

REMARKS BY LIMPOPO PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE HANDOVER OF
THE LONG-STANDING INTERMODAL TRANSPORT FACILITY PROJECT TO A NEW
CONTRACTOR, THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY, THOHOYANDOU,

07 October 2025

Programme Director,

MEC for Transport and Community Safety, Ms Violet Mathye,

MEC for Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, Mr Ernest Rachoene,

Executive Mayor of Vhembe District, Cllr Freda Nkondo,

Mayor of Thulamela Municipality, Cllr Sarah Rammbuda,

Councillors,

Traditional and Faith-Based Leaders,

Representatives of the Taxi Industry,

Distinguished Guests,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ndi mats Sheloni, Avuxeni, Thobela, Good morning, Goeie môre.

Today marks an important turning point in the story of Thohoyandou a story that has for far too long been paused, but one that we are determined to complete. We gather here today to restore hope to the people of Thulamela and Vhembe at large.

We are meeting here specifically for this Intermodal Transport Facility Project popularly known as the Thohoyandou Taxi Rank project which began in 2011 with the promise of modernising public transport infrastructure and creating a central hub that would serve thousands of commuters daily.

This is the project that was originally scheduled for completion in 2015, but like many infrastructure projects in the past, it faced numerous setbacks that stalled progress for years.

Programme Director, this project is reminiscent of the Maphutha Malatjie Hospital, another development in our province that was once trapped in endless challenges. Yet, through firm leadership and commitment, that hospital was completed and is now serving the people of Limpopo.

Similarly, the 7th administration has made a firm commitment that this project too must be completed and start serving our people.

For 14 long years, this facility has stood as a symbol of delay and frustration. We acknowledge, as a government, that we could have done better. We sincerely apologise to the people of Thulamela for the inconvenience and the lost opportunities that came with this delay.

We also recognise that some of the challenges stemmed from shortcomings by contractors and implementing agents, issues which in some instances remain before the courts to this day.

As Premier, I have made it my personal mission to intervene directly in stalled infrastructure projects because we cannot speak of economic growth and job creation when our infrastructure remains incomplete.

We live in a province battling high unemployment and slow economic growth. Each delayed project is a missed opportunity to empower our people, stimulate local businesses, and uplift communities.

Allow me to briefly take you through the sad history of this project. It commenced in 2011 and was scheduled to be completed by 2015. However, upon supposed completion, major structural defects were discovered. In 2017, remedial work began and concluded in 2018, yet the facility remained unsafe and incomplete.

The project was locked in disputes that dragged through the courts until 2024, when we appointed the Independent Development Trust (IDT) as the new implementing agent.

After careful groundwork, we have now appointed a new contractor to complete the remaining work. That is why we are gathered here today with the two MECs, for Transport and Community Services and Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure, to officially hand over this project and give a clear directive to the contractor: finish this project within eight months.

This final phase of construction will cost R46,916,285.12, and as a government, we expect nothing less than excellence, efficiency, and accountability. When we return here, it must not be to discuss progress reports or excuses, but we must be cutting the ribbon and opening this facility to the people of Thulamela.

To the contractor, we are placing our trust in you. Deliver on your commitment, respect timelines, uphold quality, and honour the people whose livelihoods depend on this facility.

To our community, we ask for your support and patience as this work resumes. Together, let us ensure that this time, the story of the Thohoyandou Intermodal Facility is one of completion, service, and pride.

Let us finish what we started because our people deserve a government that delivers.

I thank you.