

SPEECH OF THE FREE STATE MEC FOR SPORT, ARTS, CULTURE AND RECREATION, MR DAN KGOHULE, ON THE OCCASION OF THE HAND OVER OF THE MULTIPURPOSE SPORT COURT, 09 JULY 2011, VAN STADENSURUS

9 July 2011

Programme Director
Colleagues
Honoured Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen
Comrades

We are delighted that we are fully on track with regard to our programme of opening Multipurpose Sport Courts across the Free State. The opening of sport facilities in our province is part of our effort to ensure access to sport and recreation services to all our communities, more especially those in the small and rural towns. Just before we came here we were at Qibing/Wepener where we officially opened the first of the community gyms that we are going to build in the Free State.

Today we meet here in Van Stadensrus to open this Multi Purpose Sport Court following the opening of these facilities in other areas of our province which are: Vredefort (4 June 2011); Heilbron (11 June 2011); Petrus Steyn (18 June 2011) and Luckhoff (25 June 2011). Other areas in the province where these facilities will be rolled out are: Diyatalawa, Makgolokweng and Tweeling.

We are all aware the provincial government has committed itself to developing the lives of the people in the province for the better. The communities of these towns are no exception in this regard. As part of our pledge to ensure a better life for the people of the Free State and these small and rural towns of our province, the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation has embarked on a campaign that ensures broader participation by our communities in programmes of sport and recreation.

For too long the identification, development and nurturing of young sports athletes was a privilege that was afforded to a select few during the previous dispensation. Our present government realises the importance of sports as a key factor in ensuring nation building and social cohesion.

We know that to produce excellent sports athletes takes years of training and guidance and that talented athletes should be identified from an early age.

Our concern as a department is that many young people in our communities are not able to develop their talents be it in sports, the arts, education or any other field because there are no programmes in place to identify and nurture them. This occasion today is a progressive initiative to ensure that talented athletes are offered an opportunity to develop their talents and therefore excel in whatever sports activities they are involved in.

Through Sport and Recreation my department continues to ensure that mass participation in sports penetrates every corner of our communities.

We have committed ourselves to build on the positive outcomes realised in the last financial year. We have been able to introduce a new strategy for sport and recreation in all 82 towns in the province.

This Multipurpose Sport Court we are handing over to this community today is the fifth that the department is handing over in this financial year.

During my department's Budget Vote for 2011/2012 I indicate that "The building of these sport facilities paves the way for our vision of encouraging all people in our communities to actively take part in different sport and recreational activities"

The hand over ceremony of this Multipurpose Sport Court facility indicates our continued vision to promote and enhance the development and encourage the participation of our people in sporting and recreational programmes.

I have no doubt that if we are to follow this kind of an approach and do sport and recreation the right way this time around, the Free State will not lag behind in terms of medal tallies at various sporting tournaments.

I wish to urge the community in Van Stadensrus to value and cherish this facility. We are confident that this initiative will enable to produce future sports legends and help us to support the aspirations of young and talented sport athletes.

I thank you.