

# Pillay lays out budget plans

## **SE-ANNE RALL**

"RADICAL socio-economic transformation does not belong to a faction; it belongs to the ANC as a whole. It is part of the programme and policy of the ANC and it is our duty to implement it as policy," said Ravi Pillay, Human Settlements and Public Works MEC. This was the foundation on which Pillay delivered his budget speeches for both portfolios in Pietermaritzburg today.

Pillay said both his departments had key roles to play in transformation within the province.

"Arising from the electoral mandate, we are driven to advance radical social transformation by which we mean the fundamental change in the structure, systems, institutions and patterns of ownership, management and control of the economy in favour of all South Africans, especially the poor, the majority of whom are African and female."

He said this meant using all resources and the capacity of the state to maximise the benefit to the broadest possible place.

His department would focus on the issue of land grabs, which had plagued the city for a number of years, he said.

In a recent case, a group of women set alight patches of ground in Reservoir Hills.

They were demanding land of

their own to build on, so that they could provide a safe environment for their children.

"Land invasions remain a challenge and in partnership with municipalities, we employ a strategy of social facilitation, legal action and deployment of security services to manage this difficulty. We need to manage, resist and discourage land invasions. The national department is piloting legislation for the amendment of the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from the Unlawful Occupation of Land Act 19 of 1998.

"Managing will not solve it. We need to aggressively pursue this matter and organise the communities so that they can talk to each other and act in each other's best interests.

"Most of the time, these invasions are instigated by shack lords, who own shacks and are renting them out to others," Pillay said.

Human Settlements has allocated just more than R3.8 million to four programmes: administration (R201 248), housing needs, research and planning (R16903), housing development (R3419351) and housing assets management and property management (R206 368). The bulk of this budget has been allocated to eThekweni, because of demographics, project planning readiness and the availability of bulk services.

In the past five years, the de-

partment has delivered 133 478 houses, 26 153 sites, rectified 9 847 units, maintained 16 794 units and handed out more than 16 000 title deeds, impacting the lives of more than 1 million people in the province.

Regarding Public Works, Pillay said his budget of just over R1.5bn would be split over administration (R382 684 000), property management (R678 491 000) and infrastructure (R445 776 000).

He said the department delivered new social infrastructure such as schools, clinics and hospitals, and maintained existing facilities, managed a significant lease portfolio and co-ordinated reporting on the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in KZN.

"This is exciting work that seeks to achieve co-ordination of all infrastructure delivery in the province. We are encouraged by the continued commitment by provincial departments as well as key stakeholders such as Eskom, Transnet, Water and Sanitation, Umgeni Water and the Provincial Planning Commission serving on the Provincial Infrastructure Work Group," he said.

Last year, the Human Settlements Department won the Govan Mbeki Award for the Best Performing Province for the third year in a row.

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