

King Goodwill Zwelithini pleased with KZN's progress on Medical Male Circumcision as he welcomes back Abakhwetha from Kokstad

NO FEWER than 200 young initiates (Amakrwala) from the Greater Kokstad area were warmly welcomed back to their community by His Majesty, King Goodwill Zwelithini, after successfully completing their incident-free circumcision rite of passage.

The Homecoming ceremony, which took place at Shayamoya Sports Grounds in Kokstad on Friday (06 January 2017), was also graced by the presence of amongst others, COGTA Deputy Minister, Hon Obed Bapela; Acting KZN Premier, Mr. Sihle Zikalala; KZN Health MEC, Dr Sibongiseni Dhlomo; KZN COGTA MEC, Ms Nomsa Dube Ncube; Social Development MEC, Mrs. Weziwe Thusi; Chair of the House of Traditional Leaders, Inkosi Phathisizwe Chiliza and local Mayors. MEC Dhlomo thanked Isilo for the clarion call that His Majesty made in 2009, when he called for the revival of circumcision as a means to curtail the spread of HIV amongst his subjects.

MEC Dhlomo also thanked the Traditional Committee called Indlondlo that is responsible for organising and performing circumcision in the Greater Kokstad area, for agreeing to work in partnership with the Department of Health to ensure the safety of all the initiates.

This partnership has resulted in the broadening of the circumcision process as the Indlondlo committee considers initiation as a broader concept, which entails strong teachings of moral regeneration that transform an individual from boyhood to manhood.

Reporting on the progress made in this area since 2010, MEC Dhlomo informed His Majesty that the partnership with Traditional Leadership has ensured that not a single initiate has died or been amputated:

“Today we are proud to report that we have jointly ensured the safe return of all the initiates. In 2012, we successfully circumcised 236 initiates; in 2013, a total of 241; in 2014 increasing to 300 with 265 in 2015 and a final 200 that we are welcoming back home today. All in all we have worked together to safely transits 1245 boys to manhood just in the Greater Kokstad area alone.’

National Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs Deputy Minister, Hon Obed Bapela said he was very enlightened and pleased at how medical male circumcision is being conducted in KZN.

‘I came here to learn because over the years we are collecting statistics of initiates dying in the Eastern Cape; North West; Limpopo and other Provinces but none in KwaZulu-Natal. What I am observing here is the involvement, cooperation and participation of almost all the Provincial Government Departments in this particular initiative.

I am also impressed by the seamless and easy relationship there is between the Department of Health and the Traditional Committee [Indlondlo] and recognise that as one important aspect as to why all the initiates come back home alive in this Province. I am quite impressed.”

King Goodwill Zwelithini then gave full praise to MEC Dhlomo for heeding his call for the revival of the circumcision custom and for the safe performance thereof to more than 750 000 boys and men since 2010.

The 200 strong Greater Kokstad initiates were then presented with an ox by His Majesty the King as a token of appreciation.

ENDS



MEC Dhlomo with Inkosi Phathisizwe Chiliza Chiliza and amabutho



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MEC Dhlomo with King Goodwill Zwelithini, Inkosi Chiliza and Acting Premier Mr Sihle Zikalala
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