“Another step closer to reaching our key objective of eradicating slums in KwaZulu – Natal” were the words of MEC for Human Settlements and Public Works, Ravi Pillay, when he officially launched the Siyahlalala slums clearance housing project in Ward 25, Newcastle Municipality.

The Implementing Agent, Umpheme Development has been tasked with ensuring that a total of 1205 beneficiaries live in comfort and security through provision of decent shelter. The total value of internal services (infrastructure) is about R58 million and just under R158 million for the top structure.

The construction of infrastructure (roads and sanitation pipes) started in August 2015 and the project is anticipated to be completed by October 2015. A total of 20 jobs have been created for the community of Siyahlalala.

MEC Ravi Pillay and his entourage started by pouring concrete in one of the slabs this morning which symbolised that work has begun and that the long wait of the community of Siyahlalala is producing positive results.
This project is right at the heart (CBD) of Newcastle Municipality and is called Siyahlalala because the Community did not want to be moved from this place but rather for government to develop the area that they are living in.

In his address, MEC Ravi Pillay said this is a wonderful day and month because this is the month when our first democratic leader, the icon, tata Nelson Mandela, was born and challenged people of Siyahlalala to stand for the values that Mandela believed in.

MEC Pillay also emphasized the importance of good working relations between the community, the municipality and Implementing Agent. He said he will not tolerate shoddy workmanship in this project and that he would only accept 1205 quality houses.

The MEC thanked Siyahlalala community members for being patient for such a long time and said that they must always know that government will eventually deliver, slowly but surely.