



correctional services

Department:
Correctional Services
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

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MINISTER LAMOLA HANDS OVER REFURBISHED SPORT FIELD THROUGH DCS OFFENDER LABOUR

The Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, Ronald Lamola handed over an upgraded sport field to the community of Concordia in Knysna on Thursday, 23 June 2022.

This marks his second visit to the community of Knysna, wherein during the initial visit Minister Lamola committed to the community that the Department, working with the Knysna Local Municipality, will upgrade the sporting facility to ensure that young people are provided an opportunity to utilise their youthful energy positively and harness their sporting talent. "When I was here last year, I was equally disturbed when parents; community leaders; and stakeholders; raised a genuine concern about the state of the Concordia Sporting Field. It was dilapidated and neglected and not conducive to allow young people to participate in sport. As a consequence, some of the youth out of boredom, experimented in substance abuse and others engaged in criminal activities – hence we partnered with the Local Municipality to upgrade the sport field. Without collaborative work, all of this was not going to be possible." – said Minister Lamola.

Through its Strategic Framework on Self-Sufficiency and Sustainability, the DCS availed offenders and departmental artisans to complete the work, with the help of the machinery and equipment provided by the Local Municipality. The DCS will further provide parolees to fully maintain the vegetable garden established at Concordia High School to benefit the local feeding scheme project as a poverty alleviation programme.

Lamola cited that, this is a clear demonstration that, offenders and parolees were provided with a second chance hence they made it possible to contribute in the upliftment of this community. "Gone are the days where offenders just sit idle in their cells throughout their period of incarceration. We make sure that they gain valuable skills which they could use when they are released to start their businesses. The work they have done here in Concordia is a clear testimony that indeed they have technical skills," he said.

We are expecting the learners here, to take advantage of this opportunity and compete at the highest level with their counterparts in sports. Hoping that the discipline they acquire through these facilities will contribute towards their future and encourage them to become better citizens. "Working together, we can benefit more communities with such infrastructure and amenities that respond to the needs of the youth.

We have a responsibility to give the youth of this country an opportunity to live up to their full potential, to be the best they can be in life, regardless of their background. We want the next sporting stars to emerge from here in Concordia, and with determination and hard work, nothing stops young people from here to attain their goals".

Minister Lamola urged parents to play their part in encouraging young people to participate in sporting activities as a move towards ensuring that they stay away from bad behaviour. “If a child turns a criminal, he becomes a community problem, not just for his/her family. Let us come together to ensure that young people grow up to become law abiding citizens”.

He urged members of the community not to discriminate against ex-offenders and parolees. “Allow them to use their skills to earn an honest living. Some have been equipped with skills in painting, welding, building, plumbing, farming, baking and hair dressing to mention a few. Allow them to showcase their skills and gain employment to feed their families, for when they are discriminated against, even on trades and jobs they qualify for, they will resort to their previous life of crime”.

Minister Lamola also donated a total of 60 pairs of shoes to learners from Hornlee and Thembelitsha Primary Schools; and Concordia High School in order to ensure that they attend school in a dignified manner.

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