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MANDELA DAY PURSUITS

New Madiba statue faces criticism, unions clean up

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AS WITH every year on July 18, people across the world celebrate the life and accomplishments of Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first democratically elected president.

Across the country, state organs, and private and civil organisations each conducted their own activities to commemorate the day.

Arguably the biggest attraction took place in Mthatha, in the Eastern Cape, where President Cyril Ramaphosa unveiled a statue of Madiba.

The statue was erected at the Nelson Mandela Museum.

"The erection of this statue contributes to the creation of memorialisation programmes in honour of President Mandela's unwavering commitment to the freedom of his people and as a founding father of democratic South Africa," the Presidency said.

But it was not met with all smiles and welcomes, many people online questioned the need for another Madiba statue when infrastructure in the province was in a poor condition, to say the least.

By the comments attached to posts about the statue, it seemed only those



SINCE 2009, the world has marked International Nelson Mandela Day. | **BRENDAN MAGAAR**
African News Agency (ANA)

in government were happy to see it erected. In other parts of the country, trade union Cosatu was seen conducting various clean-up activities.

In Gauteng, the provincial government deployed a group of people called the "Green army" to clean up a field in the Everton area.

Transnet National Port Authorities in Durban supported the Ntwela Junior Primary School in uMlazi, by helping them achieve "food security" for a year. They did so by donating groceries to the school – which is a non-paying

institution, and also by setting up a "small vegetable garden" to help them with supplies throughout the course of the year.

"The plan is for us to assist the school caterers prepare lunch for the learners, dish up for them and assist with cleaning up after lunch, as well as officially hand over groceries that will sustain them for the year," Transnet said.

Political parties like the ANC and DA also used the day to get out on to the streets and conduct service delivery



MINISTER Sihle Zikalala in Pretoria operating the road paving equipment.

activities, ranging from grass cutting to paving of roads.

Former chairperson of the ANC in KZN and now Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Sihle Zikalala, and the Gauteng MEC for Roads and Transport visited an orphanage in Hammanskraal, Pretoria. Zikalala was seen operating some heavy machinery as he paved a portion of the road.

The DA's John Steenhuisen visited the Ekhanana Old Age Home in uMlazi and carried out routine maintenance on the facility.