



MYDISTRICTTODAY



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PRIORITY 2: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION.

Digital technology provides economic opportunities for young people in rural areas

By Phiwokuhle Zokufa; GCIS, Eastern Cape

On 28 January 2025, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) in the O.R. Tambo District hosted a radio programme to discuss Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and digital technology opportunities at the Sajonisi Youth Radio Station. Invited panelists included Mr Sivenathi Mzaca from Hlumis' Isizwe Trading, Lwandiso Gulukungqu from the State Information and Technology Agency (SITA) and Broadband Infraco.

In today's fast-paced world, digital technology is revolutionising every aspect of our lives, from communication and education to business and healthcare. The Department of Communication and Digital Technologies (DCDT) is currently rolling out internet connection in public spaces such as schools, clinics and libraries to enable access and quicker government services.

One such success story is that of Mr Sivenathi Mzaca from Lusikisiki, a beneficiary of the broadband roll-out programme led by BroadBand Infraco, an entity of the DCDT. Mr Mzaca's company works as a sub-contractor for the programme. "My company is responsible for local connection; when there is a connection problem, we are required to fix that," he said. He further motivated young people to work hard to achieve their dreams.

Apart from providing internet access, opportunities in the ICT sector are growing and changing the lives of young people. The radio programme demonstrated firsthand how technology can empower individuals and communities, helping them to connect, learn and thrive.



Mr Mzaca, the owner of Hlumis' Isizwe Trading, is a beneficiary of the broadband roll-out headed by Broad Band Infraco.



The radio programme held at Sajonisi Youth Radio Station on 28 January 2025.



Ms Phiwokuhle Zokufa, GCIS O.R. Tambo Regional Communication Coordinator introducing the radio programme.



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PRIORITY 1: A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

SoNA activation and food safety campaign in Hammanskraal

By Sebjalo Rachuene and Boipelo Sefoka; GCIS, Head Office

On 30 January 2025, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) Information Resource Centre team, in collaboration with the GCIS Gauteng Provincial Office, Community Development Workers (CDWs) and the Office of the Public Protector, embarked on an awareness campaign on the State of the Nation Address (SoNA) and a food safety campaign at the Kopanong Complex in Hammanskraal.

The activation aimed to promote GCIS services, raise awareness about the SoNA by President Cyril Ramaphosa on Thursday, 6 February 2025; while also educating the community on food safety.

The GCIS plays a critical role in ensuring that South Africans have access to accurate and up-to-date government information. During the campaign, officials engaged with community members, highlighting the significance of the SoNA, which will outline government's priorities, policies and plans for the year. This is to create greater civic participation and awareness of developments happening nationally, that directly impact communities such as Hammanskraal.

The GCIS and its partners continue to work towards bridging the gap between government and the people, fostering transparency and empowering citizens with knowledge that impacts their daily lives.



Officials from the GCIS and Office of the Public Protector distributing information materials to community members who visited the exhibition stall during the awareness campaign.



CDWs engaging with community members who visited the stalls.

PRIORITY 2: ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION AND JOB CREATION.

Marula Festival expected to boost the economy of Limpopo

By Eunice Nkuna; GCIS, Limpopo

The Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) made a purposeful economic intervention by developing the Limpopo Mukumbi Industries as a viable business industry, taking advantage of the vast concentration of marula trees found mostly in the sub-tropical parts of the province. Following the successful launch of this initiative on 4 March 2006 with Ba-Phalaborwa as the host town, the district experienced a massive economic spin-off during the annual Marula Festival held on 23 January 2025, officially launched by the Premier of Limpopo, Dr Phophi Ramathuba and Mopani Executive Mayor, Cllr Pule Shayi.

Dr Ramathuba echoed the importance of economic sustainability and job creation, emphasising that the festival should not be solely about entertainment. “We must utilise this opportunity to create lasting economic benefits for the people of Limpopo.” The Premier’s sentiments find expression in the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP), which aims to build a new economy and unleash South Africa’s true economic potential. The ERRP is used as one of the vehicles to achieve the goals set out by the 7th Administration, while its overarching goal is to create a sustainable, resilient and inclusive economy.

The Mayor of Ba-Phalaborwa, Cllr Merriam Malatji, in her message of support, emphasised the readiness of the town to host the festival. “We are delighted to be the permanent host of this magnificent festival, and we are grateful for the collaboration spirit between our municipality and the

LEDET,” she said. She further mentioned that the festival would also provide a valuable platform to revitalise discussions around the establishment of an industrial hub, which will empower cooperatives and contribute to poverty alleviation and job creation.

The Executive Mayor of Mopani District Municipality, Cllr Pule Shayi, shared the same sentiments saying, “Marula fruit plays a pivotal role in maintaining our cultural activities such as using its nuts for *morogo*, using its beer to boost confidence in men, and the tree itself acting as a shade in many rural households.”

Premier Ramathuba used the opportunity to also visit the Baleni Traditional Salt-Making Project. Located in Shawela, a village east of Giyani, the project is a unique initiative where women from the Mahumani community produce salt using traditional methods passed down through generations. The salt-making process is deeply rooted in traditional customs, including interactions with their ancestral world and offerings at a dry leadwood tree.

They have also created their own traditional filters for salt. This approach not only preserves cultural heritage, but also ensures the sustainability of the salt harvesting process. The women involved in the project are the guardians of this knowledge and have been mining salt in the area for generations.



Premier Ramathuba observing the traditional salt-making process at the Baleni Traditional Salt-Making Project in Shawela village.



Cllr Shayi and Cllr Malatji during the official launch of the Marula Festival.



Dr Ramathuba tasting the marula fruit beer, while other guests look on in excitement.



Karabo Lapisi, a Grade 7 learner said:
 "Today I have learnt a lot, and I was motivated when we were taught about time management, as it will help me get good grades."



Nyameko Gxilisha, a Grade 7 learner said:
 "Today my classmates and I received a lot of helpful information, which will help us for the year ahead."

PRIORITY 1: A CAPABLE, ETHICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL STATE.

Shaping the potential of the Free State's future leaders

By Babalwa Solitswayi; GCIS, Free State

On 23 January 2025, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) held a Back-to-School awareness event to interact with Grade 7 learners from the Madiketla Primary School. The Office of the Free State Premier and the Alliance Against HIV and AIDS, a non-governmental organisation, welcomed the learners to new grades and wished them well for the 2025 academic year.

The speakers discussed the importance of goal setting, aspirations and emotional intelligence. The GCIS emphasised the importance of time

management and the consequences of absenteeism. The learners responded to the stakeholders and educators by providing insights into the experiences they encounter daily, and they appreciated the advice on how to improve.

The school's Head of Department, Mr Molapo Ntsane, expressed gratitude to the stakeholders for visiting the school to speak to the learners. In his closing remarks, he said, "As a school, we had a challenge of absenteeism; however, from today we hope to see the difference as the learners were listening attentively."



Mr Ntsane introducing and welcoming stakeholders to the Grade 7 learners of Madiketla Primary School.

