

DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE

I S MFUNDISI

It looks like the reconfiguration of government departments in the wake of the April elections has been a blessing to this department which up to then was treated like a step child because it was accommodated in some awkward parts of town.

Their relocation to Gaabomotho Building has brought them within reach of the general public and they wasted no time in putting up signage to announce that they are in town!

The department is faced with big challenges in that it has not been popular and the economic down turn will further make it marginal. It is only if the people can appreciate that the Latin expression *mensana in corpore sano* "a sound mind in a sound body" is still as true today as it was then.

This department is the reservoir for the legacy of the province in that it has to ensure that linguistic and cultural mores are observed. Cultural events have to be observed from Gaabomotho.

One wonders to what extent this department works with the national one and to what extent the activities that take place in Freedom Park in Pretoria affect us in the province. We raise this question because when Freedom Park was constructed each province had to send material such as stone and soil samples to make it representative of all provinces. We argue that if this province or all provinces do not have a direct stake that is taxation without representation which is of course tantamount to tyranny.

There is very little that was done in Cultural Affairs during the period under review. The North West Cultural calabash has since been confined to the Taung area. The Aardklop Festival in Potchefstroom continues to promote the Afrikaner culture while the other cultures are left behind.

The Provincial Geographic Names Committee has to show commitment and go around in quest of unacceptable and obnoxious names in consultation with the communities.

There is a difference between completing a project and having it function. It is pointless to have completed heritage facilities and they remain structures unopened, unused and eventually to be vandalized. This goes for museums such as those at Setlhwatlhwe and Seolong and elsewhere. These facilities should be put to use if they are to be seen to improve the quality of life of the people in those areas.

It is strange that the strategic objective of the language services is to promote multilingualism and redress the linguistic imbalances while developing the previously marginalized languages but English has been turned into the *Lingua franca* of the province. Very little is done to rope in the poor use of Setswana even by the local radio stations.

We in the UCDP look forward to a day when some documents of this legislature at least will be written in the dominant indigenous language, name Setswana. There is of course room for the use of other languages.

Much has still to be done to with regard to bringing libraries under the jurisdiction of the department. Municipalities tend to cling to what they perceive to belong to them. It is regrettable that as much as access to libraries is not easy most of them hardly have newspapers let alone being connected to the internet. The nearest example is the situation in Schweitzer Reinecke where the library in town has nothing to do with the one in nearby Ipelegeng. It is one thing to have a building and another to have it functioning.

We have however to accept that as much as the infrastructure may be in place it will not be helpful if the if we do not have trained librarians and communities that are ready to read.

It is important that all archival material should be updated and even all those records of the erstwhile Transvaal Provincial administration as all that information will prove vital to the well being of the people in the province. A big question is why after 15 years the archives administration has yet to sort out the records of the then Bophuthatswana government.

The North West Province is fortunate that we will be hosting some 2010 FIFA games and the question is how ready are we? We know it is a FIFA event that is by and large in the hands of the national government and the Local Organising Committee; but for the fact that the event is in our backyard we deserve to know more about it.

The report notes that there are Public Viewing areas for the 2010 FIFA World Cup; may we know where these are?

The province is not doing well in most sporting codes but we should exploit the situation that makes us shine above all other provinces. The Mmabana Foundation which brings talent to the fore has to be nurtured and promoted. Whatever little resources we have should be amassed in the institution because it has proven to yield results of world acclaim.

There is an unfortunate malady in the department. All requisitions are approved from head office. This results in some events being called off because of the bureaucratic approach and the disregard to pay service providers within the 30 days set by law.

Local structures for various sports codes are non-existent in most cases. This is very unfortunate when there is an under spending of R13 million set aside for Sport and recreation. This should not be allowed to persist.

While the annual report has not been qualified by the Auditor General, we like the latter would urge that all matters of emphasis should be attended to have an unqualified report without any matters of emphasis in future