

To: All Media

Attention: News Editors

Date: 23 April 2021

For Immediate Release

Suspension of Gauteng 2021 winter initiation season

The Gauteng Initiation Task Team comprising Traditional Leaders, Gauteng Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, Municipalities, Sector Departments, South African Police Service and Cultural Religious and Linguistic Rights Commission, held consultative workshops across the five regions in Gauteng. The workshops took place in the following Regions:

- Sedibeng
- West Rand
- City of Joburg
- City of Ekurhuleni
- City of Tshwane

The Purpose of the workshops was to engage the primary stakeholders, which are the Initiation School Principals in each of the regions/municipalities on whether to hold initiation or to suspend the 2021 winter season.

Detailed presentations were made from the Gauteng Department of Health, with specific focus on the continued impact of Covid-19 in Gauteng.

We also had detailed presentations from the National House of Traditional Leaders with specific focus on the process followed during Lockdown Level 1.

The two Traditional Authorities namely Amandebele Ba Lebelo and Amandebele Ndzundza Sokhulumi, decided to suspend initiation for the 2021 season.

All the stakeholders in each region, having considered all inputs, unanimously decided to suspend the 2021 winter initiation season. The Primary reason for the decision by all stakeholders was:

- the devastating impact of the Covid-19 second wave in our communities;
- many stakeholders felt that we should wait for the vaccination rollout to take effect before commencing with initiation; and
- the safety of initiates.

Following the above-mentioned consultative workshops, the Gauteng Initiation Task Team resolved as follows with respect to the winter season initiation:

-The 2021 winter initiation season is suspended.

-Anyone attempting or conducting initiation must be dealt with by the law enforcement agencies as they will be in contravention of the law.

- Our monitoring teams must remain on the alert for any incidents of illegal initiation to rescue our children, particularly in the hot spot areas.

- embark on an intensive awareness and communication of the suspension decision to all communities.

We plead with all our Communities to abide by this decision.

END

For Media Enquiries

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