



KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

SPORT, ARTS AND CULTURE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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HIS MAJESTY HAS CONGRATULATED UMKHANYAKUDE FOR ENDING THE CHILD PREGNANCY EPIDEMIC

King Misuzulu ka Zwelithini has congratulated the Umkhanyakude District for ending the child pregnancy epidemic (especially those younger than 15 years of age). This was stated by the the king during Umkhosi Wamaganu at the Emachobeni Palace in Ngwavuma. This year, the festival coincides with International Women's Day, which aims to promote the rights of women and girls by combating all forms of discrimination against them. He expressed his appreciation that by the time of his reign, the epidemic had ended from Ngwavuma to the Manguzi area. This he credited to the cooperation of the community, the chiefs and the government.

Speaking about the hope he has for the marula tree from whose fruit *amaganu* beverage is made, the king championed for its protection, "We must protect this tree and generally not allow nature to be damaged during our watch. The damage of nature is ultimately the destruction of humanity as we are also nature."

"Since the eNgwavuma area has the highest number of *amaganu* trees than any other area, there must be a campaign we come up with as a way to protect this tree. We will start a campaign to increase the planting of this tree in collaboration with various



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agencies.” The king also urged that while the interested parties may include Ingonyama Trust, Ezemvelo Wildlife and Isimangaliso Wetland Park, the government must also come closer to this partnership so that the project can contribute to increasing job opportunities.

He continued by emphasizing that celebrating this festival also helps to remember its founders Mntanenkosi and Mdlokombane.

The MEC of Sports, Arts and Culture, Mntomuhle Khawula highlighted that amaganu are instrumental in the promotion of social cohesion “Besides various health and cosmetic benefits amaganu through Umkhosi Wamaganu helps in uniting different countries and ethnic groups, which is a major part of the process of building harmonious and socially cohesive societies.

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