



## Press release

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### Al Jama-ah supports the cultural and creative industries

Al Jama-ah political party urges the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, to assist struggling artists with the much-needed state funding.

Al Jama-ah party leader, Hounorable Ganief Hendricks echoed these words when he launched the parties' elections manifesto in Gqeberha, (formerly Port Elizabeth), Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality.

Al Jama-ah wants to bring change in the sector by focusing on opening up the tourism industry which is vital for the arts and culture sector, "an effort will be made to engage the public on investing in artists, business education and skills development will be offered. We're looking at a post covid-19 world with prosperity for all" says Hendricks.

The party aim to bring the Department of Arts and Culture to sit around the same table with Tourism and work on a plan in every Municipality to help local Artists benefit from state initiatives concerning infrastructure upgrades and ensure that there's always an opportunity for Artists in their local communities.

This comes after Al Jama-ah candidate Farook Mohammed, contesting Ward7 in, was recently honoured with a prestigious award at The Mzansi Arts and Media Awards.

Mohammed, who is also director of his own brand, Afro Arabian Empire, and co-producer of Islamic TV programme, Liljamie Productions, won the award in the category of best events' organizer. This is in recognition of the work that he has been doing, helping artists and creatives, he has made it possible for artists to showcase their work and promote craft during a difficult period for the industry.

Mohammed says "The creative industry plays an important role in the economy of the country; we can neglect it at our own peril. We have to support it in every way possible; Al Jama-ah also has oversight on the Sports, Recreation Arts and Culture committee, we will continue to use our influence towards the talent in the sector."

Al Jama-ah understands that artists are entrepreneurs, and that art is a business on its own. Artists make up many genres from painters, sculptors, ceramicists to musicians, actors, filmmakers, poets, and the like. Al Jama-ah has been offering strategic council to the industry and is in the process of helping them to establish better business practices and apply for state funding.

The effects of the pandemic have contributed to the severe unemployment have taken a devastating toll on the sector. The full scope and scale of the impact can be hard to discern,

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in part because of the size and diversity of the industries and occupations that constitute arts and culture,” says Mohammed.

The industry is in a very poor state, artists have not received much needed aid and it has somewhat reached a standstill for many and is at risk of collapse, but efforts are being made by individuals to keep themselves afloat but it's not good enough. “We are playing our part; we've also set up a virtual library/ gallery”.

The party is concerned that the economy in general is in a bad state and emphasises the need for the whole economy back on its feet because artists got the larger portion of a bitter end of the stick.

**End**

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