Blade: Varsities must change

NEO GOBA

HIGHER Education Minister Blade Nzimande said the need to speed up transformation at universities had to be addressed, after he met all the country’s vice-chancellors in Johannesburg yesterday.

Nzimande said that little progress had been made in transforming universities because of “very weak” institutional forums taking their recommendations to university councils, which had final say.

Nzimande said if the Higher Education Amendment Bill was passed, councils would have to provide tangible reasons why they did not accept a forum’s recommendations.

Nzimande said it had been agreed that a conference on higher education must be held in conjunction with the transformation oversight committee.

Nzimande urged all South Africans to recognise universities as critical assets.

“The recent disruptions and violence at some universities clearly show that there are fringe elements seeking to destabilise our institutions as part of a perverse agenda that is hijacking and undermining legitimate student concerns.”

Nzimande bemoaned the constant “changing of goalposts” amid the protests.

The minister said he would meet SRCs across the country but each must first provide a written submission of the issues they wished to discuss.

Burning of art upsets Sachs

FORMER Constitutional Court judge Albie Sachs said students who burned paintings “trampled on” his ancestors.

At Stellenbosch University yesterday he said he was “distressed” a portrait of Molly Blackburn of the Black Sash was destroyed. — Aron Hyman