



MEDIA ADVISORY

PROVINCIAL STAKEHOLDER MEETING: TOWNSHIP TRADE

Many a family in South African townships depend on informal township traders for their daily needs. Daily basic needs like milk, sugar, bread, soap and paraffin are the centre of this township trade which has been a serious contested terrain of late in South African townships.

In Mangaung this trade is estimated at R431 million per annum. Research indicates that the share is becoming smaller because participants are increased by the day. Titled, *“Trade is in our blood”*: Reflections on Trends and Conflicts In Township Trade, the report by University of the Free State established that there exist conflict between informal traders themselves. At the centre of the conflict is the fight for the markets between the traditional South African township traders that have been foreigners, mostly Bangladeshis, Pakistanis and Ethiopians. Locals decry the fact that the markets have been mostly invaded by non South Africans which have eroded their profits or business.

The report emanated from the study wherein the following findings, believed to be contributing towards this conflict, were made.

- Legitimacy and uncontrolled influx of non-South African traders in Mangaung Township.
- How non-South African traders out compete their South African counterparts.
- Competition for markets and resources.
- Non-compliance with business and health regulations by non-South Africans.

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In his Budget Speech, the MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mr. Mxolisi Dukwana said, to this end “For a considerable time now, informal business in the Free State has been raising concerns that non-South African traders, or the so called foreigners, have taken control of the informal trade in the former black townships. This, in many cases has led to conflict and even to violence.”

To address this, the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs will host a Stakeholder meeting on Thursday. Among others to:

- Discuss the recommendations of the report.
- Agree on initiatives to address challenges facing township trade.
- Commitment of the stakeholders in implementing the agreed initiatives.

About 60 Stakeholder Delegates will include:

- 20 District Municipalities in the Free State
- South African Revenue Services
- Department of Home Affairs
- Afrikaanse Handel Institute
- SANCO
- IDC
- SETA
- SEDA
- NAFCOC
- MBO
- BCTI

Details are as follows:

Date: Thursday, 28 July 2011

Venue: Kopano Nokeng

Time: 09h00 – 13h00

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Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs

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