



**higher education
& training**

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Speech delivered by the Honourable Deputy Minister of Higher Education and Training, Mr Mduduzi Manana, MP during the Decade of the Artisan event in Mpumalanga, Standerton, Gert Sibande TVET College (Skills Academy Centre)

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Programme Director

The Principal of Gert Sibande TVET Collge, Mr Nick Balkrishen and his team

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CHIETA Seta: Executive: Research and Skills Planning, Ms Kedibone Moroane

Department of Higher Education and Training and Gert Sibande TVET College,
Officials

Future leaders

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning

It gives me a great pleasure to welcome to you on the 11th Decade of the Artisan Programme, here at Gert TVET College (Skills Academy Centre). I want to start by acknowledging young people who are in our midst for agreeing to be part of us on this profound programme. As we were crisscrossing the country we realise that our young people don't know what an artisan is all about. We are here having started the conversation in 2013, to tell you what artisan entails. Artisan is a person who has been certified as competent to perform a listed trade in accordance with the Skills Development Act.

We would like to urge you to go to the TVET College. Some of you have been misled that college offer substandard education and that university has more prestige. We want you in our college more than university. Employment is guaranteed if you are from the college. Since the establishment of DHET, we have built state of the arts facilities for the college to be attractive to you.

I made research why there is lot of unemployment in the country? I invited the employers, they told me the reason why there is a skills mismatch is that, you are training vast majority of young people on the needs that are not relevant to the industries. Train them on the skills that are required by the industries, like artisanship. We then identified those 125 trades in November, 2013 and distributed them to high schools around the country. Out of 125 trades, 47 were artisanal trades.

I know you would like to wear suit like the Deputy Minister. I want to urge you; there is no money with suits. Don't mind to get your hands dirty by wearing a dust coat.

One day when I visited Sasol, I happened to meet a lady working as an artisan. She

told me, she earns R100 000 a month. There are good prospects in the field of artisan, and employment is guaranteed.

We are currently producing 14000 artisans per year. We have to dribble our efforts and reach the target of producing 30 000 artisans in 2030 as stipulated in the National Development Plan. The message we would like to convey to you is to go and study at the college. A doctor cannot operate a machine without an engineer. It is no longer fashionable to have matric; the key is to have employment. Even with a degree it must be a degree in a profession which is high in demand. We are engaging the employers on an on-going basis to assist our learners because they provide experiential training. We must double our efforts and produce more artisans.

Don't look down to a plumber, welder, electrician and bricklayer. They play a very critical role in the country's economy. We are now enjoying these lights because of an electrician. An electrician in the area of his/her locality can render the service and earn more money. In Germany, when you say you are a doctor, they don't take you serious. But when you say you are a welder, boilermaker they take you serious. They have managed to halve unemployment with 4 per cent. Every young person in Germany is in employment, because their economy is built on TVET system. The Minister of Education in Germany told me you need to change the picture of having more university students to more TVET College students.

We need more skills in innovation, research, engineering and hospitality. For us to be a true developmental state we need to invest more in the TVET system. What pains us is the fact that during the construction of stadiums in 2010, we have imported skills from other countries. Furthermore we have deployed about 1000 Thailands rendering the services at Medupi Power Station in Limpopo. We were

forced to import those skills because we have a shortage of coded electricians in the country. How long are we going to borrow skills? We are relying on you to go to go to TVET College to sustain the country's economy. In the field of artisan, there are no careers designed to men only. We are now happy to see more girls entering into the TVET system, because we have change the picture. It is no longer the case where only men become artisans.

Government has mechanism to help you financially through NSFAS programme. I always stuck in traffic on N1 road, when I go to work because majority of the drivers have benefited from the NSFAS. Your situation at home must not determine your destination. Don't preoccupy yourself with where will I get money. Allow the caring government to take care of that situation. As we are engaging you, the Life orientation Educators are being trained to equip themselves with knowledge of artisans so that they will encourage you to consider taking up artisan as a career of choice. You must visit those stalls to obtain more information on career choices.

It is wrong and counter-revolutionary to burn school. Most of our university were burned as a result of fees must fall campaign by the students. Little did they know they are blocking you to get opportunity to access post school? Such horrible deeds have far reaching implications. We are making a clarion call, to the perpetrators to stop vandalising university structures. Government is aware that most university students are confronting financial constraints and take that challenge very seriously. Indeed, government remains firmly committed to progressively realise free post-school education for the poor and working class, as called for by our constitution and to assist the middle class families who are unable to pay. You have a right to protest but do it in an orderly fashion.

At TVET College you don't you don't get a loan, you get full bursary. You won't pay fees. However if you want to go to the university, you will be expected to repay the loan. If you obtain 75%, while at university, it is converted into a bursary.

Scholarships are awarded on merit. Education is one solution that can remove abject poverty.

Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farm workers can become president of a great nation said Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. He was referring to himself; he grew up in a rural area of Mvezo but ended up opening a law firm in Gauteng. His poor background did not deter him from realizing his potential. He ended up becoming the first democratic elected President of South Africa in 1994. Let us not look at our current situation and lose hope. We need to take a leave out of him

Consider taking career in artisanal career. It pains us when we see you loitering the streets after graduation ceremony. A year later, employment dololo (nothing). Your neighbours will start to ask why is he/she not working. Your self-esteem will be low. What we are doing here is a career counselling to put you in the programmes that are more relevant to the industries. We don't want you to ask 2 rand from our parent. Your certificate must work for you.

In conclusion, you must learn and do nothing else. You must learn and acquire skills that will help your community and family. They can be relieved from their poverty stricken by you being educated.

I thank you

