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Thousands of adults get second chance

By Ilhaam Hoosain
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Some 300 000 Adults who missed out on going to school will start learning how to read, write or count in just under two weeks. The National Education Department's Khari Gude Mass Literacy Campaign, aimed at reducing adult illiteracy, is the biggest project of its kind.

Research shows that 161 000 out of 4,7-million adults, who have never attended school and cannot read, write nor count, are living in the Western Cape.

The department hopes that by 2012 these adults will all have attended adult literacy classes. The classes will be at community centres, schools and churches across the country.

A daily newspaper reports that groups who lobby for adult basic education have welcomed the campaign.

Professor Veronica McKay, an adult basic education expert appointed by Education Minister Naledi Pandor to run the R6,2 billion campaign, said that this is a great investment. Enabling the right to literacy is one of the greatest gifts that any government can give its people, since it opens so many opportunities for enhanced understanding.

McKay said the first 300 000 adults would enrol at 20 000 classes and participate in a six-month learning programme on April 14.

This pilot would be followed by the full-scale rollout of the programme, which would see over one million adults educated each year, up until 2012.

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