



NEWS LETTER

COGTA



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE
& TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS

MARCH 2019



Editor: Ms Thando Sonjica

fronts with a view to empower the department going forward.

MEC Xasa said the session was in line with Pillar 1 of the Back to Basics programme, which encourages government to Put People and their Concerns First. Read more about this session on page three.

Also significant during this quarter which was the end of a financial year for departments and end of the term for government was Eastern Cape House of Traditional Leaders (ECHO TL) two day sitting convened at Bhisho in March, 2019. The session was intended to allow members of the House to reflect on the Premier's address and engage him on issues he raised during the Opening of the House.

The session also provided an opportunity for the Premier to indicate the coming to an end of the fifth term of the Eastern Cape Government. Many members indicated that although the Traditional Leadership Institution was constitutionally recognized but it still needed to be resourced to enable it to fulfil its constitutional mandate. Read more about this story on page 6-7 and find out also how the Premier responded.

Take time to read other stories in this issue about programmes and projects that the department of COGTA was engaged in during this quarter.

Happy reading.

Speaking during an end of term stakeholder engagement session in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, MEC Fikile Xasa said the Back to Basic (B2B) Programme was government's foundational philosophy to building a responsive, caring and accountable department capable to support municipalities and traditional leadership institutions to serve our people better.

"That is the essence of our programme to operationalise B2B over the five (5) year political term which is fast coming to an end," said MEC Xasa.

The session was meant to share highlights and set backs of his department as the end of the political term of the current administration was fast approaching. This was an interactive session wherein invited guests were at liberty to make constructive observations on the performance of CoGTA in various

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B2B PROGRAMME YIELDS SOME POSITIVES

By Mamnkeli Ngam

The Back to Basic (B2B) Programme is a government foundational philosophy to building a responsive, caring and accountable government, said Cogta MEC Fikile Xasa.

In the political term under review, said MEC Xasa, his department has seen some successes as well as setbacks in the implementation of the B2B programme. The transformation of the local government sector remains a priority for the current administration.

He said Cogta supported municipalities to establish 514 War Rooms out of 705 wards, which was a provincial target. There are 319 functional war rooms.

“The War Rooms are a realisation of Operation Masiphathisane, a government service delivery programme mean to improve integration and coordination in the three spheres of government. We also facilitated the participation of traditional leaders in Operation Masiphathisane to improve service delivery and integration of services at local level,” said MEC Xasa.

He added that all municipalities were supported to develop systems, procedures and policies related to Petition Management and Rapid Response,” he said.

On the delivering of basic services, MEC Xasa listed the following as highlights; the number of households with access to water has increased from 1,3 million households in 2014 to 1,5 million in 2018. The total households with access to sanitation increased from 1,1 million in 2014 to 1,3 million in 2018. Between 2014 and 2018, 187,114 households were connected to the grid and to date the cumulative number of households that have access to electricity is 1,7 million households in the Province.

4 237 households in KSD, Elundini, Ntabankulu, Mbizana, Matatiele, Intsika Yethu, and Umzimvubu were electrified.

“Through the implementation of the KSD Presidential Intervention over R4 billion has been invested on infrastructure development (roads and bridges construction, electricity, human settlements, water and sanitation. Over 13 000 temporal jobs were created,” said MEC Xasa.

MEC Xasa said support to traditional leadership institutions included 258 Traditional Leaders are participating in Municipal Councils, construction of AmaNdeli, AmaNguzela, AmaBhele and AmaGqunukhwebe Traditional Councils, the introduction of the Customary Male Initiation Practice Act of 2016, amongst other deliverables.

“Despite our service delivery achievements, it is clear that much needs to be done to support, educate and enforce implementation of local government’s mandate for delivery. We also need to improve the quality of political and administrative leadership in all spheres of government. That is the essence of building a capable state to execute a successful transformation agenda of government,” said MEC Xasa.



Chairperson of SALGA Mxolisi Koyo and Nkosi Buyanda Matanzima

FRAUD AND CORRUPTION DENT THE IMAGE OF GOVERNMENT

By Mamnkeli Ngam

Cogta MEC Fikile Xasa has decried the state of fraud and corruption taking place in Eastern Cape municipalities which has resulted in “communities losing trust and confidence in our government.”

Speaking during an end of term stakeholder engagement session in the Nelson Mandela Bay Metro, Xasa said his department has conducted investigations in municipalities after petitions were submitted to his office on allegations of fraud and corruption, nepotism and general maladministration.

“One gets a sense that some municipalities are being captured by business and politicians all collaborating with some government officials. Equally disappointing is that recommendations emanating from the investigations we have conducted have been ignored including forensic investigations,” he said.

In some instances, added MEC Xasa that investigations by officials from Cogta have been thwarted like in Mquma and Ngqushwa Local Municipalities.

“As a result, communities have lost trust in our government due allegations of fraud and corruption hence we see

violent and destructive service delivery protests,” said MEC Xasa. He added that government was serious about issues of corruption and they expected affected municipalities to implement the recommendations without fail.

Amongst the stakeholders who attended the end of term session were Kings, members of the Executive Council of the House of Traditional leaders, Mayors and executive mayors, representatives from Saga, business sector, NGOs and senior government officials.

MEC Xasa added that in the Province eleven (14) municipalities will be investigated by the National Treasury namely; Great Kei, Enoch Mgijima, Amahlathi, Engcobo, Ingquza Hill, Port St Johns, Walter Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba, KSD, Emalahleni, Mquma, Ngqushwa, Mhlontlo and Sakhisizwe.

The investigations have already started in the Great Kei local Municipality, said MEC Xasa.

“We have agreed on the areas of investigation against each municipality informed by the allegations provided to us. This is an undertaking to ensure stability within these municipalities,” said MEC Xasa.

44 669 WORK OPPORTUNITIES CREATED THROUGH THE CWP

By Thando Sonjica

Outlining the highlights of the department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs in the third quarterly review session in East London, Dr Ernest Vermaak, Director for Monitoring and Evaluation said out of the target of 43 100, 44 669 work opportunities were created through the Community Works Programme (CWP) where people are employed to do community work such as cleaning, maintenance and beautification of towns in their selected municipal areas.

“Furthermore, seven towns were supported to promote the small towns’ revitalisation programme to ensure town development and beautification,” said Dr Vermaak

He said the department supported ten municipalities to assess compliance to relevant legislation and B2B action plans. “Municipalities that were supported under this intervention are Nyandeni, Makana, Raymond Mhlaba, Mnquma, Emalaheni, Matatiele, Mbizana, Kouga, Port St Johns and Intsika Yethu. These municipalities were supported on the functionality of their structures, such as Council, Municipal Public Accounts Committees (MPAC). Furthermore, he said these municipalities required intensive support on all the B2B key performance areas,

which are Basic Services, Good Governance, Public Participation, Financial Management and Institutional Capacity. In support of the fight against corruption, Dr Vermaak said two allegations of procurement irregularities were investigated and closed out at Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality.

He explained that eight municipalities were monitored on the implementation of their Audit Response Plans based on the 2016/17 audit outcomes, namely Chris Hani, Emalaheni, Intsika Yethu, Matatiele, Ngqushwa, O.R. Tambo, Sakhisizwe and Senqu. “In addition to the above, eight municipalities were supported to have functional financial oversight structures, which are Mphashe, Elundini, Joe Gqabi, Engcobo, Sarah Baartman, Amathole, Ingquza Hill and Blue Crane Route. Walter Sisulu and Great Kei Municipalities were assisted to pay Eskom debt in a view to ensure sustainability of electricity service provision to the communities. Walter Sisulu Municipality was assisted with R15 Million and Great Kei Municipality assisted with R1.148 Million. Dr Vermaak clarified that eight municipalities were supported to improve revenue management and debt collection by facilitating meetings with government departments that are owing them, which are Blue Crane

COGTA HOLDS IDP GUIDELINE REVIEW WORKSHOP

By Nowethu Goniwe.

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) in collaboration with Office of the Premier (OTP) and National Cogta hosted Eastern Cape consultative workshop on the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) guideline review process at Good News Conference Centre, in King Williams Town.

The session was embraced by the presence of officials from various municipalities, sector departments, State Owned Entities (SOEs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and various stakeholders of the province towards providing an Eastern Cape Provincial input in the review process of IDP guidelines.

Outlining the purpose of the day Ms Nosipho Yose, manager at the Directorate of IDP at Cogta said the session was aimed at providing exposure and create an understanding on the integrated development planning processes at local government sphere. “Its also meant to explain different roles, responsibilities that are required to be played by a spectrum of stakeholders as well validate intra and inter municipal frustrations relating to IDP within our province. The session will also develop municipal action support plan that could institutionalise and solicit Eastern Cape Provincial input towards the review process of IDP Guidelines by National Cogta,” explained Ms Yose

Speaking at the same event, Ms Senzi Malaza a manager from National Cogta made a presentation about revised IDP guidelines and said IDPs are the strategic plans of municipalities. She further explained that revised IDP guidelines are meant to ensure that IDPs become effective plans for implementing the Integrated Urban Development

Framework IUDF, National Development Plan (NDP) and other government policies. She also said revised IDP guidelines is about explaining National and Provincial departments with regards to their roles and responsibilities in the development and implementation of IDPs, and government entities, traditional leaders, mining companies and other stakeholders with regards to their role in the development and implementation of IDPs and their target audience.

Ms Malaza further outlined the objectives of the revised guidelines as to reassert the strategic nature of IDPs and ensure that they respond to key national and provincial policy imperatives. “The revised guidelines will also assist municipalities to develop IDPs that are legally compliant, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in the development, review and implementation of IDPs.

She said the revised guidelines will outline the process to align IDPs and Social and Labour Plans (SLPs) development processes as well as to introduce a uniform criteria and approach for assessing IDPs.



IDP workshop attendees

Route, Nelson Mandela Bay, Joe Gqabi, Intsika Yethu, Sakhisizwe, Amathole, Mbhashe and Raymond Mhlaba.

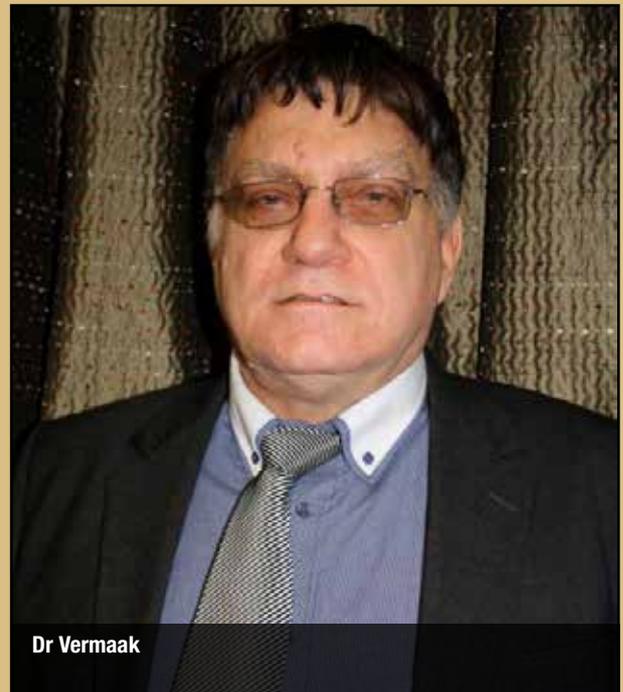
In terms of the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) implementation, highlighted that the department supported the six District Municipalities in by-law preparation, establishment of municipal planning tribunals, development of the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and in the full operation of the Geographical Information System (GIS). "Technical support on GIS operation was also provided to the six District Municipalities who lacked capacity.

He said nine municipalities were supported to implement indigent policies in a motive of ensuring that the poor communities are not deprived of much needed government services such as water, electricity, sanitation, refuse removal.

With regards to traditional affairs issues, he said 239 Traditional Councils were supported to perform their functions to ensure that rural households are not neglected in terms of their needs. "In addition, six Local Houses were supported to perform their functions. Ebhotwe Kwa Pakeni, Isikelo and Mchwebeni Traditional Councils Development Plans were approved.

Dr Vermaak further said that the department also supported ten municipalities to develop and implement

LED strategies. "Capacity building programmes were conducted in collaboration with Stats SA on data analysis in six municipalities for them to be able to understand the economic situation of their communities.



Dr Vermaak

HOD URGES MANAGERS TO LOVE AND ENJOY THEIR WORK

By: Namhla Kondlo-Magada

In a two-day session to review departmental performance of the third quarter held in East London, the head of department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta), Ms Gabisile Gumbi- Masilela urged managers to love and enjoy what they do and think of citizens in their decision making.

"As managers you need to ask yourselves whether your contribution to the department is good or bad, positive or negative and how it was affecting the department. In everything you do, develop your staff and find time and space to find out their needs, recognize their good performance, appreciate what they do as this encourages employees to do more said," said HOD.

The department of Cogta hosted the session for management to report and account on the performance progress of various directorates of the department.

Opening the session Ms Gumbi Masilela highlighted the purpose of the session as ensuring the establishment and implementation of the departmental strategies and plans. "The facilitation of the effective performance monitoring and evaluation is every managers business and it is key that all managers contribute and provide remedial actions to all issues affecting the department", said HOD.

Ms Gumbi Masilela spoke strongly on how the reports submitted by directorates lacked narrative and could not be communicated to external stakeholders in the state

they were in, thus she requested that directorates provide detailed presentations and reports on their performances. "A report must reflect outcomes of the support provided and how the support materialized. It must contain details of the interventions made and what have been the result of the changes. That does not need rocket science but a strategic provision and guidance on the support achieved", she said.

She further emphasized that a report needs to be supported by a portfolio of evidence (POE), "as I have learnt through the Auditor General findings that the POE verification in the department pose a problem and that should be rectified," said HOD.

All programmes and directorates got a chance to report on their performance sharing their challenges and working relations with both internal and stakeholders. Good work was commended and areas concerns were identified on the reports with remedial actions to be followed.

Among key challenges raised that affect most directorates in the department was that of training, filling of vacant posts, tweaked structure and directorates that share key performance areas.

Ms Gumbi- Masilela responded and gave directive for the tweaked structure to be reviewed and vacant post to be filled especially technical post. She further advised that the department embarks in partnerships on their projects as it cuts costs and overheads making an example of possible partnerships with Universities to offer training for the department.

She further requested Corporate Services Chief Directorate to provide support to core business to function better and provide support to municipalities and traditional institution better.

MEMBERS OF THE PROVINCIAL HOUSE CALL FOR EQUAL STATUS

By Bongwe Maseti

Following the address delivered by the Honourable Premier of the Eastern Cape, Phumulo Masualle, during the annual Opening of the Eastern Cape House of Traditional Leaders (ECHO TL) in February this year, a two day sitting was convened at Bhisho in March 2019.

The session was intended to allow members of the House to reflect on the Premier's address and engage him on issues he raised during the opening of the House. The session also provided an opportunity for the Premier to indicate the coming to an end of the fifth term of the Eastern Cape Government.

Speaking during the debate, Nkosi Mwelo Nonkonyana, Chairperson of the House indicated that tools of trade allocated to members of the House need to be of equal status to those of Members of the Provincial Legislature since they are performing almost the same duties. "Members of National House also need to be of equal status to those of Members of Parliament and those of Local Houses to be at same status as those in District Metropolitan Municipalities", he said.

He also added that they want Traditional Councils to be located in the Kingdoms and be fully resourced as public service areas in which all facilities from government departments and Councilors will reside. "The call for public service areas is in line with the District Support Centre Model (DSC) which is spearheaded by the Head of Department for Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs. The

main purpose of DSCs is to enhance support to traditional leadership institutions and municipalities," said Nkosi Nonkonyana.

Nkosi Xolile Ndevu from Gcaleka Region called for all thirty eight (38) Members of the House to have full time status to enhance their productivity. "Traditional Leaders need a bereavement policy, pension benefit and a burial scheme to ensure their families are taken care of when the need arises".

Nkosi Jongisizwe Ngcongolo from Fingoland Region indicated that although the Traditional Leadership Institution is constitutionally recognized but it still needed to be resourced to enable it to fulfil its constitutional mandate. "We want state of the art machinery for Kings and Queens Counsels and clarity on how they are going to function."

Nkosi Ntsika Joyi from Dalindyebo Region commended the establishment of Local Houses, however, he cited their inadequate resourcing as a concern as they are currently not fully functioning due to insufficient resources. Members of the House commented that a huge allocation of budget goes to Local Government at the expense of Traditional Affairs. They mentioned that it would benefit them if there could be a Department dedicated to address issues of Traditional Leadership by merging Departments that are servicing them like Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture, Agriculture, Land Affairs and Traditional Affairs.

DID YOU KNOW

OBJECTIVES OF THE EASTERN CAPE CUSTOMARY MALE INITIATION PRACTICE ACT

- Provide for the protection of life, the prevention of injuries and all forms of abuse experienced by initiates before, during and after the customary practice of male initiation;
- Provide for traditional leadership to take primary responsibility for the practice of male initiation within their areas of jurisdiction, in partnership with the Provincial government and all the other stakeholders;
- Ensure that initiation practice is not exploited as a commercial enterprise used purely for personal enrichment;
- Ensure that the teachings and rituals that are part of male initiation are aimed at character building to prepare the young for adulthood,
- Provide for the establishment, composition and functioning of the Provincial Initiation Coordinating Committee,
- Provide for the establishment, composition and functioning of the District Initiation Forum,
- Provide for the prohibition of force attendance of male initiation,
- Provide for the permission to open and hold initiation school,
- Provide for the observation of health standards in traditional circumcision,
- Provide for the offences and penalties therewith,
- Repeal the Eastern Cape Application of Health Standards in Traditional Circumcision Act, 2001 (Act No.6 OF 2001); and,
- Provide for matters connected therewith.

Morena Lebonya requested the Premier to visit Joe Gqabi District to address the issue of underage initiation as it has a potential of causing a rise in initiation deaths

Nkosi Sipiwe Mhlambiso from Rharhabe Region raised the issue of the War Rooms Masiphathisane programme, that is ineffective in the rural areas due to the fact that it does not recognise the specific role of Traditional Leaders in rural areas instead it puts Ward Councillors at the forefront of the war rooms programme.

Responding to the question of Traditional Affairs being viewed as being less of a priority than local government at Cogta, the Premier clarified the role and place of the Traditional Leadership Institution as being a constitutional entity. "At no stage should there be an impression that one constitutional creation gets less recognition than the other even in the practice of those who are leading these institutions. At all times there must be corresponding acknowledgment of the right to exist of these constitutional creations" the Premier said.

The Premier also mentioned that there are discussions that are underway at different levels between the majority party and the CONTRALESA in respect of matters that pertain to Traditional Leadership Institution on how it finds expression in the unfolding dispensation. The Premier added that "All these endeavours are meant to clarify further the nature of the relationship that ought to exist between these institutions.

Regarding the call by Members for the inclusion of Traditional Leaders along the coastline in oceans economy from the inception stages to avoid rubber stamping government programmes, the Premier emphasized that "There should be meaningful engagement of Traditional Leaders to enable

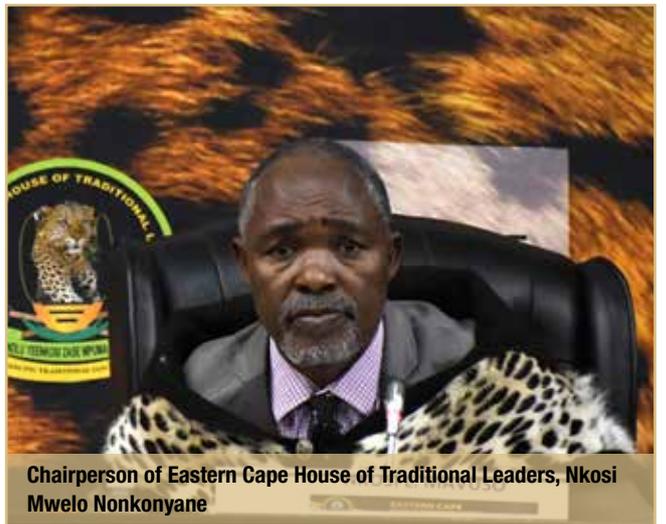
them to give effective leadership to their communities. There must also be co-operation and mutual understanding in the Xolobeni proposed mining project to minimize the involvement of outsiders in the matter". He added that Kingdoms ought to be vigilant and should be represented in the project steering committees to ensure the execution of the project is according to plan. He warned Traditional Leaders not to get dragged into the infightings which sometimes compromise these projects". The Premier also added that Traditional Councils should be properly equipped in terms of staffing to make them functional.

In response to a call by Members for involving DSRAC in customary male initiation, the Premier said that "I have taken note of the call on the role and place of DSRAC in initiation as it is a cultural activity, not in the context of expecting the Department to contribute resources in the programme. Discussions around this matter are needed first to ensure a seamless transition, said the Premier. He said the issue of ill treatment of Regents particularly women and the role of the Royal family in the matter needed to be noted vigilantly by the traditional leadership institution to avoid factions."The same goes for other challenges, he said.

In his closing the Premier thanked Members of the House for their co-operation saying even in areas where they did not see eye to eye during this fifth term differences were managed in a civil manner and ultimately there has been level-headedness. He urged Traditional Leaders to allow them (politicians) to talk to their Kingdoms. He also asked Traditional Leaders to talk to their communities as well for voting on the 8 of May 2019 for their preferred parties to assist them in fulfilling their mandate.



Premier of Eastern Cape Phumulo Masualle



Chairperson of Eastern Cape House of Traditional Leaders, Nkosi Mweliso Nonkonyane



Nkosi Nokwezi Makaula



Nkosi Diko with Nkosi Stokwe in the background



Nkosi Sipiwe Mhlambiso of Rharhabe Region

EC HOUSE OF TRADITIONAL LEADERS REVIVES INKCIYO TRADITION

By Namhla Kondlo-Magada

The community of Bhisho witnessed a procession of young virgins fearlessly dressed in traditional Inkciyo attires in celebration of the old Xhosa ritual called Inkciyo. Cheering sounds and whistles by audience and elderly women were exchanged as the youth showcased their practices singing traditional music, drama performances and dances in enjoyment of their day.

Over 100 young girls aged between 10 and 22 years from different districts in the province took part in practice of Inkciyo, a ritual where girls undergo virginity inspection by designated female community elders

The Provincial House of Traditional leaders and the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs in partnership with key stakeholders hosted the event in recognition and welcome of the Inkciyo custom.

Giving a message of support at the event, the chairperson of the Eastern Cape HOTL Chief Mwelo Nonkonyane applauded women in recognition of the good work that they were doing in the Province in ensuring purity amongst young people. He emphasized on the theme of the day which was titled “we are reviving the lifestyle of purity among young people” . He said true leaders were born by pure people and “you are the future of this country, you are women of calibre and we are proud of you”.

He said they were looking forward to seeing another event of that nature where they would be celebrating all maidens present here reaching the age of 21 as virgins. “The world today is ruthless, fathers turn against their own children, our society’s moral fiber is increasingly out of control”. IChief Nonkonyane said they want the programme to be rolled out

throughout the Province, practiced from the local houses, district and at provincial level.

Giving a key note address at the event, Ms Zoleka Capa, a member of Parliament (MPL) and a Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Social Development expressed her frustration on how the Inkciyo ritual was not understood by many. “This ritual is regarded as some form of discrimination among women whereas young woman who do not conduct themselves well and have children are rewarded by NGO’s and government with some given child support grant and those who have preserved themselves do not get any form of grant of funding of programmes such as Inkciyo, said Ms Capa

Ms Capa further shared and applauded the role of the maidens reflecting of the medians who marched to parliament few years ago fighting the Constitution of policies and laws that demotes culture and morals. She further explained that Inkciyo was not only about virginity testing. “It involves many programmes aimed at empowering girls and boys, teaching them life skills, boosting self esteem and self-respect and instilling discipline,” she said.

Ms Mamokgethi Mohapi aged 22 spoke on behalf of the maidens and attested that they were not forced to part take in Inkciyo but they are enjoying it . “We requested the elderly woman to test and guide us. We are proud of the womanhood and we value cultural customs because teenagers in our days become pregnant at a young age, said Ms Mohapi

She said there was HIV/Aids as well as sexually transmitted diseases and through the practice of Inkciyo , they refrain from sex and keep pure until the right time of marriage.



Maidens from the Eastern Cape districts



Member of Parliament , Ms Capa and Ms Nongenile Nyoka

A NATION WITHOUT ITS TRADITIONS IS LOST, SAYS PREMIER MASUALLE

By Dumisani Lindi

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Nkosi Siphohle Mahlangu and Nkosi Mhlawuli from the National House of Traditional Leaders



Nkosi Nonkonyana, Premier Masualle, Queen Noloyiso and Mr Nkantsu as they enter the house chamber!



Praise singer doing umbongo for Premier Masualle



Women Cultural Group performing a song at the Opening of the Eastern Cape House of Traditional Leaders

On 28 February 2019 dignitaries and traditional leaders of the province converged at the Eastern Cape House of Traditional Leaders in Bisho to witness the opening of the House of Traditional Leaders. Amongst attendees was the Premier of the Eastern Cape Pumullo Masualle, MECs, Mayor of OR Tambo District Municipality Cllr Nomakhosazana Meth, Kings and Queens of our province, Traditional Leaders from around the province and other dignitaries invited.

Welcoming the invited guest, Chairperson of the ECHoTL, Nkosi Mweliso Nonkonyana it made him proud to see the unity showed by government and traditional leaders. "It is well to known that unity is the key to stop bad habits in our province" added Nkosi Nonkonyana. Nkosi Nonkonyana emphasised that traditional institutions are the engine of each community, "We will do all we can to ensure that traditional institutions are taken care of as they are our point of reference and the custodian of our culture," he said.

Nkosi Nonkonyana further said they were proud to be part of the ECHoTL as it is one of the kind that was provided by our government. I thank all the past and present premiers for the effort given to ensure that the dreams of traditional leaders are realised," said Nkosi Nonkonyana.

Giving the annual address Premier of the Eastern Cape Province, Pumullo Masualle said it was a great honour to come and talk in the house and address our Kings and traditional leaders on service delivery issues. He said this year's state of the Province address was the 5th of the term since 2014 and it was more of reporting what has been done. "In the 25 years in government we can prove that it is not the same as the past and a lot has been done even though we have challenges.

We have given services to our people as much as we can," added Premier Masualle. The premier emphasised of what has been done by the province to ensure that traditional institutions are operating well. "We as the province have invested in agriculture and building health care centres in rural areas," added the Premier.

Premier Masualle further thanked the House of traditional leaders for fighting to ensure that everything that has to do with culture and custom was taken care of. "Having the house of traditional leaders will always ensure that we are reminded of who we are, where come from and how we should handle the future. He said a nation without it traditions and traditional leaders is a lost country.

LEARNERS URGED TO TAKE EDUCATION SERIOUSLY

By Dumisani Lindi



From the 21st to the 23rd of January 2019 Cogta MEC Fikile Xasa visited schools around the Sarah Baartman District Municipality as part of the Back to School Campaign. This is the initiative of the Eastern Cape Government to deploy the Members of the Executive Council and officials as part of the monitoring visits and engagements with key stakeholders at school level.

Along with officials from various sector departments including Education, Public Works and Rural Development and Agrarian Reform the MEC visited Port Alfred High School, Port Alfred Junior Secondary in the Ndlambe Local Municipality.

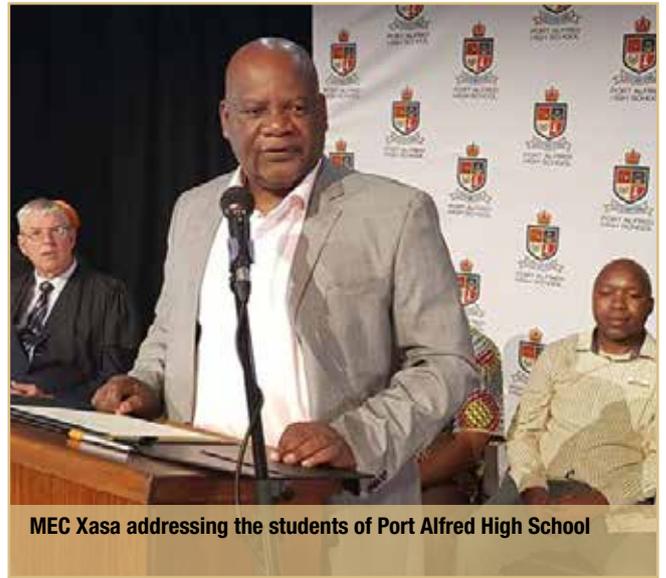
Other schools visited were Sandisulwazi High School in Peterson in Sunday River Valley Local Municipality, Mary Waters and Mrwetyana High Schools both in Makanda Local Municipality. Each school presented its profile wherein challenges included overcrowding, drug use, pregnancies, crime in the community, poverty, non-attendance by learners and teachers, lack of funding and educational resources.

In Mary Waters, School Principal Ms Faith Coetzee urged the MEC to assist and ensure that services are delivered quick to safeguard the future of learners. "We appreciate the visit and it brings hope that our government cares for the bright future for our children. Our children want to learn but the circumstances are preventing them and you being here gives them hope that tomorrow will bring sunlight," said Ms Coetzee.

In each school the MEC addressed the learners encouraging them never to give up on education,

"We are here today to encourage you to stay in school and take you're your studies seriously. You are the future of this country and for this country to have a better future it needs educated people and you are those people," said MEC Xasa.

"We know that some of the challenges you are facing are not of your own making. We promise to help as much as we can and for this to work we need you to help yourselves as well by staying away from drugs and crime," added MEC. In closing MEC said, "As I said before, this country belongs to you. My wish for you is to stay in school and ensure that you do the best you can to achieve greatness. Remember that your future is in your hands."



MEC Xasa addressing the students of Port Alfred High School



MEC Xasa addressing the students of Port Alfred Junior Secondary School



MEC Xasa addressing the student of Mary Waters High School in Grahamstown

COMMUNICATORS TOLD TO EMBRACE 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

“By Namhla Kondlo- Magada



Cllr Stuurman of Sarah Baartman District Municipality

The department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs in partnership with the Government Communications Information System (GCIS) and South African local Government Association (SALGA), hosted a two day Local Government Communicators Forum meeting from the 28 to 29 March 2019 at Mentors Kraal in Kouga Local Municipality. Amongst those who invited to address the forum was Cllr Stuurman of Sarah Baartman District Municipality, Mr Ngubane from the National Telecommunications & Postal Services, Mr Mdukiwa of Cogta Chief Director Municipal Public Participation and Rapid Response to seat and discuss with communicators and representative persons from all Eastern Cape Municipalities.



Cllr Stuurman, Mr Mamkeli Ngam: Director Corporate Communication at Cogta and Mr Thabo Mdukiswa Chief Director Municipal Public Participation and Rapid Response at Cogta

Mr Ndlelantle Pinyana Regional Director GCIS who was the chairperson of the meeting in his opening remarks said “the department together with the partners gathered with the objective to monitor and assess the implementation of the resolutions taken during the 3rd quarter LGCF meeting also enhancing capacity building initiatives and sharing information and best practises”. Subsequently the gathering takes place at a time where 2019 marks the end of the 5th administration since 1994 elections, where the country will be going for elections hence the evaluation of the state of readiness for the upcoming general elections was key to address.



Ms Ncumisa Cakwe- Communications Officer from Ngqushwa municipality and Ms Nonceba Vuso: Communications Manager at Amathole District Municipality

Welcoming the communicators in the district, Cllr Stuurman challenged all communicators to be efficient and factual in their communication. “We are living in the digital world today where news travel fast than before. We need to make our voice heard, we cannot afford to seat on information”. Moreover he stressed the vital role that the communicators are to play in making sure government good news is told, also encouraging creativity and a move with the times. He then encouraged everyone to cast their vote on the upcoming elections.

Speaking at the same event, Mr Thabo Mdukiswa Chief Director Municipal Public Participation and Rapid Response at Cogta gave the status of protests in the province and the impact it might have in 2019 elections. He advised communicators on the importance of rapid response in any negative information that might effect municipalities. Highlighting the reasons of ongoing protest Mr Mdukiswa said it was mainly due to slow or lack of service delivery on housing, roads, electrification and water”. “Moreover it was also due to the poor municipal community complaints management, weak communication between government and the communities including alleged corruption, collusion and maladministration. Communicators engaged on the discussion on the strategies of dealing with community protests and improving Operation Masiphathisane.



Ms Natasha Peterson : GCIS Regional Communication Coordinator: Sarah Baartman District Municipality

Concluding the session Mr Thulani Ngubane from Telecommunication and Postal services spoke on enabling South Africa towards an inclusive digital economy and 4th Industrial Revolution. He said as communicators we have a responsibility to understand these technological advancements and be in touch with the new technological systems. “We must not fear change, these systems are here to empower our work to be able accelerate service delivery. The 4th Industrial Revolution is real and it is here, you will be left behind if you do not get on board,” said Mr Ngubane.

Opening of the House of Traditional Leaders



**HOD EC COGTA
Ms Gabisile Gumbi
Masilela**



**Nkosi Makaula and Nkosi Kama handing gifts to
Premier Masuale and MEC Xasa**



Nkosi Nosandi Mhlauli greeting Premier Masuale



**Deputy Speaker of the Eastern Cape Legislature ,Mr Mlibo
Qoboshiyane greeting MEC for Public Works, Pemmy Majodina**



**Bhisho Primary School kids performing at the opening of the
house**



**Deputy Chairperson of the House of Traditional Leaders
Nkosi Langa Mavuso and Queen Noloyiso Sandile**



**Nkosi Mwelo Nonkonyane holding hands with Chief Mahlangu
whilst Premier Masuale and Chief Mhlauli looks on**



Dignitaries listening in the Chamber



MECs Majodina and Xasa