

2024/25

VOTE 1

BUDGET SPEECH

NORTHERN CAPE LEGISLATURE

DR. ZAMANI SAUL

PREMIER OF THE NORTHERN CAPE



Modern, Growing and Successful Province



premier

Department:
Office of the Premier
NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE



2024 Budget Vote 1 Speech by the Premier of the Northern Cape

Dr Zamani Saul

17 September 2024

Northern Cape Provincial Legislature

Honourable Speaker, Ms. Newrene Klaaste

Honourable Deputy Speaker, Mr. Mangaliso Matika

Honourable Members of the Executive Council

Honourable Members of the Provincial Legislature

Leader of the Official Opposition, Mr. Harold Mcgluwa

Leaders of all opposition parties: Honourable Member Tlhaole (EFF), Honourable Ferris (PA) and Honourable Joubert (FF+)

Chief Whip of the Legislature, Honourable Dr. Norman Shushu and the Whippers

Director General, Mr. Justice Bekebeke, and the entire OTP Team

Representatives of Labour and Civil society structures

Members of the Media

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon, Goeie Middag, Dumelang,

I am pleased to deliver the first Budget Speech of the Seventh Administration. This also serves as the last Budget Speech of the Office of the Premier under the current Medium Term Strategic Framework for the period 2019 - 2024.

We have started the work of the Seventh Administration with renewed vigour, purpose, and determination to serve the people of the Northern Cape. Our approach is underpinned by the tenets of servant leadership as we build on the work already started in the Sixth Administration.

Honourable Speaker, we present this budget on the backdrop of many achievements over the past 30 years and more specifically, over the past five years. You will recall that we presented to the Sixth Legislature and the people of our province a vision anchored on three pillars to modernise the Province, grow the economy and to make the province successful. Education and health are our apex programmes and account for more than 80% of our budget and on both fronts we have experienced improved outcomes. I must mention that, I gave a clear instruction to the MEC of Education, that despite the recent budget cuts no educators will be retrenched in the Northern Cape. In the next three years we will work towards having **ONE SOCIAL WORKER TWO WARDS** and **ONE AMBULANCE THREE WARDS**.

Building a Modern, Growing and Successful Province serves as a guardrail of our work and is now neatly aligned to the three priorities of Government, which are:

- **to drive inclusive growth and job creation;**
- **to reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living;**
- **and to build a capable, ethical and developmental state.**

Honourable Speaker, nothing is impossible if our vision, strategy and discipline are aligned.

Honourable Speaker, the Northern Cape presents a unique and unprecedented growth opportunity for South Africa as a new growth front. As a Province, we contribute 2.2% to the national GDP, directly correlating to our 2.2% share of the national population. The key to unlocking our economic potential lies with our industrial corridor, which is designed to transform the socio economic landscape of our province.

The industrial corridor carries five catalytic projects:

- **Namakwa SEZ**
- **Boegoebaai Port and Rail Infrastructure**
- **Green Hydrogen Plant**
- **Upington Industrial Park, and**
- **Kathu Industrial Park**

Honourable Speaker, for the next five years, we are going to lead a drive to create about 60 000 new jobs and invest more than R20 Billion in socio-economic

infrastructure in the Northern Cape. This means better roads, increased number of schools, clinics, libraries, community halls, houses and other important amenities of life. My office is working on developing a mechanism to closely monitor all our infrastructure projects from conception stage to execution stage and handover.

Honourable Speaker, we have witnessed substantial increases in the GDP, which is currently standing at R148 billion increased from R119 billion in 2019. Our continued focus on mining, agriculture, renewable energy and industrialisation will further drive this momentum. By the end of October 2024 the NCEDA Board will be appointed, this will be followed by the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer for this mega entity.

Honourable Speaker, we need to embark on a vigorous drive for investment in the economy and infrastructure in the province. This, must be accompanied by a massive rollout of vocational training and skills development programmes. It is trite law in Economics, that if the economy does not grow, you can't create jobs. Infrastructure projects such as the Vaal Gamagara Water Supply Scheme with its R10 billion investment, will transform the lives of people in more than 200 villages in John Taolo Gaetsewe District through uninterrupted water supply to even the most remote communities.

As we continue to advance these high-impact projects, it is clear that the Northern Cape is no longer a minion but a key player in the country's economic future. The office of the Premier is centrally positioned to provide strategic leadership and support to the Northern Cape Provincial Government.

Honourable Speaker, the strategic focus for the duration of the 2020 - 2025 period is to strengthen service delivery integration and find synergy in the work of the Provincial Departments through improved co-ordination by the Office of the Premier. I therefore welcome progress made with in sourcing of our security guards. This week, the beginning of the second phase of insourcing will take place with interviews to fill 145 posts of Security Officers.

The establishment of a Provincial Information Technology Shared Services Centre is a vehicle to deliver on the information technology aspirations of the Province. We have also appointed a champion for IT Governance and two Directors, one of which is an expert on Cyber Security, and the other who is a professional in Information

Technology & Infrastructure. We aim to appoint another two Directors in the new financial year for Research Development as well as Strategy and Innovation.

Madam Speaker, technology has allowed us to connect the globe and we should harness it to connect people in our rural areas. To achieve this, we have partnered with MTN, Vodacom and Telkom, as industry experts, to support us in our efforts to fuse modern technology in our work.

Honourable Members, as part of our commitment to advancing human capital development, we continue to prioritise skills development as a cornerstone of our economic growth strategy. Through various initiatives, we are investing in the future of our youth to address critical skills shortages in the province. The Northern Cape Premier's Bursary Program remains a vital tool in supporting our deserving youth to pursue tertiary education in fields critical to the development of the province.

For the 2024/25 financial year, we have allocated R13.2 million to the fund. This investment underscores our continued commitment to ensure access to higher education for our youth. Currently, 222 active students are being supported across various institutions of higher learning.

In addition to bursary funding, we are also continuing to implement training through funding secured with Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) to provide vital skills training to our people, thereby aligning our workforce with the needs of the modern economy. The Services SETA has provided R37.1 million to fund the training of 756 learners, transferring much-needed skills to our citizens, thus enabling them to access new opportunities in various sectors.

Honourable Speaker, Communication Services remain a critical component of our interaction with various role-players. The Executive Council has approved a provincial communication strategy. Underpinned by this strategy we are in the process of professionalising the communications' environment at all levels of government by exposing Communication Officials to training opportunities as well as introducing the Government Communication Excellence Tool (G-CET) for reporting.

Madam Speaker, the total budget for Office of the Premier in the **2024/2025** financial year is **R314 544 million**. This is a substantial decrease of 32,5% from the previous

budget allocation. Despite the shrinking fiscal space, the Office of the Premier is committed to achieve all its objectives in the three programmes, which are:

Programme 1: Administration, has been allocated R149.5 million to provide strategic leadership and oversee the successful implementation of government programmes. Programme 1 gets the largest amount of the budget as it supports all other programmes in the Office of the Premier.

Programme 2: Institutional Development, has been allocated R110.3 million to strategically lead the province towards long-term planning for human capital, towards a developmentally orientated public service and the provision of advisory legal services.

Programme 3: Policy and Governance has been allocated R54.7 million to strategically manage policies and strategies throughout the province through research and development. This allocation will also support the implementation of a sustainable provincial growth and development plan, and the monitoring and evaluation of performance against provincial plans.

Let me extend my gratitude to the staff of the Office of the Premier, under the leadership of the Director General, for their enduring commitment and support in the realisation of our aims and objectives. In addition, I thank my colleagues in the Executive and the Members of the Legislature for contributing to our overall achievements and successes. Also, allow me to thank my political party, the mighty African National Congress, for entrusting me with the responsibility to lead the province.

Let me also thank my wife, my mom, my entire family, comrades and friends for their continued and unwavering support. To lead the government of the Northern Cape is a rare privilege, which I don't take for granted. I also want to thank all MPLs for your support, as well as critical and constructive engagements with our work.

My attitude for the next five years is concretely shaped by this beautiful and heart-rending poetic epilogue, which goes as follows:

It is in our trauma that we find triumph.

It is in our challenges that we find creativity.

It is in our fears that we find fierceness.

It is in our problems that we find power.

It is in the darkness that we find our Light.

Honourable Speaker, it is with great humility and honour that we table before this House, the 2024/2025 Budget Vote for the Office of the Premier, for appropriation.

Thank you very much