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KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

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JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

MINISTER MACPHERSON & MEC MEYER CONCLUDE SUCCESSFUL VISIT TO HIS MAJESTY KING MISUZULU KAZWELITHINI

(Note to editors: Photos of Public Works & Infrastructure Minister, Dean Macpherson, and KwaZulu-Natal Member of the Executive Council (MEC), Martin Meyers, visit to His Majesty King Misuzulu kaZwelithini at Mashobeni Royal Palace can be found [here](#).)

- Public Works & Infrastructure Minister Dean Macpherson and KwaZulu-Natal MEC Martin Meyer met with His Majesty King Misuzulu kaZwelithini and Amakhosi in Nongoma to strengthen collaboration between government and traditional leadership on rural development and infrastructure delivery.
- The King expressed support for the Minister's EPWP vision, the work the IDT is doing and the Social Facilitation Framework, confirming his participation in the EPWP pilot launch in KwaZulu-Natal and commitment to resolving land-related matters with the Department.
- MEC Meyer highlighted the provincial Department's ongoing work to unlock rural economic opportunities, reclaim hijacked state assets, and deliver projects that drive local job creation, tourism, and community empowerment across KwaZulu-Natal.

The Minister of Public Works & Infrastructure, Dean Macpherson, and the KwaZulu-Natal Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Public Works & Infrastructure, Martin Meyer, on Monday afternoon concluded a successful visit to His Majesty King Misuzulu kaZwelithini in Nongoma, KwaZulu-Natal. After briefing His Majesty on the work that the Department of Public Works & Infrastructure and its entities are undertaking at both national and provincial levels, the Minister, MEC, and departmental heads held discussions with Amakhosi, during which a number of matters were resolved. The Minister and MEC were joined by the Chairperson of the Independent Development Trust (IDT), Zimbini Hill; the Chairperson of the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), Khulile Nzo; and the Chief Executive Officer of the Council for the Built Environment (CBE), Dr Msizi Myeza.

During the engagement with the King and Amakhosi, both the Minister and MEC expressed the importance of working with the Royal Family to deliver services to rural communities across KwaZulu-Natal. Among the major initiatives highlighted by the Minister includes the work to reform the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) to become a hand-up towards permanent employment and the social facilitation framework to work with communities to bring an end to construction stoppages. The Minister also outlined the important work of the Independent Development Trust as a force for good by building much needed social

infrastructure. The King voiced his full support to these initiatives and entities and said he would join the launch of the pilot EPWP program in KwaZulu-Natal, as well as encourage Amakhosi to work alongside the department to implement the social facilitation framework.

Meanwhile, MEC Meyer highlighted projects such as the Nongoma cultural amphitheatre which has been able to show that state-of-the art facilities can exist in rural KwaZulu-Natal while driving tourism and economic development. Furthermore, he said his department's work to release 11 commercial properties to the KwaZulu-Natal Agriculture and Rural Development Department and a shoe factory in Msinga to the KwaZulu-Natal Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs department will further support the empowerment of rural communities.

Minister Macpherson said the visit, a first by the department to the king, marks an important milestone towards strengthening relationships as the department delivers on its mandate and improve the lives of all South Africa.

"To achieve our development goals, it is essential that we work with His Majesty, King Misuzulu to uplift rural communities in KwaZulu-Natal. I am therefore deeply grateful to the King for granting us the opportunity to visit him and brief both him and the Amakhosi as we work together to build a better province for all its people," said Minister Macpherson.

"Without the support of traditional leadership, we will not secure the community buy-in necessary to prevent construction stoppages across the province, meaningfully implement a reformed EPWP to benefit young people, and deliver large-scale infrastructure projects in rural communities such as schools, police stations, and hospitals that will improve the lives of many. This is why support for entities like the IDT and CIDB by His Majesty is most welcomed."

MEC Meyer added that KwaZulu-Natal Public Works and Infrastructure remains committed to improving the infrastructure and lives of the many people that live in rural KZN.

"Through programmes like EPWP and stakeholder involvement, we are working to ensure that the quality of training aligns with the industry demands which will equip beneficiaries to be skilled in lifelong essential skills," MEC Meyer said.

"KZN Public Works and Infrastructure is also hard at work to reclaim what it owns. Having recently completed our audit, we now understand how our 10 067 assets are used and how many are hijacked properties. In this regard, it has been identified that some of the biggest concentration of hijacked properties is in Ulundi. That is why KZN Public Works and Infrastructure has begun talks with KZN SAPS provincial commissioner, General Nhlanhla Mkhwanazi, and the Honourable Premier, Thamsanqa Ntuli, as the custodian of Community Safety and Liaison to take back these assets which are paid for by the taxes of the people of KwaZulu-Natal and which harbour various illegal and criminal elements."

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