



MY DISTRICT TODAY



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OUTCOME 14: A DIVERSE, SOCIALLY COHESIVE SOCIETY WITH A COMMON NATIONAL IDENTITY

South Africa commemorates Human Rights Day

By Thembi Matjokana: GCIS, Gauteng



Different stakeholders exhibiting at the event.

The annual Human Rights Day was commemorated on 21 March 2016 at the Sharpeville Cricket Pitch under the theme: "South Africa United Against Racism". The event was led by Gauteng Premier David Makhura. Free State Premier Ace Magashule and North West Premier Supra Mahumapelo joined Premier Makhura at the event.

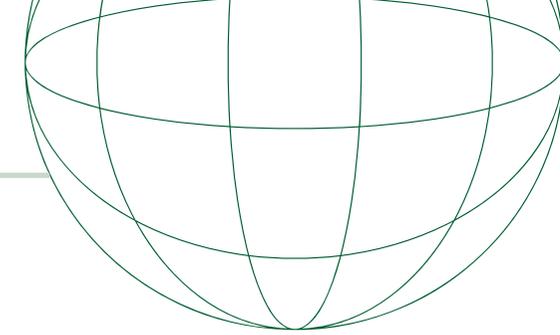
The commemoration started with a wreath-laying ceremony by all Premiers, MECs, Executive Mayors, Councillors, survivors and victims of family members of the Sharpeville massacre, and Ahmed Kathrada Foundation and Nelson Mandela Foundation representatives at the Sharpeville Memorial Precinct. Premier Makhura led a march against racism where thousands of people marched from Sharpeville memorial site to the main venue at Sharpeville Cricket Pitch to create awareness about racism and to spread the message about human rights.

"More than 55 years later South Africans are still experiencing racism, today as the country remembers those who died and the many victims who were also wounded on the day, it is befitting to launch an anti-racism initiative which will uphold the rights of all South Africans," said Premier Makhura. He further stated that in South Africa many people have died so that we can be a free non-racial country, and that the launch of anti-racism initiative is government's way of working together to ensure that racism is done away with.



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Premier Makhura also mentioned that government is committed to assisting families of those who died because most of these families are impoverished and disregarded due to the loss of their loved ones. He said that young people from these families who are unemployed would be assisted to find employment so that they could take care of their families. The Premier pledged that the families of those who died during the Sharpeville massacre will also be prioritised in the allocation of housing in the area.

“We talk about human rights, we talk about ensuring that every South African lives a life of human dignity,” he said.

The celebration was filled with excitement and entertainment from artist such as Cultural Item.

Government also ensured that the public gets access to government services and information through exhibitions. Stakeholders such as departments of home affairs, health, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, Gauteng Department of Economic Development, Government Communication and Information System, South African Police Service, Independent Electoral Commission, South African Human Rights Commission, the Office of the Public Protector, Arcello Mittal and various crafters from Sedibeng were also in attendance. Selina Modise from Sharpeville had this to say about the commemoration, “It is important that young people are educated about the Struggle that was fought for to achieve the freedom that is enjoyed today. I agree that as a country we still have a long way to go especially with the way people are using social media to post racist remarks. At least government is doing its best to make sure such people are brought to book.”



Premier Makhura greets survivors of the Sharpeville massacre at the event.



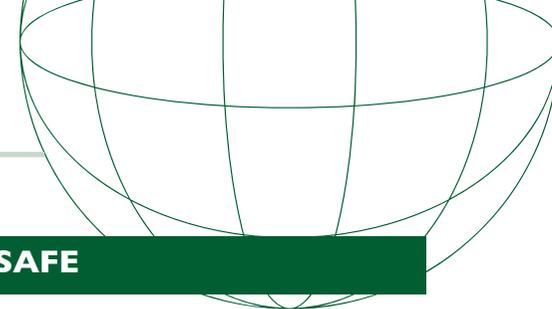
South Africans gathered at Sharpeville for the Human Rights Day commemoration.



Winnie Radebe said:
“Human rights celebration means my freedom, dignity, respect and a brighter future.”



Magta Langa said:
“I was a teenager on the day in 1960, today I get to enjoy the freedom attained through blood and tears.”



Ndlovu said:
 “Government must close down illegal border crossing to fight crime.”



Gogo Shongwe said:
 “MEC please intervene at the local schools where bullying is at the high rate. Learners fight and stab one another during school hours. When teachers try to calm them down they promise him or her that they will deal with them after school. Police must conduct unannounced visits.”

OUTCOME 3: ALL PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE AND FEEL SAFE

Nkomazi communities unite to fight crime

By Joy Themba: GCIS, Mpumalanga



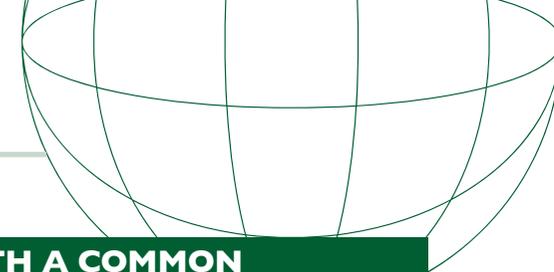
Provincial Community Policing Forum Chairperson Kevin Pillay, Provincial Commissioner Lieutenant-General Mondli Zuma, MEC Shongwe, Nkomazi Executive Mayor Cllr Thulisile Khoza and Provincial Speaker Blessing Shongwe attended the Imbizo.

Nkomazi residents have been targeted for 4X4 bakkies that are stolen in the early hours of the morning. It is believed that the cars are sold to neighbouring countries such as Mozambique and Swaziland at a lower price.

MEC for Safety and Security, Vusi Shongwe, reported that his department took back all the Schoemansdal Police Station firearms to ballistic and gave the officers new ones. A new station commissioner has been appointed to intensify the fight against crime. The station commissioner will be part of all community meetings with his management to develop good working relations and get information that can assist in crime prevention. He should also work closely with local municipality so that they can assist with grading of roads for easy access to villages. In beefing up the staff, additional police officials were recruited for Schoemansdal Police Station.

A new method has been introduced where each police vehicle is allocated a cellphone. The cellphone numbers are written on the vehicles to enable communities to send messages to report crime. To monitor the process, police officials are trained to record each case, they must record the name of the person, the time of reporting and the time for response in the occurrence book.

As a wayforward, provincial government, South African Police Service, South African National Defence Force and House of Traditional Leaders have been tasked to go back to the drawing board and discuss the illegal crossing of borders. A resolution was taken that Nkomazi Local Municipality will send out graders to the illegal crossing areas to dig big holes in order to prevent the crossing of these 4x4 bakkies. In closing, MEC Shongwe said, “We cannot afford to have crime-ridden communities. Let us eradicate crime completely and close down the space for criminals.”



Nthabiseng Tau said:

“I am grateful to have received this information about the dangers of racism. As citizens of this country, we need to treat one another with dignity and respect at all times.”



Stanley Swanzer said:

“The information I received today was very powerful. I learned more about the dangers of racism. I appeal to everyone to desist from racial actions.”

OUTCOME 14: A DIVERSE, SOCIALLY COHESIVE SOCIETY WITH A COMMON NATIONAL IDENTITY

Dialogue to condemn racism

By Lerato Setilo and Lehlohonolo Manoto: GCIS, Free State



Some of the stakeholders at the event.

South Africa observed Anti-racism Week from 14 to 18 March 2016. Citizens were encouraged to take on racism by learning about its dangers, speaking and acting against it. The Department of Justice and Constitutional Development organised an Anti-Racism Awareness Dialogue at Clarendon Hall in Bloemfontein on 16 March 2016. This dialogue created a platform for various stakeholders to share Acts, policies and interventions from their organisations on what constitutes racism, and how they should confront acts of racism.

We have seen in the first two months of the year how racism has taken place in universities and also on social media. These incidents reminded us of our painful past that we do not want to be reminded of. President Jacob Zuma has said that this year’s Human Rights Day should also be commemorated as a national day against racism and be used to “lay the foundation for a long-term programme of building a non-racial society”. The government has rolled out plans on how it is going to educate all citizens on how to combat racism. The Department of Basic Education has joined the call to raise awareness against racism in schools.



Community members and Community Works Programme members listening to various speakers at the event



Kathrina Langeveld said:

“It is very good that people from big government offices come to us. We feel safe today because there are police officers.”



Dignitaries at the event.



Community members at the event.

OUTCOME 3: ALL PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE AND FEEL SAFE

Police Minister conducts a community outreach

By Zusiphe Mtirara: GCIS, Western Cape



Minister Nhleko speaking at the event



The Minister with other dignitaries



Professor Yuns Ballim of Sol Plaatje University.

Police Minister Nathi Nhleko officially reopened Muizenberg Museum and held a community outreach programme in Lavender Hill on 23 March 2016. Among other important guests at the gathering were; Deputy Minister of Police, Makhotso Soty, Acting National Police Commissioner General Khomotso Pahlane, Community Safety MEC Dan Plato, Provincial Police Commissioner General Khombinkosi Jula and other dignitaries from the South African Police Service (SAPS) and local organisations.

The day kick-started in Muizenberg where the Minister reopened the Museum. His final destination was a community outreach at the Lavender Hill open field to take questions and concerns from the community. Minister Nhleko briefly responded to the questions by encouraging residents of Lavender Hill to work closely with the police to ensure a crime-free society.

“A crime-free society is a process that requires collaboration between police and the community, we can have as many police officers as possible but without the community’s help that would not be effective. We do have a challenge though of resources as the SAPS and this challenge will always be there because the living conditions of our people change every day and therefore we need to upgrade our resource allocation,” he said.

Minister Nhleko then dismissed claims that drugs are being sold by foreigners only, saying that even local people are involved in drug dealing.

Though most questions were not answered during the outreach, the Minister confirmed that it was not the last outreach activity they were conducting and would interact with all other structures that can contribute in bringing change. He then announced that the next stops would be Mitchells Plain and Woodstock.