



agriculture, environmental affairs,
land reform and rural development

Department:
agriculture, environmental affairs,
land reform and rural development.
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Date: **16 March 2022**

TO: ALL MEDIA.

SUBJECT: MEC MANOPOLE CONDEMNS ABUSE OF FEMALE FARM WORKERS DURING HUMAN RIGHTS DAY DEBATE.

16 MARCH 2022.

The MEC for Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform, Mme Mase Manopole said women constitute a majority in the population stakes “yet in many respects remain marginalized, and more often, fall victim to discrimination, abuse with some in the process paying with their lives.”

She was addressing the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature during the Human Rights Month Debate in Kimberley on Tuesday afternoon (15 March 2022).

Human Rights Day which is celebrated annually on 21st March, is as a result of a defiance campaign across the country, which saw apartheid police shooting and killing 69 people in 1960 in Sharpeville.

The tragedy came to be known as the Sharpeville Massacre and it exposed the apartheid government’s deliberate violation of human rights to the world.

MEC Manopole said, despite their unwarranted status in society, women had over centuries played a significant role in fostering cohesion.

“It is an undeniable truth that women tend to be predisposed to such critical roles in society as peace-making, mediation, and the nurturing of relationships. However, in many respects women remain marginalized, and more often, fall victim to discrimination, abuse with some in the process paying with their lives” she said.

“A case in point is when during farm inspection by our officials who were accompanied by the Department of Labour, in Twee Strome Boerdery in the ZF Mgcawu District, found female farmworkers been housed in horse stable and the farm owner deducting rent from their salaries for what he calls ‘rental money for accommodation’- that is absurd and totally uncalled for,” said MEC Manopole.

MEC Manopole said the Farmer was given a warning and immediately instructed to move the female farm workers to an area where they can live in comfort and dignity.

“We have intensified our farmworkers campaign, with a special focus on women and girl children who are in many cases abused and marginalized in farms across the Province.

“We will put the constitution in use and make sure that everyone has a right to fair labour practices. This right extends to all farm workers, whether they are permanent, temporal or seasonal workers. We have and we will continue to intervene and improve the livelihoods of farm workers in the agricultural sector,” she said.

MEC said the Farmworkers and Farm dwellers rights are human rights, as encapsulated in the Bill of Rights.

“Dismissals and evictions of farmworkers without following proper channels will have to stop.

“Farmworkers have inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. They have the right to Freedom of association, including the right to form and join trade unions and bargain collectively. The rights of their children to access safe schooling and protection. The rights to a decent standard of living, health and well-being. Access to government services such as health, basic municipal services, social security and registration of birth,” said MEC Manopole.

She said on the legislative front, there has also been progress, given the latest enactment into law of the three anti-GBV Bills.

This legislative reforms will, among others, allow victims to make online protection order applications without being present in court.

“Also, protection order applications will be on a 24-hour basis on the online application platform. As a deterrent measure for likely perpetrators, one of the Bills makes provision in it that makes it possible for certain particulars of persons convicted of sexual offenses to be made publicly available.”

MEC Manopole said the Sharpeville massacre remains a signature event in the country’s historical timeline, and its contribution need to be foregrounded, “as it certainly ought to be a case with many other parts of this country, which, like Sharpeville, took the fight to the apartheid regime.”

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For media enquiries contact Zandisile Luphahla, Media Liaison Officer and Spokesperson to the MEC, on 083 391 5388.

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