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New status for Nkandla

By Loyiso Sidimba | Feb 07, 2015 |

PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma's hometown, Nkandla, will be part of one of the country's three new cities after the 2016 local government polls.

Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister Pravin Gordhan has asked the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) that some municipalities be prioritised and considered as metropolitan municipalities.

Nkandla will form part of one of the two new proposed metros in KwaZulu-Natal.

The centre of the new Nkandla metro will be Umhlatuze (Richards Bay) in the province's North Coast. Other local municipalities to form part of the metro will include Mbonambi, Umhlathuze, uMlalazi and Mthonjaneni.

The president's hometown is about 140km from Richards Bay.

In a letter dated January 13 sent to MDB chairwoman Jane Thupana, Gordhan said there were some municipalities whose boundaries should be re-determined to make them more functional.

"In order to address the functionality, viability and sustainability of municipalities, a number of strategies have been embarked upon.

"One of those strategies is to invoke Section 22 of the Municipal Demarcation Act and to request the board to consider the re-determination of a set of boundaries," reads Gordhan's letter in part.

KwaZulu-Natal's capital Umsunduzi (Pietermaritzburg) will also be a metro and include the surrounding smaller municipalities such as Umshwati, Umngeni, Mpofana, Impendle, Mkambathini and Richmond.

The government is also going ahead with the contentious new metro west of Johannesburg. The metro will have Mogale City as its core, and include the West Rand district municipality (Merafong, Randfontein and Westonaria).

Another 17 municipalities across the country will be disestablished, according to Gordhan.

The MDB will publish its final list of wards in October after countrywide consultations.

The disestablished municipalities will be amalgamated into their neighbours after being declared poorly functional and non-viable.

According to the Financial and Fiscal Commission, the financial and fiscal implications of boundary re-determinations must be prioritised and established before any demarcation decision is made.

Last week, the ANC said it would conduct a review of non-viable municipalities.

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