

 <p><b>defence</b> Department: Defence REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA</p>	<h1>MEDIA RELEASE</h1>	<p>Department of Defence (Defence Corporate Communication) Private Bag X161 Pretoria 0001</p>
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**Subject: ARMED FORCES DAY 2016, 21 FEBRUARY 2016 – NELSON MANDELA BAY MUNICIPALITY: PORT ELIZABETH, EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

In 2012, the President of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) and Commander-in-Chief of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) proclaimed that 21 February will be observed and commemorated as Armed Forces Day. It is to be a day on which the South African population honours men and women of the South African National Defence Force by affirming its support and gratitude to them for upholding the Constitution of the Republic and defending the territorial integrity of the Republic and protecting its people.

It is for this reason that the Armed Forces Day coincides with the commemoration of the sinking of the SS Mendi on 21 February 1917.

Since the proclamation, the Armed Forces Day has been celebrated in three provinces, namely Gauteng, the Free State and the North West Province. This year, the Armed Forces Day will be held in Port Elizabeth, in the Eastern Cape Province and will be preceded by various activities with the aim of educating and creating awareness to the public about the South African National Defence Force, its role, function and capabilities.

President of the Republic, President Jacob Zuma in his capacity as the Commander-in-Chief of the SANDF will officiate in this 5<sup>th</sup> segment of Armed Forces Day. The proceedings will commence at 10:00. As the main functionary, he will take the salute from the South African National Defence Force during the military parade.

The Armed Forces Day was implemented to achieve several objectives which are as follows:

- To unite all South Africans behind our military.
- To allow the SANDF to interact with communities.
- To expand public understanding of the military's role and its purpose to society.
- To showcase the latest military equipment and technologies used to protect the public.
- To demonstrate the military combat readiness against threats and as well as to support government during peace time.

The Armed Forces Day will be preceded by various activities during the week of the 13 -20 February 2016.

These activities will include the following:

- **SPORTING EVENTS : 16 - 19 February 2016**
  - At Gelvan Park Sports Complex, the SANDF will conduct a number of sporting activities with the aim of encouraging healthy living and fitness amongst young people and importantly, the participation and interactions within different communities.
  
- **NAVY SHIPS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC 13 – 16 February 2016**
  - There will be an open day for the public to view SA Navy ships and submarines. The public will be afforded an opportunity to view warships and submarines.
  
- **COMMUNITY CLEAN UP PROJECTS (Project Sisonke) 15 February 2016**
  - About 300 members of the SANDF will carry out a clean-up operation in Bethelsdorp, Langa and Uitenhage. This will take place from 09:00 – 12:00. The aim of the clean – up is to promote environmental care in the community.
  
- **FREE COMMUNITY MUSICAL CONCERTS 15 February 2016**
  - Local communities will be entertained by five military bands that will be performing for free at various community halls. There will also be a free musical gala concert at Feather Market Hall on 18 February 2016.
  
- **HANDING OVER OF LEGACY PROJECT 20 February 2016**
  - As part of the Armed Forces Day legacy, Ministers of Defence and Military Veterans and Social Development will hand over three old age homes that have been repaired and refurbished by the SANDF.
  
- **MILITARY STATIC DISPLAY AND ARENA EVENTS 17 - 21 February 2016**
  - Over three thousand (3000) learners from local schools will be hosted daily by the SANDF to career and military display events at King’s Beach.
  
- **NIGHT SHOOTING DEMONSTRATION 18 February 2016**
  - SANDF elements namely the SA Army, SA Air Force and the SA Navy will demonstrate capabilities such as night shooting, amongst others. This will start at 18:00 at Kings Beach, Port Elizabeth.

- **THE MAIN EVENT OF THE WEEK: ARMED FORCES DAY AND WREATH LAYING CEREMONY 21 February 2016**

- The main event is the Armed Forces Day on 21 February 2016. The President will lay a wreath at SS Mendi Memorial in New Brighton at 08:00. He will proceed to a military parade wherein he will confer medals to deserving SANDF members and customarily take a salute. Approximately, one thousand (1000) SANDF members and over hundred vehicles and aircraft will participate in the march and fly-past. This will be followed by a capability demonstration by all four services which include live demonstration of anti-piracy operations by the SA Navy, beach landing by the SA Army, the release of hostages by SA Special Forces and the extraction of injured personnel by the SA Air Force and the SA Military Health Service.

- For any further information: [www.mil.dod.za](http://www.mil.dod.za).

**ENDS.**

**Issued by:**

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