

Indaba will be ideal way for networking by firms

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Following the recent successes of the manufacturing indabas in Johannesburg and KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape indaba is gearing itself up for its turn in Port Elizabeth on October 3 and 4.

The event provides a networking platform for EC's manufacturers to discuss challenges and opportunities in 2020, and over the longer term. An exhibition, which is part of the event, allows manufacturers, and those companies wanting to sell to them, to showcase their wares.

The two-day agenda has several interactive sessions, during which EC business owners can quiz industry experts, investors, policymakers and government representatives on the direction the province is taking regarding more progressive and globally competitive manufacturing policies and goals.

The agenda includes proposals on leveraging the advantages of having three active ports – Port Elizabeth, East London and Ngqura. Each is a driver of economic development, and an investment attraction for new companies to come into the area, confident that distribution is a box already ticked.

As in previous years, the au-



LEADING THE WAY: As in previous years, Mercedes-Benz SA will anchor the Eastern Cape manufacturing indaba. Picture: TED KEENAN

tomotive sector will anchor the show. The province has four of the seven original equipment manufacturers, three in PE (General Motors, Volkswagen and Ford Motors) and Mercedes-Benz South Africa in East London.

The sector accounts for 6.8% of GDP, manufactures half of SA's passenger vehicles and sends out 51% of exports. Along with around 100 major component manufacturers, the sector is the largest single employer in the province.

Key industry leaders will speak on the challenges relating to the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR), especially regarding employment security, and how to proactively stay ahead of the technology curve.

Manufacturing experts will

discuss how adopting innovation can positively impact on job creation. through establishing new career alternatives and economic diversification opportunities.

The conference will host informative dialogues revealing how government and private sector plan to collaborate to review policies concerning the core training of employees.

This can be achieved by both up-skilling and re-skilling workforces that have fallen prey to 4IR.

Another focus is increasing black and female industrialist participation to ensure an equal, competitive and successful industrial climate.

The manufacturing indaba moves to Cape Town on November 20.