



**RAYMOND  
MHLABA**  
MUNICIPALITY  
.....  
UMANYANO KUPHULISO

External Newsletter

# UMHLALI

*Sizisa iindaba eluntwini!*

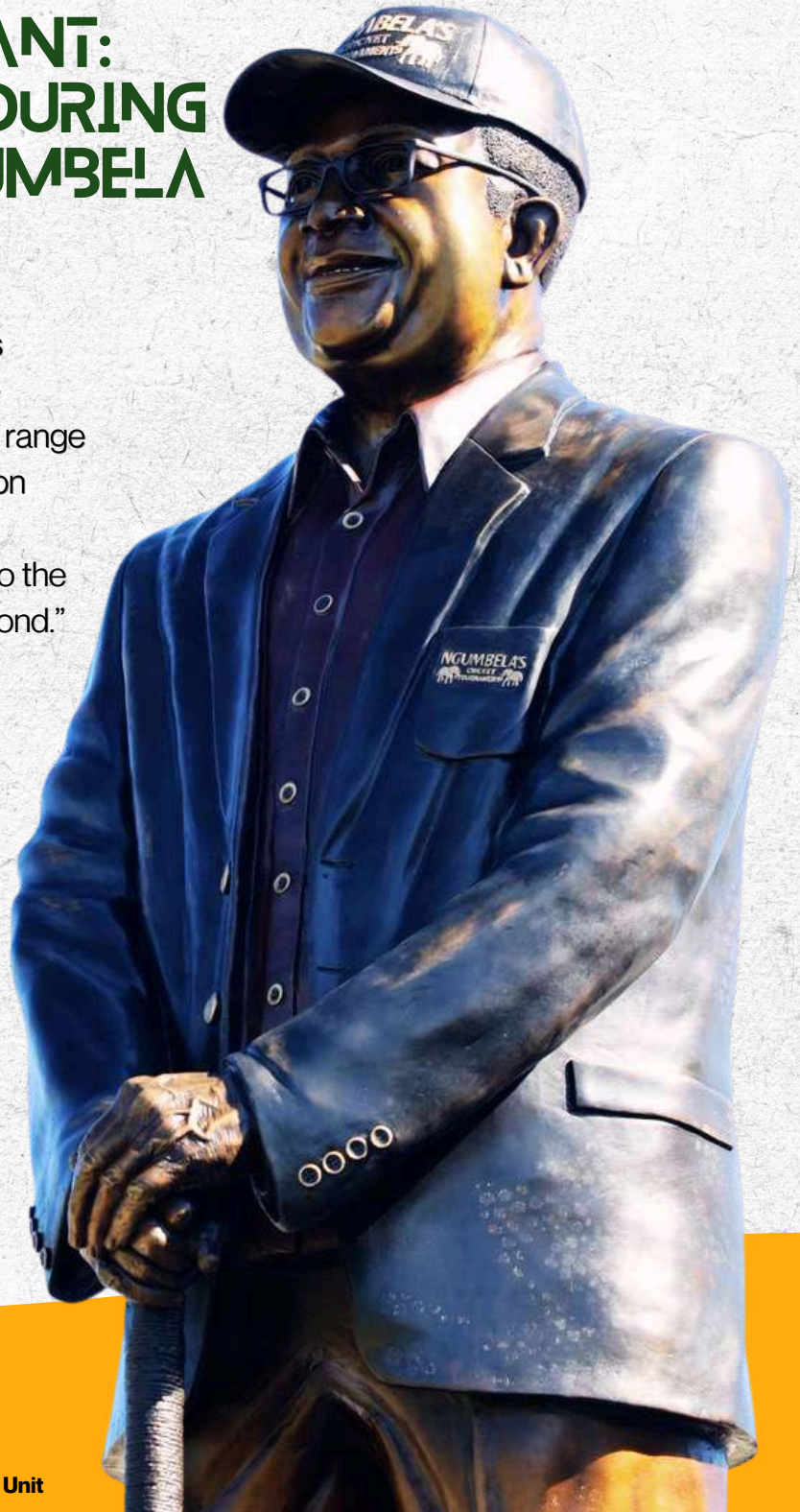
## HONOURING A GIANT: CELEBRATING THE ENDURING LEGACY OF TATU NGUMBELA

*See more: page 8*

“The engagement culminated in a significant equipment handover valued at R639 000. Items donated included bedding, chairs, neonatal care equipment for newborns, a dentist's chair, and a range of additional medical equipment. This contribution was expected to substantially strengthen the hospital's capacity to deliver quality healthcare to the residents of the Raymond Mhlaba area and beyond.”

*See more: page 3*

“We must never allow the contributions of our heroes to fade into silence. By immortalising them in stone, we ensure that their stories live on in the public square, visible to every child, every passerby, and every leader yet to come. Alongside this, our Pre-Easter Service reminded us that at the heart of all we do as a municipality, there must be values rooted in compassion, solidarity, and service to others,” said Mayor Sango.



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External Newsletter

Sizisa iindaba eluntwini!

UMHLALI



**HON MAYOR,  
Cllr Nomhle Sango**

# A MESSAGE FROM THE HONORABLE MAYOR: CLLR. NOMHLE SANGO

Dear Residents, Partners, and Stakeholders of Raymond Mhlaba Municipality,

It is with great pride and a deep sense of purpose that I welcome you to yet another edition of **Umhlali**, our municipality's external newsletter, and one of our most important bridges between local government and the communities we are privileged to serve.

The name Umhlali speaks directly to the heart of our mandate. The resident, the neighbor, the citizen whose daily life is shaped by the decisions we make and the services we deliver. This newsletter exists because of you, and it exists for you.

Within these pages, you will find a candid and informative account of the programmes we are implementing, the progress we are making, and the service delivery projects that continue to transform lives across our municipal area. From community upliftment initiatives to intergovernmental partnerships to grassroots engagement, Umhlali brings it all to your doorstep.

I am a firm believer that good governance is not conducted behind closed doors. The people of Raymond Mhlaba Municipality have every right to know what their municipality is doing, how resources are being used, and what plans are being made on their behalf. Umhlali is, at its core, is a commitment to that principle; transparency and accountability in action.

Through this newsletter, we do not only report on achievements; we open ourselves to scrutiny, invite dialogue, and affirm our responsibility to those who entrust us with the mandate to govern. Every project highlighted, every milestone celebrated, and every partnership acknowledged here is a demonstration that we take seriously our duty to serve with integrity.

To our implementing partners, government departments, civil society organisations, the private sector, and community structures, thank you for walking this journey with us. The work of Raymond Mhlaba Municipality is strengthened immeasurably by the relationships we have built and the shared vision we carry.

To our residents: your voices continue to guide us. Keep engaging, keep holding us accountable, and keep believing that a better Raymond Mhlaba is not only possible, it is being built, together, every single day.

I invite you to read, share, and respond to what you find in Umhlali. Let it be a conversation, not just a communication.

**Masakhane.**

**Hon Mayor**

*Cllr Nomhle Sango*

## *Chief Editor's Summary:*

# A SEASON OF **SERVICE,** **REMEMBRANCE, AND** **COMMUNITY PRIDE.**

As we enter this edition of Umhlali, we do so with a full heart and a grateful spirit, for the stories we have had the privilege of telling, and for the communities that continue to make those stories worth telling.

This edition has been a rich tapestry of milestones, memories, and meaningful progress. It reflects, in no uncertain terms, the spirit of a municipality alive with activity, driven by service delivery, and anchored in the values of our people.



**MUNICIPAL MANAGER,**  
**Ms Unathi Malinzi**

We enter having shared two stories that carry significant historical and spiritual weight for our communities. The unveiling of the statue of Tata Advocate Mthetheleli Ngumbela stands as a powerful act of remembrance and recognition, a tribute to a son of this soil whose life and legacy continue to inspire generations. We must never allow the contributions of our heroes to fade into silence. By immortalizing them in stone, we ensure that their stories live on in the public square, visible to every child, every passerby, and every leader yet to come. Alongside this, our Pre-Easter Service reminded us that at the heart of all we do as a municipality, there must be values rooted in compassion, solidarity, and service to others.

Across the months covered in this edition, we have been reminded of the breadth and diversity of our work. We celebrated the success of the Career Expo in Middledrift, where Raymond Mhlaba Municipality and the Eastern Cape Department of Community Safety joined hands to open doors of opportunity for our youth — because a municipality that invests in its young people invests in its own future. We also celebrated the conclusion of the Ray Mali T20 Cricket Challenge, with Perksdale lifting the cup in a tournament that brought our communities together in the true spirit of sport and camaraderie.

We are equally proud of the Community Upliftment Programme that delivered tangible impact across education and health sectors in KwaMaqoma, affirming our commitment to reaching the most vulnerable members of our communities with meaningful support.

Together, these stories paint a picture of a municipality that does not rest, one that is present in its residents' lives through every season and in every sphere.

On behalf of the municipality, we wish to extend our sincere gratitude to every official, partner, and community member whose dedication made the programmes and events featured in this edition possible. Your commitment is what makes Raymond Mhlaba Municipality a place of genuine progress.

And to you, our valued reader, thank you. Thank you for picking up this edition, hopefully you will take the time to engage with the work of your municipality, and for being the very community that gives our work its meaning. Umhlali exists because of you, and it is always written with you in mind.

**Municipal Manager**

*Ms Unathi Malinzi*

**TATA ADVOCATE MTHETHELELI NGUMBELA**

**STATUE HAILED A RESOUNDING SUCCESS**

*March 2026 | Nxukhwebe, KwaMaqoma*



The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality joined hands with provincial and district leadership in a momentous occasion to honour the life and enduring legacy of the late Tata Advocate Mthetheleli Ngumbela, as his statue was officially unveiled in a ceremony that drew together dignitaries, councillors, iNkosazana Yesizwe SamaZizi akwaLamyeni, Nompumelelo Ndlazi, and community members from across the area.

The Hon Mayor of Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, Cllr Nomhle Sango, was joined by the Eastern Cape Premier, Hon Lubabalo Oscar Mabuyane, the MEC for Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture, Hon Sibulele Ngongo, the Amathole District Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr Anele Ntsangani, and Raymond Mhlaba Councillors in celebrating the extraordinary contributions of a man who dedicated his life to the upliftment of his community.

The unveiling, which served as the centrepiece of the day's programme, was presided over by Mayor Sango with great pride. The keynote address was delivered by Premier Mabuyane, who drew on personal experiences with Tata Ngumbela, painting a vivid picture of a man who was not only a community champion but a formidable force in driving development wherever he went.

In his address, Premier Mabuyane announced further steps to honour Ngumbela's legacy, revealing that the R63 road between Alice and KwaMaqoma would be named after Mthetheleli Ngumbela, ensuring his name remains permanently engraved in the landscape of the region he served with such dedication. The Premier also announced plans to build a museum in Healdtown to preserve and showcase the area's rich historical and cultural heritage, responding to a plea from iNkosazana Nompumelelo Ndlazi of the Amazizi akwaLamyeni Ndlazi Traditional Council. "We are not merely gathered here to unveil a statue of Mthetheleli Ngumbela. Today, we gather to rekindle ubuntu bethu — the spirit of humanity, unity, and shared purpose that Tat' Ngumbela embodied throughout his life. May this monument stand not only as a reminder of his remarkable legacy, but as a living call for all of us to emulate his values of service, leadership, and community upliftment," said Premier Mabuyane.

Speaker after speaker took to the podium to share cherished memories and reflect on the immeasurable impact Tata Ngumbela had on those around him. His legacy spanned the construction of over 100 churches, contributions to the growth of local businesses, and the development of various infrastructure facilities that continue to serve communities to this day.

The unveiling of the statue stood as a fitting and permanent tribute — a reminder that the name and the works of Tata Advocate Mthetheleli Ngumbela would not fade from memory, but would instead stand tall for generations to come as a symbol of selfless service, faith, and community development.

## *Faith and moral regeneration:*

### RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY HOSTS

### **ANNUAL PRE-EASTER SERVICE**

*March 2026 | Town Hall, KwaMaqoma*

In a powerful display of faith, unity, and shared purpose, the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality gathered its employees and community members on Thursday, 26 March 2026, for its Annual Pre-Easter Service, a tradition that continues to anchor the municipality's commitment to the spiritual and moral wellbeing of its people.

Held under the theme "Wenjenje uThixo ukulithanda kwakhe ihlabathi, ude wancama noNyana wakhe, ekuphela kwamzeleyo", the service drew deeply from one of the most profound narratives in the Christian faith, the final utterances of Jesus Christ as He hung on the cross. These seven words, rich with messages of forgiveness, compassion, hope, and redemption, served as the spiritual lens through which employees were invited to examine their own conduct, renew their purpose, and recommit to a life and career defined by integrity.

Beyond its devotional character, the service also carried a clear and deliberate institutional message. Municipal leadership took the opportunity to address the concerning reality of moral decay, a challenge that affects not only the broader society but also the workplace. Through Scripture, reflection, and shared testimony, employees were reminded that public service is not merely an occupation; it is a calling that demands the highest standards of honesty, accountability, and care for others.

The Annual Pre-Easter Service stands as a testament to Raymond Mhlaba Municipality's recognition that a productive workforce is, first and foremost, a grounded and values-driven one. By nurturing the spiritual and emotional health of its employees, the municipality continues to cultivate a workplace culture built on respect, compassion, and mutual support, which are qualities that inevitably translate into better service delivery for the communities it serves.

As the Easter season draws near, the municipality extends its heartfelt wishes to all employees, their families, and the broader community. May this time of reflection bring restoration, and may the lessons of the Seven Words continue to inspire a renewed dedication to serving with purpose and grace.

## *Youth Empowerment:*

### RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY AND EASTERN CAPE

### DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SAFETY HOST **MULTI-**

### **STAKEHOLDER CAREER EXHIBITION**

*13 March 2026 | Bonakele Milner Multipurpose Centre, Middledrift*

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, in partnership with the Eastern Cape Department of Community Safety, successfully hosted a Multi-Stakeholder Career Exhibition at the Bonakele Milner Ntsangani Multipurpose Centre in Middledrift.



## Continues...

The session drew school learners from across the Middledrift area, as well as community members, all eager to explore career pathways and make informed decisions about their futures.

The session was graced by the Chief of Amagqunukhwebe Traditional Council, Mama Nokwandisa Kama, who delivered the welcoming remarks. In her address, Mama Kama highlighted the significance of the exhibition, urging attendees to seize the opportunity and allow it to meaningfully shape their career and life decisions. Her words set a tone of purpose and intentionality that carried throughout the proceedings.

Each participating department was allowed to present its services to the audience, offering insight into the nature of its work and the various avenues for young people and community members to become part of their organisations. The engagement was both informative and interactive, equipping participants with practical knowledge to guide their career planning.

The session was brought to a close by Ward 10 Councillor, Cllr Simon Xego, who expressed gratitude to all attendees and acknowledged the collective contributions of the stakeholders who made the exhibition possible. His remarks affirmed the value of such collaborative efforts in empowering communities and investing in the potential of the youth.

The Career Exhibition stood as a testament to the Municipality's commitment to community development and youth empowerment, reinforcing the importance of accessible information in building a future-ready society.



## *Sports Development:*

### **PERKSDALE LIFTS THE CUP AS CHAMPIONS OF THE RAY MALI T20 CRICKET CHALLENGE 2025/2026**

*22 March 2026 | University of Fort Hare, eDikeni*

The Annual Ray Mali T20 Cricket Challenge came to a thrilling conclusion at the University of Fort Hare cricket grounds in eDikeni, with Perksdale emerging as the undisputed champions of the 2025/2026 edition after a day of competitive, spirited play that brought together the Semi-Finals and the Final in a single, action-packed programme.

#### **Final Standings and Prizes**

Perksdale claimed the championship title, walking away with R20 000 and gold medals to mark their triumph. TUBS put up a commendable performance to secure second place, earning R10 000 and silver medals. Sheshegu Brothers claimed third place with a R7 000 prize, while Young Stars rounded off the top four, receiving R3 000 in recognition of their participation.

# Continues...

The prize-giving ceremony was officially opened by the Portfolio Head of Sports, Arts and Culture, Cllr Portia Sabane, who extended a warm welcome to all participants and attendees. Cllr Sabane reaffirmed the municipality's commitment to supporting sporting initiatives that uplift communities and nurture grassroots talent.

The event was further graced by Tata Ray Mali himself, whose address resonated deeply with all in attendance. Speaking with characteristic wisdom, Tata Mali called on the cricketing community to embrace unity as a foundation for progress, drawing a powerful connection between sporting cohesion and broader socioeconomic development.

In a development that added significant value to the tournament's legacy, the Ray Mali T20 Cricket Challenge announced the formation of a representative cricket team drawn from participants who featured across the competition. The team was set to travel and compete in various venues, providing selected players with a platform for growth, exposure, and development beyond the local stage.

The Annual Ray Mali T20 Cricket Challenge continued to cement its place as a meaningful fixture on the regional sporting calendar. This tournament was as much about community building and opportunity as it was about the love of the game.

## Goods Delivered:

### COMMUNITY UPLIFTMENT PROGRAMME DELIVERS MEANINGFUL IMPACT ACROSS EDUCATION AND HEALTH SECTORS IN KWAMAQOMA

23 March 2026 | KwaMaqoma

A high-level community upliftment programme, driven through intergovernmental collaboration and funded primarily by the Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS), delivered tangible benefits to the KwaMaqoma community on 23 March 2026 — touching both the education and health sectors in a meaningful two-phase intervention.

The programme was attended by the Hon Mayor of Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, Cllr Nomhle Sango, alongside the Deputy Minister for Public Service and Administration, Hon Pinky Kekana, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for the Eastern Cape Department of Health, Hon Ntandokazi Capa, and the Amathole District Municipality Chief Whip, Cllr Nanziwe Rulashe-Nesi, among other key stakeholders.



# Continues...

## Phase One: Investing in the Dignity of Learners at Nqaba Primary School

The programme commenced at Nqaba Primary School, where 100 complete school uniforms were handed over to learners, accompanied by sanitary equipment. The impact of this gesture was immediate and profound — ensuring that children were equipped with the necessities required to participate fully and with dignity in their education. The handover affirmed the principle that no child's access to learning should be compromised by material need and served as a direct investment in the well-being of the community's youngest members.



## Phase Two: Strengthening Healthcare Capacity at Fort Beaufort Provincial Hospital

The second phase of the programme took the delegation to Fort Beaufort Provincial Hospital, where engagements were held with the Hospital Board and hospital officials. Discussions centred on the challenges facing the institution, with participants collaborating to identify practical solutions to the obstacles affecting service delivery.



The engagement culminated in a significant equipment handover valued at R639 000. Items donated included bedding, chairs, neonatal care equipment for newborns, a dentist's chair, and a range of additional medical equipment. This contribution was expected to substantially strengthen the hospital's capacity to deliver quality healthcare to the residents of the Raymond Mhlaba area and beyond.

The two-phase programme demonstrated the tangible outcomes that intergovernmental collaboration and private sector partnership could achieve when directed towards the genuine needs of ordinary people. The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality welcomed and commended the initiative, reaffirming its commitment to supporting efforts that improved the quality of life of all residents across the municipality.



## *Honoring Legend:* **CELEBRATING DR RAYMOND MHLABA'S BIRTHDAY MONTH!**

In celebration of Dr. Raymond Mhlaba's birthday month, the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality pays tribute to the life and contributions of a remarkable freedom fighter and dedicated public servant.

### Who Was Raymond Mhlaba?

Dr. Raymond Mphakamisi Mhlaba was born on 12 February 1920 in KwaNondyola Village, KwaMazama. Dr Mhlaba was a towering figure in South Africa's liberation struggle. His unwavering commitment to justice saw him stand trial alongside Nelson Mandela and other liberation heroes in the infamous Rivonia Trial of 1963-1964, where he was sentenced to life imprisonment. Dr. Mhlaba spent 25 years on Robben Island, yet emerged with his spirit unbroken and his dedication to the people intact. He was a man of profound humility, known for his quiet strength, intellectual depth, and selfless leadership. His political journey began in his youth as a trade unionist and community organizer, and he rose to become a key strategist in the struggle against apartheid.

# Continues...

## A Life of Service

Dr. Mhlaba was instrumental in the fight for democracy, enduring imprisonment in his quest for a non-racial, equitable, and democratic South Africa. After achieving freedom, he continued to serve with great distinction, making substantial contributions to the development and governance of the Eastern Cape. He served as the first Premier of the Eastern Cape Province from 1994 to 1997, laying the foundation for democratic governance in the province during its critical formative years.

As a municipality that proudly carries his name, we reaffirm our commitment to embodying his principles of integrity, humility, and service to the people. The legacy of Dr. Raymond Mhlaba continues to illuminate our shared path towards a better future for everyone.

## Back to School:

### RAYMOND MHLABA MUNICIPALITY JOINS EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE IN SERIES OF **BACK-TO-SCHOOL CAMPAIGNS ACROSS THE AMATHOLE WEST DISTRICT**

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, in collaboration with the Amathole District Municipality and the Eastern Cape Provincial Government, participated in a series of Back-to-School campaigns and school visit programmes across the Amathole West District during January 2026. Spanning several weeks and multiple schools, the initiative brought together municipal leadership, provincial legislators, education officials, government departments, and community stakeholders in a concerted effort to support learners, assess educational infrastructure, and commit to tangible interventions at the start of the 2026 academic year.

At the heart of the campaign was the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality's Hon Mayor, Cllr Nomhle Sango, who participated in every leg of the programme alongside the Amathole District Municipality's Executive Mayor, Cllr Anele Ntsangani. Their joint leadership signalled a strong, unified commitment by local government to the welfare and educational development of learners in the district. The campaign unfolded across multiple phases: the provincial back-to-school visits on 14 and 15 January, the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature's School Visit Programme from 19 to 21 January, and a Social Development partnership visit on 30 January 2026.

### **Phandulwazi Agricultural High School: Celebrating Excellence, Confronting Challenges**

The first engagement took place on 14 January 2026 at Phandulwazi Agricultural High School in Dikeni. The visit was marked by a celebration of remarkable academic progress — the school's matric pass rate surged from 75.4% in 2024 to an impressive 89.7% in 2025. Special recognition was accorded to Zemvelo Blayi, who emerged as the school's overall top achiever for the 2025 academic year. Mayor Sango used the occasion to inspire learners with words of wisdom.



# Continues...

At the end of the session, the learners were given deliverables, including three water tanks, forty school uniforms for disadvantaged learners, and thirty pencil cases to equip students with essential learning materials.

Phandulwazi was revisited on 30 January 2026, when the MEC for Social Development, Hon Bukiwe Fanta, joined Mayor Sango and the Hon Speaker of Council, Cllr Thozama Ngaye, for a Social Development back-to-school campaign. During this visit, 40 full school uniforms were handed over to learners at Phandulwazi, with a further 30 uniforms delivered to Lukhozi Senior Secondary School. MEC Fanta delivered a candid and empowering message to learners on sexual morality and responsible decision-making, noting that approximately 30 educators across the province had been dismissed for inappropriate conduct and that rising teenage pregnancy rates remained a serious concern. Her address drew from personal experience, encouraging learners to invest in their education and futures with discipline and purpose.

## Lukhozi High School: Urgent Intervention Needed

On 15 January 2026, the provincial back-to-school campaign concluded at Lukhozi High School in Zihlahleni, Debenek. Lukhozi's academic performance highlighted an urgent need for comprehensive support. The school recorded a pass rate of 57% for the class of 2025. The challenges at Lukhozi were multi-dimensional, encompassing a critical shortage of teaching staff, inadequate infrastructure, and a deeply concerning security crisis. Five classroom doors had been recently stolen, leaving the rooms exposed. Beyond property crime, the school faced inter-village conflicts spilling into the school environment, with confrontations between learners from rival communities creating an atmosphere of fear and undermining the educational mission.

Municipal and education leadership responded with firm commitments: a new teacher would be employed to address the staff shortage, two water tanks would be provided, and Amathole West District Director Mr Ncapayi committed to initiating a comprehensive infrastructure inquiry to address fencing, additional classrooms, and related development needs. The campaign underscored that Lukhozi's recovery would require sustained monitoring and the timely delivery of all promised interventions.

## Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature School Visit Programme: Gaining Ground-Level Insight

From 19 to 21 January 2026, the Eastern Cape Provincial Legislature conducted a structured School Visit Programme across the Amathole West District, chaired throughout by Hon Dr Tony Duba. Mayor Sango participated in the launch of the programme at Fort Beaufort Primary School in KwaMaqoma on 19 January, welcoming the provincial delegation and reaffirming the municipality's support for collaborative approaches to education. "The municipality remains committed and supportive of initiatives that prioritize the welfare and educational development of learners," she stated.



# Continues...

On 20 January, the programme moved to Gcato Senior Secondary School in Binfield, eDikeni, where dual presentations were delivered by representatives from both Gcata and Siphumlile Primary School. Siphumlile's principal, Ms Phunyezwa Foslara, highlighted the introduction of a Grade R class as a significant development for early childhood education in Lloyd Village, Ward 18. Gcata had cause for celebration in the outstanding achievement of learner Sphokuhle Mankqoyi, who earned six distinctions in the 2025 matric examinations across isiXhosa, English, Mathematics Literacy, Agriculture, Economics, and Business Studies. Infrastructure needs — particularly fencing and kitchen facilities — were identified as priorities at both institutions.

The programme concluded on 21 January at Nozalisile Secondary School in Xhukwana, Debe Nek, bringing together representatives from Nozalisile and Knox schools. Nozalisile had its own academic achievement to celebrate, recording a commendable 91% matric pass rate for 2025. Both schools raised concerns regarding ablution facilities and kitchen infrastructure, which the Eastern Cape Department of Education's Acting Chief Director for Curriculum Management, Ms Lutho Kota, undertook to address with urgency.

Taken together, the January 2026 Back-to-School campaign and school visit programme represented more than a series of engagements. They reflected a sustained, coordinated commitment from the Raymond Mhlaba Municipality and its partners to ensure that every learner in the Amathole West District begins the academic year with the support, resources, and environment they need to succeed. From uniforms and water tanks to teacher appointments, borehole projects, and infrastructure inquiries, the commitments made across all visits are a statement of intent that will be closely watched as the 2026 academic year unfolds.

## Bursary Opportunity:

### **BURSARY PROGRAMME UNLOCKS OPPORTUNITIES FOR RAYMOND MHLABA YOUNG MINDS**

*21 January 2026, KwaMaqoma.*

In a moving ceremony that underscored the transformative power of education, Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, in partnership with Amathole District Municipality and MaxProf, awarded bursaries to outstanding learners from across the Amathole District Municipality. The programme, held today, 21 January 2026, at KwaMaqoma Town Hall, brought together community leaders and families to celebrate academic excellence and to ensure that financial constraints do not stand in the way of young people's dreams.



## Continues...

Delivering the keynote address, Mayor Sango emphasized the critical importance of investing in education and supporting learners who demonstrate dedication and potential. "Education is the cornerstone of development and the key to unlocking opportunities for our youth," Mayor Sango declared. "Singurhulumente, sine responsibility of ensuring ukuba we effect the commitment we made kwi Freedom Charter ingakumbi kula mqolo uthi "the doors of learning and culture shall be opened," she said.

Mayor Sango thanked MaxProf for their generous partnership and commitment to empowering young people in the Amathole District. "This collaboration demonstrates what we can achieve when government, the private sector, and communities work together towards a common goal – building a better future for all."

Also in attendance was Amathole District Municipality Chief Whip, Cllr Nanziwe Rulashe-Nesi, who commended the learners for their academic achievements and encouraged them to remain focused on their studies. "You are the leaders of tomorrow, and today we are investing in that tomorrow," Cllr Rulashe-Nesi said. "Let these bursaries serve not only as financial assistance but as a vote of confidence in your abilities and your future."

Four learners from Raymond Mhlaba Municipality each received a R15,000 bursary. The recipients are:

- Ibenathi Soluzuko Mngayi
- Nkcubeko Mapi
- Xolisa Mbina
- Madiba Limnandi Kweta

Each of these young people has demonstrated exceptional academic performance and a commitment to their education despite various challenges. Their bursaries will assist with tuition fees, accommodation, textbooks, and other essential educational expenses.

The highlight of the ceremony was the awarding of a R70,000 bursary to Mbokombo Inganathi, whose remarkable journey left attendees deeply moved. Inganathi was given the opportunity to share his story with the audience, and what unfolded was a testimony of resilience, determination, and the power of hope. Through tears and applause, those gathered listened as he recounted the obstacles he had overcome to pursue his education. His story served as a powerful reminder of why initiatives like this bursary programme are so vital. They change lives, restore dignity, and open doors that might otherwise remain closed. The bursary awards are the result of a partnership between Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, Amathole District Municipality, and MaxProf, an organization committed to educational empowerment and youth development.



# Continues...

Representatives from MaxProf expressed their pride in supporting deserving learners and pledged continued support for education initiatives in the district. "We believe that every young person deserves a fair chance to succeed," the CEO expressed, Pratih Ramdas.

As the ceremony concluded, the Raymond Mhlaba Speaker of Council, Cllr Thozama Ngaye, urged the bursary recipients to work hard, stay focused, and remember that they carry the hopes and dreams of their families and communities.

## Free Basic Service Application Drive

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality has conducted from **January to March 2026** Free Basic Services Application drive across various communities to ensure that eligible residents can access essential municipal services. This initiative aims to streamline the application process and make it easier for qualifying residents to receive free basic services. **Application Requirements:** Applicants are categorized into three groups, each with specific ocumentation requirements. Please ensure you bring the correct documents when applying.

Category 1	Pensioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified ID copy</li> <li>• SASSA statement</li> </ul>
Category 2	Employed but earning below the threshold of R4,600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified ID copy</li> <li>• Recent payslip</li> </ul>
Category 3	Unemployed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified ID copy</li> <li>• Affidavit stating unemployment status</li> </ul>



## Waste Management: **SIX NEW SKIP BINS**

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality has taken a significant step forward in its commitment to improving waste management services by acquiring six new skip bins. This initiative forms part of the municipality's broader efforts to enhance refuse collection and maintain clean, healthy environments across its jurisdiction.

The newly procured skip bins are strategically placed across various towns within the municipality to ensure that communities have convenient access to proper waste disposal facilities. While the municipality welcomes and encourages active community participation in keeping neighbourhoods clean, residents are strongly urged to use the skip bins responsibly. **Community members are reminded that burning waste inside or around the skip bins is strictly prohibited. Residents are advised to simply dispose of their waste by placing it in the bins and leaving it for collection by municipal workers.** Burning waste poses serious health and environmental risks, including air pollution and the release of harmful toxins, and can also damage municipal infrastructure, such as the skip bins themselves. The municipality, therefore, calls on all residents to refrain from this practice and to cooperate in maintaining the bins in good condition for the benefit of the entire community.

# *International Relations* **OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY (USA)**

Raymond Mhlaba Municipality, under the leadership of the Municipal Manager, Ms Unathi Malinzi hosted a delegation from Ohio State University (USA) in Edikeni (Alice), with the occasion graced by a representative from the RMDA. The meeting focused on exploring areas of mutual interest, including capacity building, research, local development, and tourism. Engagements are ongoing as both parties continue to discuss pathways for meaningful collaboration that can drive sustainable development in the municipality.



## *Foot AND Mouth* **DISEASES**

### **What is Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)?**

Foot and Mouth Disease is an acute, highly communicable viral disease that affects almost exclusively cloven-hoofed animals, including cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, and buffalo. The disease is characterized by the formation and subsequent rupture of blisters or vesicles inside the mouth, on the tongue, muzzle, nostrils, and feet.

### **Clinical Signs in Animals**

The incubation period ranges from 2 to 14 days. Clinical manifestations include:

- Pyrexia (sudden high fever), which is often unrecognized
- Anorexia (loss of appetite)
- Excessive salivation accompanied by smacking of lips
- Unwillingness to rise and evident lameness
- Increased abortion rates and elevated mortality rates (approximately 5% in adult animals and up to 50% in young animals)
- Significant weight loss and reduced milk production

### **Significance of FMD**

FMD is classified as a State-controlled Disease due to its capacity for rapid spread and the substantial economic impact that a potential outbreak would have on the affected nation.

## **GARDENING INITIATIVE FROM UFH**

The Raymond Mhlaba Municipality welcomed a donation of gardening tools to the Msobomvu community by the University of Fort Hare's Faculty of Science and Agriculture, as part of a community engagement project titled "School Home Gardens Model for Advancing Climate-Smart Agriculture and Strengthening Food Security. The handover took place on 5 February 2026 at the University Farm in Alice, with donated materials including wheelbarrows, JoJo tanks, and fencing equipment. Ward 12 Councillor Mr Mthetheleli Gqokro welcomed the gesture, particularly highlighting the water tanks as a direct response to water challenges in the area, while LED Manager Mr Lwazi Ndlazulwana described the initiative as representing hope, empowerment, and dignity through food security. Dean of the Faculty of Science and Agriculture, Professor Linda Sibali, emphasised the university's responsibility to positively impact surrounding communities through skills transfer and indigenous knowledge exchange. The municipality reaffirmed its commitment to such partnerships and expressed its desire to see the initiative extended to other villages across the municipal area.

**Source: University of Fort Hare**

# Local Government Elections: **REGISTRATION WEEKEND**



## REGISTRATION WEEKEND

### 2026/27 Local Government Elections

## 20 – 21 JUNE 2026

### LET'S GET VOTING READY!



SOUTH AFRICA

[f](#) [X](#) [@](#) [v](#) [in](#) @IECSouthAfrica 060 088 0000 0800 11 8000 [elections.org.za](#)

Raymond Mhlaba Municipality encourages all community members to exercise their constitutional right to vote by registering for the upcoming 2026/2027 Local Government Elections.

Residents who are not yet registered, as well as those who wish to update their voting details, are urged to visit their nearest voter registration station during the Voter Registration Weekend on 20–21 June 2026.

Voting is a powerful tool that allows communities to shape the future of local governance and strengthen democracy. Your participation ensures that your voice is heard in decisions that affect service delivery and development in our municipality.

Let us all take responsibility and be active citizens by registering to vote.

Registration Dates: 20–21 June 2026

Venue: Your nearest voter registration station

#RegisterToVote #LocalGovernmentElections #ActiveCitizenship #YourVoteYourVoice



# thank you.

WE WOULD LIKE TO  
TAKE THIS  
OPPORTUNITY TO  
EXPRESS OUR  
HEARTFELT GRATITUDE  
TO YOU FOR TAKING  
THE TIME TO READ THE  
OUR NEWSLETTER.

## CUSTOMER CARE:

For your customer care inquiries, please  
contact the following:

✉ [customercare@raymondmhlaba.gov.za](mailto:customercare@raymondmhlaba.gov.za)

OR

☎ **046-645-7478**

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External Newsletter

# UMHLALI

Sizisa iindaba eluntwini!