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Premier of the North West Province, Bushy Kaobitsa Maape delivered the 2023 State of the Province Address on Friday, 24 February during the Official Opening of the North West Provincial Legislature where he highlighted the need to make the public service and public office uncomfortable spaces for people who do not want to advance accelerated service delivery and job creation. He gave emphasis to the following key deliverables that are aimed at improving the lives of the people of North West.

**Accelerating Service Delivery remains central to our mandate**

Premier Maape commits that North West Provincial Government will through the Accelerated Service Delivery Plan, continue to ensure that local municipalities are clearing illegal dumping sites, constructing new high mast lights and repairing existing ones, repairing damaged roads and addressing water and sewer challenges. He says the Steering Committee which was established to urgently attend to water and sanitation challenges across the province, has developed a plan to deal with immediate water challenges, with priority being given to Ditsobotla, Naledi, Madišong, Ramotšhere Moiloa local municipalities among others.

Premier Maape also announced the introduction of a mobile App which will enable members of the public to participate in fast tracking the reporting of

instances where basic services are interrupted or unavailable.

Moreover, the provincial government will roll-out access to Internet through broadband and Wi-Fi from the current 25 % of learners to 75 % in the current academic year. This will see government expanding broadband connectivity to schools to the tune of R31.2 million.

To promote improved access to healthcare services, Premier Maape committed the department of Health to ensuring that during the 2023/24 financial year, the new Sekhing Community Health Centre is completed and commissioned, and that Mahikeng and Klerksdorp Campuses of the North West Nursing College and the Ventersdorp and De La Rey Bulk Pharmacy projects are also completed.

"We are rolling out a massive Routine Roads Maintenance Plan on critical surface and gravel

roads across all four districts of the province. Moreover, the Infrastructure South Africa (ISA) through the Presidency has set aside R13 billion rand for the maintenance and upgrading of thirty-nine rural roads projects in the province".

As pronounced by Premier Maape, the department of Public Works and Roads will also start work on the Lichtenburg to Koster road, and a portion of the road connecting Koster and Derby to Magaliesberg. Additionally, the provincial government has received an amount of over R100 million to address flood damaged roads in the province. Maape said consultants have been appointed for the upgrading of a 12 km road, D39 from Mooifontein to Lombaardslaagte, using paving bricks.

On new human settlement projects, Premier Maape indicated that they will all be delivered in an integrated manner, allocated to rightful beneficiaries and built in areas where there are internal services and bulk infrastructure. "The

provincial government will collaborate with the private sector, the national government and the Housing Development Agency to launch a housing project in Marikana extension 13 in the 2023/24 financial year, targeting 3 400 beneficiaries".

Maape further stressed that the provincial government will conduct a performance assessment of all contractors, to scale down those failing to complete their work on time, terminate and blacklist repeat offenders.

In an effort to continue creating development opportunities for the people of the North West, Premier Maape announced that the department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development will allocate twenty (20) farms to 20 beneficiaries ranging from youth, women, military veterans, persons with disabilities and emerging black commercial farmers totaling 34 000ha.

**Our focus is still on creating job opportunities and youth support initiatives**

Premier Maape announced the following as key job creation opportunities and initiatives to support to youth development

- An amount of R12million is set aside to support 60 youth owned businesses that have been successfully incubated at Mafikeng Digital Innovation Hub
- The first intake of 13 069 Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) beneficiaries will start in April 2023, covering all infrastructure delivery departments.
- North West Parks Board will spend R4m on youth skills development programme which is envisaged to create at least 120 job opportunities.
- A further 250 job opportunities in the environment sector will be created
- A total amount of R21.4 million has been set aside to fund beneficiaries of the Victor Sifora Provincial Bursary Scheme during the 2023 academic year.
- Office of the Premier will launch a project to create a Provincial Youth Portal - a digital platform

with information related to all opportunities for youth in the province

**Economic recovery through private partnerships**

Premier Maape recognised the following private sector partners who demonstrated their commitment to the province and made unparalleled contribution to the economic progress of the province and the well-being of its people.

- The North West Chamber of Commerce & Industry for their partnership in turning around of Ditsobotla Local Municipality and the many contributions by their affiliate members like NWK and others.
- The Sedibelo Pliansberg Platinum Mine for their investment of R 9.4 billion with three thousand job opportunities created in the Moses Kotane Local Municipality;
- Harmony Gold in the City of Matlosana for the R7 billion investment which will sustain six thousand jobs;
- African Rainbow Energy which is investing about R2 billion in a solar plant in Ditsobotla Local Municipality;

- Supreme Chicken in Tigrane for the investment of R180 million ramping up economic activity, sustaining over two thousand locals; and many others.

**Renewable energy as one of the prioritised Mega Infrastructure Projects**

Premier Maape stated that preliminary estimates indicate that North West Province has the potential to attract at least R50 billion worth of investment in the renewable energy space in addition to existing private sector renewable energy investments.

"To respond to the current energy challenge, the Executive Council will formalise its expression of interest to participate in the Solar panels manufacturing initiative coordinated by ISA, this initiative will be hosted by the North West Development Corporation. Stilfontein in the Dr Kenneth Kaunda District has been identified as a potential location of the plant subject to feasibility study confirmation", Premier Maape revealed.

Accordingly, a joint Technical Team of Experts has

been established with the North-West University to revise the Provincial Energy Strategy, to give appropriate focused attention to the provincial energy security and load shedding mitigation strategy.



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