

DHA violating the rights of citizens by not timeously issuing documents

By Angel Khanyile MP – DA Shadow Deputy Minister of Home Affairs

Chairperson,

In a Constituency with 19 schools and with roughly 16 000 learners, there are about 250 learners who do not have birth certificates. Most of these children are South Africans.

This government must be reminded that thousands of children who have been treated like nobodies do not enjoy education because they are undocumented and have thus placed a burden on teachers who do not know how to address these challenges without proper direction from government.

No South African child should have to leave hospital without a birth certificate. Therefore, the Department of Home Affairs (DHA) must move fast to ensure that labour wards have in-house officials.

The issue of insufficient capacity must be addressed immediately. Last week hundreds of people were turned away at the Isipingo Home Affairs Office, as it can only serve 80 people per day. This shows that there is no innovation and appetite to serve.

The ANC government is failing vulnerable citizens of this country.

Nomvula Mtshali from Standerton, in my home province, Mpumalanga, “place of the rising sun” - was left with her father as an infant and has been waiting over 31 years for a birth certificate.

This Government is talking about a new dream. Yet, 31-year-old Nomvula’s quest for a simple birth certificate will seemingly remain just that - a dream.

Despite anecdotal evidence, a referral letter from Social Development, a certificate from church and her father's death certificate, Nomvula still remains without a birth certificate.

This information was emailed to the acting Deputy Director General, Thomas Sigama, on the 28 March 2019, up until today I have had no response. If a Member of Parliament, who is mandated to perform oversight, cannot get answers from this DHA how do we expect ordinary citizens to get proper services?

Today, many South African women are married to husbands they have never met. These women are struggling to find their identity and are denied an opportunity to find work, because some of their so-called “husbands” are blacklisted.

It took the ANC government 14 years to get Ms. Nomathamsanqa Booi's fake marriage annulled, she further discovered that there were 2 children she did not know registered in her name. Following her meeting with Minister Aaron Motsoaledi, he committed to having her issued with a smart card ID within 48 hours, we congratulate Mrs Booi for finally being liberated after waiting for 14 years.

The big question remains, what were the reasons or criteria used by the Minister to commit to issuing Ms. Booi with a smart card ID within 48 hours? When, as the Portfolio Committee of Home Affairs was informed there are remaining cases of victims who have not yet been assisted. 643 cases have been argued and 263 have been investigated cases.

If the Minister is serious about this corruption, whereby ID copies and signatures are fraudulently submitted as in Ms. Booi's case, it is enough reason to accelerate the issuing of smart card ID's to the aforementioned cases.

If he fails to do this, these women, just like Ms. Booi, will have to wait a further 14 years. The Annual Performance Plan indicated that there is insufficient capacity at DHA contact centre.

Government needs to act at a pace of a bullet train in ensuring that all South African women are properly documented and enjoy equal benefits of being citizens of this beautiful country.

Chairperson, this government fails to conduct oversights and members of the community continue to suffer at the hands of officials who manage those offices like they are running their tuckshops.

On the 18th June I received a call from Govan Mbeki municipality residents that their Home Affairs offices were still locked at 11h00 when I contacted one of the office managers he confirmed, and further advised that the official who had the office keys was on leave and they were waiting on him to bring the keys, driving from Bethal to Secunda which is more than 60km away.

I urge the Minister to investigate this matter and address it accordingly.

It is only the DA government will ensure all South African citizens young and old are properly documented and their rights are protected.