

MEDIA STATEMENT

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KZN MEC FOR FINANCE, NELISWA PEGGY NKONYENI TOURS UTHUKELA DISTRICT ON BUDGET AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Ntabamhlophe, Escourt: In an attempt to widen KZN Treasury's physical footprint on provincial budget matters as well as comprehensive government services, MEC Nkonyeni invited various stakeholders along with local leadership during a packed uMdwebu Sports Field, ward 14, under Ilangalibalele Local Municipality today.

MEC Nkonyeni was accompanied by the MEC Champion of UThukela District who is also MEC for Department of Basic Education, Ms Mbali Fraser, Operation Vula Fund under the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Social; Development, Ithala Bank, Health Systems Trust, and the Department of Health as well as KZN Treasury's very own Central Suppliers' Database to help local SMMEs to register in order to compete for government jobs.

Part of the requests that emanated during community engagement include the need for a police station inside Ntabamhlophe area to fight rampant crime that involves the killing of people and theft of livestock; support for local businesses and local agriculture.

Speaking during the engagement, Bongani Khulu of Ward 14, said he struggles to manage own finances.

"I am a pensioner but I cannot manage my financial situation because I now live my life through Loan Sharks. I need to learn how to manage my finances," he said.

Other requests include the need for government support for small businesses, information on government tenders and contracts as well as the need for sporting equipment to ensure that the youth hone their talent in sport and stay away from crime.

MEC Nkonyeni said she was encouraged to hear communities pouring their hearts out on matters that affect their livelihoods as well as the requests presented to government.

"We will channel certain requests to relevant government departments and these include the building of the police station, repairing of access roads and support for businesses and agriculture. It is illegal for any Loan Shark to take and keep people's Identity Documents and SASSA Cards just because they owe them money. That is why during our visit, we were able to recover from a Loan Shark Mr Khulu's ID and SASSA Card and handed it over to him, same time. In terms of road repairs, in KwaZulu-Natal, we also have our own Programme: Operation Siyazenzela under the Department of Transport that is tasked to repair roads without having to wait for tender processes. We will immediately introduce financial literacy programme under KZN Treasury to educate communities about financial management. We need to package all of these initiatives in order to cater for the different needs of communities," said Nkonyeni.

On Provincial Budget, Nkonyeni said since she tabled the R146 billion, they have been monitoring expenditure.

“We follow up on each department that requested budget for specific projects. Every quarter, we undertake our oversight role as KZN Treasury to see if the projects whose funding was allocated are indeed being built.

Nkonyeni said government will continue to encourage communities to start own businesses, come to KZN Treasury for assistance to register in the Central Suppliers’ Database and seek business support from available government funding schemes.

Issued by KZN Treasury. For clarity, contact Thuba Vilane on 060 521 7319 or Musa Cebisa on 071 687 8777.