



tourism

Department:
Tourism
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**economic development
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MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Mpumalanga
TOURISM AND PARKS AGENCY

A boost for tourism in Mpumalanga as youth cadets complete Safety and Guiding Training

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On the back of Tourism Month, the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Fish Mahlalela, today proudly presided over the graduation ceremony in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga, where two hundred and ten (210) graduates will enthusiastically join the tourism sector as Tourism Monitors.

In collaboration with the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA), the Department of Tourism hosted the graduation ceremony for youth who successfully participated in the Tourism Monitors Training Programme. These monitors will ensure visitor safety and service excellence at various tourist attractions in Mpumalanga Province.

Addressing the graduates, the Deputy Minister said: "Skills development is an essential instrument to address poverty alleviation and job creation. The Tourism Monitors Programme is part of the broader government intervention that involves training, mentorship and deployment of unemployed youth in identified tourism attractions and sites."

The Department of Tourism, through its Working for Tourism Programme, launched the Tourism Monitors (TM) Programme in 2017/18 financial year, as a pilot programme in Gauteng Provinces, in partnership with the Gauteng Tourism Authority.

Currently the programme is being implemented in all nine provinces, including identified protected areas through partnership with organisations such as South African National Parks (SANParks) and the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). Monitors were trained in the National Certificate in Tour Guiding NQF 4 and were provided with various training opportunities like Customer Care, Tour Guiding and Communication Skills.

The objectives of the Tourism Monitors Programme is primarily the enhancement of tourism safety awareness at key tourism attractions and consequently reduce the number of criminal incidents that are directed against tourists, to eliminate opportunities for such crime and to integrate current tourism safety and awareness initiatives into sustainable programmes.

"As Mpumalanga we are excited to be part of this initiative that offers young people an opportunity to participate and benefit from the development opportunities in the tourism sector. The exposure of these young people through this programme has empowered them with work experience through placement at various tourist attractions within the province. They have played a critical role in providing support and visitor services, especially in relation to tourism safety awareness, early warning and rapid response to incidents of crime and distress amongst those visiting our province", said Mr Johannes Nobunga, CEO of Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency.

The collective effort of stakeholders demonstrates the commitment to the safety of all our visitors and to ensure that South Africa remains a destination of choice and proves that tourism is everybody's business. "We cannot do this without partnerships with both public sector entities and industry in the form of product owners and service providers. I would like to thank all stakeholders, particularly our host employers for absorbing these graduates into their business and the rendering of various public services, community policing centres, border posts, airports and shopping malls and recreational spaces in our country " "The Tourism Monitors are graduating at a time when we ready ourselves for the festive season in December, and we believe that through their deployment, the multitudes of tourists from within our country and abroad will have memorable and safe visitor experience over the 2019 Festive season "the Deputy Minister concluded.

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