


**Publication:** Daily News - Main

 **Title:** Premier's working group set to deliver first report

**Publish date:** 15 Apr 2025

**Page:** 3

**Reach:** 8283

**AVE:** R 14887.49

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## MSUNDUZI MUNICIPALITY TURNAROUND

# Premier's working group set to deliver first report

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THE working group that was appointed by KwaZulu-Natal Premier Thamsanqa Ntuli to turn around Msunduzi local municipality will hand over its first report next week.

This was confirmed by the Premier's Office spokesperson Bongani Gina on Monday.

Gina said the group has confirmed to the premier that it will submit its first report on the challenges it found in the municipality and progress it has made in turning around the situation.

"The Premier is expecting a report from the chairperson of the working group, Ravi Pillay, on April 25. The report will detail the challenges the team found as well as the progress it has made since its appointment in February," said Gina.

The group, similar to the eThekweni Presidential Group, was appointed in February as part of the new Section 154 intervention measures following a report by Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs MEC Reverend Thulasizwe Buthelezi in October last year, which said the Municipality's governance was deteriorating.

Announcing the team, Ntuli also said the intervention was necessitated by the Auditor-General's report, which

recommended urgent interventions in the municipality.

Pillay, a former Public Works and Finance MEC, leads a seven-member team that includes provincial director-general Dr Nonhlanhla Mkhize who is the co-chairperson as well as various heads of provincial departments.

Some of the key terms of reference of Pillay's team were to ensure that the municipality implemented the findings of the investigation reports as well as meeting the service delivery needs of the communities.

The municipality had been under administration for more than five years and to the surprise of the many people including the opposition parties, it was lifted out of administration in April last year.

Opposition parties rejected the MEC's decision arguing that instead the municipality should have been placed under Section 139(1)(c), which would have meant that it would be dissolved and hold fresh elections.

The ANC-led municipality has been besieged by administrative problems which included failing to take control of the finances, lack of consequence management and failure to prevent irregular and unauthorised expenditure.