ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY

ETHEKWINI WEEKLY BULLETIN

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By 2030 eThekwini will be Africa's most caring and liveable City

15 April 2025 (Issue 411)

CITY'S EASTER PREPARATION PLANS TO ENSURE MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

The City is ready to welcome the 1.3 million visitors that will descend over the Easter holiday and winter season. The City's safety plans as well as tourism offerings for the Easter period and upcoming winter season were outlined by eThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba (inset) on 14 April during the campaign launch.

THE Easter period is set to provide a memorable experience of the City's blend of adventure and relaxation.

EThekwini Municipality unveiled its Easter and Winter campaign themed "Endless Fun Season" on 14 April. The campaign will showcase Durban's diverse attractions, from world-class shopping malls and vibrant market scenes to breath-taking waterfalls and cultural safaris.

Projections show that about 1.3 million visitors will descend on the City over the Easter holiday while the hospitality industry will see hotel occupancy rates peak at an average of 63 percent, which is an increased rate from last year's 50 percent.

The local economy is set to receive a boost with direct spending estimated at approximately R2.5 billion and a GDP contribution of around R6.1 billion, with 11 000 employment opportunities created over this period.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba said through this campaign, the City wants to highlight Durban's rich tourism offerings, ensuring visitors explore more adventure, cuisine, attractions, and experiences.

"We want to assure our visitors both local and international, that we are ready to deliver a safe and enjoyable holiday. Security measures have been put in place with a safety and security plan developed by the Metro Police and stakeholders to ensure visibility at all key tourism attractions," said Mayor Xaba.

Durban has received nominations in the World Travel Awards for various categories including Africa's Leading Festival and Events Destination.

Staying true to this nomination, several signature events are lined up which visitors can look forward to.

These include the Joyous Celebration Easter Mega Fest, One-Man Show Concert, eThekwini Surf Pro, and the Durban International Marathon among others.

There will be precinct activations in all regions such as Amanzimtoti, Shongweni, uMhlanga, Inanda, and the Beachfront.

PLATFORM FOR WATER SECURITY IN CITY UNITES STAKEHOLDERS

Members of the Platform for a Water Secure eThekwini (PWSET) convened on 14 April as part of the collaboration with government to work together to find solutions to the current water security challenges in the City.

PWSET was launched by the national Department of Water and Sanitation in eThekwini last year as a multi-stakeholder forum that involves ratepayers' associations, civil society, church leaders, business, as well as government department and agencies. It is supported by the 2030 Water Resources Group at the World Bank.

The forum and government tackles water challenges collaboratively by shifting from a posture of blame-seeking but rather to solution thinking as a priority. The forum also receives regular updates on infrastructure upgrades, water management practices and has access to water supply monitoring.

The PWSET works closely with all stakeholders who are consumers with the aim for them to understand the water supply value chain, so they contribute to the solution of preserving water resources.

The biggest challenge currently is the escalating water demand which outpaces available supply. The strategy of PWSET seeks to reduce water demand by eight percent. This will be done by directly communicating and implementing water management practises for top residential and commercial water users.

SPOTLIGHT ON DISASTER RISK PREVENTION

More than 20 G20 international countries gathered at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre for a G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group meeting where they discussed disaster risk solutions while reinforcing the need for a united global response to shared challenges.

STRENGTHENING disaster preparedness and resilience through solidarity and global cooperation was the cornerstone of the four-day G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group meeting held at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre.

Representatives from more than 20 G20 international countries comprising of policy makers, government, experts, and civil society participated in the engagement to seek solutions to several challenges.

The engagements delved into tactics to collectively mitigate the severity of natural disasters as well as best practices to strengthen disaster resilience with the focus on prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.

The G20 meeting allowed countries to learn from each other regarding mechanisms and strategies to collectively integrate disaster risk reduction measures.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba said the engagements will help the City to gain knowledge and expertise from other G20 countries that will assist eThekwini Municipality to implement disaster resilience strategies.

While eThekwini has been extensively affected by disasters in recent years, significance strides have been made in implementing disaster recovery measures. A number of programmes and projects have been initiated as part of disaster risk reduction to ensure they are environmentally sound, socially acceptable, and economically viable.

Mayor Xaba said these initiatives are an indication that the City is compliant with the 'Build Back Better' approach which is to build systems and infrastructure that are more robust and less vulnerable to future disasters.

Sarah Houghton, a delegate from Switzerland expressed her gratitude that this important engagement was held in eThekwini, a region that has witnessed several flood disasters.

TECHNOLOGY AND SERVICE DELIVERY ARE INTERLINKED

THE 15th Public Sector Audit, Risk and Performance Indaba was held at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre from 7 to 10 April under the theme 'Accelerating and enhancing assurance on service delivery through technology'.

The event is held annually by the Chartered Institute of Government, Finance, Audit and Risk Officers (CIGFARO) and brings together industry leaders and specialists to share their insight for attendees to get the most out of the event. They will then return to their respective workplaces and implement what was discussed.

EThekwini Municipality's Chief Risk Officer Phumi Madlala spoke on risk and business continuity at the recent Public Sector Audit, Risk and Performance Indaba.

CIGFARO President Dr. Emmanuel Ngcobo said the theme is relevant especially in the public sector. "We cannot deny the significance technology brings to the table in aiding the transformation of governance through creating platforms and enhancing the processes for improved efficiency, effective engagements, strategic data-driven decision making, cost reduction and introducing greater accessibility that holistically improves transparency and accountability."

Nomalungelo Mkhize from the Auditor General's Office in her keynote address explained the impact of technology and its benefits. "Technology improves audit efficiency and coverage, enables monitoring of service delivery, strengthens early warning systems, bridges capacity constraints, and enhances accountability."

The Indaba saw pertinent discussions on how technology can impact the achievement of a clean audit, credible Integrated Development Plans, the use of panel appointments, and cybersecurity.

HAMMARSDALE WASTE BENEFICIATION CENTRE DRIVES THE GREEN ECONOMY

INNOVATION took centre stage at a ribbon cutting ceremony for a low-cost demonstration house made from an innovative prototype block comprised of 70 percent recycled materials, including glass, construction, and demolition waste.

The ceremony was hosted by the City's Economic Development and Planning Unit, in collaboration with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Use-it, and Key Bricks. The stakeholders presented the innovative building to the Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation (DSTI). The event was held at the Hammarsdale Waste Beneficiation Centre.

The new blocks provide advantages such as using fewer virgin materials and natural resources like river sand, stone, and water. The blocks interlock, needing less mortar and cement for bonding.

Dr Mmboneni Muofhe, Deputy Director-General from the Department of Science, Technology, and Innovation, honoured the Hammarsdale Waste Beneficiation Centre ribbon cutting ceremony for a low-cost demonstration house.

The waste beneficiation facility aims to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship in the green economy by incubating small firms that operate independently off-site. Use-it continues to help reduce waste that ends up in landfills.

Among the recycled materials used to make the blocks are 22 percent glass, 44 percent building rubble, 22 percent sand, 11 percent cement and 1 percent water. These blocks can be used in the industrial and housing sectors.

The blocks may be reused, and the erected construction can be readily disassembled thanks to this design.

Dr Mmboneni Muofhe, DSTI Deputy Director-General said their collaboration in this initiative will encourage sustainable building practices for SMMEs while addressing needs such as low-income housing. The beneficiation centre also focuses on green jobs and skills development, partnering with industry partners.

DURBAN TEXTILE AND LEATHER INCUBATOR DRIVES ECONOMIC GROWTH

THE Clothing, Textile, Footwear, and Leather industries are set to experience a significant boost. This comes as 20 local small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) have been selected to partake in a 12-month incubation programme at the Durban Textile and Leather Incubator (DTLI). This initiative, a partnership between the City and the Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency, aims to create jobs and stimulate growth across these industries' value chains.

The new cohort was introduced during an induction ceremony on 9 April at DTLI's offices. The SMMEs were selected through an open call.

Twenty small, medium, and micro enterprises will embark on a Durban Textile and Leather Incubator Programme.

DTLI Chief Executive Officer Dr. Poppet Pillay congratulated the selected SMMEs. "The second group of 30 informal businesses will join later in April after a five-week ideation phase. Those progressing will enter full incubation. Meanwhile, 54 existing SMMEs trained duringthe 2024/25 financial year are on track and set to graduate in May this year."

A second group comprising of 30 informal businesses will be inducted shortly. They will go through an ideation programme to assess viability. Those that become registered and compliant with DTLI support will proceed into full incubation alongside the 20 SMMEs inducted on 9 April.

During the induction, Dr. Pillay and the DTLI team presented the programme's mission and objectives.

Chairperson of the Economic Development and Planning Committee Councillor Thembo Ntuli expressed enthusiasm for the initiative's impact.

TRADING SERVICES PRIORITISES SERVICE DELIVERY

A MAYORAL budget engagement session with the Trading Services Cluster was held recently at the Durban City Hall to engage councillors and senior officials reporting to this portfolio committee.
EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba said they are unpacking the budget of the committee to ensure that every aspect is covered before a series of consultative community meetings are held.
"This process will ensure that officials are implementing what has been budgeted. This process will be conducted in all portfolio committees as we need to account for ratepayers' money," he said.
Chairperson of the Trading Services Committee Councillor Mdu Nkosi said proper implementation of the budget will eliminate service delivery protests.

EThekwini Mayor Councillor Cyril Xaba and Chairperson of the Trading Services Committee Councillor Mdu Nkosi scrutinised the budget allocated to this committee.

"We have allocated budget for water services to increase water infrastructure and supply. We are spending millions on security services to protect Municipal infrastructure," he said.
Projects included in the budget allocation are the extension of the Hammarsdale Waste Water Treatment Plant, the one plumber per ward and one electrician per ward initiative, repairs of water pumpstations, borehole installations, and the construction of eight new electricity substations.
Also prioritised in the budget is the procurement of electricity meter electricity cable replacement, improving landfill sites, and the development of the Shongweni Landfill Site.

EQUIPPING SMMES FOR SUCCESS

About 20 small, medium, and micro enterprises will be primed for success after participating in a six-month enterprise and supplier development training programme.

ETHEKWINI Municipality is intensifying its support for small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) through strategic collaborations with private sector partners. This follows the launch of an impactful six-month Enterprise and Supplier Development Training Programme, a key initiative in partnership with KZN Oils, aimed at fostering the growth of 20 local SMMEs. The programme will equip the SMMEs with tools for success.
Khungeka Gojo, Programme Manager at the Municipality's Business Support, Tourism, Markets, and Agri-Business Unit, said the training is designed to accelerate growth, enhance business operations, and position entrepreneurs for long-term success in both the public and private sectors. "The initiative focuses on building sustainable businesses that address community needs, generate employment, and promote economic inclusion."

USHAKA NOMINATED FOR AWARD

USHAKA Marine World's Wet n' Wild water park has been nominated for the 2025 World Travel Awards in the category of Africa's Leading Water Park.
Durban is definitely making waves at the World Travel Awards as it is also up for the title of Africa's Leading Festival and Event Destination, standing proudly alongside Cape Town and Johannesburg.
"This recognition reflects our passion and commitment to creating unforgettable experiences in travel and tourism. We couldn't be more excited to be recognised among the best in the world. Thank you for your support," said Chief Executive Officer of uShaka Marine World Ndabezitha Khoza.
The Valley of Waves, uShaka Wet 'n Wild, and the Wild Waves Water Park have been nominated in the category, Africa's Leading Water Park.
The World Travel Awards will hold the ceremony in Bahrain, with the final gala taking place at the Exhibition World Bahrain on 9 December.
Voting for the World Travel Awards 2025 Africa region will close on 4 May. Visit their website for more details https://www.worldtravelawards.com/

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If you would like to submit feedback or contribute to eThekwini Weekly Bulletin

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