

Keynote address by the Mayor of Greater Tzaneen Municipality, Dikeledi Mmetle at the official opening of the Nkowankowa Indoor and Outdoor Sports Centre on 22 April 2016 at Nkowankowa Section C

Programme Director

Traditional leaders present here

Members of our Executive Committee

Ward and PR Councillors

Officials of the Greater Tzaneen Municipality

Officials from all sector departments present here

Members of our ward committees

Distinguished Guests

Fellow citizens

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is indeed a great day

It is a day for celebration

It is a day for jubilation

It is day where we witness the work of government in action

A day where we meet not because something is wrong

A day where we meet not because people are not happy about service delivery

Today we gather here because the government of the ANC through its pro-poor policies and its diligent leaders has brought a monument

The ANC government has brought us a facility those only years ago was a distant dream

Today we prove to the prophets of doom that the government of the ANC listens and delivers

Because of ANC government, beneficiaries of government programmes, can stand and say that government is not doing anything, whilst in front of house built by government, in tar road constructed by government

They can say all of this with confidence because even when they the ANC government believes in the freedom of speech

Today we launch this multimillion indoor and outdoor sport centre, our government has injected a whopping R13 million to build this centre through the municipal infrastructure grant

This is the only centre of this kind in the entire province.

As we open doors to this state-of-the-art facility, we do so with a great sense of pride

We therefore call on the people of Nkawkawa, the people of ward 21, the people of Greater Tzaneen and the people of Mopani to take pride in this facility, to take ownership of this facility

From all of you here today, I expect that you will go back to your homes and tell your families and friends that today we have seen a

masterpiece proudly brought to the community by the ANC government

This facility belong to all the residents fo this country, it will remain accessible to all our communities

Programme director

I and fellow councillors took the oath of office 5 years ago on the 2nd of June 2011, we took office with plan to deliver infrastructure to our poor communities

We had plan to improve our townships and reduce the service delivery backlog that we face

You, the voters, our communities took to the polls and in that year you gave us a mandate to represent you, to pursue your developmental agenda and to help you reach your dreams

We took that mandate with great pride, and buoyed by your overwhelming support we hit the ground running and pushed forward projects that add value to your lives

We advocated for projects that brought dignity to your lives

We fought for projects that brought convenience to your lives

When we took office, the people of this section of Nkowankowa did not have a tarred main road and struggled to get taxis to work wherever it rained. Today its a different story.

The people of this section have also received title deeds to their properties, hundreds of house that this government build for you free of charge.

Just 12 months ago the people of Nkowankowa, Mariveni and other areas had to think twice about using the Nkowankowa to Letsitele

road, but today we can say this government listened to your voices and repaired that road

Today we do not have to think twice about using that road

These are examples of government service delivery track record

These achievements are undisputable.

They are there in the open for everybody to see

We have decided to come here and officially tell you that this centre that we build for you is open for your use

We are doing this because, we have seen that we do a lot of good things for our people, but because good things don't make newspaper headlines. You are likely not to hear this

When we were busy with the construction of the ring road, the SABC came to us and said that the community is not happy because they cannot access their homes because of your project. The project was on-going, it was not news but the complaints about the projects were.

Again when we were building this sport centre, the media brought a complaint about a woman whose house cracked because of the heavy machinery used in the project, no one saw the need to write about this centre, but what went wrong with the project made news.

These are some of the reasons why we came here today, to talk to you directly and not through a third or fourth person.

Programme director, what we should be celebrating today is the fact that we have connected electricity to more than fifteen thousand households since 2011

What we should take pride in, is that we have brought dignity to more than 20 000 families by building them Ventilated Improve Pit Latrines or dignified toilets.

Programme director, despite our provincial government being under administration we have managed to build at least 3000 RDP houses in the past 5 years.

You have seen the R71 road from Polokwane to Tzaneen and even beyond being rebuilt, we all remember the stop and go

You have seen the road from Thabane via Lephephane and Khujwane to the R36 undergo a massive upgrade, from gravel to tar, a R100 million investment.

The people of Mafana, Bonn, Ntsako and Sedan will tell you that we build a nice road there, they will also tell you that they now travel with ease and that taxis and buses are now more accessible than before.

The people of Muhlava and Petanenge will also bear testimony of their own development, that despite all the legal problems and changing of contractors, the Greater Tzaneen Municipality led by the ANC has delivered a 9 km road that cuts through the village of Petanenge and connects the village to both Nkowankowa and Muhlava village.

They too will tell you that their lives have seen a drastic improvement, that road has survived the most recent rain.

We have built a road and a bridge in Ramotshinyadi, that bridge that cross over the Merikoma River is our pride and joy.

The Senakwe to Morapalala road in Bolobedu in ward 1 are also beneficiary of our intensive campaign to build critical infrastructure and to redress the injustices of the past.

Some of you here today, if not most of you, are beneficiaries of our Indigent programme which year after year subsidises services to thousands and thousands of households.

We understand the impact of poverty in society; we know that some of you cannot afford basic services.

This financial year (2015/16) alone more than 36 000 households will be exempted from paying for certain municipal services, these people include pensioners, child headed families, parents to children receiving child grants, the unemployed and all those who cannot afford due to social and economic reasons.

We spend on average R6 million to cover these people, of which R2.5 million is for Nkowankowa Section C, Nkowankowa alone inclusive of all its sections, section A, B and C cost R3.7 million.

Ladies and gentlemen, this facility that we are celebrating here today, belongs to all of you, it is therefore your responsibility to jealously protect this facility against vandalism and theft.

You must know that there are those who are not happy about this facility, but I know most of us are happy about this facility.

We must obey all the rules of this facility because those rules are meant to protect all users.

We must therefore be fair to those who will be in charge of this facility.

I am told that there is going to be a committee formed that will deal with the wellbeing of this facility, let us choose men and women who

will make a significant contribution not only to the facility but also to general sports development in our municipality.

As you have already been told, this facility will be used for soccer, netball, volleyball, basketball and off course as a gym.

They say we are an obese nation, a nation of bellies and nation of over eaters and less exercise,

Let us use this gym to stay healthy and fit,

Let us start to live a healthy life that life must start today.

After this ceremony we are going to watch schools compete in netball and football, I am told there will be 13 schools participating, which include both high schools and primary schools.

I am already excited about these developments because from today onwards I will expect competitions to be a regular occurrence in this facility.

This month marks the 22nd anniversary of our democracy, on the 27th of April 1994 our first democratically elected president took oath of office.

In April 1994 we entered into a new dispensation,

we entered into a South Africa which recognises all of us as equals.

In 1994 we tasted freedom for the first time.

As government we have done so much to improve this country.

It will take us weeks to tell you of these achievements, but what I know is that all of us here have seen the changes that the ANC government has brought.

Let me quote from the words of Nelson Mandela

“ Let there be justice for all.

Let there be peace for all.

Let there be work, bread, water and salt for all.

Let each know that for each the body, the mind and the soul have been freed to fulfill themselves.

Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another and suffer the indignity of being the skunk of the world.”

Our President, Jacob Zuma will be at Giyani stadium on Freedom day to celebrate with us. We must all go there and celebrate this 22nd anniversary of our democracy.

Programme director, within the next two months, we expect the councillor or councillors to call a community meeting where you, the community will decide on the name for this facility.

You will chose and name that a majority of the members of the community prefer.

The party that i represent in Government the ANC, launched its election manifesto on Saturday in Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape province.

Amongst other things the ANC promises to:

Continue to be led by the Constitution

Involved Communities in choosing councilors

Councilors will be made to give regular feedback and sign performance agreements

The ANC government has made progress in improving the lives of people since 2011, and will continue to expand electricity provision, water, and sanitation, refuse removal as well as social grants and the

expanded public works programme, health care, and basic and higher education

Municipalities will strengthen local economic development structures, and incorporate science and technology into this, while the ANC will continue to support the township and village economies by buying goods and services from them. Action against illegal trading will be stepped up.

For food security, the ANC government will give residents information on sustainable agriculture and assist smallholder farmers to access municipal land for food production and agriculture.

The party will also work with traditional leaders to make communal land available for development

We will expand broadband access in municipalities as well as free wi-fi areas

We are to upgrade informal settlements and overhaul ageing infrastructure, while improving transport, roads and bridges. Sports and recreation facilities will also be upgraded

The fight against crime, corruption and fraud will continue, and municipal officials and councilors and their families will be barred from doing business with municipalities.

Corrupt municipal officials and councilors will be liable for losses incurred due to their actions.

Community safety forums will be strengthened and street committees formed to fight crime. We have already started with the training of street committees that you have elected as communities

In rural areas traditional leaders will be involved. In the Greater Tzaneen Municipality traditional leaders form part of our highest decision making structures, Council and the Executive Committee.

The ANC government will establish and develop the municipal capacity to manage disaster risks that come from a changing climate.

The Back to Basics programme will continue adding engineering, project planning and financial management skills to municipalities.

The ANC will build long-term planning capacity as well as monitoring and evaluation in municipalities, including early warning mechanisms for problem areas.

The ANC will ensure bulk suppliers get paid and the money owed to municipalities by communities, government departments and businesses is recovered. It will also “address challenges related to billing systems” and step up the system to protect indigent households.

Like i said in the begging, listing the good things that we have done as the ANC will take a day if not weeks or months to do.

Let us all make sure that we register with the IEC in order to be eligible to vote, i want the youth, all those who are over the age of 18 to make sure that they register to vote. People can still do this at the IEC offices in Peace Street.

In my conclusion I want to extend a warm word of gratitude to the steering committee that oversaw this project and the Community Liaison Officer.

Our team at the municipality who made sure that all that needed to be done was done.

I also want to thank the community for their cooperation throughout the project and last but not least the Ward Councilor Stanely Mboweni for his leadership in the community.

With these words, I officially declare the Nkowankowa Indoor and Outdoor Sport center open to the general public.

I thank you