



MEDIA ADVISORY

Minister Mchunu to lead a signing of off-take agreements for start of the R28-billion Upper uMkhomazi Water Project

17 April 2024

The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr Senzo Mchunu will spearhead a joint signing ceremony of off-take agreements with Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA), uMngeni-uThukela Water Board and six municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal, to mark the commencement of Upper uMkhomazi Water Project.

This significant milestone in efforts to ensure water security in the province, will be held on Friday, 19 April 2024 at Deepsdale in Bulwer. It is expected to be attended by Deputy Minister, David Mahlobo, provincial cabinet led by Premier Nomusa Dube-Ncube, Executive Mayors from eThekweni Metro, Ugu, Harry Gwala, iLembe, uMgungundlovu Districts and Mayor from uMsunduzi Local Municipality as well as dignitaries from the two water entities.

The 28-billion-rand Upper uMkhomazi Water Project is earmarked as a catalyst to water security and vibrant economic activity in the eThekweni area and surrounding districts and it is set to increase the amount of raw water in the uMgeni Water System yield by 55%, from 394 to 608 million cubic metres (or kilolitres) per annum, upon its completion. The TCTA will implement raw water component of project and uMngeni-uThukela will implement bulk water treatment component for distribution to the identified six water services authorities.

The project consists of construction of a 81m high dam at Smithfield on the uMkhomazi River (with gross storage capacity of 251 million m³), a 33km, a 3.5m diameter tunnel from Smithfield dam to the uMlaza River Valley, and a 5.1km, 2.6m diameter gravity bulk pipeline connecting the tunnel to the Baynesfield Water Treatment Works.

The commencement of the project after delays signifies government's commitment in all spheres to ensure that there are collaborative efforts to realise water security for current and future generations.

On uMkhomazi Water Project, Government, approved for blended finance and funded 25% from National Treasury through the Infrastructure Fund, and a further 25% to be funded through an interest-free loan from National Treasury to the TCTA, while the remaining 50% to be raised on the financial markets by the TCTA. The two water entities of the Department of Water and Sanitation, TCTA and uMngeni-uThukela have entered long-term water supply agreements to raise funds for the implementation of the project.

The joint signing ceremony will be preceded by an inspection of a dam site.

Members of the media are invited as follows:

Inspection of a dam site

Venue : Deepsdale (Dam site near Beacon)

Time : 09h00-09h20

NB! Media interviews will be conducted on site at 09h30

Joint signing ceremony

Venue : Deepsdale (Marquee)

Time : 10:00-12:00

Journalists in need for transport to the event can arrange with Mr Fhatuwani Tshikulumela on 082 553 7881

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Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

For more information, contact Kamogelo Mogotsi, Spokesperson for the Ministry on 076 523 0085 or Wisane Mavasa, Spokesperson for the Department of Water and Sanitation on 060 561 8935.

For uMngeni-uThukela Water, please contact Spokesperson Siyabonga Maphumulo on 082 303 4243.

For TCTA, contact the Media Liaison Officer Luzamo Sandlana 082 803 1634/ 079 071 9368

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