



LAND NEWS

Volume 4, 2014

**Department pledges it's support
to rural women**

Re-opening kicks-off

**Northern Cape DRDLR sponsors
tablets for schools in Riemvasmaak**



**rural development
& land reform**

Department:
Rural Development and Land Reform
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Editorial

South Africa is only moving forward

The Freedom Charter, as adopted by the Congress of the People in Kliptown on 26 June 1955, acknowledged that “our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality.” Twenty years later into democracy, we are seeing a South Africa with a land reform agenda that is shaping up impressively.

One is witnessing everyday, good stories of land reform, the kind of stories that will forever be engraved in our hearts. The signing into law of the Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act of 2014, by President Jacob Zuma, is another positive step in ensuring that we all call South Africa a democratic State where restrictions of land ownership on a racial basis are a thing of the past.

The Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act paves the way for the reopening of lodgement of land claims from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2019, this is a step welcomed by many. This move will certainly heal the wounds of the past, a past full of shame and disgrace.

South Africans, who did not claim by the initial cut off date of 1998, started claiming on the first day of the re opening. Lodgement sites across the country are everyday receiving claims that once settled will restore dignity and hope. The department has noted with concern cases of fraud where criminals take money from, mostly, poor old people, promising them to process their claims. These criminals are in some instances selling claim forms. This, if left unattended, will be a cancer that will eat away good efforts of reversing the legacy of the 1913 Natives Land Act.

The Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act criminalises the selling of claim forms and any other fraudulent activity. This is reassuring us that the re-opening process will be fair and just, however we all need to work together with government to remove such ills from our society.

We, the Land News team, have travelled throughout the country capturing stories of possible claimants as they took the first step in nation building. We were often confronted by old people who clinched to their papers with a hopeful smile. We hope you enjoy reading about their stories in this special edition of re-opening of land claims.

Happy reading
Neliswa Lizeka Chiloane

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Letters to the editor



In a re-enactment of the Apartheid era, a group of people protest against the 1913 Natives Land Act to raise awareness about the Free State leg of the Building the Legacy: 20 years of Freedom Exhibition.

SA land reform system – a positive step in nation building

Land ownership and control in South Africa has long been a source of conflict, from the time Jan Van Riebeeck settled in the Cape in 1652 through the wars of dispossession that were fought up to the height of apartheid.

Our history of colonial conquest and land dispossession through forced removals and racially-skewed distribution of resources has left us with a complex and painful legacy, which continues to manifest itself through poverty, inequality and unemployment that continue to exist.

On the fall of the apartheid government, the democratic government in 1994 sought to reverse the legacy of dispossession by adopting a land reform programme, made up initially of land restitution, land redistribution and land tenure reform.

One of the first pieces of legislation passed by the democratic government, and signed into law by the late President Nelson Mandela was the Restitution of Land Rights Act which he signed on 25 November 1994 to give effect to a right to restitution that was contained in the 1993 Interim Constitution. The 1996

Constitution incorporates clauses in section 25 that elevates the land reform programme to a constitutional imperative.

The first clause states that a person or community dispossessed of property after 19 June 1913, as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices is entitled to the extent provided by an Act of Parliament, either to restitution of that property, or to equitable redress.

Secondly, the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources, to foster conditions which enable citizens to gain access to land on an equitable basis.

Lastly, a person or community whose tenure of land is legally insecure as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices is entitled to the extent provided by an Act of Parliament, either to tenure which is legally secure, or to compatible redress. ■



During the Building the Legacy: 20 years of Freedom Exhibition, a group of actors portrayed a devastated family that was removed from their land during Apartheid.

The purpose of land redistribution programme is to provide the poor with access to land for residential and other productive uses, in order to improve their income and quality of life. The programme aims to assist the poor, labour tenants, farm workers, women, as well as emergent farmers.

In the book *Native Life in South Africa*, Solomon Tsekido Plaatjie says “the passing of the 1913 Natives Land Act is a crucial piece of legislation that made it illegal for black South Africans to own or occupy land, except as employees in South Africa”.

Land reform is therefore not only a means of correcting past injustices or bringing reconciliation and peace to the country, but can also be seen as a strategic move in economic empowerment, which can offer opportunities for small scale production while supporting entrepreneurial culture in

rural areas and small towns. As victims of land dispossession are given a chance to claim their land back through the reopening of lodging land claims, one can only hope that as a country, we can find a way of moving on from the past, even though we may have not healed from the bruises brought about by that horrible era. ■

**Nthabiseng Matabane
Pretoria**

Minister receives Vulamasango land claim

By Thabang Mahlatsi



Rural Development and Land Reform Minister, Gugile Nkwinti has described the process towards the re-opening of land claims as a “bottom-up” decision and says, to some extent, groups such as the Vulamasango Singene paved the way.

The minister was speaking at the launch of the reopening of land claims in East London, Eastern Cape on 14 August 2014. To mark the launch of the reopening, Minister Nkwinti received a historic claim from the Vulamasango Singene group of claimants.

Referring to the 2005 National Land Summit, hosted by the former Department of Land Affairs, Minister Nkwinti said it was through the insistence of Vulamasango Singene and other lobby groups that a resolution to re-open land claims was taken at that event.

“In 2007 at the 52nd National Conference of the governing party a decision was taken there, in response, to establish the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, two years after the National Land Summit”, he said. The Vulamasango Singene Campaign was launched in 2002 by a group of communities in the Eastern Cape who were victims of the betterment policy.

Under the betterment scheme, designated areas were divided into distinct land use zones - for residential, arable and grazing usage - and all people were forced into the demarcated zones.

During the first lodgement period which closed in 1998, victims of the betterment scheme were excluded from the land claims process when the new democratic government opened the land restitution process. The government was then taken to court by the Vulamasango Singene group which wanted thousands of villagers from the former homelands areas to benefit from the restitution process.

Speaking at the launch, chairman of the Vulamasango Singene group, Vukile Njoli said they had deemed the closure of the first lodgement period as unfair because it meant other communities who were victims to the betterment policy would never get to claim their land back.

He says this was the reason they decided to take the matter to the courts. Mama Nongenile Adonis spearheaded the claim of thousands of villagers as she arrived at the Commission of Restitution of Land Rights

lodgment site in East London. An elated Mama Adonis lodged a claim on behalf of the Mantunzeleni community in the Ngqamakwe comprising nine villages who were victims of the betterment policy in the Eastern Cape.

She said she was filled with joy because they have finally been allowed to claim back the land from which they were removed. Mama Adonis said once the land has been handed back to them, they will use it for farming so that they can feed their families. ■





“I’m filled with joy because we have finally been allowed to claim back the land from which we were removed...we can feed our families.”

Returning land to the dispossessed

State wants claimants to step forward before cut-off point in 2019

IMAGINE waking up one day only to find that your home, your land, your entire existence has been erased. This is the fate that befell thousands of our fellow countrymen and women in 1913 when black families were forcibly removed from their land by the colonial government.

The promulgation of the 1913 Natives Land Act made concrete the then common practice of blacks being removed from their land. Over 100 years have passed since this human tragedy unfolded but still the scars remain and the legacy endures.

South Africa's first democratically elected government inherited the remnants of over a hundred years of oppression when it assumed office in 1994.

Colonial and apartheid land policies succeeded in making most South Africans landless in the country of their birth and produced inequality, division and poverty.

Solving the land issue was one of the first priorities of the new democratic government in 1994. Former president Nelson Mandela and the democratic collective stressed that the divisions of the past would never heal unless this issue was resolved.

On November 17, 1994, the Restitution of Land Rights Act, which aimed to restore the rights of those dispossessed by discriminatory land legislation dating back to the 1913 Land Act, was passed by Mandela and signed into law.

The Act provided for the establishment of a Land Claims Commission and a Land Claims Court to respectively probe and adjudicate claims of individuals and communities dispossessed on or after June 1913.

Speaking on the emotive issue of land on June 23, 1998, at a restoration ceremony Mandela highlighted the need to undo the damage of the past.

"Our land reform programme helps redress the injustices of apartheid. It fosters national reconciliation and stability. It underpins economic growth and improves household welfare and food security," he said.

The first window for the lodgement of land claims closed in 1998. An estimated 80 000 claims were lodged in this period. Seventy-



Voice of Government

PHUMLA WILLIAMS

KEY POINTS

» Imagine waking up one day only to find that your home, your land, your entire existence has been erased

» This is the fate that befell thousands of our fellow countrymen and women on June 19, 1913, when black families were forcibly removed from their land by the colonial government

» South Africa's first democratically elected government inherited the remnants of hundreds of years of oppression when it assumed office in 1994

» Redressing and healing the divisions and wounds of the past has been a cornerstone of successive democratic administrations since 1994

thousand of the claims settled were for financial compensation while over 5 000 were for land restoration.

A smaller number of claims lodged before the 1998 cut-off period have not yet been settled or resolved. These have been prioritised for settlement and will be processed simultaneously with the new ones.

The reopening of the window for land claims to individuals, families and communities who were dispossessed of their land by the 1913 Natives Land Act and subsequent legislation has been made possible by the Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act, which was recently signed into law by President Jacob Zuma.

Rural Development and Land Reform Minister Gugile Nkwinti, and his department will steer the process, which runs for a period of five years, ending in June 2019.

Speaking on the reopening of the window period, Nkwinti said a great number of people had raised the issue that they had not been aware of the process which ran from 1994 to 1998, hence the need for a new lodgement period.

He confirmed that there were 14 lodgement offices and sites in all nine provinces which are ready to assist with claims.

"These sites are equipped with advanced technology to ensure speedy and accurate capture of relevant information.

"Our people will be assisted by trained staff and every effort will be made to ensure the process from the submission of a claim to the time it is settled is a smooth one," Nkwinti said.

He further highlighted that his department would deploy mobile units to remote areas of the country in order to reach every citizen who qualifies to lodge a claim. At the same time an awareness campaign will also be rolled out to ensure that all South Africans are informed about the new lodgement process.

Citizens wishing to lodge their claims are urged not to fall prey to unscrupulous people claiming to be agents of the department while depriving them of their hard-earned monies.

Should they wish to claim we urge them to contact our offices or contact us through our toll-free number, 0800 007095, to be guided on how to lodge their claims.

A special lodgement manual has been produced by the department. It can also be accessed through their website: www.ruraldevelopment.gov.za.

The government is aware that there are pockets of society who question the need for the restitution of land rights programme. We are, however, convinced that it is a necessity given our history of land dispossession and economic exclusion.

Redressing and healing the divisions and wounds of the past has been a cornerstone of successive democratic administrations since 1994. The National Development Plan, our nation's long-term plan to eliminate poverty and inequality by 2030, calls for successful land reform that will lead to job creation, rising agricultural production and the development of an inclusive rural economy.

We are convinced that more inclusive and fair access to land is one of the fundamental elements to transform the rural economy and to move South Africa forward.

Phumla Williams is the acting head of the GCIS

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Northern Cape DRDLR sponsors tablets for schools in Riemvasmaak

By Moeketsi Ntsane



Jubilant school learners and their teachers from Riemvasmaak, in the Northern Cape, show-off their new tablets during the hand-over.

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) in the Northern Cape has donated 40 tablets to two primary schools in Riemvasmaak, in a bid to bring a new attitude to learning and teaching in rural schools.

The tablets, which will have wi-fi connectivity, will contain study material and guides for teachers and learners, among other things.

The tablets will also have multimedia programs that will enable pupils to access telephonic explanations of the school work in their home languages. The department through its Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) supports the poorest rural communities in their developments.

This includes ensuring the provision and access to basic, social and economic services, said Programme Manager of Information and Communication Technology, Ms Esmeralda Reid. "At the heart of these rural communities

are the children and their teachers, the department acknowledges that in the 21st century, it is within the knowledge economy where many of these rural children will find employment", she said.

In 2009 the DRDLR embarked on bringing Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to rural communities, in the form of ICT centers that provide access to government services, learning and training material, employment opportunities and communication (e-mail, skype, etc.).

The Ischool Africa Programme was identified by the department in 2010, for roll out to 16 rural schools, to see how the use of appropriate facilitated technology in rural schools would benefit rural teachers and children.

The tablets were handed to the schools as part of the Nelson Mandela International Day. ■

Department continues to support Eastern Cape emerging farmers

By Vuyolwethu Mngoma and Siphe Mayongo



A tractor toils at the farm in the Eastern Cape Province.

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) in collaboration with the Agriculture Research Council (ARC) and Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) continuously fights poverty through the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) by supplying emerging farmers with agricultural implements.

These cash-strapped farmers, Zama Zama G5, Vukuzenzele people of Pearston and Willowmore Nursery are within the Karoo Area in the Eastern Cape Province in the Blue Crane and Baviaans Municipality under the jurisdiction of Cacadu District Municipality (CDM). Zama Zama G5 is located in a town called Cookhouse and is one of the 25 Farmers of Bio Fuel that were handed over by the DRDLR in April 2013.

DRDLR's Deputy Director of Rural Enterprise and Industrial Development (REID), Mr Ntsikelelo Maqabanqa said the department supports these projects because the beneficiaries, both young and old, have a passion for planting and are committed to agriculture. "All genders are involved in

this project, even people with disabilities. I am confident that these projects will be successful. We also visit these projects on a monthly basis to monitor progress," said Maqabanqa.

The department through the CRDP created 67 job opportunities through these projects and now Karoo communities are able to bring food on the table for their families. Staff member of Willowmore Nursery, Mr Abdol Klaas, 22, is one of the few youth who benefited from these initiatives. "I left school at a young age because my father died and as a result I had to go and find work so to provide for my family," he said.

DRDAR's Scientist in Cacadu District, Mr Andre Diamond and Extension Officer for Willowmore area, Thabisa Nameka both said the department supported these projects with technical support, food security programmes and chose these projects because the beneficiaries are dedicated, committed and experienced farmers.

"These projects play a vital role in terms of food security and the community benefits because some of the crops are donated to schools and churches," said Diamond.

However, Willowmore Nursery founder, Mr Phillip Korkee highlighted that these projects face challenges like dryness of the Karoo area, scarcity of water, no electricity and lack of participation by the youth. "When we started here we had a lot of young people on this project but now it's only a few left because they regard this as boring to them", said the 55-year-old.

Mr Klaas Johannes Mintoor, Vukuzenzele people of Pearston founder, says they are highly rated by their consumers because they sell fresh and cheap products to impoverished communities and to East London, Graaff-Reinet, Somerset and Cradock retail stores."Our products are healthy and in good quality because we receive regular visits from health inspectors," said Mintoor.

He added that the cooperative continually invite pupils in surrounding schools to their farms in their quest of luring young people into farming and agriculture. "It is important that pupils, especially those studying agriculture, see our successes here so as to motivate them to embrace the culture of producing food for themselves and the community," he said.

Agri-park Project Manager, Dr Phokele Maponya, says the ARC provided the projects with training in, among other things, soil preparation, trading food, harvesting and post harvesting. "We distributed inputs and fruit trees to nurseries. We constantly monitor these projects on a monthly and quarterly basis to ensure growth and competitiveness," he said.

He added that the ARC is currently conducting agricultural and hydroponic training in both the OR Tambo and Alfred Nzo Districts in the province." We want to establish other potential nurseries in the province and provide assistance where necessary," concluded Maponya. ■



Workers are often working on their plants in the farm that being assisted by the department.

Minister Nkwinti announces five Bills

By Lungelo Mkamba



The National Assembly in Cape Town, Western Cape, where minister Gugile Nkwinti announced the five Bills he intends bringing before Parliament.

Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform Minister, Gugile Nkwinti, has announced five crucial Bills that will advance rural development and land reform in the country. Delivering his 2014/15 budget vote in the national assembly, Nkwinti revealed that the following Bills will be brought before Parliament for consideration:

- Electronic Deeds Registration Bill, 2014
- Regulation of Land Holdings Bill, 2014
- Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Bill, 2014
- Communal Property Associations Amendment Bill, 2014
- Communal Land Tenure Bill, 2014.

Nkwinti explained that an electronic system will be implemented through the Electronic Deeds Registration Bill.

“(This) will allow us to achieve universal, countrywide access to deeds registration and cadastral or Surveyor-General’s services. It will decrease turnaround time for approval and registration of property,” he told members of Parliament.

The Deeds Office processes almost a million registrations per annum; however the current process is manual. He announced that the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform will soon be developing e-Cadastre, an electronic land registration system. Nkwinti further added that the Bill will expedite the registration of property process.

“Old documents dating from 1657 will be scanned as part of the modernisation of the deeds registration. The estimated cost of this project is projected at R1.8 billion over a ten-year period,” minister Nkwinti added. The Regulation of Land Holdings Bill would pave the way for the establishment of the Land Commission.

Nkwinti told the National Assembly that through the Bill, “We seek to provide a legal framework for the disclosure of race, gender and nationality by owners of land and property (both natural and juristic).” He added that the Bill would provide a “transparent and more conducive regulatory environment for the generation and utilisation of policy-relevant information on land ownership and usage”.

Nkwinti also announced the Extension of Security of Tenure Amendment Bill, 2014, which would protect the rights of farmworkers and establish the Land Rights Management Board with District Land Reform and Local Land Rights Management Committees. Nkwinti then spoke about the Communal Property Associations Amendment Bill, 2014, which he said, will ensure faster registration of CPA's and improved accountability to Parliament by the Department.

"This Bill will provide for security of tenure through the registration of title deeds in the name of individual households.

This will apply to both farm dwellers and labour tenants," Nkwinti said.

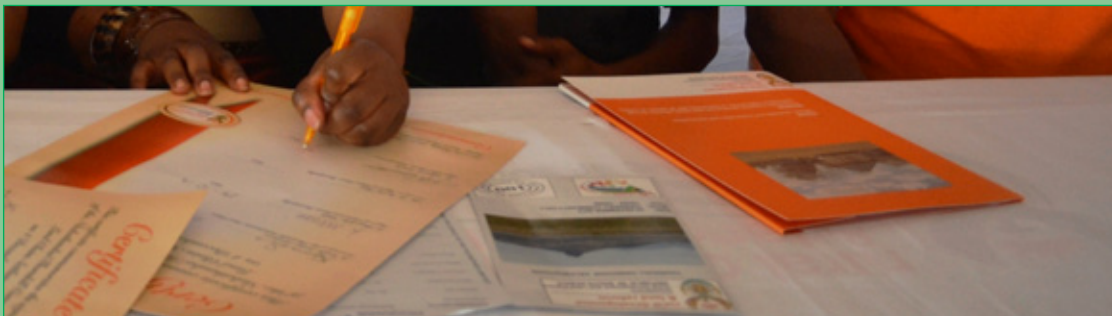
The Minister then announced the fifth Bill, the Communal Land Tenure Bill, 2014, which would:

- Reform communal tenure to provide for the institutionalisation of land use rights by individual households, irrespective of gender;
- Define institutional roles and roles-relationships;
- Provide for the distinction between governance and investment and development entities in the communal space;
- Delineate responsibilities of the governance and investment and development entities;
- Establish an accountability regime for the governance structures and the investment and development entities;
- Protect communal land from land sharks; and,
- Provide for active participation by households in strengthening the capability of the local sphere of government. ■



Mpumalanga registers its first land claim after the re-opening

By Malema Ntsime



In this file photo, a department official signs off a finalised land claim.

The Commission on Restitution of Land Rights in Mpumalanga successfully registered the first land claim lodged by Mr Bhekhisizwe Victor Nkosi on 02 July 2014 in Mbombela. Mr Nkosi, a resident of Kabokweni Township just outside Nelspruit, lodged a claim on behalf of five families on the property Middleton farm.

During his lodgement, all required documentation was in order and as a result, the claim was successfully lodged. This process followed the announcement by Minister Gugile Nkwinti during a media briefing in Cape Town that the State would be re-opening the period for people who were disposed of their land to claim it back.

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform has taken all necessary steps to ensure that the process is in line with the latest technology trends and that all required documentation should be in place before the system can accept a land claim. It appears that Mr Nkosi has been keeping his ears on the ground because immediately after the announcement, he wasted no time in ensuring that he takes advantage of this opportunity that he missed during the initial cut off date of December 1998.

"I was driving and listening to Radio 2000 FM when it was announced on the 5pm news bulletin that the re-opening process of lodgement of land claims has been officially opened. I stopped the car, called some family

members and all could not hold their excitement of being provided an opportunity to lodge a claim on the land I always knew as home and was born in" said Mr Nkosi in an exclusive interview with Land News.

"When I got to the office, the receptionist enquired if I had all required documentation and after realising that all is in order, he ushered me to the lodgement office where I successfully lodged my claim. The whole process went smooth and I was immediately given my acknowledgement letter with a reference number after lodging our claim.

I feel very excited to be the first in Mpumalanga to lodge our land claim during this reopening period. My concern, however, is that the process takes a long time despite the fact that our forceful removal from the farm happened around 1962," concluded Mr. Nkosi.

Currently, there are two lodgement sites in Mpumalanga situated in Emalahleni and Mbombela that are fully operational. The third identified site is in its final stages and will soon be open to the public for the lodgement process. The re-opening process will continue until June 2019 and it is expected that a huge number of claims will be lodged in this province considering large amount of land dispossessions that occurred in this part of the country. ■

Limpopo opens doors for land claimants

By Helani Maluleke



From left: Mr Sidwell Mojela and Abram Mojela launched their land claim in the hope of having their land and dignity back.

The Limpopo Regional Land Claims Office is buzzing with the influx of land claimants who want to lodge their land claims. Officials in the office on a daily basis assist communities and individuals who want to restore their dignity by claiming land that was disposed.

Mr Sidwell (50) and Abram Mojela (68) from Mookgophong in the Waterberg District of Limpopo Province who lodged a family claim were amongst the first claimants to walk into the Regional Office's door.

The Mojela family like many other families lost their land rights in 1985 when they were forcefully removed, by the apartheid government, from their farm called Olifants Clap. They moved from Mookgophong to Mokopane at a place called Sekgakgapeng where they are currently residing.

After going through the screening process they were found to be eligible claimants with relevant documents. They indicated that they were very glad about the level of service they received from the officials who assisted them.

"The lodgment process was very effective and quick. We are very happy that we are finally given an opportunity by our government to lodge our claims because during the previous phase of lodgment we did not get the message on time," said Mr Abram Mojela.

Realising that some people were not aware of the initial lodgment period, the province is rolling out an interactive communication campaign, that will inform people on how to lodge a land claim, targeting hotspots (areas where people were dumped after dispossession). The roll-out campaign is targeting 30 000 people across the province by the end of the current financial year.

"If our land claim is successful, we would like to utilize the farm to continue with our farming because now we have a lot of cattle and sheep but we do not have enough land to do our farming," Mr Abram Mojela said. ■

World Geomatics converge in Cape Town

By Nolizwe Adams



The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform was part of the crucial three-day AfricaGEO conference in Cape Town, Western Cape.

A South African geomatics association which includes the South African Geomatics Institute (SAGI), the Geo-information Society of SA (GISSA), Institute for Mine Surveyors, as well as the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), recently hosted a three-day AfricaGEO Conference at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC).

The conference was held under the theme “Developing Geomatics for Africa”. It was opened by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform’s Deputy Minister, Mr Mcebisi Skwatsha. The conference focused on the latest developments in the geomatics industry as well as the available technology in Africa. It was the second conference to be organised by South African Geomatics Associations, since June 2011.

According to organisers, the aim was to create a platform to share the latest developments in surveying and Geo-information and on issues of sustainable development. It was also to promote the latest products and services in the industry.

Topics covered by the delegates included: New technology for Geomatics, Development of a new South African Land Cover as well as Using Ortho-rectified Imagery to Delineate Land Rights. Professor Georg Gartner from Austria, who is also President of the International Cartographic Association (ICA), was a keynote speaker and presented a paper on Modern Cartography.

He highlighted the importance of cartography as an interface to information. “Cartography is a very powerful function of data. It is about the efficient communication of spatial information,” he said. He added that modern cartography is about finding context and most significantly reaching out to the man on the street.

Other speakers included Professor Chris Rizos from Australia, Dr Chen Jun of China, Mr Jeff MCKenna from Canada as well as Dr Solomon Abebe Haile from Kenya. Most discussions were about the need for networking, being dynamic and always having a user needs approach when developing geo-spatial data.

Teboho Mapakisa who was representing the Chief Directorate: National Geo-spatial Information (CD: NGI) presented a paper on the efficiency and effectiveness of the VRS technology as a densification to the RTK - Single Base technique for GPS/GNSS surveys in South Africa.

Speaking at a workshop organised by the Young Surveyors Network (YSN) during the conference, Mr Siyabonga Mdubeki from the Chief Surveyor General’s office, commended the organisers for providing such a platform. “Such platforms are essential as they are for sharing ideas, skills, knowledge and support to one another,” he said. Mdubeki added that issues facing young surveyors such as development and skills transfer needed to be done in a more structured way. ■

Rural Cooperatives to set-up Cooperative Bank

By Maleshoane Letsoalo and Lungelo Mkamba



The arts and craft work was on full display at the rural women's workshop.

Plans are underway to establish a Co-operative Bank for Arts and Crafts Co-operatives that are supported by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), this was announced during the recent Arts and Crafts Rural Women Workshop that was held at Lakes Hotel in

Benoni. Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Gugile Nkwinti, his deputy, Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini; Director General Mdu Shabane; and Deputy Director General Leona Archary were among the delegates that attended the crucial workshop. Women from various co-operatives around the country were unanimous in voicing



Women from various provinces came in their numbers to attend the crucial rural women's workshop.

their strong support for plans to form their own bank. Nomadelo Sauli from the Co-operative Banks Development Agency (CBDA) in Pretoria delivered a detailed presentation, which explained the process of establishing a co-operative bank. She told the delegates that in order to start a bank like First National Bank (FNB), one would need a startup capital of 250 million.

Sauli explained that government had passed the Co-operative Bank Act, no 40 of 2007 which paved the way for the establishment of Co-operative Banks.

To start a Co-operative Bank, a minimum of 200 members in the co-operative is a prerequisite and R100 000 capital, Sauli explained. "If each member contributes R500 each, you have the co-operative bank and the more members in the co-operative, the less capital that each member will contribute," she said. She said her agency had capacity building programmes where they, amongst other things, train members in financial management.

"If you form this co-operative bank, it will be an opportunity for money to be circulated in your communities." Sauli's colleague, David de Jong added that if the women formed the co-operative bank, they could loan money to each other however the funds can only be loaned to members of the co-operatives. Explaining the benefits of a co-operative bank, he said "It is owned by

its members; they get profits which is divided amongst them whereas businesses have shareholders that can even be overseas." Nosisa Jojozi, who is a member of a co-operative that formed the first co-operative bank in Mthatha, Eastern Cape, told the delegates "We are from the poorer of the poorer villages and we ventured into CBDA in 2012 which empowered us as a community and helped us give back to our communities." Jojozi said her co-operative was reluctant at first but after attending CBDA workshops, they realised the benefits, formed the bank and never looked back.

Nosisa Jojozi, who is a member of a co-operative that formed the first co-operative bank in Mthatha, Eastern Cape, told the delegates "We are from the poorer of the poorer villages and we ventured into CBDA in 2012 which empowered us as a community and helped us give back to our communities." Jojozi said her co-operative was reluctant at first but after attending CBDA workshops, they realised the benefits, formed the bank and never looked back.

Bonani Mbatha from Intsimbi Co-operative that is based in Mpumalanga welcomed the news of forming a bank. "We would love to form the co-operative bank because it would go a long way in helping us," she said. ■

Deputy Minister pledges department's support to rural women

By Maleshoane Letsoalo and Lungelo Mkamba



Through their crop and plants, rural women are uplifting themselves and their local communities.

Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Ms Candith Mashego-Dlamini, has declared her full support to women in rural communities, saying they must continue to be united in their co-operatives. "Government must benefit everyone. We do not want to help one person only. Form your co-operatives, be united and government will support you," she told delegates during the recent Arts and Crafts Rural Women Workshop in Benoni.

Ms Mashego-Dlamini acknowledged that the workshop was very big for rural women. She said the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) must develop rural communities and that women were very important to South Africa. She praised the positive work that co-operatives do for communities. The deputy Minister stressed that women should be aware of government's programmes, including Bills that are passed in Parliament. "Women co-operatives must be



Some of the women enthralled delegates with a signature dance during the workshop.

developed. We want to take you to see women that are successful and learn from them,” she told hundreds of women that attended the workshop.

Her sentiments to support women were echoed by Ms Leona Archary, Deputy Director General: Rural Infrastructure Development; who emphasised the urgency of growing the co-operatives with a realistic model targeted for 2035. Ms Archary said that out of 74 thousand co-operatives in the country; only 160 were operating successfully which, she said, is a clear sign that more work needs to be done.

She indicated that the department would support additional skills training of more women especially the youth and co-operatives that have youth involved. Ms Archary also urged the women to work towards moving from primary to secondary cooperative, she said it will enable

them to pull financial support and bulk buying. In order for them to achieve this, she said, they would need to work from bottom to top.

The deputy Minister added that women should engage and inform the department when they need support.

She said she had observed that they were at least 15 percent young women in the co-operatives that attended the workshop. She called on the experienced women to teach young women about co-operatives and share the knowledge that they have attained with other young women. She further declared her full support and that of Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Gugile Nkwinti to the women. ■

Re-opening kicks-off at Kimberley lodgement site

By Nqabisa Mkalipi



The Restitution office in Kimberley has successfully lodged more than 20 new land claims on the first day of re-opening.

Claimants and staff alike were excited about the prospect of lodging new claims during this second window period. Mostly elderly people from around Kimberley came to lodge new claims while the office was inundated with telephone enquiries from people who reside outside Kimberley; requesting information on the process of lodging a land claim.

Prospective claimant, Mr Johannes Mooketsi, said that he was very happy to be given an opportunity again because he was not aware about the initial process and as such they missed out.

The Department of Rural development and Land Reform has ensured that the lodgement site has innovative technology to ensure swift and precise capturing of relevant information.

Eligible claimants are assisted by trained staff that ensure the process; from the submission of a claim, to the time it is settled is a smooth one. All claims lodged before 31 December 1998 will still be settled and claimants are welcome to enquire about the status of those claims. Prospective claimants await to lodge their land claims at the site in Kimberley.

An official of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform captures the information of a prospective land claimant in Kimberley. ■

KZN leads in the re-opening of land claims

By Sifiso Ntombela



The Office of the Regional Land Claims Commission: KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) opened its doors on the 1st of July 2014 after President Jacob Zuma signed into law the Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act, paving the way for people to register claims for their ancestral land.

Claimants came in numbers, flocking the KZN offices to register their land claims for land which was wrongly taken from them during land dispossessions orchestrated by Apartheid laws. Old people couldn't hide their excitement as the extension period had finally come. On the 2nd of July claimants were taken for information sharing session on the lodgment process. The training also focused on the new electronic capturing of claims.

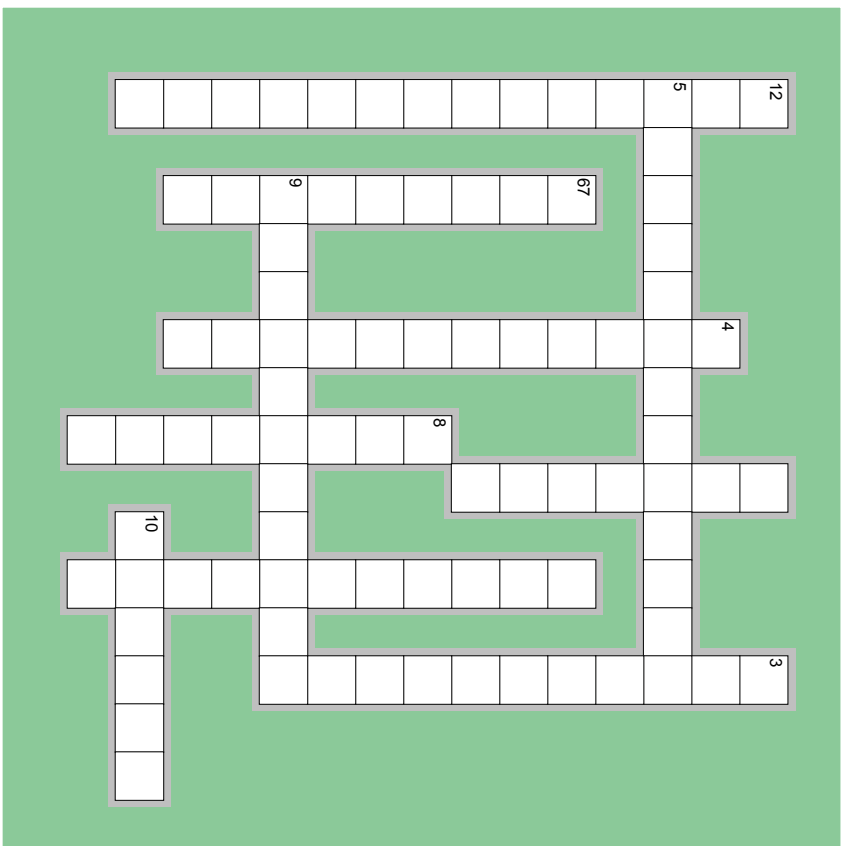
The session was followed by a media briefing led by the KZN Chief Director: Restitution Advocate Bheki Mbili. The media briefing

officially launched the KZN Communication Campaign on the Re-opening of Land Claims process. He appealed to the media to inform the public about the reopening window.

"We are also dependent on you to give this matter the prominence it deserves in your respective publications," he said. "We are alive to the fact the road ahead will not be easy, but we are ready to confront the challenges that lie ahead in the quest to restore the dignity of our people and reverse the legacy of the 1913 Natives Land Act," he concluded.

Members of the media were then taken on a tour around the Pietermaritzburg lodgment site in order to assess the state of readiness of the office. ■

Crossword puzzle



Across

5. The department through its Rural Development Programme (CRDP) supports the poorest rural communities in their developments.
9. The Women in and Rural Development (WARD) Deputy Secretary, Mohadi Mopell, said her organisation was delighted that the department has reopened the land claims process.
10. The Chief Land Claims Commissioner, Ms Nonfundo

Down

1. The Programme was identified by the department in 2010, for roll out to 16 rural schools, to see how the use of appropriate facilitated technology in rural schools would benefit rural teachers and children.
2. Deputy Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Ms Mashego. Dlamini
3. The Commission on Restitution of Land Rights in Mpumalanga successfully registered the first land claim lodged by Mr Victor Nkosi on 02 July 2014 in Mborobela.
4. In 2009 the DRDLR embarked on bringing Information and Communication (ICTs) to rural communities.
6. The Trust chairman, Judge Jerome Ngwenya, described the reopening as good news.
7. President Zuma signed the of Land Rights Amendment Act of 2014 and the Property Valuation Act of 2014 into law.
8. The Extension of of Tenure Amendment Bill, 2014, will protect the rights of farm workers and establish the Land Rights Management Board with District Land Reform and Local Land Rights Management Committees.

Crossword solution to previous edition;

Across: Recapitalisation (1), Sustainable (8), Super (9), Shwababa (11), Isivuno (12), Mayathula (13).

Down: Inhabitants (2), Plas (3), MuyeXe (4), Communal (5), Dalibhunga (6), Zimbabwean (7), Jacobsdal (10).



Vox pops

20 years of freedom and democracy in South Africa



Compiled by Maleshoane Letsoalo

South Africa commemorated National Women's Day on 9 August 2014, a day in which we pay homage to the women, mothers, sisters and daughters who fought tirelessly against the Apartheid government. In August, which is also known as Women's Month, we recognise the contribution made by women in the struggle for freedom in The Land News team engaged South African women about observing Women's Month and they expressed the following views:



Rev MJ Modibedi

National Women's day signifies the selflessness of the women of 1956; the march was more than just about carrying a dompas. It was about human dignity and gender justice; because of their braveness today as women we are presented with lot of opportunities, women empowerment, women are leading businesses owners, women are no longer tied to their kitchen's but they are actually career women who are focused on building a better society by developing their communities through social development projects such as vegetable gardens, and sewing.



Julia Miambu:

It is really important to celebrate Women's Day as it speaks volume of the courage those women who marched to the union buildings in 1956. In order to see peace and unity amongst our people beyond race, because of those heroic women,

our movement is not restricted anymore, and everyone travels anywhere, at any time without having to produce a dompas or limited to travel to a certain area only for a dictated period of time, without the fear of being woken up in the middle of the night with a heavy knock on the door.



Lizzy Deane:

For me, Women's Month marks the emancipation of the whole society people now walk without fear. A lot has changed; we now have women who pursue careers which they were marginalised before such as engineering, also working in the defence force and participate in different sports activities. Through the efforts of these women and of others in our country, today we can be proud that we have a Constitution, which enshrines women's equality. We have a Commission on Gender Equality, an Office on the Status of Women located in the Presidency. Women are a sizeable number in our National Parliament.



Feziwe Fesi:

Although a lot has been said to commemorate National Women's Day, I feel more still needs to

be done. As women we need to unite like those women did in 1956, as they supported each other. They stood with one voice and they were faced with the struggles of carrying dompas' and inequality. We are still facing challenges of poverty and child abuse. It should not be seen as a public holiday but a day in which people bring about change in their society.



Enid Modiba:

It is because of their (the women who marched in 1956) legacy that nowadays we have women's dialogue where we engage with other women from far about issues that affect us. We have a women's league which addresses issues in and around our communities. When we had an opportunity as a country of having Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Gqcuka as deputy president, it showed that as women we are going forward. We also had Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma appointed as chairperson of African Union (AU), which signified that as women we can lead and develop our country and beyond.

Free State Restitution Unit relocates in response to the re-opening of the lodgement of Land Claims

By Karabelo Raseobi and Mzwandile Mtshali



The Restitution unit of Free State Province has moved from the SA Eagle Building to spacious offices in Post Bank Building in order to ease the process of claiming land in the next five years. One is currently drawn closer by colourful banners of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform outside the Post Bank Building and the signage is guaranteed never to lead you astray.

A welcoming smile of the security guards leads you nowhere else but to lively orange-painted walls that instantly trigger hope of sustainable rural communities from within. Your mind positively gazes to the atmosphere of a vibrant workplace and a loud silent voice says, "Batho Pele". You sight a handful of comforting and relaxing black chairs that are logically positioned for people's convenience. Will they always be occupied?

Well I doubt as committed, ethical and innovative officials of the Restitution Unit definitely assist in a wink of an eye, one is convinced that this next five years will be of rich harvest.

In taking this manoeuvre, the Free State Restitution and Communication units are determined to spread the words of the re-opening and fraud envisaged to hot places like Qwaqwa, Harrismith, Schoonplaas, Warden, Vrede, Memel, Odendalsrus, Hennemann, Senekal, Bothaville, Wesselsbron, Kroonstad, ThabaNchu and Botshabelo. They will inform people about how to lodge their claims and warn them about fraudulent people who will try and steal their land and money. ■

Reopening receives resounding welcome

By Lungelo Mkamba



In a re-enactment during the Building the Legacy: 20 years of Freedom Exhibition, a policeman (left), speaks to a family that was dispossessed of land.

Land rights organisations and land trusts have welcomed the reopening of lodgement of land claims, hailing the process as a triumph for the country, especially for those who missed out on the initial process which ended in 1998. Claimants have begun lodging their claims around the country's 14 lodgement sites after the minister of Rural Development and Land Reform announced the reopening of the lodgement of land claims on the 1st of July.

Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (WARD) Deputy Secretary, Mohadi Mopeli, said her organisation was delighted. Her organisation had attended the public hearings on the Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Bill and backed the reopening but called for government to allocate more land to women. "We have been waiting for a long time for the reopening," Mopeli said. "We want to see more women owning land. Some women are struggling. Land will benefit us because we will be able to farm and plant on the land."

If women were restored land, Mopeli explained, they would work the land, create employment, ensure food security and "empower women".

For example, she said, a single or widowed mother would have land to work on. Director of the Association for Rural Development (AFRA), which was also part of the public hearings, welcomed the reopening but called on government to prioritise outstanding claims. AFRA director, Mike Cowling, said the reopening would allow those who had missed out on the initial process to lodge their claims.

"People were ignorant about their rights and did not claim," he said. Cowling suggested that government ask the new claimants why they had missed out on the 1998 deadline before accepting their claims.

Ingonyama Trust chairman, Judge Jerome Ngwenya, described the reopening as good news. Judge Ngwenya indicated that he, Zulu Monarch, Good Zwelithini, and traditional leaders in KwaZulu-Natal would meet soon to discuss lodging a combined claim. "We are very happy and thankful to the minister (of Rural Development and Land Reform, Gugile Nkwinti) for this opportunity," the judge said. ■

Programme being established to accommodate Khoi and San

By Lungelo Mkamba



Members of the Khoi and San communities have welcomed Minister Gugile Nkwinti's announcement that programme is being developed to accommodate their land claims.

The Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Gugile Nkwinti, has restored hope to the Khoi and San communities, announcing that a programme is currently being developed to accommodate them. The current land claims process is open to those who were dispossessed of a land right after 1913 however a policy on the exceptions to the 1913 Natives Land Act cut-off date is being developed by the current government to address the worries of the Khoi and San communities.

“As we re-open the lodgement period we are mindful that there are parts of our community that remain excluded by this process. I refer to the Khoi and the San communities who are not accommodated by this Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act of 2014. Their plight is not forgotten,” Nkwinti said.

He told journalists that the purpose of the exceptions is to ensure that government is not confined to the restitution law. “We (want to) create a programme overtime that will consider the Khoi and the San because they were dispossessed a long time ago, much earlier than the 1913 Natives Land Act. So we are looking at that. We got a first report from the Khoi and San. We said to them (the Khoi and San) how would you advise government to go about with this thing.... we asked them about the kind of programme that we should pursue to assist them.”

Nkwinti said government was busy with the programme and he would soon submit a report to President Jacob Zuma regarding the matter and it would be discussed while engagements with the Khoi and San would continue. ■

Outstanding claims will be settled, says Nkwinti

By Lungelo Mkamba



In this file photo, a department official signs of the settlement of a land claim.

The Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Gugile Nkwinti, says outstanding land claims are receiving crucial attention but could be “dealt with” simultaneously with the new lodged claims.

Speaking at a media briefing after President Zuma signed the Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act of 2014 and the Property Valuation Act of 2014 into law, which paved the way for the reopening of lodgement of land claims from in Cape Town; Nkwinti explained that some of the outstanding claims were before the courts or embedded.

“We might find ourselves dealing with this (the outstanding claims) simultaneously because some of the claims are complex. It is not because of a lack of money. Some are in court or embedded,” he said. “But we cannot wait for that resolution to take place when we can settle another claim tomorrow.”

Nkwinti explained that in the previous lodgement of land claims process, claims were lodged manually which led to documents being lost. “These new claims will be much easier and we will settle them much faster,” he said, adding that he wanted outstanding claims to be dealt with rapidly.

Nkwinti revealed that there were about 8 471 claims lodged before the 1998 cut-off period that have not yet been settled or resolved. “These have been prioritised for settlement. I am appealing to those individuals and communities affected to continue to exercise patience, while we are resolving their claims and not to lodge their claims again.”

He also allayed fears regarding the budget for the lodgement of claims saying that restitution was not a project. “It is another weakness in the interpretation. 30 June 2014, 30 June 2019, and then people translate it as meaning that by 30 June 2019 all the claims would have been settled.

It is a wrong interpretation. What 30 June 2019 is about is the time frame during which people can lodge claims not the timeframe of settling claims...”

“The budget is not an issue. It is a political issue. The fact that we will deal with claims electronically, means it will be easier to deal with.” ■



BASIC INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR COMMUNITY CLAIM

- Affected area (indicate that the community appears on the map)
- Number of households in the community
- Number of households (people) occupying
- Number of people (household) occupying
- Date of founding (if any)
- Name of founding
- Location of the founding
- Location of the founding
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- Location of the founding
- Location of the founding



MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & LAND AFFAIRS

16 August

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT RECEIPT

Dear Mr N Adams

We acknowledge the receipt of your application for a land claim. Your reference number is **BT/2014/00441**

Please note however that the following additional information is still required:
1. Copy of any written notice received at the time of dispossession such as notice of dispossession or sale deed

Please note that the subject claim will only be continued once the additional information is supplied and the complete property description (with farm name) is identified.

For future communication please use the following telephone number: 0800 007 000.

Regards

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT & LAND AFFAIRS
LAND RESTITUTION SUPPORT
DARDEN LANE
2014-08-14

Regional Land Claims Commissioner



**Rural development
& land reform**
Department
Rural Development and Land Reform
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

This certificate commemorates the
settlement of Batlhabine ba
Mogoboya Community Claim
on 06 April 2013 in the
Mopani District Municipality,
Limpopo Province

[Signature]
Mr JBO Marule
MEC Limpopo
Department of Agriculture

06/04/2013
Date

[Signature]
Cllr LJ Matlou
Executive Mayor
Mopani District Municipality

06/04/2013
Date

[Signature]
Cllr D Mmetle
Mayor: Greater Tzaneen
Local Municipality

06/4/2013
Date

[Signature]
Mr E Ralelelle
For Batlhabine ba
Mogoboya Community

06/4/2013
Date



fraud AWARENESS

RESTITUTION IS A WORK IN
PROGRESS - AND ITS WORKING!
(BUT PLEASE BEWARE OF FRAUDSTERS)

ANTI-CORRUPTION HOTLINE: 0800 701 701



Now that the National Assembly has officially passed the Restitution of Land Rights Amendments Bill after a fierce debate between Members of Parliament, communities and individuals who were dispossessed of land during Apartheid, but failed to lodge land claims before the 1998 cut-off date, now have another opportunity to claim.

The Act sets a new deadline for the lodgement of land claims to 31 December 2019. These communities however need to be alerted of opportunists who will try to con them of their hard earned money by promising to lodge claims on their behalf. Already there are numerous reports of people posing as government officials collecting money from unsuspecting community members with promises to help them with lodging their land claims. These people take advantage of the high illiteracy rate of the people residing in rural areas.

It should be put on record that application forms for lodging claims, together with the Citizens Manual will be distributed free of charge to South Africans. How could people be so cruel as to take advantage of communities who, for the longest time, have been on the receiving end of repression? If caught, these unscrupulous characters looking to make a quick buck out of poor communities should be heavily punished - the Act includes a clause that allows for the prosecution of fraudulent claims.

Attempts by claimants to swindle money out of the state could also surface when the lodgement of land claims process is re-opened. Those who had previously claimed for land and had been compensated might try their luck once more - hoping to scam the system. As it is government is still in the process of settling claims lodged before the cut-off date of 1998, which will receive first preference when the process of lodgement of land claims is re-opened. By fraudulently claiming for land when they have already been compensated, people are robbing other communities of a chance to improve their lives.

Government has ensured have put measures in place to guarantee that those who previously claimed will not do so for the second time. Opportunistic fraudsters looking to con the government are strongly warned and they will face jail time.

The Department of Rural Development and Land Reform reiterates that people must refrain from paying any individuals for lodging a land claim as it is free.

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