

# THE SPEECH OF PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE INAUGURAL CHARITY GOLF DAY DINNER AT POLOKWANE GOLF CLUB, POLOKWANE

13 SEPTEMBER 2024

Programme Director, Ashifa Shaba,  
Capricorn District Executive Mayors, Cllr Mamedupi Teffo,  
Polokwane Municipality Executive Mayor, Cllr John Mpe, Chairperson  
Lepelle Northern Water Board, Dr Nndweleni Mphephu,  
Lepelle Northern Water Board members,  
CEO of Lepelle Northern Water, Dr Cornelius Ruiters and Executives,  
Corporate sponsors,  
Golfers,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Distinguished guests.  
Lokovhela, Thobela, Riperile, Good evening, Goeie naand.

Programme Director, it is an absolute pleasure to be here this evening during the Lepelle Northern Water Inaugural Charity Golf Day Dinner.

Today marks a special occasion where we have come together, not just to enjoy the sport of golf, but to support a noble cause. This event is a shining example of how we, as a society, can unite across various sectors to uplift our communities. It is an honor to witness such corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives that are directed at the welfare of our senior citizens, the very people who have built the foundation upon which we stand today.

Programme Director, we all know that Lepelle Northern Water is a public water utility wholly owned by the state, established in terms of the Water Services Act No. 108 of 1997. Their mandate is clear: to provide bulk water services to water services authorities and industries within the mandated areas of our Limpopo Province. This is no small task. The responsibility of ensuring that water flows to over 3 million people, as well as major industrial users, is monumental, especially when the demand for water exceeds the available supply.

Despite these challenges, Lepelle Northern Water remains resolute in its efforts, implementing water conservation and demand management to ensure that our province continues to receive reliable water supply. But today, we are not only celebrating their success in delivering essential services; we are celebrating their heart for the community.

Amidst financial constraints affecting many companies and state-owned entities in our country, it is heartening to see that Lepelle Northern Water remains committed to their social responsibilities. Tonight's event is a testament to their dedication to not only providing water but also investing in the community.

Programme Director, as government, we applaud Lepelle Northern Water for this initiative. It is aligned with the guiding principle of "putting people first," a core priority of our governing party. This charity golf day, aimed at supporting the senior citizens of the Leeufontein Center for the Aged and Disabled, is a powerful demonstration of their commitment to uplift our people, especially the most vulnerable among us.

The center itself will become a beacon of hope, providing a conducive environment for social gatherings, fostering inclusion, and promoting social cohesion among our senior citizens. It's a reflection of Ubuntu – the belief that we are all connected, and through this connection, we can create positive change. The broader implications of an initiative like this cannot be overstated.

When we support our elderly, we are preserving the wisdom and history of our communities.

The proceeds from today's event will go directly to programmes designed to enhance the physical, emotional, and social well-being of over 55 elderly individuals. These programmes will create an environment of care, dignity, and respect, reminding our senior citizens that they are valued members of society.

Programme Director, corporate social responsibility is not just about writing cheques or making donations. It is about deeply integrating the ethos of social upliftment into the DNA of an organisation. Lepelle Northern Water is doing just that, and we believe that their example should inspire other companies, both within and beyond the water sector, to adopt similar practices. The role of the private sector in addressing community challenges cannot be underestimated. We know that the government cannot do it alone. Our communities are facing immense hurdles, from unemployment to service delivery, and the support of businesses like Lepelle Northern Water is critical in bridging the gap.

During the month of July, as we commemorate the legacy of our beloved former President Nelson Mandela, we are reminded that each of us has a role to play in building a better world. Mandela's vision of a society based on fairness, compassion, and equality should motivate us all to take action every day, not just on Mandela Day. We urge the captains of the industry present here tonight to follow the example set by Lepelle Northern Water. Let us take Mandela's call to heart: "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

In this spirit, we also want to take a moment to reflect on a parallel initiative that we have recently launched – the "Hi Nwa Mati Friday." This initiative encourages municipalities across the province to work diligently in ensuring access to clean water for all. Lepelle Northern Water's support in realising this initiative would be invaluable, as we know that water is not just a basic need but a human right. It is our hope that this initiative will expand and succeed with the backing of entities like Lepelle Northern Water, and together, we can bring water to every community, ensuring a better quality of life for all our people.

Tonight is more than just a fundraising event; it is a moment to reflect on the power of collaboration. When government, business, and communities come together, we create lasting change.

Let this evening serve as a reminder of what we can achieve when we unite for a common cause.

In conclusion, I want to express my sincere gratitude to Lepelle Northern Water Board, management, and all involved in making this Charity Golf Day a success. Your commitment to corporate social responsibility has left an indelible mark, and we believe this is only the beginning of many more initiatives that will benefit our communities. Let us all take inspiration from this evening and continue working together to uplift the most vulnerable in our society.

Thank you once again to everyone who has contributed to this evening's success. Together, we can build a brighter, more caring, and more equitable Limpopo.

Thank you.