



public enterprises

Department:  
Public Enterprises  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## MEDIA ADVISORY

### DEPUTY MINISTER BAPELA TO HANDOVER NEW CLASSROOMS AND SCHOOL SHOES AT EDWALENI PRIMARY AND TOUR SAFCOL OPERATIONS IN MPUMALANGA

**Pretoria - 03 May 2023.** The Deputy Minister of Public Enterprises, Mr Obed Bapela, will on Thursday 04 May 2023 conduct a site visit to the operations of the South African Forestry Company Limited (SAFCOL) in Mpumalanga, and will hand over classrooms built through the company's Corporate Social Investment (CSI).

Deputy Minister Bapela will be accompanied by SAFCOL Board members and Group CEO, Mr Tsepo Monaheng, who will provide the Deputy Minister with a comprehensive update on the progress of the company's turnaround and its strategic vision for growth.

SAFCOL, as one of the State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in the Department's portfolio, has seen a significant improvement in its financial performance, resulting in the company declaring a R1 million dividend in the 2021/22 financial year.

The company is implementing a growth strategy to maximise revenue and profit growth in the 2023/24 financial year.

Deputy Minister Bapela and his delegation will start the tour by handing over newly built classrooms and school shoes to the Provincial Department of Education and learners of the Edwaleni Primary School. SAFCOL completed the construction of the classrooms in March 2023 after the company received a request from Berlin Joint Community Forum, which is one of the 14 communities in which SAFCOL has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) across the Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces.

Deputy Minister Bapela will then visit the state-of-the art Sabie Research and Development facility (R&D) on the Tweefontein plantation outside Sabie, where research on pest and disease tolerance, genetic improvements and growth, and yield modelling is conducted on plants.

The R&D facility also houses a nursery which produces about 10 million seedlings annually to ensure that the company has seedlings for all its 15 plantations that make up the company's plantation footprint.

The next stop will be the Platorand Training centre in Sabie where learning and development programmes are implemented to equip SAFCOL employees and external stakeholder such as neighbouring communities with forestry industry skills which includes plantation preparation and establishment, tree planting, harvesting and timber processing.

The training of communities living adjacent to SAFCOL operations and land claim beneficiaries contribute to alleviating poverty and unemployment, while fostering good mutual relationships. In addition, the facility ensures that skilled individuals are available to develop the sector and the country further.

**The Handover of Classroom and shoes will be held as follows:**

**VENUE: Edwaleni Primary School**

**Dwaleni Township -10km outside White River**

**DATE: 04 May 2023**

**TIME : 09h00-10H30**

**Tour of SAFCOL facilities:**

**VENUE: Sabie R & D facility and Platorand Training Centre**

**DATE: 04 May 2023**

**TIME : 11H15 -14H00**

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