    

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**PHUTHADITJHABA INDUSTRIAL PARK SHOULD BE EXPLORED TO BENEFIT NOT JUST THE PROVINCE, BUT THE ENTIRE COUNTRY**

The strategic location of the Phuthaditjhaba Industrial Park should be explored to benefit not just the province, but the entire country. This was said by the Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Bulelani Magwanishe who was speaking during the official launch the revitalised Phuthaditjhaba Industrial Park at the Phuthaditjhaba Multi-Purpose Centre in QwaQwa today.

The industrial park has been revitalised to the value of R50 million by the dti under its Industrial Parks Revitalisation Programme.

Magwanishe said the Phuthaditjhaba Industrial Park which is part of Department of Trade and Industry (the dti) led Industrial Parks Revitalisation Programme (IPRP) is intended to respond unemployment in the province and should also be explored to benefit not just the province, but the entire country. He added the province is strategic in many respects, most important being that it connects to six provinces and is the neighbour to the Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho.

“For this year, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Dr Rob Davies announced that R216 million has been set aside for the revitalisation of industrial parks. Phuthaditjhaba is one of the five industrial parks that stand to benefit, as we will be proceeding with the other phases of revitalisation. Today we recognise the completion of the first face of the programme in this industrial park, which was realised through an allocation of R50 million. This launch follows the completion of the first phase of the Botshabelo Industrial Park also here in the Free State,” said Magwanishe.

Magwanishe stated that with the Free State Development Corporation commitment to woo in other Small Medium and Micro-sized Enterprises to consider locating in the park, we are bound to drastically reduce unemployment which is very high in this area.

Most importantly, Magwanishe said is it important for these parks to be properly maintained, for them to be able to sustain and increase their occupancy rate because the business friendly environment.

“We are here on the backdrop of the Investment Summit, which confirmed the confidence that the local private sector and multi-nationals have in South Africa, we therefore need to take advantage of these Industrial Parks to increase investment and create sustainable employment,” said Magwanishe.

Magwanishe also noted that the there is hope for the South African economy and that signifies hope for the people.

“As we are to embark on phase two of the revitalisation programme, upon its completion we must be able to tell a story that, we have decreased the vacancy rate which currently stands at 40% and the employment rate which currently stands at 7518 has been hugely increased.

In her address the Free State Member of the Executive Council for Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Ms Limakatso Mahasa said, Black Industrialist in the province should take the opportunities presented to them by the government. She challenged them to work with the government towards ensuring that the economy growth in the area is able to create the much needed jobs.

Maluti a Phofung Local Municipality Cllr Gilbert Mokotso acknowledged the efforts and expressed graduate towards the revitalisation of the industrial area as it contributes drastically to the struggling economy of the municipality and looks forward to the infrastructural improvements that will come with the upgrade. The municipality waits in jubilation the commencement of Phase two of the revitalisation as it further indicates more job opportunity for the locals.

The event was a collaboration amongst the Department of Trade and Industry (the dti), Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA), Free State Development Corporation (FDC), as well as the Thabo Mofutsanyane District and Maluti-a-Phofung Local Municipalities.

The revitalisation of the Phuthaditjhaba comprised of the upgrading of the security infrastructure including fencing, street lighting, installation of boom gates, pedestrian gates, installation of CCTV cameras and control room, as well as the refurbishment of high mast lights.

Caption: Free State Member of the Executive Council for Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Ms Limakatso Mahasa , Morena E Moholo Morena Moremoholo Mopeli and Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Bulelani Magwanishe, and MAP Exec Mayor Cllr Gilbert Mokotso

**Issued jointly by the Department of Trade and Industry (the dti) and Free State Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA).**

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