



**KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**

**SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE**  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Media Alert  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TO: News Editors | New Reporter | All Media

## **OFFICIAL OPENING OF MFEKAYI AND MAKHASA LIBRARIES AMPLIFIES LIBRARIES AS THE GATEWAY TO SOCIAL COHESION**

As the South African Library Week kicks off in earnest this week, KwaZulu-Natal MEC for KZN Sport, Arts and Culture Dr Ntuthuko Mahlaba will officiate a handover of libraries to Makhasa and Mfekayi communities.

These hubs of knowledge are primarily primed to incubate and accelerate the reading campaign and add to the artillery to drive libraries to promote social cohesion in Umkhanyakude District.

Through the establishment of Makhasa and Mfekayi library, the Department aspires to increase access to library services and bring learning tools closer to people of all ages. These information resource centres are modular libraries fully equipped with all the necessary resources and books that will allow the community easy access to information.

Each library houses a reading collection of over 3000 books that includes learner support materials and tertiary textbooks to benefit tertiary students.

The facility includes a study area that can accommodate well over 100 people at a time, 5 public internet access computers, a small toy library section, newspaper section and ablution facilities.

With over 100 libraries built in KwaZulu-Natal since the dawn of democracy, consideration has evolved beyond limits of architecture, to transforming the nature and



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quality of material provided for users to be one that prepares them for the challenges posed by this century. Projects such as the Library for the Blind hosted in partnership with South African Library for the Blind has seen establishment of 38 mini-libraries for the blind across the Province.

As the Province joins the country to celebrate South African Library Week observed under the theme *Libraries Foster Social Cohesion*, it boasts of over 224 libraries who offer patrons the world beyond books. In the 30 years of our country's democracy, libraries have not only benchmarked with global trends of service but have proven to be hubs for social cohesion. This is evident in programmes such as Internet @ your library which launched the trend towards the smart library from 2006, preparing communities for the digital era and libraries beyond brick and mortar. The programme also set fertile ground for employment of cybercadets who were deployed in libraries to assist communities with computers. Libraries through the gaming facilities also attract the youth as key patrons. Gaming @ your library is available in 39 libraries. The mobile library (bus) which has evolved into a mobile smart library criss-crosses the province to create awareness about the libraries and growing the number of registered library users.

Libraries are also frequented by small groups such as study groups, reading and writing clubs/ book clubs who are united by the love of reading.

Media is invited to attend this site handover programme.

Date: 23 March 2024, Saturday

**Venue 1:** Mfekayi Library, Mtubatuba LM

Time: 9am

**Venue 2:** Makhasa Library, Big Five Hlabisa LM

Time: 12 pm



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## **Community engagement**

Venue: Makhasa Community Hall

Time: 12pm

ISSUED BY THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE

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