

Deputy Minister tells youth to emulate the class of 76

The Deputy Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Thabang Makwetla led an Imbizo at the Kathorus campus of Ekurhuleni West TVET College and Change Bible Church in Katlehong on Wednesday, 21 June to inspire youth to be part of solutions for their problems. This Imbizo was held in collaboration with the Ekurhuleni Municipality and Gauteng Department of Community Safety.

The Principal of the Kathorus campus, Ms Helen Ntlatleng, opened the gathering and spoke of the huge support the college was getting from government and the business community. She spoke highly of the technologically advanced equipment and vehicles that have been donated to the college in order to enable students to gain skills. She appealed, though, for the Deputy Minister and other government leaders in attendance, to help them eradicate substance abuse at the college, as students easily access such substances from many taverns in the vicinity of the college.

Deputy Minister Makwetla told the students that, although society has a responsibility to take care of them, the youth also has a responsibility to contribute to the advancement of the country. He gave an example of the youth of 1976, who took it upon themselves to change their immediate conditions at schools, and ultimately led the bigger struggle to change the whole society. "We must not give birth to a generation that cares only about itself," he said. He paid tribute to Oliver Reginald Tambo for instilling in the youth of that era, a respect for women and children rights, rights for people living with disabilities and other human rights at a time when many thought those were secondary issues.

MEC for Community Safety in Gauteng Sizakhele Nkosi-Malobane said the recently reported crimes against women and children, committed in the cruellest manner, was an indication that South Africans are an angry nation. She attributed it to poor parental care, manifesting itself in the same children growing to be violent persons. Deputy Minister later took questions from the community at the Change Bible Church just few kilometres from the college. Ms Nonvula Mahlangu said she needed help for her brother, whose parole has been revoked after he was arrested for a further charge and later had the charge withdrawn. She wanted to know why was he not placed on parole after the withdrawal of the charge. Kenny Motsamai, who is on parole, also asked the Deputy Minister about unemployment of parolees and probationers.

Area Coordinator Community Corrections at Boksburg Management Area, Ms Monica Mabena, said they will engage Ms Mahlangu privately to address the situation of her brother. On unemployment of parolees and probationers, she said the department was working with other institutions where parolees and probationers were engaged on different projects, such as, refurbishment of schools and school desks. The Acting Mayor of Ekurhuleni, Lesiba Mpya said the municipality already has already ring-fenced R2 billion for youth related projects, and they will consider ring-fencing a portion of that for ex-offenders.