

## ABOUT US

The eZasegasini 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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080 131 3013

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**Abandoned Vehicles:**

031 311 2814

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## ROMITA HANUMAN

THE City's Housing Department has won the Southern African Housing Foundation Special Merit Award for its upgrade project at the SJ Smith Hostel in Merebank.

Senior Project Manager Lawrence Pato received the award on behalf of the department at a recent

## Kudos for SJ Smith upgrade

conference in Cape Town.

Judges were looking for a community residential unit project, as the revamped hostel is now termed, that could serve as an easily replicated model. The units had to offer good value for

money, privacy and a pleasant living environment.

Judges also wanted to see that residents were paying their rent, as this showed the project was sustainable.

Walter Ngubane, Project Executive: Hostels, said SJ

Smith had initially accommodated about 4 500 people. "After the upgrade there are an extra 300 beds, which is equivalent to 12 duplexes, or family units."

Cllr Sbu Gumede, who chairs the Council's Housing

Committee, said: "People are now responsible for their homes. It becomes an ownership factor and people will take care of them, whereas in the hostels they would not worry about cleanliness."

Thanks to a new billing system, a substantial increase in rental payments had been achieved this year.

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## Concern at hostels transfer

## SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

THE DA has expressed reservations about plans for the municipality to take over several city hostels previously administered by provincial government.

At a recent Executive Committee (Exco) meeting the opposition party expressed its concern over what it said was a "transfer of responsibility" by the provincial Housing Department.

DA caucus leader Cllr John Steenhuisen said his party needed a firmer commitment that province would "give us funding for taking over the hostels".

A report tabled before Exco recommended that the four hostels, at KwaDabeka, KwaMakutha, KwaMashu and Umlazi be transferred to the City for management.

Poor management at the provincial Housing Department-run hostels have led to numerous complaints to the municipality from residents and councillors, including a lack of electricity and water.

The report recommended that the Council take over the hostels and the KwaZulu-Natal Housing Department provides funding to the tune of R250-million for the first three years.

A further R12.5-million of

this amount would be used to upgrade water and electricity at the Glebe hostel.

The Council would then submit yearly motivations for funding to the province until the hostels became self-sustainable.

The ruling ANC said the Housing Department had promised to provide funding. "We need to adopt a positive attitude, we can't have separate communities with unequal standards of service delivery in one city," said ANC Cllr Nomvuzo Shabalala.

Mayor Obed Mlaba dismissed the DA's comments.

"In 1994 the province was led by other people, now it's led by a different party. There have been negotiations around funding being made available and that is exactly what will happen."

Mlaba said the DA's insensitivity to the plight of hostel dwellers was because, "you (the DA) have never lived in these conditions."

"When I first arrived in the city as a boy I was forced to live there and I know the inhumane conditions associated with being a hostel dweller."

The DA abstained from voting for the approval of the transfer.

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## SHIRTY ABOUT ABUSE



**MORE than 200 T-shirts bearing hand-painted messages condemning the abuse of women and children were strung up on washing lines outside the City Hall on Wednesday. In a short speech, Mayor Obed Mlaba implored men to protect women and children and 'not abuse them'. He urged people to spread this message. The event was part of the national 16 Days of Activism Against Women and Children Abuse campaign which runs until 10 December**

Picture: THEMBA KHUMALO

## New rates policy: have your say

## THEMBA NYATHIKAZI

THE City is implementing a new rates policy that will affect the rates paid by all owners of property, be it residential, commercial, sectional title units, or government-owned.

The public are requested to submit comments on the policy to the City Manager before 7 December.

Copies of the draft policy are available from the City Hall, libraries, clinics and municipal banking halls.

It can also be viewed on the

web at [www.durban.gov.za](http://www.durban.gov.za).

The policy is in line with the new Property Rates Act which requires that rates be based on the "market value" of a property. The municipality is in the process of revaluating properties.

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## Ugu, Umngeni join eThekweni at Vunas

## SIYABONGA MAPHUMULO

WHEN eThekweni enters the race to pick the best-run metro in South Africa next week, it will do so along with Ugu District and Umngeni Local municipalities in tow.

These two municipalities took first and second place at the yearly Vuna awards at a function in Pietermaritzburg at the Royal Show Grounds.

For pipping the other 58 contending municipalities to the post they were awarded R750 000 each.

The awards are organised by the Local Government, Housing and Traditional Affairs department to recognise the efforts of local and district municipalities to quicken the pace of development. They also help the department choose the municipalities to represent



**PROUD: Ugu Mayor Sithembiso Cele and Mayor Obed Mlaba at the KwaZulu-Natal Vuna Awards**

Picture: THEMBA KHUMALO

KwaZulu-Natal at the national Vuna awards. Ugu will represent the province in the Category B municipalities while Umngeni will compete in Category C.

Congratulating the winners, MEC for Local Govern-

ment, Housing and Traditional Affairs, Mike Mabuyakhulu said while backlogs in some areas of development continued, it was clear that municipalities remained dedicated to bettering the lot of their communities.

Because eThekweni is the only metropole or Category A Municipality in KwaZulu-Natal it does not participate provincially in the Vuna awards but automatically qualifies to compete with the other five metros nationally.

The City has scooped the national award for the past two years, along with the R2-million winner's cheque.

Mayor Obed Mlaba said the City would again be relying on its excellent credit rating and its many flagship projects including the newly-renovated ICC to tip the scales in its favour.

Municipalities vying for the Vunas are judged on service delivery; economic development and job creation projects; municipal transformation; finances, including revenue collection and spending; and sound governance.

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## Durban duo off to Brazil

## DERRICK DLAMINI

A DURBAN pair leave for Brazil tomorrow on a week-long capacity building programme, thanks to support from the municipality's Inanda, Ntuzuma, and KwaMashu Area Based Management.

The programme is designed to boost community development initiatives.

Theatre director Thabani Mbhele, of Ubunye Artist Production, and Lindelwa Nxele, a community builder, are expected to gain knowledge in events management, leadership, communication and planning. They will join delegates from around the world as part of the Pioneers Of Change Global Journey in Mury, Rio de Janeiro.

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