

Premier must tell of R584m owed

DA: ABOUT TO BE WRITTEN OFF WITHOUT TRYING TO RECOUP

Alex Matlala

The Democratic Alliance in Limpopo is demanding answers from Premier Stan Mathabatha about his administration's failure to recover nearly R600 million owed to the province by the state and individuals this financial year.

Yesterday, the DA wrote to the legislature speaker, Polly Boshie-lo, to call for an urgent debate on the staggering R584 million owed to all the Limpopo departments and public entities.

The DA said the money in question was on the verge of being written off without holding officials accountable, and with no credible attempts to recover it.

The department of treasury confirmed the affected departments only owed over R336 million, while public entities were owed more than R248 million.

"The department of education is owed R104 million, followed by public works, roads and infrastructure with R101 million," DA Limpopo provincial leader, Jacques Smalle, said yesterday.

"The Limpopo Economic Development Agency (Leda) is the biggest culprit and leads all the public entities by failing to collect a staggering R217 million, followed by Gaal and LTA with R22 million and R8 million respectively," Smalle said.

"To compound the matter, a total of almost R81 million was written off in the last three financial years in all the departments,

while R27 million was written off in all public entities."

Smalle said there is an urgent need for National Treasury to implement stringent monitoring systems. This will allow for penalties, which would improve the poor collection of debt.

The Limpopo provincial government defended itself, saying the DA was campaigning. "Limpopo is vastly rural. Most of the departments do not collect anything because there is nothing to collect in rural communities," said Limpopo provincial government spokesperson Kenny Mathivha.

"While we admit we are not doing well in debt collections we hope a huge chunk of the money owed is collected or paid back,"
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