

STATEMENT BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA AT THE MEDIA BRIEFING ON THE  
PROGRESS MADE BY THE 7TH ADMINISTRATION, MOWANENG BUILDING, 29 AUGUST  
2025

Director General,  
Ladies and Gentlemen of the media,

Good morning.

Before I begin our briefing today, I want to take a moment to acknowledge a profound loss in our media community. The passing of seasoned journalists and broadcasters Themba Chauke and Tshidi Madia has cast a dark cloud upon us this week. These individuals were pillars in the media landscape and their contributions have left an indelible mark. Tshidi was known for her bravery and patriotism, interrogating us while holding us accountable for the love of the country. She rose through the ranks until her latest role as associate politics editor at Primedia Broadcasting. On the other hand Themba entertained and informed many through the years at Munghana Lonene and Capricorn FM. We extend our heartfelt condolences to their families during this difficult time.

As we reflect on the work of the 7th Administration, it is now a year since we delivered our inaugural address at the Limpopo Legislature on 2 August 2025, setting forth our aspirations and commitments. This past year has been transformative and it is essential to assess our progress and make necessary adjustments to our strategies.

#### Appointment of Heads of Departments

One of the key objectives was to stabilise our administration by filling the long-standing vacancies of Heads of Department. I am pleased to announce that we have successfully completed our rigorous recruitment process. We have appointed Dr Ntodenani Nancy Ndwamato as the Head of the Department of Health and Ms Kgathane Veronica Mokgonyana as the Head of the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture. These appointments, along with previous ones in Social Development and Agriculture and Rural Development, Education and Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure mean we are now a complete team, fully equipped to fulfil our mandates.

Each head has been given a five-year contract and we are committed to monitoring their performance through established review mechanisms. Together with their MECs we will ensure accountability and progress in our departments.

#### Celebrating Positive Audit Outcomes

To build public confidence in our administration, we made a concerted effort to enhance governance and ensure responsible financial management. I am proud to announce that all ten departments have received unqualified audit opinions for the first time in many years - an important milestone for this administration.

The Office of the Premier, Provincial Treasury, Sport & Recreation have maintained their clean audits. We are excited because Limpopo Economic Development, Environment and Tourism has come on board with clean audit. This gives us comfort that we can confidently approach investors with assurance that we have sound financial management. Department of Transport and Community Safety has also joined this community of clean audits.

We are looking at departments like Agriculture and Rural Development, Social Development as departments that in the next audits must join the clean audit group.

Health has retained its unqualified audit opinion but have improved because their performance information has been unqualified for the first time. Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, Social Development and Education were qualified last year and this year they all have unqualified audits.

Public Works and Education are our pride, especially Education since 50% of our provincial budget goes to them and Health. So, if you take Education, Health and Public Works they take almost 80% of the provincial budget which then gives us reasons to celebrate their achievements as we know that bulk of our money is taken care of.

Having said that, we still have challenges in our state-owned entities. Limpopo Tourism Agency has retained its clean audit whereas Limpopo Gambling Board has gone to unqualified with emphasis.

We have recently restructured Limpopo Economic Development Agency (LEDA) Board to allow it to lead it to improvements. They have just concluded a strategic planning session that would add more direction and purpose to administrative positions that they are going to fill.

This achievement demonstrates that we are on the right path. For the departments that stand just shy of a clean audit, such as Agriculture, Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (COGHSTA) and Social Development, we will continue to work to ensure that they join that group in the next cycle.

#### Great North Transport Turnaround On Course

Turning our attention to our state-owned entities, I am pleased to report on the turnaround strategy for Great North Transport. The Executive Council also received a comprehensive report on the turnaround strategy of Great North Transport (GNT). The management of GNT is working diligently to ensure operational sustainability by 31 March 2026. To support this goal, GNT has expanded its fleet to 197 buses, with an additional 39 expected by 31 August 2025. This will bring GNT's operational capacity to 236 buses as September begins, with plans to acquire further buses to meet the contractual requirements of the routes operated. The return to operational efficiency involves enhancing the quality of service and leveraging private hire revenue to cover variable costs effectively.

## Investment and Special Economic Zones

Significant progress has also been made in our Special Economic Zones. We have concluded public participation processes in Fetakgomo-Tubatse and are now moving towards designation by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition.

While we have faced delays with the Musina-Makhado SEZ, especially with issues of land and township establishment, we are optimistic with the recent advertisement for bulk infrastructure services, which will kickstart construction.

As we prepare for the Limpopo Investment Conference on 28 and 29 October 2025 under the theme “Limpopo Rising: Africa’s New Investment Frontier,” we are positioning ourselves as a hub for growth and opportunity. We have noted progress of contribution of over 20,000 jobs in the previous investment conferences since we began.

Unfortunately, these milestones can be hardly celebrated, while creating these jobs other industries are sadly shedding jobs.

## Water and Roads Initiatives

Our #HiNWaMatiFridays campaign continues to unlock water supply challenges, with significant progress made in Giyani and beyond. We launched the #HiNWaMatiFridays in Giyani, Mopani District last year wherein we wanted to unlock the water challenges. In Mopani District Municipality, the Executive Mayor Cllr Pule Shayi has launched Operation Fix All, an aggressive and sustained programme to refurbish boreholes across the district, giving water to our people. The programme is aligned to #HiNwaMatiFridays Campaign as pronounced by this 7th Administration.

This is the fourth week since the start of the campaign and at least a total of 73 boreholes have been fixed by MDM’s own maintenance team, providing much-needed relief to communities, particularly to our rural women.

The commitment from the Municipality is that there is ongoing work to ensure sustainable water provision to the people in the district. We will see more communities linked to the bulk water supply system, where taps will be opened next month. Much work has been done with massive progress recorded on the reticulation projects in the Greater Giyani Municipality where 23 out of the 24 villages have been practically completed with the overall progress at 97,6%.

In Capricorn District the Executive Mayor Cllr Mamedupi Teffo has carried through the same spirit to ensure that our people have access to water by introducing newly planned and funded projects under the Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG) and the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG). There are six completed projects that she is the process of handing over that will benefit over 8 000 households across the district.

We are also pleased that Sekhukhune District is working hard to refurbish boreholes as temporary relief whilst projects connecting to the De Hoop water scheme are getting concluded.

We do not face as severe water challenges in the Waterberg area as most of the local municipalities are water service providers, but we continue to support them.

Our biggest focus in the next few weeks will be in Vhembe District where we want to assist unblocking all the bottlenecks, work on solutions to have many communities access water whilst the Nandoni Water Project is extending its reach.

## Roads

In terms of roads, our #21NewRoads campaign is revitalizing our road networks while simultaneously creating jobs. The project focuses on upgrading 21 strategic roads from gravel to tar, ensuring that we address the backlog while empowering local contractors.

## Conclusion

Today, I stand here not just to share our progress, but to reaffirm our commitment to serving the people of Limpopo. We are delivering on our promises, manifesting the government in action. Together, we will continue to make strides toward a brighter future for all our citizens.

Thank you.