



LIMPOPO

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPEECH BY PREMIER DR PHOPHI RAMATHUBA DURING THE LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL HERITAGE DAY CELEBRATION, SELETENG, GA-MPHAHLELE, LEPELLE-NKUMPI MUNICIPALITY IN THE CAPRICRON DISTRICT

24 SEPTEMBER 2026

Members of Executive Council

Members of The Provincial Legislature

Executive Mayors, Local Mayors, All Councillors

Ba Mošate wa ga Mphahlele le Magoši a rena ka moka

Religious Leaders

Limpopo Provincial Heritage Resources Authority (LIHRA)

Limpopo Arts and Culture Council (LACC)

Heads of Department

Our Limpopos artists, Media Houses

Distinguished guests, Fellow Limpopians,

Thobela. Sanibonani. Avuxeni. Ndi matsheloni. Lotshani. Goeie Middag.

Today, as we gather to celebrate Heritage Day, we are called upon not only to remember where we come from, but also to reflect deeply on the kind of society we are building for future generations.

Heritage is more than our monuments, our traditional attire, our languages, our music, our dances and the stories passed from one generation to another. Heritage is also about the values we inherit, preserve and transmit. It is about the principles that define how we treat one another, how we raise our children, how we respect women and girls, and how we build communities founded on dignity, *botho* and human solidarity.

It is therefore deeply concerning that, while we celebrate the richness of our heritage, women and girls continue to lose their lives to gender-based violence and femicide. The killing of women in South Africa is not merely a law-enforcement challenge; it is a profound societal crisis that demands a response from every sector of society.

We must ask ourselves: What kind of heritage are we passing on if our daughters grow up in fear, if women are not safe in their homes and communities, and if violence becomes normalised?

Our heritage must become part of the solution.

Programme Director,

The wisdom of our African communities has historically placed great value on respect, communal responsibility, protection of the vulnerable and the

peaceful resolution of disputes. Our traditional institutions, families, schools, faith communities, artists and cultural organisations all have a role to play in restoring these values and using them to confront the attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate violence against women.

As we celebrate Heritage Day, let us therefore make a conscious commitment to preserve not only the physical manifestations of our heritage, but also those values that affirm the dignity and humanity of every person.

Let our heritage teach our boys and men that strength is not demonstrated through violence, but through responsibility, respect and protection. Let our cultural institutions become spaces where young people learn about equality, dignity and non-violence.

And let our languages, music, literature, theatre and storytelling become powerful instruments for challenging gender stereotypes and breaking the silence around gender-based violence.

The heritage we celebrate today must be a heritage that protects life, respects women, safeguards children and strengthens families and communities. As we honour our past, let us use it to shape a safer and more just future.

Programme Director,

Heritage Month is always cause for celebration as it is the month we appreciate the rich, diverse and common cultural heritage that makes us Proudly Limpopians.

As former President Nelson Mandela once said, "The heritage of a great nation is not just its wealth or its power, but its people, their values and their culture." Whilst President Ramaphosa once said: "In our heritage lies our strength," the strength to advance the social, economic and health opportunities is created through heritage customs.

This year, Heritage Month is commemorated under the theme: *"Celebrating Our Living Heritage: Strengthening the Ties That Bind Us."* It highlights living heritage as a dynamic expression of identity, memory and belonging through languages, music, dance, rituals, oral traditions, indigenous knowledge, craftsmanship, beliefs and customs.

The theme embraces our country's constitutional diversity and the restoration of human dignity. It positions heritage as a living resource for unity, social cohesion and shared identity, while recognising the histories, cultures, struggles and aspirations that connect people across the country.

The theme further propels us to give a reflection and a focus on the selfless struggle of heroes and heroines who sacrificed their lives for the Freedom and Democracy that we have attained, it is because our selfless veterans in the liberation struggle that we are able to celebrate and appreciate the rich history, heritage and culture that we possess as a province.

We should also honour our military veterans, who are part of us today, as the living human treasures that have history and good stories to tell that led us to attain the Freedom that we are proud of today.

The wars and battles that have been fought by our heroes and heroines, give expression to the liberation stories, history, monuments, statues, published materials, stories, performing arts and other tangible and intangible heritage assets as part of the heritage that we need to preserve and pass on to generations to come.

Programme Director,

Our heritage is what we have inherited from the past to value and enjoy in the present and to preserve and pass on to future generations.

In Limpopo, the rich heritage that we have inherited from our forefathers cannot be contested. As a province, we boast about the diverse heritage emanating from our diverse culture as the Ndebeles, Tsongas, Vendas, Pedis, Afrikaners, Tswanas, Indians, Swatis and Coloureds. We are diverse in the province and yet we are one.

Programme Director,

We boast about the rich heritage sites that express the beauty and uniqueness of our Province. Places like Makapan's Valley, Mapungubwe National Park, Lekgalameetse Provincial Park, Tjate Heritage Site, Muti wa Vatsonga Museum and a lot more.

These are some, amongst many of the rich heritage landscapes and sites that we have as an expression of heritage that we need to preserve, appreciate and conserve.

Programme Director,

The provincial government is working closely with the Limpopo Tourism Agency in this month of Heritage to promote Limpopo as a tourist destination and the promotion of our numerous heritage sites.

It is also key that we should visit the heritage sites as part of promoting the Cultural Heritage Tourism in the Province and we appreciate the Limpopo Tourism Agency for ensuring that the entrance to the nature reserves publicized in their Tourism Itinerary is free for this month. This is to encourage the residents of Limpopo to appreciate the rich heritage that is embedded in the tangible heritage assets that we possess.

In conclusion, let us celebrate our roots, our heritage on daily basis, let us revive, uphold and practice our traditional customs to become a better nation and to contribute to the building of a culture of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and inter-cultural dialogue, amongst others, education and most importantly Culture and Heritage Education.

Let us celebrate our Culture that defines us ...Pula!

Happy Heritage Day! Our Roots! Our Culture! Our Pride!

Happy Heritage Month!