

AMATHOLE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY LAUNCHES WOMEN'S MONTH

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East London - Deputy Minister of Local Government Nomatyala Hangana urged women throughout the country not to be used as a tool to pull each other down. Hangana was speaking at the official launch of Amathole District Municipality Women's Month in East London. Addressing hundreds of women that gathered at Christian Centre she said the theme of these years' celebrations is Emancipation, Empowerment and Equality. She said 9th of August is a day that was fought bitterly by women who vowed that days of carrying dom-pass were numbered. She said the heroines like Lillian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph Dora Tamani, Nonyamezelo Mxenge and others took a decision to defy pass laws that were imposed by the former regime and marched to Pretoria

She also sent strong message to women to continue to support each other as they are still faced with many challenges such as abuse, rape and domestic violence. "People must thank President Thabo Mbeki for being a progressive president because through his leadership style a number of women are in top positions. Women must look at their common challenges such as eradication of poverty and the welfare of each other," Hangana added.

She reminded people about the importance of local government and stated that municipalities are better positioned to deal with community problems. "Time has come for all municipalities to work hand in hand with ward committees as they are described as foot soldiers, eyes and ears of local government. In order to be able to fight the scourge of gender based violence, municipalities must continue to support ward committee programmes," she said.

Hangana lambasted those women who are still protecting their husbands and boyfriends who are abusing their children. She asked communities to always look after their children.

On the issue of the failure to disseminate information to the public Hangana said communication is still a thorny issue. She congratulated the leadership of ADM for honoring National Women's day.

Thanking women who hailed from eight local municipalities throughout the district to honour the launch of ADM's Women Month, Executive Mayor Sakhumzi Somyo said it had not been an easy road to freedom for those women who sacrificed their lives. Somyo also encouraged women not to shy away from their daily responsibilities as challenges still do exist in various households. Somyo urged men to protect women at all times as they are the pillars of strength.