

SPEECH BY LIMPOPO PREMIER DR. PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE 12TH EDITION
OF THE MAHUMANI MULTI-CULTURAL CELEBRATION 2025, NKOMO 22B

Programme Director, Mr. Pat Khalanga Makhubele,
The Mahumani Traditional Council led by Hosi Khaohareni Aarone Mahumani Nkomo,
Deputy Minister of COGTA, Prince Z Burns Ncamase,
Mopani District Executive Mayor, Cllr Pule Shayi,
Greater Giyani Municipality Mayor, Cllr Thandi Zitha,
Councilors,
Kingdom of Great Zimbabwe, His Royal Highness C Murinye,
Traditional Leaders,
Faith-Based Leaders,
Distinguished Guests,
Community Members,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Inhlelani, Ndi masiari, Thobela, Good afternoon, Goeie dag,

It is with great pleasure and reverence that I greet you all on this momentous occasion of the Mahumani Multi-Cultural Celebration, a gathering where heritage, unity and diversity converge to remind us of the beauty of who we are as people.

As we come together today, let us take a moment to recognise the significance of our cultures and traditions.

There is a rhythm that beats in every nation, the sound of its culture - the breath of the people, the song of their ancestors, and the wisdom of their forebears.

Culture is not merely about the past; it is the pride of future generations, the mirror that reflects who we are. Without culture, we are like trees without roots, vulnerable to the storms of foreign winds. However, with a strong cultural foundation, we can stand tall and unite as a resilient community.

For the past twelve years, this celebration has been a testament to the resilience, vision and pride of the Mahumani community. It serves not only as a platform to showcase your cultural heritage but also as an opportunity for growth and solidarity among our people.

Programme Director, culture plays a profound role in shaping our society. It teaches us respect, unity and ubuntu. It binds our humanity and reminds us that our past is a bridge to our future. As a government, we recognise the immense potential that lies within our cultural heritage - not just as a symbol of identity but as a catalyst for social cohesion and economic development.

This celebration, now in its 12th edition, stands as proof that cultural festivities can drive our tourism and economy. The Mahumani Traditional Council is uniquely positioned to promote tourism in Limpopo. With your proximity to the renowned Kruger

National Park, you have a golden opportunity to attract visitors eager to experience our rich cultural tapestry. The Southini Baleni attraction and the artistic exhibitions that reflect your creativity are just the beginning of what this community can offer.

We must now elevate our cultural assets further. Tourism is inherently linked to experiences and by packaging our cultural heritage effectively, we can make Mahumani a destination of choice.

However, achieving this demands a collective vision. It requires us to view cultural activities as sustainable economic ventures that uplift households, empower youth, and expand opportunities.

As we celebrate this milestone, I encourage you to dream big. Explore how your land - sacred and rich in potential - can become a wellspring for economic opportunities: cultural villages, eco-tourism lodges, agricultural projects, craft markets and heritage trails. Let us transform our cultural pride into tangible development for this council and community.

Yet, this transformation cannot rest solely on the shoulders of our leaders. It demands the involvement of every member of our society - elders sharing their wisdom, youth fuelling our future with energy, women as custodians of families and men as pillars of strength. Together, let us preserve our culture and harness opportunities that benefit all.

The provincial government stands ready to support you. Through the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements, and Traditional Affairs and the Department of Sport, Arts, and Culture, we are committed to creating platforms for artists, musicians, crafters, and storytellers. These cultural ambassadors are vital in ensuring that Limpopo's voice resonates not only within South Africa but across Africa and the world.

Our vision is expansive. We aim for this celebration to grow beyond Mahumani, Giyani and Limpopo, becoming a nationally recognised festival that invites visitors from all provinces and countries. Let it emerge as a beacon of cultural pride and economic potential.

As I conclude, let us unite - traditional leaders, businesses, artists, government, and community members. Together, let us protect and promote our culture as a foundation for our future. May this 12th edition of the Mahumani Multi-Cultural Celebration symbolize our pride, drive our tourism, generate jobs, and foster unity.

In the words of an African proverb: "A people without the knowledge of their past, their origin, and their culture is like a tree without roots."

Let this celebration root us deeply in our traditions while reaching for the skies of opportunity.

I thank you.