



# transport

Department:  
Transport  
Province of KwaZulu-Natal

## MEDIA LIAISON AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

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### MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: ALL MEDIA  
DATE: 23 JUNE 2015  
ATTENTION: EDITORS/ NEWS EDITORS AND PR WIRES

#### **New bridge to save villagers from crocodiles**

Facing crocodiles while crossing uThukela river will be a thing of the past for the communities of eMdlebeni and Mankenganeni in Umlalazi and KwaDukuza Local Municipalities following the start of the construction of the R78 million Nyakana uThukela Vehicle Bridge.

The two communities had for years braved the deep crocodile infested river to visit their relatives or to get to KwaDukuza to access shopping facilities and other basic amenities such as clinics.

School children also had to face the dangers of swimming across the river every morning to cross from Mankenganeni to eMdlebeni to access schools. This had an impact on school enrolment and the pass rate of scholars in the area who often missed schools on rainy days due to the high levels of the river, which posed a great danger.

The communities had relied on the services of a Good Samaritan Amos Dlodla, 65, who used his boat over the years to help the school pupils to cross safely every morning.

However the gloom gave way to excitement and joy today (23 June 2015) from the two communities when the MEC for Transport, Community Safety and Liaison, Willies Mchunu officially did a sod turning signaling the construction of the bridge.

The 230 metre long bridge will cost over R78 million Rands and will take two years to be completed.

"Over 275 school pupils at the iNyakana Combined School, iTshelabantu Combined School and Banguni High School in this area will benefit from the bridge. They will now look forward to coming to school knowing that access to reach their schools has been made easier," said Mchunu.

"Two weeks ago we were in Maphumulo the nearby municipality to also commence the building of two bridges of Mvumase and Mabhobhane where school pupils also faced the struggle of crossing this same river of uThukela to get to schools. I want to ensure that in this term of office we eradicate such challenges which prevent our children from accessing education," said Mchunu.

Ends.

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