITED AGAINST RACISM



VENUE:

MOSES MABHIDA STADIUM, DURBAN,
KWAZULU-NATAL

DATE:

21 MARCH 2016

TIME:

09:00

KEY NOTE ADDRESS:

HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT JG ZUMA

#notinmyname

President Jacob Zuma will deliver the country's national message at the Human Rights Day celebrations in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, on 21 March 2016. Held this year under the theme: "South Africa United Against Racism", the Human Rights Day celebrations seek to remind all South Africans about the sacrifices that were made in the struggle for liberation and to celebrate the achievement of freedom and democracy in 1994. The President has declared that Human Rights Day 2016 be commemorated as the national day against racism and as a foundation to lay a long-term programme on building a non-racial society. The historical basis of Human Rights Day is attributed to the Sharpeville Massacre that took place on 21 March 1960 as residents of Sharpeville and citizens across the country, embarked on protest marches against pass laws.

In the recent months, South Africa experienced an upsurge in racist incidents. In line with the theme of "South Africa United Against Racism", the President has made a call to South Africans to devote their time to anti-racism campaigns in which organisations and the public join in a co-ordinated national effort and pledge to fight racism at all levels. This year's Human Rights commemoration coincides with the 20th anniversary of the signing of the final draft of the *Constitution* into law and the 60th anniversary of the 1956 Women's march to the Union Buildings. The signing of the *Constitution* took place in Sharpeville on 10 December 1996. The *Constitution* laid the foundation for a democratic and open society in which Government is based on the will of the people.

Government will host various activities throughout Human Rights Month to remind all South African residents to continue to work together to further consolidate democracy. The details of the national Human Rights Day celebrations are as follows:

Date: Monday, 21 March 2016

Time: 09:00

Venue: Moses Mabhida Stadium, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

Basic Education joins anti-racism campaign



The Department of Basic Education (DBE) has joined the call to raise awareness against racism and discrimination as we are approaching National Human Rights Day on 21 March and International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, also on 21 March 2016. The DBE is supporting the call for a national anti-racism week as announced by the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation in February this year. As part of its broader aims, the Anti-Racism Network of South Africa (ARNSA) has committed to support the Department to develop policy and programmes to address racism in schools. The Department is currently working with one of the member organisations of ARNSA, the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation (IJR), to train teachers on its “Teaching Respect for all” programme to lay the foundation for a long-term programme of building a non-racial society.

Racism, intolerance and discrimination are not a product of a cohesive society. Social cohesion is one of the key priorities of this current administration and its role in promoting unity in diversity in and through education is vital to the future of our country. The Department’s directorate responsible for Social Cohesion and Equity in Education had undertaken a mini evaluation of a small sample of school textbooks and Learner Teacher Support Material (LTSMs). To this end the department has established a Ministerial Task Team to specifically work on evaluating textbooks for discrimination according to specifications in the Terms of Reference that was gazetted in February this year. The Ministerial Task Team, which is chaired by Prof Crain Soudien, will also evaluate a broad sample of the current LTSMs and textbooks and provide the evidence to develop a textbook policy towards the promotion of diversity. This will support the development of a textbook policy which will be used for the screening of LTSMs and textbooks for use in schools.

Minister commends education NGOs for innovation and excellence

The National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) convened a national Education NGO Leadership Summit for NGOs on 11 March 2016, where delegates took stock of their roles in implementing the National Development Plan (NDP), as well as their operational circumstances and sustainability. Specific reference was made to the NDP goal of eliminating poverty and inequality by 2030. According to the plan, South Africa can realise these goals by promoting leadership and partnerships throughout society.

Minister Angie Motshekga addressed over 100 delegates representing Government, unions, NGOs and the private sector. The Minister echoed President Jacob Zuma's address during the 14th Annual National Teaching Awards when he said: "Education is a societal issue and requires all sectors and communities to work together," to resolve the challenges of the sector. Minister Motshekga confirmed that R326 million has been allocated to the NECT for various programmes which seek to unlock the potential of the basic education sector. The NECT was launched on 16 July 2013, to strengthen partnerships among business, civil society, Government and labour to achieve the education goals set out in the NDP, as well as increasing retention, progression, and completion rates in the basic education sector.

Click on the below link for the full article:

<http://www.education.gov.za/MinistercommendseducationNGOsforinnovation/tabid/978/ctl/Edit/mid/3855/Default.aspx>



The National Commission for UNESCO meets with the Ministry of Women



The National Commission for UNESCO was established by Cabinet Decision 9 of 1996, and is housed at the Department of Education. The Commission co-ordinates UNESCO objectives as implemented by 10 line function departments: the Departments of Arts and Culture; Basic Education; Environmental Affairs; Higher Education and Training; International Relations and Co-operation; Science and Technology; Social Development; Sport and Recreation South Africa; Water and Sanitation; and the Ministry of Women.

The National Commission's work is divided into five sectors: Education; Natural Science; Culture; Communication and Information; and Social and Human Science (SHS). The SHS sector deals with issues of youth, sport, social transformation and gender, and works closely with the Commission for Gender Equality and the Ministry of Women in implementing the *UNESCO Priority Gender Equality Action Plan, 2014-2021*.

On Wednesday, 09 March 2016, the National Commission Secretariat met with Ms Jennifer Ann Schreiner, the Director-General of the Ministry of Women, to discuss issues of mutual concern. Henceforth, the Ministry of Women will be taking its rightful place in the membership of the National Commission to lead on gender issues.

Read to Lead during South African Library Week

South African Library Week (SALW) is being observed from 14 to 21 March 2016 with the theme **#libraries4lifelonglearning**, which highlights the substantial contribution of libraries in addressing our country's educational, social, cultural and recreational needs and prevalent inequalities. It provides insight into the role of libraries in South Africa and demonstrates how this slots into the objective of ensuring equitable access to quality information and to social advancement programmes. This makes libraries complicit in the intention to realise the vision of an informed nation.

In celebration of this week and in support of the Read to Lead Campaign, the Information Resource Centre encourages all DBE officials to become members of our own in-house library in order to enjoy the array of reading material and resources available. This is everyone's chance to be at the forefront of our Minister's drive to create a reading nation! Those officials that would like to support other planned activities across the country for this special week may visit The Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA) website at <http://www.liasa-new.org.za/salw-2016/>



Tales Untold: Beating the odds through commitment and perseverance by Lydia Mmakwena Molefe



Ms Lydia Mmakwena Molefe, née Semenya, recently joined the Information Resource Centre (IRC) at the DBE in Pretoria. She had the following to say about beating the odds through commitment and perseverance to embrace her passion:

“I was born in Kromkuil village near Hammanskraal on 03 February 1975 where I grew up in Temba Township. In 1980, I was enrolled at Rethusitswe Primary School and matriculated at Tswaing High School in 1991. When I matriculated I was young and uncertain about the career path that I wanted to pursue. My interests have always been in Humanities because I wanted to become a Lawyer or a Social Worker, but since I was raised by parents who were both teachers by profession, I became a teacher. I graduated from Kwena Moloto College of Education and started my teaching career in Mafikeng in 1995.

I met my beloved, departed husband, Odirile Molefe, in 1995 and agreed to marry him even before he proposed. I am proud of my two sons, Kaone and Omphemetse. It is not easy being a widow and single mother - losing your source of motivation and pillar of support early in life. I have chosen to see life’s challenges as stepping stones to a bigger picture. My favourite phrase is: *When life gives you lemons, add sugar and turn it into lemonade*. I have also learnt that everything has its own season, and that nothing is permanent. One has to be hopeful and optimistic and not allow yourself to be demoralised by destructive events on one’s journey. Owing to a zealous personality, my faith, a compassionate heart, positive thoughts, and empathy for others, I keep looking forward, no matter the challenges I encounter.

In 2007, after 12 years as a teacher in various fields within the teaching profession, I was employed at Waterkloof House Preparatory School as a literacy teacher, as well as a librarian at their adopted school, Bathokwa Primary School in Atteridgeville. It was here that my passion for library services emerged. It fills me with joy when learners become avid readers and adapt a culture of reading. It was for this reason that I joined the Department of Education at the Directorate: Children and Youth Literacy in 2009. I have since been in the library and literacy development field until the unit was merged with the Foundations for Learning Campaign to become Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM): Policy, Development and Implementation. On 1 March 2016 I joined the DBE’s Information Resource Centre Team. I believe that libraries are the cornerstone of society and a vehicle to realize the vision of an informed nation.”

Let's unite to stop Tuberculosis on World TB Day



Annual World Tuberculosis (TB) Day on 24 **March** is aimed at building public awareness that TB remains a global epidemic, causing the deaths of nearly one-and-a-half million people each year, mostly in developing countries. It commemorates the day in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch astounded the scientific community by announcing that he had discovered the cause of tuberculosis, the TB bacillus. World TB Day is an opportunity for people everywhere to join this fight by helping to educate others about TB and by urging communities, governments, civil society organisations, healthcare providers, and international partners to unite and take forward innovative approaches to ensure that everyone suffering from TB has access to diagnosis, treatment and cure.

South Africa is one of the countries with the highest burden of TB, with the World Health Organisation (WHO) statistics giving an estimated incidence of 500 000 cases of active TB in 2011. About 1% of the population of about 50 million people develops active TB disease each year. This is the third highest incidence of any country after India and China, and the incidence has increased by 400% over the past 15 years. Out of the 500 000 incident cases in South Africa, it is estimated that about 330 000 (66%) people have both HIV and TB infections. The DBE is guided by the *National Strategic Plan on HIV, STIs and TB 2012 – 2016*, as well as our own *Integrated Strategy on HIV, STIs and TB (2012-2016)* in calling for “Zero TB infections, Zero TB Deaths, Zero Stigma and Discrimination: I am Kicking TB in My Lifetime”.

This year, a red arrow was chosen as a symbol to represent the unwavering commitment to move forward with this mission until the finish line is reached because despite its devastating impact as the world's leading infectious killer, there is still the troubling fact that most people in the world think of TB as a disease of the past.

Advocating the rights and benefits for all in inclusive environments on World Down Syndrome Day



21 March 2016 marks the 11th anniversary of annual World Down Syndrome Day. Down Syndrome is a naturally occurring chromosomal arrangement that has always been a part of the human condition, exists in all regions across the globe and commonly results in variable effects on learning styles, physical characteristics or health. People with Down Syndrome must be able to enjoy full and equal rights, as well as the opportunity to participate fully in their communities. When children with Down Syndrome and other disabilities are given opportunities to participate in environments that prepare all today's children for life as tomorrow's adults, it enables adults with Down Syndrome to live, work and participate, with confidence and individual autonomy. Let us, on World Down Syndrome Day, encourage those with Down Syndrome to say “My Friends, My Community” and get the world talking about the benefits for everyone in inclusive environments.

The *White Paper on the Rights of People with Disabilities*, approved by Cabinet on 9 December 2015, is a crucial step along the journey of improving the lives of persons with disabilities and moves us closer to a fully inclusive society for all as envisioned in the *Freedom Charter*, which unambiguously states that “South Africa belongs to all who live in it”. The *White Paper* takes its cue from the *Constitution* of the Republic of South Africa. It builds on the progressive policies and programmes that Government has and continues to implement over the past number of years to make positive and meaningful changes for persons with disabilities. In line with the NDP, the *White Paper* is a call to action for Government, civil society and the private sector to work together to ensure the socio-economic inclusion of persons with disabilities. We therefore seek to create a caring and inclusive society that protects and develops the human potential of its children, a society for all where persons with disabilities enjoy the same rights as their fellow citizens, and where all citizens and institutions share equal responsibility for building such a society.

National Water Week encourages all to conserve water for future supply



The Department of Water and Sanitation will be commemorating National Water Week 2016 from 14 to 22 March under the theme “Water for people – Water by people. Water has no substitute.” The campaign seeks to encourage citizens to conserve water and to ensure sustainability for future supply. This year’s celebrations will coincide with World Water Day on 22 March 2016.

The Department is appealing to all South Africans to play an active role in conserving and protecting the country’s water resources. This year’s National Water Week comes at a critical time in the history of our country when this precious resource faces a number of challenges due to a devastating drought and a general increase in the demand for water. The Department is working closely with provinces to address the challenges facing all South Africans. Please do your part and use water sparingly!

Follow the conversation on social media: #WaterWeek2016

Regional Round-up



education

DEPARTMENT: EDUCATION
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

The South African National Parks (SANParks) recently handed over a science laboratory and a kitchen to Sibusisiwe Secondary School in Matsulu outside Mbombela in Mpumalanga where learners will, for the first time, conduct science experiments inside a fully-fledged science laboratory. The Mpumalanga Provincial Education Department said that schools located in rural provinces such as Mpumalanga often lacked facilities to assist learners to become citizens of the 21st Century. In addition to the above, the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) was also introduced to the school. Handing over the donations, SANParks said that they spent over R8 million of the total tourism revenue on social responsibilities and added that other communities living adjacent to the national park will continue to benefit.

Upcoming Events

- 14 to 21 March 2016: The commemoration of South African Library Week
- 14 to 22 March 2016: The commemoration of National Water Week
- 21 March 2016: The commemoration of National Human Rights Day
- 21 March 2016: The commemoration of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- 21 March 2016: The commemoration of World Down Syndrome Day
- 24 March 2016: The commemoration of Annual World Tuberculosis (TB) Day
- 01 April 2016: Ministerial Excellence in Education Awards, including the District and School Excellence Awards, as well as the NSNP Awards at the Presidential Guesthouse in Pretoria