

SPEECH BY THE MEC: TRANSPORT, SAFETY & SECURITY, Mme MAPULA MOKABA-PHUKWANA DURING THE PRESENTATION OF BICYCLES TO SCHOOLS AT NTSHUSHI VILLAGE.

22 JANUARY 2016

Programme Director

The National Development Plan (NDP) is a strategic framework produced by the National Planning Commission with the mandate to identify issues affecting the long-term development of the country and advise the Presidency accordingly.

The ultimate vision of the NDP is to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality through growth by 2030. In achieving the objectives of the broader developmental framework, education has been identified as being a central component.

The Honourable Executive Mayor of Vhembe District Municipality,

The Honourable Mayor of Makhado Local Municipality,

Their Highness all Traditional Leaders and their representatives,

Representatives from other Provincial Departments

Our Councillors present here,

Leadership of Political and Community Organisations,

Educators, Parents and Learners,

Our business partners and non-governmental organisations

Esteemed guests Ladies and gentlemen

In order to realise the Vision 2030 as spelled out in the National Development Plan, it is imperative that all provincial departments in Limpopo and elsewhere puts their hands on deck in chorus.

Our efforts as a developmental state must be synchronised and integrated towards the improvement of our people's lives and livelihood.

It is a well-known fact that as government we cannot do everything by ourselves. We must partner with our communities, business, churches and non-governmental organisations. However, that partnership and co-ordination must be seen and felt first within different departments.

Today, as the provincial department of Transport, Safety and Security we are here to demonstrate the exceptional co-ordination and integrated approach towards development. The bicycles we are presenting to schools in this district illustrate that partnership between our department and the provincial Department of Education.

Programme Director

Today marks the 9th day since the reopening of our schools for the 2016 academic year. Having gathered here to present these bicycles, it is prudent also, to constantly remind ourselves of where we come from, so that we are able to understand where we are and where we want to go.

To know where we come from and where we want to go. The Freedom Charter drafted at the people convention at Kliptown in 1955 under the leadership of the African National Congress is our steering mantra. The Freedom Charter gives our government direction as envisaged by our forefathers in 1955 and before. It is a sanctified book like the Bible to people of Christian faith.

Allow me to remind you of the wisdom of the Freedom Charter by briefly quoting it on education and development [I quote].

Firstly it says: *“The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;*

Secondly, *“All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;*

Programme Director, I am certain that you will agree with me on this one that Freedom Charter was relevant yesterday and is still relevant today and it will be relevant tomorrow. It says:

“The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace;

It says further, that “Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children; Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit”

Therefore, the # Fees Must Fall campaign is not an innovation by someone, but rather the government's programme as envisioned in the Freedom Charter. It is only the ANC led government that will deliver everything promised in the Freedom Charter. A lot have already been achieved and the rest will be realised despite efforts of our distractors in legislatures, some media houses and dissidents within the organisation and the alliance.

Programme Director

Those who have designed apartheid ideology had ensured since 1953 that the type of education that South African Black child receives must be of poor and inferior quality. It should in fact be an education that condemns the Black and African child to life time of *“a hewer of wood and a carrier of water “*

As part of the apartheid education, the African child was taught for instance to celebrate and hero worship Simon Van Der Stel, Hitler, Mussolini and Jan Van Riebeeck in History classes. The African child as part of this minimalist approach to education was not to be taught that, in fact Jan Van Riebeeck and Simon Van Der Stel were not heroes, but convicts sentenced by courts in their country, to serve their sentences at the Cape Colony. Neither were we to be told that Hitler and Mussolini were dictators and undemocratic.

We were rather taught in History Classes and as part of the apartheid system to hate ourselves and those who came before us. Our ancestors and fore bearers such as Shaka, Sekhukhune, Hintsa, Makhado and other warrior kings , resisting the grabbing of their lands by colonialists, were projected as barbarians and savages.

They were projected as war mongers always in tribal wars which Van Riebeeck and his kind purportedly saved us from when “they discovered us”. This education system was so contradictory , poor teachers were always in trouble and at pains to explain the difference between these tribal wars of our ancestors and the wars between the Germans and the Britons and the French, which history books called, not tribal but “the glorious First and Second World Wars”, to their curious learners.

Programme Director

Apartheid education was based on the notion that education was not for Blacks and Africans in particular. Education for people of colour was not a priority of government. For instance, the apartheid government never envisaged to provide educational infrastructure for educational purposes for Africans except with a political motive to either divide Africans and turning them against each other or to perpetuate minority rule over Africans by ensuring that the education infrastructure such as a school is an institution to perpetuate minority rule.

Programme Director

The legacy of these anomalies continues to date as some within our country still yearns for the old apartheid days which unfortunately will never return. In recent times we have started to hear racist whispers from some of those wishing for the old days to come back.

It is for this reason that we always have to restate these facts about where we come from so as to constantly remind ourselves and those to come after us, that the handing over of these bicycles is not an accidental coincident or an isolated event of history.

This is an event taking place within a certain historical context. This initiative, known in the Transport and Education partnership as the Shova Kalula Programme was introduced as a pilot programme in 2001. Today, the siShova Kalula project has grown into a fully-fledged programme. That is why as a province we are proud to incorporate it into our provincial schools programmes.

Shova Kalula bicycle programme is like many other programmes of our government an intervention to improve mobility and access to Educational, Social and Economic opportunities of our people. Especially those in rural, remote and poorly resourced areas like the learners who are receive bicycles as mode of transport.

This programme was introduced to solve the problems such as the endemic inaccessibility, spatial distortion and economic marginalization particularly in the rural areas , problem of learners walking long distances to schools, inaccessible and unaffordable public transport services and biasness towards motorised- transport.

From 1994 to date and in pursuance of this vision of society and striving to eradicate the legacy of apartheid society and its education system, the ANC government has put into place many efforts to ensure that education is as accessible and as free as possible.

Comrades and Compatriots

Negotiated settlements such as CODESA 1, 2 AND 3, are known to be characterised by compromises. The ANC has never lost sight to the value of education in a revolution or in transforming the society. The ANC continues to attach great value to education of our nation. The First president of the democratic Republic of South Africa, Comrade President Nelson Mandela has stated that

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

This commitment was re-emphasised by Cde and President Jacob Zuma at the 104th ANC Anniversary Celebration in Rustenburg when he said [I quote].

“A crucial element of creating a prosperous society is access to quality education. We are making steady progress in this regard.

The 2015 Matric results of nearly 500 000 (five hundred thousand) successful matriculants is the highest number ever in our country’s history. This is a culmination of years of hard work by students, teachers, parents and all involved and interested in our children education.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Our generation today is a beneficiary and a witness to how under the ANC government schools were built even in the most remote of rural localities of our country, of how free primary and secondary education are provided as well as how those unable to afford tertiary education are assisted by the ANC government.

Within the statement of Benyamin Franklin who said that

“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest”

We call on the Department of Education and other sister departments, the Traditional leaders, the receiving schools, the parents ,the SGBs and everybody in communities to ensure that these assets or bicycles are well taken care of.

They do not belong to the government. They are ours as a community which cares and have responsibility to invest on the future of its children through education.

In closing, Programme Director, I wish to remind our people that the Local Government elections are around the corner. It is therefore important for everyone aged 18 and above to secure their Identity documents and make sure you exercise your choice for sustainable development through Voting.

We thank you

Ha khensa!