



public works,
roads & transport

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Departmental Newsletter

April - September 2022

Issue 44

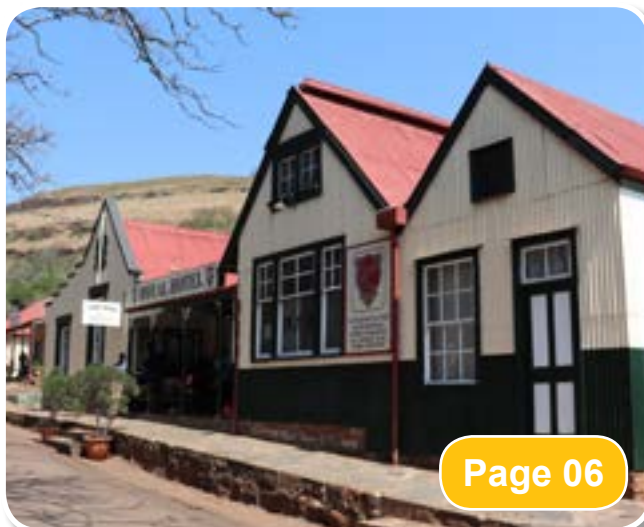


OPERATION
VALA ZONKE
ALL HANDS ON DECK



Page 05

**R133 MILLION INVESTMENT PUTS
MANANGA ON THE MAP**



Page 06

PILGRIM'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY LOADING



Page 08

**LADIES IN UNIFORM TAKE THE BULL
BY ITS HORNS**

Perspective



OPERATION VALA ZONKE

ALL HANDS ON DECK

Once again, we convey our sincere gratitude to the citizens of the 'Place of the Rising Sun' for entrusting us with the noble task of dismantling the socio-economic impediments of the past. This 44th installment, which is a constitutional imperative to enhance the objectives of our democracy, pays tribute to the service delivery agenda of the 6th administration of the democratically elected government.

We unpack every step of our journey from April to September 2022, highlighting the significance of each commemorative theme from Freedom to Heritage Month in respect of service delivery. These remain the moral compass of our State machinery to ensure that critical issues such as women and youth empowerment amongst others do not fall within the cracks of bureaucracy.

For this reason, the Honourable MEC, Ms Mohita Latchminarain has been at the forefront leading the battalion of our work force to the battlefield, from the Legislature addressing strategic and policy matters to the coalface of service delivery, mixing asphalt and patching potholes. Of course, ours has always been ensuring access to critical social amenities such as schools, clinics and roads. This task would have been a dream deferred without the input of women and youth as we commemorated their respective struggles in June and August.

Our ethos to build a capable State is anchored on the principles of equal access to opportunities. The empowerment of women, youth and persons with disability remains central to our service delivery agenda. We are intentionally biased towards society's most marginalized sectors and have been able to cultivate the cream of the crop through internship, learnership, business and work opportunities.

Without stealing the thunder from Madiba, we too are not prophets but the servants of the people. In fact, Mandela Month reminded us of Helen Keller's words that, "The world is moved not only by the mighty shoves of the heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker." It is therefore befitting to conclude that we have all been called to serve one another with sincerity and integrity irrespective of our socio-economic or political affiliation.

HOD: MC MOROLO

"Attending to potholes as soon as possible after they occur is the most effective way to arrest this decline. We have therefore engaged extensively with other spheres of government on the implementation of a campaign that will ensure a singular focus on the pothole challenge," explained

the Minister of Transport, Mr Fikile Mbalula during the national launch of Operation Vala Zonke aimed at addressing potholes on South Africa's road network.

The campaign is a national initiative that views the pothole challenge holistically and acknowledges that each province has a unique context. Its roll-out is implemented through an integrated, rigorous and comprehensive plan that will drive interventions to ensure that Government improves the overall condition index of roads at local, provincial and national level.

Minister Mbalula launched the national campaign on the 8th of August 2022. He appealed to provinces, municipalities, the private sector as well as the general public to get behind the campaign which will be implemented by the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL) under the custodianship of the Department of Transport.

Mpumalanga Province led by MEC Mohita Latchminarain and the Executive Mayor of the City of Mbombela, Cllr Sibongile Makushe-Mazibuko joined forces with SANRAL on the very same day (8 August) to launch the Provincial Operation Vala Zonke campaign on R536 road between Hazyview and Sabie.

In a nutshell, all nine provinces were talking the same language of taking the battle to the street against potholes since this is a national crisis that requires consented collaboration with all stakeholders. Road users all over South Africa now have the opportunity to report potholes using the newly launched SANRAL Pothole App which can be downloaded from the Google Play Store and iOS App Store.

If there is one thing well executed on MEC Latchminarain's service delivery road map is her



EXECUTIVE ORDER: His Excellency, President Cyril Ramaphosa in the company of Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, MEC Mohita Latchminarain and HOD, Mr Charles Morolo during one of the Department's Operation Vala Zonke in Victor Khanye Local Municipality.

EDITORIAL TEAM

EDITOR
Mxolisi Cyril Dlamini

SUB-EDITORS
Bongani Dhlamini
Dimakatso Matentshi

DESIGNERS
Bonginkosi Dlamini
Gloria Malale

CONTRIBUTORS
Portia Mnisi, Rachel Nkosi
Nothando Ndlovu, Rodney Madalane,
Benika Khambule, Muzi Maseko
Samukelisiwe Lekhuleni
Nthabiseng Thabethe,
Nelisile Malambe

(A) HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS
Moosa Ntimba

COMMENTS
Should you wish to comment on this newsletter or share your views with the readers of @Work, you can email your views or comments to:

CommunicationDpwrt@mpg.gov.za
Tel: 013 766 8231

Website: dpwrt.mpg.gov.za

DISCLAIMER
Although care has been taken to verify the accuracy of information, the editorial team extends sincere apology for any inconsistencies that may occur.



ALL HANDS ON DECK: The Executive Authority, MEC Mohita Latchminarain and the Accounting Officer, Mr Charles Morolo are the driving force behind the battle against potholes in the Province, having secured four jet-patcher trucks to fasttrack Operation Vala Zonke.

commitment to tackle the thorny issue of potholes across Mpumalanga's road network. Since she took office in February 2021, she made it clear that her ultimate focus is to change the status core of Mpumalanga's transport infrastructure. ***"Our Department is strategically positioned to tackle Economic Transformation and Job Creation as one of the apex priorities to advance the National Development Plan (NDP) goal by 2030. Our road network is a critical artillery of socio-economic development to ensure that our people enjoy access to service delivery amenities. Unfortunately, most of our roads are in dire condition and demand for new roads outweighs the State's capacity due to budgetary constraints. We therefore need to take stock of our existing infrastructure. If anything, we intend to ramp up our effort to eliminate the scourge of potholes on our roads,"*** explained MEC Mohita Latchminarain during one of her 'War on Potholes' drive where she is traveling the Province leading a team of road workers, patching potholes.

Walking the talk, the Department has purchased four jet-patcher trucks to meet the high demand for roads maintenance throughout the Province. According to the Head of Department, Mr Charles Morolo,

building a capable State requires equally capable work force and an investment on systems, equipment and machinery that facilitate productivity. "Since the previous Financial Year we have been closing the gap left by employees who have since exited the system through retirement. We are continuing with the recruitment drive to build internal capacity in order to reduce reliance on service providers and consultants," elaborated Mr Morolo.

The Department has already been on a number of roads patching potholes in collaboration with district and local municipalities. Bushbuckridge, Nkomazi, Mbombela, Dr JS Moroka, Thembisile Hani, Victor Khanye, Msukaligwa, Emalahleni and Dipaliseng local municipalities are amongst the areas already covered. However, the backlog remains very high but the MEC and HOD are confident that the battle will be won. "Operation Vala Zonke came at the nick of time to boost our efforts. We believe that our collaboration with other stakeholders will advance the work that we have already started. We already have a cordial relationship with SANRAL which is very beneficial to the people of Mpumalanga," said MEC Latchminarain referring to SANRAL's investment in the Province to improve transport infrastructure.

His Excellency, President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, also graced one of the occasions on the 3rd of August in Delmas, Victor Khanye Local Municipality where the Department was patching potholes in the company of Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane and other dignitaries. The President applauded the effort of the Department and emphasized on the impact of transport infrastructure on socio-economic development. "Roads are in the front-line of service delivery because they enable mobility, accessibility and connectivity of between people and amenities," stated President Ramaphosa after pulling his sleeves to dig his hands on some heavy lifting of a couple of asphalt bags.



BUDGET VOTE NAVIGATES STRINGENT ECONOMIC TURMOILS



A DROP IN THE OCEAN: Demand for roads in the Province outstrips available budget which calls for a balancing act between maintenance and construction.

BUDGET CALLS FOR BALANCING ACT

The construction and built environment are central to the revival of the economy and opening up of opportunities that will transform and benefit the province. To continue driving investments into each of these sectors, increased engagement and collaboration between public and private sectors has become a priority. These were the sentiments of MEC Mohita Latchminarain during the tabling of the Department's budget vote on the 14th of June 2022 in Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature. The Honourable acknowledged the devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic towards Government's effort to realize the socio-economic outcomes envisaged in the National Development Plan. ***"That said, the need for infrastructure investment and development has not gone away. In fact, it is more pertinent than ever,"*** she elaborated.

The Department presented a total budget of R4, 993, 301, 000 which is still a drop in the ocean considering the amount of service delivery challenges facing the province in terms of public infrastructure investment particularly roads. It is therefore required to strike an almost impossible balance between maintenance of existing stock which is aging at a rapid pace and construction of new roads to connect rural communities with socio-economic amenities. A total share of R1.9 billion has been allocated mainly for Transport Infrastructure which gives credence to the MEC's call for public-private partnership especially the mining, agriculture and tourism sectors which are the main economic drivers and beneficiaries of transport infrastructure. There other programmes such as Public Works Infrastructure, Transport Operations, Community Based Programme and Administration have been apportioned R1.2 billion, R1.3 billion, R82 million and R359 million respectively.

BUILDING A CAPABLE STATE

Drilling down to the nuts and bolts of service delivery, the MEC highlighted that in the past couple of years, the Department has not been able to achieve adequate staffing levels due to the provincial moratorium on filling of posts while on the same breath the Department's mandate has increased with more projects and responsibilities. Since 2021, the Department has managed to fill 193 posts against 217 that were advertised.

However, during the same period, a total of 153 employees left the Department resulting on minimal impact on the departmental vacancy rate which is currently sitting at 36%. However, the Department is fast-tracking the filling of vacancies in order to ensure that service delivery is not compromised. ***"Madam Speaker, our workforce is the backbone of the Department. Not only is this group collectively responsible for the execution of our mandate but are also vital for Building a Capable State,"*** said the MEC.

The Department has teamed up with a number of stakeholders to strengthen its capacity through various programmes such as internships, learnerships, apprenticeships, young professionals programme and bursary graduate training schemes. This includes a partnership with SETAs to train about 1483 young people on various skills development programmes that include artisanship. A training academy in KwaMhlanga has been opened where the Department together with Strait Agri Solutions intend to tackle the unprecedented youth unemployment. In addition, a total of 142 employees were trained on plumbing, electrical engineering and supply chain management while 139 unemployed youth were trained on Diesel Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Auto Electrical Engineering and Earth Moving Equipment. Accredited training providers and SETA conducted the training for the two groups. The graduation ceremony for the 281 successful learners was held on the 17th of June 2022.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY AGENDA

Access to service delivery lies on the availability of affordable, safe and efficient public infrastructure such as roads, schools and hospitals. Without these, transport, education and healthcare among others would not be possible. In the 2022/23 financial year, the Department plans to complete a total of 198 capital and refurbishment infrastructure projects on behalf of client departments such as Education, Health, Social Development, Culture, Sport and Recreation as well as Economic Development and Tourism. This capital investment on public infrastructure does not only support job creation but also assists Mpumalanga to address the inherited spatial injustices. Twenty-eight years later, the 'Place of the Rising Sun' flourishes with

state-of-the-art schools, clinics, libraries and other public buildings which were non-existent prior to 1994.

As pronounced by the Premier during the State of the Province Address, the Department will accelerate the construction of Parliamentary Village, Bethal, Mapulaneng and Mammethlake hospitals as well as the Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market, which were interrupted by illicit forums with intending to extort money and block the delivery of services. Planning and design is on track for Linah Malatjie Tertiary Hospital and the School for the Deaf in Emalahleni Local Municipality, Hoerskool Bergvlam, Nelspruit Primary School, Laerskool Laeveld, Laerskool Nelspruit, HTS Middelburg and Pine Ridge High School.

The MEC also tabled a list of tourism roads projects that are currently being implemented in various places across the Province which include Pilgrim's Rest, Embalenhle, Matibidi, Hluvukani and Mashishing. Some of the roads projects that are due for completion this current financial year include Klipwal, Ga-Motibidi-Rainbow, Masibekela-Thambokhulu, Verena-Gauteng boundary, Volksrust-Daggakraal, Van Dyksdrift-Hendrina as well as Delmas-Kendal. Overall, the Department has set aside R649 million for roads maintenance to reduce the current backlogs while R677 million has been reserved for construction of various strategic roads across the Province.

MOBILITY, ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

The responsibility of the Department does not end with the construction and maintenance of roads but transport operations as well. This comprises of public and freight transport as regulated by the National Land Transport Act no. 5 of 2009. Over R1.3 billion has been reserved to ensure that the approximately 117,000 daily commuters benefit from the bus subsidy scheme which costs an annual budget of R711 million. Scholar Transport is an affords learners equitable access to quality education and requires at least R451 million to see it through. In addition, the taxi industry gets a share of the pie of about R11 million for enhancement of administration and governance within their structures. Of course, all this work requires dedicated men and women in uniform, Transport Inspectors, to enforce compliance on the road in order to eradicate road accidents. To ensure that this mandate is fulfilled, tools of trade such as patrolling vehicles are a necessity.



R133 million puts Mananga on the map

Residents of Mananga and surrounding areas in Nkomazi Local Municipality stand to benefit from the multi-million rand road project that will see the upgrading of D2950 road. The 6km project is part of the Department's objectives to maintain road network across the Province. On 15 August 2022, MEC Latchminarain landed at Mananga village for a sod-turning ceremony. Inkhosi Mlambo II together with the Nkomazi Local Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr PP Magagula, welcomed the MEC with great anticipation as the community gathered in numbers to acknowledge the project. The road connects the villages of Mtata in Masibekela, Mananga and Khombaso, Ehlanzeni District.

The scope of works involves the upgrading of the road from its current state to surfaced single carriageway road with lane width of 3.5m (paved)

and shoulder of 0.6m. The project is valued at R113 million for phase one and will be implemented in three phases. This project will create approximately 200 employment opportunities for the local communities. The total projected expenditure on both the labour and local SMME's is estimated to approximately R26 million.

Speaking at the sod turning ceremony, MEC Latchminarain reiterated the Department's commitment to its strategic objective of eradicating potholes across the province. "To achieve the desired results, this programme is aimed at working collaboratively with all municipalities and government agencies in achieving a pothole free road network. "The community of Mananga and the surrounding should own the project, and guard any project disruptions, which will cost unnecessary delays and increased costs or derail the completion

of the project", said MEC.

Adding her voice, Executive Mayor of Nkomazi Local Municipality, Cllr PP Magagula lauded the road infrastructure in the community as the tone setting for more development to come in the village. "We are grateful for this road project by the Department and this will be a tone setter for future development in Mananga and surroundings. She also called upon the community of Mananga not to frustrate the project progress and to protect their infrastructure.

Mr Siboniso Sibiya, a local resident expressed his gratitude. "The necessity to rehabilitate the road is vitally importance to the community members of Mananga and the surrounding villages. We have been waiting for this project for a long time, however we thank the Department's efforts of bringing hope to the citizens", said Sibiya.

KANYAMAZANE-TEKWANE BRIDGE BRINGS A RAY OF HOPE AFTER THE STORM



IMPENDULO: The newly constructed KaNyamazane-Tekwane bridge is Government's response to the community outcry after Tropical Storm Eloise completely damaged the previous one.

Traffic congestion due to the flood damaged bridge on D2296 road between KaNyamazane and Tekwane South outside the City of Mbombela is water under the bridge. Finally, the Department has completed the construction of the R22 million bridge which connects KaNyamazane, Tekwane South, Entokozweni and Kirino. This is after Tropical Storm Eloise ravaged Mpumalanga about two years ago and left a trail of destruction in the midst of COVID-19.

The storm which caused damages amounting to hundreds of millions of rands across the Province affected residential, industrial and public infrastructure including roads and buildings. The KaNyamazane-Tekwane South bridge was not spared. This led to the Province being declared a disaster zone in terms of the Disaster Management Act no. 57 of 2002. Since then, a temporary bypass road was constructed with the assistance of the City of Mbombela Municipality.

According to the Project Leader, Mr Ngoni Chimusoro, the project started in September 2021. Surrounding

communities did not only reap benefits in terms of the infrastructure but work and business opportunities were created in the process. As a result, more than 32 local residents were able to put bread on the table through work opportunities while local SMMEs were not left out in the cold.

The project scope included the construction of an in-situ concrete culvert as a replacement of the washed away culvert across the Rietbrook River and affected road formation on the D2296 road. The overall road section that required intervention was approximately 90m long and 18.3 m wide.

Ms Nomsa Nkosi, who resides at Tekwane South shared her excitement after having gone through frustrations regarding traffic congestion during peak hours. **"We used to travel via Karino (N4 road) in order to access KaNyamazane and Pienaar. Even after the construction of the temporary by-pass, it used to be heavily congested during peak hours. However, the road is even much more better now than before,"** acknowledged Ms Nkosi.

Pilgrim's 150th anniversary

Experience South Africa's

Like fine wine, Pilgrim's Rest has definitely not lost its charm but has fermented to perfection over the past decades. The South Africa's only living museum which is nestled in Mpumalanga Province's misty mountains (Thaba Chweu) along the panorama route has recently been nominated for Kwela's Dorp Van Die Jaar 2022 award. Of course, this comes as no surprise considering the town's historical significance in economic development, cultural heritage and social cohesion. In addition to the rich heritage, the mining monument which will be celebrating 150 years in 2023 is surrounded by the fauna and flora of the 'Place of the Rising Sun' affirming its proximity to the Kruger National Park, God's Window, Mac-Mac falls, Blyde River Canyon and many other tourists attractions.

One of the mandates of the Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport in Mpumalanga is to provide maintenance services to ensure that this gem retains its original architectural expression and its heritage is preserved for future generations. This work is performed in collaboration with the National Heritage Council of South Africa under the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture as well as other significant role players particularly within the tourism industry. As a living museum, the town is fully functional from fuel station to keep visitors on the move to the famous Royal Hotel which accentuates the luxury of yesteryear. As a gateway to discover Mpumalanga's magnificent natural attractions, visitors can wine and dine in some of the world's oldest eateries like The Vine Restaurant and Johnny's Pub, Pancakes at the Stables, Pilgrim's Pantry and Scott's Cafe of Woodsluck Distillery amongst others. One thing guaranteed is an undistorted taste of history.

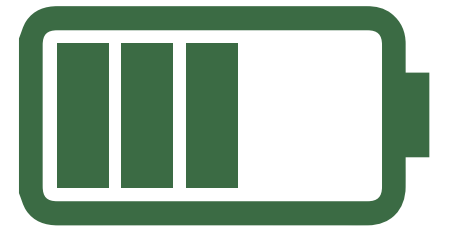
Unfortunately, a pen and paper cannot do justice unless one takes a 'shot-left' to Pilgrim's Rest. Ms Pretty Makhubedu, the Town's Manager under Public Works, Roads and Transport said guests have an opportunity to 'time travel' back a century.

"For starters, we have a world class golf course with a magnificent clubhouse to bring out the 'Tiger Woods' in every golf fanatic. Visitors can also take home memorabilia from our pottery, antique and souvenir shops, not to mention our talented sculpture, painting and bead artists. Apart from our amazing restaurants, we have grandeur accommodation facilities at affordable rates. By the way, our guests love the 'ghost tour'," emphasized Ms Makhubedu with a smile obviously 'unspooked' by the revelation of a 'ghost tour' which takes visitors to the 'after life'. However, those who are still searching for the meaning of life, can join the gold panning.

According to Ms Leona Oosthuizen, Public Relations Officer: Pilgrim's Rest Business Chamber, the town is planning to host a massive celebration in 2023 for its 150th anniversary which coincides with the World Gold Panning Championship. She said these events are critical to revitalize the economic outlook of the town especially after the devastating effects of COVID-19 pandemic. ***"We are keeping our fingers crossed that Pilgrim's Rest will be victorious in the Kwela's Dorp Van die Jaar competition which will reaffirm our place on the map. However, the greatest celebration is next year's 150th anniversary which coincides with the World Gold Panning Championship. We are expecting an influx of visitors to grace our shores***



150th Anniversary loading...



Only Living Heritage



which will yield economic spin offs. We hope this will be reminiscent of a gold rush particularly since we have just emerged from COVID-19 lock-down,” alluded Ms Oosthuizen.

Pilgrim's Rest which was a gold mining camp got its name as an 'asylum' for prospectors. Founded as a result of alluvial (dust) gold discovery which gave birth to today's famous Gold Panning Championship, 'pilgrims' or prospectors would pitch their tents from the hillsides where they rested after their labour intensive ventures. Some of course, their spirit lingered a bit longer and had since rested at the town's iconic cemetery. Those who want to connect with their ancestors can book a 'ghost tour' for a reincarnation experience.

History records from different sources indicate that around 1873/4 the town and its surroundings had an influx of about 1500 prospectors hoping to strike gold in one of Transvaal gold fields, working on over 4000 claims. This became the town's economic wagon which although the ventures were deemed to be temporary had nevertheless cemented the establishment of businesses which were notoriously charging exorbitant prices since prospectors had no other alternatives to source daily supplies. However, the potential of pocketing the yellow metal, outweighed any expenses incurred in the process.

Prior to 1870, it is believed there were mining activities of quartz reef which were discovered by recent gold mining efforts and remain evident to this day. It is said, Mpumalanga was part of a transit corridor that moved gold from South Africa to Arabia, India and Phoenicia. In 1881, Davide Benjamin, a London financier, obtained a mining rights concession from the Transvaal Government on a number of farms, including the Ponieskrantz farm where Pilgrim's Rest is situated. In 1882, Benjamin formed the *Transvaal Gold & Land Exploration Company* which paid compensation to the remaining diggers for their claims.

Notably, in 1884 the *Transvaal Gold & Land Exploration Company* report mentioned that white labour was very expensive. Alternatively, local black labourers from the different kraals in the area were considered a better option. In 1896, the *Transvaal Gold Mining Estates Ltd* (TGME) was established which amalgamated small mining companies on the Pilgrim's Rest gold fields. Subsequently, production dramatically increased which translated to labour force expansion for both black and white. By 1950, there were approximately 14 000 labourers in the mining sector in Mpumalanga Lowveld region. It is therefore, without a doubt that labour issues formed a vital part of Pilgrim's Rest history hence the commemoration of Workers' Month in May has a significant meaning to the Pilgrims.

Mining activities were shut down in 1971 and the village was sold to the Transvaal Government which later became the Mpumalanga Provincial Government. It became a provincial heritage site in 1986 and remains South Africa's national monument and living museum. Of course, there is much history to write home about regarding this golden gem however no story can be told better than a personal encounter. It is for this reason that visitors are invited to share and be elevated to the realms of historical ambiance by walking the streets of gold marveling the architectural beauty and sink their teeth on the local cuisine from fine restaurants.

In September, South Africa celebrated heritage and tourism month which cast a spotlight on Pilgrim's Rest's significant contribution to Mpumalanga as a heritage site and tourists' destination. While the 150th anniversary is loading and of course, the gold panning, it would be wise to book your spot in advance to avoid disappointments since it is promising to be "massively exciting" as Ms Oosthuizen coins it. On the other hand, the Department has also marked the up keeping of the museum town as one of its top priorities in order to harness economic growth and generate work opportunities for the locals.

LADIES IN UNIFORM TAKE THE BULL BY ITS HORNS



Those who attempted to test the depth of the pond of justice, drowned themselves in hefty fines ranging from R2000 to R2500.

The purpose of the operations which took place on major roads such as the infamous R573 Moloto road in Thembisile Hani and the N4 road in Nkomazi as well as others in Govan Mbeki and Thaba Chweu local municipalities, was to curb road accidents and the carnage by ensuring that public transport operators comply with the requirements of the National Land Transport Act no. 5 of 2009.

These formidable women joined forces with other law enforcement agencies including the Department of Community Safety, Security and Liaison, South

African Police service (SAPS), Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and municipal traffic departments. Clearly, there was no room for escape. All the operations combined resulted on 216 fines being issued, matching the total number of vehicles impounded which were a combination of buses, midi and mini buses. Most of the offenses included operating without permits, unroadworthy vehicles and overloading.

MEC Mohita Latchminarain who joined one of the operations applauded the 'grinding stones' for a job well executed. "If it needs women to stand up as they did in 1956, in order to stop the carnage on our roads then we are prepared and equal to the task. We cannot tolerate any conduct that places the lives of other road users at risk. We will be on the road 356 days," said the MEC.

Women in uniform discharged their duties without fear or favour during August across the Province in commemoration of Women's Month. Over 216 vehicles were impounded for various offenses which bears enough testimony to the saying, "Wathint' abafazi - wathint' imbokodo" which is loosely translated, "You strike a woman - you strike a rock." While their iron grip is quite obvious throughout the year, in August however, they faced the bull and graped it by its horns without their male counterpart.

Zero tolerance for recklessness on the road

"We will continue to implement law enforcement operations until things are in order in the public transport system," emphasized MEC Mohita Latchminarain during the tabling of the Department's Budget Vote. The MEC has avowed to intensify law enforcement efforts in a bid to ensure safety on the road. Since then, the Department has conducted a number of operations across the "Place of the Rising Sun."

The Minister of Transport, Mr Fikile Mbalula officially launched the October Transport Month 2022 on the 3rd of October in the City of Tshwane. "October Transport Month is a period where we take stock of the path we have traversed as a sector and the contribution we have made towards the realization of a better life for all. We do this by showcasing tangible projects we have delivered ranging from infrastructure to integrated public transport networks and rail manufacturing, amongst others," said Minister Mbalula.

Since the Easter Season, the MEC and HOD have participated on various law enforcement operations where unlicensed and unroadworthy public transport vehicles including eight PUTCO buses were impounded. As the country is gearing towards the Festive Season preambled by the October Transport Month, road safety remains on high alert. As things stand, driver error still accounts for more than 70% of the total road accidents and fatalities in South Africa. While roads suppose to be part of the journey, unfortunately they end up as the final destination for many road users.



After a tragic fatal accident involving an articulated truck and a Light Delivery Vehicle (LDV) that claimed the lives of 18 pupils and two adults in Pongola, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa has been left traumatized. In fact, recently there has been a spike on accidents involving trucks allegedly caused by recklessness of some truck drivers. According to a report tabled by the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), the driver of the articulated truck that killed the learners in Pongola (KZN), overtook multiple vehicles, where this action was prohibited by no-overtaking lines, in a dangerous and unlawful manner. **"The driver recklessly overtook vehicles and drove on the oncoming lane for approximately 1.2KMs. The report found that driver error was the main cause of the accident,"** stated Minister of Transport, Mr Fikile Mbalula during a media briefing.

During the launch of October Transport Month, Minister Mbalula stated that Government is making progress with regard to the reduction of cargo on the road in favour of rail. He said this will reduce the risk posed by trucks on the road which has led to a number of accidents and fatalities. He also said it is time truck owner take some of the responsibility for the behaviour of their drivers on the road.

JOINT OPERATION: MEC Mohita Latchminarain and Head of Department, Mr Charles Morolo during the launch of Easter Season Road Safety campaign.

NEW TRAINING ACADEMY TO BENEFIT UNSKILLED AND UNEMPLOYED YOUTH



CUTTING THE RED TAPE: MEC Latchminarain cuts the ribbon to mark the official opening of KwaMhlanga Training Academy meant to equip young artisans with a variety of technical skills mostly required within the built environment.

The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport cemented a public-private partnership with Strait Agri Solution as they opened a one stop training academy to tackle the high youth unemployment. The ceremony took place in KwaMhlanga (Thembisile Hani Local Municipality) on the 13th of June 2022.

The primary purpose of the training academy is to provide various skills such electrical, plumbing and welding that will enable people, especially the youth in the province to access skills that will allow them to participate in the mainstream economy.

MEC Mohita Latchminarain who officiated the ceremony expressed her joy over the one stop training service which forges the relations with private sector with prime purpose of reducing the high unemployment rate.

"We are looking forward to a more strategic partnership with TVET's, SETA and private companies so we could expand the programme to more trades and young people across the province. The project is a long-term programme aligned with Vision 2030 that has primary objective of creating sustainable jobs and reducing unemployment, alleviating poverty and inequality through skills development" she said.

During the ceremony, MEC Latchminarain was in the company of MMC: Technical Services of Nkangala District Municipality, Cllr JT Makwiting, Acting Executive Mayor of Thembisile Hani Local Municipality, Cllr T Skosana as well as a delegation from Strait Agri Solution management and the Department of Education.

The training academy will diversify its operations to cater for learnerships, apprenticeships and candidacy programs. Whilst the long term objectives is to include courses in heavy machine operations, diesel mechanic, panel beating and road construction.

STATE-OF-THE-ART SCHOOL FOR IMPOVERRISHED SHABALALA COMMUNITY

Learners at Shabalala Secondary School have a reason to celebrate after the MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, Ms Mohita Latchminarain officially opened the state-of-the-art school on the 2nd of August 2022. The more than R59 million structure boasts of 28 classrooms, an administration block, laboratory, library, computer centre, school hall, 30 toilets, kitchen, 3 sport grounds, parking and basic services.

The school currently has a total of 1205 learners from grade 8 to 11 with 36 teachers and will accommodate grade 12 learners next year. It is situated in at

Shabalala village near Hazyview outside the City of Mbombela. The project commenced in October 2018 and was completed in October 2019. Local communities benefited immensely from work opportunities with at least 96 people pocketing jobs.

According to the MEC, the school will reduce overcrowding and create a conducive environment for learning and teaching. This will in turn improve performance of learners. The MEC was in the company of the Executive Mayor of the City of Mbombela Cllr. Sibongile Makushe-Mazibuko and Mr Desmond Moela, a Member of Parliament.



STATE OF THE ART: MEC Mohita Latchminarain (Middle) accompanied by the City of Mbombela Executive Mayor, Cllr Sibongile Makushe and Member of Parliament, Mr Desmond Moela during the official hand over of Shabalala Secondary School.



DIGNITY RESTORED FOR LEARNERS OF SIFISOSETHU SECONDARY SCHOOL

Thembisile Makhaya is a sixteen year old grade 11 learner from Sifisoethu Secondary School. She lives with her aunt and three siblings in a two room shack with no source of income from any family member apart from a child support grant worth one thousand four hundred and forty (R1 440) from her siblings. *"I cannot afford toiletries because the grant caters for food and other basic items, hygiene items are luxuries which unfortunately I cannot afford,"* she said. Ms Makhaya is a living proof of the state of affairs for millions of young girls who live under abject poverty.

Government is determined to change the lives of these girls like, Thembisile, for the better. This was evident when MEC Mohita Latchminarain donated 150 dignity packs which includes hygiene product and sanitary pads to learners at Sifisoethu Secondary School on the 21st of June 2022. MEC was in the company of the Executive Mayor of Dipaliseng Local Municipality, Cllr Khethiwe Moeketsi. In her remarks to attendees, MEC Latchminarain highlighted the struggles experienced by learner nowadays and further motivated them to prioritize education above anything else as it is a powerful thriving weapon that nobody can take away from them. *"Surround yourself with the right people who will impact your lives with constructive influence and positive drive"* she advised.

She further commended the School Principal, Mr Oupa Bodibe for his impressive leadership performance, for continually producing impressive matric results and urged him to continue flying the education flag as high as possible. The initiative was part of the Youth Month celebration.



WOMEN INTENSIFY STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

According to Stats SA, South Africa remains one of the most unequal societies in the world. This is further perpetuated by the scourge of poverty and unemployment which predominantly affects the black community particularly women, youth and persons with disabilities. Unless Government is deliberate on its service delivery approach to prioritize these sectors of society, the concept of democracy would remain a fairytale.

While many are still debating where to start to address this mammoth task, MEC Mohita Latchminarain started where she is. On the 8th of September 2022, the Honourable convened a Women's Dialogue with all the 'grinding stones' in the Department. Having gone through the crucibles of life, marriage and career herself, MEC Latchminarain encouraged women to speak up against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and strive to empower themselves academically and economically.

She said women continue to bear the brunt of a patriarchal system that seeks to undermine the gains of freedom. *"I am a living testimony that you too can defy the odds of abusive relationship and social stigma to achieve your dreams. As an MEC and qualified Lawyer, my journey was not painted in roses. I have survived the worst but it sharpened my mind reminding me that as a woman, I am equal to the task,"* elaborated the MEC.

Affirmative action, employment equity, and gender mainstreaming are not merely political rhetorics but constitutional imperatives fully embraced by the Department. These women are holding the fort from road workers to the Chief Financial Officer. While they are equal to the task, their role is often obscured by patriarchal dominance which often steals the credit. Fundamentally, this was not a celebration but a reaffirmation of a woman's position in society.





QUAL TO THE TASK: Ms Helen Mdaka, the Department's Chief Financial Officer, and the Honourable MEC, Ms Mohita Latchminarain during the Women's Dialogue event at eMalahleni Local Municipality.









MEC Mohita Latchminarain leading a delegation from Legislature during project visit at the Mpumalanga Fresh Produce Market.



Portfolio Committee on Public Works, Roads and Transport, Community Safety, Security and Liaison



Legislature Speaker: Hon. Makhosazana Masilela



HOD Morolo and MEC Latchminarain getting briefing from senior officials

OVERSITE TO KEEP THE 'STATE'S HANDYMAN' ON CHECK

The true test of democracy lies on the Legislature's capacity to ensure accountability of Government to the electorate without fear or favour. The Portfolio Committee on Public Works, Roads and Transport, Community Safety, Security and Liaison serves as an extended arm of the Mpumalanga Legislature which monitors and evaluates the performance of the Department. The purpose of the oversight function is to advance the objectives of democracy which amongst others demand openness and transparency in the manner Government operates.

Since the beginning of the financial year, the members of the Legislature within the Portfolio Committee led by the Committee's Chairperson, Honourable Norah Mahlangu, have been crisscrossing the Province inspecting the work of the State's handyman. They kick started their fact finding mission in June 2022 at the Mpumalanga Parliamentary Village to check progress of the project. According to the Project Manager, Mr Julius Mavhungiri, progress on construction has been hampered by land disputes which the Department has been working tirelessly to address. However, there is a glimpse of hope that the project will be completed.

The Mpumalanga Parliamentary Village will play a significant role in reducing Government spending on accommodation of the members of the Legislature as well as the Cabinet whose primary residence is far from the City of Mbombela where the Mpumalanga Legislature is situated. In turn, these savings will be reinvested in service delivery. To date, the project has created a total of more than 300 work opportunities while a handful of SMMEs are still benefiting from a number of sub-contracting opportunities. The scope of work consists of three phases which are site establishment and perimeter fencing as well as bulk services and the residential building.

Another project which was inspected by the Honourable members is the Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market where construction is in progress. The project is expected to be completed in December 2022. Apart from the brick and mortar as well as work and business opportunities created thus far, many emerging and small scale farmers in Mpumalanga are expected to benefit greatly. A total of 599 work opportunities have since been created.

The Legislature's oversight work which involves a lot of engagements with the Department as well as the public at large has not only been focusing on building infrastructure but transport as well including issues concerning safety, commuter and scholar transport.

On the other hand, the Mpumalanga Legislature champions one of the most critical initiatives called Taking Legislature to the People (TLP) where the members as well as departments and municipalities go to the citizens to listen to

their concerns with the aim of addressing service delivery challenges.

On the 10th of May 2022, the TLP programme went to Dr Pixely Ka Seme Local Municipality. Members of the Legislature paid a visit to Ethembeni Primary School where the Department completed a water and sanitation project. The project started in March and ended in June 2022 at a tune of more than R3.5 million, thus creating at least 20 work opportunities for local people. The scope of work included; upgrading of water services, installation of a new sewer, septic tank and French drain, demolition of 49 pit toilets and construction of 29 waterborne toilets with 21 basins, 8 urinals and four 5000 liter water tanks.

The journey continued the next day on the 11th of May 2022, with monitoring of D281 road which is under construction. The 12km road between Volkrust and Daggakraal has been upgraded from gravel to surfaced road at a cost of R152 million.

The TLP is an oversight and public participation programme. Through this programme, the Legislature exercises its constitutional obligation to monitor Government programmes and address issues affecting communities. It furthermore affords ordinary citizens an opportunity to engage face to face with Government on issues affecting them.

The current Provincial Legislature was elected on the 8th of May 2018 when South Africa installed the sixth Government administration. South Africa's democratic rule opened doors to the first democratically elected Legislature in 1994. At the time, the Province was still called the Eastern Transvaal until it was renamed Mpumalanga in 1995. The Provincial Legislature, is established in terms of Chapter 6 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. It is unicameral, consisting of 30 members elected by a system of party-list proportional representation. This means the electorate is represented in the Legislature.

Each State entity is accountable to the citizenry through the Legislature (or Parliament in case of national departments) which exercises oversight to ensure that these institutions deliver on their constitutional mandate. The Portfolio Committee is one of the most critical arms of the Legislature focusing on departments within a specific portfolio. The Portfolio Committee meets with the Department on regular intervals to discuss service delivery issues including physical inspection of projects implemented guided by various tools monitor performance from planning to execution. Since this committee is represented by different political parties, it provides the Department with an object view on issues and how to tackle challenges without being biased towards particularly political narrative.



SANRAL TO INJECT 9BN TOWARDS ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE IN MPUMALANGA

Delivering her 2022/23 Policy and Budget Speech, MEC Mohita Latchminarain said ***“The National Department of Transport through the South African National Roads Agency Limited (SANRAL) will be implementing major and minor works on the national road network that traverse through the Province”***

The MEC further indicated that the road agency recently shared with the Department the list of projects that are under implementation and due for implementation in the near future. These include the upgrading of the N2 road from Ermelo to KwaZulu Natal (KZN) border at an estimated cost of R6 billion and the R40 road between Hazyview and Bushbuckridge at an estimated cost of R3 billion. Both major projects are still in the design stage.

The N2 road which extends to Western Cape is a

critical route which connects to a number of towns with strategic importance. On the other hand, the upgrading R40 road will help ease traffic congestion and travel time between Bushbuckridge and Hazyview. The implementation of both projects will take between 30 and 36 months to complete.

Some key projects earmarked for construction, upgrading and maintenance while other are already running include the upgrading of the R573 (Moloto) road within the Thembekele Hani Local Municipality. The first phase of the project has been completed and more phases will be rolled out this year. The resurfacing of N17 road, section 2 and 3 from R29 road in Springs to R50/ road in Leandra Interchange as well as resurfacing of R33 road from Mkhondo to Amsterdam.

There are also planned repairs of on N12 road in Victor Khanye Local Municipality which will be split into three parts. There are currently 12 routine road maintenance projects servicing the Province championed by SANRAL.

Maintenance of roads is an ongoing exercise which creates work and business opportunities for local communities. SANRAL manages a total of 2478 km of Mpumalanga Province's total road network.

“Through a public-private partnership with TRAC and the Mpumalanga Provincial Government, we have been able to ensure that this route, referred to as the Maputo Development Corridor, continues to be a catalyst for trade and investment between South Africa and Maputo, as well as with Mpumalanga Province's neighbouring provinces of Gauteng and Limpopo,” explained Mr Progress Hlahla, the Regional Manager of SANRAL in the Northern Region.

Thambokhulu Spins Massive Work Opportunities

The upgrading of D2952 road between Masibekela and Thambokhulu at Ehlanzeni District created massive work opportunities, in which 197 local people were employed, with women and youth making up the majority of labourers. The outcome of the construction had positive economic spin-off as twelve local sub-contractors reaped benefits.

One of the labourers, Ms Thoko Masina appealed to Government to introduce more similar projects in rural areas so to stimulate the economy. “Life is better now since I am able to provide for my children. I wish Government can invest more on infrastructure so that more people could get employment,” she said.

One of the sub-contractors, African Rebirth Security, was contracted

to provide security services. Empowering local business has been the cornerstone of Government from the onset. Small businesses contribute to local economies by bringing growth and innovation to the communities they serve. They also help stimulate economic growth by providing employment opportunities.

A total of more than R39 million was awarded towards the project, which constitute the upgrading of Gravel Road to Paved (Block Paving) Road, construction of by-pass, replacement of existing pipe culverts where necessary, Roadbed preparation and compaction, construction of 150mm G7 selected layers, 150mm C4 sub-base and 150mm C3 base, construction of concrete edge beam and kerbs, installation of block paving's. Work started in October 2021 and completed in March 2022.



PROGRESS: To date, massive progress has already been made as the D2952 road is being finalized. Final touches are being made as sand topping has already been poured to stabilize the pavers.

e-Disclosure tightens the grip to curb corruption



FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE: Mr Mandla Mashela punching in the numbers on the e-disclosure website with the assistance of Ms Sikhulile Mkhathshwa an IT technician.

Corruption in the country has been a bone of contention lately with calls for government to take tougher measures to curb the trend, since it continues to reach an alarming rate. This cancer of corruption is ravaging and robbing the poorest communities of the most basic services as it hinders growth and development in rural areas. To address the challenges, government is taking a firmer stance to mitigate the problem.

In one of its strategies, government introduced the Financial Disclosure Framework to assist departments to identify and manage conflict of interest situation for member of the SMS. Employees below salary level 9 who are responsible for supply chain management (SCM), financial accounting, Ethics Officers, PSC officials, and officials with delegated authority to access the eDisclosure system are also affected by the law. These officials are expected to disclose shares, loan account, income generate assets, trusts accounts, directorship, partnership, remunerated work outside the employee's employment, consultancies, sponsorships, vehicles, ownership, gifts and hospitality from a source other than family member.

According to the Director for Risk and Security Management, Ms Florence Netshifhehe, the department conducted the compulsory financial interest disclosure workshops starting from 1st of April until the 30th of April 2022 for all senior level. "This was further done with Assistant Directors from 9 & 10 on the 1st of June to the 31st of July 2022. The exercise is conducted yearly" she adds.

financial interests is done to ensure transparency, accountability, manage conflict of interest between official duties and private financial interests and to promote ethics and integrity and to fight corruption in the public service. This exercise is done every financial year using an electronic system of disclosure (eDisclosure system)," she added.

During the disclosure period, Risk Management unit assisted employees who were not previously registered on eDisclosure system on the disclosure process. If an employee fails to disclose their financial interests their behaviour will be considered a serious misconduct "The Ethics officer will provide a report to the HOD regarding employees who failed to disclose their financial interests" said Ms Netshifhehe. She further advised employees to avoid late, inaccurate or incomplete information as that is a disciplinary offence and may result to a disciplinary action.

SKY IS THE LIMIT FOR HA

"Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today." These great words from political activists, Malcom X, better describe the mood of jubilation and excitement expressed by graduates at the graduation ceremony of 300 unemployed youth and officials held on the 17th June 2022 at eMalahleni Local Municipality. The Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport honoured these graduates for completing the National Qualification Framework credit bearing courses.

One of the graduates is Mr Donald Mthembu, who acquired artisan skills in plumbing. He voiced his excitement. "I am happy that I will use the certificate to further my ambitions of developing my plumbing business in the near future" he adds.

Addressing the graduates, Ms Latchminarain said **"Young people are the future of our society and have an important role in the development of our province. Standing in front of all of you today, I am delighted to intensify our Skills Development Programme focused on capacitating young people and preparing them to participate in the mainstream of the economy."**

The Department partnered with SETA to train about 1483 young people on various artisan skills that include electrical, plumbing and bricklaying, amongst others. The event was coordinated in collaboration with accredited training institutions such as Khosithi, FOREK and Circle Way under SETA. The institutions made it possible for the learners to achieve the necessary competence in their respective fields of study.

The ceremony was attended by Cllr C Nkalitshana, Executive Mayor of Emalahleni Local Municipality, Cllr TT Mathebula, Acting Executive Mayor of Nkangala District Municipality and Cllr H Maseko, MMC of Emalahleni Local Municipality. The entourage was led by the Honourable MEC Mohita Latchminarain.



"A disclosure of

RD WORKING GRADUATES



SPRIT OF MADIBA LIVES IN THE HEARTS OF DPWRT STAFF



TAKING NOTES: Departmental officials taking note while taking turns all in the name of lending a helping hand in the spirit of Madiba.

“There can be no greater gift than that of giving one’s time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return”- Nelson Mandela these words better describe the selfless work of men and women who dedicated 67 minutes of their time to change the lives of the poor during Mandela Month. The Officials in the Department crisscrossed the province lending a helping hand to the less fortunate communities.

On the 29th of July 2022, MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport Mohita Latchminarain let an entourage to Litshwele Secondary School at Majembeni, Bushbuckridge Local Municipality to donate school uniform and dignity packs to learners. She was in the company of delegates from the Executive Mayor of Bushbuckridge Cllr Sylvia Nxumalo, Department of Education and the School governing body. They further made minor repairs by replacing windows, doors and fixing plumbing system of an old dilapidated Letshwele school.

In her remarks to attendees, MEC expressed her appreciation to all participants in changing the lives of learners. “We are here to do renovation of the school, most importantly paving a way to a brighter future to all our pupils. We hope that the spirit of Madiba will prevail in all of us as we change the lives of these learners for the better” she said. Later during the day, the entourage proceeded to patch potholes on the R536 road near Hazyview.

On the 25th of July 2022, the Spirit of Madiba landed in the hearts of Ehlanzeni Transport Inspectors, as they extended a helping hand to Thandanani Home Based Care and dropping center where they donated food parcel and dignity packs. The center offers daily meals to needy families and provide aftercare service to learners in the area. It was established in Barberton, City of Mbombela. It was registered in 2003 as a Non Profit Organization. Mr Zweli Nkosi, a Principal Transport Inspector did not mince his words as he appealed to South Africans to remember the values that Mandela personified “We should built a South Africa that is free from poverty and safe for all people, so let’s join hands and make better the lives of the less fortunate,” he stressed.

Potholes on the roads of the country have been a bone of contention for most road users, hence the Department dedicated the Mandela Month improving the roads condition by patching potholes. On the 18th and 19th of July 2022, officials at Nkangala District intensified their mission of patching pothole along the P29/1 road in Ogies. They further targeted the Doornfontein road at Boekenderhoek. The maintenance team, further gave the Masekeseke center a facelift by painting the building. Officials concluded the Mandela Month on a high note by fitting globes at a traffic offices at Vaalbank.

There were many celebrations of International Nelson Mandela Day since it was launched by the United Nations in 2009 where individuals are encouraged to dedicate 67 minutes to helping others every year on Nelson Mandela’s birthday, 18 July. His legacy shines as a beacon of hope and healing, and as a reminder of the power of the human spirit to overcome impossible odds. His sole focus was on healing his country’s divisions and bringing old enemies together to rebuild in common cause.



SOCIAL MEDIA

APRIL



PARTNERSHIP STILL ON 'TRAC': On the 4th of April, MEC Mohita Latchminarain together with the Chief Director for Transport Infrastructure, Mr Dancy Malatji convened a meeting with the Trans African Concession's (TRAC) Chief Executive Officer, Mr Alex Van Niekerk to engage on strategic issues related to roads.

TRAC was initially contracted to design, construct, finance, operate and maintain the N4 road between Emalahleni (South Africa) and Maputo in Mozambique. The concession was then extended by 60 km, from the Solomon Mahlangu Drive Interchange (Emalahleni) to the Gauteng/Mpumalanga border in 2005, bringing the total road length to 570 km.

During the meeting TRAC CEO presented an update on current roads infrastructure development which include key projects such as the Karino and Machadadorp Interchange as well as other upgrades taking place along the N4 toll road.

The MEC applauded TRAC's work and emphasized on the need for both the Department and TRAC to share best practices particularly on roads maintenance.



SAFETY FIRST BEFORE EASTER EGGS: "The safety of the pedestrians, motorists, and other vulnerable road users is paramount," Alluded the Minister of Transport, Mr Fikile Mbalula during the Launch of Easter Road Safety Campaign on the 12th of April near Delmas on the N12 road.

"Our focus will be on the use of safety belts, the road-worthiness of vehicles, fatigue, drunk driving, pedestrian safety and reckless behavior on the road such as speeding and overtaking on barrier line," said Minister Mbalula.

He further mentioned that the Easter weekend was going to be one of the most challenging due to the lifting of the National State of Disaster regulations. As a result, traffic volume was expected to increase thereby escalating the risk of road accidents. "It is therefore critical to intensify our effort to protect innocent lives," said the Minister.

The statistics of monthly road fatality rate since 2019 for the months of January and February, indicate that road fatalities are on an upward trajectory this year. MEC Mohita Latchminarain echoed the words of the Minister and vowed to tighten the grip. "The Minister has given us marching orders and we will leave no stone unturned to bring those who challenge the law to book," vowed MEC Latchminarain.

"We have developed an action plan where our Transport Inspectors will be deployed in all strategic points to ensure that road users are safe and compliant in terms of relevant regulations," said the MEC.

MAY



ASIGH OF RELIEF: The community of Morongwane in Bushbuckridge Local Municipality welcomed MEC Mohita Latchminarain accompanied by Cllr Bhunu Malandule and Cllr Musa Nkuna after they had requested a meeting to engage with the MEC on issues of roads. The community related to the MEC a number of challenges they face regarding the current state of D3975 road which traverses the villages of Thusanang, Oakley, and Marongwane between Mkhuhlu and the R40.

MEC Latchminarain told the community that the Department will send a team of engineers to do an assessment of the road. The assessment will be for traffic volume, population being served and economic activities along the route will be among other factors to be considered in order to effect a proper design of the road along with necessary processes.

"In the meantime we will ensure that the road is maintained and remains safe to use. This will include routine maintenance such as grading and re-graveling, vegetation control and drainage clearing. We are indeed hard pressed in every corner due to the backlog and we are pleading for patience. However, we remain committed to address such challenges and even investigate innovative ways to provide safe, reliable and affordable roads infrastructure," said Ms Latchminarain.

She also warned the community to refrain from criminal activities taking place under the guise of service delivery protests whereby trucks are being torched on the R40 road. "We understand the frustrations however such should not undermine the gains so far accumulated. I appreciate such engagements and commit myself to working with you to address challenges amicably," she said.

JUNE



A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH: According to the Bill of Rights, everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to health and wellbeing. In support of this fundamental principle, the Department organized a Health and Wellness Day on the 2nd of June 2022 at Ingwenyama Lodge in White River to rejuvenate employees in the spirit of Youth Month. The officials participated in different sporting codes including soccer, netball, aerobics and other interesting games.

The purpose of the initiative is to promote healthy living in recognition of the impact of employees' wellbeing on service delivery. It is therefore critical attend to the physical, emotional, social and even spiritual needs of the workforce to curb the amount of time spent on sick leave even to the point of incapacity or death.

Various stakeholders including Coca Cola, GEMS and Liberty Life graced the occasion to empower officials with critical health and life skills. Employees did not only get a clean bill of health but they also learned how to put their finances in order too. Hopefully, this workout will translate to better service delivery.



YOUNG LIONS LEARN TO HUNT: During Youth Month, a number of young people joined forces with the Department in its effort to change people's lives through service delivery. The 15th of June was no different as MEC Latchminarain embarked on grass cutting to clear weeds on roadsides between KaMagugu and Karino on the D2296 road, accompanied by young professionals. Well technically, the MEC is still the youngest MEC in the country. So celebrating Youth Month is a personal affair. "We often say the future belongs to young people but we are young today not tomorrow. Therefore, it is great injustice not to capacitate our youth today," said the Honourable.

EDIA SNIPPETS

AUGUST



SHOSHOLOZA: On the 27th of June, the steam engine of service delivery was humming across the land of His Excellency, Kgoshi Mokoena under the Mathibela Traditional Council in Bushbuckridge Local Municipality. The Department dispatched a battalion of men and women at Rolle on D3968 road to patch potholes.

MEC Mohita Latchminarain accompanied by Mr. Million Makaringa (Member of Provincial Legislature), Cllr Lot Nkuna (MMC: Technical Services and Infrastructure), the Acting District Head, Mr David Chiloane and community leaders were at the forefront of the battlefield in orange and blue overalls holding the bull by its horns fixing every pothole.

The Department is determined to change the narrative of Mpumalanga's road condition and has already demonstrated its capacity by purchasing four jetpatchers to strengthen its army.

JULY



CHECKPOINT: MEC Mohita Latchminarain together with Transport Infrastructure senior officials paid homage to His Excellency, Inkhosi Mdluli at Makoko to inspect progress on the flood damaged bridge on D2968 road between Numbi and Makoko which has since been repaired by the Department.

During the visit, the MEC met with Inkhosi Ml Mdluli with his council members as well as Cllr J. Manana and Cllr H. Sifunda from the City of Mbombela. The meeting was fruitful and the delegation took a tour to inspect the work that has been done.

This is part and parcel of the MEC's programme to visit all areas where the Department is implementing projects to ensure that service delivery is not only a political rhetoric.



LENDING A HELPING HAND: Every year, in August, South Africa commemorates Women's Month, paying tribute to more than 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956 in protest against pass laws. In support of the struggle for liberation, the Department's female officials in Nkangala District switched from suits to overalls as they landed a helping hand to the needy.

This worthy initiative was well received by the Acting Principal of the Platorand Special School at eMakhazeni Local Municipality where the officials assisted with painting. Ms Samkelisiwe Mavudla praised the women for their selfless act on repairing the dilapidated administration building. "They painted the building and repaired broken windows" she said. According to Ms Mavundla, the institution was established in 1953 which houses a total of 213 learners with 36 teachers and 89 support staff. The school caters for learners with special needs, as they are equipped with skills in woodwork, mechanic, beauty and nail technician, bakery, cooking, computing and electrification.

Ms Catherine Mahlangu, who was spearheading the project explained that they identified the school in celebration of the Women Month programme. "The Department will continue to change the lives of the vulnerable. Today, we also donated at least 150 dignity packs to the school. We are hoping to reach more learners in the near future," she said.

SEPTEMBER



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: The Speaker of Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature, Ms Makhosazane Masilela hosted the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians on the 8th of September 2022 in Albert Luthuli Local Municipality.

The workshop was attended by various dignitaries. The Speaker of Gauteng Provincial Legislature, Ms Ntombi Mekgwe, spoke passionately about women development and encouraged all to work together.

MEC Mohita Latchminarain was one of the presenters. She spoke about gender equality and made significant proposals on how gender equality should be tackled.



SPOTCHECK ON SERVICE DELIVERY: The MEC and HOD led a delegation of political principals and senior officials during the EXCO Outreach programme at Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality on the 14th of September to D2091 road in Marapyane where the Department has completed phases 1 and 2.

During the week long programme, the Honourable Premier, Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane and her Cabinet visited various projects championed by different departments to inspect progress. The main focus of the programme is to fast-track service delivery and engage the public about challenges they are experiencing on the ground.



WORKING TOGETHER: MEC Mohita Latchminarain together with HOD Charles Morolo led a team of officials on day 2 of the EXCO Outreach and Imbizo Programme at Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality.

The purpose of the meeting was to give more information about the opportunities that are available in the Department and also to get inputs from various stakeholders on how to strengthen the relationship between the Department and its stakeholders.

The engagement was attended by various stakeholders such as, local business forum, Santaco, commuters association, youth and women structures.



WHEN THE SUN RISES IT UNFOLDS SERVICE DELIVERY

BATHO PELE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

[Public Servants Rolling Up Sleeves To Spring Clean Service Delivery Points]

1 CONSULTATION

All stakeholders should be consulted on the nature, quantity and quality of services to be provided in order to determine the needs and expectations of the end users. Citizens can be consulted through the following:

- Customer surveys
- Campaigns
- Isimbizo
- Workshops

2 SERVICE STANDARDS

Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect

- Service charters
- Strategic plans
- Booklets with standards
- Service level agreements

3 ENSURING COURTESY

Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration e.g. tools, measurements & systems put in place to effect customer care - customer care units & staff

- Right attitude!!

4 ACCESS

All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled, e.g.

- Decentralized offices (MPCC, one stop shops etc)
- Extended business hours
- Use of indigenous languages and sign language
- Service charters displayed
- Improved service delivery to physically, socially and culturally disadvantaged persons (including infrastructure)
- Signage must be clear and helpful
- All frontline staff should wear name tags

5 INFORMATION

Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive e.g.

- Braille and functional sign language, help desks, brochures, posters, press information to be available at service points, in various official languages
- Weekly newsletters
- Frontline staff training
- Induction training is made compulsory to all new employees

6 OPENNESS & TRANSPARENCY

Citizens should be told how departments are run, how much they cost and who is in charge. The Citizen should know who the Head of the Unit is. The management must be transparent and open to all staff members, e.g.

- Appointment circulars
- Regular staff meetings with Management must be encouraged

7 REDRESS

Establish a mechanism for recording any public dissatisfaction e.g.

- Toll-free number, suggestion boxes & customer satisfaction questionnaires
- Each Unit must have a complaints handling system in place
- Staff must be trained to handle complaints fast & efficiently

8 VALUE FOR MONEY

Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money e.g.

- The use of expenditure controls, improved internal controls (e.g. private use of phones, budget reviews)
- Costs per unit of services delivered

CONTACT DETAILS

HEAD OFFICE

Corporate Services, Strategic Planning & Finance
Rhino Building, 7 Government Boulevard,
Riverside Park, Ext. 2
City of Mbombela, 1200
Tel: 013 766 6696
Fax: 013 766 8471

Building Infrastructure and Transport Management
Mbombela Square
City of Mbombela, 1200
Tel: 013 752 4593
Fax: 013 752 4043

EPWP, Property Management, Government Motor Transport, & Transport Infrastructure
16 Hope Street
City of Mbombela, 1200
Tel: 013 766 8594/8502

Operating Licensing Board
Mbombela Square
City of Mbombela, 1200
Tel: 013 752 4593/7585
Fax: 013 752 4043

DISTRICT OFFICES

Bohlabela District
Private Bag X1313
Thulamahashe
1365
Tel: 013 773 8300
Fax: 013 773 0760

Gert Sibande District
Private Bag X9034
Ermelo
2350
Tel: 017 801 4000/4600
Fax: 017 801 4120

Ehlanzeni District
Private Bag X11226
Mbombela
1200
Tel: 013 762 5600
Fax: 013 753 7221

Nkangala District
Private Bag X4018
KwaMhlanga
1022
Tel: 013 947 2593
Fax: 013 947 3779