NATIONAL BOOK WEEK IS #GOINGPLACES

South Africa’s longest running and most successful national reading campaign National Book Week will be celebrated across the country from the 7th – 13th September 2015

At Emoyeni Conference Centre in Parktown, Deputy Minister of Arts and Culture Rejoice Mabudafhasi launched National Book Week and the NBW Tour Bus ahead of its one week tour.

Mabudafhasi emphasised, “The importance of reading in order to achieve success in life is foundational for the individual and essential for nation building and social cohesion. The Department of Arts and Culture’s Mzansi Golden Economy (MGE) strategy recognises the power of the sector to contribute to job creation, poverty reduction, skills development and above all, economic growth.”

With the striking reality that only 14% of South Africans read books and half the country doesn’t own a single leisure book in their home. The campaign #BUYABOOK was born to curb that. Speaking with glee, South African Book Development Council CEO Elitha Van Der Sandt said, “We are very excited about this one. We have partnered with Exclusive Books and Bargain Books so that from 7th-20th September, selected books will be sold for R20. Please buy a book, not for yourself but for someone who doesn’t own one.”

#GOINGPLACES is another campaign that would be a physical catalyst for National Book Week by travelling throughout the country, not just bringing the books to you but also bringing all of the world to those who read.

Director General of Basic Education Mathanzima Mweli added to the change of the countries reading pattern saying, “We need civil society to support what schools are doing. We have to go beyond to get the nation reading. That’s why every year, the department delivers 1000 libraries to schools because it realises that the future does not belong to us; it is borrowed from our children.”

Now in its sixth year, the country’s most successful annual national reading campaign has mobilised some of the best storytellers, musicians, and ambassadors such as Lupi Ngcayisa, Stoan Seate, Refiloe Mpakanyane, Jena Dover, Pearl Thusi and Aaron Moloisi to name a few to get Mzansi travelling again through books. Along with the mascot, Funda Bala, the ambassadors will bring the world to those who dare pick up a book.

The National Book Week Bus Tour will make stops in four of South Africas provinces which are Gauteng, Limpopo, KwaZulu Natal and the Eastern Cape. In trying to get the country travelling through pages of books, this campaign has been celebrated in seven provinces. This is all in hope of amplifying its message in imagining a better life and a better South Africa and building it through books.

At the cutting of the ribbon as the NBW Tour Bus and Mascot were unveiled, Deputy Minister Mabudafhasi said, “This ribbon symbolises the release of love and knowledge of books all over.”

Accompanied by the NBW mascot, Funda Bala, they will visit venues in Gauteng, Limpopo, KwaZulu Natal and the Eastern Cape, trumpeting the magic and life-changing power of books. Satellite programmes will also take place in the Free State and Western Cape.

#GOING PLACES is the apt theme of the NBW Bus Tour, and speaks to both the movement of the National Book Week Tour Bus as it goes from town to town, and the ‘travelling’ to faraway places through the allure of books.

Fun was had with a Wordathon by Johan Schronen from Access Education, toy libraries provided by Cotlands, poetry sessions facilitated by singer Nancy G and Hitman CEO. Mobi site workshops organised by FunDza, book debates had and many more activities kept the children enthralled..

Other various service providers that added to the fun was the likes of Kwesukela while Nal’ibali ran storytelling events and competitions, and Project Literacy facilitated family literacy projects.

Why National Book Week?

The South African Book Development Council (SABDC) in partnership with the Department Of Arts and Culture initiated National Book Week in 2010. It aims to mitigate the findings the 2007 study that revealed that only 14% of South Africans read books and over half of South African households (51%) do not have a single leisure reading book.

This disturbing insight is a barrier to the country’s development efforts as reading and literacy are at the heart of personal growth, community development and a thriving nation. Having as few as 20 books in the home is proven to have a significant impact in propelling a child to higher levels of education.

Furthermore, children who read are able to easily transcend hurdles often imposed by the low educational levels of their parents, their community’s economics or the political systems of their country.

The Honorable Minister of Art and Culture, Mr. Nathi Mthethwa explains his support for National Book Week. “The importance of reading in order to achieve success in life is foundational for the individual and essential for nation building and social cohesion. The Department of Arts and Culture’s Mzansi Golden Economy (MGE) strategy recognises the power of the book sector to contribute to job creation, poverty reduction, skills development and, above all, economic growth. Thus as such, the National Book Week is a strategic intervention to promote a reading culture that will enhance the prominence and socio-economic impact of the South African books sector both locally and globally.”

All events will promote a key message to encourage reading as a fun activity with each province or location tailoring the programme to meet local demands with a strong focus on promoting indigenous languages, local authors as well as library awareness and access.

#BUYABOOK for R20

To unlock this power of reading, NBW 2015 has launched the #BUYABOOK Campaign, a call-to-action to individuals to help put books in the homes and hands of those who cannot afford them.

First in line to heed this call has been publishers Pan Macmillan SA, Penguin Random House SA, and NB Publishers who have offered a selection of discounted books that will be sold in Bargain Books and Exclusive Books stores nationwide.

The public is encouraged to purchase the books for R20 and donate them into the NBW book bins in the stores. These books will then be donated to selected communities. Another options is for people to donate books to those they know don’t own one.

Adds Van der Sandt, “Owning a book is like owning a treasure. The #BUYABOOK Campaign opens up new opportunities. An opportunity to give. An opportunity to grow. An opportunity to read. An opportunity to discover a different world. An opportunity for more people to write. An opportunity for more books to be sold. An opportunity for more diverse books to be produced. The opportunities are endless. This National Book Week, join us as we take books to people. Participate in #GOINGPLACES and #BUYABOOK.”

What can YOU do during National Book Week?

* Participate in the programme in your province
* Visit your local Bargain Books or Exclusive Books stores and participate in the #BUYABOOK campaign. Donate books to organisations working with women, children, youth, and the disabled.
* Corporates are encouraged to #BUYABOOK or two
* Create your own activities and let the NBW team know about it.
* Promote NBW on your social media platforms.
* Communities, churches, social groups, schools and libraries and anyone with an interest in promoting reading, are encouraged to participate in the campaign to bring awareness of the joy and value of reading books.

McDonald’s SA have also hopped on the campaign to help spread the word. The fast food chain has launch Reading Corners in select restaurants across the East Rand, and the vivacious Metro FM host Refiloe Mpakanyane will be the “lovable aunt” reciting stories to the kids.

Watch out for when the NBW Tour Bus rolls by to marshal young minds from local schools Ephes Mamkeli Secondary School (Wattville), Twatwa High School (Benoni), Alafang Secondary School (Katlehong) and Benoni High School. Children from the Themba Tikvah crèche in Wattville will be able to join in the fun and education of this special time when the McDonald’s Reading Corners campaign is launched on Friday, 4 September.

NATIONAL BOOK WEEK PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

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| DATE | PROVINCE | VENUE | HOSTED BY | ACTIVITY |
| Mon 7 Sept | Gauteng | Ratanda, Heidelberg | Gauteng Provincial Government  | Bus Stop  |
| Tue 8 Sept | Gauteng | Department of Correctional Services | Department of Correctional Services | Bus Stop  |
| Free State | Jacobsdal Public Library | Free State Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation. | Satellite programme  |
| Western Cape | Thembalethu Mall | Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs & Sport | Satellite programme |
| Wed 9 Sept | Limpopo | Molepo Comm. Library / Schools, Capricorn, Molepo | City of Polokwane | Bus Stop |
| Eastern Cape | Steve Biko Centre | Eastern Cape Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture  | Satellite programme |
| Western Cape | Thembalethu Mall | Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs & Sport | Satellite programme |
| Thu 10 Sept | KwaZulu Natal | Indoor Sports Complex, Emnambithi Ladysmith Mun, Ladysmith | KwaZulu-Natal Department of Arts & Culture | Bus Stop |
| Eastern Cape | Steve Biko Centre | Eastern Cape Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture  | Satellite programme |
| Western Cape | George Civic Centre | Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs & Sport | Satellite programme |
| Fri 11 Sept | Eastern Cape | Steve Biko Centre, Ginsberg (KWT) | Eastern Cape Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture  | Bus Stop |

END

NOTES TO EDITOR:

To find out more about NBW programmes around the Country, visit our Facebook for regular updates.

* [www.facebook.com/NationalBookWeekSA](http://www.facebook.com/NationalBookWeekSA)
* Twitter: @NBW\_SA
* Instagram: @nationalbookweeksa
* #GOINGPLACES / #BUYABOOK

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