



# TINTSWALO: The oracle of a new dawn

SPECIAL EDITION  
2019 - 2024



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# Perspective



In Mpumalanga, when the sun rises, it dawns with new possibilities. Indeed, the beehive of activities throughout the Province in respect of public infrastructure development bears testimony to this mantra. As we conclude the sixth term of the democratically elected Government, perhaps it is an opportune moment to pause and reflect on the journey thus far traveled. Undoubtedly, for the past three decades, we have collectively put our ducks in a row to ensure that 'Tintswalo' navigates the challenges of life with confidence, backed by necessary socio-economic infrastructure such as transport, education and healthcare amenities in line with international standards.

Once again, the Department under the leadership of MEC Mandla Ndlovu stands before this window of opportunity to account and take stock of the mandate of service delivery entrusted to the 'Handyman of the State' by the citizens of this majestic Province. This special edition is dedicated to the work that the Department has accomplished since 2019/20 financial year when the sixth Administration commenced its business. As always, the MEC has been at the helm of this auspicious task to ensure that Government's Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, post Covid-19 pandemic, is a success. As the saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words," hopefully this episode will serve as a portfolio of evidence, not overshadowed by colourful words but rather displaying a true reflection of the state of affairs in Mpumalanga.

The past six months, since our last publication, the Department has made tremendous progress on various projects including among others, the construction of Middelburg Hospital, Mkhondo Boarding School, Parliamentary Village and Mpumalanga Fresh Produce Market. Transport infrastructure which plays a key role in socio-economic development remains a top priority. Several roads have since been completed while others are in progress. We also hosted a successful EPWP summit to calibrate our job creation strategy. Furthermore, as the custodian of public transport, safety on the road is non-negotiable hence we recently increased our fleet to augment the effort of our Transport Inspectors.

Well, this year South Africans have another opportunity to exercise their constitutional right to elect their political leadership. As Government, it is appropriate to reiterate Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane's words that, "We are ready and will continue to diligently tackle the myriad of challenges we face. We shall not betray the collective trust bestowed upon us by the people across the length and breadth of our beautiful Province." Ndziyakhensa.

**MC Morolo**  
Head: Public Works, Roads and Transport



## Mpumanga ready to tackle road accidents and fatalities beyond Easter season

By Mxolisi Cyril Dlamini

### Transport Inspectors gets new wheels to curb road carnage

**Road** accidents and fatalities are amongst the major causes of grief and despair throughout the world. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 1.19 million people die each year as a result of road crashes. Road injuries remain the leading cause of death for children and young adults between 5 and 29 years of age. If this trend continues unabated, none will remain to tell the tale since transport is a matter of socio-economic imperative. To fight the scourge, on the 14 of December 2024, MEC Mandla Ndlovu handed over ten more vehicles to the Department's Transport Inspectorate unit responsible for control and regulation of public transport. These vehicles will provide necessary muscles to boost the arm of the law by ensuring that there is sufficient foot soldiers on the ground and in every corner.

*"As we approach the festive season and beyond, these patrol vehicles will significantly enhance law enforcement operations and visibility on the road throughout the Province. This in turn will guard against reckless*

*behavior on the road which accounts for the highest number of road accidents and fatalities. Working in collaboration with other law enforcement agencies such as national, provincial and municipal traffic departments as well as the South African Police Service, we believe that the arm of the law will be strengthened. Ultimately, our main interest is the safety of all road users,"* said MEC Ndlovu during the handover event which was held on the N4 road, at Alkmaar in the City of Mbombela.

### Human factors accounts for over 80% road crashes

**The** Minister of Transport, Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga released the 2023/24 festive season road statistics at a media briefing held at the N1 Grasmere Toll Gate in Gauteng on Wednesday, 24 January 2024. The Minister was joined by key stakeholders in the road traffic sector. Delivering her speech, the Minister mentioned that most fatalities were recorded on Sundays which is a new trend. Human factors contributed 80,8% of the crashes, environmental factors contributed 10,4% mostly as a result of heavy rainfall

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and storms that had a big impact on road condition whereas vehicle factors contributed 8.8%. Notably, 40.9% of those who died were pedestrians, passengers accounted for 33.6%, drivers 24.6% and cyclists 0.8%.

According to the statistics, Eastern Cape is the only province that managed to surpass the target set for it to reduce fatalities by at least 18.6%. The provincial summary of the statistics is as follows:

- Free State recorded a 27.4% decline.
- Eastern Cape recorded a 21.5% decline.
- Northern Cape recorded a 15.7% decline.
- Limpopo recorded an 8.4 % decline.
- North West recorded a 2.1% decline.
- Gauteng recorded a 7.6% increase.
- KwaZulu Natal recorded a 4.2% increase.
- Mpumalanga recorded a 9.7% increase,
- Western Cape recorded a 22.6% increase.

Regardless of the 9.7% increase in road accidents and fatalities in Mpumalanga, the MEC remains hopeful that Mpumalanga will bounce back since during the same period in 2022, the Province achieved an overwhelming 23.8% reduction of accidents and fatalities. One thing that is certain is that road safety is everybody's business especially considering the fact that human error plays a major role. "This speaks to the collective effort that each and everyone must make to ensure that no one is a victim of road crashes. Our work is not only confined in October Transport Month, Festive and Easter seasons but a daily commitment, 365 days a year," emphasized MEC Ndlovu responding to the Festive Season' statistics.

## MEC impressed with Buscor's service ratings

The early bird catches the fattest worm, the saying goes. While the majority of South Africans were still asleep, MEC Mandla Ndlovu together with Ms Norah Fakude-Nkuna, Buscor Executive Chairperson and entourage were on the road as early as 3h00 am to ensure that thousands of commuters at Ehlanzeni District are transported safely to their destinations. The leaders woke up before dawn on Thursday, 26 October 2023 as part of October transport Month programme to meet with bus commuters traveling to work from Nkomazi Local Municipality to the City of Mbombela.

The purpose of the initiative which is conducted periodically, is to assess the state of public transport. In Mpumalanga, Government subsidizes over 400 000 commuters who travel to work everyday using buses. The use of public transport is encouraged by Government in order to minimize traffic congestion which not only causes delays and sometimes road accidents but it equally overburdens transport infrastructure.

As the custodian of public transport in Mpumalanga, MEC Ndlovu had an opportunity to interact with commuters who raised various concerns but mostly applauded Buscor for exceptional service. The dignitaries also visited Buscor's operational hub including the depot and workshop to get a first hand experience on how the company keeps its fleet fit for the road.



MEC Mandla Ndlovu engaging with commuters



Buscor and DPWRT management



Minister of Transport, Ms Sindisiwe Chikunga in Standerton



MEC Ndlovu taking a bus from Nkomazi to Mbombela



# VULINDLELA: Minister Chikunga Officially Opens Another Economic Artillery In Standerton

By DoT Communications



R23 road towards Standerton in Lekwa Local Municipality

In a landmark move for South African infrastructure development programme, the Minister of Transport, Ms Sindisiwe Chikunga accompanied by the MEC of Public Works, Roads and Transport in Mpumalanga, Mr Mandla Ndlovu, officially handed over the completed R23 road project in Standerton, Mpumalanga, on the 5th of February 2024.

This milestone event demonstrated Government's ongoing commitment to improving the country's road network, leading to safe travel and increased economic opportunities. The handover ceremony highlighted the importance of the R23 road for local and regional connectivity, further showcasing Government's efforts to enhance transportation links and accessibility.

Minister Chikunga also led an inspection of the R50 road, emphasizing the comprehensive approach taken to ensure road safety and efficiency that meet international standards.

Furthermore, the dignitaries hosted an engagement session at Sakhile Stadium in Standerton where local residents had an opportunity to directly engage with Government representatives. This demonstrated Government's commitment to listen and respond to citizen's needs and concerns regarding the improvement of service delivery in a collaborative approach.

With the intervention of the South African Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL), Standerton has become a point of reference. Due to high roads maintenance costs competing with the provision of similar critical basic services, the local Government had a mammoth task on its hands that compelled the national Government to come on board. This move proved to be a game changer which has since greatly improved roads condition in this little town which serves as a rest stop for those traveling between the provinces of KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng as well as Limpopo. Most importantly, the local residents are reaping the benefits.



VULINDLELA: Minister Sindisiwe Chikunga and MEC Mandla Ndlovu officially opening R23 road in Standerton.



## MULTI-MILLION RAND ROAD UPGRADE TO BENEFIT BELFAST AND JUSTICIA RESIDENTS

By Bongani Dhlamini

**MEC** Mandla Ndlovu together with the Executive Mayor of Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, Cllr Silvia Nxumalo, as well as members of Hoxani and Jongilanga Traditional Authorities conducted a sod turning ceremony on the 10th of November 2023 for upgrading of the D4382 road between Belfast and Justicia in Bushbuckridge Local Municipality. The estimated cost of the project is approximately R114 million. Apart from improving access to public amenities, the long awaited upgrade of the 13km road is expected to create massive job opportunities for the local communities.

During the ceremony, MEC Mandla Ndlovu said **"While we continue to invest in**

**construction and upgrading of roads infrastructure, project disruptions due to community unrest and disputes remain a thorny issue. We must therefore work together to ensure that this project is completed within the scheduled 22 months. Otherwise, delays rob others the same opportunity to enjoy the fruits of democracy."**

Transport infrastructure continues to play a significant role in the economy of the Province and South Africa as a whole. It is for this reason that over the past five years the Department has placed much focus on rehabilitation and maintenance of aging transport infrastructure.



# Sanitation restores the dignity of education

By Mxolisi Cyril Dlamini

**Water** is life, sanitation is dignity and education is the key to success. These proverbial truths, have not only found expression in the Bill of Rights but have been the credo of the Mpumalanga Provincial Government's service delivery agenda since 1994, not only as a matter of ideology but brick and mortar cemented on concrete foundations in every school throughout the Province. In a nutshell, the provision of water and adequate sanitation is the cornerstone of education in 'the Place of the Rising Sun.' The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport is leading the mammoth task of eradicating unsafe sanitation structures in every school and replacing these with safe and environmentally friendly sanitation system, the enviro-loo. Needless to say, this alone has created massive business and work opportunities for the residents of the Province.

To date, the Mpumalanga Provincial Government has implemented a total of 3306 education infrastructure projects since 1994. Out of these, 1228 projects

were the restoration of dignity to learners through the provision of adequate sanitation. Evidently, this has significantly improved access to education especially in rural communities where education was seen as a matter of luxury for the wealthy.

***"There has been a phenomenal growth in access to education in our Province with Stats SA General Household Survey findings indicating that the percentage of 7 to 17 year olds attending school in Mpumalanga Province is at 98%,"*** emphasized

Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane during the State of the Province Address on the 1st of March this year.

According to UNICEF, poor sanitation and high-risk

hygiene behaviors confine the poor in a vicious cycle of poor health, environmental degradation, malnutrition, reduced productivity and loss of incomes. For women and adolescent girls, the lack of privacy and dignity has deleterious impacts on health and safety, self-esteem, education and well-being. More than 70 per cent of the population in Eastern and Southern Africa (340 million people) have no access to basic sanitation services. Among these, 98 million people (19 per cent) practise open defecation, 179 million use unimproved facilities and 63 million shared sanitation facilities.

Well, numbers do not lie. Mpumalanga has turned the curve in terms of sanitation provision from Nkangala to Gert Sibande and Ehlanzeni. The deplorable state of poor sanitation left by the apartheid regime as a result of its discriminatory spacial development is now a thing of the past. Black, White, Indian and Coloured, can now enjoy equal access to adequate sanitation that embraces one's dignity. Sanitation is not a privilege but a right.



## Access road paves way to multi-million rand state-of-the-art Bethal hospital

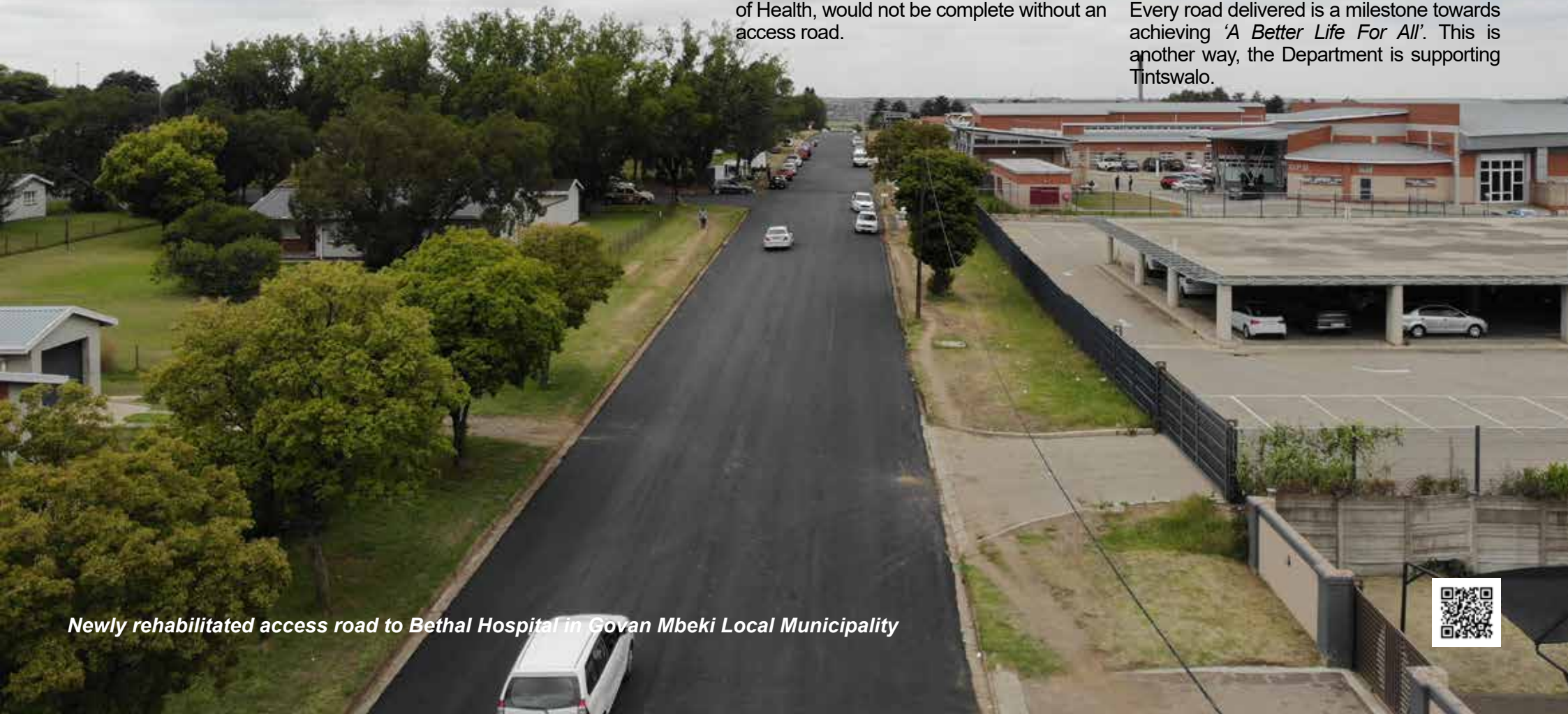
By Nothando Ndlovu

**"Be** fruitful and multiply," thus says the Holy Scriptures. Access to public amenities such as schools, shops and hospitals can never be over emphasized. If anything, it is the lifeline of socio-economic development and of course, Mpumalanga's Public Infrastructure Delivery agenda. @Work, recently visited Govan Mbeki Local Municipality to investigate how the community of Bethal is reaping the fruits of democracy. Indeed, the land is flowing with milk and honey.

Nestled at the heart of Govan Mbeki's farming town of Bethal is one of Mpumalanga's recently completed state-of-the-art hospitals. This mega project has changed the trajectory of healthcare provision to the people of Bethal and surrounding communities. The multi-million rand project, spearheaded by the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport on behalf of the Department of Health, would not be complete without an access road.

Upon completion of this magnificent healthcare facility which ticks all the boxes of medical expertise, the Department embarked on another complementary project which was a cherry on top. An investment of about R4 million was injected on the rehabilitation of Clerq and Wicht street which connects directly to this majestic healthcare facility. The rehabilitation of the access road has been applauded by the community as a crowning jewel of Government's commitment to service delivery. The Department's intervention has alleviated the local municipality's burden of maintaining the road which was already in dire condition.

This access road is one of many, the Department has delivered over the past five year term of the Sixth Administration of the Democratic Government. More are still on the pipeline throughout the Province. Every road delivered is a milestone towards achieving 'A Better Life For All'. This is another way, the Department is supporting Tintswalo.



Newly rehabilitated access road to Bethal Hospital in Govan Mbeki Local Municipality







KaNyamazane-Tekwane Bridge: City of Mbombela



MEC Mandla Ndlovu patching potholes on R555

# WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY AND THE SUN RISES WITH ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES

By Mxolisi Cyril Dlamini

“Our decisions about transportation determine much more than where roads or bridges or tunnels or rail lines will be built. They determine the connections and barriers that people will encounter in their daily lives - and thus how hard or easy it will be for people to get where they need and want to go,” said Elijah Cummings. In a nutshell, transport facilitates the ecosystem of human existence. It is the heart beat of socio-economic development. Mpumalanga is making inroads towards changing the narrative of the past by ensuring that previously disadvantaged communities have access to socio-economic amenities through the provision of transport infrastructure such as roads and bridges. Since 2019, and of course going back to 1994, the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport has completed

a number of projects including coal haulage and tourism routes as well as rural roads which were not catered for by the previous regime. However, this has been without its own challenges.

“As a province we have constructed 76 projects under the Integrated Rural Mobility and Access programme. These include 17 bus shelters, 10 footbridges, 29 culverts, 15 bridges, 4 walkways and 1 multi-modal facility. Also, multitudes of maintenance works were implemented across existing transport infrastructure which includes the patching and resealing of surfaced roads and the re-graveling and blading of gravel roads. A total of 57 roads construction projects were completed in the past 30 years which include: the Rehabilitation of road P170/1 between Matibidi and Graskop; D3930 Acomhoek to Hluvhukani; Coal Haul P141/1 South Clewer to Kriel; Road P8/1 Mashishing and Bambi; D2486 N2 to Klipwal; Upgrading of gravel roads to surface in Daantjie – Mpakeni; D3973 Hoxani and Marite; D281 Volksrust to Daggakraal; Paving of roads D1875 Tweefontein to Gembokspruit; D2091 Marapyane to Limpopo border; D2952 Masibekela to Thambokhulu. During the current administration, we will complete the rehabilitation of sections P8/1 (R36) between Mashishing and Bambi Phase 3; D2950 Mananga to River Crossing; Coal Haul P36/1 Delmas to N12; Upgrading of D481 Mooiplaas and Ekulindeni; D4407 Hluvhukani – Orpen Road near Welverdië,” explained Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane during the State on the Province Address in March this year.

To put matters into perspective, Mpumalanga has a total road network of 13 867,52 km plus 670 bridges, 370 major culverts and 25 lesser culverts. Out of this, 5 497,82 (40%) km is surfaced roads while 8 369,7 (60%) is gravel. The road network include tourism (9%) and coal haulage (14%) routes. One of the major challenges is budgetary constraints which requires a balancing act between maintenance of existing stock and provision of new roads especially in view of the rapid growth of new developments. Unfortunately, transport infrastructure is one of the most expensive public facilities and the most critical since without roads, all other amenities will not be accessible to the general public. On the other hand, the health and safety as well as education amongst others of the nation cannot be ignored. As a result, there is always a budget shortfall. For example, in 2023/24 financial year, the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport was allocated R2.4 billion although about R45 billion is required to clear all backlogs of the road network. For this reason, the Department is using an integrated





Moloto Vilange Road: Thembisile Hani Local Municipality



approach in collaboration with other State entities such as the South African National Roads Agency Limited (Sanral) as well as the private sector such as the Trans African Concessions (TRAC).

The Trans African Concessions (TRAC) is an international, privately-owned company that manages the N4 Toll Route from the Solomon Mahlangu Drive Interchange in Tshwane, Gauteng, to the Maputo Port in Mozambique. The Maputo Corridor (N4 Toll Route) remains a critical commercial and tourism passage between South Africa and the international community through the port in Mozambique. As a mining and agricultural hub, Mpumalanga and the rest of the country are heavily dependent on the N4 Toll Route for freight and commuting. Over the past 30 years, the N4 road has undergone tremendous expansion to accommodate new developments and growing demands. This gigantic task is funded largely funded by the road users themselves.

On the other hand, Sanral (an agency of the Department of Transport), has invested billions of rands in the Province which is yielding massive benefits for the citizens of the 'Place of the Rising Sun' through the provision of world class infrastructure as well as work and business opportunities generated by every project. One of these is the infamous R573 Moloto road which traverses 162 km across Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces. Sanral has injected R4.5 billion to transform one of the most dangerous roads in South Africa. Furthermore, about R9 billion is targeted for the upgrading of the N2 road from KwaZulu-Natal/Mpumalanga border to Camden near Ermelo. Today, Standerton residents in Lekwa Local Municipality are reaping the benefits of Mpumalanga's partnership with Sanral. Karino, Machadodorp and Montrose interchange projects serve as a beacon of hope that Mpumalanga is heading towards a right direction. As if that not enough, the Agency is championing the ValaZonke Pothole Programme aimed at ensuring safer roads that are free from potholes.

Delivering the 2023/24 Budget Vote, MEC Mandla Ndlovu reiterated that Government has a commitment to prioritize the needs of the 4.7 million population of the Mpumalanga province. However, the demand outweighs available resources. The intervention of Sanral, TRAC and others has never been so critical. "It is therefore encouraging that our public private partnership initiatives are starting to bear results. This year, the mining houses around Thaba Chweu have pledged to contribute 60% towards the rehabilitation cost for road P171/1 which extends between Dullstroom and Rossenekaal Junctions," said MEC Ndlovu.

During the 2023/24 financial year, the Department has targeted the completion of several roads projects such as block paving of roads D3976 (Mathibela), D567 (Moloto) and D1875 (Gemsbokspruit - Tweefontein); Reconstruction of culvert bridges on roads D2946 (Gomora), D4415 (Kashoty) and D282 (Daggakraal); Upgrading of roads D2950 (Mananga), D481 (Embhuleni - Maanaar) and D2274 (N11 - Hendrina); Rehabilitation of roads P29/1 (Delmas), P8/1 (Mashishing - Bambi) and D2486 (N2 - Klipwal). These are some of the projects amongst others that will bring significant change upon completion this year. In fact, These and many others have created massive work and business opportunities for the citizens of the Province. This is another way the Department is improving the standard of living.

Verena Road (P95/1) - Thembisile Hani Local Municipality

# A TRIBUTE TO NOKO

## The sun has set but it will rise again

By Mxolisi Cyril Dlamini



An American author of fiction, Madeleine L'Engle, once said, "Death is contagious; it is contracted the moment we are conceived." Evidently, experience has proven that L'Engle's words were not one of her creative works of fiction. If anything, they echoed the sentiment of the Holy Scriptures (Ecclesiastes 9:5), "For the living know that they will die but the dead know nothing." Well, those who know, build roads and bridges while the sun still shines for their journey traverses across many lives. Their destiny is to leave those behind with direction and a clear sense of purpose to navigate their way forward. Figuratively speaking, this was the late Mr Dancy Malatji's path.

Tributes are pouring in for the Chief Director: Transport Infrastructure, the man behind the steering wheel of Mpumalanga's road network development. Mr Malatji's passing has left a bitter taste to what was meant to be a celebration of the democratic government's successful completion of the 6th administration tenure in terms of transport infrastructure delivery in the Province. Noko, as he was affectionately known which is his clan name, met his untimely death after a short illness, leaving behind his wife, children and grandchildren. A brother and a father figure to his peers, he has left a permanent imprint of decades of experience and expertise which he vigorously imparted to other professionals in his field of Engineering. To the citizens of the 'Place of the Rising Sun', he leaves behind a legacy of development that has transformed many lives and connected communities cross the Province which were previously neglected.

Born and bred in Tzaneen, Limpopo province, Mr Malatji was an academic in his own right. He started his tertiary education at Mangosuthu Technikon, where he obtained a National Diploma in Civil

Engineering in 1988. He further obtained a Contract Engineering Law Certificate through Civil Engineers Industry Training Scheme in 1997. In 2000, he obtained a certificate in Engineering Management at the University of Pretoria and further obtained a Masters Degree in Business Administration (MBA) in 2003 at De Montfort University in the United Kingdom (UK). In his professional career, he worked both in the private and public sector in different position from Trainee Civil Engineer to a Surveyor, Water Technician and Principal Industrial Technician amongst others. He joined the Mpumalanga Department of Public Works, Roads & Transport as a Technician in April 1997. In July 1999 he was promoted to Civil Engineer and further appointed as Director: Roads Maintenance in 2002. In 2010, he was appointed Chief Director: Road Infrastructure, a position he held until his passing.

It is said, the departure of great men never leaves a vacuum, because they understand that success without a successor is failure. They see life as a relay and their goal is not to reach the finishing line, leaving everyone behind but to put their best foot forward in order to handover the baton to others. As the saying goes, "If you want to go fast, go alone - if you want to go far, go together." Their retreat is not a defeat. Certainly, not the end of the road. The sun has set but it will rise again.

Rest in peace Morena Malatji, Noko, Mphalaborwa, Selema tsela, Ke Phalaborwa gaMalatji bollanoto gwalla theku bosele Rena re batho ba sealeng sa mmamohuma, gohuma gohuma batshoko O se bone meokgo go falala lehumo lena le beng balona Ke Malatji le Malatjana ba kgaletjana mongwe ore letsatsi letswa phagong mongwe ore letswa modung. Rena rebatho ba tlloo e wele Ramalatji timamollo retlatsoga re e bona bosele Owaaaaaaa!!!



# CELEBRATING RELENTLESS SUCCESS: MP

— *Snippets of Public Infrastructure*



Maphakama Mpakaneni Early Childhood Development: Mbuzini



Mmametlaki Hospital Solar System: Mmametlaki



Masuku Primary School Sanitation Project: Siyabuswa



Daantjie Youth Development Centre: Daantjie



Vukuzakhe Community Healthcare Centre: Volksrust



Mkhondo Boarding School: Mkhondo

**As** the 6th administration closes another chapter of the 30 year democratic rule, Mpumalanga has a good story to tell. ***"We are resolved not merely to return our economy to where it was before the coronavirus, but to forge a new economy in a new global reality,"*** expressed President Cyril Ramaphosa addressing the nation on the 21st of April 2020 in response to Covid-19 pandemic. At the time, South Africa was 25 days into a nation-wide lock-down to contain the spread of the coronavirus. The President cited the unimaginable devastation of the pandemic which he said has disrupted lives and damaged the economy. More than 102 000 South Africans succumbed to the deadly virus, leaving many families in despair. As result, drastic measures were required to cushion the vulnerable, not only as a temporary measure but a permanent solution.

Unfortunately, the coronavirus outbreak in March 2020, coincided with a vulnerable South African economy which as a matter of fact, had encountered two consecutive quarters of a recession. A health crisis plus economic meltdown could only spell disaster. As a result, the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan was conceived. This plan had three phases: Engage and Preserve - which includes a comprehensive health response to save lives and curb the spread of the pandemic; Recovery and Reform - which includes interventions to restore the economy while controlling the health risks; and lastly, Reconstruct and Transform - which entails building a sustainable, resilient and inclusive economy. Almost five years later, the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan has yielded impressive results. Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, Mpumalanga has risen from the pandemic in leaps and bounds.

As the custodian of public infrastructure in the Province, the Department of Public

Works, Roads and Transport had a mountain to climb as far as economic transformation and job creation is concerned. When the 6th administration took over in 2019 prior to the pandemic, Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane had endeavored to intensify investment in socio-economic infrastructure. "Government will continue investing in our socio-economic infrastructure in the next 5 years to boost faster economic growth and improve the lives of many people in this province. We will expand the Provincial industrial base by focusing mainly on targeted sectors that are labour intensive, promote beneficiation with value chain development potential for job opportunities; such as Agro-processing. We will prioritize strategic infrastructure that supports economic development and service delivery, including; Bulk water and sanitation infrastructure; Road infrastructure network particularly in areas with high volumes of trucks like the coal haulage network systems in Gert Sibande and Nkangala; Rural development programme



# MPUMALANGA HAS A GOOD STORY TO TELL

By Mxolisi Cyril Dlamini

*Infrastructure Delivery From 2019 To 2024 —*



Mamelodi



Middelburg Hospital: Middelburg



Mamelodi Sports Centre



Members of the Legislature monitoring progress



Mpumalanga welcomed Eastern Cape leadership (MEC Ntombovuyo Nkopane) on a benchmarking mission to establish common ground and best practices

through upgrading of rural and township road infrastructure, but also creating strong urban-rural linkages; Support infrastructure that promotes agriculture especially our emerging farmers and build hospitals, clinics, schools and Early Childhood Development (ECD) centres," pronounced Premier Mtshweni-Tsipane during the State of the Province Address (SOPA) on the 5th of July 2019.

Well, has the Premier lived up to her promises or it was all smoke and mirrors? Fortunately, concrete does not evaporate into thin air like words. Despite the pandemic, Mpumalanga has emerged victorious. The facts on the ground speak for themselves. Since 2019, the Department has delivered schools, clinics, hospitals, libraries, ECDs and roads that have not only resuscitated the economy and created massive work and business opportunities but have restored hope and the spirit of resilience to the Province's 5 million citizens who have gone through hell and back.

Delivering the Department's budget vote last year, MEC Mandla Ndlovu said, "Covid-19 defocused all of us from the MTSF towards the health crisis. Once the pandemic subsided, Mpumalanga had to manage the transition following the economic and social interruptions. In response, the Province is implementing the Mpumalanga Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (MERRP) to re-ignite its economy." The MEC also highlighted that there were other projects that the Department is intending to implement in the 2023/24 financial year. He said 178 projects were at design stage, 164 construction and 5 being maintenance projects. A total of 121 projects are for the Department of Education, 11 for Health, 12 for Culture, Sport and Recreation, 5 for Social Development and 15 special projects for the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport. This means that Mpumalanga remains a construction site.

Without a doubt, Tintswalo, can rest assured

that her children will not only inherit freedom and democracy but resources and amenities that will unleash their potential. Throughout the Province there are traces of the new dawn. For example, Mbuzini ECD and Matsamo Library in Nkomazi Local Municipality speak volume while the City of Mbombela has opened its doors to the Parliamentary Village and Mpumalanga Fresh Produce Market; Mkhondo Boarding School in Mkhondo Local Municipality and New Ermelo Primary School in Msukaligwa Local Municipality are ready for the next academic year; Mapulaneng, Bethal, Mmametlaki and Middelburg hospitals in Bushbuckridge, Govan Mbeki, Dr JS Moroka and Steve Tshwete local municipalities respectively are the cherry on top. These are just a few points of reference that serve as Mpumalanga's public infrastructure delivery agenda's portfolio of evidence. Collectively, these projects are worth billions of rands which have been plowed back to communities of the 'Place of the Rising Sun'



# EPWP Summit tackles bread and butter

***“We must enter into the Phase 5 of EPWP with vigor and determination to bring about EPWP reforms that must bring about real change in lives of our people. To this end this summit must go beyond the basics, this conference must turn the corner for us. It must usher us into a clear path of how we are going to model the next phase of EPWP...”*** These were the sentiments expressed by the Deputy Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Ms Bernice Swarts during Mpumalanga’s EPWP Summit held on the 2nd of November 2023 in Middelburg, Steve Tshwete Local Municipality, under the theme “Changing EPWP Outlook: Striving towards improving the lives of the unemployed and unskilled

through sustainable job creation and skills development strategies.” Ms Bernice Swarts was accompanied by MEC Mandla Ndlovu together with the Executive Mayor of Nkangala District Municipality, Cllr TD Ngwenya and other dignitaries from various departments, municipalities and institutions.

The Summit provided a conducive platform for robust discussions regarding the future of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) which was officially launched in 2004 with the intention of revitalizing job creation and skills development through labour intensive methods to maximize the number of workers. The stakeholders met to share ideas, experiences, challenges and successes in the implementation

of the programme which is in its 4th phase. Among the key intended outcomes of the Summit was to craft strategies to maximize reporting by all EPWP stakeholders; create sustainable work and skills development opportunities as well as identify impactful programmes and best practices.

Delivering her key not address, the Deputy Minister indicated that as of the end of October 2023, the EPWP programme had already created 610 883 job opportunities which is 58.8% of the overall target for 2023/24 financial year. This amounts to an accumulative number of 4.5 million work opportunities created during the current Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) period out of the targeted 5 million by the end of March

2024. “It is very evident that drastic measures are needed to ensure that we succeed in our resolve of leading the nation to decent and sustainable work. This gathering must not only inspire hope but must deliberate and bring about practical solutions for the government to consider and implement in order to bring about a significant dent on the high rates of unemployment and inequality in our society,” elaborated Ms Swarts.

MEC Mandla Ndlovu expressed concerns over the high rate of youth unemployment and called for urgent intervention. ***“The ever increasing youth unemployment rate remains a concern. With the integration of strategies and identification of youth impactful programmes through***



**AT THE FOREFRONT:** MEC Mandla Ndlovu and Deputy Minister Bernice Swarts leading discussions during Mpumalanga EPWP Summit.



**RALLYING BEHIND JOB CREATION:** Head of Department, Mr Charles Morolo (right) in the company of EPWP Chief Director, Ms Sebenzile Shube and the Chief Financial Officer, Ms Hellen Mdaka.





# issues

By Rodney Madalane

**this Summit, we believe that youth unemployment can be drastically reduced in the coming Phase 5 of EPWP,"** said the MEC. The Summit took place at the backdrop of the Province's 156 900 work opportunities created since beginning of 2023/24 financial year, of which 102 804 accounts for women, 70 031 youth and 819 people with disabilities.

The Summit took a queue from the EPWP Indaba hosted by the Minister of Public Works and Infrastructure, Mr Sihle Zikalala on the 10th of October 2023. The Minister urged stakeholders to collectively work towards improving coordination of EPWP structures; Implementation of framework from recruitment to exit; Define impactful projects; Improve

training to provide meaningful skills and ensure proper exit plans through enterprise development or linking candidates with permanent employment opportunities.

In the National Development Plan 2030, the EPWP is positioned to contribute to Government's goals of alleviating poverty, developing local communities, providing work opportunities and enhancing social protection. The focus of the priority areas include massifying the programme through the implementation of identified programmes of high impact; Strengthening the exit strategies implemented by the programme through partnerships with other institutions and Strengthening the coordination of the programme.



## CAREER GUIDANCE AVIATION

Exploring the world of  
By Nelisile Malambe

**Aviation plays a major role in the world's economies, not only in transport but in many other fields, it brings people together from all the corners of the globe and has been reaching into space for almost a century. Civil aviation in this country is regulated by the South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA).**

The South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) is an agency of the Department of Transport (DoT), established on 01 October 1998, following the enactment of the now repealed South African Civil Aviation Authority Act, 1998 (Act No. 40 of 1998). This Act was replaced by the Civil Aviation Act, 2009 (Act No. 13 of 2009), which came into effect on 31 March 2010.

### WHO WE ARE

The South African Civil Aviation Authority is an entity of the Department of Transport responsible for:

1. Improving the safety and security of the civil aviation industry by:
  - Developing aviation laws in line with international standards.
  - Enforcing them through inspections.
  - Promoting the laws to encourage compliance.
2. Providing qualification standards for licensed aviation personnel such as pilots.
3. Oversight of Aviation Training Schools.

### WHY A CAREER IN AVIATION?

Aviation is a vast field which includes careers in piloting, various trades in engineering and mechanics, airport operations and the manufacturing of aircraft.

Those with a love and strong background in mathematics, physical science and engineering will fare very well in this field due to technical nature of most of the jobs. Although the majority of opportunities require a foundation in STEM related subjects, one can still launch a successful career in aviation such as in aviation law, aviation safety & security, environment management etc.

Aviation is an exciting field which opens doors to work anywhere in the world, with great opportunities for growth.

### BURSARY OPPORTUNITIES

The SACAA offers bursaries to future aviators in the areas of piloting, aeronautical engineering and maintenance engineering.

For bursary information and enquiries please visit our website [www.caa.co.za](http://www.caa.co.za) or email: [bursaryapplications@caa.co.za](mailto:bursaryapplications@caa.co.za)

Follow our social media pages to get updates when bursary applications open.

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### AERONAUTICAL ENGINEERING

Develops, designs, and tests aircraft, missiles, satellites and the related systems of flight vehicles.

### REQUIREMENTS

- Matric / Grade 12
- Qualification with Level 5 on: Pure mathematics; Physical Science; English

### WHERE CAN I STUDY

- University of the Witwatersrand

### AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE ENGINEER

Diagnoses, maintains, replaces or overhauls aircraft engines.

### REQUIREMENTS

- Matric /Grade 12
- Qualification with Level 4 on: Pure Mathematics; Physical Science; English

### WHERE CAN I STUDY

- SAA Technical School
- Denel Technical Academy
- Paramount Technical Training Academy
- South African Air Force







WHEN THE SUN RISES  
IT UNFOLDS SERVICE DELIVERY

## FAREWELL Shandu KA Ndaba

By Mxolisi Cyril Dlamini

**Like** the biblical Priest, Aaron who guided God's people in the wilderness for 40 years alongside Moses, Mr Sibusiso Aaron Mbatha has left 'indvuku ebandla' (a baton) as he retires from his 40 year journey in the public service. Mr Mbatha lives behind an impeccable service delivery legacy characterized by great achievements. Of course, the evidence speaks for itself in terms of public infrastructure delivery agenda under his leadership as Nkangala District Director. As the HOD's extended arm in the district, he has championed the Department's mandate to deliver public infrastructure such as roads, schools, libraries, clinics and hospitals.

Indeed, like his name, this living legend has been a blessing to the Department and the entire Mpumalanga Province. In his 40 year span in the public service, 19 years of which as the District Head, Mr Mbatha has been a force to be reckoned with. Internally, he will always be remembered for his "consider-it-done-chief" attitude that marked his character. Unsurprisingly, the announcement of his retirement in February 2024 has been met with mixed feelings, like walking your daughter down the aisle to be handed over to another man's hand. Nonetheless, colleagues had an opportunity to bid farewell to 'uBaba/Babe' as he was affectionately called. Well, to some he was the 'chairman' of the '5 am club'. In fact, to be precise, 4 am is the accurate time at which uBaba began his day. Approachable, responsible, decisive and dedicated that is how many described him. Well, ndlelanhle nkokheli!

*Mbatha, Shandu ka Ndaba;  
Gumbi Lamagwala; Sontshikazi,  
Mthiya othiya ngenkomo abafokazane bethiya  
ngamahlahla;  
Ndabezitha!  
U Shandu ubengengakanani ngoba  
nasentendeni yesandla uyenela;  
Nasothini lomkhonto uyahlala athi cababa;  
Mazalankosi;  
Mavungama;  
Mathabathanyawo;  
Makhabaluthuli;  
Makhubanothuli!*



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EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME