



Justice and Constitutional Development Minister Jeff Radebe, while addressing Klerksdorp community members and surrounding areas in the North West

## MINISTER LISTENS TO COMMUNITY CHALLENGES DURING IMBIZO.

Mokgethwa Ngoepe



“Listening to day-to-day challenges faced by communities help to improve our work as per the Batho Pele principles. It also helps us to deeply understand the communities’ needs and devise means on how we can try our level best to address such needs,” remarked Justice and Constitutional Development Minister Jeff Radebe, while addressing Klerksdorp community members and surrounding areas in the North West recently.

More than one thousand community members from Klerksdorp

and the surrounding areas within the Matlosana Local Municipality packed the Alabama Community Hall to capacity to listen to Minister Radebe addressing them during an Imbizo Focus Week.

The main purpose of the Imbizo was to interact with the youth and attend to critical issues that confront young people in the area. “The issue of drugs is a problem in this country and we are focusing our energies on measures our government is taking in making sure that we discourage our youth from taking drugs,” remarked Minister Radebe.



Listening attentively: Community members listening to speakers during the Imbizo in Klerksdorp recently.

He also applauded the child justice system which deals with young people in a different manner than adult criminals. "As the department, we are of the strong view that all this information needs to be disseminated as widely as possible so that the youth of this country can feel confident to attend to challenges for the future of our nation. Therefore education is of paramount importance for the youth," he explained.

Imbizo is a forum for enhancing dialogue and interaction between government and the people. It provides an opportunity for government to communicate its Programme of Action (PoA) and the update on the progress made. Imbizo further helps to promote public participation in government programmes with the aim of continuously improving people's lives. It also provides an opportunity for the members of the public to share concerns, grievances and offer advices on how government can improve its day-to-day operations.

One of the youth, Morere Moremogolo (24), of Khuma Township, who was sentenced to a correctional supervision, was brave to confess in full view of the audience, that he had committed lot of crimes which included house breaking, drugs, theft and rape at a very young age. He now has regrets for what he did which he mainly attributes to peer pressure.

"I really have regrets for what I did, I feel I have wasted my time. I dropped out of school at a very young age because of drugs. I have always been praying to be given another chance, which I got, it's all thanks to the Bosasa Youth Development Centre which has taught me how to write and prepare for public speaking. I am proud to inform you that I am now a motivational speaker," said Moremogolo to a cheering crowd. He appealed to stakeholders present to assist him as he still seeks more advice and financial support to further his career.

Moremogolo was one of the 25 young people who were taken to the Bosasa Youth Development Centre (BYDC) in Klerksdorp for rehabilitation. He had since learned a lot of things about life and how to live better with the community.

He urged other young people to learn from him. "It's very important to choose friends as they can easily lead you to do wrong things. It is vital to have friends who are focused because stealing is not a solution. The long arm of the law will catch up with you and there will be no place to hide," warned Moremogolo.

Minister Radebe concluded responding to the challenges and issues raised by the community. He further thanked and applauded Moremogolo for his confession and his bravery to speak about his previous life in public. "If we can have youth of his calibre, we will certainly have a country that is free from drugs and violence. This really shows that the child justice system is indeed working," he said.

**"The issue of drugs is a problem in this country and we are focusing our energies on measures our government is taking in making sure that we discourage our youth from taking drugs."**

The minister urged the youth to emulate the youth of 1976 and the young lions of 1980's. "We are proud, as the department, to say we have One Stop Child Justice Centres all over the country which we give R28 million annually to make sure that they are operating optimally to deal with issues affecting the vulnerable people within our communities," concluded Minister Radebe.