

inside Mopani



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Executive Mayor calls for civil society involvement as he leads Men's March on GBVF



The Executive Mayor of Mopani District Municipality Cllr Pule Shayi has appealed to civil society organizations to partner with government in the fight against gender-based violence and femicide.

He told hundreds of men who had joined the men's march against gender-based violence in Giyani on Friday, 20 November, that government alone will not be able to win the fight. Mopani District has recorded over 200 sexual offence cases between July and September this year as per the statistics released by the Police Minister a fortnight ago. More than 150 of these cases are rape.

"This remains a societal problem. We commend the efforts by the President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency President Cyril Ramaphosa for making financial resources available to address gender-based violence and femicide.

"Government has established the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Gender-Based Violence to coordinate the response to GBVF. This team has already handed over the National Strategic Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide to President Cyril Ramaphosa, in April this year," he said.

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The Executive Mayor said that government has moved to amend three bills which will aid the justice system in responding to GBV. "The **Criminal and Related Matters Bill** seeks to introduce stricter bail conditions and sentencing provisions. The **Domestic Violence Amendment Bill** which will address gaps and anomalies which needed to be closed since the Domestic Violence Act came into effect in 1999.

"The **Criminal Law Amendment Bill** will extend protection afforded to victims of GBV and introduce a new offence of sexual intimidation and extend protection for victims of incest. The finalisation of the **Victim Support Services Bill** which will regulate the provision of sheltering, the prevention and combating of hate crimes bill," he said.

He said he was encouraged by the support from the religious community. "We are happy we have respected church leaders joining us today on this march. We say this because the church has a much bigger role to play in building a society where morality takes prevalence." Shayi also urged men to report when they are abused. "We are using this march here today to recommit ourselves to treat women and girls in our society with the utmost care and respect.

"We will not look away and remain silent when women and children are abused, raped and killed in our communities. As fathers in our homes, we will raise our boys to respect women, to respect themselves, to value life and human dignity. We also want to implore those of us (men) who are abused at home to gather courage and start reporting cases to law enforcement authorities. Taking your own life is never a solution."



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