



MY DISTRICT TODAY



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PRIORITY 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

March tackles violence against women and children

By Mlungisi Dlamini: GCIS, KwaZulu-Natal

Violence against women and children has prompted civil society groups and government to work together and speak in one voice against gender-based violence (GBV). On 10 October 2019, the Department of Community Safety and Liaison, and the Emphithi Empowering Project led a team of government departments, non-governmental organisations and students in a three-kilometre march and dialogue aimed at raising awareness about GBV in Pietermaritzburg. The event has created a platform for young leaders to speak out about the plight of GBV.

Speaking on behalf of the Durban University of Technology students, Olwethu Ncoweni, said that students were tired of daily reports on GBV. "We are here today to make a mark so that our future generation does not suffer the same experience," he said. Ncoweni also added that the fight against GBV should become a collective effort. The event concluded with the signing of a pledge by several sector representatives as a commitment to fight against all forms of abuse.

Government has established the Gender-Based Violence Command Centre (GBVCC) to provide support services to victims of GBV. Callers can be assisted in any of the 11 official languages. In addition to the Toll-Free Line: 0800 428 428, the GBVCC has an SMS helpline: 31531 for text messages and 'Please Call Me' function via *120*7867#.



Participants listening to different speakers during the engagement.



Gender-based violence activist Lwazi Ntsele leading the march.



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Thobeka Mdunge said:

“We are here today to speak for the voiceless. We are saying ‘enough is enough’. The courts should give heavy sentences to perpetrators.”



Nosipho Ngcobo said:

“When dealing with the issue of gender-based violence, society needs to recognise that men are also affected by this scourge.”



Abulele Kufa said:

“Most students do not speak out about gender-based violence yet we have a number people in our area of residence who are victims of this scourge. This programme will assist us to raise awareness and mobilise people to come forward and report abuse.”

PRIORITY 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

Campaign tackles gender-based violence

By Livhuwani Todani: GCIS, Mpumalanga

The Government Communication and Information System, together with the Foundation for Victims of Crime (FOVOC), Childline South Africa, Thuthuzela Care Centre and the South African Police Service hosted a mall activation on 23 September 2019 at KG Mall in Emalahleni Local Municipality. The event sought to empower the community with information on how to report gender-based violence (GBV) and child abuse.

Community members were also informed about the danger of not reporting GBV and child abuse cases. Information leaflets with contact details were distributed and some community members came to the Thuthuzela Care Centre where they were offered assistance to open cases.

Speaking on behalf of FOVOC, Samantha Sibande said, “We have a centre that houses victims of abuse, we therefore urge victims to come forward and not stay in abusive relationships.”

The Emalahleni Thuthuzela Centre also conducted interviews with Emalahleni FM to raise awareness on how they can assist victims of abuse.

Thuthuzela care centres are one-stop facilities based in public hospitals to assist people who are victims of abuse. They seek “to reduce secondary trauma for the victim, to improve conviction rates and to reduce the cycle time for finalising cases”. Government is currently in the process of enhancing operations in all centres to ensure that they are fully functional. More information on the Thuthuzela care centres can be accessed via the link: www.justice.gov.za/vg/TCCs-list.pdf.



Thandeka Sibanyoni said:

“Change begins with one person. If you know you are living under an abusive relationship, report your case as early as possible.”



Community members holding placards during the activation.



Stakeholders distributing information materials to the public.



The herd of sheep in Zuurwater.



Two dams and a crib that are affected by drought in the Namakwa District.

PRIORITY 4: SPATIAL INTEGRATION, HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

Government assists drought stricken farmers

By Willem van Dalen: GCIS, Northern Cape

Deputy President David Mabuza visited the Aggeney community, in the Northern Cape on 4 October 2019 with the purpose of engaging with local farmers in Namakwa District Municipality. The visit comes amid calls by farmers to declare the area as drought-stricken. Farmers in the district were afforded an opportunity to raise factors that affect their ability to farm effectively.

The Deputy President met the Maasdorp family who represented other drought affected farmers during this visit. The family reiterated that they had to reduce their livestock from 700 sheep to just 90 because of severe drought.

Deputy President Mabuza committed that government would collaborate with the private sector to provide urgent relief to the Northern Cape farming communities, more especially those whose livestock is mostly affected by drought. Several measures have been established. Government has allocated an estimated amount of R30 million for immediate intervention in the procurement and distribution of fodder for the farming community as a short-term measure.

Moreover, government has promised to collaborate with stakeholders within the agricultural sector to ensure a coordinated approach to the challenge of drought that is severely affecting the area. It has also committed to help with the production of fodder to increase the current capacity of the Fodder Bank, established in the province.



Deputy President David Mabuza, Northern Cape Premier Zamani Saul and Pieter Groenewald at the Zuurwater farm.



Deputy President David Mabuza meets the Maasdorp family.

PRIORITY 5: SOCIAL COHESION AND SAFE COMMUNITIES.

Bonville community march against violence

By Selina Lekaota: GCIS, Free State

The Bronville community together with the South African National Civic Organisation gathered at the Welkom Magistrate Court on 10 October 2019 to deliver a memorandum requesting that bail never be given to those accused of gender-based violence (GBV), femicide and pedicide.

GBV cases continue to rise across South Africa. The Lejweleputswa District had experienced a high number of these cases.

Government has built sexual offences courts to prioritise GBV cases and to ensure that victims and survivors get justice.



Women marching from Welkom Central Park to the magistrate court to deliver their memorandum.