



Publication: Sunday World - Main
Title: SOPA ticks all the right boxes
Publish date: 03 Mar 2024
Page: 8

Reach: 22300
AVE: R 126975.30
Author: Staff Reporter

Voting for continuity is important for province

By **Staff Reporter**

Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane has received resounding feedback on her State of the Province Address (SOPA) regarding infrastructure development, roads, education, health, jobs and tourism in Mpumalanga.

The Premier acknowledged that this was her administration's final SOPA but said she was content with the numerous projects already in motion and progressing well.

The guests invited to the prestigious event in Mbombela on Friday echoed her sentiments.

Mandla Ndlovu, the Chairperson of the African National Congress (ANC) in the province and also the MEC for Public Works, Roads and Transport, described the governing party as an unstoppable train of service delivery.

"The Premier's address highlights the progress made by the ANC-led government over the past 30 years while also recognising that there is more work to be done. Education has seen the development of modern schools that prioritise the well-being of our

SOPA ticks all the right boxes

children. We have graded numerous gravel roads to make them smoother," he said.

Ndlovu stated that 60% of the roads are paved, with the remaining 40% earmarked for paving.

Ndlovu emphasised the importance of voting for continuity in Mpumalanga to ensure the next administration can complete the work.

"Let's remind our community to recognise that providing service is a continuous process. We need our people to realise they must not disrupt this journey. It is important to vote for the ANC to ensure the continued delivery of services to the people," Ndlovu said.

Victor Mashego, chairperson of the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, expressed his approval of the speech.

"Our province has excelled in terms of tourism. We are ranked second after Cape Town, which has received substantial funding since before our democracy. Even though we needed to catch up, we are closely following them thanks to the support from the Provincial Government.

"Despite having to catch up, we are



Mpumalanga Premier Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane during the State of the Province Address

breathing down their necks because we are receiving the support that we need from the Provincial Government. It tells you that if we only have one tourism flight that comes in, things will take off on a much bigger scale once we open the airspace," said Mashego.

"The Premier and her posture are greatly appreciated. Mpumalanga ranked last in terms of investment for a while. However, in the last two years, there has been a noticeable increase in efforts to boost sales and invest a significant amount of money, thanks to the Premier's initiatives. Cape Town receives over R100-million in funding while we only get R30-million, yet we

still hold the title of the second most popular tourism destination. It's a compelling story."

Khoshi Mathupa Mokoena, the chairperson of the Mpumalanga House of Traditional Leaders, expressed that the speech has instilled hope in rural communities.

"The Premier has addressed the issues regarding road infrastructure and water satisfactorily. As experienced community leaders, we are prepared to collaborate with the Provincial Government and believe that consulting with us on service delivery will lead to better outcomes for our communities."

Zodwa Ndlozi, hailing from Pienaar outside Mbombela, expressed her joy at the increasing integration of Mpumalanga's artists into the national scene.

"For years, cultural groups and artists in Mpumalanga have lacked support. However, we recently witnessed our own representing us in the National Parliament and performing poetry for the President. The work being done at the provincial government level is crucial for our visibility. The story of our people is unfolding beautifully," Ndlozi said.