

New regional TV stations set to be launched

Two new state-owned regional television stations are going to be launched soon to help fulfill the government's mandate to ensure that all of the country's 11 official languages are represented in the broadcasting media.

According to Communications Minister Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, the government has made a decision to close Bop Broadcasting and use the assets to launch a new regional service broadcasting Tswana, Sotho, Pedi, Tsonga and Venda.

A second channel will also be launched that will broadcast in Afrikaans, Ndebele, Tswana, Swati, Xhosa and Zulu.

A date for the launch has not been set, but the minister says that the planning is now at an advanced stage. The first new channel could be on the air as early as next year.

Vincent Maphai, the SABC's board chairman, will be presented the corporation's draft editorial policy to the parliamentary portfolio committee on communications this week. A national summit on broadcasting is also in the pipeline for discussion of content development and issues of language delivery in broadcasting.

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