

Festive launch of 2010 National Water Week

Mthatha played host to numerous VIP guests and hundreds of people who gathered at the FNB Rotary Stadium to be part of the National Water Week launch on Monday 15 March 2010.

It was a festive mood as DWA Minister Buyelwa Sonjica, Premier of the Eastern Cape Ms Noxolo Kiviet, mayors, councilors, community water conservation field workers and the community at large turned the event into a colourful affair characterised by singing, music and dance.

When delivering her address, Minister Sonjica said, "Ma ndi qale ngo ku bulela insebenzisano. Ku ya bonakala ukuthi sibambisene, sizisa amaservices ebantwini. Ndi bulela futhi inkokhelo yakho, Premier. Ndi bulela nama-officials, kepha indlela ise inde. Umsebenzi usemninsi," - thanking Premier Kiviet, DWA officials and the local municipality for working together in bringing services to the people. But she warned them that there was still a lot to be done.

"We are all aware of the dire straits and challenges that drought has imposed on this province. In this regard I am pleased to announce new interventions that we are making to respond to this great challenge".

One intervention is that the Department has made available an additional R6, 35m to the Eastern Cape province for drought relief programmes. This is in addition to the R5m rain water tanks project that DWA has already started implementing in six district municipalities - the O.R. Tambo District Municipality (ORTDM), Alfred Nzo, Amathole, Ukhahlamba, Cacadu and Chris Hani municipalities.

"In addition to the R2, 2m that we made available to Amathole District for rainwater tanks and ground water exploration, we will make available a further R2m for Adelaide and Bedford to equip boreholes in these areas and augment the existing programme to fight drought," Minister Sonjica added.

"In the same vein, I am also throwing a challenge to our local government partners to ensure that these interventions get implemented with the urgency they deserve for the benefit of our people on the ground. I am also delighted that the national treasury has now issued a new directive that municipalities should report on their water quality and state of waste water treatment works. We need to build on this and ensure that we all take our requisite constitutional responsibility seriously," Sonjica noted.

The Department has also funded the Mthatha bulk sewer infrastructure refurbishment for R25m. This is to effect repairs and refurbishment of sewers, pump stations and waste water treatment works. This project is progressing well and is due for completion in June 2010.

"It is my belief that in this year of service delivery, together with the communities of Mthatha we can do more to save and protect our water resources," concluded Sonjica.

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