



the premier

Department of
the Premier
FREE STATE PROVINCE

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THE FREE STATE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT TAKING A LEAD ON EDUCATION

Still basking in the glory of being number one in South Africa in terms of matric pass rate, the Free State Provincial Government is not resting on its laurels. Instead, under the leadership of the Honourable Premier of the Free State Ace Magashule, the Free State Provincial Government has ensured that 33 students will receive further higher institution training at Mevlana University, in the city of Konya, Turkey, where they will study Medicine, Engineering, and International Trade. These fields of study were identified as scarce skills areas which form an integral part of the Skills Development Strategy of the Free State Province, linked to the 2009 election manifesto and the 5 key priorities of government. The Free State Government, in continuity since 1994, is moving South Africa forward to Vision 2030 with a focus of making education a pillar of growth and development.

Head of Department (HOD) for Education in the Free State, Stanley Malope pleaded with the Mevlana University to take good care of the students which the Free State Government has now handing over to them. "What we are giving to Mevlana University is raw material from Africa, so when they return, we can only hope that they are desired products that have been processed", he said. "In every hardship, there will rise an opportunity, so the children must study hard and honour the legacy of the late Nelson Mandela."

The students thank the Free State Provincial Government for the momentous opportunity to study abroad and they promise to do their best and represent the province with aplomb. "I wholeheartedly thank the Free State Government for this opportunity and I promise that I will come back to South Africa as a doctor", said Vuyo Hlobo, who will study medicine at Mevlana University.

MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mamiki Qabathe, who was head of the delegation to Turkey, met with representatives from various universities to discuss the possibilities of taking more students to Turkey. MEC Qabathe met with representatives from Gediz University, situated in Izmir, and also engaged with representatives from Antalya International University - an institution which offers courses in English for Business, Engineering, Tourism, and Architecture. Other institutions the MEC engaged with are Meliksah University, situated in the industrial city of Kayseri as well as Ipek University, situated in Istanbul. "We are hopeful that the children we have left behind in Turkey will study hard and one day plough back to the country", said MEC Qabathe.

MEC Qabathe also visited Turgut Ozal University, based in the capital of Ankara, as well as BAU University, based in Istanbul, to discuss possibilities of taking up post-graduate students. In Ankara MEC Qabathe also met delegates from Ipek University - a Social Sciences and Arts institution which has 8 indoor film studios on campus. The state-of-the-art University, still to be fully completed, plans to accept 800 new students next year. The Free State Provincial Government is working towards being part of their plans, moving forward. In her capacity as MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, MEC Qabathe visited PakPen. Formed in 1970, the Istanbul-based company manufactures plastic, windows and doors which are eco-friendly. MEC Qabathe discussed how the eco-friendly products can benefit the people of the Free State, and indeed South Africa as a whole.

By taking 33 students to further their studies in Turkey and furthermore engaging with various universities and entities, the Free State Provincial Government has shown its desire to increase the number of appropriately skilled people who will, in the future, meet the demands of the emerging economic and social developments.

The Free State Provincial Government is hopeful that the students will one day return home to serve the province which is now ensuring a better tomorrow for them.

Issued by the Free State Provincial Government Communication Services.

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