

Government invests in rural economy

President Jacob Zuma says government will continue to invest in the country's rural areas, in order to stimulate local economic growth and to further the social development of people living outside urban areas.



Jacob Zuma says the government will continue to invest in the rural economy.
Image: GCIS

"It is important to strengthen our rural areas and invest in the land, in agriculture and stock farming to enhance food security.

"It is therefore correct and proper that we reiterate the call for traditional leaders to marshal their communities back to the land to plough and produce food through subsistence farming," said Zuma.

He was addressing the National House of Traditional Leaders during the debate of the address he delivered during the annual opening of the House.

The President said programmes aimed at rural development, such as Masibuyele emasimini and Fetsa Tlala, were well placed to encourage the rural population to get into subsistence farming. "This would contribute a great deal towards food security in the country," he said.

Zuma said government's land reform and redistribution programmes were some of the initiatives taken to assist small-scale farmers become formal commercial farmers.

Cultural integration

Switching focus to other matters of concern to the House, the President said the process of integrating the Khoi and San

leadership into the mainstream cultural leadership was on course.

He said the Traditional Affairs Bill would be among the laws to be considered by the new Parliament after the May general election.

"I urge you to use this opportunity for public consultations on this bill," he said.

"Programmes must be developed to integrate commemorations and celebrations of the Khoi and San battles, and their victories, into the general cultural events of the Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) Department, particularly led by the Department of Traditional Affairs," he said.

President Zuma said the reopening of the land claims law was passed by Parliament on 24 February.

"We intend to interact with you directly as we together have to accelerate the pre-1913 land claims, an opportunity created by the ANC government for the descendants of the Khoi and San to lodge their claims.

"The reopening of the land claims will also recognise the heritage and national landmarks that must be protected, [as they are] areas of huge interest to traditional leadership, as they have sacred meanings," he said.

The President announced that Cogta and the Health Minister will meet soon to consider possible interventions to curb further deaths at initiation schools.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>