

AmaMpondo seek state's help to plough fertile land and grow food



HONOURED: AmaMpondo AseNyandeni King Ndamase Ndamase receives a heifer donation from OR Tambo mayor Thokozile Sokanyile during her visit to Nyandeni great place near Libode. Picture: LULAMILE FENI

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The communities of AmaMpondo and their traditional leaders are deeply concerned about large tracts of land that lie fallow while people are unemployed and poverty levels soar.

They have now appealed to newly-elected OR Tambo mayor Thokozile Sokanyile to assist them to work the land so that poverty can be alleviated.

They have also asked that their concerns reach the ears of premier Oscar Mabuyane and President Cyril Ramaphosa.

"We have plenty of land, but unfortunately we do not have the means to work it.

"We do not have tractors to plough. We AmaMpondo are not lazy people by nature, but we have been disabled by lack of implementation to work it," said AmaMpondo AseNyan-

deni King Ndamase Ndlovu-yeze Ndamase.

Sokanyile has embarked on a roadshow introducing herself to the three kings in the district, and is calling for co-operation between the monarchs and the district municipality to work for cohesion in development of

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King Ndamase

communities.

Sokanyile was accompanied by some of her mayoral committee members and as a sign of respect, provided gifts of a heifer, a case of cool drinks, a case of beer and two bottles of brandy.

This was her second visit to a

monarch. On Tuesday, she visited AmaMpondo King Zanzuko Tyelovuyo Sigcau at his Ndimakude great place in Flagstaff.

Next week she will visit AbaThembu acting King Azenathi Dalindyabo at Bumbane great place near Mthatha.

"We want to be active partners in the development of our communities and ensure that our communities work the land, children get education and government provides all the necessary service delivery projects," Ndamase said.

In a closed meeting, the cultivation of cannabis as part of agriculture and farming in the AmaMpondo AseNyandeni kingdom was discussed, as was the kingdom's talks with potential investors from China.

Another issue was the lack of water in Nyandeni.

Traditional leaders have called on Sokanyile and the government to use boreholes as

an option to supplement water supply in the district.

The king said the people who had been commissioned by human settlements MEC Babalo Madikizela to drill a borehole for the great place had not returned after the Easter weekend.

Sokanyile noted the issues raised.

"Yes, I can even see that the yard of the great place and the palace fence pose a safety risk to the king and his family and degrade his dignity.

"On the issue of land, we will request the king and the traditional leaders to assist us when government comes with agricultural projects, and ensure that there is no theft and vandalism of the projects."

Sokanyile said that it was of great concern that the national department of public works, which owned some of the buildings at the great place, had not maintained them.