



DID YOU KNOW ?

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is your right to:

- ⬆ Receive health education, good quality healthcare and counselling.
- ⬆ Adequate supervision by an adult or care-giver you trust.
- ⬆ An approved traditional surgeon/ healthcare practitioner to perform the circumcision.
- ⬆ Clean hygienic equipment must be used.
- ⬆ Demand the registration certificate of a prospective initiation school and traditional surgeon.

TRADITIONAL MALE INITIATION

It is your responsibility to:

- ⬆ Communicate any problems you may have to your parents, caregiver, healthcare worker, social workers, friends, etc.
- ⬆ Report any illegal or unregistered initiation school to your nearest police station.
- ⬆ Drink water.
- ⬆ Use medication for your ailments.

Ministerial Visit TO PRIORITY DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES

Deputy Minister for the National Department of Cogta
Dr Namane Masemola

Deputy Minister Traditional Affairs
Prince Burns Ncamashe

MEC for EC Cogta
Zolile Williams



EDITORIAL COMMENT



Editor: Ms Thando Sonjica

The 1st of September 2024 marked the beginning of the Heritage Month to be celebrated on 24 September 2024 to honour our nation's diverse culture and rich heritage. The month was convened under the theme: "Celebrating the lives of our heroes and heroines who laid down their lives for our freedom."

The theme paid tribute to the many struggle stalwarts who gave up their lives for our freedom. Over the month, our government remembered those freedom fighters who were forced into exile by the apartheid state and died in foreign nations. These brave men and women are an integral part of our heritage. The campaign tag line for this year's Heritage Month was: Our History, Our Story, Our Heritage!

As part of commemorating the Heritage Day 2024, the EC House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders (ECHOTKL) celebrated the life of King Hintsa by hosting a Memorial Lecture at King Hintsa TVET College in Dutywa, Mbashe Local Municipality. Speaking at the event the Chairperson of the ECHOTKL Nkosi Mpumalanga Gwadiso said the Month is the time to reflect and embrace the life and times of heroic figures. "The selfless contribution by heroes like King Hintsa made it possible for our country to enjoy 30 Years of Freedom and Democracy. King Hintsa led from the front and stood for what he believed in, hence we remember and commemorate him as one of our great leaders." said Nkosi Gwadiso. Read more about this story on page 6

Our department also celebrated this day by holding an inhouse event at the Tyamazshe Building in Bhisho showcasing traditional wear, dance, music competitions and traditional food.

Plus, of significance in this quarter was the commemoration of the Mandela Day on July 18. The Day holds special significance because, on this day in 1994, the late President Mandela presided over the first Government of National Unity (GNU). Coincidentally, President Cyril Ramaphosa delivered the first Address on the Opening of Parliament of the 7th Administration under the GNU on the same day. The principle of building a caring and better world was always central to who Mandela was. That is why the Eastern Cape Government led by MEC Zolile Williams dedicated 67 minutes to do good deeds by painting the Ludeke Methodist Church, feeding the elderly and handing over toys to children in Ludeke village in the Winnie Madikizela Mandela Local Municipality.

As part of celebrating the Day the ECHOTKL in collaboration with Nyandeni Local Municipality hosted a career exhibition at Sandi Senior Secondary School (SSS) in Ngqeleni Village. The school achieved 95.4% in the 2023 Matric results. This bodes well for this Province and a heartwarming story can be found on page 8

Read more about the other programmes that the department was engaged in during this quarter and enjoy the read.

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This is a quarterly newsletter published by the Directorate: Corporate Communications of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

Voters Have

“MATURED AND LOOK FOR TANGIBLES” WARNS MEC WILLIAMS

By Thando Sonjica

MEC Zolile Williams unveiled the key priorities of the Government of National Unity (GNU) at a three-day departmental Strategic Planning session in Port Alfred recently.

“The GNU adopted three strategic priorities to drive inclusive growth and job creation, reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living and build a capable, ethical and development state. We have resolved to advance these three strategic priorities in this term,” said MEC Williams.

In attendance were Cogta senior officials, key stakeholders like the Office of the Premier (OTP), Provincial Treasury (PT), Auditor General (AG), Eastern Cape Socio Economic Consultative Council (ECSECC), District and Metro municipalities.

MEC Williams said voters have “matured and looked at tangible outcomes” from government. He added that whilst the Province garnered 62% votes, there were backlogs to be improved. “In this regard, local government becomes the focal area because some communities did not vote especially in rural communities. Whilst we have performed better in other areas, the delivery of basic services remains a serious challenge,” said MEC Williams. MEC Williams added that other priorities were to improve audit outcomes, implement Risk Adjusted Strategy (RAS) and prevent poor expenditure in municipalities.

“We need to work with municipalities to deliver services and have credible billing systems including the Buffalo City Metro Municipality. Let us be closer to our communities to resolve their problems and not be distant to the realities of people. The need to instil good work ethics remains great so that our officials understand the challenges faced by of our people,” he said.

He called on the session to also discuss the challenges of lack of refuse collection and infrastructure maintenance which remain problem areas in the Province.

With regards to the non-negotiables, he said, these were meant to expedite service delivery in municipalities through the implementation of a performance managed system and strong monitoring and evaluation process.

“We must go out and train senior municipal officials on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to realise the non-negotiables. Let us be deliberate in building systems beyond the life span of individuals to build a capable state. We must not act like policemen to municipalities rather assist them to function better and build trust with them,” he said.

He added that priority municipalities must be supported to prevent them from falling into the distressed zone through a dashboard which will easily indicate municipal performance immediately,” said MEC Williams.

With respect to disasters, he called for the development of disaster plans that include solutions like temporary bridges, mobile electricity engines, disaster trucks, snow removing trucks, and emergency vehicles working with the South African National Defence for submission to the Cabinet,” said MEC Williams.

On Traditional Affairs, he said the Reconstitution of Traditional Councils must be navigated with care due to the challenges of disunity amongst traditional leaders. “As Cogta we must define clearly our roles,” said MEC Williams.

In addition, he said the department must resolve claims and disputes of traditional leaders including those who have been recognised but have not been remunerated. Also, he said a new approach should be found on how to include headmen and women in Ward Committees for the development of their communities. “The institution of traditional leaders cannot be undermined because it has long been in existence. Headmen celebrate this initiative,” said MEC Williams.



MEC Williams



Acting HOD Mr Vuyo Mlokothi



Mr Lixolile Petela from Alfred Nzo Municipality



Mr Graham Terblanche from Sarah Baartman District Municipality



Mr Mahlubandile Qwase, Deputy Director General, Office of the Premier

DID YOU **KNOW ?**

National Fraud Hotline
0800 701 701

Provincial House SIGNS MOU WITH WIPHOLD

By Dumisani Lindi

The 24 July 2024 marked a monumental day for the EC House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders (HOTKL) as the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Women Investment Portfolio Holding (WIPHOLD). This epic event took place at the HOTKL building in Bhisho. WIPHOLD is an investment holding company that believes in creating value to empower women and transform society under the guidance of its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Ms Gloria Serobe, the brains behind the partnership with the House.

"The House is a perfect choice to partner with to invest in the development of rural areas and support women in farming and fight Gender Based Violence. I always had a soft spot for Traditional Leadership Institutions because in them, I see leaders who can talk to their communities directly. So dealing with them is like going directly to the targeted audience," said Ms Serobe.

In response, the Chairperson of the House Nkosi Mpumalanga Gwadiso thanked Ms Serobe for trusting the House through the partnership.

"It is great to have a partner like WIPHOLD which is about women development in rural areas by empowering them to eradicate poverty. The partnership will benefit our communities in agricultural development not forgetting the fight on violence against women and children. We need to understand where we come from as Inkosi (when we used) to lead development in our communities. I am excited," added Nkosi Gwadiso.



Seated L-R: Ms Serobe, Nkosi Gwadiso
Standing L-R: Mr Vuyo Stofile, Nkosi Buyanda Matanzima, Ms Pamela Ndudane, Mr Thandabantu Gwebindlala, Ms Roane Tower, Ms Busisiwe Magobiane

Legal Advisors Forum IS WHERE MUNICIPAL LEGAL MINDS MEET

By Vuyani Sibene

Early July 2024, in Mthatha, in the OR Tambo District Municipality Council Chambers was where the process to establish and institutionalise Eastern Cape Municipal Legal Advisors Forum (ECMLAF) got underway. The strategic intent of the Forum on the day, was to reflect on progress and create an understanding of the local government sector legal scenery and attend to the legal challenges to be addressed.

The Forum also sought to identify critical legal challenges faced by local government and the opportunities presented.

Mr Siphiso Maqungu Director Legal Advisory Services (LAS) in Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) said the forum remains the most important vehicle for information sharing by legal professionals in the Province.

"The benefits of the Forum shares case law developed by courts to improve compliance by municipalities, regulatory alerts to enable municipalities to implement the latest legislation as well share strategies to mitigate incidents of litigation," said Mr Maqungu.

Opening the session, Mr Bongani Matomela Director for Strategic Planning and Governance said the District encouraged the meeting to inculcate a culture of professionalism.

"Accordingly, the LAS should advise us to provide an integrated approach to deal with legal matters across all municipalities as some of the legal cases will, undoubtedly, create unparalleled precedents for municipalities going forward. We call upon the Forum to pro-actively and reactively provide legal advice to all municipalities. All issues raised in the Forum must be lifted to the Municipal Managers Forum," said Mr Matomela.

In closing, Mr Maqungu said key things which must be agreed upon was the management of litigation support by districts to local municipalities.

"Districts must ensure submission of consolidated litigation reports to CoGTA to enable us to provide support to mitigate incidents of litigation," said Mr Maqungu.

In addition, he said the forum confronts some of the legal challenges Legal Advisors are faced with in their respective municipalities and some members are not attending.



Legal advisors from various Municipalities including EC Cogta



Mr Matomela

Cogta Launches PUBLIC PARTICIPATION FORUM

By Mr Vuyani Sibene

The department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) has a Constitutional mandate to support municipalities to respond to the needs of communities and encourage them to participate in the affairs of local government.

It is against this background, that Cogta MEC Zolile Williams on 19 September 2024 launched the Municipal Public Participation and Rapid Response Advisory Forum (MPP&RRAF) at the Coega Village in Gqeberha. The launch was attended by all Troikas from the 39 municipalities of the Province, representatives from the Eastern Cape Legislature, government officials and members of the House of Traditional Leaders and Khoisan Leaders.

In his address, MEC Williams said public participation is the “cornerstone of good governance” as enshrined in the Constitution. For that reason, municipalities are obliged to involve communities and community organisations in all matters of local government.

“The Forum is not merely a formality but a genuine process of engaging the public, responding to their needs and shape policies that affect their lives. Today, we lay a foundation to deepen democratic practices to amplify the voices of our communities and hold our government accountable to the people it serves,” said MEC Williams.

MEC Williams quoted the wise words of the late former South African State President Nelson Mandela that “we are not yet free, we have merely achieved the freedom to be free, the right not to be oppressed. We have not taken the final step of our journey, but the first step on a longer and even more difficult road.”

He said the work of deepening democracy and improving public participation is an extension of that unfinished fight for freedom and justice.

Giving the message of support, the Deputy Chairperson of the House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders Nkosi Gwazinambha Matanzima said the effective intergovernmental relations can lead to better policymaking and implementation, improved coordination between different levels of government, and more efficient use of resources.

“The involvement of traditional leaders is key for government to function effectively and meet the needs of its citizens. We now have the Government of National Unity (GNU) because of a noncaring government and municipalities that do not deliver services to the people. Let us not forget that this freedom was fought by the blood and sweat of our forefathers let us not play with it,” said Nkosi Matanzima.

Also giving the message of support, the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Public Participation in EC Provincial Legislature, MPL Mlibo Qoboshiyane said the launch was an essential intervention to “build democracy and promote dialogue between the governed and the governors.”

He said it is through informed engagement, where different views are canvassed, to build democracy envisaged in the Constitution. Qoboshiyane added effective intergovernmental relations can lead to better policymaking and implementation, improved coordination between different levels of government, and more efficient use of resources.

“While intergovernmental relations can be challenging, particularly in complex political environments, policymakers must work to build effective relationships between different levels of government so that government functions effectively to meet the needs of its citizens,” said MPL Qoboshiyane. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the MEC for Cogta and all the Mayors committing themselves to making the structure work.

L-R MEC Williams, Eastern Cape Members of Parliament Mlibo Qoboshiyane, Mandlakazi Keleko and Tiphany Harmse



L-R: Mayor of Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality Councillor Gerie van Niekerk, MEC Williams and Mr Vuyo Mlokothe

Memorial Lecture Hosted TO COMMEMORATE KING HINTSA

By Dumisani Lindi

As part of commemorating the Heritage Day 2024, the EC House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders (HOTKL) celebrated the life of King Hintsa by hosting a Memorial Lecture at King Hintsa TVET College in Dutywa, Mbashe Local Municipality. Amongst the attendees was the King of AmaXhosa, King Vulikhaya Sigcawu, Deputy Minister for COGTA Prince Zolile Burns-Ncamashe, Deputy Chairperson of the National House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders Nkosi Langa Mavuso, Professor Somadoda Fikeni, representatives from Wiphold, Right to Care and Members of the Provincial House.

The Memorial Lecture was the brainchild of the House and the Xhosa Kingdom. In his opening remarks the Chairperson of the House Nkosi Mpumalanga Gwadiso said the Heritage Month represents the time to reflect and embrace the life and times of heroic figures. "The selfless contribution by heroes like King Hintsa made it possible for our country to enjoy 30 Years of freedom and democracy. He led from the front and stood for what he believed in, hence we remember and commemorate this great leader" said Nkosi Gwadiso.

Delivering his keynote address, Professor Fikeni the late King stood firm to defend his people. "King Hintsa was one of the brilliant minds in warfare, and the likes of Nkosi Maqoma were legendary for defending the land of their forefathers. King Hintsa was 45 years old when he died which showed maturity and his thinking was ahead of his time. When he was caught, he was disrespected, killed and his body mutilated and discarded all over this world," said Prof Fikeni.

Professor Fikeni thanked the attendees and the opportunity he was given to talk about one of the great Xhosa King to have ever lived.



Professor Fikeni

R400 000 Budget FOR TOOLS OF TRADE FOR HEADMEN AND WOMEN

By Vuyani Sibene

MEC Zolile Williams wrapped up his Province wide engagements with the Headmen and women recently with the last leg being at Bensonvale College in the Joe Gqabi District Municipality. During the session, the MEC handed over cell phones to traditional leaders of Sterkspruit and Maluti regions. He has already been to Amathole, OR Tambo District Municipalities on the same mission. The province has more than 1,089 headmen and women and about 220 senior traditional leaders.

The sessions according to Ms Nodumo Vuba, Chief Director for Traditional Leadership Institutional Support and Capacity Building Services was to discuss key issues on laws affecting traditional leaders which is informed by the Traditional Leadership and Government Act No 1 of 2017 and Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Act No.3 of 2019 (TKLA).

The Acting Head of Department (HoD), Mr Vuyo Mlokothe said the provision of the handsets together with data and airtime will cost about four hundred thousand rands (R400 000).

"This looked impossible given the meagre budget, until we ran and implemented the MEC's directive. This tells us that when leadership partakes (in decision making) nothing is impossible," said Mr Mlokothe.

MEC Williams said the engagements discussed issues pertaining to rural development and acknowledged the roles played by headman and women in this regard.

"Through these engagements, we are trying to close the gap on working relations between us and Headmen and women. Some policies needed to be revisited, as they do not make sense with regards to ubuntu which is our culture. In my view this sphere of government has been neglected although it is at the coal face of service delivery," said MEC Williams.

He had noted issues affecting this stratum of leadership such as medical aid benefits, installation of the Kings, reconstitution of Traditional Councils, gratuities and stipend for travelling as well as capacity building.



L-R: MEC Williams, Nkosi Toise, Councillor Xabela
from Mnquma Local Municipality

COGTA Deputy Ministers VISITED EC PRIORITY MUNICIPALITIES

By Thando Sonjica and Vuyani Sibene

The Deputy Ministers (DM) of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Dr Namane Dickson Masemola and Prince Zolile Burns-Ncamashe, successfully concluded two-day visits to Chris Hani and Amathole District Municipalities. The identified priority districts of the Province were visited to assess and support local governance structure and interaction with local municipalities to strengthen local government and enhancing service delivery across the country.

The visits began from 09-10 September with engagements in Chris Hani and later Amathole, accompanied by the MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA), Mr Zolile Williams and delegations of district and local mayors, municipal speakers, Councillors, representatives from South African Local Government Association (Salga) and Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency (MISA).

Throughout the two days, the Executive Mayors presented updates on the state of local governance, focusing on key areas such as political leadership, governance structures, functionality of Municipal Public Accounts Committees (MPACs), financial management, local economic development initiatives, revenue generation, procurement practices, and the effective utilization of grants. Institutional capacity challenges and successes were also highlighted, with the DM reaffirming COGTA's commitment to provide support where needed.

Speaking in Komani during the first leg of the visit in the District, the DM Masemola said the visit was to look at the negative AGs report on the performance of municipalities, however there are pockets of excellence.

"We came here to discuss the reports and how to support municipalities because we do not want to theorise on the reports but to have a clear understanding of the work being done. An Inter-Ministerial Committee has been appointed to deal with Auditor General's Audit Outcomes. A strategy has been developed to deal with the negative audits," he said.

In addition, DM Masemola called on Mayors, Councillors, municipal officials, and stakeholders to return to the "core principles of public service and serve people with pride, integrity, and dedication."

"The true essence of our roles lies in prioritizing the needs of communities we represent and ensure that our work has a tangible, positive impact on the lives of ordinary citizens," DM Masemola.

Likewise, speaking in an engagement session for the Amathole District Municipality, DM Burns-Ncamashe said there is a need to intensify efforts to ensure with the delivery of essential services to the communities.

DM Burns-Ncamashe said it was important to strengthen relations between municipalities and traditional leaders, to realise community development and social cohesion.

In his closing remarks, DM Masemola pledged ongoing support from COGTA and MISA so that municipalities overcome their challenges and deliver quality services to all citizens.

The DM expressed satisfaction with the outcomes of the meeting, noting that they had successfully achieved their primary objective of sparking critical reflections and meaningful discussions among all stakeholders presents.

"The engagements have fulfilled their purpose, which was to ignite thoughts and facilitate open dialogue about the challenges and opportunities within our municipalities. We commit to return to monitor progress in addressing the challenges raised during the discussions. We are firm on the non-negotiable nature of delivering essential services to the people, which remains at the core of the government's mandate. We must ensure that every effort is made to meet the needs of our communities," said DM Masemola.

Deputy Minister Traditional Affairs, Prince Burns Ncamashe



Provincial Director of Operations for EC Salga-Mr Sonwabo Gqegqe



L-R: Executive Mayor for Chris Hani Municipality Councillor Lusanda Sizani, Deputy Minister Dr Namane Masemola and MEC Williams

Province Celebrated Mandela Day THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE

By Vuyani Sibene

The Ludeke village in the Winnie Madikizela Municipality was abuzz with activities during the week of 18 July as entities and departments across the Province celebrated the Nelson Mandela Day with a diverse range of events and initiatives. The activities were held to honour the legacy of the iconic leader, the late President Nelson Mandela and encourage residents to dedicate their time to giving back to their communities.

In celebration of the Nelson Mandela Day, government departments such as Social Development, Sports, Recreation Arts and Culture, Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the Nelson Mandela Museum commenced with a 5km walk reflecting the efforts and legacy of the iconic leader. Other activities included renovating the Methodist Church at Ludeke, handing over of school shoes, leisure toys, play mats, fleece blankets at an Early Childhood Development Centre and a soup kitchen for the elderly.

There were also services to assist the elderly with health care support screening, testing of medical conditions by professional doctors, South African Revenue Services (SARS) on tax matters as well as grant verification by the department of Social Development.

The Winnie Madikizela Municipality participated in community service projects, educational workshops, and cultural outreach programmes. The overall theme was dedicating at least 67 minutes of your time to make a positive difference.

Speaking as acting Premier, Cogta MEC Zolile Williams said this was not just a celebration for a man but a movement towards justice, equality, and human dignity.

"As we commemorate what would have been Madiba's 106th birthday, we reflect on a life that transcended the ordinary, a life that navigated unimaginable hardships with unwavering resilience, grace, and an indomitable spirit," he said. He alluded that the Mandela Day is observed annually on July 18th to commemorate Nelson Mandela's legacy and his contributions to peace, justice, and human rights. He added that the celebration took place a month after the 29 May elections which marked the start of the 7th administration since the advent of the country's democracy in 1994.

MEC Williams added that Madiba's call to action still resonates as powerfully as it did during his lifetime.

"Madiba urged us to dedicate 67 minutes of our time to make a difference, to change the world in meaningful ways. We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in your hands to make a difference which is encapsulated in the slogan, Take action, inspire change. Make every day a Mandela Day as a clarion call for all of us to contribute to the collective good. It is a reminder that the responsibility of creating a better world does not rest solely on the shoulders of a few, but on all of us collectively," he said."

He added that the significance of the Day cannot be overstated as the world is facing unprecedented challenges, including climate crisis, global pandemics, social inequality and political instability, "Mandela Day serves as a vital reminder of our shared humanity and the power of collective action."

Community members were afforded an opportunity to reflect on their challenges which were among others non-availability of water, incomplete houses, incomplete road that connects Luwaca and Harding and the poor state of R61 Road. MEC Williams responded that the provincial government was aware of the problems and was doing something about them. "Let us continue to walk in his footsteps, striving each day to build a nation that truly reflects the values of equality, justice, and humanity and arts" said MEC Williams.



Mayor of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela Municipality Councillor Daniswa Mafumbatha and MEC Williams feeding the elderly

Career Expo IN NGQELENI AS PART OF NELSON MANDELA DAY

By Dumisani Lindi

In celebration of the Nelson Mandela International Day and respond to the call made by the late former President Nelson Mandela to uplift lives in the rural communities and present opportunities to eradicate poverty, the Eastern Cape House of Traditional and Khoisan Leaders (ECHOTKL) hosted a career exhibition at Sandi Senior Secondary School (SSS) in Ngqeleni Village, which achieved 95.4% in the 2023 matric results.

The House invited stakeholders such as King Sabata Dalindyebo TVET College, Walter Sisulu University (WSU), South African Police Services (SAPS), Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Right to Care, Tsolo Agricultural College, OR Tambo District Tourism, Department of Community Safety and Nyandeni Local Municipality (NLM) to the event, to make presentations about the courses they offer.

The event was made possible through partnership with NLM, led by Mayor, Councillor Viwe Ndamase who in his address said praised the House for the partnership to enhance the chances of their children to further their studies.

"As for the school and community you are privileged to have the House come here due to the good pass rate by the Sandi SSS. I am proud of their achievement, and I urge them to keep up the good work," said Mayor Ndamase.

Speaking at the event, the Chairperson of the House Nkosi Mpumalanga Gwadiso urged learners to believe in themselves, be responsible, respect their bodies, and parents and value education.

"I am also proud of what this school has achieved and thank our stakeholders for making answering our call and make the possible," said Nkosi Gwadiso.



Students from Sandi Senior Secondary School with the exhibitor from Walter Sisulu University