



# Diambars Football Academy to launch in SA

“Diambars” is a Senegalese word for fighters, which was allocated to a football academy concept designed to address the plight African football stars who chase fame and fortune in the world of football at the expense of education.

The first academy was built in Senegal with the help of some French professional footballers and legends. The Diambars philosophy emphasises education through football and the students are expected to achieve high standards in education.

After a successful rollout of the first Diambars Football Academy in Senegal, Diambars decided that South Africa would be an ideal site for the second project. They then approached Gauteng Provincial Government (GPG), which responded positively. It was then decided that this academy would be one of the legacy projects of the Soccerex which is taking place in South Africa during the 3-years to 2009. GPG then approached the City of Ekurhuleni (CoE) to partner in the project through the donation of land on which to establish the Diambars Football Academy. The three parties, GPG, CoE and Diambars signed a MOU to give effect to the partnership on this project.

The South African Diambars project will formally open in January 2010 with two first intakes of Grade 8 and 9 learners. Construction will commence in February 2009.

“World football is coming to South Africa in 2010 says French star Patrick Vieira, 31. I am hoping to add to my 100-plus international caps at Africa's first World Cup. I am also hoping to see another of my dreams come to fruition by 2010: the building of a Diambars Football Academy in South Africa.”

“Schooling is inherent to the training academy's concept. Our aim is to use football as a driving force for education. We know that only 20% of our Diambars students will go on to become professional football players. We want to guarantee that those who don't can still become champions in life”, explains Bernard Lama, former French footballer.

“As the 'home of competitive sport', our province will benefit immensely through the establishment of this academy. We are grateful to have role models like Bernard Lama and Patrick Vieira backing this project. It can only motivate our young aspiring footballers to achieve great things,” says Barbara Creecy, MEC for Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation.

“Our city is excited about being the seat for the second Diambars project in Africa. This project will benefit our plans to establish our own sports academy. We hope to tap on the expertise of Diambars,” says Councillor Ntombi Mekgwe, executive mayor of City of Ekurhuleni.

For more about Diambars go to [www.diambars.org](http://www.diambars.org).

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