

MEDIA RELEASE	Limpopo State of the Province Address: PSA expectations
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is waiting with eagerness for Limpopo Premier's State of the Province with the hope that he will provide much-needed solutions to the people of Limpopo including many disillusioned employees. Many employees in Limpopo are working in neglected and dilapidated buildings which threatens their health and safety while not creating a very conducive environment for optimum performance.

At the heart of many challenges, lies the capacity and resourcefulness of the Provincial Government to deliver service to the people. The chronic staff shortage across departments is not a small matter and over the years, the Department has dismally failed to address this problem denying the vulnerable and poor people, the quality service that they need so much. The staff shortage adversely affects the employees who are forced to cover for the unfilled vacancies which the Provincial Administration is failing to address. Further, government has spent millions of rands to train educators, doctors, nurses, and other professions, however, are not able to employ the same despite their services highly being required at schools and health institutions. To make matters worse, the province has continuously ignored the call to absorb the Community Health Workers even though this category of employees forms the backbone of health service delivery in the province. The PSA hope that sanity will prevail and that the Premier of the Province will address the plight of the marginalised and forgotten Community Health Workers so that they can be employed and move from receiving a stipend to a living wage.

The PSA is waiting with abated breath for the Premier to also address the issue of infrastructure as many buildings are not in the required standards, they are not habitable although workers are putting their lives at risk daily by entering the same to feed their families. The situation is exacerbated by chronic water shortage leaving them with no access to functional toilets violating the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Pit latrines are still a problem at most schools with overcrowding being the order of the day as shortage of classes remains one of the huge problems in the province. The selling of inedible food by the local spaza shops causes illness to most people who are forced to buy from it because of the low price, needs a plan by the Provincial Administration as it remains the duty of the government to protect its citizens.

The promise of the Premier to have all government buildings fitted with solar panels to address the electricity problems could not be realised despite the same government forcing the health workers to provide 24-hour service in institutions that do not even have backup electricity. In some institutions, generators were procured but there is no budget for fuel, making the same useless.

Critically, the Premier must address the issue of crime as the lives of many citizens are at the mercy of criminals making it difficult to be safe in your own house. Crime is not only a problem in the communities but also in town forcing those who come to town to constantly look behind their backs worrying about their belongings which also affects the tourism industry as no one would want to come to a Province that is not able to address lawlessness and criminality. The Province is not winning the battle against corruption particularly in government, wastage,

maladministration, and mismanagement of public resources. The Premier must not only speak about corruption because it is an issue that he is expected to talk about but rather have the plan and capacity to root out corruption which is a barrier to the provision of excellent service delivery to the people of Limpopo which will be demonstrated in the tangible plans which we hope that the Premier will table.

School safety should not be ignored as both learners and educators need to be safe in a learning environment. Many schools are still not properly secured where both learners and educators are not safe, and many incidents are reported where there is assault on either learners or educators like the recent event at Rammupudu Primary School where an educator was assaulted by a learner.

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