

## Free State

### Tributes pour in for Ngubentombi



MOURNING COMRADES: MECs Oly Mlamleli, Mamiki Qabathe, Sisi Mabe and Sisi Ntombela at the service. Picture: Maryna van Wyk

#### **Maryna van Wyk**

While tributes from political structures of the ANC in all provinces, opposition parties and national leaders, poured in for the late MEC for health Fezi Ngubentombi, her 13-year-old daughter, Zandile, was still unaware of her mother's death.

Zandile was with her mother and two VIP policemen late Saturday night when the car they were travelling in left the road and crashed into a pillar of an overhead bridge at the Andries Pretorius off-ramp.

The accident happened less than 10km from the MEC's official home in Heuwelsig. Yesterday afternoon, family from the Eastern Cape, where Ngubentombi was born, was still on their way to Bloemfontein. Several dignitaries from the ANC, ANC Women's League in the Free State as well as top officials from the provincial government attended a memorial service at Ngubentombi's home.

Her sister-in-law Lindelwa Ngubentombi said the funeral would be in Sasolburg on Saturday.

"She mentioned once she would like to be buried there because she had lived there most of her life," Lindelwa said.

She said Zandile, a Grade7 pupil at Eunice School in Bloemfontein, was very attached to her mother.

"The other four children were also attending the ANC rally in QwaQwa, but Zandile always chose to travel with her mom."

She said Zandile was still in the ICU of the MediClinic Hospital in Bloemfontein. She sustained burn wounds to her face, arms and hands.

"She is in a stable condition and my brother, her dad, is the only one allowed to visit."

Lindelwa said the family had not decided on future plans for the children and would focus only on the funeral. "It's difficult for us. We are just there for one another."

She described her sister-in-law as a "woman with a golden heart, a living flower".

Deputy Minister of Basic Education Hlengiwe Mkhize and Deputy Police Minister Maggy Sotyu, chairperson of the provincial ANCWL, Sisi Ntombela attended the memorial.

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## Free State

Dec 4 2012 10:46AM

### Building a future



CARING: Minister of Social Development Bathabile Dlamini, right, during visit in October, to launch the social development month in the Free State. Picture Neo Mvubu

#### *Maryna van Wyk*

The challenge of restoring the moral fabric of society while instilling strong values and morals in the youth of South Africa has become more important than ever, hence the importance of institutions like the National Youth Camp.

The annual event organised by the Department of Social Development will see 497 youths from all the provinces gather at the De Brug military base outside Bloemfontein on Sunday for a five-day camp.

The youths will interact and deliberate with their peers on various issues.

Speaking at the welcoming event at De Brug, Minister of Social Development Bathabile Dlamini said the youth had been brought to Bloemfontein as representatives of the realities of many young people and to engage with these realities through dialogue.

The theme of this year's camp is Youth Working Together in Diversity.

Dlamini said the theme reflected a commitment to ensuring that young people worked together across race, ethnicity, language and creed to confront challenges and find solutions to issues affecting them.

Dlamini said the camp was the starting point of a concerted effort by the government to promote youth activism and civic engagement.

"This is also part of our contribution to nation building by unlocking the potential of young people as envisaged in the Masupatsela Youth Pioneers Programme," she said.

The minister said a key objective of the National Youth Camp was to promote respect for diversity, social inclusion and to encourage the participation of young people, especially those with fewer opportunities, in the democratic life of the country.

She said the programme was filled with enjoyable activities and also provided an opportunity to meet new friends, share experiences and develop new possibilities for the future.

"Most importantly, there will be various activities that are aimed at helping the youth to be better persons and better citizens of this country," she said.

She told the attendees that while it was important to know and assert the rights of every citizen, it was equally important to meet one's individual responsibilities to learn, respect adults and serve the community.

"I would like to appeal to our young people here today to join our government's campaign in its resolute fight against alcohol and substance abuse, and the abuse of women and children. As parents, teachers and community leaders we have an obligation to teach our children what is wrong and what is right.

"Together we must take a stand and address alcohol and drug problems in our homes and families and carry these concerns into our community life. Equally, we must strongly condemn the high levels of violence against women and children."

Dlamini said a big concern was the high levels of violence in schools.

"This indicates the need for increased civic education, especially for young boys to learn how to view women and men as equals. From a very young age boys must learn how to tackle issues and differences through dialogue rather than violence."

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## Free State

### Minister sets up youth camp



BONDING: Minister Dlamini will unite youth. Picture: Themba Maseko

#### ***Peter Ramothwala***

The Minister of Social Development, Bathabile Dlamini, will on Sunday open the National Youth Camp to be held at Die Brug Military Camp, Olienhoutplaat, Bloemfontein.

The aim is to bring together young people from all provinces. The event will run from December 2-7 under the theme: Youth Working Together in Diversity.

The camp is organised within the umbrella of the Masupatsela Youth Pioneers Programme.

The key objectives are to develop positive bonds amongst young people, promote tolerance, social inclusion and respect for diversity.

Minister Dlamini said one of the key outcomes of the camp was to encourage young people to establish youth clubs throughout the country and to champion youth-led development initiatives.

"The central goal of the camp is to engage youth as active and reflective citizens of our country.

"It will provide a forum for joint reflection and dialogue among young people and policy makers," said Dlamini.

Dlamini said the week-long programme would follow the Masupatsela programme accredited curriculum and focus on issues such as sex and reproductive health rights, substance abuse, peer pressure, youth unemployment.

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## Free State

Nov 21 2012 10:39AM

### New population strategy

*Maryna van Wyk*

The provincial government is the first of the nine provinces to have developed a population development strategy in line with the national policy to address issues such as youth development, gender equality, the impact of HIV-Aids in the province, as well as migration patterns.

Addressing stakeholders during the first Free State population development strategy session at the President Hotel on Friday, the executive manager of research, population and development in the department of social development, Joe Mosuhli, said the strategy noted that low fertility rates, out-migration and HIV-Aids had a great impact on the annual growth rate of the population.

“Our focus areas are mortality and morbidity as a result of HIV-Aids and other causes, youth demographics, gender equality and empowerment of women and lastly the consequences of local population trends such as migration,” Mosuhli said.

“The empowerment of women is an important focal point because of the occurrence of gender-based violence, sexual abuse among children and teenage pregnancies.

“Local population trends which relate to the formation of informal settlements, urbanisation, the development of rural areas as well as climate change and the environment, remain a priority,” he said.

Through this strategy, programmes could be introduced to reduce the prevalence of HIV-Aids and its impact on the province, to reduce maternal and infant mortality, to promote the health of the youth and to promote educational attainment and skills development of youth as a strategy to reap the demographic dividend.

Mosuhli said the population strategy would be incorporated into all development plans and programmes of the provincial departments as well as local and district municipalities.

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## Free State

Oct 11 2012 12:19PM

### Children at heart of community development

A community in QwaQwa in were the eager beneficiaries of an Early Childhood Development Centre (ECD) recently launched in the area.

“More than R1m was spent on the construction of this facility and an additional R190 000 was donated by provincial department of social development for paving, fencing, lawns and equipment,” said Minister of Social Development Bathabile Dlamini.

She said the department had embarked on the project “to care (for) and improve the lives of rural communities, with the needs of our children at heart”.

The minister thanked the Department of Correctional Services, which had assisted in building the facility.

The Lethabong centre has employed a manager and four ECD practitioners, as well as cooking and cleaning staff.

“The Free State department of social development, in partnership with the NDA (National Development Agency), allocated R7.5m for the reconstruction of seven facilities and the renovation of four facilities.

“We are proud to announce that nine of these facilities have been completed,” Dlamini said. She said a second facility, which would cater for children in need of care and protection in Slovo Park was still under construction.

She said the province’s social development department had allocated R1.9m for that project. – *SANews*

## Free State

Dec 1 2012 3:30PM

### **Zuma hands over Child Development Centre**

President Jacob Zuma handed over an early childhood development centre for children under five in Qwa Qwa, in the Free State on Saturday, according to a report.

SABC reported the centre was named after former Home Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma who was recently elected as the first female chairperson of the African Union Commission.

The centre would take care of children from poor families and children whose mothers are sick.

The Free State social development department built the centre for R1 million and the furniture and toys are valued at R450,000, according to the report.

-Sapa

## Free State

Apr 20 2012 9:07AM

### UFS to offer new degree



New students of the University of Free State QwaQwa campus during their welcoming and orientation programme early this year. The campus is planning to introduce a four year degree in community development

### ***Getrude Makhafola***

The provincial department of social development and the University of Free State's Qwaqwa campus have partnered to introduce a community development qualification to help the department increase its capacity.

Head of department Matlhogonolo Maboe said large segments of communities were entirely dependent on the community development sector for their daily survival.

"As we professionalise the sector we will be building communities, especially those in rural areas who need our services the most.

"Through qualified personnel we will be better equipped in addressing what President Jacob Zuma referred to as the "triple challenge" of unemployment, poverty and inequality," said Maboe.

She said the department was seeking to find ways to increase its capacity as more seek social services such as home visits coupled with the increase in the number of applications for social grants.

Thabo Kessah, spokesperson for the QwaQwa Campus, said the plan was also discussed with the South African Qualifications Authority (Saq) which then developed the idea of a qualification in community development.

"We first started months ago by conceptualising the field of community development and then solicited stakeholders who might have an interest in the new Community Development Qualification Framework.

"The qualification has since been developed jointly by the department and Saqa," said Kessah.

Campus principal Dr Elias Malete said that the programme of professionalising community development would address the needs of communities.

"The programme will help in revitalising our campus and the community being served by the university and the department.

"The situation out there requires professional community workers who can handle people's social needs and we are proud to partner with the department to help them realise their cause," said Malete.

He said the Qwaqwa campus will next year introduce a four-year Bachelor of Community Development degree. The South African Social Services Agency (Sassa) provincial spokesperson Inno Khunou said the number of people seeking social grants was increasing.

"More people apply at our agency every year to seek relief. The increase is across the board, indicating the dire situation people find themselves in as there is no employment," said Khunou.

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## Free State

Oct 4 2012 2:27PM

### Dlamini promises new creches for rural areas



PLANNING AHEAD: Minister Bathabile Dlamini wants to build more creches in impoverished communities. Picture: Getrude Makhafola

#### **Neo Mvubu**

The Minister of Social Development Bathabile Dlamini says her department is targeting the building of early childhood development centres in impoverished communities across the Free State to improve the lives of those communities.

The Minister said this during her visit to Qwaqwa as part of the launch of development month which aims to bring services to the people. She was accompanied by her deputy Maria Ntuli.

During the visit MEC of social development Sisi Ntombela took the ministers to various ECD centres which were being developed by the national government.

Speaking at one of the ECD centres which was under construction, Dlamini told people gathered there that the ECD projects were part of government's plan to improve these centres in impoverished communities. The construction of ECD centres began last month.

It has created jobs for 15 people in rural communities. Some of them would benefit from permanent jobs that would accrue out of the centre when it was operational.

The eight women and two men who will be building the crèche over the next few months were hoping to be part of those lucky to be employed permanently in the future. According to one of the employees, Lebogang Malindi, the Benben construction company, a government initiated one, paid them R150 per day each until they complete the project.

Malindi said they helped build the foundation of the crèche and it had been standing for three weeks.

"Their original ECD centre was in Slovo Park at somebody's house.

"There the children were squashed in for a long time until they applied for the centre from government," said Malindi.

According to him, this job meant putting food on the table for him and his family.

“I have been unemployed for some time now and with this opportunity, I will be able to support my family.

“I just hope that they carry this project through,” he said.

Malindi, together with his co-workers, were busy building another foundation and, according to him, this will enable them to get more work from government.

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# THE NEW AGE

One Country. One Paper

**'Jobs abound' for qualified social workers**

Apr 24 2012 9:24AM

*Getrude Makhafola*

The department of social development has allayed fears that qualified social workers would not be employed in the province because there were no positions.

It was reported that social workers in other provinces, whose studies were funded by provincial governments, were in limbo because there were no positions available.

Provincial spokesperson Ipeleng Morake said the province had this year taken in all newly-qualified social workers whose studies it funded. "Our social workers need not worry.

"We have employed newly qualified graduates we funded through our skills development programmes. Those who were not funded by us but are qualified and need employment can approach our offices for assessment."

One graduate social worker, from Bloemfontein who studied in Port Elizabeth, said she did not know where to go as she had planned to settle in the Eastern Cape.

"I graduated with a four-year degree in March this year and we hear that there are no positions in the Eastern Cape. "My plan was to settle there, but it looks as if I will have to come back to the Free State. I cannot stay where there are no job prospects."

Ipeleng said those graduates who were outside the province's skills development programme were welcome. "MEC Sisi Ntombela has always said that this province needed skilled and qualified social workers.

"We are in the process of filling posts through skills development programmes with partners such as the University of Free State. We have more still studying and they will be placed as well when they finish their studies."

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## Free State

Oct 17 2012 10:36AM

### People still go hungry



BREAD ON THE TABLE: National Development Agency provincial manager Anthony Bower and MEC Sisi Ntombela at the launch of World Food Day in Virginia. Picture: Neo Mvubu

#### **Neo Mvubu**

"The Free State is the most food insecure province in the country, despite being the breadbasket," said National Development Agency provincial manager, Anthony Bower.

Speaking at the World Food Day organised by the department of social development in Virginia, Bower criticised the fact that although the province has the capacity to grow its own food, a countless number of people still go hungry daily.

He said the problem of food security lies in the inability to implement key activities, which could help develop the economy.

Bower was accompanied by the MEC for social development, Sisi Ntombela who, in partnership with the NDA, donated R1.8m towards the Ikaheng Vegetable Project.

According to Bower, the project consists of three women and one man who help plough in agricultural activity.

He said the project's aim was to help alleviate poverty by helping unemployed men and women in communities.

Bower said some of the challenges the project had come across had to do with technical knowledge.

"Some of the men and women need marketing skills to attract buyers. We need to introduce them to agro-processing, then they would be able to sell processed foodstuffs instead of raw products," he said.

One of the owners of Ikaheng Vegetable Project, Alicia Mokotjo, said they began in 2007 but experienced a number of challenges.

"We had to apply for land and agricultural supplements in order to achieve what we have. Matjhabeng local municipality

gave us one hectare of land and later five more. We also received generators and tractors from the NDA.”

Mokotjo said one of the problems they had was people stealing their produce. They also experienced drought, which had hampered progress.

Mokotjo said they began selling to factories in the CBD and received a lot of support from local markets.

“Without such support, we would not have pulled through. What we need now is a new tractor, water and basic skills to help us grow.”

Free State

Jun 1 2011 12:39PM

## **Child abuse figures not accurate**

Getrude Makhafola

The scourge of child abuse and the number of children who go missing is feared to be far greater in the province than official records show.

Since late last year, 125 cases of child abuse have been documented by the department of social development.

It is feared this is only a fraction of all incidents.

“The problem is that most incidents are not reported,” said the department’s spokesperson, Ipeleng Morake.

“Not all people come forward to report cases that involve the abuse of children and we believe that the problem is deeper than what we are actually exposed to.

“That is one of the ongoing challenges we are faced with.”

Social development MEC Sisi Ntombela has reiterated her call to communities across South Africa to treat every child as one of their own.

“That is how we can fight this scourge, if we all come together for the interest of the child,” she said.

Ntombela made her call during Child Protection Week. She will launch the province’s programme in Ficksburg today.

Morake said Ficksburg was chosen because of its spate of cases of missing children and cross-border trafficking into neighbouring Lesotho.

Childline in Bloemfontein said another area that experienced a high number of missing children was Bloemfontein.

Morake said there was an acute shortage of social workers in the province, as there was nationally, and that programmes such as Masupatsela had helped lift the burden.

The Masupatsela Youth Pioneer Programme is a nationwide Department of Social Development initiative that recruits, trains and absorbs the unemployed and out-of-school youth of South Africa.

In the Free State, the youngsters do door-to-door campaigns and profile households, report suspected cases of domestic abuse and help with poverty alleviation programmes.

“Because we do not have enough social workers, the Masupatsela youth continue to be our foot soldiers in our communities,” said Morake.

She said 38 social work graduates from the University of Free State were employed by the department in March.

“We continue to appeal to all social workers to go to their nearest social development office because we really need their skills,” she said.

Child Protection Week takes place from May 30 to June 4 to raise awareness about the need to protect children against any form of abuse.

Bathabile Dlamini, Minister of Social Development in statement this week Families and communities are the first line of response. The aim of the Child Protection Week campaign is to strengthen families and communities to play a role in identifying children need support earlier and linking them with appropriate services provided by government and community based organisations,” said .

The department said other activities to take place during Child Protection Week and beyond included the launch of the Early Childhood Development campaign, to be held today at KwaMhlanga in Mpumalanga; the launch of a children services directory in Durban tomorrow; commemoration of International Day for Families to be celebrated in Mthatha, Eastern Cape on Friday; as well as the commemoration of International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Drug Trafficking, event to take place on June 26 at Sasolburg in Free State.

## Free State

Apr 1 2011 7:45AM

### Help for flood victims

#### *Pule Lechesa*

Relief is on the way for flood victims in QwaQwa, eastern Free State, as the department of social development hands out food parcels and blankets today.

The department, accompanied by Pioneer Foods, will be handing out nearly 400 food parcels at Charles Mopedi stadium.

The MEC for social development, Sisi Ntombela, lauded Pioneers Foods for their partnership.

"We invited them to help and we acknowledge their efforts. We also encourage other businesses to come on board because such partnerships with the private sector show government work can be made lighter in desperate cases such as this," said Ntombela.

Bheki Zwane, Pioneers's bakery manager, said the company willingly participated because "social investment and development are at the heart of our social responsibility programmes". "We were happy to answer the government's call for help," said Zwane.

Apart from Thabo Mofutsanyana, in which QwaQwa is located, other districts to be hit by floods in this extended rainy season are Xhariep and Fezile Dabi.

"More pledges need to be made from businesses as what we are taking there today may not be enough," said Ntombela.

Government officials will attend today's ceremony.

## Free State

Nov 8 2012 12:04PM

### Tweeling youth centre is 'unique in many ways'



KEEP BUSY: Minister of social development Bathabile Dlamini, right, to open the youth centre. Picture: Neo Mvubu

#### ***Olwethu Mabovula***

Minister of Social Development Bathabile Dlamini will today open a youth development centre in Tweeling near Frankfort.

This is being done to help the youth in the remote area to gain information about training, study, government service and employment opportunities.

The Tweeling community's youth population stands at about 1700 and the majority are unemployed. Most people in the area depend on social grants and only a few have professional jobs.

Apart from providing information on other issues such as HIV and Aids, teen pregnancy and crime busting, the centre is meant to keep the local youth busy with meaningful activities. The activities include sports, arts and recreation.

The multi-purpose centre is receiving praise for its world class facilities that include training and skills development, community services and income generating services, says MEC Sisi Ntombela's spokesperson Ipeleng Morake.

"The centre's attraction is the youth development element, as well as government services.

"Through the resource room and internet access at the centre, the local youth can obtain any information they want," said Morake.

"They will need to know about study programmes in colleges and universities, bursaries, internships and other skills training programmes.

"We have been working in the area for the past three months informing people about what the centre is intended to achieve.

"We also work closely with the municipality," she said.

Minister Dlamini will be joined at the opening of the youth centre by Premier Ace Magashule, MEC Ntombela and other local personalities.

Local artists will provide entertainment during the ceremony.

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