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Tourism heeds the call to create more jobs

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Following the commitment by President Cyril Ramaphosa to create 275 000 jobs per annum during the Job Summit held in Midrand last week, yet another group of 145 chefs from Limpopo and Mpumalanga graduated in Polokwane this morning, as part of the National Youth Chefs Training Programme (NYCTP) of the Department of Tourism.

Implemented by the South African Chefs Association (SA Chefs), the 2011 launched NYCTP, is a 10-month training course which comprises of 30% theory and 70% work integrated learning.

Speaking on behalf of the Executive Mayor of Capricorn District Municipality Counsellor Sammy Selamolela in his welcoming remarks said the municipality's growth and development strategy has identified tourism as one of the key pillars that will drive the economy in the district.

"The problem we have in South Africa is that we have more job seekers than entrepreneurs. It is upon these graduates to be more job creators than seekers. We want to move from being a welfare state, and this programme is one of the exit strategies that government utilises to do so. It is clear that it is making a difference", said Deputy Minister Thabethe, in her remarks during the ceremony.

"We are one of the few countries in the world that has a high gap between the haves and the have nots. Skills is one of the stumbling blocks in achieving our objectives hence the launching of skill development programmes. We are celebrating what we have planted as government. All of you must now go out and be ambassadors of government and give testimony to the skills that we have empowered you with", concluded the Deputy Minister.

In providing a state of tourism in the Limpopo, DDG for Environmental Affairs and Tourism Keleabetswe Tlouane said in order to accelerate growth in the tourism sector, the goal is to fast track inclusive quality growth of the South African tourism's economy.

"This will be implemented through the five pillars that form part of the building blocks of the revised National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS). This necessitates the province to relook at the its tourism approach and alignment with the revised NTSS", said DDG Tlouane.

Motivating the learners, former graduate of the programme and sous-chef at the Meropa Casino and where the graduation ceremony was held, Vincent Ngubane impressed on the graduates to never lose focus despite the many challenges that come with being a chef.

"Four years back, I was sitting where you are sitting. I did my practicals at Sun City, serving a minimum of 5000 guests daily. It was not an easy journey, but immediately after my graduation, I received my letter of appointment as a junior sous-chef", said Mr Ngubane.

A total of 488 learners from across the country will graduate as chefs and receive certification accredited by the City and Guilds. These include a Certificate in Food preparation and cooking, a Diploma in Food and cookery, as well as a Diploma in Patisserie (Pastry) in food preparation and cooking.

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