



transport

Department:
Transport
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

Street Address: 172 Burger Street,
Pietermaritzburg, 3200
Postal Address: Private Bag X9043,
Pietermaritzburg, 3200
Tel: (27)(33) 355 8664
Cell: 072803146 / 0796995755
Fax: (27)(33) 355 8632
Email: Kwanele.Ncalane@Kzntransport.gov.za
Website: <http://www.kzntransport.gov.za>

MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

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MEC WILLIES MCHUNU LAUDS SANTACO SCHOOL UNIFORM DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMME

NQUTHU, Monday, 17 March 2014 -- MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Mr. Willies Mchunu, has applauded the South African National Taxi Council (SANTACO) for its programme of distributing school uniforms to thousands of needy learners in the province.

Mchunu was speaking following the distribution of 1 000 school uniforms for learners in 100 schools in the UMzinyathi District, valued at R500 000.

"Well over 3 000 learners would receive school uniforms through this programme across the province. Already 1 500 uniforms have been distributed in SANTACO regions including Greater North, covering areas such as Inanda, Phoenix, Ndwedwe, Ntuzuma and Kwa-Mashu; Zululand District; and Ningizimu 2 Region including uMlazi, Lamontville, Yellowwood Park, and Chartsworth," said Boy Zondi, chairperson of SANTACO in KwaZulu-Natal.

"The taxi industry, a major stakeholder of the Department of Transport, is leading from the front in supporting the government programme to move South Africa forward. Working productively with SANTACO has brought peace and stability in this very important industry, but the organisation is now going an extra mile to play a crucial role in education. On its part, the government is continuing to invest massively in education, from early childhood development to tertiary education, as well as skills training and development," said Mchunu.

He said the fact that education and health were getting the lion's share of the national and provincial budgets, underscores the importance of universal access to development and these economy-critical services. Nearly all learners below the age of 15 are attending school, where they also benefit from feeding schools and broadly study for free.

"In KwaZulu-Natal specifically, the Departments of Transport and Education, are helping 21 000 learners with scholar transport including buses and taxis. In addition, well over 9 000 learners are benefitting through the Shovakalula bicycle programme," said Mchunu.

In UMzinyathi District alone, 860 learners are on scholar transport and 830 learners have received bicycles across tens of schools.

Mchunu said in the spirit of the 20 Years of our Freedom and Democracy, all South Africans and organisations needed to play their part in helping build our country into a united, democratic, non-racial, non-sexist, equal and prosperous nation.

Ends.

Media contacts:

Kwanele Ncalane -072 803 1462/ 079 699 5755/

Kwanele.ncalane@kzntransport.gov.za

Nathi Sukazi 081 018 0518/ 082 565 0205/ Nathi.Sukazi@kzntransport.gov.za

Website: www.kzntransport.gov.za

Twitter: @KZNTransport

Facebook: www.facebook.com/kzntransport