



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

TAKING PARLIAMENT TO THE PEOPLE

KZN 2022



DAILY NEWS • ISSUE 3



Traditional leaders are urged to a more active role in the fight against crime



Taking part in the hearings, Mr Sibusiso Luthuli, who came from Harding, said traditional leaders can play a critical role in closing the gap created by the limited resources available to the South African Police Service (SAPS). “These leaders are already getting paid by the state and a collaboration with this institution could prove necessary in fighting the scourge of crime in

Participants, one after another, told the permanent delegates to the NCOP about the rise of crime in their communities. One of the participants implored the SAPS management to give community members clear timelines on when they can expect the resolution of their complaints. Participants cautioned against being sold pipe dreams, as this undermines SAPS’ already shaky credibility. They said they should not be, “made to wait like children waiting for a parent to bring potato chips from town; something which doesn’t happen. Instead, children wait forever”.

In response to many comments by the community, the Minister of Police Mr Bheki Cele reassured the people of uMuziwabantu municipality that his department is in the process of arranging a stakeholder engagement session planned for Monday, 28 November 2022. The meeting will discuss crime challenges in the area. Since April this year, about 40 people have been killed in uMuziwabantu. “We have arrested 12 people and their cases are in court,” he emphasised.

Minister Cele also urged communities to be active participants in the fight against crime, especially because criminals are known to communities. “These criminals are from your houses, but when the police go out looking for them, you protect them. Please work with the police to remove these criminals from our streets, so that we can live in peace,” Mr Cele said. Regarding the call for collaboration with traditional leadership, Minister Cele informed the people that SAPS has introduced what it calls traditional policing, where traditional leaders provide office space at traditional council offices to enable people to report cases closer to the people. “The intervention was launched in the Eastern Cape and will be extended countrywide to enhance a collaborative crime fighting.”

The residents of Ugu District Municipality have called for traditional leaders to play a more active role in the fight against crime, as a large number of the South African population in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) lives in tribal communities, writes Malatswa Molepo.

The call was made by the people of KZN during the public hearings on crime, which formed part of the week-long Taking Parliament to the People programme currently underway in KZN. The programme was chaired by the Chairpersons of the NCOP’s Select Committee on Security and Justice and her counterpart, the KZN Legislature’s Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Community Safety and Liaison.

the rural areas,” he said.

The general sentiment expressed was that crime is a worry to the majority of South Africans and gender-based-violence, taxi violence and murder occur frequently in KZN. Residents of uMuziwabantu Local Municipality complained about the escalation in the murder rate in their municipality and called for increased police visibility. People also mentioned an increase in substance abuse among the youth.

“We are really worried by the high murder rate in our area. The proliferation of firearms worsens an already ominous situation. What is more worrying is that perpetrators are not arrested and there is slow response from the police to complaints by the community. Can the police strengthen the monitoring of places that sell alcohol, especially illegal shebeens and taverns?” asked one resident, Ms Nosipho Mkhize.

Floods victims express their bitter experiences of homelessness



The effects of floods and the backlog in building replacement houses in Ugu District Municipality took centre stage during the third day of Taking Parliament to the People's public hearings in the area, writes Abel Mputing.

The victims of the April floods in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) spoke about their bitter experiences of being left homeless after the disaster. One of the victims, Ms Ntombi Ntungwana, said: "Many families affected by floods were promised emergency houses, but some in our community are still without them. Many of them are now living with other families."

Ms Ntungwana said the floods added to the

number of names on the housing list, which even in normal circumstances grows every year as the population grows. An added complication is the tinkering with the list that councillors indulge in.

Another resident who participated in the hearings, Mr Thami Nyawu, said: "Some councillors sell houses and disregard housing waiting list and if you don't know a councillor you are unlikely to get a house." He also asked that the provincial human settlement department allocate a certain percentage of the available housing for people living with disabilities and that they are prioritised on the list for housing.

Another participant, Mr Xolani Ntini, asked the government to build decent houses with the necessary amenities, such as running water and sanitation and which are big enough to maintain the privacy and dignity of their occupants.

Farmworkers also voiced feelings of neglect at the hands of the Department of Human Settlements. One of them, Mr David Dlamini, said: "We vote like other South Africans, but we are neglected. We don't get houses, we continue to live in squalor. We, too, deserve decent houses."

During the response session, KZN's MEC for Human Settlements Dr Ntuthuko Mhlaba said Ugu District Municipality received R312 million for human settlement development. As for the families still in temporary units due to flooding, Dr Mhlaba claimed that 1 072 of them in the district have been approved for housing. He added that the district is in the process of profiling disabled persons and they will be allocated housing in

future that suits their needs.

On this point, the Minister of Human Settlement, Ms Mmamoloko Kubayi-Ngubane, added that various norms and standards govern the construction of housing for the elderly and the disabled. However, she conceded that in some instances such standards are not observed because of the lack of water bulk infrastructure or the geographic location of certain communities, which make it difficult for these norms and standards to be observed.

She made an example that in some rural areas it is difficult for Eskom to connect houses to the electricity grid because of their geographical location. "In such instances, we have decided to install solar panels in these areas to give them access to electricity, but also to ensure that electricity is affordable to them," said Ms Kubayi-Ngubane.



NCOP delegation concerned about Umzumbe housing development delays

A KwaZulu-Natal multimillion-rand housing development project that was supposed to be completed within three years is still incomplete almost 10 years later. The Umzumbe Cluster C Rural Housing Project was approved in 2014 with a budget allocation of R144 million to build one thousand units. Eight years later, only 539 houses have been completed with R91 million spent, writes Sakhile Mokoena.

A National Council of Provinces (NCOP) delegation that is part of the Taking Parliament to the People programme currently under way in the province's Ugu District Municipality conducted an oversight visit to the project.

"The Cluster C project there is a serious problem in term of the timeline. The project started in 2014 and we are now in 2022,

almost 10 years later. The expected time of completion was at least three and half years; we are well beyond that timeline. There have been lots of problems with the implementing agents, and our concern is that every time a project is extended, there are cost implications, which becomes a bit of a challenge," said delegation leader Ms Shahidabibi Shaik.

Officials from the municipality told the delegation that some of the challenges contributing to the delays in the project are poor performance by implementing agents and, on two occasions, contracts had to be terminated. With a third contractor now on site, the project is now expected to be completed next year.

The NCOP delegation was not impressed with this explanation and noted the cost to government when projects are delayed. Ms Shaik and her delegation, which also comprised Members of Provincial Legislatures, resolved to write to the municipality and the provincial Department



of Human Settlements for a detailed report on the project.

"The municipality needs to engage the different spheres to resolve all the challenges and ensure the project goes well. We cannot have poor people waiting for houses for 10 years; it is unfair," she said.

The delegation was also briefed on progress with Cluster B, a related project within the same district, which is still within the project timeline. However, there is currently a dispute with local contractors about the construction of the foundation slabs.

Improved stakeholder relations critical to successful completion of project

A delegation of permanent delegates to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and Members of the Provincial Legislature have called for improved stakeholder relations to ensure the completion of the Harding Main Road project. The delegation visited the site of the development as part of the Taking Parliament to the People programme, which is currently underway in Margate, in the Ugu District's Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal, writes Malatswa Molepo.

The delegation was concerned that the municipality had not invited important stakeholders, such as community leaders and business forums, to better inform members about the progress achieved and likely impediments. "The main reason why many projects stall is the lack of communication, collaboration and sharing of information. By making this call, we want to avoid any inevitable challenge that might arise as a result of gaps in communication," said Ms Lydia Moshodi, the leader of delegation.

The project involves the rehabilitation of the 2.2-kilometre road starting at the intersection with the N2 to the Mbango River, tying into Nelson Mandela drive. This road provides access to the CBD and out of Port Shepstone, giving access to the



industrial, commercial and residential areas of Marburg. Funding was made available through the Neighbourhood Development Partnership Grant.

The delegation commended the workmanship on site, which will increase the lifespan of the road, especially as it is a busy road. Also, the connection to the commercial and industrial area will have a positive spinoff in increasing the economic output within the town, leading to increased job creation. The committee also appreciated the simultaneous development of a storm water drainage system that will move the water away from the road and prevent deterioration.

Nonetheless, the delegation was concerned that the project largely excludes women, as only three of 10 subcontractors are female-owned companies. "We must emphasise our frustration that female-owned construction companies continue to be excluded in such projects, which undermines the drive to transform the industry and empower more women to actively

participate in such projects," said Ms Lydia Moshodi, the leader of delegation.

The committee has also noted the delays in implementing the project and emphasised the importance of meeting timeline deadlines. While this is a concern, the delegation accepted that some of the delays are caused by rain. Nonetheless, the delegation urged the contractor to comply with deadlines to ensure project completion and prevent cost overruns.

The delegation also highlighted the importance of making an effort to accommodate the needs of businesses situated along the road, especially as the festive season approaches. "It is important that constant communication and mitigating solutions are found to ensure that businesses are not adversely affected," Ms Moshodi emphasised.



NCOP delegates urge Ugu District Municipality to find funding to refurbish St Helen's Rock raw water pump station



A delegation of permanent delegates to the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and Members of the Provincial Legislature have urged the Ugu District Municipality to renew its focus in finding sufficient resources to refurbish the St Helen's Rock Raw Water Pump Station, writes Malatswa Molepo.

The delegation visited the pump station to assess progress in the refurbishment of the plant. "The municipality must give the pump station the necessary attention, because it is a strategic resource and provides water to a large community. This strategic resource has its own issues and, if they are not attended to, it will have dire consequences, both social and economic, in the area," said Mr China Dodovu, the leader of delegation.

The delegation was informed that the municipality has received R15.3 million to start the refurbishment, but needs in excess of R30 million to undertake all the refurbishments required. The R15 million from the Department of Cooperative Governance is being used to refurbish the ageing pump station infrastructure. The delegation called for the municipality to include the project in its Integrated Development Plans to ensure that it budgets for the remaining portion of the project.

This recommendation should be seen in the context of the municipality's residents, who highlighted during the public hearing part of the Taking Parliament to the People programme that prolonged water cuts are having a negative effect on their lives and businesses. The NCOP delegation was reassured to hear that recent water outages were due to the refurbishment project and not neglect, in which production at the pump station was reduced for a time to allow for maintenance.

In addition, load shedding has had a

negative impact on the optimal operation of the plant. "As a result of surges in electricity, when electricity comes back, our switches would be destroyed. But as part of this refurbishment projects we have installed heavy switches that can withstand the surge," said Mr Malibongwe Zwane from the municipality.

The delegation further welcomed the news that the pump station is now exempt from load shedding. Moreover, the delegation was pleased to hear that new pumps purchased from the United States have arrived in South Africa and will be installed soon.

Meanwhile, the delegation was concerned by the lack of fencing around the 22-metre-deep upstream dam that receives water from the pump station. The lack of a fence is a risk to life for people and animals and must be attended to urgently. "We accept the interim measures taken by the municipality to have a person stationed at the dam to avert encroachment of the dam. But the reality is that people and animals might attempt to access the dam leading to the loss of life. A permanent solution must be found to prevent this," Mr Dodovu emphasised.

The installation of rain gauges upstream to enable the municipality to timeously turn off the pumps when there are surges in water is welcomed and will ensure pumps last as long as possible. "Our preoccupation is ensuring that the plant operates optimally for the benefit of the people of Ugu District Municipality. Water is a necessary resource and all efforts and attention must be made to ensure that our people receive water," Mr Dodovu concluded.



Vandalism and cable theft threaten water supply in Ugu



Vandalism of water infrastructure and the theft of electricity cables in KwaZulu-Natal's Ugu District Municipality are disrupting the municipality's efforts to resolve water supply challenges in the district, writes Sakhile Mokoena.

Senior officials from the district municipality's water resources management unit told a delegation of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and Members of Provincial Legislatures during a site visit to Bhothoyi Water Treatment Plant in the Ray

Nkonyeni Local Municipality that incidents of vandalism and the theft of cable and solar panels are a huge disruption to water supply.

"There is vicious vandalism and cable theft across the district and our water supply infrastructure gets severely affected, causing serious disruptions to water supply in the district," said Mr Rowan Mlambo, a manager in the Ugu water resource management unit.

The officials dismissed any possible

links between the vandalism of water infrastructure and the proliferation of water tankers. In other parts of the country, suspicions have been aired linking the vandalism of municipal water infrastructure to criminal syndicates with an interest in keeping the water tankers in business.

Another big challenge facing the district is aging infrastructure that results in water supply disruption due to frequent burst water pipes. The municipality has embarked on a massive programme to upgrade the water treatment plants and replace old pipes. The delegation heard that the municipality needs about a billion rand to replace all the aged infrastructure, but is only able to do it in stages, due to budget constraints.

Delegation leader Ms Shahidabibi Shaik, who is also the Chairperson of the Select Committee on Security and Justice, condemned the vandalism of water infrastructure and advised the municipality to involve the South African Police Service in the matter. She also commended the municipality for completing the upgrade of the Bhothoyi plant, at a cost of R35 million within the allocated project time.

NCOP calls for acceleration of housing services to the people



The current speed of service delivery to the people of Ugu District Municipality is disappointing and requires urgent action. A delegation of the permanent delegates to the National Council of Provinces and Members of Provincial Legislatures visited a site where families affected by the recent floods have been relocated, writes Malatswa Molepo

The site visit was part of the week-long Taking Parliament to the People programme, which is currently underway in Ugu District Municipality in Gamalkahe in the Ray Nkonyeni Local Municipality.

The Chief Whip of the NCOP, Mr Seiso Mohai, who was part of the group that visited the site, said: “We have seen the temporary housing units provided to the four families and we are generally satisfied that it provides decent housing to the families. But our wish is that the municipality moves

with speed to deliver permanent housing, not only to these families, but to all deserving people in the area.”

The delegation was informed that the area around the Dujazana Temporary Housing projects did not have access to water and electricity and had to walk far to fetch water. The delegation emphasised that South Africa has moved from providing housing to a human settlements system that encourages availability of services in close proximity to where people live. As a result, the delegation recommended that municipal Integrated Development Plans reflect this change in perspective.

The R70 000 cost per unit of the prefabricated house was also questioned by the delegation, especially regarding the value-for-money proposition. Also, a concern was raised around the information that the first contractor abandoned the project without completion and delivery of the units. The delegation requested a complete breakdown of the cost incurred, detailing how much each phase of the house cost. Also, the report should include any cost overruns incurred by the municipality as a result of the non-completion of the project.

The delegation welcomed the assurance that the houses were anchored on the ground, which will prevent the repeat of the mudslides that led to the loss of lives in KZN. The delegation was also pleased with the assurance that geo-technical studies have been done classifying the area as safe, as this provides assurance to the families.

Meanwhile, Mr Simfumene Funwa, a beneficiary of one of the houses said he was happy that they were moved from the local church and given the house, although it is temporary. “We are happy that we have a place to sleep and no longer have to share the house with eight other family members. The municipality has assured us that we will get a more permanent structures soon,” Mr Funwa said.

