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Title: Govt makes progress on Mass Literacy Campaign

By Proffesor Ndawonde

Pretoria - Government has made progress on the pilot "Kha Ri Gude" Mass Literacy Campaign by enrolling 360 000 learners.

"Progress thus far includes the enrolment of 360 000 learners; recruitment and training of 24 000 volunteer educators, 2800 supervisors and 150 coordinators," Government Spokesperson Themba Maseko said on Thursday.

He said government would be spending R6.1 billion on the "Kha Ri Gude" (Let us Learn) mass literacy campaign over five years to enable 4.7 million South Africans achieve literacy by 2012.

The campaign, which forms part of the Adult Basic Education and Training programme, was launched by President Thabo Mbeki during his State of the Nation Address in February this year.

The campaign has been rolled out as a pilot this year and will go to full scale in 2009.

Also speaking to reporters on Thursday, Deputy Minister of Education Enver Surty said his department will work in cooperation with other departments to ensure that the campaign was successful and effective.

He said there were millions of South Africans who were illiterate and government hopes to reduce this number by 2012.

"There were approximately nine million functionally illiterate South Africans and the department seeks to halve the number by 2012 and ensure that by 2020 every citizen is able to read and write."

He said the campaign also provides numeracy and literacy books which have been published in the eleven official languages.

The campaign, the deputy minister said, further ensures that learners are given individual attention which will contribute to effective learning.

"The campaign will ensure that there are not more than 15 learners to one teacher in the adult schools, because they need certain attention to ensure the effectiveness of the campaign," said Mr

Surty.

He said it would take not more than six months for a person to be functional in literacy and numeracy.

The deputy minister cited a 70-year old man, who is currently part of the campaign and was able to read and write within six months. - BuaNews