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THE annual Umkhosi woMlanga (Reed Dance) in KwaZulu-Natal. | File

KZN GOVERNMENT

'No additional costs for 2025 Reed Dance at Mashobeni Palace'

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DESPITE the annual Umkhosi woMlanga (Reed Dance) in KwaZulu-Natal taking place at a different location next month, no further expenses will be incurred.

This is according to Tammy Colley, MPL, DA KZN Spokesperson on Sports, Arts and Culture, who stated that there was an annual budget for the Reed Dance.

She said the matter was also discussed at a KZN Legislature Portfolio Committee on August 15.

"From my understanding and from the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, there were no additional funds because of the venue change," she said.

Amazulu King Misuzulu kaZwelithini decided to relocate the annual Reed Dance ceremony from Enyokeni Palace to the new Mashobeni Palace, in Pongola, which is a few kilometres from KwaKhangelamankengana Palace.

The provincial government, through the Department of Public Works in KZN, recently completed a massive Amphitheatre at Enyokeni, which cost the taxpayers R140 million and was expected to be used for the 2025 event.

The dome-designed structure was requested by Misuzulu's father, the late King Goodwill Zwelithini, for the Reed Dance and has facilities that do not require the hiring of VIP marquees or toilets. The structure has a seating capacity for 2000 people.

At Mashobeni, a makeshift pavilion was created where maidens and the public gather for the king's address after the presentation of reeds by the maidens.

Colley emphasised, that eNyokeni Royal Palace must not become another white elephant in the province, adding that there were concerns about the future use of this facility and its maintenance.

"It is now essential that clarity be provided to ensure that public money spent on infrastructure delivers value for both the Zulu nation and the province's people," she said.

Premier of KwaZulu-Natal Thami Ntuli confirmed that the annual Reed Dance ceremony, one of the province's most significant cultural traditions, will, for the first time, be hosted at Mashobeni Royal Palace.

"This marks a new chapter in the continuation of a cultural practice that celebrates purity, womanhood, and unity within the Zulu society," he said.

Dr Nomagugu Ngobese said there was nothing wrong with the change of venue, and people were making "harsh" statements without understanding the history of the Zulu Royal Palaces.

Ngobese is the founder of Nombukhulwane Youth Development Institute, a cultural body that plays an important role at the annual Umkhosi woMlanga.

"Each king has a different venue, and I see no point in people making a noise about it. Our maidens would like to go to another venue. They are still young. They are not concerned about the change of venue, but rather the significance of the event," she said.