

TOWERING OVER MZANSI



Huge Mandela statue unveiled day after his funeral

By PHETOLO MOTLOUTSI

A MASSIVE statue of Nelson Mandela now stands with outstretched arms to welcome everyone to the Union Buildings in Pretoria.

It was at the Union Buildings that Madiba lay in state for three days last week and it was here that he was inaugurated as South Africa's first black president in 1994.

The statue was unveiled yesterday by President Jacob Zuma, who said: "There should now be no more tears. We must celebrate Madiba and take forward his legacy."

"He should live in our hearts and inspire us to do something good every single day so that we can honour his

memory. In that way the pain of his death will be eased as time passes. In his humility Madiba left it to the South African people to celebrate his life and legacy.

"When he was asked how he wished to be remembered, he said: 'It would be very egotistical of me to say how I would like to be remembered.'

"I'd leave that entirely to South Africans. I would just like a simple stone on which is written 'Mandela'."

His grandson Mandla was among family members who attended the unveiling.

Other dignitaries included Zuma's wife Thobeka, former president Thabo Mbeki, deputy president Kgalema Motlanthe, Arts and Culture Minister

Paul Mashatile, Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi and television talk-show host, Dali Tambo.

Also present were IFP president Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Gauteng Premier Nomvula Mokonyane, North West Premier Thandi Modise and Tshwane Mayor Kgosiemo Ramokgopa.

Hundreds of people attended the unveiling. The 9m statue is expected to draw large numbers of people to the Union Buildings, which was 100 years old last month and will soon be declared a grade one national heritage site.

The bronze statue was made by sculptors Andre Prinsloo and Ruhan Janse van Vuuren and cost R8million.



President Jacob Zuma and Madiba's grandson Mandla Mandela at the unveiling of the 9m statue of former president Nelson Mandela at the Union Buildings in Tshwane, yesterday.

Photo by Phetolo Motloutsi

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