



Province of the
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COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE
& TRADITIONAL AFFAIRS

COGTA

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DEPUTY PRESIDENT ENGAGES AMAMPONDO LEADERSHIP ON DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

By Sonto Malinga



L-R: Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform, Mzwanele Nyhontso, King Ndamase, Queen Tina Madosini Ndamase, Deputy President Paul Mashatile and MEC Zolile Williams

Deputy President Paul Mashatile undertook an official visit to His Majesty King Ndamase of AmaMpondo aseNyandeni as part of government's efforts to strengthen cooperation with traditional leadership in advancing inclusive development. The engagement, held under the theme "Traditional Leadership at the Centre of the Developmental Agenda and Social Cohesion through Cooperation with Government," underscored the central role of traditional leaders in promoting unity, social cohesion, and the developmental priorities of rural and peri-urban communities.

In his address, the Deputy President reaffirmed government's commitment to working closely with traditional and Khoisan leaders to enhance service delivery, stimulate local economic growth, and address the pressing challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment. The visit focused on priority areas of collaboration, including improving access to basic services, unlocking investment opportunities to drive job creation, supporting rural development, and strengthening social cohesion.

As Chairperson of the Inter-Ministerial Task Team on Traditional Leadership, the Deputy President also received progress reports on interventions aligned with the District Development Model, covering water and electricity supply, infrastructure development, agricultural projects, and community safety initiatives. He commended the progress achieved and emphasized the importance of coordinated planning through the DDM to ensure holistic and impactful service delivery.

His Majesty King Ndamase Ndamase welcomed the engagement, reaffirming the commitment of traditional leaders to continue partnering with government in building resilient communities and promoting sustainable development. The visit concluded with a renewed pledge by both government and traditional leadership to work together in advancing development, fostering unity, and ensuring that the voices of rural communities remain central to South Africa's transformation agenda.

NKOSI KAULELA OF THE AMABHELE ASEMBUTHWENI OFFICIALLY RECOGNISED

By Vuyani Sibene



Nkosi Kaulela

26 September 2025 marks a momentous day for the AmaBhele aseMbuthweni in Cisira, Peddie where Nkosi Mzikayise Welcome Kaulela was officially installed as the substantive Chief of AmaBhele at Cisirha Traditional Council in Ngqushwa. The ceremony was attended by many delegates from National and Provincial departments, District, and Local Municipalities as well as senior traditional leaders from AmaRharhabe, chiefs from AmaMfengu and AbaThembu nations. The ceremony presided by Rharhabe Kingdom included presentation of vehicles and symbolic items of authority, such as the traditional royal rod.

Nkosi Kaulela proudly represented a significant milestone in history as he led the fight to restore his community's status as an independent chieftainship.

A battle that survived the homeland's regime of Lennox Sebe, the Ciskei military rule under Brig Oupa Gqozo, and long years of democratic government. Currently, in the fight of traditional

initiation deaths there were no deaths recorded in the Cisirha traditional council during the winter traditional initiation in 2025.

The Deputy Minister of the National Department Cooperative Governance, Traditional Affairs (Cogta), Prince Burns Ncamashe, expressed joy at the installation of a traditional leader, reiterating the role of traditional leaders in preserving culture, sustaining the social fabric and advancing community development. "At long last, they have agreed and shared a poignant warning from the poet SEK Mqhayi with Nkosi Kaulela confirmed that he is the senior leader of AmaBhele" said Deputy Minister.

Representative of the Premier, MEC for Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) Zolile Williams acknowledged the long delays that had frustrated the community. "It was not easy. I arrived in the provincial government as Cogta MEC and I found out the application for recognition was with the former Premier, Phumulo Masualle, but for some reason it was never processed," he said.

"Working with King Sandile, the Kaulela Royal family and Premier of the Eastern Cape Oscar Mabuyane, we were able to find a lasting solution. Now AmaBhele aseMbuthweni have been recognised, said MEC. He pleaded with government officials not to get involved in the royal family feuds.

An emotional Nkosi Kaulela responding to the community of Cisirha said his story is like the story in the bible "After the long, bumpy journey of 40 years, we triumphed. We are still standing and observing our hard-fought authority and freedom as an independent chieftom. This is victory to God, victory to our ancestors and to all AmaBhele, he said.

Nkosi Kaulela said the recognition fulfilled the birthright of his family and nation. "If I die, I will die a happy man having fought for the birthright of my royal family. Together we won. We must keep this sacred. It was not a walk in the park, there were even some royal family members who sold out on the struggle for the freedom of AmaBhele aseMbuthweni. All we want now is unity, order and brotherhood as the royal family." said Nkosi Kaulela.



MEC Z. Williams



Invited guests



L-R: Deputy Minister for National Cogta, Prince Burns Ncamashe and AmaRharhabe King Vululwandle Sandile

DEPUTY MINISTER MASEMOLA LEADS OVERSIGHT VISIT TO BUFFALO CITY METRO

By Sonto Malinga



Dr. Namane Dickson Masemola



L-R: BCM Municipal Manager, Mr Mxolisi Yawa and HOD Mr. Vuyo Mlokothi



BCM Executive Mayor Cllr Princess Faku

The Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), Dr. Namane Dickson Masemola, convened a high-level accountability and assessment oversight session at the Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) conference facility in Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCM). The session formed part of the national oversight programme themed “Every Municipality Must Work”, an initiative aimed at reinforcing governance, improving service delivery, and ensuring accountability within the sphere of local government.

Accompanied by the Eastern Cape MEC for CoGTA, Mr. Zolile Williams, the Deputy Minister, emphasized that the visit was not merely a routine compliance exercise but a deliberate and proactive step to strengthen institutions of governance and restore public confidence in municipalities. “Our collective task is to ensure that municipalities are functional, stable, and responsive to the needs of the people. This oversight process is not about finger pointing but about accountability and solutions that drive service delivery,” said Dr. Masemola. “Through the District Development Model, we are institutionalizing a culture of joint planning and coordination across all spheres of government, so that service delivery is accelerated, and resources are optimally utilized.”

During the session, MEC Williams raised a critical concern regarding persistent challenges that continue to undermine the performance of municipalities. He warned against the dangers of undue interference in municipal administration. “When politicians interfere in administration, it creates confusion over roles and responsibilities. This lack of clarity fuels political instability which continues to undermine the effective functioning of our municipalities,” Williams stated. “It is essential that we respect the separation of roles between political leadership and the professional administration, so that municipalities can focus on delivering services effectively and consistently.”

The Executive Mayor of BCM, Cllr Princess Faku, elaborated on the progress achieved by the municipality in improving service delivery and infrastructure. “We are working tirelessly to expand access to water, sanitation, and electricity while also investing in economic development projects that create jobs and empower our communities. These interventions reflect our determination to respond to the pressing needs of our residents while laying the foundation for inclusive growth and sustainable development.”

Mayor Faku concluded by emphasizing the significance of intergovernmental collaboration in addressing service delivery challenges. “The oversight session has provided us with a platform to reflect on our successes and shortcomings, while strengthening the partnerships that are essential for accelerating delivery. We value this process as it ensures that Buffalo City remains on track towards building a more prosperous and resilient metro for all its residents.”

In closing, the Deputy Minister reaffirmed government's commitment to accountability, transparency, and collaborative governance, stressing the need to confront challenges such as political instability and weak institutional capacity. He emphasized that municipalities must be responsive, efficient, and people centered, as they are the closest sphere of government to citizens. The Buffalo City engagement was described as a reminder that effective local governance is central to community transformation and development, and that all spheres of government must work together to ensure that “every municipality must work.”



LGCF REINFORCES ROLE OF COMMUNICATORS IN STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY

By Sonto Malinga



Eastern Cape Local Government Communicators

The Local Government Communicators Forum (LGCF), held in Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality from 18–19 September 2025, once again underscored the vital role that government communicators play in strengthening democracy and service delivery at the local level.

The forum, chaired by Mr. Mamnkeli Ngam, Director for Communication Management at the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), opened with a strong call for accountability and ownership. It was emphasized that the forum belongs to all communicators, and its successes or failures depend on their collective effort. The Chairperson acknowledged the work done by municipalities and stressed the importance of discipline in how members approach engagements. One of the most pressing issues raised was the shrinking financial envelope within government. Mr. Ngam cautioned that the future of the forum is under pressure due to limited budgets, urging participants to think creatively about sustaining the LGCF even when resources are scarce. “As CoGTA, we will make sure the forum does not lapse,” he reassured, calling on communicators to use the platform to empower one another.

Presentations highlighted both challenges and opportunities. Speakers stressed the importance of building strategic partnerships, including private sector stakeholders such as Telkom, and the need for communicators to showcase the contributions of traditional leaders and councilors in municipalities.

Digital innovation emerged as another key theme. The Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) delivered a presentation on digital media, where proposals such as WhatsApp chatbots, podcasts, and localized digital campaigns were discussed as tools to control the narrative and reach communities directly. Communicators were also encouraged to take campaigns to schools, work closely with parents, and collaborate with departments such as Health and Education to maximize the impact of initiatives, particularly those addressing ulwaluko (male initiation).

The relationship between government and the media also came under focus. Several presenters noted that while journalists can be allies, headlines often dramatize issues and pit organizations against one another. Mr. Ngam reminded participants, “Do not shy away from the media but manage engagements with context,

professionalism, and resilience.” Importantly, municipal communicators were urged to focus on telling their own stories before others define them.

The forum further called for inclusive approaches to communication. Suggestions included producing content in multiple languages, developing braille versions, and integrating campaigns on customary practices such as ulwaluko. Delegates also strongly appealed for CoGTA to develop a civic education syllabus to help citizens better understand the different spheres of government, their rights, and the services they should expect.

Despite frustrations with underfunding and limited resources, the closing remarks carried a message of encouragement. Ngam further reminded participants that their voices are essential in bridging the gap between municipalities and communities. “We might have management, but without leadership, communication fails,” one participant added, urging colleagues to bring clarity and continue advocating for their role.

In addition Mr Ngam retold communicators that they are not only tasked with keeping citizens informed but also with cultivating trust, driving transparency, and ensuring inclusiveness in governance. “Local government communication is more than issuing statements, It is about weaving together the voices of communities and the machinery of governance, ensuring that democracy is lived, understood, and strengthened at the grassroots level,” said Mr. Ngam

In formally closing the forum, Dr Siviwe Mditshwa, Chief Director for Strategy and Systems highlighted the crucial role communicators will play in the coming year. “As South Africa approaches the 2026 Local Government Elections, the role of local government communicators becomes increasingly critical.

He advised that the core team responsible for the LGCF needs package the challenges and meet with the Head of Department to propose solutions and thereafter the MEC for Cogta. “Perhaps for the next LGCF we need to have a panel discussion where communicators can vent out their frustrations. He further advised that the GCIS needs to organize digital training for local government communicators because the demand seems to be too high.