

ABOUT US

The eZasegagasini Metro is the official eThekweni Municipality publication through which ratepayers and residents are kept informed about news, entertainment and perspectives in the greater Durban region.

It is also a forum for readers' views. It hits the streets fortnightly on a Friday, with 450 000 copies distributed throughout the region.

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A street by any other name

SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

THE ANC and smaller parties at council this week reaffirmed that consultation with ward committees on the proposed renamings of streets and buildings in the eThekweni area would continue until June 2007.

This was after the tabling of a report from the Masakhane, Grants-in-Aid, Non-Racism, Non-Sexism and Non-Discrimination committee seeking permission to amend the renaming policy to allow ward committees to also make an input in the process.

But opposition parties chiefly the DA, IFP and MF dissented saying that council could not amend a policy that was already halfway through.

They called for a revamp of the renaming process in its entirety as it had been "characterized by blunders and majoritarian arrogance."

The parties also called for the formation of a new task team comprised of legal experts, geographers and historians to drive



the consultation process.

The Minority Front's Jayraj Singh said accused the ruling party of being power drunk in its approach to the

renamings.

In response the ANC said the 30-day extension to the original deadline was to afford the public further opportunity to comment and make fresh proposals.

"Consultation did occur and we canvassed the views of all political parties and the public and we are still continuing to do so," said ANC councillor Stanley Xulu.

He said enough time had already been wasted and the move by opposition parties fell nothing short of tactics aimed at further delaying the process.

Exco member S'bu Gumede seconded him.

He said the renaming process was legitimate and described those opposed to it as speaking "aMangoSuthu," implying that opposition parties were leveling false accusations against the ANC by saying that the process had flaws.

The IFP however took offense at this statement saying Gumede

deliberately sought to degrade their party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi by using his name in that context.

The party later staged a walkout after Gumede refused to retract his statement instead saying that he had expressed himself "in proper isiZulu."

Masakhane Chairperson Zandile Gumede said the ANC was not using its majority at council to unfairly disadvantage minority parties.

"The process is not being bulldozed. All concerned persons were given opportunities to participate and we are now ensuring that they are being given a further chance to make submissions," she said.

The IFP, DA and MF all voted against the amendment of the policy adopted earlier this year.

According to the amendment, all submissions received up to 23 June will be considered by a task team of municipal officials and then presented to the Masakhane Committee.

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Getting connected

KEN MCHUNU

'TECHNOLOGY has revolutionised the world we live in and now is the time for us to embrace the transformation and exploit it for our benefit as a skilled and literate society'. So said Ina Cronje, KwaZulu-Natal MEC for Education, last week, when she opened a 15-computer lab at St Charles Memorial Combined Primary School, in Shongweni, which had been donated by Enforce Security Services. She said her department would need R300-million a year for six years if it were to furnish every school in KZN with computers. "It is impossible for us to provide all our schools with computers. This is why we need to forge partnerships with the private sector."

St Charles becomes the second disadvantaged school to benefit from a campaign by Enforce to offer assistance to battling schools throughout the province. With the R280 000 worth of 15 computers with internet connection, the company presented the school with 16 desks and 32 chairs and will install burglar guards and an alarm system later in the year. Clinton Phipps, Managing Director of Enforce Security, said his company's "small contribution" intended to empower learners with skills to make them compatible in the job market. Shongweni Councillor, Themba Moyo said the gift would go a long way to serve even future generations.

IN BRIEF

Delivering with dignity

GUGU BLOSE

ETHEKWINI'S Housing Unit recently began the roll-out of a housing consumer education programme aimed at making consumers aware of issues that concern them in their new status as homeowners.

Siko Thabede, a senior manager in the housing unit said: 'It will bridge the gap in understanding what the government wants to do and expectations of beneficiaries and public at large. This will remove a lot of obstacles to housing delivery.'

Residents of Inanda were told what documentation a person who owns a house should have, how to take care of their homes and taking responsibility for procuring repairs to various faults in their homes. 'Any home owner should procure their own repairs. Benefiting from low cost housing should not mean that the housing unit must fix your broken light bulb. People must begin to own their homes,' said Mpume Qwabe of the Housing Unit.

Refuse burning prohibited

ZAMASWAZI NDLOVU

FROM 1 June the burning of garden refuse on residential properties throughout the municipality will be prohibited.

The burning of fire breaks and other controlled management burning in natural grassland, nature reserves, conservancies and in the agricultural sector would be subject to approval.

This new regulation states: "Residents should apply for permission from the Fire Department in order to undertake such burning, where they will be asked to fill in the prescribed forms". Contravention of this regulation may result in fines, of no less than R1 300.

Previously, residents from the outer west region burned garden refuse as a means of disposal. Development and densification of the region as well as improved waste removal services has now made this practice intolerable.

To report complaints or for further information, call 031 361 0000.

IT trainees graduate

VERNON MCHUNU

HISTORY was made in the city when 100 locals trained in computer and information technology graduated courtesy of the democratic government.

"This first set of graduates must be recorded as they are part of a very important piece of history," a beaming Deputy Mayor Logie Naidoo said.

The graduates have been receiving training in Information and Communication Technology.

Naidoo said the graduation was a statement about ICT development as a way of developing the economy to address poverty. "This is world wide revolution," he said.

Jacque Subban, head of the city's Geographical Information & Policy Unit, said information and communications technology was the most important aspect of life today.

The graduation ceremony was attended by deputy communications minister Roy Maharaj, who congratulated the city for having taken this "all important step".

Non profits meet in SDB

KEN MCHUNU

THE South Durban Basin Area-based Management Programme this week hosted an Indaba for Non-Profit Organisations at the Clairwood racecourse. More than 57 organisations were given an opportunity to raise concerns and work out, with different spheres of government and the private sector, how to work toward sustainability.

Eurekha Singh, SDB Social Development Manager, said a survey had shown that NPO's in the SDB lacked information on how to acquire funding for projects. This had resulted in competition and inefficiency.

Singh said: "There are currently four to five thousand formal businesses in the SDB and the amount is almost double in informal businesses and NPO's. Funding for projects remains a major issue for NPO's, which often results in most projects not reaching full materialisation. We want to establish a forum to address this and other issues the NPO's face."

Stop cable theft plea

GUGU BLOSE

'ELECTRICITY theft kills our children.' That is the message that drives the Save Your Power campaign run by the eThekweni electricity services department.

Vincent Zondi of electricity services said, 'A lot of people get their electricity connected illegally which leaves a lot of wires hanging out in the open exposed to children. This campaign helps us make them aware of the dangers around exposed electricity wires.'

The campaign takes the form of a road show, and was recently taken to Clermont.

"It is important to note that no electricity is free.

"We monitor all the electricity that we distribute and everyone has to make up the cost of the illegal electricity. That is why we go into communities and urge them to report illegal connections to our toll free number," Zondi said.

Illegal connections are also a contributing factor to power outages.